

205 Live – December 6, 2016: How Appropriate That I Forgot to Post This

205 Live

Date: December 6, 2016

Location: Toyota Center, Houston, Texas

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Corey Graves, Austin Aries

It's the second week of the show after a pretty strong debut episode. The main event is the same as it was last week with Rich Swann facing Brian Kendrick for the Cruiserweight Title, though time it's Swann putting the title on the line. Other than that it's hard to say what we'll be getting but some more debuts are likely. Let's get to it.

Rich Swann talks about his family passing away, leaving him with only wrestling. It took him a long time to get here but now he's cruiserweight champion. That's a simple story but it works no matter how many times it's done.

Opening sequence.

Noam Dar vs. Cedric Alexander

Before the match, Alexander gets a kiss on the cheek from Alicia Fox. They get technical to start with Dar working on an armbar until a dropkick puts him on the floor. Back in and Dar stays on the arm while driving his knuckles into Cedric's shoulder. They're sticking with a basic story so far and that's a good idea.

Speaking of telling a story, it's really kind of amazing how different the commentary here is. You have the announcers talking about how Alexander has good genetics and Dar is more about strategy with Aries getting himself over as a huge heel who could take this show by storm once he's healthy. In other words: it sounds like wrestling commentary instead of the usual WWE nonsense.

The arm work continues with Aries talking about how hard it is to wrestle without one limb, "unless you're Zack Gowen of course." Alexander fights back with the good arm and a springboard crossbody gets two. Dar kicks him square in the arm and grabs a Fujiwara armbar. The rope is grabbed of course so Dar kicks him in the face for the pin at 10:29.

Rating: C. The arm work here was fine for a story and the match was perfectly watchable. I'm not sure about having Alexander lose here but Dar could be a valuable asset for the division going forward. Cedric is already over with the audience but the Fox thing feels a little forced. Maybe it'll be ok going forward though.

Post match Dar dedicates the win to Fox, meaning we have a heel turn and a likely rematch.

Mustafa Ali video.

TJ Perkins wishes Swann luck but suggests that it was the same luck that gave Swann the win last night.

Ariya Daivari vs. Jack Gallagher

Rematch from last night with Jack coming in with a limp due to Daivari's post match attack. They shake hands to start though Jack isn't convinced. So he's smart and gallant. Daivari works on a leglock to start so Jack does some rapid fire kicks to the leg (from his back of course) and grabs one of his own.

It's right back to Gallagher's knee with the leg going into the LED board (because that's what wrestling rings are made of these days) and then the LED post (because...well you get the idea). A leglock keeps Jack in trouble until he remembers that he's Jack Gallagher and spins out. The big headbutt to the chest gets two but another kick to the knee drops Jack again. A frog splash puts Gallagher away at 6:30.

Rating: C+. This was only a little better than the opener but it didn't have the same spirit to the previous Gallagher matches. It's almost like taking away his speed and athleticism via a knee injury is a really bad idea. On top of that, Daivari might as well be wearing a VILLAIN shirt so

he's only going to get so far.

Lince Dorado video.

TJ Perkins comes out for commentary on the main event.

Brian Kendrick says he's ready this week because a lot of the stress is gone. He's dedicating his win to himself.

Cruiserweight Title: Rich Swann vs. Brian Kendrick

Swann is defending. Perkins and Aries bicker to start as Kendrick works on the arm. A loud dropkick gives the champ two as it seems they have a lot of time to work with here. Brian bails to the floor but catches Rich with Sliced Bread on the outside. That means a banged up knee though as we combine the first two matches' stories into one main event.

Back in and a dragon suplex sets up the Captain's Hook. Swann isn't about to tap to a chinlock though so he grabs the rope and completely misses the spinning kick in the corner. Thankfully Kendrick falls outside from the collision instead of the kick, allowing Swann to hit a corkscrew dive.

Not that it matters as the fans are cheering for Aries. Swann's standing 450 (Why does that have to be in the corner?) is countered into a rollup for two and they both go down from kicks to the head. The Captain's Hook is countered again as Ranallo tries to figure out how to counter the hold. Dude it's a chinlock. Stop acting like it's an Inverted Chikara Special.

A long Captain's Hook stays on the neck until Swann makes the ropes again (of course). Kendrick knocks him off the apron and out to the floor, only to have Swann send Brian into Perkins. The distraction is enough for Swann to nail the spinning kick to the head for the pin at 12:37.

Rating: B-. Good but nowhere near as good as what they did last week. That being said this was more about setting up something with Perkins involved, which is a better idea from a storytelling perspective. Swann winning clean via pin is a good idea too as you don't want him winning off a countout or something like that, especially this early in his

reign.

Post match, Kendrick goes after Perkins and Swann inadvertently collides with TJ to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. And that might be about it for my interest in 205 Live. The wrestling was fine, the storytelling was fine and that's the only word to describe the whole thing: fine. There's nothing on here that makes me feel like I need to see this again and that's not good for a recurring series. It's fine at the start but this feels like a show that doesn't have the longest lifespan and that's a problem two weeks in.

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Main Event – December 9, 2016: It's Spread

Main Event

Date: December 9, 2016

Location: Frank Erwin Center, Austin, Texas

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Byron Saxton

We've had a steady schedule for all of a week now so of course it's time to change again. This show is now being released on Fridays on Hulu and will be available online a day or so later. If nothing else it's kind of nice to wait a little bit instead of having the show airing just a day or two after Smackdown. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Darren Young vs. Jinder Mahal

....no. No no, no no no. NO! How many times can they possibly do THIS SAME MATCH??? Young wristlocks him down to start and we hit the mat with a headlock takeover. Jinder goes after the knee to take over but some cannonballs down onto the leg only get him kicked out to the floor. The Gut Check is broken up but a second attempt is enough to put Mahal away at 5:00.

Rating: D+. Just a simple match but the repetitive nature is just killing the thing. I have no idea who is loving these matches so much but I really question their taste in wrestling. Just find something new already because, even though not a lot of people are watching, these shows have an audience and they deserve a bit more respect.

Back to Raw.

It's time for the big ending with Charlotte (who has accepted the Iron Man challenge) apologizing to her dad. We see her yelling at Flair (that makes three times tonight) but it was even harder to see Flair raise Sasha's hand last week. Charlotte says no one can imagine how hard it is to be Ric's daughter because of how big his legacy really is.

Then last week she saw her dad raise Sasha's hand and she knew she had failed as his daughter. Flair comes out and hugs her but, of course (that's a trend tonight) she slaps him in the face. Cue Sasha but Charlotte Alley Oops her face first into the post. Charlotte mocks Flair crying and walks away to end the show.

From Raw again.

Anderson and Gallows vs. Cesaro/Sheamus

The winners get New Day, at ringside here, next week for the titles. Anderson and Gallows go outside and get in New Day's face to start but the Europeans run them over, sending the cereal flying. Back from a break with Cesaro fighting out of Anderson's chinlock and escaping the Magic Killer with some help from Sheamus. The hot tag brings Sheamus in for the ten forearms to the chest but everyone winds up on the floor for the brawl with New Day and that's a no contest at 9:58.

Rating: C. This was fine though the triple threat for next week was obvious. I'm really not sure who wins the thing but it's a cool feeling to have a match where I don't know the ending. The match should be fun and I really could see it going either way. This match was just a means to an end and that's fine.

Bo Dallas vs. Sin Cara

Another rematch. Cara starts fast by knocking him outside for a suicide dive. Back in and Bo runs the masked one over and implores that we believe in him. Cara's moonsault seems to hit knees and he sends Bo into the ropes while trying to throw Dallas outside. We take a break and come back with Cara failing to suplex Bo out to the floor.

Dallas' belly to back suplex does work but Cara throws him into the ropes for another crash. A Lionsault press gets two for Cara and a middle rope Regal Roll gets the same. Cara fires off some knees until the referee pulls him away, allowing Bo to grab a rollup (and maybe some tights) for the pin at 10:40.

Rating: C+. This was much better than I was expecting with both guys actually working a lot harder than you would have guessed. Dallas has a place on the roster but he needs the right character to really pull it off. I mean, he's beating a main roster guy here but that doesn't count because Cara is just a lowly cruiserweight and therefore meant to be beaten right?

Back to Raw one last time to wrap things up.

US Title: Chris Jericho vs. Roman Reigns

Roman is defending and is actually driven into the corner to start. The Superman Punch is countered with a dropkick and a clothesline puts the champ on the floor. A big dive to the floor takes Reigns out again and we take a break. Back with Reigns caught in a chinlock for a bit before being tossed out to the floor.

The Lionsault only gets two and the fans are getting WAY into Jericho all over again. A Samoan drop and Superman Punch get two on Jericho and the Codebreaker is countered into a sitout powerbomb. Roman goes shoulder first into the post though and we hit the Walls. As Reigns grabs the rope, cue Owens for a superkick. The Codebreaker gets two on Reigns but the Canadian argument sets up the spear to retain the title at 13:43.

Rating: B. Is there a reason why Reigns needs the US Title? Someone answer that for me. His feud is over the World Title and he doesn't have a long term challenger but he's still US Champion with no real prospects for a title feud anytime soon. Jericho vs. Rollins over the US Title could elevate the belt but Reigns is keeping it anyway. I don't think I need to explain this one being good as Jericho is still on fire.

Overall Rating: C-. Just a show here really and that's mainly due to how stale Raw feels at the moment. With almost nothing interesting going on Monday nights, it's kind of hard to get into a recap show with a decent featured match. I'm already missing the old Main Event format and again, that's just because Raw's roster isn't as interesting or entertaining.

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Think of Any Episode of Raw Ever

It's on the Network. That's absolutely insane and I love it.

Daily News Update – December 10, 2016

When Could Chris Jericho Be Leaving WWE?

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/when-could-chris-jericho-be-leaving-wwe/>

What Other Gimmicks Were Considered for Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks?
December 7, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/what-other-gimmicks-were-considered-for-charlotte-vs-sasha-banks/>

Two NXT Tag Team Title Matches Announced. December 8, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/two-nxt-tag-team-title-matches-announced/>

Update on the NXT Title Situation. December 8, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/update-on-the-nxt-title-situation/>

Ring of Honor Title to be Defended at "Wrestle Kingdom 11." December 8, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/ring-honor-title-defended-wrestle-kingdom-11/>

Vince McMahon Changes Mind on WWE Network. December 8, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/vince-mcmahon-changes-mind-wwe-network/>

Two More "Smackdown Live" Wrestlers Injured. December 8, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/two-smackdown-live-wrestlers-injured/>

WWE Wishes Legend Happy Birthday, Return Possible? December 9, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/wwe-wishes-legend-happy-birthday-return-possible/>

AJ Styles Pulled From More Shows. December 9, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/aj-styles-pulled-shows/>

Two TNA Talents Reportedly Gone. December 10, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/two-tna-talents-reportedly-gone/>

Smackdown – July 11, 2002: Right Down the Middle

Smackdown

Date: July 11, 2002

Location: Boardwalk Hall, Atlantic City, New Jersey

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

It's the week after a big show and the top story is the return of the Rock. It's not clear what he's going to be doing here but odds are it's something rather simple that is going to be considered amazing because it's the Rock. If nothing else he needs to start the build towards

Vengeance when he challenges for the World Title. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week's World Title match which ended in a draw.

Opening sequence.

John Cena is in the main event tag. That's a big, big step forward in a hurry.

Tag Team Titles: Edge/Hulk Hogan vs. Billy and Chuck

Billy and Chuck are challenging. Edge spinwheel kicks Chuck in the face to start but Billy snaps off a tilt-a-whirl slam to take over. As the beating ensues, it's hard to ignore Hogan playing cheerleader. That's one thing I always love about Hogan in tag matches: he almost never stops moving on the apron. It might be slapping the turnbuckle or pacing back and forth but he's rarely just standing there watching. There's a lot that can be done from that spot and it's something not enough people do.

The double and triple teaming has Edge in trouble before we hit the chinlock to slow things down even more. Billy walks into the half nelson faceplant and it's off to Hogan for the usual. The big boot hits Chuck's chest/shoulder area and the one to Billy is even less accurate. Rico offers a distraction so the Fameasser can get two on Hulk. Another big boot sets up the legdrop to retain.

Rating: D+. The important thing here: the match ran 6:16 and Hogan was in the ring for about a fourth of that. Hogan wrestling less than two minutes a match but getting to do all of his signature stuff is the best thing he can do right now. Good enough match and it ends the threat of Billy and Chuck getting another shot.

Cena comes up to Undertaker (his partner tonight) to thank him for the chance tonight. Undertaker doesn't seem to care because he's worried about the Rock.

Torrie Wilson was doing a beach photo shoot earlier today when Molly Holly interrupted. She thinks wrestling is what matters and offers Torrie a title shot tonight. Torrie: "Ok, I'll do it."

The agents try to get Undertaker out of the parking lot but he'll have none of that. A limo arrives but it's Chris Jericho/Kurt Angle, Undertaker and Cena's opponents tonight. Insults are exchanged and a brawl breaks out. Vince comes in for the save and some yelling.

Post break, Undertaker wants to know where Cena was. Cena says Undertaker threw him out but Undertaker yells about Cena not having his back. Undertaker thinks Cena won't last long if he doesn't get it together. So I guess he got it together.

Women's Title: Torrie Wilson vs. Molly Holly

Holly is defending. Torrie gets in a slap and that's about it for her early offense. Molly chokes on the ropes for a bit until Torrie catapults her into the corner. Some right hands in the corner have little effect as Torrie gets powerbombed out of the corner, setting up a leglock for a pin (kind of odd) to retain Molly's title.

Rock is here.

Mark Henry/Randy Orton vs. Reverend D-Von/Batista

D-Von cheap shots Orton to start and the early beating sends Randy outside. That means it's time for Batista to show off the power for a bit. Orton avoids a knee drop though and Henry comes in to clean house with his own power. Everything breaks down and Henry clotheslines both of them down at the same time, only to have Batista hit a Regal Roll of all things. The spinebuster ends Henry in a hurry.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here, including Orton who disappeared halfway through the match. They need to go somewhere with this idea before Orton loses what little steam he has. At least Batista and D-Von are getting somewhere with this though and that's a big accomplishment in WWE at this point.

Hogan and Edge are going gambling. Rock comes in and Hogan takes credit for the Wrestlemania match. Rock: "You been forgetting to take your vitamins lately?" He'll even join them at the casino after some business is taken care of. Rock mocks Hogan a bit behind his back and Edge says

Mr. Nanny smoked the Scorpion King. Edge and Rock is an odd visual as their generations mostly never crossed.

Here's Rock in the arena for the first time in a long time. Before he can get to the point though, he brings in rapper Busta Rhymes to plug an album and movie. This goes nowhere so they sing Under the Boardwalk and of course all of this is edited off the Network. After the singing ends, Rock calls out Undertaker but gets Angle instead.

Kurt thinks he's the one Rock needs to be worried about because he can make Rock tap just like he did to Hogan. Oh and if Puff Daddy wants a shot, Kurt can make him tap too. Kurt: "I speak that jive!" After taking a bit to figure it out, Rock starts making Dr. Evil jokes. Apparently Angle isn't a Mike Myers fan (smart man) and wants Rock next week. Rock agrees and puts Angle in the ankle lock until Undertaker comes out to clean house. This was a bit long but Rock vs. Angle should be great.

We recap the Un-Americans interrupting America the Beautiful last week.

Test vs. Rikishi

Rikishi sends him into the steps before the match as his way of standing up for America. The bell rings and Test turns him inside out with the clothesline. For some reason Storm has to hit a superkick, setting up a nearly botched pumphandle slam for two. Rikishi loads up the Banzai Drop for two but it's too early for a Stinkface. Not that it matters as the Samoan drop ends Test in a hurry. Short match but they did a lot here, including having part of the new heel stable lose despite interference.

Post match the trio goes fater Rikishi until Edge and Hogan make the save.

Stacy and Vince are about to remove clothing when Jericho comes in to ask nothing in particular. Vince asks that he give up his match against Edge so we can have a Tag Team Title match at the pay per view. Jericho is offered a reward to be named later.

Jamie Noble, Nidia and Tajiri are rather disgusting at a restaurant. Noble talks about how he's never had anything but the title means he's

not poor anymore. That's not something I'm naturally going to boo.

We look at the NWO's actions on Raw. Nash will be out for a long time.

Tajiri/Jamie Noble vs. Hurricane/Billy Kidman

Jamie and Billy run the ropes to start until Hurricane sneaks in with a hot tag to take the champ down. Tajiri comes in and starts snapping off the kicks for a bit until a miss allows the tag off to Kidman. Everything breaks down and some heel miscommunication sets up a Hurricane flip dive. Back in and a super sitout powerbomb ends Noble, likely giving Kidman a future title shot.

Rating: B-. They didn't stop moving in the time they had but they only had a little over three minutes. Kidman as the next challenger is fine, especially when you consider the winner is just holding the title until Rey Mysterio gets here. Fun match though as the wrestling actually worked for once tonight.

Rock isn't sure how Coach shrunk and turned to become Marc Lloyd. He went gambling today and the big Vengeance slot machine came up with three Brahma Bulls. Rock will be waiting here to see the end of the show, which sounds like a threat.

Rey Mysterio is coming in two weeks.

John Cena/Undertaker vs. Kurt Angle/Chris Jericho

Undertaker and Jericho get things going with Chris actually winning the early fist fight. Cena comes in and gets beaten down, only to have Angle go shoulder first into the post. The rookie doesn't know how to follow up though and Angle snaps him over with a belly to belly.

Some Canadian stomping keeps Cena in trouble until he powerslams Angle for a breather. Undertaker comes in as everything breaks down, including a ref bump. The Angle Slam gets a delayed two on Undertaker and it's back to Cena. Undertaker saves his new little buddy from the Lionsault and an Oklahoma roll puts Jericho away.

Rating: C+. Cena getting the pin here is important but not as important

as him being treated as someone on this level. He might have gotten beaten up a little bit but he hung in there well enough and wasn't destroyed. You can pencil in Jericho vs. Cena for Vengeance and that should be another good night for Cena.

The brawl continues post match with Undertaker putting Angle in a dragon sleeper. Cue Rock to lay out both guys with Rock Bottoms to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Even with the star power and rookies being pushed, Smackdown continues to be the most middle of the road show ever. The wrestling and storytelling are fine but there's still very little to actually get excited about. The show certainly isn't bad but it's not the most exciting. Changing a few things up can make this a great show though and it's much better than the horrible Raw shows.

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Ring of Honor TV – December 7, 2016: An Early Christmas

Present

Ring of Honor

Date: December 4, 2016

Location: William J. Myers Pavilion, Baltimore, Maryland

Attendance: 600

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, Nigel McGuinness

We're past Final Battle and that means a few weeks before we actually get anything substantial in storyline terms. It's really hard to say what we might get here but it could be anything from a house show to some nothing TV matches, but there's almost a guarantee that it won't be anything storyline driven. Let's get to it.

Will Ferrara/Cheeseburger vs. Tempura Boyz

Joey Daddiego, Ferrara and Burger's trainer, is on commentary. Ferrara and Burger double team Sho in the corner to start as we hear about Daddiego working on the Americans' weight training. It's off to Yo as the beating begins but Sho runs over to pull Cheeseburger off the apron to break up a hot tag attempt.

That goes nowhere though as Burger gets the hot tag a few seconds later, meaning it's time for all the chops. Everything breaks down and the palm strike into a jumping Flatliner...only gets two as we take a break. Well it's a special show so they have to fill in time. Back with Cheeseburger taking a package piledriver for the pin at 8:00. The post break stuff was less than a minute.

Rating: D+. Not much to this one but that's going to be the case on the whole show. There's nothing interesting to this one but at least the Tempura Boyz stand out a little bit instead of being a very similar kind of act than you see so often. Also it's not like you can ever have too much talent on a roster so this is all fine. Not a good match or anything but fine enough for what it was.

Post match here are Prince Nana and Donovan Dijak to destroy Ferrara and Cheeseburger. Daddiego gets in and says this isn't happening so let's

have a match.

Joey Daddiego vs. Donovan Dijak

Daddiego slugs away but can't do much on the much bigger Dijak. A brainbuster gets two on Donovan but Nana crotches Daddiego. Feast Your Eyes gives Dijak the pin at 2:29.

We recap the Cabinet getting rid of their gimmick and calling themselves...the Rebellion. That's really the best they could come up with? The idea of just scrapping the thing was out of the question? They also attacked Dijak and the Motor City Machine Guns at a house show.

Video on Kevin Sullivan/Steve Corino/BJ Whitmer. Thank goodness Corino just left the promotion instead of making us sit through this anymore.

BJ Whitmer/Damien Martinez vs. War Machine

As expected, they don't even bother with the wrestling and just head outside to set up tables. The big brawl takes us to an early break with neither team in any real control. Back with a wrestling match having broken out with Whitmer and Rowe down off a double clothesline.

Everything breaks down again with Hansen and Martinez slugging it out on the floor. The referee gets shoved and the match is thrown out at 7:16. Not enough to rate it but this was the kind of brawl it should have been.

Rowe gets chokeslammed through a table and Hansen gets kicked a lot. Kevin Sullivan talks to Hansen and apparently they knew each other back in the day. Hansen used to call himself Steve NEW SCHOOL Corino so Sullivan calls out the real Corino. This means a staredown between Corino and Hansen which goes...nowhere. Much like EVERYTHING ELSE IN THIS STUPID STORY!

Briscoe Brothers/Silas Young/Jay Lethal vs. Motor City Machine Guns/Lio Rush/Jay White

There are three people in this match named Jay. The referee is so confused by the horrible naming decisions that he doesn't ring an opening bell (or maybe I just missed it) but Lethal shouldered Rush down to start. Rush starts firing off strikes and kicks Lethal in the head, setting up a

big dive to the floor. That triggers a parade of dives to put everyone down as we take a break.

Back with more chaos, albeit slightly more controlled chaos. Mark takes a trashcan to the head and stops to chat about it on commentary for a bit. Lethal gets in trouble but there isn't a heel corner for him to get caught in. Some quadruple teaming allows Lio to fire off some YES Kicks but Young tags himself in to save Lethal.

Rush gets caught in the corner as the Rebellion comes out to watch for reasons of general annoyance. We take a second break and come back with Rush handstanding his way out of a cutter (not a fan of the guy but that was cool). The hot tag brings in White as everything breaks down.

Everyone else winds up on the floor so Rush's frog splash hits Lethal's knees. White gets the tag but Mark makes a blind tag to kick White in the head. The Guns do their rapid fire stuff to Young and a double suplex staggers Jay Briscoe. White's Kiwi Crush actually gets the pin on Jay Briscoe at 15:22 in a big upset.

Rating: B-. Rush is slowly growing on me though I still find him vastly overrated. White getting the pin is a nice touch though as he and Briscoe had that great brawl for one of White's earliest matches. This was the high energy match that this promotion is capable of putting on and it worked well for this nothing show.

Overall Rating: C. For what we had here, this was actually a watchable hour. I like the idea of giving the lower stories and talent a show of their own like this as it's not often they get a chance to shine. There are even stories to them most of the time, even though they don't get to be on the pay per view. At least they get a chance to advance them, though unfortunately one of them is Sullivan vs. Corino. Good little show here, which was a nice surprise.

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Impact Wrestling – December 8, 2016: The Last Normal One

Impact Wrestling

Date: December 8, 2016

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: D'Angelo Dinero, Josh Matthews

It's the last regular show of the year as next week will be Total Nonstop Deletion because it's a good idea to give the Hardys their own show. The big story this week is the World Title on the line as Eddie Edwards defends against Ethan Carter III. You can almost guarantee a screwy finish of some kind as TNA loves leaving us hanging. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the World Title match with both guys seeming to have a lot of respect for each other.

Here's new Grand Champion Moose for an opening chat. We get the YOU DESERVE IT chant, which is really starting to lose meaning. The guy has been around less than six months and has only been wrestling on the big stage for less than two years. Anyway, Moose promises to be a fighting champion but here's Drew Galloway to interrupt.

Drew says the title was built for him and now he could have a match of the year against someone like Moose. The fight is about to begin but

here's Aron Rex (now clean shaven) to interrupt. Rex says three seconds isn't enough time for a match and threatens to sue the fans for, and I feel stupid for saying this, Rexual Harassment. He'll have his rematch right now.

Grand Championship: Moose vs. Aron Rex

Rex is challenging and wastes no time with the loaded up punch, which knocks Moose out on the floor. Back in and Rex can only get two so we hit the chinlock. Moose makes a quick comeback to end the round but Rex still takes the first. Rex uses his evil towel to blind Moose to start the second and it's ANOTHER chinlock. The Wind-Up Elbow gets two on the champ and more elbows give Rex the second round. Round three begins with Rex hammering away again, only to get dropkicked off the top. The Game Changer retains the title at 7:36 total.

Rating: D+. I really cannot stand this gimmick. It's TNA trying to be creative and while it's something new, that doesn't mean it's interesting. The problem here is you could take away the rounds and the match would be exactly the same. Just have Rex cheat to win any regular title and it's the same thing. That's a major problem but TNA just keeps running with this thing.

Eddie says he's ready.

Galloway rants about TNA not holding the tournament for him.

Aiden O'Shea vs. Mandrews

O'Shea goes for a slam but the much smaller Mandrews falls on him to take over. Aiden's big forearm hits the apron by mistake and now he's ticked off. The shirt comes off and the slow beating begins, only to have Mandrews send him outside. That means a big flip dive as I'm wondering why I'm supposed to boo this guy. A springboard seated senton sets up a shooting star press to end O'Shea at 5:48.

Rating: C-. So.....he's one of the least interesting wrestlers in the division, he's turned heel, and now he wins a match that by definition is about making someone look like a face? Normally I would attribute this to

a weird taping situation where Mandrews' turn was taped after this but, since it's TNA, it's just weird booking as this took place after the turn.

Mahabali Shera/Al Snow vs. Tribunal

Indian strap match, meaning they're bound at the wrists by straps and you win by touching all six corners. They brawl on the floor to start until the wrists are strapped, meaning the Tribunal can start choking. Snow's comeback is cut off but it's too early to touch the buckles. Low blows and straps to the back have the Tribunal down and a double low bridging allows Snow and Shera to win at 5:19.

Rating: D-. Whatever man. I've been sick of this feud since the second it began and this isn't getting any better. Hopefully this blows it off and we can go on to anything else because I have no idea why it would keep going. No one involved is interesting and no one involved is being elevated but it keeps going anyway. Such is life in TNA.

We see Matt Hardy asleep with the Seven Deities telling him about something called Apocalypto.

Ethan is ready for the title match and makes fun of Eli Drake for not being able to talk.

Here are the Hardys to talk about Tag Team Apocalypto next week. Matt says the match will be so big that Mc-Mahon or Hayman couldn't promote it. There will be regular stars of the Impact Wrestling roster and even King Maxill will make his debut. The Tag Team Titles will be on the line in an open challenge to any tag team in the history of space and time.

Cue Shane Helms (He still works here?) to say he'll be there. Matt can't wait to see 3 Count or the superheroes back in action. Helms is actually bringing the Helms Dynasty and promises to be there. Cue Decay to say they'll top the Great War when they appear as well. Helms takes a Twist of Fate.

After a break, DCC says they'll be in North Carolina next week too.

Laurel Van Ness vs. Allie

Madison Rayne is on commentary. Before the match, Maria laughs at Allie for pretending to be a wrestler. Allie says she's been training with Braxton Sutter, which freaks Laurel out. Sutter comes out to watch from ringside as Laurel starts beating Allie up. Allie gets in a suplex as Sutter and Mike Bennett fight to the back. With the men gone, Laurel misses a charge in the corner and a reverse DDT puts her away at 5:11.

Rating: D+. The match was nothing but the story was all it needed to be. Allie is one of the most over people on the roster and seeing her beat up Maria and company is the best idea possible. It's also very helpful that she's a trained wrestler so we don't have to sit through months of her learning how to do things. Sutter vs. Bennett could be good too.

Maria tries to get in and is shoved right back down.

Video on Carter vs. Edwards.

Allie is all happy and kisses Sutter in celebration.

Total Nonstop Deletion ad.

TNA World Title: Ethan Carter III vs. Eddie Edwards

Eddie is defending and they trade armbars to start. A running knee lift cuts Eddie off and sends him to the floor as they're definitely taking their time here. Ethan gets two off a knee drop and we take a break. Back with Carter getting two off a suplex and we're off to a chinlock.

That goes nowhere so Eddie hits a top rope hurricanrana to very little reaction from the audience. They chop it out until Ethan is knocked outside for the suicide dive. Eddie's rollup is countered into a sitout powerbomb for two but the TK3 doesn't work. Back up and the champ gets crotched on the ropes for the superplex into a small package near fall.

Carter speeds things up until the Boston Knee Party sends him outside. The TK3 connects on the floor but Carter still can't put him away. The Backpack Stunner is countered into Ethan's rear naked choke, only to have Eddie roll onto his back. It's a double finish as Eddie taps at the same time as the three count at 20:35.

Rating: B. The match was good but, as usual, it felt like they were just doing moves until we got to the ending. The near falls helped a lot and I buy them as equals but the ending felt a bit forced. It's a good main event but really not enough to save the show, which wasn't the best leading up to this.

The match is ruled a no contest so Eddie retains. Replays show that Carter's shoulder was up at two anyway but it's not acknowledged. I'm guessing Carter goes heel after this.

Overall Rating: C-. That main event helped a lot but there's almost no way to save this show. Maybe they were just spent at the end of the marathon tapings or maybe TNA just isn't capable of putting on quality TV (there's a shocker) but so much of this show feels like a waste of time.

I can't count how many things on here just exist with no emotional connection. When you have a gimmick match that doesn't work, a pretty worthless big vs. little match, that stupid, stupid Snow/Shera match and a mostly bad women's match, a good main event just isn't enough. The show isn't the worst in the world and is watchable at times but it's not interesting and that's a much bigger problem.

Results

Moose b. Aron Rex – Game Changer

Mandrews b. Aiden O'Shea – Shooting star press

Al Snow/Mahabali Shera b. Tribunal – Snow and Shera touched all six buckles

Allie b. Laurel Van Ness – Reverse DDT

Eddie Edwards vs. Ethan Carter III went to a no contest with a double finish

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New Column: YES! He Should Be Champion Again

And he should beat Daniel Bryan on the way there.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-yes-he-should-be-champion/>

Monday Night Raw – July 8, 2002 (2016 Redo): Breaking Point

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 8, 2002

Location: First Union Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

Raw is actually picking up a bit at the moment as they're making some efforts to push the younger talent. Brock Lesnar is moving up the card and it's clear that Eddie Guerrero and Chris Benoit are becoming the top heels. Unfortunately that leaves the NWO, who are promising that HHH will be joining tonight. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Undertaker vs. Kurt Angle from Smackdown with the double finish.

Vince announces Undertaker vs. Rock vs. Angle for Vengeance. Undertaker is off tonight though and the fans are NOT pleased.

Opening sequence.

Here's Booker T. for an opening chat. He's used to fighting the NWO and wants X-Pac in particular because X-Pac looks like a rat. Booker quotes his dad, who apparently spoke to him in promos about challenging people to wrestling matches. Instead of X-Pac, here's Eddie Guerrero to answer. Eddie wants to fight someone so here we go.

Booker T. vs. Eddie Guerrero

Please give them some time. Eddie stomps him down in the corner to start and puts his feet on the ropes for two. A belly to back suplex sets up a running seated Blockbuster for two but Booker grabs his spinning sunset flip out of the corner for the pin. For some reason the bell doesn't ring and Booker's music takes a second to come on so there isn't much of a reaction.

Rating: D+. So much for giving them time. I'm sure these two are capable of having a good match if you give them more than three minutes but then we wouldn't have time for all of the NWO promos tonight. At least Booker didn't have to do another unnecessary job here though and that's a good thing.

Post match Benoit comes in for the beatdown but Goldust makes the save. The Dudleyz come in and clean house with chairs.

Rey Mysterio video.

Goldust grabs Booker's hand for a celebratory dance. Booker isn't happy with that because the NWO is coming for them. This turns into a discussion of Jon Bon Jovi until Booker superkicks a pretzel vendor who looks like X-Pac. That probably does deserve a beating.

Jackie Gayda isn't happy about Trish Stratus interfering last week. Apparently Trish is jealous of the attention Jackie has been getting and can't handle it. Christopher Nowinski comes in to rip on Trish for wearing a cowboy hat and looking like Yosemite Sam. The result is a mixed tag with Bradshaw as Trish's partner. Of note here, Jackie had some of the worst acting skills I've ever seen here. She has almost no presence and is just reading her lines. Trish isn't great but at least she sounds natural.

Video of Rock asking if Lillian would like some strudel. Lillian: "More than anything in the world Rock."

Bubba Ray Dudley vs. Chris Benoit

Before the match, Goldust, dressed as Ben Franklin and talking like Santa Claus, suggests a partnership with the Dudleyz to fight the NWO. This turns into a discussion of wanting to punch Thomas Jefferson in the gonads. Benoit takes him down to start but gets suplexed. Eddie offers a distraction though and the middle rope backsplash misses. That's enough for Benoit to snap off a German suplex but Bubba grabs one of his own. Eddie goes after Spike as the Bubba Bomb gets two. The Spike factor allows Benoit to grab the Crossface for the submission.

Rating: C. This is a good role for Bubba but I'm not clear on why Benoit and Guerrero aren't higher up the card. I mean, save for Undertaker STILL being champion for reasons that aren't clear. The match wasn't much to see but at least Benoit won, albeit after making sure Bubba stayed strong.

Guerrero and Benoit beat on the Dudleyz until Booker and Goldust make the save.

Video on Nowinski at Harvard. Ok then.

Recap of last week's ladder match.

Ric Flair praised Jeff Hardy's performance last week when, I kid you not, STEVEN RICHARDS interrupted and set up a match with Flair for later tonight. You bring Flair back to the ring, turn him face, and then give him a match with Richards? I mean, if Richards goes over (which he won't) it's one thing but a quick Flair win doesn't help anyone.

Jackie Gayda/Christopher Nowinski vs. Trish Stratus/Bradshaw

This is an infamous one. The guys start things off and Chris wants a little football, only to tag in Jackie when Bradshaw gets down in the three point stance. Trish gets two off a dropkick and shoulder, which pretty much ends the competent part of the match. Stratus charges at Jackie in what I think was supposed to be a toss over the top but Jackie completely misses her so Trish just bounced chest first off the ropes.

I think Trish calls for a drop toehold or maybe a small package but Jackie kind of lays on her instead. I've seen over 50,000 wrestling matches in my life and I honestly do not know what they were trying to do there. That's not good, nor is it acceptable. Jackie chokes on the mat and then the ropes before thankfully bringing Nowinski back in for some missed elbows.

Trish tags out, which brings up another issue. JR keeps talking about how the women have to face the women and the men have to face the men, so why did Trish have to tag? Shouldn't Bradshaw be allowed to come in without the tag taking place to satisfy the match rules? A fall away slam sends Nowinski over for another tag and the men leave, because that's clearly the best idea.

Trish tries what looks to be Stratusfaction but Jackie goes to the mat, leaving Trish to force her over with a snapmare. Some chops in the corner allow Trish to desperately call spots as JR tries to say Jackie just needs ring time. Trish shoves her off the middle rope, waits for Jackie to turn around like she's supposed to, kicks her back into the middle of the ring, and hits something like a middle rope fist to the back of the head (supposed to be a bulldog and didn't make contact anyway).

The fist comes close to Jackie's head, Trish lands and turns around, and THEN Jackie goes down, allowing Trish to get the pin after the longest three minutes and fifteen seconds that I've ever seen in wrestling. Ignore Jackie kicking out at two and a half as the referee count anyway because they can't let this keep going.

Rating: U. For unacceptable. This is a perfect example of what happens when someone has no reason to be in the ring but is out there because they won some competition. Nowinski was nothing great at this point but he could wrestle an acceptable match. Jackie looked like she was in her first week or two of training, let alone being ready for a live match.

There's a difference between not being able to do much (see someone like Maven in his Raw debut) but being able to do that little amount at a watchable level. This was the polar opposite as Jackie couldn't even do basic stuff right and you could see Trish getting mad out there. Completely unacceptable here and one of the worst matches in history.

Benoit and Eddie are annoyed when the NWO comes in to say there's strength in numbers.

Montage of Rock impersonating various people.

Here's the NWO for a chat. We see the NWO offering their assistance to HHH at King of the Ring, which apparently means HHH is joining the team. Shawn recaps the Kliq and then runs down HHH for sucking up to the fans too much. Just like the NWO, the Kliq is for life. That's why HHH has until Vengeance to make the biggest decision of his life. Nash has his own bombshell because he's coming off the injured list tonight. His idea for tonight: a ten man tag with Booker T./Goldust/Dudleyz/??? vs. the NWO/Benoit/Guerrero.

Ric Flair vs. Steven Richards

So is this really just taking place so a Philadelphia guy can wrestle? Flair stomps him down in the corner, followed by the standard chops and punches. A toss sends Steven outside, followed by a belly to back into the Figure Four for the submission.

Rating: D. What the heck was the point of that? This was an NWA style squash with Flair giving up nothing, hitting his usual stuff, and winning the match with his finisher. If this is the best they can do with Flair at this point, they'd be better off making him the boss again or just leaving him as a heel because this was a waste of time.

Here are Paul Heyman and Brock Lesnar for a chat. Lesnar vs. Rob Van Dam is now for the Intercontinental Title (Wasn't it already?) but Heyman would rather talk about making and exploiting everyone in ECW. Now Heyman wants to feed one of those people to the most dominant wrestler for the next ten years.

Tommy Dreamer comes out and threatens to innovate some violence and actually knocks Lesnar outside with a kendo stick. He makes the mistake of going after Heyman though and gets hit with the F5 on the floor. With Lesnar busy looking at Dreamer, Van Dam comes in and kicks Brock down. A Van Terminator knocks Paul silly. This was ALL for the live crowd, which is almost never a good idea for a TV show.

European Title: Jeff Hardy vs. William Regal

Regal is defending and gets punched in the face to start. The Whisper in the Wind barely makes contact but gets two anyway. A few knees to the face put Jeff down and the Regal Cutter gets two for the champ. Something like a Tazmission has Jeff in more trouble but Regal goes to unhook a turnbuckle pad. This villainy goes badly for him though as Jeff dropkicks him into the corner and hits the Swanton for the pin and the title.

Rating: D. Well that happened. Regal was similar to British Bulldog as he only held the title because he was from Europe, meaning Jeff isn't likely the saving grace that the title needs. Hardy is basically getting the title as a consolation prize after last week, which doesn't mean anything because the title hasn't meant anything in years.

Video of This Is Your Life Rock.

Regal breaks down in tears over losing. Nowinski has to come in and help him up.

Bubba gives a rousing speech to get Van Dam to be the mystery partner.

Dudley Boyz/Rob Van Dam/Goldust/Booker T. vs. NWO/Chris Benoit/Eddie Guerrero

Remember earlier tonight when the Dudleyz didn't want to team with Goldust and Booker T? Well forget about that because Nash has decided they're partners here. There was no mention of Vince saying deal with it and team together and no scene of them agreeing to put issues aside and deal with a common enemy. Either of those things would have been fine and taken all of thirty seconds to do but instead we get neither, leaving it as a plot hole.

X-Pac and Van Dam start things off with Shawn shouting something from ringside. After the kicking exchange, it's off to Goldust for an atomic drop and a tag to Bubba. Even Spike gets to snap off a headscissors but Benoit comes in to turn things around. The beating doesn't last long as Van Dam is back in to monkey flip Eddie but the Canadian is back in to take over on Rob.

A superkick puts X-Pac down as the fans are trying so hard to care here. Unfortunately it's all for naught though as the NWO is just sucking the life out of this show. The hot tag brings in Bubba to clean house but Van Dam goes after Shawn and walks into the F5 onto the stage from an invading Lesnar.

Back in and Benoit keeps working over Bubba as this keeps going. The tag brings in Nash to give Booker the big boot but he goes over to the other corner and OW MY QUAD! That would be a torn muscle and Nash wouldn't wrestle again until April. Everything breaks down with Bubba checking on Nash and Shawn superkicking Booker. Show adds the chokeslam to put Booker away. JR: "IT'S AN NWO VICTORY!" Well to be fair, Benoit and Guerrero were just there anyway so it's truer than it sounds.

Rating: D+. I've seen worse but you can feel the tape and paperclips coming off in a hurry. Nash getting injured is one of those things that only happens when nothing else can go wrong, but to suggest that he was going to save the whole show was ridiculous in the first place. Oh and well done by having Booker take the fall and not, I don't know, SPIKE

FREAKING DUDLEY. That's so great.

Shawn says that's what HHH is in for if he doesn't join the team.

Overall Rating: F. This is a show where the wrestling was bad but the bigger problem is how it felt like the final straw. Yes the angles are horrible and yes the matches are hit or miss at best but tonight we had one of the worst matches of all time and one of the big stars coming back into the ring and then being put on the shelf for several more months, meaning the NWO continues to be worthless. Raw just does not have the credibility to survive something like this and it's clear that they're in need of a major shakeup.

On top of that, this was half Raw and half ECW reunion show with people like Dreamer and Richards being put on the card for the sake of appealing to the live crowd. Like I said, that's fine for a show that has a lot of momentum but Raw had two decent shows in a row and that's about it. Something needs to be fixed around here and it needs to happen in a hurry.

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NXT – December 7, 2016: Around the World

NXT

Date: December 7, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves, Percy Watson

This is another interesting show as it's a combination of the regular taping and the NXT Title match from Osaka, Japan with Shinsuke Nakamura challenging Samoa Joe for the title. It's also nearly time to start getting ready for Takeover: San Antonio, which is only about six weeks away. Let's get to it.

We open with a quick video hyping up the title match.

Opening sequence.

Here's DIY to get things going with the new champs coming in through the crowd to celebrate. It takes some time for the cheering to die down but Paul Ellering and the Authors of Pain cut them off before anything can be said. Ellering talks about how awesome they are until the Revival cuts them out with the fans singing their song. Revival gets to ringside and says the Authors only won because Revival was out of the tournament. The Authors come down to shove Revival around with Ellering saying they're coming for the titles. I'm thinking a rematch is in order to set up the Authors' opponent and that's just good.

We're getting a new commentators and it's....Percy Watson? Yes that Percy Watson. As in the guy you haven't thought of since he was released. I have no idea why he's here or what need he's filling but he's certainly here.

No Way Jose/Rich Swann vs. Sanity

Sanity confirms their heel status by cutting the pre-match dance off. It's Alexander Wolfe and Eric Young for the team here. There's no Sawyer

Fulton here and Eric stomps on Fulton's jacket in some symbolism. Swann and Jose go fast to start by knocking Wolfe out to the floor.

Unfortunately the announcers have to go out of their way to get Watson in on commentary and it doesn't feel very natural. Swann gets taken into the Sanity corner and it's time for an early break. Back with Swann taking a Bret Hart chest bump in the corner and getting caught in a dragon sleeper from the middle rope. That's not bad.

Wolfe comes in for his version of dancing and a neck crank to keep things slow. A double clothesline gives Swann a breather and of course equals out several minutes of offense. Jose comes in off the hot tag and gives Young a TKO for two. A big corkscrew dive sends Swann into Wolfe but here's a huge man to send Jose into the steps. The announcers acknowledge him as Damo (formerly Big Damo) as he stares Wolfe down. Back inside, Young's wheelbarrow into a neckbreaker ends Jose at 10:35.

Rating: C. The match was nothing special but Damo debut as a potential new member of the team makes a lot of sense. He looks like a monster (please have him put on a singlet or a shirt) and would fit in really well with the group. Not a good match or anything but I'm digging Sanity more every week.

Sanity looks at Damo, who leaves on his own.

William Regal makes Revival vs. DIY for the titles on January 11 (that's a long way off for NXT). Tye Dillinger comes in to suggest he should leave NXT after losing to Samoa Joe. Regal cuts him off and offers him a spot in a tournament to crown a new #1 contender. There will be four singles matches with the winners facing off in a four way match for the title shot in San Antonio.

Eric Young has nothing to say about Damo but Nikki Cross runs into Asuka and stares at the title. Asuka gives her the evil smile. I could go for this.

Ember Moon vs. Kimber Lee

Lee is a former Chikara Grand Champion. Moon wastes no time in starting

in with the kicks but charges into a side suplex for two. A hurricanrana gets Ember out of trouble and the Eclipse ends Lee at 3:03.

Rating: D+. I still can't get over how awesome the Eclipse looks. The timing she has to have to pull off a move like that is just amazing and I've never seen her come close to missing. Lee got in some offense here and I wouldn't mind seeing her signed up to appear more in NXT.

Here are the matches for the #1 contenders tournament:

Tye Dillinger

Eric Young

Elias Samson

Roderick Strong

Oney Lorcan

Bobby Roode

Andrade Cien Almas

No Way Jose

NXT Title: Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Samoa Joe

Joe is defending and is quickly kicked into the corner for Good Vibrations. A poke to the eye gets the champ out of trouble and we take a break. Back with Nakamura in an STF which is turned into a Crossface which is turned into a rope grab. A German suplex looks to set up Kinshasa but Joe snaps off a powerslam for two instead.

Nakamura gets out of the Muscle Buster, only to get caught in the Koquina Clutch. It's the standing version though (I believe we call that a sleeper) and Joe releases for a string of suplexes instead. Joe kicks him out to the floor and loads up the Rock Bottom onto the steps. That earns him a bunch of strikes to the back and neck as Nakamura takes over for a change. Back in and Nakamura can't keep him up in a fireman's carry. Instead he goes to the middle rope so the middle rope knee to the head

can set up Kinshasa for the pin and the title at 10:45 shown.

Rating: B. This was the usual good, hard hitting brawl from these two though I'm pretty sure it's going to be the last big match, unless we see the Australia cage match. There's not much left for Joe in NXT at this point so odds are he's either in the Rumble or debuts before then. Good match of course and it's cool that we got to see it.

We'll actually see the cage match next week on NXT.

Overall Rating: B-. This was fine for a special show and next week feels like it's going to be the same thing. It's kind of weird that this didn't feel like anything all that interesting but, as usual, NXT got a lot done here. We had two debuts (I'm still wondering why Watson is here), a title match set up, another title match after that set up, a title feud teased and a title change.

Results

Sanity b. No Way Jose/Rich Swann – Wheelbarrow neckbreaker to Jose

Ember Moon b. Kimber Lee – Eclipse

Shinsuke Nakamura b. Samoa Joe – Kinshasa

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