

# Wrestling Wars Podcast

## Episode 11

Featuring the return of Ty Burna, Money in the Bank and a preview of the AFC North division.

<http://mightynorcal.podbean.com/e/wwp-episode-11-the-return-of-ty-burna-as-we-cover-money-in-the-bank-and-our-preview-of-the-afc-north/>

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## Thought of the Day: It's Spreading

I know it's annoying but....

So I was at Wal-Mart today and I saw the Brawling Buddies (new version of Wrestling Buddies, which were in fact the coolest things ever), the WWE toy sections, and a towel with Orton/Cena/other WWE guys on it. I know we talk a lot about how family friendly can be annoying, but this is why it's happened. WWE is right there with stuff like Marvel and Disney and they would be crazy to go edgier again (at least long term) and throw away this sort of opening. Yeah it gets annoying to the older fans, but it's far better for the company as a whole.

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# Souled Out 2000 (2015 Redo): A Different Kind Of Bad

## Souled Out 2000

Date: January 16, 2000

Location: Firststar Center, Cincinnati, Ohio

Attendance: 14,132

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mike Tenay, Bobby Heenan

And then everything changed. The big matches for this show were scheduled to be Chris Benoit vs. Jeff Jarrett in a 2/3 falls match for the US Title and Bret Hart defending his WCW World Title against Goldberg. Then Goldberg, Hart and Jarrett all got hurt so we're going to get Sid Vicious vs. Benoit for the World Title, which is being announced the night of the show. Other than that, Russo is GONE (pause for the parade) due to his solutions to the gaping holes caused by these injuries, which I'll get to later. Let's get to it.

The announcers immediately talk about the changes to the World Title match and show us clips of the injuries occurring, including the Goldberg superkick to Hart and Benoit's Swan Dive off the top of the cage this past week on Nitro to knock Jarrett out. It's interesting that the headbutt hit the arm but still rattled Jeff that much.

We look at the Revolution attacking Konnan during the pre-game show, which somehow leads to the new Triple Threat Theater. Instead of Jarrett vs. Benoit in a 2/3 falls match, Kidman of all people will be running a Revolution gauntlet in the three gimmick matches, including against Revolution's mystery partner.

We run down the card to fill in even more time. Apparently Page vs. Bagwell is last man standing.

Also earlier tonight, David Flair and Crowbar have attacked Vampiro, meaning it's no longer Flair vs. Vampiro but instead it's a three way dance with Crowbar added.

After six and a half minutes of recaps and explaining the card, we're ready to go.

### Kidman vs. Dean Malenko

This is Catch As Catch Can, which was originally the Dungeon Match and means you win by pin, submission or your opponent leaving the ring. You know, because Kidman vs. Malenko needs a wacky stipulation. Dean takes him into the corner to start but Kidman drives him in just as quickly.

That goes nowhere as Malenko takes him down into a headscissors, only to bail into the corner when Kidman comes up swinging. A jackknife cover gets two for Dean but Kidman rolls away and fires off right hands, sending Dean rolling to the floor....to give Kidman the win. Either Dean screwed up on a pretty unique rule or he wanted out as fast as he could. That's it for Dean in WCW.

Clip of Vampiro powerbombing Crowbar for a pin on Thunder. The post match stuff that set up the match tonight isn't included but why bother with something like that?

We recap Daffney being all psycho and hooking up with David Flair, who then joined forces with Crowbar. This somehow tied into David's godfather Arn Anderson, who helped them win the Tag Team Titles. Vampiro and the Misfits hit on Daffney so she kneed them in the groin, setting up tonight's match. In theory this was going to be Vampiro and someone against the champs, but it was changed to a three way on the pre-show for no logical reason.

Vampiro is about to address what's going on but Masahiro Chono of all people interrupts and yells in Japanese.

David, Crowbar and Daffney promise to break Vampiro's bones and rip off his flesh.

### Vampiro vs. David Flair vs. Crowbar

It's a big brawl to start but Vampiro faceplants both of them to take over early on. There's no reason for Flair and Crowbar to fight each other aside from general insanity so this should be a tag match like it

was supposed to be. Vampiro's suplex is countered into a northern lights suplex for two but a spinning kick puts Crowbar down as well. There's a suicide dive for Crowbar as Daffney bounces up and down on the bottom rope.

David's chops have no effect as the announcers talk about Ric Flair being on some house shows but not appearing on TV. Vampiro chops David a few times and throws him onto Crowbar. The Rock Bottom on the floor is broken up by Crowbar's flip dive for a huge crash. A big splash from the apron crushes Vampiro again as the Tag Team Champions are only kind of working together.

Back in and Crowbar plants him with a German suplex, continuing to make me wonder why he's stuck in this story. Vampiro one ups him with a release superplex, prompting about forty seconds of replays of the match's big spots. David remembers he's in the match and gets two off a vertical suplex as this becomes the handicap match it was supposed to be. That goes nowhere as Vampiro superkicks both of them down and plants Crowbar with a Rock Bottom for two.

More double teaming gives the champs control and a top rope splash gets two for Crowbar. David slaps on a figure four that makes Dusty Rhodes look like Ric himself but Crowbar goes for a cover, starting a brawl between the champs. Back up again and Vampiro cleans house, sidesteps a charging David to send him into Daffney and the Nail in the Coffin gives Vampiro the pin.

**Rating:** D+. Total mess here but it was fun at times. Like I said though, the booking was all over the place and it was just a spotfest, but the bigger problem is the Tag Team Champions just lost a glorified handicap match in ten minutes. Why this wasn't a tag match isn't clear, especially when you have all those people on the roster not doing a thing. David continues to be completely worthless.

Buff Bagwell arrives.

The Mamalukes are ready for the Harris Brothers in a bonus match.

Harris Brothers vs. Mamalukes

Ron shoves Johnny the Bull into the corner to start but eats a spinning kick to the face which sounded like it made some solid contact. Back in and Ron runs over Vito (in his sleeveless, shiny neon green shirt) but Johnny comes in with some right hands to the ribs to take over. Vito drops an elbow low, only to have Ron take Johnny out to the floor and whip him into the barricade.

A big side slam plants Johnny back inside and it's off to Don for a lame chinlock. The Twins maintain control and hit Johnny low as I'm trying to figure out who to cheer for in this match. Vito gets goaded into the ring so Ron can choke in the corner before throwing the Bull to the floor. This match just keeps going and the fans chant DOA. Vito breaks up a cover off a DDT and crotches Don, only to have Disco shoves him off by mistake, helping Vito with a top rope clothesline to Ron for the pin.

**Rating:** D-. This is one of those matches that just kept going for no reason other than they needed to fill in some more time. On top of that it's a bonus match so there isn't even a story going on until the ending where Disco didn't mean to help the Mafia guys win. Really dull stuff here but either team would be an upgrade for the Tag Team Titles.

Madusa rants to Spice about Oklahoma.

#### Cruiserweight Title: Madusa vs. Oklahoma

Madusa is defending but Oklahoma has the Cruiserweight Title belt because this story is stupid. Oklahoma vows to prove that men are the dominant sex and runs down all the horrible housewives here in Cincinnati.

"Madusa, get those silicone balls out here so I can bounce them back to the kitchen." Madusa comes out in a bikini with a loincloth as she fires off kicks to start.

Some hair drags put Madusa down but Oklahoma (wearing a singlet with his name on it in the WWF Attitude logo style) avoids a charge, only to have Madusa fall onto his crotch. A pair of middle rope missile dropkicks drop Oklahoma but he comes right back with a DDT because he's somehow better than the best American female wrestler of this era. Spice takes the barbecue sauce away from Oklahoma and here's Asya to help out.

Not that it matters as Oklahoma pulls the loincloth down and rolls Madusa up for the pin and the Cruiserweight (Ferrara weighed about 300lbs) Title. Too short to rate, but the man that said he was better than all women just pinned the female champion despite her having two people to help her. Somehow, this is supposed to be entertaining rather than, you know, horrible and disgusting.

The girls pour the sauce down his singlet post match. That's an appropriate response after being cheated out of a title by a chauvinist announcer whose entire character was originally built around mocking an announcer. All hail the Powers That Be!

Hardcore Champion Brian Knobbs credits Fit Finlay for giving him back the Eye of the Tiger. He'll beat up Meng and Smiley tonight and then take out Finlay to become the new master.

Hardcore Title: Brian Knobbs vs. Fit Finlay vs. Meng vs. Norman Smiley

Knobbs is defending. This is called Four The Hard Way and I'm sure it's going to be the hard way as opposed to something easy like gum surgery. Norman comes out in riot gear. Brian takes over with a bunch of trashcan lid shots before double teaming Meng with Finlay's help. Meng shrugs it off and knocks Norman down (Heenan: "RUN!") before everyone goes to the floor. Norman does a kind of leg sweep to put Brian down but Finlay blasts him in the head with a trashcan.

A headbutt with the riot helmet puts Norman down again and it's table time. Knobbs and Finlay hit Meng with the trashcan and it's time to split up because this match needs to be doubled. Thankfully it doesn't last long as Norman and Finlay come back to ringside with Smiley being dropped face first onto a chair. Meng's cover on Brian is broken up and Norman is left alone with the champ. Instead of covering though he stops to dance, allowing Knobbs to hit him with the riot shield to retain. Tenay says Knobbs is a force to be reckoned with a mere four days after winning the title.

**Rating:** D-. You can see the problem with this division in this match alone: they're not doing anything. This is just the weapons title with people who have nothing else to do filling in the spots. At least with

the WWF version, the hardcore guys were entertaining and had enough charisma to carry the division. This is everyone but Norman treating it seriously and making it a very dull sit every time they're out there.

Meng cleans house post match.

### Kidman vs. Perry Saturn

Bunkhouse Brawl, which means hardcore (that sounds familiar), even though I don't think either of these two have ever been in a bunkhouse in their entire lives because most people aren't cowboys. Saturn headbutts him down to start and plants Kidman with a gorilla press for two. He crotches Kidman on top and hits a springboard clothesline (kind of at least) to drive Kidman to the floor for a big crash right on his side.

Thankfully with Kidman's hip still in one piece, Saturn knocks his head off with a clothesline and gets two off a legdrop. Saturn rips the shirt apart and starts cranking on the arm. A beal with the torn shirt sends Kidman down again before Saturn remember this is a hardcore match and pulls out a table. Kidman finally scores with a dive as Tony and Heenan plan starting a table business. There's a comedy gimmick in there somewhere.

Back in and Saturn takes over again with a top rope elbow getting two. Saturn busts out a layout powerbomb (yes he can!) for two but misses a moonsault. The BK Bomb gets two but Saturn launches him over the top and out through the table for two on the floor. They head up top with Saturn loading up a superbomb, only to get backdropped down. It's time to go back to the drawing board with another powerbomb but Kidman faceplants him down (maybe he can't) for the pin. That's it for Saturn in WCW.

**Rating:** D+. This was a glorified Saturn squash until the ending came out of nowhere. Kidman took a good beating and it came off like the Jeff Hardy formula, which isn't the worst idea, but Saturn destroying him for ten minutes with the hardcore rules barely meaning anything.

And now, Stevie Ray goes back to the hood. Heenan's words. Stevie talks to some old friends and says this is where he and Booker come from. He says a pile of cardboard boxes is home to someone and this is where

they're from. Some people Stevie knows asks where Booker has been but Stevie says they just forgot about this place. I can't believe I'm saying this, but this was actually really well done.

Stevie says it's done tonight.

### Booker T. vs. Stevie Ray

Before the match Booker, wearing a red vest with sleeves so skinny they look like suspenders, says he's going to give Stevie the whipping he deserves for saying Booker has forgotten where he came from. Stevie tries to get in a cheap shot but Booker ducks underneath and nails a spinning kick to the face. A big clothesline drops Booker and the match slows way down.

They head outside with Stevie slowly walking around the ring until Booker fires off some right hands. Back in and Stevie gets in a thumb to the eyes and hooks on a chinlock. A backdrop puts Booker down and we cut to the crowd for no apparent reason. Booker escapes the Slapjack and scores with the Book End, but Ahmed Johnson runs in for the DQ.

**Rating:** D. Booker is good, but carrying Stevie Ray is almost impossible. There's only so much you can do when you're in a story this lame and we passed that point as soon as the bell rang. Really dull match but I was a huge fan of Ahmed Johnson so somehow I can live with this.

Stevie names him Big T. Unfortunately, I remember where this is leading and it's going to get even worse.

Sid is ready to fight his friend for the World Title.

### Tank Abbott vs. Jerry Flynn

Here's Tenay's recap: "This past Monday, they were put inside the same jail cell and even that couldn't keep them apart." Abbott punches, Flynn kicks, they trade some lame submission holds and Tank punches him out for the pin in less than 100 seconds.

We recap Page vs. Bagwell, which is over accusations that Bagwell slept with Page's wife Kimberly and Buff implying that Kimberly has been with



the entire locker room. In other words, it's over whether or not Kimberly is a sl\*\*.

### Diamond Dallas Page vs. Buff Bagwell

Last man standing. Buff punches him out to the floor and they're quickly in the crowd with Buff punching him over what appear to be hockey boards. Back to ringside with Bagwell still in control but Page comes back with a neckbreaker. The Diamond Cutter is broken up and Bagwell goes outside for a dive from Page. They both go down off a single right hand and fight near the WCW.com station.

Both guys throw a monitor and Tony thinks it's hilarious. A keyboard shot to the head puts Bagwell down but Buff comes back with an elbow off the set through the table. It's Page's turn to no sell and they head back to the ring as there hasn't been a count yet. Page, bleeding from the side, crotches Bagwell against the post. Even more no selling ensues as Bagwell shrugs off a Diamond Cutter and hits a Vader Bomb for eight.

Buff DDT's Page for seven and it's Blockbuster time. The fans react, so is Buff supposed to be the good guy here? Page eats Blockbuster but gets up at nine. Bagwell pulls a police baton out to beat on Page for nine, only to walk into a Diamond Cutter. It's actually Bagwell up first with Page not being able to answer the count. So yeah, Page lost by hitting his finisher. That's certainly different.

**Rating:** D+. That ending is really confusing stuff as you would think Buff could have just hit the Blockbuster for the win. They were trying to play up the idea that Buff blocked the move but he went down like anyone else would have. Really weird ending to a boring but not horrible match.

Kimberly comes out and watches as Page beats Buff down.

### Kidman vs. ???

This is in Caged Heat, which means Hell in a Cell. Shane Douglas comes out to introduce the mystery opponent: the Wall. Yeah it's Kidman vs. the Wall in an unannounced match inside Hell in a Cell. They fight over a chair on the floor to start with Wall getting the better of it. Kidman is

tossed into the cage a few times as the crowd is just gone. They head inside with Wall getting two off a clothesline. A sunset bomb out of the corner gets the same for Kidman and he counters a suplex into a DDT for the same. Kidman goes up top and dives right into a chokeslam for the pin.

**Rating:** F. This is another instance where I can sum up the problem in one sentence: a Hell in a Cell match that lasted five minutes That's ignoring the fact that these two have no personal issues and Wall is just there because Shane is still injured and you can't put Asya out there.

### Kevin Nash vs. Terry Funk

Hardcore. Again. If Nash wins he's the Commissioner but if Funk wins, the NWO is gone. Nash jumps him in the aisle and throws in some big right hands, followed by a chair to the back. There's the Jackknife through the table but Nash goes inside to talk trash instead of covering. He tells Funk that he can keep his job as Commissioner if he can get back in, but as soon as Terry gets back in, Nash says he's a liar.

Another clothesline puts Funk on the floor and he crashes on his head to make it look even more effective. Terry nails him with a chair a few times to limited avail so Nash chairs him down again. A DDT plants Nash and Funk slowly slugs away before setting up some more chairs. That earns Funk a low blow and a powerbomb through the opened chairs to give Nash the power.

**Rating:** D. So Nash is the Commissioner after spending weeks beating up the lame duck Commissioner. I'm so glad we got to sit through this, though at least Nash is somewhat relevant to the product and has been around longer than a few weeks. I can also see why Flair wasn't interested in coming back for something like that.

Nash officially takes over at midnight.

Arn Anderson, guest referee for the main event, basically says none of this matters as it's all about getting Nash out of power. He stumbles over his lines here which is something you never see from him.

## WCW World Title: Chris Benoit vs. Sid Vicious

Feeling out process to start with Sid shoving Benoit into the corner but being nice enough to help him up. Some of the roster comes out to watch at the arena entrance. Sid shoves Benoit to the floor by the throat and it's time to regroup. Back in and Benoit gets smart by going after the knee by dropkicking the leg our bringing Sid down.

With almost the entire locker room watching (and looking like they're at a funeral), Benoit takes it to the floor and crushing the leg between the post and the steps. A Figure Four has Sid in even more trouble but he turns it over, sending Benoit to the ropes for a break. Sid is wrestling as the face here but Benoit is only the heel by default.

Benoit snap suplexes him for one and then puts on the bridging Indian Deathlock to make Sid scream. The hold has to be broken because of the pressure it puts on Benoit's neck so Sid can try a quick comeback, only to eat another dropkick to the knee. The rolling Germans are countered with a powerslam for two and the fans actually show some signs of life.

A long leg lock has Sid in even more trouble and a release German sets up the Swan Dive but Sid powers out at one. The chokeslam gets two due to Benoit's foot being under the rope. There's the Crossface for an immediate tap to give Benoit the title. Anderson wasn't a factor in the entire match.

**Rating:** C. Watchable match here with Sid getting in almost nothing.

That's the big key here: Benoit took him apart and then made Sid submit (unlike Goldberg in an interesting bit). Unfortunately there was almost no emotion or drama here as it was just about who was going to win and there was no reason to be upset with either guy as champion.

Replays show that Sid's foot was under the rope, which was their out to take the title off Benoit once he quit.

Benoit praises Sid for a great fight and talks about seeing the Dynamite Kid when he was eleven years old. Anderson comes in and shakes Benoit's hand. Cue Nash to say he's going to make Benoit's life a nightmare starting at midnight.

**Overall Rating:** D. Let's get the important part out of the way first: this was a big, big improvement over the Russo shows. It may not have been good or even decent, but there's a huge difference between a show making me scream at the screen fifteen years later and just being pretty lame. There's only one decent match on the show and only one moment that matters, but at least it's a nice feel good moment.

The interesting thing here is that you might like the show better without seeing the build. It's a totally different show than they set up due to the injuries and changes to the card, but that doesn't mean it's anything good. The new version of WCW starting tomorrow night is going to be....I guess the word is interesting, but the roster being depleted all at once is one of the final nails in the coffin, which we'll get to on Monday. Bad show, but a boring bad instead of infuriating.

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# Thunder – January 12, 2000: It's Killed My Ability To Speak

Thunder

Date: January 12, 2000

Location: Civic Center, Erie, Pennsylvania

Attendance: 3,947

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson, Mike Tenay

We're officially on Wednesdays now as Thunder goes running away from Smackdown as fast as it can. It's the final show before Souled Out, which isn't going to wind up meaning anything as the top half of the card is going to be thrown out the window due to a bunch of injuries. Let's get to it.

We open with clips from Nitro this week. The old guys are prominently featured.

Bret Hart arrives separately from the NWO.

#### Vampiro vs. Crowbar

To set the tone for this show, Tony brings up the Old Age Outlaws and Scott's immediate response is "Oh you didn't know." Vampiro jumps David Flair during the entrances and goes after Crowbar early on. David gets planted with a Rock Bottom on the floor but Crowbar pops back up with a moonsault to the floor to take both of them down.

Crowbar hits a slingshot splash for two but Vampiro plants him with another Rock Bottom. Some kicks set up a pose but Crowbar plants him with a German suplex followed by a slingshot legdrop. Back up and Vampiro gets crotched on top, only to counter a hurricanrana into a superbomb for the pin. Short but entertaining while it lasted.

Vampiro gets beaten down post match until Arn Anderson comes out to talk to David. Crowbar goes after Arn and gets laid out.

Time to run down the card.

Here's Bret Hart with something to say. The crowd has a right to boo him right now because he's let them all down. He doesn't like the way the NWO takes all those shortcuts so the NWO is out and the pink and black attack is back. Bret tells the NWO where they can stick it and here they come to the stage. Nash says Bret hasn't learned a thing "since New York" because he's still too stupid for his own good.

The crowd may want heroes, but Bret could have become a god in the NWO. Bret needs to forget about this Canadian hero bull because hard work doesn't pay. That would be one of those shoot comments that isn't meant to be a shoot comment. Nash offers Bret a chance to come back to the team right now, but Bret swears a bit more. He'll go through the NWO one by one starting tonight so Nash promises to end Hart's career. It's a nice idea, even though I'm not entirely sure why Bret has had a change of attitude.

After a break, Bret is sitting in a room with a ball bat.

The Old Age Outlaws are watching on a monitor. I guess that passes for interesting now.

#### Hardcore Title: Brian Knobbs vs. Norman Smiley

Norman is defending and this is taking place outside, but Norman it's too cold. He's finally forced outside and gets jumped by Knobbs, who nails him with a bunch of weapons. Norman comes back by throwing him into a wall and they hit each other with trashcans and a metal sheet. Cue a car to run Norman down, allowing Knobbs to hit him with a shovel, because RUNNING HIM OVER WITH A CAR isn't enough, for the pin and the title, because Brian Knobbs is a better choice to be a champion than the entertaining Smiley, and doing this four days before a four way title match makes total sense.

The NWO kicks Bret's door down.

Here's the Revolution with something to say. They're ready for the big showdown with the Filthy Animals on Sunday and Shane might even get in the match himself. Malenko promises to raise the Revolution flag on Sunday over the bodies of the Filthy Animals. Saturn talks about spinning wheels and nearly gets into it with Asya until Shane calms them down and tells Asya not to screw this up.

The NWO has Bret and carry him through the back. The Old Age Outlaws are STILL watching all this. I'm still trying to figure out why this is supposed to be interesting.

Jerry Flynn and Tank Abbott get arrested for fighting.

#### Madusa vs. Oklahoma

Non-title, but this is an evening gown match. Oklahoma comes out in a dress and carrying the Cruiserweight Title, so here's Miss Hancock to shake her head at him. Madusa comes up from behind and kicks Oklahoma down before they whip each other into the steps. He can't get the barbecue sauce taped to his leg so he slams Madusa and tries to get it out again. With that taking way too long, Madusa suplexes him down and strips his dress off for the win.

As if that's not enough, Oklahoma gets the bottle loose and nails Madusa, rips off the top of her dress and pours the sauce over her. This is in no way symbolic of anything whatsoever.

The NWO burns Bret's gear.

Madusa yells a lot, the producer yells clear, the segment ends.

#### Midnight vs. Booker T. vs. Stevie Ray

It's an elimination match. Why you ask? I don't know, but I'm assuming Oklahoma in a dress pouring barbecue sauce over Madusa's chest will explain it. Midnight comes out first but we see Stevie jumping Booker backstage. Stevie comes out and beats Midnight into the corner for a knee to the ribs and right hands to the face. A clothesline and ax kick set up a powerslam as Midnight has had no offense.

Cue Booker who punches Stevie to the floor but Stevie wants a mic. He's going to leave now and since this is an elimination match, Booker now has to beat up Midnight. So after we had the regular man on woman violence, we now get man on woman violence against the man's will. Can we please get rid of Russo so we don't have to watch his weird fetish stuff anymore?

Booker grabs a headlock before putting Midnight down with a few shoulders. He doesn't want to follow up though so they stumble around until Midnight scores with a dropkick. Booker hits the ax kick but Stevie low bridges him to the floor and blasts him with a slap jack. He throws

Booker inside and tells Midnight to pin him, but Midnight pulls Booker on top of her to give him the win.

**Rating:** F. So we had a man beating up a woman, a man reluctantly fighting a woman, and then a woman laying down and pulling a man on top of her. I'm sure Russo and Ferrara loved it because they seem to hate women in any form and good for them for getting to enjoy themselves for a few minutes while everyone continues to watch anything else.

Midnight dropkicks Stevie post match, but since that might mean a lowly woman got one up on a MAN, Stevie slap jacks her to put her back in her place.

Jerry Flynn is put in his cell and Tank Abbott jumps him. Because they're cell mates. It's WACKY!

Kanyon is ready for his champagne on a pole match. Well of course he is.

Nash is going to cut Bret's hair.

Funk sends Zbyszko to find out if Bret has had his head shaved, because he doesn't care enough to go find out himself. And that's the boss people.

#### Chris Kanyon vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Champagne bottle on a pole. Kanyon slugs him down as Bigelow gets inside but Bam Bam nails an elbow to the face. An early climb is countered with a powerbomb from Kanyon (looked better than you would think) but Bigelow crotches him to break up a bottle attempt. Bigelow nails a belly to back and falling headbutt as they're trying this wrestling thing for a change. This time it's Bigelow getting crotched as he goes up, allowing Kanyon to Russian legsweep him down from the ropes to put both guys down.

It's Bigelow up first but Kanyon's girls get on the apron to break up Greetings From Asbury Park. Your good guy tries to kiss the girl but Kanyon gets up for a save. Kanyon pulls down the bottle and dives into a right hand to the head. Bigelow grabs the bottle, throws it down, and headbutts Kanyon between the legs. Greetings From Asbury Park ends this.



**Rating:** D+. Somehow this is probably the match of the night, even though they ignored the gimmick of the match. You can almost cringe in advance whenever a woman is on screen these days though and it has nothing to do with their performances. Somehow we've reached the point where Vince having Trish bark like a dog is a lot easier to sit through than what's going on here.

Post match Luger, still dressed as Sting, comes out and nails Bigelow with a ball bat. Luger loads up a Scorpion Deathlock (oh I'd pay to see him try that move) but a crow appears at ringside to screw off Luger and Liz. Bigelow gets up and yells at Luger, earning him a champagne bottle shot to the head.

Zbyszko and Orndorff look for Bret.

Package on Page vs. Bagwell, which makes sense, even though they never actually showed what started the thing.

Kimberly comes out to talk about various challenges before Gene gets to the point: why are she and Page having issues? Apparently Page doesn't like Kimberly getting too involved with all the people at work but this isn't about Bagwell. Gene: "How are things in the bedroom at home?" I'm wrapping this up quickly: Kimberly says this is private and doesn't refute anything Bagwell has said other than she's taller than he says.

MY GOODNESS stop treating the women on these shows like this. Madusa is stripped and covered in sauce, Midnight is beaten up and blamed for splitting up a team and now Kimberly is basically called a sl\*\* who has been with every member of the locker room as Gene asks her about her sex life. This gets more and more ridiculous every day and it's getting sickening.

Sid and Benoit are ready for tonight as well as Sunday.

Sid Vicious/Chris Benoit vs. Jeff Jarrett/Kevin Nash

Jeff promises to take Benoit apart on Sunday but gets cut off by Sid. It's a big brawl to start with Benoit taking Nash to the floor as Sid hammers on Jeff in the corner. Well it's not like Jeff can look any worse

at this point. A big boot sets up a chokeslam but Nash comes in off the apron to break it up. Nash and Sid pair off as Jeff and Benoit fight to the back of the arena. This is firmly in the "it's technically a match" category. Benoit comes back for a save but gets double teamed as the referee tries to keep this straight.

Jeff puts on the sleeper and of course gets reversed. He does however mix things up by jawbreaking his way out instead of using a suplex. Benoit grabs the ropes to avoid a dropkick and catapults Jeff into the corner. Nash breaks up the Crossface and everything breaks down again. They send Benoit to the floor and Nash blasts Sid with the US Title. Jeff tries the same thing on Benoit but eats a suplex. The Swan Dive is broken up and Nash shoves Benoit onto the belt, setting up the Stroke for the pin.

**Rating:** D. Total Attitude Era style main event here with neither team looking particularly good. I'm still not sure why I'm supposed to care about Sid vs. Hart on Sunday when they've barely interacted or why Nash being commissioner is going to be interesting (you know he's going over Funk) but the wrestling isn't helping anything.

Scott Steiner is out cold under a table and Bret is gone.

Bret, covered in bruises, walks outside but says he isn't leaving like that. Ignore his hair clearly under the back of his hat.

It's time for our big closing segment with Bret coming to the ring with a pipe. He wants the NWO out here right now so here are Nash and Jarrett with ball bats. Remember when people fought with their fists instead of metal objects? Bret gets beaten down so Anderson (with a bucket. A bucket?) and Funk (branding iron) come out. Didn't Funk say he didn't care? The old guys clean house but Funk thinks something is up.

Anderson throws the bucket of water on Bret, cleaning the bruises off his face. As you should have seen coming, Bret takes off his shirt and reveals an NWO shirt (because OF COURSE). Cue the New Age Outlaws (as Tenay calls them) but they're quickly taken down. Sid and Benoit come out and take beatings as well, only to have Funk hit Nash low (because Sid and Benoit are worthless when compared to a legend like Funk) and go for the branding iron to end the show.

### Overall Rating:

SLRAMYBIBAWRPFBYAAWHNWHHTAOGWCAYOPPBATETGAJAEACDJWMAARATSTCFYHMPDAWSISGYO  
OAJAWFTDWRISIAYRHMDYRHDTTSOF.

For so long Russo and may you be impaled by a wild rhinoceros, preferably female, because you are a woman hating neanderthal who has treated a once great wrestling company as your own personal playground because you aren't talented enough to get a job anywhere else and couldn't do jack without McMahon, Austin and Rock around to save the company from your horrible movie plots disguised as wrestling stories. I'm so glad you're out of a job and wait for the day when reality sets in and you realize how much damage you really have done to the sport of wrestling.

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## Reviewing the Review – Monday Night Raw: June 1, 2015

We're past Elimination Chamber (I won't be doing a Reviewing the Review for that as I pretty much said everything I was going to say on the last podcast) and less than two weeks away from Money in the Bank, which means we already know most of the people in the ladder match because we have to get there as soon as possible. Tonight is the first part of the rushed

build to the show so let's get to it.

We open with the Authority (YAY!) to complain about Ambrose stealing the title last night but get Roman Reigns instead. A ladder match is set up for Money in the Bank with Rollins defending against Ambrose and Seth saying he doesn't need the Authority. This would be the teenage rebellion years against Mommy and Daddy Helmsley. Stephanie went into full on evil Stephanie mode against Reigns but HHH called her off and said Reigns had to defend his Money in the Bank spot right now.

This wasn't the worst opening segment as thankfully they kept it to the point and didn't let Stephanie take Roman apart for a change. Ambrose vs. Rollins was set up in a hurry but you have to do that on the two week build. It's not a bad way of getting things done but, as usual, Stephanie added nothing here.

Reigns successfully defended his spot against King Barrett because Barrett can take yet another loss right? Then he successfully defended it against Mark Henry because who cares about Henry? Then he successfully defended it against Bray Wyatt because his push is as up and down as Barrett's. This was the old Chris Jericho Intercontinental Title marathon idea (also involving Stephanie actually) and it worked well enough. If they build up Reigns as someone who has to keep overcoming the odds, they might get people to care about him for a change.

Ryback didn't have a match against Miz because Big Show returned and set up a title program. I can live with Big Show in this role FAR easier than in the main event, though I'm still not thrilled with seeing him. If he's just there to put Ryback over though, everything should be fine for the most part. If Ryback can Shell Shock him, the place will come unglued. Well probably mostly glued together but there will be cracks.

Now we get the really good moment of the night as Kevin Owens came out and delivered an amazing victory speech about how he proved himself to be the better man last night as he pinned John Cena in the middle of the ring. Owens talked about his son being a John Cena fan and how last night, he defeated Super Cena in the middle of the ring because he's a real man and role model who does everything he promises to do.

Cena came out and gave his Serious Cena speech about how Owens isn't a real man because he got so obsessed with being a role model that he stopped acting like a man is supposed to. Cena talked about how he does things for kids, including one in the crowd wearing Cena gear and holding a sign saying "I'm beating cancer." I've heard people saying this was faked or staged and it just makes me shake my head. Not everything is some concocted work people. Stop looking for things that aren't there and enjoy a cool moment. Anyway John says he won't give up and is ready for Money in the Bank. Outstanding.

New Day came out to talk about having Kofi winning Money in the Bank and retaining their Tag Team Titles, complete with sound effects. This led to Kofi losing to Dolph Ziggler and New Day losing a six man tag to Ziggler and the Prime Time Players, who would go on to become #1 contenders (in case that wasn't COMPLETELY OBVIOUS ALREADY) a few days later on Smackdown.

Now we get to the stupid part of the show, as Nikki Bella successfully defended her Divas Title against Paige by seemingly turning heel yet again (assuming you considered her a full on face) by having her sister do Twin Magic with her. Yes, Brie Bella, who is mostly pale by comparison and lacking various surgical augmentations and with different color hair, is apparently still close enough to her sister's looks that the referee couldn't tell the difference between the two of them. I've heard that this was damage control from the whole "all black wrestlers look alike" backlash from Payback and that's not the most out there theory in the world.

Sheamus beat up Orton with a chair for a DQ in a Money in the Bank preview match. I'm a fan of both guys but these two have some of the most horrible main event level chemistry I've seen in a long time. They can have good matches against almost anyone else but they just don't work against each other.

Rusev said he was a broken man. My heart is the thing that's breaking.

Neville beat Bo Dallas in a shortened version of their Elimination Chamber match.

Ambrose came out to save Reigns to end the show after the Wyatt match.

Other than Cena and Owens, this show was pretty uneventful. It's part of the problem of setting up your major matches in the first ten minutes: after that, what else is there to do for the rest of the night? Well other than have non-twins act like twins all over again because referees are that stupid. This show was much more dull than last week, but I'll take dull over rage inducing any day. I'm looking forward to the night after Money in the Bank so we can FINALLY get to a normal schedule again because this is starting to get old.

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# Smackdown – June 4, 2015: Fighting All The Way To The Bank

Smackdown

Date: June 4, 2015

Location: Toyota Center, Houston, Texas

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Byron Saxton, Jerry Lawler

In something I could get used to, the big story tonight continues to be Kevin Owens, who will be issuing an NXT Title Open Challenge in the same vein as John Cena's US Title Open Challenges. Owens has only had one match on the main roster so far so it's going to be interesting to see how they treat him here. Let's get to it.

We open with stills of Sunday's main event with Ambrose winning via DQ but leaving with the title anyway.

Here's Rollins to get things going, of course without the title but carrying a chair. A year ago to the day, he took a chair to Ambrose and Reigns to dismantle the Shield. Rollins sits down in the chair and talks about being asked "why" so many times over the last year. Why did he do what he did and destroy what he created? From the day he arrived, he said his goal was to be the very best in this industry.

After all the time in the Shield, he got tired of sharing the glory with two chumps beneath him. That led him to the Authority, who groomed him to be the future of the WWE. Then he won the Money in the Bank ladder match all by himself. Around the time of the Royal Rumble, he had a vision to defeat Brock Lesnar and Roman Reigns at the same time. To execute a plan like that took a genius (So people like Kane and Jack Swagger are geniuses?) because now the Beast is off licking his wounds and Reigns is living in Seth's shadow.

Rollins stands here as the greatest champion of all time but with no title around his waist. That brings him to Dean Ambrose, who wants all of the fans to think that stealing a title makes you a champion. Well allegedly it made him the Intercontinental Champion so why not try it with the big belt too? Rollins can take care of Ambrose without any member of the Authority, including Stephanie or HHH. Cue Ambrose on the screen, standing under a ladder, to say Rollins either has a bad memory or is a liar.

The fans saw Ambrose pin him on Sunday and now he knows the Authority is going to send everyone that they can to keep this title from slipping

through their fingers. At Elimination Chamber, Ambrose climbed to the top of the mountain and at Money in the Bank, he'll climb to the top of the ladder and claim the WWE World Heavyweight Championship that rightfully belongs to him or he'll die trying.

This right here was a great example of why the Authority really isn't needed most of the time. Yeah they helped set up the story, but this was one of the better promos these two have ever had, which happens to come off the heels of another of their best promos ever last week. The Authority bogs so much stuff down with HHH taking twice as long as any human to speak and Stephanie has to get in her buzz words because saying "WWE World Heavyweight Championship" and "Money in the Bank pay per view" is how you sell a show instead of letting the wrestlers who hate each other talk the fans into the building.

#### Prime Time Players vs. Ascension vs. Lucha Dragons

#1 contenders match. Darren and Sin get things going with Cara being taken down to the mat but nipping up to his feet. Off to Kalisto who eats a clothesline for two as the fans are just silent here. Viktor tags himself in to stay on Kalisto as New Day is watching in the back. Kalisto kicks Konnor out to the floor and sends Viktor out to the floor as well, setting up a nice double suicide dive to get the fans into things a bit.

We take a break and come back with Ascension working over Kalisto, including Viktor dropping an elbow for two. Kalisto finally gets a boot up in the corner and takes Viktor down with a middle rope ankle scissors. Saxton: "Kalisto is like a real life Sonic the Hedgehog." No Byron, he isn't.

Ascension breaks up a hot tag attempt but Kalisto knees out of a delayed vertical suplex, allowing Titus to tag himself in and clean house. Everything breaks down with Titus kicking Konnor in the face and throwing Kalisto at him to put both guys on the floor. The pumphandle powerslam from Titus is enough to pin Viktor at 9:29.

**Rating:** C. Fun triple threat match here though the continued depush of Ascension makes my head hurt. They're a good power team and we even got a nice little tease of that on Sunday, so it's time for them to get pinned



again here. To say they were in trouble coming out of the gates is an understatement, but WWE hasn't done them any favors.

Renee Young asks New Day about their future now that they know their #1 contenders. Woods continues to be amazing with a line of "Renee, our future is as bright as a morning sun.....rising over a new day." Their plan for the Prime Time Players: dispose of the Prime Time Players and their greed, clap and then watch Kofi Kingston win Money in the Bank. Kane comes in and makes Kofi vs. Neville for tonight.

Sonic auditions.

### Ryback vs. Stardust

Non-title. Ryback throws him into the corner to start but runs into a boot to the face. A reverse DDT gets two for Stardust and a running knee to the face gets the same. Off to the chinlock for a bit before it's the Meat Hook and Shell Shock to give Ryback the pin at 2:11. Nothing to see here.

We recap the Bellas using Twin Magic on Raw, which is still a horrible idea.

Renee Young brings Paige out for a chat. Paige says it feels like things are never going to change around here because the Twin Magic has been done for years. The Bellas come out here every week and talk about giving Divas a chance but they know it's all about them and they make sure to hold the rest of the Divas back. Their lives are all about being celebrities but Paige's life is consumed with what happens in that ring. She'll never buy into the idea of if you can't beat em, join em. Instead, it's up to her to change the world she's in. Good stuff here but it's the same story AJ did before the Bellas took over the division.

Harper and Rowan say they're different because they're family.

Stills of Owens vs. Cena on Sunday.

Here's Kevin Owens for the NXT Title Open Challenge. Before the match, Owens talks about everyone knowing him after what he did this past Sunday. He's the man who defeated John Cena in his first match in WWE.

However, Owens' son is still a John Cena fan because he's seven years old and doesn't know any better. On Monday, Owens heard the emotion in Cena's voice and learned something: John Cena is completely delusional.

Cena actually believes all the nonsense he spews out. Cena stood out here and said Owens isn't a real man, so there is no way Kevin can let his son be influenced like this anymore. The fairy tales that Cena force feeds kids around the world have to stop and Owens is glad to be the one to step up and do just that at Money in the Bank. That brings him to tonight and the NXT Title Open Challenge starts right....well he isn't wearing a watch so just get out here.

#### NXT Title: Kevin Owens vs. Zack Ryder

We even get big match intros. Owens is all over him to start but a single forearm sends him out to the floor. Ryder is right back on him but Owens knocks Zack into the barricade. Back in and Ryder scores with a middle rope dropkick but the Pop Up Powerbomb ends this in 1:12.

Owens gives him the Cannonball and another powerbomb post match.

Sheamus enjoyed giving Orton a beating on Monday and he's going to do it to everyone in the Money in the Bank ladder match in ten days before going on to become WWE Champion. Simple yet effective again.

Tough Enough videos.

#### Neville vs. Kofi Kingston

This has potential. Kofi kicks him down to start but Neville flips forward into the cross body out of the corner. Lawler: "Neville has so many moves that when I try to call his matches, I'm more confused than a chameleon in a bag of Skittles." That's Lawler's one clever line all year. Kofi sends him to the floor for some cheap shots from the New Day and we take a break.

Back with Kofi getting two off a reverse suplex but Neville kicks him right back. A standing shooting star gets two on Kofi and Neville plants him with a tornado DDT. Big E. pulls Kofi away before the Red Arrow can launch, but Neville just dives on both of them with a big moonsault. Back

in and Neville counters a rollup into one of his own for the surprise pin at 8:04.

**Rating:** C+. Neville continues to impress and it's cool to see him fight off all three guys and pick up a win with something other than the Red Arrow. You don't want to overuse the big spots and risk burning the fans out on them, because there comes a point where even Neville can't top himself with the high spots.

It's time for MizTV with special guest Lana, who has her own Titantron video. We look back at the breakup and Rusev being all devastated as a result. Lana says Rusev didn't respect him so he doesn't deserve her. This gets a standing ovation from Miz, who describes Lana as good. He calls it a good business decision, but Lana, with the accent melting word by word, says that it was purely personal. If Miz keeps suggesting otherwise, she'll either leave or Miz will get slapped.

That brings out the second guest: Rusev, who slowly limps to the ring. Rusev is here as a broken man and blames it on his upbringing. He didn't know what he had until it was gone and he knows Lana loves that song. Rusev asks for one more chance and would like her to be his crutch while he can't walk. Lana tells him where he can stick his crutch so Rusev erupts all over again and calls her stupid. Cue Zigler to get Lana out before things get bad. Rusev as the crushed ex-boyfriend is perhaps the worst usage of someone with potential that WWE has had in years and it's just sad at this point.

#### Roman Reigns vs. Sheamus

This could be good. Sheamus goes right to the ribs to start and knees Reigns to the floor, only to eat a big clothesline. Sheamus keeps the power game going by driving him into the apron and throwing him over the announcers' table as we take a break. Back with Sheamus driving knees into the ribs and slapping on a chinlock. The Regal Roll gets two but Roman fights out of the ten forearms. Roman misses the apron kick (has he ever done that before?) and Sheamus takes over again, only to miss a charge into the post.

Back up and Roman fires off some clotheslines in the middle of the ring

and in the corner but the Samoan drop is countered. They head outside again and this time the apron kick connects with Sheamus standing on the floor. Back in and here are Kane and the Stooges for a distraction, setting up the Irish Curse for two. The Brogue Kick misses and Reigns hits the Superman Punch, only to have Kane come in for the DQ at 10:40.

**Rating:** B-. I liked this as much as I expected to with both guys hitting each other over and over until we got to the obvious ending. It's getting really tiring to see Kane and the Stooges come in for the DQ or interference, especially when they barely have anything to do with the match in the first place. Fun power match here though.

Kane chokeslams Sheamus to shock the Stooges. He announces himself as the final entrant in the Money in the Bank ladder match and chokeslams Reigns to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This show was one of the more entertaining episodes they've had in a good while as they let the stories progress naturally instead of forcing everything in. The wrestling was decent enough and the two hours went by very quickly. I can live with Smackdown like this, especially with such a good opening promo instead of the Authority droning on and on.

### Results

Prime Time Players b. Ascension and Lucha Dragons – Pumphandle powerslam to Viktor

Ryback b. Stardust – Shell Shock

Kevin Owens b. Zack Ryder – Pop Up Powerbomb

Neville b. Kofi Kingston – Rollup

Roman Reigns b. Sheamus via DQ when Kane interfered

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## Ring of Honor Ratings Are In

And they're not too bad. According to 411mania.com,

*– Ring of Honor's debut on Destination America are in. The episode scored 163,000 viewers and a 0.04 rating in the 18 – 49 demographic.*

*For those curious, the numbers are lower than Impact Wrestling's Wednesday debut by 45% and 55%, respectively. Impact scored 232,000 viewers and a 0.09 demo rating.*

*A bright point for Ring of Honor is that their 11 PM replay scored 110,000 viewers and a 0.03 demo rating, compared to the 85,000 and 0.03 that last week's 11 PM Impact replay did. Impact's midnight replay scored 72,000 viewers and a 0.02 demo rating.*

There are a few things to keep in mind:

1. This is second run programing for Ring of Honor as it already aired on their syndicated stations.
2. Ring of Honor has a far smaller national footprint than TNA. TNA was coming off a much bigger network while you could

argue ROH has never been on the national stage (calling HDNet a national stage is as big a stretch as saying TNA is competent), meaning this was basically their national (as national as Destination America can be) debut.

3. With a show debuting on a new network, it's common to see the numbers go up over the next few weeks as people find out about it.

All in all, this isn't bad. There's room for improvement, but if Ring of Honor closes the gap, TNA is in big, big trouble.

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## Ring of Honor – June 3, 2015: Wake Me For The Real Debut

### Ring of Honor

Date: June 3, 2015

Location: Ted Reeve Arena, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Attendance: 1,500

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, King Corino

So this show just debuted on Destination America as a lead-in to Impact Wrestling. I'm not the biggest Ring of Honor fan in the world but I do have a passing knowledge of the promotion. I'm not sure how long I'm going to do this for but I'll knock out the first few weeks of it at least. Let's get to it.

Keep in mind that this isn't supposed to be a special debut episode as it was taped before the Destination America deal was announced, meaning it's hard to know what we're getting here. However, apparently these matches

are from the Global Wars two day event.

This show originally aired over the last weekend in May, depending on when your area gets the Sinclair syndicated feed.

The Briscoe Brothers (the best Mark and World Champion Jay) are ready for the House of Truth tonight and Mark Briscoe is about as psychotic as you can ask him to be, which gives you a good introduction to the promotion.

Opening sequence. Nothing out of the ordinary here.

The announcers talk about the Best In The World pay per view on June 19 with a main event of TV Champion Jay Lethal vs. World Champion Jay Briscoe in a title vs. title match.

#### Will Ferrara vs. Kushida

This is ROH vs. New Japan. One encouraging note here: we're three minutes in and we know our main event tonight, the PPV main event and our opening match. That's efficient stuff for an hour long show. Kushida kicks Ferrara down to start but Will comes back with a quick neckbreaker for two. Back up and Kushida fights out of a fireman's carry before kicking Ferrara in the head.

Kushida bails to the floor and eats a suicide dive into a DDT for a nice crash. They head back in with Will nailing a running elbow in the corner but getting caught in a Fujiwara armbar. A big moonsault gets two on Ferrara and he slaps on a Kimura (apparently called the Hover Board Lock as Kushida is one half of the Time Splitters tag team. It's a Back to the Future reference in case you have bad taste in movies) for the submission at 5:14.

**Rating:** C. Glorified squash here and a good way to get the fans used to the New Japan partnership, even though they won't be around much longer after this show. The match was fine but it was clear that Ferrara was in way over his head. Not a bad match but there's only so far you can go in a five minute match with one guy so far ahead of the other.

The Addiction (Kazarian and Christopher Daniels) say they'll give Red Dragon a title shot next week and only next week.

### Silas Young vs. Takaaki Watanabe

These two split after a tag match at Global Wars Night One. Young is billed as the Last Real Man in Professional Wrestling. They slug it out to start with Young elbowing out of a German suplex attempt. That's fine with Watanabe as he plants Silas with a belly to back suplex. Now the German suplex connects and the fans are entirely behind Watanabe.

A superplex attempt doesn't work so well though and Silas nails a middle rope clothesline for a delayed two. Back up and a running neckbreaker plants Young before a clothesline puts him on the floor. Another German on the floor knocks Silas silly but can only get two back inside. Young shrugs it off, grabs an airplane spin of all things and lays Watanabe out with a TKO for the pin at 6:20.

**Rating:** D+. Well that exists. There's nothing else for me to say here as I have no idea why I'm supposed to care about either guy and the match was nothing interesting. Young has a decent enough character but, as is the case with almost every guy from New Japan, I have almost no reason to care about them. If the wrestling isn't great, there isn't much to see otherwise.

### BJ Whitmer vs. Moose

Whitmer is part of the Decade, a stable of veterans, and has a young boy (basically a servant) named Colby Corino (son of commentator King (Steve) Corino). The undefeated Moose is a monster in the vein of Ahmed Johnson. Whitmer grabs the mic and says he knows he can destroy Moose, but he'll let Colby do it instead. This is Colby's in ring debut.

### Colby Corino vs. Moose

Whitmer tells Colby, who looks like he's about 14, to prove that he's more of a man than his father ever was. Colby slaps the monster in the face to start and Moose takes him to the floor for a big swing, sending Colby back and forth into the barricade. A wicked powerbomb onto the apron sets up a powerbomb on the floor and Colby is somehow still alive. Back in and one foot on the chest gives Moose the pin at 2:44.



Jay Lethal freaks out over having to fight the Briscoes tonight but manager Truth Martini says don't worry about it.

### Donovan Dijak/J. Diesel vs. Briscoe Brothers

There are far too many people in this company named Jay. Dijak and Diesel are part of the House of Truth heel stable. Lethal sits in on commentary as Dijak drives Mark into the corner, only to eat a forearm to the face. Back up and Mark does the Karate Kit crane pose but both guys have kicks blocked, only to backflip out for a cool visual.

Off to Diesel who starts throwing punches (Golden Gloves background apparently) and Mark quickly tags out. Diesel beats up the World Champion as well, only to have Jay take J into the corner for a boot choke. Back to Mark for two off a Russian legsweep as Lethal mocks Jay's custom World Title. The House of Truth takes Jay into the corner for a quickly broken up double team before it's off to Mark for redneck kung fu (seriously).

Martini offers a distraction so Dijak can kick Mark off the top rope for two and we take a break. Back with Dijak catching Mark in midair and driving knees into the ribs for two. Off to Diesel for a fall away slam but Mark fights out of the corner and flips over for a tag to his brother. Jay cleans house and everything breaks down, setting up a Doomsday Device on Diesel for the pin at 11:18.

**Rating:** C+. Best match of the night by far, but at the end of the day you can only have so much interest in a prospect like Dijak and a glorified puncher in Diesel against the best tag team in company history. It was a fairly obvious ending but the Briscoes are good enough to make it work.

Post match Dijak hits something like a GTS (camera missed most of it) on Mark. Lethal comes in to go after Jay but eats the Jay Driller (double underhook piledriver) to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D+. Welllllllll.....this is a hard one to grade. To begin with, this wasn't supposed to be a debut episode as the Destination America deal came up out of nowhere. The Global Wars shows are going to take a few weeks to get through before we get down to what should be considered the real debut. That being said, this isn't the worst show

ever but it's really just kind of there. The wrestling was forgettable, the stories aren't the most interesting (I've never cared about Jay Lethal. I just don't get it) and this didn't feel like anything interesting. I'll keep watching for a few weeks but they'll need to pick it up a bit.

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## WWE Airing Fourth of July Tokyo Show On WWE Network

And the card is STACKED. This might be better than Payback.

- \* Lucha Dragons vs. Los Matadores
- \* **Divas Title Match:** Nikki Bella vs. Paige vs. Naomi
- \* **Tag Team Title Match:** New Day vs. Tyson Kidd & Cesaro (this may have to be changed due to Tyson Kidd's injury)
- \* Chris Jericho vs. Neville
- \* Brock Lesnar vs. Kofi Kingston
- \* John Cena & Dolph Ziggler vs. Kane & King Barrett
- \* **NXT Title Match:** Champion Kevin Owens vs. Fin Balor

This should rock, though I wouldn't be surprised if they changed Lesnar's opponent to Jericho.

On top of that, how awesome is the Network? WWE can just throw this kind of thing on there as a special with no clearance or anything like that. They're doing it because they can and we get a cool show. That's so awesome.

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## **TNA Taping Impact Before Slammiversary**

As mentioned on Impact last night. So, they're actually going to spoil their first pay per view in eight months and still expect people to pay the full price for it? There was no way they could tape at ANY OTHER TIME? Or like, air a recap show and then tape after it?

These are the sort of things where you just have to shake your head at this company. They start putting together a good show and then "oh yeah we're going to spoil it by taping a month and a half in advance." It worked SO well for WCW back in the day too.