

# WWE Madison Square Garden House Show – October 3, 2015: The Hallowed Halls

## WWE Madison Square Garden House Show

Date: October 3, 2015

Location: Madison Square Garden, New York City, New York

Commentators: Rich Brennan, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

This is another WWE Network exclusive from the world's most famous arena. It's a pretty stacked card with the main event of Brock Lesnar vs. Big Show in a match that could totally be different than any time they've fought before. Other than that we have the traditional steel cage match with US Champion John Cena defending against WWE World Heavyweight Champion Seth Rollins again. Let's get to it.

The opening video talks about Cena vs. Rollins and Brock vs. Big Show.

There's a mini Titantron set up like there was in Japan. The middle rope is pink again for breast cancer awareness.

## Rusev/Sheamus vs. Randy Orton/Dolph Ziggler

This was originally billed as two singles matches and it's a really smart move to not go with the same stale pairings we've seen multiple times each. I know this is nothing revolutionary but at least it's something new. Orton gets quite the positive reaction from the fans. Sheamus and Orton get things going and the fans are all over Sheamus' looks. Orton fights out of the corner and it's off to Rusev who is greeted by a big USA chant. Dolph comes in with a dropkick for two but a Sheamus distraction lets the swinging Rock Bottom plant Ziggler for two.

It's off to Sheamus for a chinlock as the announcers debate Lana and Summer. See, I can live with the constant storyline stuff while we're sitting in a rest hold. It's better than discussing how to fight out of something like that because you can only take that discussion so far.

Rusev comes in for a nerve hold and the villains take turns keeping Ziggler in trouble. Dolph finally gets in a slam on Rusev (really? A slam?) and the diving tag brings in Orton to clean house. A Ziggler superkick knocks Rusev off the apron and the Brogue Kick misses, setting up an RK0 to put Sheamus away at 8:40.

**Rating:** C+. Total formula tag match here and there's nothing wrong with that. They kept this from getting too long (ala the Beast in the East main event) and the fans stayed in it as a result. The RK0 is a great way to end a match like this as it's always going to wake the fans up and it's not like the MSG fans need a lot of help.

Post match Rusev screams at Sheamus for costing them the match. Sheamus is more useless than Lana and all these people so he needs to pack his bag and leave. Sheamus gets up and Brogue Kicks Rusev and walks off. That didn't feel like a face turn.

We recap Kane and Seth Rollins from Monday with Kane's split personalities.

Corporate Kane is here to help run the show and will run down to help if Demon Kane comes after Rollins. Well limp down but you get the idea.

### Stardust vs. Neville

No seconds here. Stardust shoulders him down to start but Neville sweeps the leg and does a little dance. The running hurricanrana (that's such a cool looking move) sends Stardust down again but he comes back with the Disaster Kick to put Neville down. Stardust looks at Neville's cape before putting on a chinlock. That goes as far as a chinlock is going to go so Stardust tries to crotch him against the post but the superhero pulls him face first into the post instead.

The Asai moonsault drops Stardust again but he comes back in with a Side Effect for two. With nothing else working, Stardust puts on Neville's cape and goes up top, only to dive into a right hand to the ribs. Neville kicks him in the face and the Red Arrow is good for the pin at 7:25.

**Rating:** C. We've seen this a few times before and I'm not sure where else

the feud can go unless they bring in a fourth apiece and set up a Survivor Series match. The superhero vs. supervillain stuff has kind of fallen off and there's not much left other than some decent matches. Good enough here and the faces continuing to win is a smart idea.

Paul Heyman (with a phone in his hand for old times' sake) compares Big Show to the Boston Celtics and promises to make MSG the city hall of Suplex City.

#### Team Bella vs. Team PCB

P C and B all come out separately. Becky starts with Alicia and that means it's time for JBL to start talking about boxing. Paige's request for a tag is ignored so she tags herself in to send Fox into the corner. As expected, the fans want Sasha. It's back to Becky who gets taken into the corner, allowing Brie and Alicia to double suplex her for two. Nikki comes in and goes after Charlotte for a distraction but it backfires as Becky slides over for a tag.

It's Charlotte cleaning house with a spear to Nikki but Paige tags herself in as the Figure Eight goes on. The argument lets Alicia take over and a northern lights suplex gets two. Back to Nikki for a chinlock until Paige fights up and dives for a tag, only to have her partners drop to the floor. The Rack Attack ends Paige at 8:24.

**Rating:** C-. This was more storyline stuff than a match but that's what you have to expect at a house show. Paige is now officially full on heel as there's no reason for her to do some of the things she's done here other than being evil and Charlotte/Becky's actions (mostly) made sense. It's good that they're moving on from the standard team battles though as they had been old for a long time.

Paige says she can't believe her friends would do this to her and she's not sure if she can forgive them. It seems that they're already dropping the Pipe Bomb promo from Raw for the sake of a delusional stuck up character instead. Well that's good as the interesting character might have made the Bellas look bad. I mean, they do it enough to themselves and Paige pointing out all their flaws might ruin some horrible children's dreams.

Clip from Smackdown (I'm as shocked as you are) of Reigns challenging Wyatt for a match inside the Cell.

### Intercontinental Title: Chris Jericho vs. Kevin Owens

Jericho is challenging and he welcomes us to the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his first match in wrestling. Twenty five years ago he wrestled Lance Storm (in the front row) to a ten minute Broadway in a small town in Alberta in front of fifty people. Jericho thanks us all for being along for the ride and promises a big party tonight. Kevin starts fast but gets dropkicked out to the floor and sent into the announcers' table.

Back inside and Kevin wishes Jericho a happy anniversary before punching in the face. A chinlock slows things down as JBL says Jericho was an unproven talent in WWE until he beat Rock and Austin in the same night. Dude go watch some Network and learn the history better. Jericho comes back with a missile dropkick and enziguri for two. The Pop Up Powerbomb and Codebreaker are countered and Owens' package piledriver slam gets two. The Lionsault hits knees and there's the Cannonball to a nice reaction.

Owens' Swanton hits knees as well and the Walls go on. Kevin fights over to the ropes and sends Jericho shoulder first into the post for two. Now the Codebreaker works but Owens grabs the rope for the break. This has been a really good back and forth match so far and Jericho has been in control for the majority. Kevin comes back with a superkick but the Pop Up Powerbomb is countered into another Walls attempt. Just like at Night of Champions though, Owens pokes the eyes and grabs a small package for the pin at 8:34.

**Rating:** B-. It's a really good idea to keep the matches moving here as the fans aren't going to stand for a long match with a bunch of filler. This was a fun match though between two guys that know how to work an entertaining style. Jericho is perfect for roles like this as he never needs to win another match and he'll be fine all around. Owens gets a big win and can brag about beating another legend so everyone looks good.

We recap New Day vs. the Dudley Boyz which is about the new generation

vs. the legends.

### Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Dudley Boyz

New Day is defending and of course they have something to say. This time it's about the Dudleyz's never ending retirement tour with all of their references to the 90s and glasses with no lenses. On top of that, they put a good man like Xavier Woods through a perfectly good table! JBL incorrectly says the first tag team tables match was in this building at Summerslam (Royal Rumble 2000).

D-Von runs over Big E. to start but Bubba charges into an elbow in the corner. Now it's Kofi getting beaten up as Woods tries to get the fans behind the champs. The power of positive double teaming takes over for New Day and it's time for some tromboning. E. puts on a chinlock and Woods thinks the stock is rising on tricep meat. Ray avoids the Warrior splash and makes the tag off to D-Von as everything breaks down. The 3D has Kofi beaten but Woods comes in for the DQ at 6:40.

**Rating:** D+. This really isn't surprising and it's probably the right call. New Day could be a special team and it's not like the Dudleyz need another title reign. I'd be fine if they won them eventually but I'm not going to miss anything if it never happens again. Besides, any reason to hear more from New Day is always a positive.

Post match New Day sets up a table but Bubba breaks up the Midnight Hour, leaving Woods (busy playing Taps) to take a 3D through the table.

Recap of Big Show vs. Brock Lesnar, which is built around the idea that Big Show beat him in this arena thirteen years ago. Really that's about it and we're supposed to believe that Show is a threat here.

### Big Show vs. Brock Lesnar

Brock goes right after him to start and gets sent out to the floor. Lesnar just smiles and the fans chant for Suplex City. Back in and Show pummels him in the corner but misses a charge and takes some shoulders to the ribs. The first German is blocked and there's the chokeslam. Brock pops up so it's a second chokeslam, only to have him get up again.

There's a third chokeslam for two and it's time for the suplexes. Brock can't hold him up for the F5 and it's kind of an AA instead. It's time for more smiling though and Lesnar hits the fourth German. Now the F5 finishes Show at 4:05.

**Rating:** C-. JUST LIKE EVERY OTHER FREAKING TIME THEY HAVE THIS STUPID MATCH AND WE HAVE TO LISTEN TO BIG SHOW TALK ABOUT HOW HE'S A FREAKING GIANT AND NO ONE CAN BEAT HIM!!! I'm so glad we sat through Show squashing a bunch of people so he could lose in four minutes just like he does every time he fights Brock. You could have set this match up with a single promo but instead, Cesaro had to be squashed twice. Well done WWE.

Show isn't done and he calls Brock back in. That's fine with Lesnar as it's a belly to bell and a second F5 for good measure. The fans give Big Show the Goodbye Song and Eden says let's hear it for him.

The cage is lowered.

US Title: Seth Rollins vs. John Cena

Cena is defending and Rollins is World Champion. For the sake of clarity, I'll only refer to Cena as champion. Pin/submission/escape to win here. Seth fights out of a headlock to start and sends Cena face first into the cage a few times for two. Rollins' escape attempts don't work and Cena bulldogs him off the top for two. Seth comes right back with the top rope knee to the face and the Sling Blade gets two.

We get the classic raking the face against the steel spot but Cena grabs the electric chair for two. It's back to the top with Rollins getting knocked off first, only to catch the top rope Fameasser in a powerbomb for two. They take turns sending each other into the steel and it's time for the flying tackles. Rollins kicks him in the head to break up the Shuffle but decides to try a Shuffle of his own.

Now it's the real comeback but Rollins grabs the cage to escape the AA. The springboard knee is caught in the STF but Rollins crawls to the door. They fight over the escape attempt until Rollins slams the door on Cena's head for a close two. Cena counters the Pedigree with a catapult but has to stop Rollins from escaping over the top. John gets most of the way

over but Seth superplexes him down and rolls into the falcon's arrow for another close two. They fight to the top again and this time it's a tornado DDT from Cena for a near fall.

Cena goes for the door but Rollins climbs over the top and slams the cage onto his head again. John gets up AGAIN and pulls Rollins back in for an AA but Seth lands on his feet and hits the low superkick for two to end a great sequence. The STF is countered into a Crossface but Cena powers up into another AA attempt.

Rollins rolls out again and hits Cena low (totally legal) but here's Kane. For some reason this keeps Seth from being able to climb down until Kane is right underneath him, leaving Rollins to miss a splash off the top of the cage. The AA finally connects to retain Cena's title at 22:43.

**Rating:** A-. Really good match here and it would have been even better had Kane not come out. This felt like the big showdown that you often get in cage matches and it was cool to see the fans respecting Cena for his great effort. I could have gone without seeing Rollins getting pinned again but at least it was as close to being not clean as you can get in a cage match.

Cena leaves and Kane gives Rollins a chokeslam and tombstone to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B. Totally fun two and a half hour show here with Brock squashing Big Show and a really good main event. The key thing to remember here is that this was a house show and not a pay per view. It's really just a bonus for the Network subscribers and that lowers the level of expectations quite a bit. Nothing was really bad here and they kept things short and sweet. Fun show here though and a really good way to spend about two and a half hours. Check out that cage match if you get the chance.

### Results

Dolph Ziggler/Randy Orton b. Rusev/Sheamus – RK0 to Sheamus

Neville b. Stardust – Red Arrow

Team Bella b. Team PCB – Rack Attack to Paige

Kevin Owens b. Chris Jericho – Small package

Dudley Boyz b. New Day via DQ when Xavier Woods interfered

Brock Lesnar b. Big Show – F5

John Cena b. Seth Rollins – Attitude Adjustment

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# Thunder – May 10, 2000: Gordon Solie's Tricep Meat

## Thunder

Date: May 10, 2000

Location: Prairie Capital Convention Center, Springfield, Illinois

Attendance: 4,129

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan, Mike Tenay

Believe it or not, WCW had a good show earlier in the week to lead into this one. Above all else they slowed things down a bit and are finally acting like something resembling a wrestling company. We're coming up on Great American Bash and it's not really clear what the main event is



going to be. Ric Flair was scheduled to be challenging Jeff Jarrett for the World Title but that might have been changed to Ric vs. his son David instead. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

#### Cruiserweight Title: Crowbar vs. Chris Candido

No Russo and Bischoff to start? I could get used to this. I'm sure I won't need to but I could do it. Candido is defending and talks about how awesome Tammy is before we get going. They start fighting right at the bell and Crowbar tries something resembling a headscissors. Candido pops back up and grabs a DDT for two. It doesn't have a ton of effect as Crowbar has a thick skull so he pops up with a Death Valley Driver and a slingshot legdrop for two of his own.

Tammy offers a distraction but Candido gets thrown to the floor anyway for a dive from Crowbar. Back in and Candido suplexes him over the top and onto the ramp as this is more wrestling than you usually get on these shows. Like I said, they're toning it down a bit lately and things are working a lot better. Back in and Crowbar gets crotched on top but Daffney breaks up the top rope headbutt. The Frankenscreamer triggers a catfight but Candido hits Crowbar low and the headbutt retains the title.

**Rating:** C+. More unnecessary shenanigans messing up what was a good match to start the show. Crowbar is an underrated guy and it's nice to see him getting to do something other than the hardcore nonsense that he was best known for. Candido continues to be so smooth in the ring but it's a shame that they're trying to put so much focus on Tammy when she's miles beyond the Sunny years.

Terry Funk won't give Bischoff the Hardcore Title so it's time for some heat. Why is Terry Funk being Hardcore Champion one of the top stories in this company? This is typical WCW. Yeah Funk is hardcore and yeah he's a legend, but this is a story that could be used to make someone into a big deal. How about Crowbar? Let him have the title and make him into a big deal. No instead we need someone who was World Champion over twenty years ago for a nostalgia run that no one outside of Texas was really dying to see. I know Funk is awesome, but he doesn't need this.

David Flair, Crowbar, Daffney and Vince Russo were in New York. Daffney is told to go do something while the three of them see a movie. The implication is that it's adult in nature, which raises several questions about Russo in general as it was his idea.

#### Hardcore Title: Harlem Heat vs. Terry Funk

Funk is defending though I think Big T.'s gut weighs more than Terry on its own. Terry comes out carrying chickens because we're still referencing that stupid Dustin Rhodes story. Thankfully they don't spend too long selling the chickens and some double teaming, including a snazzy run down the ramp and diving clothesline from T., puts Funk in trouble. Cash's involvement doesn't help much and T. hits Stevie with a trashcan lid by mistake. We finally get the Harlem Heat collapse, allowing Terry to hit Cash with a chair to retain. Does it matter that Cash wasn't officially in the match?

**Rating:** D. Well at least we got rid of Harlem Heat and on top of that we get to add another win for Funk. They kept this one short and limited it to some basic weapons shots which is probably best all around. The Hardcore Title idea was long past its expiration date in both companies at this point and I'm hoping they tone this thing down soon.

Tenay is interviewing Vampiro and asks him why he's in character. Oh for the love of all things good and made of Gordon Solie's tricep meat. Vampiro talks about his love of music inspiring him to wear makeup and get tattoos while Sting is treated like a king. He has "Steve's" vulture (when did he take that?) and brings up Ozzy Osbourne biting the head off a dove. Cue Sting to hit Vampiro with the bird's cage ("For your first cage match!") and call him Ian, which makes Vampiro laugh.

#### Shawn Stasiak vs. Lash Leroux

I love alliteration. Before the match, Lash says he wants to be known as Corporal Cajun. Hennig comes out for commentary which will likely not explain his actions on Monday. A rollup gets two for Cajun but he gets slammed face first out of the corner to put him down. Stasiak gets two off a tilt-a-whirl powerbomb and they head outside with Cajun being rammed into various objects.

Shawn gets two off a top rope clothesline and you can feel the lack of charisma from him. Stasiak is fine with the technical stuff but he has no presence and is really just a guy in good shape doing moves. Even Cajun, who was really nothing beyond average, has far better ring presence and charisma than Stasiak. Shawn is totally adequate in the ring but he's nothing more than that. Anyway Cajun comes back with a missile dropkick and they fall out to the floor again. This time Hennig drops Cajun on the announcers' table though, setting up Stasiak's PerfectPlex for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. The action was a bit better here and I guess they're going with "if you can't beat him, help him win matches against wrestlers he should have no trouble beating himself" for Hennig. I know Stasiak isn't the most interesting guy in the world but at least they're putting a young guy over a veteran. Hennig is over for the rest of his career so a single loss isn't going to hurt him. Thankfully he's one of the guys smart enough to realize this and put Stasiak over.

The rest of the Misfits chase Hennig off.

Russo makes Liz vs. Rhonda Singh tonight and if Liz wins she gets to be with Luger. These segments are just ways for Russo to be around the woman he had a big crush on back in the day aren't they?

Back in New York, because we need two Russo sections, Vince messes with Daffney thinking a replica Statue of Liberty is the real one.

#### Rhonda Sing vs. Elizabeth

The fat jokes start during the entrances. Liz hides in the corner to start and Sing crushes her with a splash. Luger comes in to break up another splash, allowing Liz to kick Sing in the chest. Luger Racks Sing....and that's a submission. Tony: "He is the strongest man in the world!" Oh screw you Schiavone and Russo/Bischoff for feeding him that line.

Post match Chuck Palumbo comes out with a ball bat (that's WAY too common a weapon) to knock out Luger and kidnap Liz again.

This match was embarrassing. They brought these two out here so Russo

could make fat jokes about Sing and drool over Liz in wrestling gear (a black t-shirt and camouflage skirt) while getting some of his precious violence against women in there. As usual, it's all about Russo having the mentality of a 12 year old at 39 years old. The fat jokes aren't funny and these segments get more and more disgusting every time.

Here are Russo/Daffney/David because we haven't seen enough of them tonight. Russo asks for a moment of silence for Ric Flair. Oh please like Russo could ever let that mouth of his have a rest. Ric walked out of wrestling on Monday night after Russo broke him. What people don't know is how horrible of a father Ric has been for the last twenty one years. David whines about his dad never being there for him on the first day of school and when he went to the prom. He wanted his dad at the prom? I mean, I know Ric has been in drag before but this is ridiculous.

David isn't done yet as he calls out Uncle Arn for a talk. Anderson comes out and asks if "I'm mad" is really the best excuse David can come up with. Russo is just trying to control David to get to Ric and David is letting it happen. Arn teamed with Ric for fifteen years and was compared to him every day. Ric was so upset over having to miss big days in his son's life but he would be out there wrestling with 105 degree fevers because the people like you and you and you paid to see him. All David has ever had to worry about was what college he was going to and picking out what car his dad would buy him the day he graduates.

Russo chimes in (oh please. Grace us with your wisdom) and makes Arn vs. David for tonight. Arn doesn't seem worried. "I might not be the Enforcer anymore but David isn't the Nature Boy. Let's do it." As usual, Anderson is one of the greatest talkers of all time and sums up the whole story in as simple of a manner as anyone ever could with the perfect emotion.

Bischoff and company are talking to Chuck Palumbo.

Hogan arrives. I bet he isn't even fined for being so late.

Bischoff gives Funk one more Hardcore Title match tonight. This is airing two days after the WWF did the exact same story with Chris Jericho and the Intercontinental Title.

## Hardcore Title: Chuck Palumbo vs. Terry Funk

Time for Funk to beat another rookie they're trying to build up. Palumbo is challenging and of course does Luger's entrance. Chuck starts fast and hits Funk in the head with a chair. It's already table time and Funk goes through the wood in the corner. Since Funk's character is that he's indestructible, he pops right back up and takes it to the floor for some brawling. Well at least they're doing something they should do in a hardcore match.

It goes into the crowd and then into the back with Funk taking over. Some trashcans to the head don't do much good for either guy so Chuck tries to slam him onto a spinning fan and therefore kill him. This brings in Luger who throws Palumbo up against a dumpster, giving Funk the pin to retain. That would be Palumbo's debut as anyone important and he's 0-1.

**Rating:** D+. So not only are they blatantly ripping off WWF's idea but they're also having Funk beat three guys in one night, including Palumbo who could go somewhere for them. This could have been a backstage segment and accomplished the same thing, but then we might not have gotten Bischoff on screen again.

The security beats up Luger post match and Palumbo slams him into a door. Funk has wandered off somewhere, probably trying to find a John Wayne movie.

Kevin Nash arrives, but the more interesting thing is Norman Smiley and Ralphus holding up a "Will Wrestle For Food" sign. Got an act the fans are getting interested in? Well make sure they don't get to go in the ring!

## Kidman vs. Horace Hogan

If Horace loses, he's fired. Hulk is also banned from ringside but Bischoff and the Filthy Animals are here with Kidman. Horace powers him around to start and hits a quick Rock Bottom. Kidman gets up and hits Charles Robinson but Bischoff makes it No DQ. That allows Horace to hit Kidman with a chair but a Bischoff distraction lets Kidman score with a dropkick. Bischoff makes it falls count anywhere and I'm having

flashbacks to Over the Edge 1998.

Horace boots Kidman in the face so let's make it a handicap match, even though it could have been already given that it's No DQ. The Animals come in and beat the heck out of Horace with Kidman adding a Macho Man (you remember him. The guy that came back last week like it was a big deal and will never be seen again with no explanation) elbow. The Animals go to the floor but Horace gets up and plants Kidman with a Death Valley Driver for the pin. Not so fast of course because it's now a Texas Death Match so Kidman has a ten count to get up.

Kidman gets up at nine and Bischoff hits Horace in the back with a chair and makes it an I Quit match. Eric is feeling nice though and offers Horace a spot on the team, earning him some spit in his eye. This brings in the Animals for a dog pile pin on Horace to end this No DQ, falls count anywhere, handicap, Texas death, I quit match which Kidman won via a pinfall.

**Rating:** F. For Foley, who did this way better. That's the major difference. When Russo did this for Austin vs. Foley, not only was it a 20+ minute match, but they were capable of having a great match no matter what the rules were. This was Kidman vs. Horace in a match that didn't even last six and a half minutes. Russo of course didn't get the difference.

After the match, Hulk comes in to destroy everyone, including no selling Bischoff's chair shot. He chases Bischoff to the back until Nash comes out to take care of the Filthy Animals. This brings out Russo to list off some of Nash's stupid gimmicks over the years and there's a blood bath for Big Kev.

Post break, Russo and Bischoff get in a limo but Hogan and Nash show up to destroy the car with ball bats.

#### Arn Anderson vs. David Flair

This is going to be interesting. Anderson gets behind David with ease and shoves him into the corner. A takedown puts Flair down even more easily so David tries to cheat with choking and punches. This goes as well as a

scrawny kid punching Arn Anderson is going to go so David rakes the eyes. Crowbar tries to run in and eats a great spinebuster. Now it's Daffney coming in and hitting Arn low, allowing David to bust another Statue of Liberty (again: the real money in wrestling is mass producing breakaway weapons) over Arn's head. The referee gets tossed and the match is thrown out.

The bloody Arn is put in the Figure Four as Crowbar counts a pin.

Now it's off to New York where David, Crowbar and Daffney are in a toy store. Is there a point coming to these segments anytime soon?

Here's Rick Steiner with something to say. After a clip of him turning on his brother on Monday (it's still not clear if Scott is a face or a heel), Rick says that Goldberg is old news. He brings out the man who might not be the prettiest in the world but he can knock Goldberg out with one punch. Tank comes out with the Goldberg parody entrance, complete with Russo and Bischoff security and sparklers. So he's kind of parodying Gillberg? Rick talks about attacking Scott last night (HIRE AN EDITOR ALREADY! OR GIVE THE WRESTLERS A CALENDAR!) because Scott turned on him two years ago to join the NWO.

Tank says he's going to run Goldberg over but here's Kronik to interrupt for some reason. The brawl is on and here are Bagwell and Douglas to try to get their title belts back. Scott Steiner runs out to go after Rick but Rick bails, leaving Scott and Kronik to beat up security. We cut to the back to see the Goldberg truck crushing Tank and Rick's car. Didn't he do that to Sid's car over and over? Maybe these people should start coming in cabs.

David proposes to Daffney. Sure why not.

### Sting vs. Mike Awesome

Ambulance match and Awesome is now billed as the Career Killer. Never let it be said that WCW isn't as classy as they could be. Mike takes over to start and hits a running splash in the corner but stops to get a table. Heenan is trying to put Awesome over as an unstoppable monster but it's kind of hard to make it work when one of the first images of him in the

company was losing to Scott Steiner in his second match.

The table winds up on the ramp and but Sting backdrops a charging Awesome through it to take over. They fight over to and then on top of the ambulance. Awesome can't powerbomb him onto the roof so Sting hooks the Death Drop to knock Mike out on top. Cue Vampiro to jump Sting and throw him inside to give the unconscious Awesome the win.

**Rating:** D-. I don't know. I don't know if this was any good because how much can you tell about a gimmick match when the majority of it is over in three minutes and the last bit is Sting getting down and then attacked by someone interfering? There was no difference between this and a regular match with Vampiro coming in to lay Sting out to give Awesome the pin. That alone tells me that there's no need for a gimmick attached, but Russo never understood that concept.

**Overall Rating:** D. And it's right back where it was a week ago. This was another big mess with WAY too much going on and a bunch of ideas that are thrown out there with no build and no reason to care about almost anything. Above all else there is WAY too much Russo as he's involved with Hogan, Nash, Luger and Flair among others. Not even Vince McMahon on his best day can be that spread out and expect it to work long term. Bad show here, but that's going to be the norm due to how stupid so much of the writing really is.

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# Bound For Glory 2015 Preview

I can't believe I'm saying this but I'm somewhat optimistic going into the show tomorrow night. TNA has done about as good of a job of setting this thing up in four hours and I'm actually wanting to see what they've got. Above all else, this show is already better than last year's disaster and has the potential to be entertaining. Let's get to it.

We'll start with one of the matches added on Impact with Kurt Angle vs. Eric Young. To continue the theme of things I can't believe I'm saying, Eric should win this hands down. Angle is leaving in January and turns 47 in December. There is no reason to keep pushing him as this star, especially if he's on the verge of leaving. Eric has a lot more potential in TNA and Angle stopped being hurt by losses about ten years ago. It's nice to have a story to this match but Angle should take the loss, probably the first of a few on his way out.

There's a gauntlet match between Abyss, Aiden O'Shea (Jay Bradley. I remember him better from his OVW days than TNA), Chris Melendez, Eli Drake, Jessie Godderz, Mahabali Shera, Mr. Anderson, Robbie E. and Tyrus for a future shot at the World Title. Let's not waste time here: Shera is winning this and getting the big title shot in India for the sake of the live crowd because that worked oh so well in Ring Ka King.

You remember Ring Ka King. That's the TNA backed show that ran in India and ended with Shera winning the title before the show was canceled. As is always the case with TNA: they never learn. I know Shera is better now, but catering to the live crowd instead of the much larger one over in America, as in where they're in desperate need for a new TV contract. Their solution: push a guy whose gimmick is folding his arms and popping his shoulders in the latest "dance craze". In other words, they're pushing a brawling Fandango and expecting it to be their big TV angle for...whenever the shows they're taping in late November air.

Next up is the Ultimate X match for the X-Division Title. I've completely given up on any hope for the title having meaning these days so a thrown together multi-challenger title defense is the best we're going to get. Tigre Uno is defending against Andrew Everett (newcomer who has worked around the indy circuit including some time in ROH), DJZ (who lost in a multi-man match on Wednesday) and TJP (formerly Manik, who has won two singles matches in TNA since last September and one of them was at a One Night Only).

It's so sad to see the title this dead after being the cornerstone of TNA for so many years. That being said, this meaningless title defense is standard lately for Bound For Glory as they haven't had a singles match for the title since 2012 and that match was added at the last Impact to put the title on the show. Tigre should retain here but they'll probably go with TJP, who they keep seeing potential in, despite not letting him go anywhere for some reason. It's going to be a big spot fest and nothing we haven't seen before as Pope and Josh the Tool (seriously dude: wear long sleeves) talk about how innovative it all is.

Wolves vs. Trevor Lee/Brian Meyers. If you need an answer here, you haven't been paying close enough attention. Lee has talent and should be successful elsewhere but Meyers is one of the most generic guys I've seen in a long time. Wolves retain and barely break a sweat in doing so.

Lashley vs. Bobby Roode for the Globally Televised Legendary Kingdom in the Mountains Title (STICK WITH A NAME ALREADY) is probably going to be the match of the night and that shouldn't come as a surprise. Their series for the World Title was really good but I could go for ANY kind of story here.

It's really lazy writing to have an open challenge for the title (and even worse when you consider it's on the same show as an X-Division Title match where the opponents were thrown together and a gauntlet match where the opponents are thrown together) but they have the potential to be really good as both guys are talented. Lashley has gone from the hottest thing in the company to just another guy in the last six months but that's TNA for you. I'll take Roode to retain but it's a tossup.

Kong takes the title from Kim. There's no logical reason to keep the belt on Gail here, aside from TNA's love affair with her. Kong hasn't held the belt in almost seven years and she should take it back here. As usual in TNA, they're building the idea off something that happened years ago and you needed to be around a long time ago to know the idea here. The match should be good but Kong needs to powerbomb her into oblivion and hopefully off TV for the better part of a year. I've had enough of the female Lance Storm for a thousand years and I really don't need to ever see her around the title again.

I've already done a full column on the main event:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2015/10/01/new-column-bound-for-something-new-i-hope/>

I'm picking Galloway but Carter retaining wouldn't surprise me. Then again neither would putting it on Hardy, which would be the worst possible option out of the three. Of course there's always the option of having Jeff turn on his brother and join forces with Ethan as the new heel stable because it's been two whole weeks since we've had one.

Overall Bound For Glory has the chance to be a fun show but at the same time there's nothing on the show I'm dying to see. There isn't a blowaway match on the show (I bet Buddy Rose could have one) and the best one is likely the midcard title match that we've seen three times in the last year. There's a real chance that this is the last TNA pay per view ever and hopefully they go out with a decent show after this year's Slammiversary and last year's Bound For Glory were such wrecks. We'll go with cautious optimism and low expectations, which means it's a good day for TNA.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of Complete 1997 Monday Night Raw Reviews at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/product/B015IN12I2>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

# Armageddon 2007: Triple Vision

## Armageddon 2007

Date: December 16, 2007

Location: Mellon Arena, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Attendance: 12,500

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler, Joey Styles, Taz

Thankfully we're back to double branded shows again by this point and we have two title matches in the main events. Jericho is back and wants Orton's title and we also have Edge vs. Taker vs. Batista for the title. Also there's HHH vs. Jeff Hardy which is almost always good. This would be the beginning of Jeff chasing the brass ring, which would culminate in the main event of next year's version of this show. Let's get to it.

The opening talks about the light (Jericho) coming to save us from the darkness of Orton. Oh and something about Edge, Taker and Batista too.

US Title: Rey Mysterio vs. MVP

MVP is champion of course. This is a respect feud with Rey saying MVP doesn't have it. Rey has one of his hoods on which looks like a KKK mask. It's got a Skelator design on it in yellow and black since we're in Pittsburgh. MVP goes for the legs immediately but Rey escapes. Rey grabs La Majistral for two. An armdrag sends MVP to the floor and the referee stops a

Rey dive. The masked dude is like screw it and dives over the referee to hit a nice corkscrew plancha.

Mysterio charges in the corner but gets caught in a powerbomb position and dropped face first into the buckle for two. That looked painful. Drop toehold (one of the harder ones you'll see this side of Raven) and a kick to the head get two. The Tazmissions weird cousin goes on as the crowd is staying into this. It's hard to criticize decent matches. Start screwing stuff up already!

The Pittsburgh fans can't count as they think you start with the numbers 6 1 9. Mysterio tries to run but MVP grabs him by the back of the head to ram it into the mat. That's a theme for him here: working on the head and the neck. Rey finally gets something in and both guys are down. Rey gets up first and there's the spinning cross body for two. He tries a springboard move and slips off the ropes, hurting his groin or knee.

Springboard moonsault (it's not as impressive as it sounds) gets two. MVP takes his head (Rey's, not his own. That would be stupid) off with a clothesline. He tries what appears to be a goarbuster off the top but Rey makes the block. They fight on the corner and Rey grabs a rana out of nowhere for two. Big boot by MVP gets two. That looked great.

Rey counters a reverse inverted DDT into a mat slam for two. 619 misses and MVP heads to the floor. Rey wants to dive and manages to hit MVP with a rana which is almost countered. The referee starts the count and I have a bad feeling I know where this is going. Yep MVP just takes the countout to retain the title.

**Rating:** C+. Good match with a bad ending. Rey did his job well, even with a guy that I've never seen the appeal of in MVP. Probably a good choice to not switch the title here as MVP needed the title for a bit longer here (he would lose it in May I think) and Rey was going to be

ridiculously over either way. Good opener.

We recap HHH vs. Jeff Hardy. Those two were the last people in their Survivor Series team and managed to come back from a 5-2 deficit for the win.

Jeff, the IC Champion at this point, says this is the biggest match of his career but that he doesn't fear HHH.

Mark Henry/Big Daddy V vs. Kane/CM Punk

Punk is ECW Champion here and is having to stick and move against the monsters. Kane is here to help even out the size stuff. Punk vs. Henry to start us off. Punk fires off some kicks and then tries to pick up the leg because faces are idiots in this company. Off to Kane whose strikes do a bit better. He gets a shot to the knee and Henry is actually in trouble. Back to Punk who gets flattened by a clothesline.

Off to Big Daddy V and girth of death. Punk gets sent to the floor where Striker, the manager of V, gets in a shot. Henry pounds on him for awhile until a corner splash misses. Moderately warm tag brings in Kane who cleans a few rooms. The Big Bald hits the top rope clothesline to put Henry down but V breaks up the chokeslam. Sitout chokebomb gets two for V. I thought it was tea for two and two for tea but whatever.

V pounds away while in whale humping position. He splashes Kane and it's off to Henry for some bearhuggery. Better than buggery I suppose. V comes in for Kane to fire away but another fat boy clothesline takes him down. Kane channels his inner deadman and hits a running DDT to put both guys down (Henry in this case). Double tag brings in V and Punk and everything breaks down. Punk and V are alone in the ring so Punk tries the springboard clothesline. He lands in a Samoan Drop though and we're done.

**Rating:** C-. I guess this is the only thing they could put on the show. Having Punk lose is ok here because that was the point of the angle: he

can't beat either of the monsters. This wasn't too bad but it could have been a main event on ECW TV. Either way, the big man vs. big man stuff got old after awhile which hurt the match a bit.

Vickie is in the back in a wheelchair and neckbrace. There's party stuff around like a celebration is going on. Edge comes in and it's for him because he's going to win tonight. Edge says she gives him the strength of three men. Remember that line as its foreshadowing.

#### Mr. Kennedy vs. Shawn Michaels

Kennedy says he'll win pre match. Just a respect match here as far as I can tell. Kennedy takes over to start with a lot of basic offense focused on the back. Shawn tries to clear his head so Kennedy hammers on him a lot. Shawn is like wait a minute. I'm Shawn Michaels so let me chop you and sell like I've been shot and have a bad stomach ache. Due to the back work, Shawn can't hit a suplex.

Kennedy tries a Mic Check but can't it gets countered, injuring Kenderson's elbow. Shawn, ever the psychologist out there, works on it. See how easy it is to do stuff that makes sense? Now why can so few people get that concept? Kennedy keeps trying to break the hold and finally sends both of them to the floor. That doesn't go well either as his hand is slammed into the post.

Back inside and Shawn works on the hand and the arm. Shawn grabs a wristlock but Kennedy punches him through the ropes. That's a new one. Back outside again and Shawn goes into the post. Well not really as he kind of slams against it. I don't think there's enough room for Shawn's body inside the post. A running boot to a seated Shawn in the corner sets up a backbreaker for two.

In a nice bit of thinking from Kennedy, he jumps at Shawn from the middle rope but sees Shawn get his foot up so Kennedy stops his momentum and lands on his feet, avoiding the boot.

He then sets for an elbow drop but Shawn rolls out of the way. Kennedy didn't drop it right then but rather once Shawn rolled over, hitting Shawn in the bad back. Who says heels can't be smart?

Shawn starts his comeback and chops away so he can hit the forearm and nipup. At least he's putting a hand on his back for some selling. If he has a weakness, it's his lack of selling injuries later in the match. There's the top rope elbow and Shawn starts tuning up the band. I've never gotten how no one can hear the fans chanting along or hear Shawn stomping on the mat.

Either way he catches the kick and rolls up Shawn for two. Shawn gets a rollup of his own for the same. Kennedy hits a slingshot to send Shawn into the post and talks some trash. He punches Shawn with the left hand for no apparent reason and hurts it again, letting Sweet Chin Music (bad camera angle shows that it doesn't hit at all, which is really good control from Shawn) end Kennedy.

**Rating:** B-. I liked this one as there was enough psychology peppered through it to make things work. Kennedy reinjuring his hand was a nice touch but you kind of have to wonder why he'd use his left hand for a punch. Kennedy wasn't exactly known for his in ring abilities so this was a nice little surprise.

Orton says he's not worried about Jericho because the RK0 has beaten every big name he's faced. True actually.

#### Jeff Hardy vs. HHH

Winner gets the title shot at the Rumble. This show is stacked so far. Jeff is Intercontinental Champion here. Big HHH chant starts up before his entrance. They shake hands pre match but HHH pulls him in and shoves him away. HHH shows off his power advantage and takes Jeff's head off with a clothesline. Out to the floor and HHH gets sent into the barricade.



This feels like a big match which says a lot considering it's Jeff Hardy in 2007. Jeff tries to run the railing but slips off and gets clotheslined. Back inside and Jeff pulls back for a punch but stops, prompting HHH to shout FIGHT ME. Jeff gets slapped which ticks him off and slaps HHH back. Now it's time to get going and here comes the Game. He tosses Jeff to the floor and it's time for a beating.

Jeff gets sent into the steps and into the barrier. I guess the barrier got lonesome. Trips works on the back and blocks Whisper in the Wind by shoving Jeff off the top and into the railing again. We need a step shot to make things all balanced again! Jeff looks dead. On the floor I mean, not in general. You kind of have to make that clarification at times. Back in an elbow drop gets two.

Since this is a HHH match we get an old school move in the form of an abdominal stretch. He pulls on the rope and gets caught. I guess he's bad HHH here. Jeff reverses a suplex and this an enziguiri, only to run into a facebuster and clothesline for two. A sleeper is escaped and Jeff gets a middle rope missile dropkick to put both guys down.

Jeff speeds things up a bit, likely due to an inject of speed. The slingshot dropkick in the corner to a seated HHH misses but Jeff knocks the Game to the floor. There's a big dive to the floor and the fans are starting to get into this. I can understand as it's starting to get better. Back in a top rope cross body gets two for Jeff. There's the Whisper in the Wind which gets two.

Twist of Fate is reversed into a DDT for two. Crucifix is countered into a Samoan Drop into the crucifix for two. The slingshot dropkick hits this time but the Swanton misses, getting two for HHH. Twist of Fate is countered again into the spinebuster. HHH loads up the Pedigree but Jeff rolls through it into a jackknife cover for the pin and the shot at Orton at the Rumble. HHH is shocked but not really mad.

**Rating:** B. Good match here as these two always seemed to be able to make things work. When Jeff was on his game (no pun intended) he was pretty solid. Wins like these made him into a legitimate title contender which would be the story for the next year. Well part of it as the other part was HHH never letting him get another pin on him, not even letting him get the title and needing Edge as a middle man.

Khali says Finlay will learn about consequences tonight.

#### Great Khali vs. Finlay

This is about Vince's son Hornswoggle of course. Finlay gets beaten down in the corner rather quickly and there's a hard chop. He gets sent to the floor as the idiot fans chant USA. Back inside there's a nerve hold for a LONG time. Vice Grip goes on but it's in the ropes. Horny gets on the apron for no apparent reason and is tossed to the floor. Finlay gets the club that I'm not going to try to spell and a shot to the head ends this. How was this six minutes long?

**Rating:** F. What in the world was the point of this? Nothing happened in this and they spent two or three minutes in the nerve hold. The Hornswoggle aspect never meant anything and the whole match was just a waste of time. Granted I think that was the point because there had been a bunch of big matches in a row so we needed a breather.

We recap Orton vs. Jericho. Jericho came back after being gone for like a year and a half and said he wanted a title match. Orton had been dominating the show for a few months so Jericho returned to give him a fresh opponent. This was the whole SAVE US deal.

#### Raw World Title: Chris Jericho vs. Randy Orton

Orton still has the far better Burn in My Light song. He looks so much younger with hair and non-orange skin. Feeling out process to start with Jericho hitting some armdrags and off to an armbar. Well it wouldn't be a Jericho match without one of them. Now Jericho shifts over to the ribs but it wasn't enough

arm work to make it seem stupid. Spinwheel kick puts Randy down and he heads to the apron.

Jericho sends him to the floor and there's a nice dive off the top. Back in the elevated DDT is countered into a Walls attempt but Orton counters and grabs a DDT to get two. Orton works on the back a bit and there's the chinlock required in Randy matches. Now we make sure to upgrade things with a chinlock AND a body scissors! How will he ever top that???

The Canadian fights up and breaks the hold and both guys go down off their heads colliding. Clothesline gets two for Jericho. Middle rope missile dropkick gets the same. Orton gets his powerslam for two. This is kind of a boring match. They're doing more of a collection of moves than a match if that makes sense. Jericho goes shoulder first into the post but manages to reverse an RKO attempt into a backslide for two.

Orton takes him down again and Jericho goes into the corner shoulder first again. Superplex works on Jericho's back again and gets two here. Another Walls attempt is blocked but Jericho hits a running enziguri which sends Randy to his knees. Lionsault hits knees but another RKO attempt fails. Lionsault gets two.

Out to the floor and Jericho is sent over the announce table. Back inside Jericho hits something like a top rope forearm to the back of the head. Codebreaker is countered and Orton loads up the Punt. Jericho counters it into the Walls and pulls him back into the middle of the ring. And then JBL comes in to kick Jericho in the head for the DQ, which would be Jericho's next feud. It would be about Jericho hitting him when Orton threw him into the table.

**Rating:** C. Wasn't feeling this but it wasn't really bad or anything. Jericho didn't click as a face when he came back and would turn heel about 8 months later. Orton was rather boring as the champion but had a

decent match with Hardy at the Rumble. This wasn't a bad match but it felt like pieces of a good match instead of a full good one if that makes sense.

RKO post match.

Lillian (SMOKING hot here) is about to introduce the Women's Title match but here's Jillian to sing a Christmas song for us. To be fair her Christmas album actually did do well in England. If nothing else her rack was awesome. Mickie's music finally cuts her off and my goodness she looks good in yellow.

Women's Title: Mickie James vs. Beth Phoenix

Beth is champion here. Mickie tries to attack the knees but that doesn't get her anywhere. Neither does a rana attempt. Beth puts on a dragon sleeper and then the double chickenwing which Beth escapes. Now the rana works and there's a Thesz Press. Neckbreaker puts Beth down but she didn't cover. And never mind as Beth hits a release fisherman's suplex for the pin to retain.

**Rating:** D-. The match sucked but any time you have Beth in a shirt and Mickie in small amounts of clothing, the match simply isn't a failure. The match was just a way to give the fans a breather before we get to the main event, which is all that's left. Nothing of note here and Beth dominated the majority of the match.

Taz joins Cole for commentary on the main event.

We recap the main event. Edge had to relinquish the world title due to an injury and was thinking of retiring. Then Vickie called him and they hooked up, resulting in Edge coming back in the Cell match between Batista and Taker, costing the Dead Man the title. Taker went after Vickie and tombstoned her, putting her in the wheelchair. Taker then went after Edge but Batista got involved so Taker went after him. A triple threat was made. The plan was four months in the making according to Edge, which you're told four times in the promo,

just so you know for sure.

Smackdown World Title: Edge vs. Undertaker vs. Batista

Big Dave is champion. Taker goes straight for Edge so the Canadian runs. Batista and Taker get in a fight over who gets to beat up Edge. Taker wins that one and goes after Edge but a chokeslam is avoided. Edge chills on the floor which is rather smart. He tries to steal a pin on Batista which fails but he stomps away a bit. Taker is out of the floor thanks to the Animal. Edge knocks him down again but walks into a Bossman Slam for two.

Edge sets for the spear but Batista gets a big boot up for two as Taker saves. Taker sets for the legdrop on the apron but Batista takes his head off with a clothesline instead. He loads up the Bomb on Edge but there's a low blow and Edgecution for two. Taker is back inside now and beating on Edge. Here's Old School and a Last Ride attempt but Batista spears him down, resulting in a huge crash.

Batista tries to cover Taker but gets caught in a triangle choke and...there's the bell? Edge rang it apparently to break the hold. That's rather genius. Edge spears Taker for two. The crowd is into this now as Edge spears Batista for two. He grabs a pair of chairs but Batista breaks up a Conchairto. The Canadian goes to the floor and Dave goes up, only to get crotched.

Superplex hits Batista for two. Batista takes down Taker out of nowhere and spears Edge for fun. Batista Bomb to Taker is blocked and there are two Edges on the floor. Chokeslam to Batista and Taker calls for the tombstone. Someone resembling Edge jumps into a chokeslam. Batista Bomb is countered again as the chokeslamed Edge is down.

Batista, like an idiot, tries a tombstone. He of course takes it and the real Edge cracks Taker with a chair and steals the title. The other Edges, complete with accurate fake tattoos,

would be more commonly known as the Major Brothers, who changed their names to the Edgeheads. Today they're more commonly known as Zack Ryder and Curt Hawkins. Remember that strength of three men line?

**Rating:** C. Match was just ok and the ending really doesn't work as only one of the two fake Edges were ever involved. The stable that would form, La Familia, was awful but who cares about that I guess. This set it up and would be the main story until about the end of summer. Not a horrible match, but not really memorable or anything like that.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This show is actually stacked which isn't something you see all that often on here. Not a great show or anything but with Jeff vs. HHH, Shawn vs. Kennedy, the triple threat and Jericho vs. Orton, it's hard to overlook this, especially with the reputation that Armageddon has. Not worth seeing, but for its time this would have been a well built PPV.

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## John Cena Taking Time Off From WWE After Hell in a Cell

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/john-cena-taking-time-off-from-the-wwe/42139/>

I know this broke yesterday but I have to say something about it.

Well first and foremost this means that we're going to get a new US Champion. It should be interesting to see who they put the title on as Cena isn't really feuding with anyone at the moment. There are a bunch of options but I'd love to see Cesaro get it, even though there's almost no chance of it happening. Hopefully it goes on someone who could use the title though and won't sit there and waste our time, though that's WWE's

standard operating procedure more often than not.

Other than that, it might mean Cena being freshened up. The logical move would be to have him win the Royal Rumble (tying Austin for the most all time) so he can move on and win title #16 at Wrestlemania in Dallas but that might be a bit too easy. I'd have him take #17 at Wrestlemania number whatever in the future but I can't imagine WWE keeps the title off him that long.

The other interesting case is going to be the ratings. The numbers are already at some of the lowest in years (due to a ton of reasons, namely Monday Night Football and the third hour being too much TV but that's another story for another time) and Cena is one of their few proven draws. Take him away and WWE is really going to have to mix things up, which could certainly benefit the fans.

I hope he gets back soon because there's no one better, but this might be a good thing just a few months before one of their biggest shows ever.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of Complete 1997 Monday Night Raw Reviews at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/product/B015IN12I2>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

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

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# Appearance On The Obtuse Wrestling Angle Podcast

You might not have heard of this one but it's definitely worth checking out. They've had some major guests like Brutus Beefcake and John Morrison but I was their first in studio guest. This was recorded in the studio of the morning radio show I've listened to for over thirteen years now and it was the coolest moment of my career to get to go in the studio. Check these guys out as they're awesome and hilarious, though the show is NOT safe for work.

<http://obtuseangles.libsyn.com/the-obtuse-angles-podcast-episode-21-special-guest-tommy-hall>

We recorded three shows so I'll be on twice more. It should be noted that these were done back in late July so there are a lot of Hogan jokes which might seem a bit dated.

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## Ring of Honor TV – September 30, 2015: Like A Rolling Stone

### Ring of Honor

Date: September 30, 2015

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: King Corino, Kevin Kelly

It's another stand alone episode with the New Japan guys coming in to



help bridge the gap between the pay per view and the start of the new taping cycle. Tonight we have a dream match with Adam Cole facing Shinsuke Nakamura, who is one of the best in the world right now. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

#### Matt Sydal vs. Kushida

Kushida's IWGP Junior Heavyweight Title isn't on the line. I'm not a fan of Kushida's in ring work but the Back to the Future theme is awesome. The fans start the THIS IS AWESOME chants at the bell which always gets on my nerves. Feeling out process to start with Kushida taking him down off a headlock and floating around Sydal's back until it's a standoff.

They trade armdrags until Kushida no sells a hurricanrana and blasts him with a dropkick. Sydal gets smart and goes after the knee with some kicks and a bridging Indian deathlock as we take a break. Oddly enough WCW would always go to a commercial whenever anyone else put on those holds. Back with Kushida diving into a spinwheel kick but he comes back with a front flip into a kick to the head. So much for selling the knee of course but that's such a common problem in wrestling and Japanese wrestling in particular.

Back in and a moonsault gets two on Sydal but Matt kicks the knee out. His standing moonsault is countered into the Hoverboard Lock (sweet name for a Kimura) but Sydal makes the ropes. They trade big strikes to the head and both guys are down. Sydal is up first with a reverse hurricanrana for two but the Hoverboard Lock goes on again. Matt rolls out of it and kicks Kushida in the head, setting up the Shooting Star (which still takes forever) for the pin at 12:14.

**Rating:** C. I'm not a fan of either guy and this really felt like a very stereotypical ROH match. The knee work went nowhere because Kushida wouldn't sell the thing. Sydal is better than just a single finisher but I'm still not a fan of his since he left WWE. This wasn't a bad match or anything but it's not my style.

#### Watanabe vs. Will Ferrara vs. Moose vs. Adam Page

One fall to a finish. Before the match, BJ Whitmer says Page should get some better competition because he beats everyone he fights. Page goes right after Watanabe to start and the fans aren't pleased because Watanabe is Japanese and therefore the ROH fans worship him. Ferrara comes in and knocks Page around the ring like he stole something. Off to Moose who throws Ferrara around but Page tags himself in to pick the bones. A belly to belly gets two on Ferrara but it's quickly back to Watanabe for a backsplash.

Moose breaks up a cover and backdrops the much smaller Ferrara over the top and out onto Watanabe. Colby gets on the apron and is promptly kicked back to the floor. Page comes back in and gets speared in half, only to have Ferrara tornado DDT Moose. Back to Watanabe for a German suplex to Moose and an STO to pin Ferrara at 5:45.

**Rating:** C+. This would have been better with more time and I like Watanabe a little bit better than Kushida so this didn't get to me as much. Moose is kind of in a free fall at this point and could use a big win but as usual Watanabe needs another win that doesn't seem to get him anywhere. Ferrara continues to be spunky which is about as good as you can get for someone his size.

Bushwhacker Luke marches around the ring. This is a semi-regular thing in ROH.

We see Cheeseburger getting beaten down by Brutal Bob Evans earlier in the night because these two are destined to be fighting forever. Luke came in for the save with a Stunner (yes a Stunner) and used Cheeseburger for a Battering Ram.

Back in the arena and Luke says Corino looks like a bucket of sardines (a compliment) and licks his face. As someone who has experienced that as well, I don't know why Corino is wincing.

#### Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Adam Cole

Nigel McGuinness is in on commentary. Cole is full on heel here and thankfully the commentary knows it for a change. Unfortunately they can't say what he did but that's the danger of a taped show. I still get a Mick

Jagger vibe from Nakamura. Cole works on a wristlock to start but they stop to take in some crowd reactions. Nakamura does Cole's pose in a funny bit but Cole kicks him in the leg and does an awkward little dance as we take a break.

Back with Nakamura driving Cole into the barricade but Adam scores with a superkick. Corino misses it though and sounds downright depressed. He's really starting to grow on me and I'm not sure if I like that. Back in and Cole sends him hard into the corner before going into that evil smile of his. Nakamura starts driving the hard knees into the head and gets two off a gordbuster. We could all use a bit more Arn Anderson in our lives so I heartily approve.

Cole comes back with a superkick to both knees and a low one to the jaw for two. More kicks to the knee take us to a break and we come back with Cole slapping on the Figure Four. Nakamura gets the ropes so Cole busts out some dragon screw leg whips, only to get caught in a cross armbreaker. That goes nowhere so Nakamura comes back with knee strikes (gah) and an overhead belly to back suplex. The knee gives out though, allowing Cole to come back with a running knee to the face.

A Shining Wizard gets two for Adam and a superkick to the back of the head into a cross arm German suplex for two. Cole freaks out and goes after the referee but charges into a knee in the corner. Nakamura's middle rope knee drops Cole but he can't cover. An ax kick sets up the running knee to the side of Cole's head for a close two. Cole spits in Nakamura's face so Shinsuke comes back with the Landslide (sitout Death Valley Driver) and another running knee for the pin at 22:50.

**Rating:** B. Good but not great match here which felt like a major showdown as it was supposed to. Nakamura has more personality than anyone else in New Japan and it's always fun to see him in the ring. Cole has that it factor and the smile when he had Shinsuke in trouble was great. The match was certainly good and well worthy of the spot they were going for here though I've seen better. The constant knee strikes from Nakamura after Cole spent the time working over the knee got annoying in a hurry but at least Shinsuke sold the knee a bit in between. That's a lot better than some people would do.

**Overall Rating:** B. This was a solid, wrestling heavy TV show. When one match takes up nearly half the show it's going to dominate the rating and that's exactly what happened here. That being said, I could go for some more stories as I had them built up for weeks and now I have to wait more weeks to see where they go. I'd really like them to fix this problem because it gets on my nerves every single time. Still though, fun show here with a lot of solid to good wrestling.

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# Middle Kingdom Wrestling – September 30, 2015: Short And Short

## Middle Kingdom Wrestling Episode 3

Date: September 30, 2015

Location: CWE Gym, Dongguan, China

Commentator: Eddie Strong

This show is kind of growing on me. I'm digging what they're going for with the really short TV shows and simple booking. I could go for some stories and better wrestling but that's a universal issue in wrestling,

even in China. We're on to the semi-finals tonight and it should be easier now that I have an idea who some of these people are. Let's get to it.

These shows are getting even shorter as this is under fifteen minutes long.

### The Slam vs. King Michael

This is incorrectly billed as a tournament match. Michael is a big fat guy and Slam reminds me of Gillberg. He even has similar music to Goldberg. Slam pounds away like he's a guy twice his size and drops Michael with some forearms to the chest. A leglock sends Michael to the ropes but he clotheslines Slam down and smiles into the camera.

The required fat man splash gets two on Slam and a fat man shoulder drops him again. Michael's chokebomb is good for two and the argument with the referee allows Slam to come back with a string of forearms, followed by a springboard clothesline for two. Something like a belly to back slam and a big stomp is enough to put the King away.

**Rating:** C-. This was way better than it had any right to be with Slam looking like a combination of Taz and Goldberg as he fought like a guy 100lbs heavier than he actually is. Michael was your standard fat man who couldn't do much aside from basic power moves but Slam more than made up for it. I could go for more than big forearms but that might come against someone who can give him more back.

### MKW Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Selfie King vs. Black Mamba

Da Li Sam is with Mamba again in a partnership that hasn't been explained. Mamba isn't interested in a picture to start so he loses a test of strength instead. So apparently King is really strong. I mean, he's in good shape but it's hardly great. Mamba claims his shoes are messing up and the distraction lets Sam come in with a powerbomb for the pin to advance.

Mamba and Sam take a picture over King's unconscious body. Not bad.

Wait we're not done as the promoter comes up and points out the

shenanigans, meaning Mamba is disqualified. I'm not a fan of that sort of an ending and it feels like they went this way for a shortcut instead of a full on match. Even a short one would have been fine and it would have padded the show out a bit.

Roll credits.

**Overall Rating:** C-. This didn't do it for me as well as the previous show but to be fair a show can only be so bad in fifteen minutes. The Slam was definitely the highlight of the show and it's a good idea to take some of the focus off the tournament for a change. Good enough show here but it's a step down from last time.

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# Middle Kingdom Wrestling – September 17, 2015: In Any Language

## Middle Kingdom Wrestling Episode 2

Date: September 17, 2015

Location: CWE Gym, Dongguan, China

Commentator: Eddie Strong

This show wasn't terrible the first time I looked at it and maybe the second show is going to be better. If nothing else I'm kind of interested in seeing which of the two matches from the first show is the more accurate indicator of what this promotion is about. Maybe the commentator won't be as annoying this time either. Let's get to it.

I'm not sure what the deal is with the dates but I'm going with when they're posted on Youtube.

The intro is the same last week, down to the same video packages and captions.

The Slam (CWE Champion. For the first time it's confirmed that CWE and MKW are different things) is in the ring and wants to talk to the MKW GM about why he isn't in the title tournament. The unnamed GM isn't sure what to say so Slam demands a match against a big man in the future, which is granted. So we have another angle.

#### MKW Title Tournament First Round: Jason vs. Dalton Bragg

Bragg's entrance is in fast motion. I'm digging the way they're doing things differently like that as it's not something you see in most promotions. Before the match we get a video on American Dalton Bragg, who brags about his success in America. I'm more interested in his South Park tattoos. He knows he's better than everyone in the tournament, including the Slam. That's still kind of confusing and they need to clear it up. Maybe with a bracket or something.

The match is joined in progress with Bragg kicking Jason in the head for two. A Codebreaker gets the same as we're told that Jason is Slam's student. Jason comes back with a PerfectPlex and a Boston crab but Dalton rolls through for two. Bragg can't get Jason up for what looked like a powerbomb and drops him into something like a Dominator instead for the pin. Too short to rate but Bragg is more polished and has a better presence than anyone else so far.

This show is already better than the first one and we're not even half

done.

### MKW Title Tournament First Round: Ash vs. Black Mamba

Kobe Bryant is in this tournament? Ash has an American flag on the back of his vest but there are no videos this time. Instead Mamba grabs the mic and says he knows he's underrated but he has a secret plan. He brings out someone named Da Li Sam as a coach and I guess we're supposed to know who that is. Mamba is another of Slam's students and it seems that a lot of these people wrestle in CWE. Ash drops Mamba but Sam pulls his.....whatever Mamba is to him to the floor for a conference.

Back in and Da Li trips Ash up but Ash runs Mamba over anyway. We get a chase on the floor and Mamba finally takes over with an ax handle on the way back in. A lot of choking from both Mamba and Sam sets up an ST0 (not STF commentator) for two on Ash. Mamba grabs a camel clutch (called a signature move) but Ash fights back with a Stinger Splash and backbreaker but Sam shoves Ash into the referee. The brawl is on and the much bigger Sam (his head is over the top rope while he's standing on the floor) sends Ash into the post for a long countout.

**Rating:** C. The wrestling wasn't great but there was a far more important key here: I got the idea they were trying to present even though I have no idea who these people are and know nothing about them. It's a sign of better storytelling and that's the most important thing in wrestling. You really should be able to tell what's going on no matter what and they covered that here.

The credits and a preview for next week take us out.

**Overall Rating:** B. Again on the sliding scale but this was WAY better than last week. There's definitely better wrestling here with the stories being more well rounded and the ideas being easier to understand. I'll keep watching this as it's only twenty minutes and I can go for a change of pace to the simple stories and basic booking. Much better show this week though the commentator is still annoying.

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# Smackdown – October 1, 2015: A Lucha Libre Tradition And Split Personalities

## Smackdown

Date: October 1, 2015

Location: Times Union Center, Albany, New York

Commentators: Booker T., Jerry Lawler, Rich Brennan

Oh joy it's another Smackdown. We're getting closer to the show moving to USA in January, meaning the show is the same lame duck that it's been for years now. I'm really hoping this show gets a new life on the new network but for some reason WWE is perfectly happy to have the show just exist on Fridays with nothing important happening. Let's get to it.

On a sidenote: today is five years to the day since Smackdown debuted on SyFy.

We open with a recap of Kane and Rollins on Monday. I'm still trying to figure out if I'm supposed to cheer for the demon who tried to drag Seth down to whatever was beneath the ring or the guy who cheats all the time and attacked Kane because he couldn't handle someone disagreeing with

him.

Here's Rollins to open the show. He has the belt with him, even though Kane was last seen with it on Raw. Rollins is livid and demands that Kane get out here so here's Corporate Kane on crutches. Kane is glad to be back at his job, even if it includes dealing with Rollins acting like a spoiled brat. It's time for exposition mode (that should be Rollins' finisher as it puts more people out than the Pedigree) as Rollins recaps the entire story and explains everything again before they argue over who needs psychiatric evaluations.

Kane is just a corporate boss and the demon is a figment of Seth's imagination. Maybe Rollins is just trying to get out of his US Title match this Saturday in Madison Square Garden. I certainly would want to get out of another loss because someone was stupid enough to have the World Champion feud with the US Champion and lose every match.

Kane says there's a demon chasing Rollins but it's not him. He could use a pick me up though so how about Rollins teams with the New Day against the Dudley Boyz and Demon Kane. You mean the figment of his imagination? So it's a handicap match? Rollins says no, but Kane says he'll be at ringside to make sure the demon is in action. Lawler: "This proves that Kane is smarter than the average bear!" Well we were running low on Hanna-Barbera references so thanks for covering us King.

#### Team Bella vs. Team BAD

Before the match, BAD brings up the obvious point: no one cares who started the Divas Revolution. I do love how they keep arguing about this when it's a rare occasion where you can point to the night Stephanie started it but no one brings her up in the whole thing. Sasha says the only thing anyone is going to remember is Team BAD taking over. Booker: "That's hot."

Brie kicks at Sasha to start and is actually getting close to figuring out the timing on those YES Kicks. It's off to Naomi vs. Alicia but Tamina makes a blind tag and takes Fox down with a clothesline. Nikki bounces off Tamina and gets taken over in the Samoan drop. The Bellas are sent to the floor and we take a break.

Back with Nikki sending Naomi to the apron and Alicia offering a distraction so Nikki can hit the big forearm. Fox puts on the chinlock but the fans want Sasha. A double clothesline finally allows the hot tag to Banks for some house cleaning. The double knees in the corner get two on Nikki as everything breaks down. The Rack Attack is broken up and Sasha grabs the Bank Statement to make Nikki tap at 11:11. Booker: "THAT WAS SMOKING HOT KING!"

**Rating:** C+. This got going by the end but as usual they seem to have no idea how the story goes. As best as I can tell, at least Sasha is a face now but Naomi and Tamina are somewhere in the middle but closer to face than heel. Of course this all happened without a turn of any kind and we're just supposed to figure it out as we go. At least Sasha got to beat Nikki, who hopefully moves away from the title soon enough. Then again this match isn't likely to ever be referenced again.

New Day teaches Seth Rollins the virtue of clapping, with Woods tying it into saving the tables of the world. Seth needs to drop the Cross Fit training and believe in the power of being positive. Rollins joins in and dances away to some to some trombone playing. Kane limps in and smiles. They're even making Rollins entertaining again.

Charlotte and Becky are getting annoyed at Paige for being whiny when Paige pops in. Paige doesn't want to hear it so Charlotte says you're with us or against us. Becky and Charlotte leave but are replaced by Natalya, who threatens Paige if she ever disrespects her again. It's amazing how much more interesting these basic stories (like the ones they use on NXT) are than some team battle series which overshadows the title.

#### Intercontinental Title: Kevin Owens vs. Ryback

This is Ryback's rematch after Owens took the title from him at Night of Champions. Kevin bails tot he floor to start but Ryback goes right after him. Back inside and the fight over a suplex with Ryback lifting him up for a nice delayed vertical. Ryback is sent into the post though, setting up a DDT for two from Owens as we take a break. Back with Owens elbowing him in the face and dropping a backsplash for two.

Time for the standard chinlock because that big build up to the chinlock

had to be killed before it got over. The FEED ME MORE chants get Ryback to his knees and a swinging belly to belly puts Owens on the mat for a change. A sitout powerslam gets two on the champ so he comes out of the corner with some slaps to the face. Ryback is ticked off so he charges into a boot for two. The Meathook connects but Owens rolls outside again and takes the countout at 11:28.

**Rating:** C-. They had a decent power match going but it was clearly just a matter of killing time until they got to the ending. I mean, there hasn't been a title change on Smackdown in over two and a half years and I really didn't expect them to change anything tonight. I'm sure we'll see this again at the pay per view.

Ryback escapes the apron powerbomb and Shell Shocks Owens post match.

Video on Lesnar vs. Big Show.

#### Lucha Dragons/Neville vs. Ascension/Stardust

Well they had to have a rubber match before people started taking the shows hostage without knowing who the better team was. Viktor takes Cara down to start but an attempt at a slingshot powerbomb (like Blanchard's slingshot suplex) is countered into a hurricanrana. Stardust comes in but gets kicked down by Neville, followed by a standing shooting star press for two. Everyone goes to the floor for a staredown and we take a break.

Back with Neville firing off his kicks to Viktor, who slugs Neville off the ropes and hits a middle rope falcon's arrow of all things for two. Stardust misses a charge out to the floor though and the hot tag brings in Kalisto to really speed things up. The Queen's Crossbow is countered into a tornado DDT and Cara dives through the ropes to take Viktor down. Stardust and Neville fight to the floor, leaving Kalisto to hit a quick Salida Del Sol to end Konor at 8:48.

**Rating:** C. Take a fun feud and then drag it out until there's nothing left to do with it and the matches start going nowhere. I'm assuming Neville or Stardust move on to fight Barrett now and the feud ends because the idea of pushing a feud beyond a best of three series is unthinkable in WWE. I mean, it was a rubber match and rubber is like,

impressive.

We recap Reigns and Wyatt's brawl on Monday. Bray using a person as a projectile is still awesome.

Here are the Wyatts in the arena to address Reigns. Bray has fought many men over the years but he's never met anyone like Reigns. On Monday, they created complete chaos but it's still anyone but you Roman. Cue Reigns on his own but Bray tells the monsters to step to the side. Roman slowly gets in the ring and stares Bray down.

Bray raises the mic but Roman cuts him off, making Bray's eyes open wider than they have in a long time. Reigns: "Hell in a Cell." Bray, not on the mic, says what looked to be like "I would be delighted." Reigns leaves and Bray says he hopes Roman is willing to sacrifice everything and die. Cool stuff here, as is usually the case when Reigns plays it serious. This is the logical way to blow off the feud too, as it's a match culminating inside the Cell instead of just having a match inside because the calendar says so. In other words: it's what people have been saying since they started the Cell PPV.

#### Kane/Dudley Boyz vs. New Day/Seth Rollins

It's Demon Kane in the mat and Corporate Kane (who claps along with New Day's entrance) sitting at ringside. Translation, we're starting with a handicap match. Woods is on the floor and it's Big E. vs. D-Von to start as Booker is giving shoutouts to his old band director. All five come in for a staredown and we're off to a break about a minute and a half in. Back with D-Von getting stomped down in the corner.

Woods plays the trombone and New Day does some dancing on the apron until D-Von is tossed to the floor. Rollins busts out a suicide dive and takes out Kane in the process, damaging the leg again. Seth freaks out over Kane going to the back and follows him up the ramp, leaving us with a regular match for a bit. Kane gives Rollins an evil smile and you should know what's coming.

Reality sets in on Seth as D-Von suplexes Big E., allowing for the tag off to Ray. Bubba splashes Kofi in the corner and knocks Rollins out to

the floor. D-Von dives on New Day and here's Kane. Destruction begins and Rollins bails, allowing the 3D to take Kofi out for the pin at 10:37.

**Rating:** D+. There wasn't much to the match aside from an obvious ending. I'm actually digging the idea of Kane going back and forth like this, but I really don't need Michael Myers Kane as a face, or in a title shot for that matter. It's a cool enough idea but I'm not a fan of sitting around waiting on a twist that everyone knows is coming.

Kane grabs the title again and lays out New Day and the Dudleyz. Rollins comes out on the stage to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. What was with all the six man tags tonight? This show felt more energetic than usual but most of the wrestling brought it back to earth. I like the idea of having Reigns vs. Wyatt made for the pay per view here as it felt like an important moment for a change, even if it's something that will likely be mentioned on Raw half a dozen times in the first hour. Still though, fun enough show that felt bigger than most weeks.

### Results

Team BAD b. Team Bella – Bank Statement to Nikki

Ryback b. Kevin Owens via countout

Lucha Dragons/Neville b. Ascension/Stardust – Salida Del Sol to Konor

Kane/Dudley Boyz b. New Day/Seth Rollins – 3D to Kingston

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