

Lucha Underground – May 27, 2015: He Is Risen

Lucha Underground

Date: May 27, 2015

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

The big story this week is the return of Mil Muertes, who is looking like a demonic Brock Lesnar. Unfortunately Fenix is going to be the first victim on the path of rage, which is going to be made even worse as Fenix is the one that too Muertes out in the first place. Other than that we have Prince Puma defending the title against Hernandez. Let's get to it.

We open with Catrina raising Muertes out of the casket in what looks like a trailer for a horror movie. Puma vs. Hernandez gets a bit of time as well but it's definitely the secondary story tonight. The last clip is Mundo turning heel on El Patron.

Black Lotus arrives at the temple (in a rare daylight sequence) but Chavo stops him. His grandfather was there when Dario's brother killed Lotus' parents so the Guerreros hate the Cuetos too. This story is still over the top and ridiculous and I'm starting to love it.

Aerostar vs. Johnny Mundo

Star is sent down ten seconds in and Johnny goes for a chinlock with Star's arm pinned back for some elbows to the chest. Mundo kicks him to the floor as this is a far more aggressive Johnny to start. Back up and Star spins around Johnny into a nice looking headscissors before a kick to the face and slingshot splash get two. A dropkick to the leg sends Mundo outside, setting up a big flip dive to the floor.

Mundo goes right back to slugging the masked man in the head and putting on an Anaconda Vice. After ropes are reached, Mundo kicks him in the face again for two more but Mundo plants him with a backbreaker. The End of the World is broken up so Johnny just suplexes him into the corner,

setting up the End of the World for the pin.

Rating: C. This worked well enough with Mundo's new heel persona working. However, Star got in way too much offense for Johnny's first opponent after a heel turn. Thankfully it was just token offense with Mundo never in any real danger, but this should have been a squash instead as even as it was.

Vampiro's sitdown interview this week is with Sexy Star, who isn't worried about her upcoming submission match with Pentagon Jr. because she already beat him once. Super Fly is still healing and she's ending Pentagon Jr. for him.

Lucha Underground Title: Hernandez vs. Prince Puma

Puma is defending. Hernandez easily blocks an early hurricanrana attempt and throws Puma down but he comes back by kicking Hernandez in the head. The big guy bails to the floor and Puma teases a dive to tick him off even more. Back in and Hernandez slingshots into a Codebreaker for a nice counter. It's almost all Puma so far and a springboard cross body gets two.

Hernandez gets tired of being on defense and just nails Puma with a clothesline. It's simple but Hernandez using such basic offense compared to Puma's high flying is a nice touch. A running splash gets two but Hernandez poses a bit too much and gets kicked in the head. That just annoys him though and a choke suplex sends him flying. Puma's cross body is countered into an Alpha Bomb (slam into a sitout powerbomb) and the knockout surprises the big man.

A big shove sends Puma to the floor (nice and simple again) so Konnan comes up on the apron for a distraction, allowing Puma to grab a chair to knock Hernandez out of the air. That goes nowhere so Hernandez plants him with a powerbomb onto the apron, which should completely destroy him. Instead Puma is countering a Border Toss into the barricade and landing on the rail for a big corkscrew dive to take Hernandez down.

Another slingshot splash gets another two but the 630 misses and Hernandez plants him with a powerslam. Hernandez's splash hits knees and

for once that actually hurts someone's knee. It doesn't hurt enough to stop him from kicking Hernandez in the head a few times for two. Even more kicks to the head set up the 630 to retain the title.

Rating: B-. I liked it but I didn't love it. As usual, the selling here didn't last more than about ten seconds at a time, which makes for some very quick turnarounds. That being said, the sped up matches are the norm here and almost no one selling that long makes it a lot easier to sit through. Good match and a good win for Puma, though nothing all that remarkable.

Fenix vs. Mil Muertes

Death match, which means pin or submission only and the fall has to take place in the ring, which means it was nice knowing you Fenix. Muertes, now all in black, stares a hole through Fenix and has three men in skull masks to take off his cape. Fenix tries a dive over the top during the entrances but he literally just bounces off of Muertes. Oh this is going to hurt. Muertes throws him inside and powerslams Fenix down for some right hands. He's moving around like a zombie with superpowers, which is one heck of a B movie concept.

Fenix's kicks are swatted away and a swinging chokeslam plants him down. He finally manages to crotch Mil on top and run down the ropes to kick Muertes to the floor. A big multiple jump moonsault drops Mil again but he pops up and nails a hard clothesline. To make things even worse for Fenix, Mil grabs a chair and caves his head in. Fenix of course shrugs it off and nails a superkick, setting up a huge double stomp off the barricade to crush Muertes' chest.

Back in and Fenix scores with some kicks, only to get hiptossed out to the floor. More chair shots have Fenix in big trouble so Muertes throws him onto his shoulders and sprints up the steps. Fenix's kicks have no effect and Muertes powerbombs him THROUGH THE ROOF OF THE STORAGE ROOM. We actually take a break (for I think only the third time in this series) and come back with the skull guys carrying Fenix (with the required Jesus pose) to the ring for the Flatliner and the pin.

Rating: C+. Oh yeah this worked. The wrestling obviously wasn't the point

here as Muertes is suddenly the top evil in this company. The powerbomb destroyed Fenix and made the debut of the new character work so well. Really good debut here with Muertes looking exactly like the monster he should. Muertes killing Puma and taking the title needs to be academic at this point.

Catrina, Muertes and the skull guys pose as the credits roll.

We're not done yet as Lucha Underground channels its inner Marvel with a pose credits sequence. Cueto meets with the Crew and says El Jefe (the boss) will not be embarrassed. Someone has to pay for this and the other two throw Bael into Cueto's brother's cage. Blood splatters everywhere and Cueto rubs some onto his face. Did we just see a death sequence to end the show?

Overall Rating: B. This was a solid effort as they're clearly building up a lot of stuff for the end of the season. It's so strange to be building towards a season finale instead of a big pay per view but this is actually working for me. Muertes is awesome as a monster, Cueto is awesome as an evil boss and the heroes are all solid as well to top it off. Cool show here as they're setting the stage for the big stuff to wrap things up, including Black Lotus as a wildcard. Good stuff.

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Thunder – January 6, 2000: It's Creeping Closer

Thunder

Date: January 6, 2000

Location: Civic Center, Florence, South Carolina

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Scott Hudson, Mike Tenay

It's a new year and please, for the love of all things good and not made of Russo, make it be a new Thunder. Almost the only stories coming out of Nitro are new Tag Team Champions....who had to run away so we could get to the NWO stuff, and the new commissioner....who was beaten up by the NWO to end the show. Heaven forbid WCW let anyone new (as new as Commissioner Terry Funk could be) get over. Let's get to it.

Clips from Nitro of the major stories.

The NWO drags Arn Anderson into the arena. Have they just had him held hostage for three days now? Why am I still surprised by these things?

Cruiserweight Title: Asya vs. Madusa

Well at least it's not more man vs. woman. Madusa is defending and has Spice in her corner as part of a pairing that has never actually been explained. The interference (and the stupid) start before the match as Oklahoma comes out to do commentary because we need a four man booth.

Madusa grabs the ropes to block a dropkick as Oklahoma is ripping on Madusa for holding a man's title when she should be at home cooking for her husband. So apparently Oklahoma will be portraying Jeff Jarrett in a feud that is nowhere near as interesting as Jarrett vs. Chyna. The Revolution distracts the referee so Saturn can jump Asya, allowing Madusa to hit the German suplex (Oklahoma: "A move originated by a man!") to retain.

Madusa yells at Oklahoma and the Powers That Be and gets a barbecue sauce bottle broken over her head. Well at least that's what the other announcers say happen because we have to see the Filthy Animals run in to save Asya. Why they're saving Asya isn't clear as their teams were feuding, but it makes as much sense as anything else.

The announcers run down the card.

Juventud Guerrera and Psychosis come out with the former doing his Rock imitation and throwing Schiavone out of the commentary booth.

Here's Terry Funk to beat up the luchadors and give Tony his seat back. I'm so glad they wasted that minute on an angle (if that qualified as an angle) that was over as soon as it started. Funk says the NWO can do this the easy way by bringing Arn Anderson out here right now, or the hard way by making him deal with it himself. Jarrett comes out, swears a bit, and says they'll be out here in an hour.

Saturn tells the Filthy Animals to be, and I quote, "like a midget at a urinal: on their toes." Before they get much further, Juventud runs in and takes over the interview from Gene. So is Juvy just there to make Russo and Ferrara chuckle at this point?

The NWO beats up Arn Anderson. This angle would work so much better with Flair than Funk, but can you blame Flair for not wanting to get destroyed in the Carolinas all over again for the sake of putting over the NWO?

Gene brings out Booker T for a chat about Stevie Ray's actions. Booker brings up Stevie's injury and how he needed someone to watch his back. The only person that would was Midnight, and Stevie needs to accept that Midnight is going to be around. Stevie comes out and says Midnight isn't ready because she's cost him four matches. He wants a match with Midnight tonight, and if Stevie wins, Midnight is gone. If Midnight wins though, Harlem Heat is back together with Midnight as a member. You can see the other booking hands getting in on these stories as this, while not very interesting, is completely logical.

David Flair, Crowbar and Daffney are watching on a monitor as the NWO pours hot coffee on Anderson. At what point are these guys arrested?

Flair looks concerned.

PG-13/Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. 3 Count

That's quite the odd pairing. We're promised a 3 Count concert after the match. Well I'm sold. Shannon can't hit a Fameasser on Chavo to start so it's off to Shane and JC. Evan gets bored on the apron and springboards in with a dropkick before decking Chavo and diving onto Wolfie.

Everything breaks down and Chavo hits Shannon's tornado DDT, only to have Shane hit him with the green circle for the win. Nothing match, but what are you expecting from a minute and a half long six man tag?

We get the concert, making this by far and away the most entertaining show of the year so far.

David walks away from his partners.

Funk beats up security for not finding Arn. He's kind of got a point actually.

The Wall vs. Jerry Flynn

This is a shoot fight because that's what wrestling fans tune in to see: boring wrestlers pretending to shoot on each other. Tank Abbott comes out and to watch because he's still employed for reasons I don't understand. Wall dominates to start but Flynn comes back with his limited assortment of kicks. Jerry takes it outside and whips him into the barricade before slugging away back inside. Back in and Jerry strikes even more but stops to yell at Abbott, earning him a shot to the back of the head, giving Wall the pin. More worthless stuff as people with no business on TV get pushed.

Abbott beats up Wall and Doug Dillinger post match.

David finds Funk.

US Title: Jeff Jarrett vs. Norman Smiley

Bunkhouse Brawl with Jeff defending. Smiley's Hardcore Title is off to the side for reasons unclear but it might have something to do with the

shoulder pads he's wearing. He bails to the floor to start so Jeff throws a trashcan at his head to take over. Smiley is sent into a chair and screams a lot but finally fights back with a trashcan lid and a kendo stick shot. Norman doesn't want to cover due to fear and a guitar shot sets up the Stroke to retain. Another two and a half minute gimmick match.

Post match David and Terry come out and choke Jarrett with the crowbar as Terry demands the NWO get out here. After a break, the NWO brings out Anderson and Nash has a challenge: a match with Funk at Souled Out with the Commissioner's job on the line. Funk agrees if it's a one on one hardcore match with the NWO banned from ringside.

On top of that, he wants a hardcore match against Bret for the title tonight, even though he cares more about hurting Bret than winning the belt. Notice how he worded that: he doesn't say the title is worthless like Goldberg did to Rick Steiner with the TV Title, but that there's something he wants more. Bret agrees and threatens to kill Funk tonight. That's so far outside something Bret would normally say and it doesn't work coming from him. Hart suggests a swap of Jarrett for Anderson, but Arn can't help but get in a shot at Jarrett, earning him a ball bat shot from Bret.

Disco sells his Rolex to pay off some of his debt to the Mafia.

Stevie Ray yells at Funk for no apparent reason.

Midnight vs. Stevie Ray

No Booker at ringside. After appearing in the ring, Midnight dropkicks Stevie into the corner and slugs away, only to eat a clothesline and some right hands. A slam and elbow get two on Midnight with Stevie pulling up off the cover. He does the same thing after a back elbow but stops to stare at the camera in an unintentionally (I think?) funny spot. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Stevie forearms Midnight down again.

There's a side slam and Stevie loads up the slapjack, but Booker runs out to say this has to be a fair match. Stevie actually agrees and powerslams Midnight for no cover as he checks her arm instead. That's the mating

call of a wacky finish though as Midnight rolls him up for the surprise pin.

Rating: D. The match had a goofy finish but at least it wasn't the most illogical thing in the world. Russo's booking gets annoying when you have stuff come out of nowhere and doesn't have any kind of foundation. Stevie letting her up time after time and then getting caught in his arrogance was set up over the course of the match and was paid off at the end. That's far better storytelling than almost anything else Russo does, which makes me think he isn't in charge of this story.

Kidman and Konnan introduce Okerlund to a good looking blonde, who I believe is Pamela Paulshock. She immediately gets on my nerves by calling Gene sexy. Gene Okerlund has never been sexy in his life. Stop these lies.

Back from a break with Gene calling out Page for a chat. Page denies Kimberly cheating with Buff but says Bagwell did hit on her. He'd like Bagwell out here right now but only gets him to the stage. We get sex jokes, gay jokes, and low testicular fortitude jokes, triggering a big brawl.

The Artist still won't record. This isn't going anywhere is it?

Juvy does the interview with Bam Bam Bigelow as Gene is talking to Paulshock. Before they get anywhere, Kanyon blasts Bigelow with a champagne bottle.

Kevin Nash vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

And never mind as Bigelow is down on the stage where Steiner and Jarrett get him into a wheelbarrow. Nash hits Bigelow with a ball bat and the match (yes this was a match) is over in 22 seconds. I guess the multiple matches on Monday were enough for Nash this week.

Tag Team Titles: Konnan/Kidman vs. Crowbar/David Flair

David/Crowbar won the titles on Monday in the ridiculous tournament. David comes out with his belt on backwards because he's crazy you see. Crowbar hammers on Kidman to start, meaning they're already wising up by

keeping Flair on the apron. A back elbow to the jaw puts Kidman down but YOU STILL CAN'T POWERBOMB CROWBAR EVEN THOUGH PEOPLE HAVE DONE IT AND THIS JOKE IS OLD. Off to David for a suplex as we get the old standard Schiavone hype for basic moves.

Crowbar comes in with a springboard missile dropkick and a guillotine legdrop for two with Konnan making the save. I had forgotten who Kidman's partner was until then. Kidman counters another powerbomb (oh come on now Crowbar. Even you aren't that crazy) but David breaks up the shooting star. Crowbar tries a top rope hurricanrana but Rey grabs Kidman's leg to make the save. Cue a limping Arn Anderson as Konnan comes in to clean house. In the melee, Anderson hits Konnan with the crowbar to give Flair the pin.

Rating: D+. Totally watchable match while Kidman and Crowbar were in there but it's clear that Flair just isn't all that good. The Anderson stuff is getting annoying as they're beating this story into our heads, but unfortunately they're wasting the Tag Team Titles on this. Maybe the Revolution and Filthy Animals could be fighting over the belts, but we need them on another team that doesn't deserve them so we can see David Flair in the ring.

The Revolution comes out and beats down the Animals again.

Terry Funk vs. Bret Hart

Non-title hardcore match. Bret is in shorts instead of ring gear and hammers Funk to the floor early on. Terry starts throwing in the chairs as is his customs but Bret throws him face first into one of them and nails Funk with the bat. They both head outside with Terry taking a chair to the head. All Bret so far. Back in and Funk gets in a few left hands and takes it right back outside for a chair to Bret's shoulder.

Terry sends him into the cart of weapons but misses the moonsault onto a trashcan onto Bret, allowing the champ to blast him in the head with another chair. Hart Pillmanizes the leg and knocks the referee down (why?), so let's cut to Arn Anderson putting on a referee's shirt. David Flair comes in and asks to take the spot instead, which Arn reluctantly allows. Cue the NWO with the bats to Funk and Nash decks David. Nash

Jackknifes Funk through the stage to end the show.

Rating: F+. A match? You think this was a match? I'll skip complaining about how horrible this was as you took Bret Hart and Terry Funk and put them in a street fight instead of anything resembling a wrestling match because ratings are going to plummet if you don't have some kind of violence right? Also, this is twice since Funk has debuted as commissioner that he's been beaten down to end the show. Flair had this one right all the way.

Overall Rating: F+. The wrestling still sucks, but they're moving tiny steps in the right direction. Look at the Harlem Heat story for example: there's finally some logic to it and you can tell what's going on without needing to take notes. The main event makes sense too, as poor as the wrestling has been. We're transitioning into the boring period instead of the crazy stuff, which makes me sigh and wonder what else is on instead of wanting to steal plutonium to go back in time and bash Russo's head in with a pipe wrench. They're moving in the right direction, but it's WAY too late to make things right at this point.

That's it for Thunder on Thursdays as it only took four months for Smackdown to run them out of their time slot.

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Impact Wrestling – May 29, 2015: Does It Really Matter Anymore?

Impact Wrestling

Date: May 29, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, Al Snow

After all the insanity that's been going on behind the scenes in this company, they're really in need for a good show to calm things down a bit. This show is being billed as May Mayhem, which is their version of a pay per view this month. The main event is Eric Young challenging Kurt Angle in an I Quit match. Let's get to it.

Eric Young pulls up to the arena where Kurt Angle is waiting on him. They slug it out in the parking lot until security breaks it up.

Knockouts Title: Gail Kim vs. Taryn Terrell

Inside a cage with Taryn defending. Gail goes right after her in the aisle and takes over before the bell. They finally get inside with Kim still dominating until Marti Belle reaches through the cage to pull Gail down, allowing Taryn to ram the ring finger into the cage to take over. Gail fights back again with ease until she tries to climb out, allowing the Dollhouse to interfere again, allowing Taryn to hit a quick Cutter for the pin at 5:20.

Rating: D. Well aside from how great Taryn looked, this was borderline worthless. At the end of the day, you need more than five minutes for a cage match. This is supposed to be some big blowoff to the feud and instead the whole thing can't even make it to six minutes? The Dollhouse is awesome, but they played it pretty straight here, which defeats the purpose.

Post match the Dollhouse goes after Gail until Awesome Kong comes out.

They manage to lock the door though, setting up the big beatdown. Taryn takes Gail's ring off and stomps on Gail's ring finger, apparently breaking it so the ring can't go back on. Josh: "I know Taryn has issues we're not supposed to talk about on air but this is going too far."

So, unless they're actually going to say what happened in Taryn's marriage, this is going to be another big tease that never goes anywhere. Also, this would be more effective if they didn't keep name dropping Gail's celebrity chef husband, who is so famous that I've already forgotten his name.

Quick recap of James Storm being creepy and getting Mickie James to come back for one more match. Her husband Magnus isn't pleased with this but that's exactly what Storm wanted. Josh: "This isn't PG."

Here's Mickie (in a very, very revealing dress) to talk about things. She can't wait for the one more match but tonight she needs to talk about family and the heart. Magnus is her fiance, but James Storm has been a friend for years now. This brings out Storm, prompting Mickie to apologize for Magnus bashing him in the head with a guitar. James doesn't need to hear that but Mickie insists on apologizing, even though Magnus is just trying to protect his family.

Storm insists he's not a bad guy (has any good guy ever had to say that?) because if holding a door open for a woman or keeping her from getting attacked by Bram makes you a bad man, then yeah he's a bad man. We hear about all the gifts James bought the family but Mickie didn't think some of them were that funny.

James redeems himself by surprising Mickie by saying he's set up some meetings with big names (like Billy Corgan) who want to meet Mickie and advance her career. Whatever Mickie picks, he'll have her back. Storm leaves and Mickie tells the Cowboy (her word) she'll see them in Nashville. There was a very subtle addition here as Storm kept inching closer to Mickie, making her back up a half step every little bit.

Kenny King isn't worried about defending the X-Division Title in a gauntlet match.

Eric Young shows us a Tweet that we can't see and headbutts through a window.

X-Division Title: Gauntlet Match

Why do we always need a gauntlet match or an elimination match or something other than a scheduled one on one match? There are seven people in this and another enters every 90 seconds. The first five will be eliminated over the top but when there are only two left, it's a regular match for the win. Manik is in first and Rockstar Spud is in second and Champion Kenny King will be in seventh. Both guys go for eliminations until Manik sends him into the corner and DJZ, now with a blue/purple mohawk, is in third.

Manik gets double teamed until Mandrews is in fourth after a low less than ninety seconds. Spud and Mandrews team up on Manik but Spud can't quite get him out, even as he bites Manik's fingers. No one is eliminated yet and Argos is in fifth to speed things up for all of five seconds. Mandrews misses a shooting star and gets sent to the apron, setting up a kick to the face and a ram into the post for the first elimination. Crazy Steve is in sixth as we take a break.

Back with Tigre Uno, who entered sixth during the break, being eliminated. Kenny King comes in seventh and the final group is everyone other than Tigre Uno. A big kick to the head drops Manik and another kick does the same to Young. Steve gets in a few shots and chokes over the ropes, only to get superkicked out to put us at five. Argos gets kicked to the floor for an elimination, followed by Spud jumping on King's back. He manages to avoid elimination but eats the Royal Flush.

DJZ gets back up with a belly to back suplex into a facebuster on King, only to get backdropped out by Manik a few seconds later. Down to Manik, Spud and King with Manik offering an alliance with the champ. Spud is tossed to the apron but Manik jumps King from behind, only to be thrown out with an assist from Spud to get us down to the singles match. King chops Spud down and rips at his face but the Royal Flush is countered into a small package to give Spud the title at 16:48.

Rating: D+. So here's one of TNA's major troubles explained in one match.

This was a major title match and had no build, no hype, and nothing interesting. There was no drama to anything here as the people came in and were eliminated before we got down to the final two for a very quick match with Spud winning. There was no reason to care about this and it a lot of that is due to how the match was booked instead of the action. The wrestlers didn't have time to do anything and it caught up with them quickly.

Dirty Heels vs. Wolves

This is match #2 in a best of five series with the Wolves up 1-0. Roode throws Aries through the ropes for a suicide dive to start but Davey runs inside for a dive of his own on Aries. The Wolves double team Roode inside until Austin gets back in and things settle down a bit. Edwards chops away at Aries but Austin punches him in the face, setting up a tag to Roode for chops of his own.

The Heels (who aren't heels) load up what looked like a Sharpshooter but Aries gets kicked into his partner, allowing the Wolves to double team even more. Davey puts Rode into a reverse figure four (with Roode facing the mat and Davey facing up) for a unique looking submission. The German suplex into the jackknife rollup gets two as the announcers are overhyping the heck out of this. Eddie puts Roode in a chinlock for a bit until Bobby fights up and makes the hot tag to Aries.

Austin speeds things up and snaps both Wolves' throats across the top, setting up a missile dropkick to Edwards. There's the Last Chancery on Davey and a Crossface to Eddie but both Wolves make the ropes. Something like Chasing the Dragon but with a Michinoku Driver instead of a brainbuster gets two on Aries but he pops right back up for the running dropkick in the corner, followed by the 450 to Eddie with Davey making the save. Another Last Chancery has Edwards in trouble but Richards comes in off the top with a double stomp for the save, setting up the powerbomb into a Backstabber to pin Austin at 11:09.

Rating: B. This was straight out of the indy playbook with the entire match being action from bell to bell. That sounds cool on paper, but between everything going all over the place and Josh telling us about two

minutes in that this was a classic and something we were going to remember forever, the match kind of dulled on me very quickly. It's definitely fun, but I prefer building up to the insane finish instead of just having it run the entire match.

Kenny King can't get hold of MVP and wants him to call back.

Here's Angelina Love to deal with Velvet Sky, who is sitting in the audience. Love brings out her own personal security to deal with Velvet if she tries anything. She screams at Velvet (with a voice that Vickie Guerrero would find annoying) and tells her to try something, of course drawing Velvet over the barricade for a quick beating until security pulls her off. Sky beats up security and goes after Love again until she's handcuffed and taken away.

Mr. Anderson is very happy to not have Tyrus around for his match with Ethan Carter III tonight.

Ethan Carter III vs. Mr. Anderson

Anderson has a one man cage to lock Tyrus inside, guaranteeing that it's one on one. Amazingly enough, Tyrus doesn't want to go in so Anderson goes after him, allowing Carter to ram him face first into the cage. Back in and a quick suplex gets two for Carter as Snow challenges Dixie Carter to a street fight. A running clothesline gets two more on Anderson but he throws Carter through the ropes and into Tyrus, who still isn't in the cage. Anderson nails Tyrus with a chair a few times to FINALLY get him in the stupid cage.

They slug it out back inside with Anderson taking over with the usual. A powerslam and backdrop get two each but Mr. gets crotchted on top, setting up a TKO for two. Carter hits a Stinger Splash (complete with shout) but the 1^{er} is countered into a Regal Roll and Swanton for the same. The Mic Check connects for two and Anderson is stunned. He loads up another but Carter counters into a 1^{er} for the clean pin at 8:00.

Rating: C-. That's a pretty clear ending to the feud, but my goodness TNA needs to slow down. This match started with a flurry with the Tyrus stuff then was just trading big moves for a few minutes until Carter won. They

have to speed through everything on every show because they need to get so much stuff in. Calm down a bit and spread some stuff out so that stuff like this can have time to breathe.

Anderson offers a handshake but Carter shoves the hand away. Tyrus is left in the cage.

Rockstar Spud is very, very happy to be a two time champion. He hasn't even had time to think about Destination X and Option C yet but maybe he needs a new goal.

TNA World Title: Eric Young vs. Kurt Angle

Angle is defending and this is an I Quit match. Both guys come out with security after being separated all night in another idea that didn't go anywhere. Angle goes right at him to start and they're slugging it out a minute in. Eric tries to jump over him in the corner but gets caught in rolling Germans to knock him even sillier. He won't quit though so Kurt rolls even more Germans, only to be sent to the floor as we take a break. Back with Young slapping on a Figure Four for a bit until Angle turns it over, sending Young to the ropes.

Eric can't get an Angle Slam so he puts Kurt in an ankle lock with a grapevine, only to have Kurt reverse into something resembling a Figure Four. More ropes are grabbed so Young goes up, only to dive into the real ankle lock. Young taps so Angle lets go, but Young never said I Quit. The distraction lets Young hit a low blow and piledriver. Still no quitting so Young loads up another piledriver, only to be countered into the ankle lock with the grapevine to retain Angle's title at 13:10.

Rating: C-. Raise your hand if you expected ANYTHING but that as the ending. That's where this match and feud died with me: no one in their right mind thought Young was winning the title at any point in this feud and that makes for some very dull matches. The match was watchable, but my goodness don't let this feud keep going any longer and get Young down the card where he belongs.

Overall Rating: D+. This one didn't do it for me. They were flying through every possible thing they could get through tonight and it made

the show a lot weaker than it should have been. The matches were good while they lasted, but none of them had time to set up any kind of story or psychology, which really kills the show.

We've got a few weeks before Slammiversary and then just a few weeks before Destination X and then a few months before the show is probably getting kicked off the air because not enough people watch it. Could it be because they rush through hastily announced gimmick matches like these and don't let anything have a proper build because they have to get through everything they can when they have two pay per views a year and seemingly could do things at whatever pace they want? This was an action heavy show but the lack of a foundation takes away anything good they had set up.

Results

Taryn Terrell b. Gail Kim – Cutter

Rockstar Spud won a gauntlet match, last eliminating Kenny King – Small package

Wolves b. Dirty Heels – Powerbomb into a backstabber to Aries

Ethan Carter III b. Mr. Anderson – 1%er

Kurt Angle b. Eric Young – Ankle lock

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Elimination Chamber 2015 Preview

It's time for a "let's get people to watch the Network and hope they don't remember to cancel their free month in the hour they have after the show goes off the air" show that they're calling a pay per view. This is going to be an interesting show as they only have two weeks before Elimination Chamber, which means we might get something interesting short term to set up for a change down the road. Let's get to it.

There's no pre-show match this time but Daniel Bryan will be on MizTV. There's nothing to see here other than Miz returning and Bryan plugging the book/DVD/whatever else he has coming out. I can't imagine he's coming back to the ring already and he probably shouldn't yet either. I'll be glad to see Miz back as yes, I still like the guy.

Now we'll go with the bigger matches as we start with the Tag Team Title Elimination Chamber match. Given that it's under elimination rules, we'll look at each team and eliminate them one by one.

Los Matadores – Just no.

Ascension – I'd love to see these guys just massacre everyone in this thing and win the belts like they should have when they debuted before....I'm going to stop myself there because I'll rant all day on them all over again. Ascension won't win, even though they should be a force in this match.

Prime Time Players – They're funny and I dig the team, but I don't picture them winning the titles in one of their first matches back together.

Lucha Dragons – They're the dark horses to win here as they've been pushed strong since debuting and clearly have the offense to get the fans

into any of their matches. Why Los Matadores still exist with these guys around is beyond me.

Cesaro/Tyson Kidd – You would think these guys would have a good shot but I just don't see it happening again.

New Day – I've loved the team and it's hard not to, but there's only so long you can keep the joke going. These guys work well together to steal pins, but having them survive five other teams might be a bit too much to ask.

So who do I have winning? This might come as a surprise, but I'm going with the Dragons. I don't see New Day surviving that many teams without someone catching them and Cesaro/Kidd don't feel right. The other teams are filler so yeah, I'm actually picking the Dragons.

Off to the other Chamber for the vacant Intercontinental Title so let's do the same format.

R-Truth – I think I have a better chance of winning the title than he does.

Dolph Ziggler – He has Lana. Don't get greedy. Also there's nothing for him to win here as he's held the title a bunch of times before and doesn't gain anything by winning it again.

King Barrett – He's already jobbing to R-Truth clean in less than three minutes. Heaven help him if he wins the title back and is getting rolled up by El Torito next. Pass here and that's the best for everyone involved.

Ryback – I just can't see it. They're playing up that he hasn't won a title yet so maybe he chases the belt, but I can't see him winning it here.

Rusev/Bray Wyatt – This is in case Rusev can't go due to his leg injury, and it certainly seems that he can't. Wyatt would be a very good option here but again I don't see it. He'll take a Shell Shock to even the "feud" with Ryback and no one will care.

Sheamus – This has been the odds on pick for a while now and he probably does make the most sense. Sheamus has been doing well since he got back and throwing another title on him isn't the worst idea in the world. I'll take him.

Neville defeats Dallas because there's really no reason for him not to.

I'm really tempted to go with Ambrose over Rollins for a two week title reign but I don't see it happening. I think they'll just go with the safe story of having the interference be too much for Dean to overcome and keep the title on Seth, even though Reigns has nothing to do and probably should come out and help his buddy.

Uh....Naomi takes the Divas Title and feuds with Paige for a bit, even though Tamina pinned Paige on Raw in another really dumb booking decision.

Now we get to the match I'm looking forward to the most and the match with the best build: John Cena vs. Kevin Owens in a non-title match. These two have been trading shots for two weeks now and it's going to be a huge moment if Owens somehow pulls off the win. Notice that I said somehow, as there's no need for him to win the match clean. All he has to do is survive it and hang on long enough to win by countout, DQ or maybe a fluke pin.

This is one of the very rare situations where I'm thrilled by the possibilities and really looking forward to the match for a change. Owens is a great bully character and having him win will instantly make everyone more credible. If Owens is sticking around on the main roster, give him the win here and let him become a star. Cena is going to be fine about ten seconds after the match so does it really matter? Just let Owens win and be done with it. Look at Mick Foley winning his first World Title: everyone remembers the win and no one remembers that he dropped it less than three weeks later because only the win matters.

Overall, I'm looking forward to this show, but there's a good chance it's going to be a massive disappointment. There's only so much you can expect from WWE without them rounding back into form, just like they did this past Monday on Raw. There's bound to be something good on the show though

and if there's more than a few good things, Sunday could be really, really special.

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Smackdown – May 28, 2015: Padding With A Good Match

Smackdown

Date: May 28, 2015

Location: Mohegan Sun Arena, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Byron Saxton, Jerry Lawler

I've been saying this too often lately but it's the go home show for a pay per view. The big stories going into this Sunday are the two Elimination Chamber matches as well as the World Title match between champion Seth Rollins and challenger Dean Ambrose. They haven't really had time to put together a great story so I'm assuming tonight is going to have some hard selling. Or some lame matches that keep everything where it was coming out of Raw. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's Dean Ambrose to recap the arrest angle from Raw that magically

ended right before the show went off the air because that's how wrestling works these days and the words "TUNE IN NEXT WEEK TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED!" are all four letters long now. Ambrose was sitting in his cell and thought he had one person to call: Roman Reigns. He asked Reigns to buy him some time so he could figure out a way out of the cell.

The help he needed came from WWE's Youtube channel because it was clear that Rollins shoved the cameraman into him. That was more than enough to clear his name and since he's been in a lot of metropolitan jails in this country, it only took some pictures and autographs to get a police escort to back to the arena on time. Tonight there's a rematch of Raw's tag match, but this Sunday there's going to be a fight for the finest prize in this industry. Stupid story on Monday aside, this was a good promo that got to the point for Sunday.

Tyson Kidd/Cesaro vs. Lucha Dragons

The other four teams in the Chamber match are lumberjacks. Cara and Kidd get things going with Tyson bouncing off the ropes (upside down that is) to counter a wristlock into an armdrag to send Cara to the floor. Cesaro comes in off a blind tag for a European uppercut into a German suplex from his partner followed by a half crab to slow Sin down. That goes about as far as a half crab can go so it's off to Kalisto, who is launched into the air for a hurricanrana, sending Cesaro outside.

Back in and Kalisto tries a springboard cross body, only to be caught in a vertical suplex. Cesaro doesn't put him down though as he walks Kalisto around the ring, tags Kidd in and points to him for about ten seconds as Kidd goes up top for a cross body. The announcers completely undersell this freakish display of strength but it was amazing to see. Sin is quickly tagged in to throw Kidd outside for a but Los Matadores throw him back in without doing anything.

Tyson tries a monkey flip but Kalisto dives through Kidd's legs, lands on his hands and backflips into a headscissors of his own. Dang this guy is good. We take a break and come back with Kalisto fighting out of Cesaro's chinlock but being thrown to the floor. The Players don't get in any cheap shots before throwing him back in for a double tag to Kidd and

Cara. Tyson makes a blind tag and tosses Sin into the corner for the running European uppercuts. Cara comes back with the La Mistica mat slam for two and Kalisto's corkscrew crossbody gets the same.

That's enough flipping for Cesaro as he just muscles Kalisto over with something like a belly to belly, setting up Kidd's springboard elbow for two more. Kalisto kicks Kidd in the head but Cesaro slides in with a headbutt for the save. That looked cool as he just slid in and let his head hit Kalisto.

Kidd reverses a hurricanrana into the Sharpshooter but Cara springboards in with a clothesline to break it up. Everything breaks down and Cesaro superkicks Kalisto, only to be backdropped onto a bunch of the lumberjacks. With his partner down, Kidd is distracted by Woods, setting up the Salida Del Sol to give Kalisto the pin at 13:19.

Rating: B+. I might be rating this a bit higher than some would but I had a blast watching this. Kalisto and Cara are so good as a high flying pair and maybe the best at that style since the Hardys. On the other hand you have Cesaro who is so freakishly strong it's unreal. The only issue here were the lumberjacks as they didn't really need to be there, but they hardly dragged the match down. Anyway this was a really, really fun match with both teams busting out some crazy spots. Check this out if you get the chance.

Rollins runs his mouth to Kane about Ambrose, prompting Noble to go into a story about his aunt hearing voices and being crazy, but her cobbler was good. The looks from everyone in the room are rather amusing. Kane is looking forward to having fun in the tag match tonight and promises a plan to make sure Rollins has nothing to worry about on Sunday.

R-Truth vs. King Barrett

Barrett kicks him right in the face to start and slugs Truth in the face for two. We're already in the chinlock before Barrett's kick to the ribs in the corner gets two more. Back up and Truth ducks the Bull Hammer and hits Little Jimmy for the completely clean pin at 2:26. Such is the life for someone like Barrett. I know the line is that no one remembers individual wins and losses (which I don't agree with for the most part)

but they certainly do remember loss after loss after loss after loss.

Sheamus comes out and Brogue Kicks both guys.

We recap Lana and Rusev's big spat from Monday. The less said about this the better.

Lana seems sad about having to leave Rusev but she's happier with Dolph. Rusev comes up and says he doesn't need to throw another fit because he's already had his way with Ziggler. Whatever Lana and Dolph do, it doesn't bother him. If Ziggler has to suffer because of Lana, so be it. This was much better from Rusev as he was more condescending than pitiful.

Rusev vs. Ryback

Well, it's a few months later but at least we get to see it. Ryback grabs a waistlock to start but Rusev counters into a headlock. The Bulgarian's shoulders have no effect so Ryback lifts him up for a delayed vertical suplex for two. Ryback pounds on him with some forearms but a big clothesline changes control. Rusev slowly kicks Ryback around the ring but he gets distracted by a WE WANT LANA chant. There's a decent story in there if they can find a better way of presenting it.

A backdrop sends Rusev to the floor (probably where he injured his leg) but he's still able to hit the fallaway slam as we go to a break. Back with Rusev limping around before putting on a chinlock. They slug it out and Rusev hobbles from rope to rope. He can put very little weight on it and falls down when trying to slide out of a powerslam. Rusev posts him a few times and that's a DQ at 11:56, which was probably going home quickly due to the injury.

Rating: C-. It's hard to grade this one as the injury clearly changed where the match was going. The rumor is that if Rusev can't go then he'll be replaced by Bray Wyatt, which is probably the best possible option. The injury didn't seem to be Ryback's fault but it happened so fast that it was hard to tell. Not a bad power match until the injury but they didn't have time to go very far with it.

Quick recap of Paige vs. Naomi.

Paige vs. Naomi

Naomi throws some leg kicks to start so Paige shoves her into the corner for forearms to the jaw. Some knees to the chest send Naomi to the floor, because THIS IS MY HOUSE! From the floor, Naomi sends the arm into the post and starts working over the arm in the corner. Ignore the fact that it's not the arm she sent into the post but at least she's trying. Paige comes back with some clotheslines and a kick to Tamina before catching a cross body in midair and countering it into the Rampaige for the pin at 3:12.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see here but the time didn't let them go anywhere. That's the problem with so many of the Divas' stories: they're supposed to tell full stories in about a third of the amount of time that their male counterparts receive. That being said, there's only so much time you can give to them when the division's top heel can't remember right from left.

The Bellas come to the stage to pose.

Tough Enough package.

Michael Cole brings Kevin Owens to the ring for a chat. Owens cuts Cole off when he says that Kevin has been in WWE for two years because he's been around the world for fifteen years. Now he can be on the WWE Network for just \$9.99. He knows Cena's numbers: fifteen World Titles, two Royal Rumble, fifty seven different t-shirt designs and over a thousand ways to suck.

Cole asks about Cena saying Owens has to finish the fight on Sunday so Owens shows us a clip of him destroying Sami Zayn at Takeover last week. If he'll do that to his best friend, what will he do to John Cena? Just watch Sunday and you'll see it first hand. After you do that, you'll see that the champ is here.

Dean Ambrose/Roman Reigns vs. Kane/Seth Rollins

Rematch from Raw. Ambrose passes by Owens on his way to the ring and doesn't pay him a bit of attention. Rollins gets in a cheap shot on

Reigns to start, allowing Kane to get the early advantage. Seth quickly comes in and stomps Roman down in the corner where he sits on his chest for an odd choice of offense. It's back to Kane who gets suplexed down for the tag to Ambrose as we're still in the first minute.

Reigns and Ambrose chases them to the floor and we take a break. Back with Rollins tagging in Kane to keep Ambrose in trouble. We hit the nerve hold on Ambrose for a bit before Kane pulls him off the middle rope for a big crash. Dean gets beaten down in the corner even more and Rollins hits a running back elbow for two. Back to the reverse chinlock for a bit until Dean fights back and takes out the Stooges, only to have to break up a Rollins superplex attempt.

A tornado DDT plants Kane and that's enough for the hot tag to Reigns. Kane blocks a Superman Punch like he always blocks a Superman Punch, but Dean takes him down with the standing top rope elbow. A rollup by Rollins is countered into a powerbomb but Seth slips out, only to eat the Superman Punch, drawing in the Stooges for the DQ at 12:03.

Rating: C-. There was nothing to talk about here because I saw almost this exact same match with a different ending on Monday. I'm not a fan of having these rematches so soon as this is exactly what happens: what are they supposed to do that they didn't do on Monday other than how the match ends? Not bad or anything but really dull.

Ambrose and Reigns clean house until the New Day of all people come out to beat on Ambrose, only to have Reigns hit his big over the top rope dive to take everyone out. Woods eats Dirty Deeds and Kofi gets Superman Punched out of the air. Kane and Rollins get back in though and Rollins Pedigrees Ambrose to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Not a bad go home show but as usual, there's not much to see here other than a really good tag match to start things off. However, with that great match comes a headache inducing R-Truth win over King Barrett. I was sold on the Chamber from the minute the matches were announced though so this was really just padding with a good match included.

Results

Lucha Dragons b. Cesaro/Tyson Kidd – Salida Del Sol to Kidd

R-Truth b. King Barrett – Little Jimmy

Ryback b. Rusev via DQ when Rusev sent Ryback into the post

Paige b. Naomi – Rampaige

Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose b. Kane/Seth Rollins via DQ when Joey Mercury and Jamie Noble interfered

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Thought of the Day: That's Sad

So there's a new report out saying that the creative team loves the idea of having just two weeks between pay per views because it makes it easier for them to come up with and write their stories. If this is true.....just dang. Have we really reached the point where a FOUR WEEK BUILD to a pay per view is too much to ask? It's so hard to come up with a month's worth of stories? Are you kidding me? It's freaking professional wrestling. Let the people in the feud go out there and talk,

have matches against someone else, have a staredown with the person they're fighting against, talk some more, and then have the match. Now apparently it's set the match up Monday, have a quick build the following Monday, then WE MUST HAVE THE MATCH NOW BECAUSE WE DON'T KNOW HOW TO KEEP PEOPLE INTERESTED ANY LONGER THAN THAT!

Take Wyatt vs. Ryback for example. Here's a simple, more than two week build.

Week 1: Wyatt speaks cryptically about his next target.

Week 2: Wyatt keeps talking, Ryback says he doesn't know what's next for him.

Week 3: Wyatt attacks Ryback.

Week 4: Wyatt laughs a lot and says that's just the beginning. Ryback says he's got someone ready for him and he can't wait to get his hands on Wyatt for what he did.

Week 5: Ryback has a match with say, Rowan, to get a taste of what he's got coming against Wyatt. After the match, Wyatt appears and laughs.

Week 6: Wyatt wins a squash and talks about how he defeated a little guy (say one of Los Matadores so we don't have to sit through him squashing R-Truth for the 94th time) but now he wants the Big Guy.

Pay per view match.

You have five hours of original, top level television a week, plus the Network and WWE.com to build up a story but you can't go more than two weeks before you think your fans will get bored? Maybe the problem is you put together boring stories that don't have a shelf life, but there's zero excuse for not being able to entertain wrestling fans for four weeks.

This report made me shake my head, but it tells you so, so

much about the state of wrestling today.

New Column: Say Anything, As Long As It Makes Sense

This is basically the first half of this week's Reviewing the Review about why Raw SUCKED this week.

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-say-anything-long-makes-sense/35892/>

NXT – May 27, 2015: A Bit More Stoppable

NXT

Date: May 27, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Byron Saxton, Rich Brennan

It's the week after Takeover: Unstoppable and the main story seems to be Kevin Owens fights everyone at once. After challenging John Cena on Raw, sending Sami Zayn away to get shoulder surgery, possibly putting Hideo Itami on the shelf, attacking Commissioner William Regal and getting a

new #1 contender with Samoa Joe, Owens now has to deal with the debuting Samoa Joe. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week, complete with a quick interview with Joe where he says he's coming for the title.

Opening sequence.

Sami Zayn's music opens the show but we get Kevin Owens instead. He was going to issue an NXT Title Open Challenge, but he isn't insecure enough to have to defend his title against anyone every week. The fans sing JOHN CENA SUCKS, but Owens finds it odd that they never say that about Sami Zayn and he sucks too. We won't be seeing Sami again anyway because Owens did exactly what he said he would do at Takeover. The only reason he did that was so he could keep the NXT Title and keep providing for his family, because that's what a good man does.

Another thing a good man did was to let Samoa Joe live last week. A lot of people have said that Joe is gonna kill him, but that's as ridiculous as the colors of John Cena's merchandise. If Joe ever steps in the same ring as Owens again, he'll drop Joe just like that. Speaking of dropping people, that's what he's going to do at Elimination Chamber when he shows John Cena that the champ is here.

This brings out General Manager William Regal, who says Owens is walking a thin line. Owens says Regal put his hands on Owens first, which Regal considers the only reason Owens still works here. Regal lists off all the people who have been taken out on a stretcher since Owens arrived, but Kevin denies being behind Itami's injury. Also, Sami's injuries are on Sami for asking for it and on Regal for making the match.

This brings out....Solomon Crowe? Solomon heard Owens talking about how he isn't going to fight anyone unless they earn it and that means Kevin is scared. Kevin thinks Solomon has just earned an opportunity, so Regal makes the match. That means you can add Solomon to the list of people he's sent out of here on a stretcher ("Riley, Sami, Sami, Sami, and now him.").

Look back at Hideo's arm injury last week.

Hideo says he's had surgery and when he comes back, there will be no stopping him.

We get an interview from last week with Zack Ryder, who was interrupted by Mojo Rawley, who freaked Zack out a little bit.

Emma vs. Bayley

Emma is flanked by Dana Brooke. Bayley gets stomped down in the corner to start and Emma cranks on an armbar, only to have Bayley throw her to the mat and just pound away with right hands. A kick to the face gets two near falls for Emma as the fans are of course completely behind Bayley. Emma throws her down by the hair a few times and grabs a leg drag, followed by the Emma Lock for the clean submission at 4:13.

Rating: D+. This was a glorified squash for Emma, which isn't something you often see in this division. Emma being more aggressive is a good change of character for her, but I'm not sure where Bayley goes from here. She's so ridiculously over that it's kind of a strange choice to have her lose like this.

Charlotte comes out for the post match save but gets beaten down as well.

Recap of Baron Corbin beating Rhyno last week.

Baron was being interviewed after his win last week when Rhyno came up and said they should do it again soon.

We see Becky Lynch's career retrospective from last week with new footage of her match with Sasha last week.

Elias Samson/Mike Rallis vs. Blake/Murphy

Non-title and Alexa Bliss is with the champs. Blake and Rallis get things going with Mike taking a quick beating. It's off to Murphy for a slingshot hilo and a chinlock as the champs continue to dismantle Rallis. Mike finally rolls over for a hot tag, bringing in Elias for some dropkicks. That lasts all of ten seconds before the running brainbuster into the frog splash is enough for the pin on Samson at 3:15.

Rating: D+. Another squash here to establish the new trio. The new look works very, very well for Bliss and she's very fitting as a woman who looks down on everyone around her. Blake and Murphy are good in these roles but I'm really not sure how far they can go after they lose the belts.

Samson takes a Sparkle Splash for some insult to injury.

Post break, Bliss says she gravitated to the team because they're all winners. Compare this to Carmella, who is famous for being from a garbage dump like Long Island. Next week, that's where Bliss is sending her.

Tye Dillinger vs. Finn Balor

Dillinger scores with a quick elbow to the face but Balor smiles at him. Some choking with a boot in the corner has some more effect on Finn and we hit the chinlock. Balor comes back with a running forearm and basement dropkick, followed by the Sling Blade. The Coup de Grace completes the squash for Finn at 2:45.

Jason Jordan says he's found the perfect partner when Chad Gable comes up, saying it has to be him. Gable lists off his qualifications but Jordan says he already has a partner. He also says the wrong name so Gable throws him a towel with his name on it.

Kevin Owens vs. Solomon Crowe

Non-title. Owens bails to the floor so Solomon goes after him, only to eat some right hands to the face. Back in and Owens throws him outside again and we take a break. We come back with Owens putting on a chinlock. That gets boring in a hurry so Owens just hammers him down and tosses Solomon back to the floor. The pop-up powerbomb finally ends Crowe at 9:24.

Rating: D+. Another dull squash but did anyone expect anything else? There was no need for this to be anything other than Owens crushing Crowe and it's not like you lose anything. Crowe is the definition of a guy who is just there and not doing a thing despite being a fairly big signing back in the day. Nothing to see here.

Owens loads up the apron powerbomb but Samoa Joe comes out big staredown, sending Kevin running to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This just wasn't very good. It's a big fallout show from Takeover, but unfortunately that meant little more than airing clips from the show and having the winners in squash matches. It wasn't the worst because not a lot happened, but this was one of the flatter shows they've done in a long time. Things should pick up when they start the big stories again soon.

Results

Emma b. Bayley – Emma Lock

Blake/Murphy b. Elias Samson/Mike Rallis – Frog splash to Samson

Finn Balor b. Tye Dillinger – Coup de Grace

Kevin Owens b. Solomon Crowe – Pop up powerbomb

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Ring of Honor To Air On Destination America On June 3

<https://twitter.com/DestAmerica/status/603610524614557696/photo/1>

So.....is it still a legal issue to say that TNA is in trouble? I mean, I know anything I say against TNA is just part of the massive conspiracy to hold them down because TNA has never done anything wrong in the history of ever and it's all just people hating on them, but this doesn't seem good does it?

Monday Nitro – January 3, 2000: Taking the Wrestling Out of Wrestling

Monday Nitro #221

Date: January 3, 2000

Location: BiLo Center, Greenville, South Carolina

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Bobby Heenan, Tony Schiavone

It's a new year and in the best present WCW could give us, the show is back to two hours instead of the usual three. The big story this week is the rest of the Tag Team Title tournament with all the random and wacky teams and the rest of the field being filled out by regular teams who were "randomly" paired together. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week. Why must I be forced to think of that

mess again?

A jet landed at the airport today. I'd assume a lot of those land every day but for some reason this is supposed to be interesting.

Tag Team Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Harris Brothers vs. Buzzkill/Mike Rotundo

Sullivan makes Leia Meow jump on a trampoline for obvious reasons. Rotundo goes after let's say Ron to start and eats a powerslam and clothesline for his efforts. Off to Buzzkill for a forearm, but Ron comes back with a big old side slam. It's big enough that it almost knocks Buzzkill's hair off. Don comes in to hammer away as Standards and Practices come out and get rid of Leia, drawing the Varsity Club out to the floor. The H Bomb ends Buzzkill in a short match.

We look back at the monster truck stuff last week which has damaged Sid's neck.

A motorcade is leaving the airport.

There's going to be a new commissioner tonight.

Nash thinks Tom Zenk is getting the job.

Bret arrives and gets beaten down by Sid, wearing a neck brace.

Diamond Dallas Page is ready for his match against Buff Bagwell but Curt Hennig comes up and tells him the Powers That Be want him in the ring tonight. PG-13 is in the ring right now and that's fine with Page.

Tag Team Title Tournament Quarterfinals: PG-13 vs. Scott Steiner/Kevin Nash

Steiner is Hall's official replacement because there are a lot of people named Scott in this company. PG-13 is in the ring doing their rap, so here's Page to lay them both out with Diamond Cutters. Here's the NWO with Nash dropping an elbow on Wolfie and pulling the tights for the pin. It's going to be one of those kind of shows, but at least it's two hours.

Here's the NWO to complain about now getting any respect and having to be

attacked by Sid. Jarrett: "Slappy New Year!" Jeff isn't worried about Triple Threat Theater with Benoit and doesn't have much to say about it. Nash warns the new commissioner that the NWO is going to keep breaking the rules as they always have. Steiner jokes about his retirement and thinks all his fans are Wall Street types. This actually wasn't that bad.

The motorcade arrives.

Tag Team Title Tournament Quarterfinals: David Flair/Crowbar vs. Lash Leroux/Midnight

Lash does a cross sign at Daffney in a funny bit. The bad night continues for Lash as Midnight appearing in the ring freaks him out even more. David and Lash get things going with Stevie Ray sitting in on commentary. Flair is easily knocked around the ring because he's just not that good. It's off to Crowbar who eats a drop toehold to send him to the floor, only to have him slide back inside where he accidentally baseball slides David.

Stevie tells Lash to tag Midnight in and gets what he deserves, thereby lowering Lash's sucka levels for the rest of the match. Midnight throws Lash onto Crowbar and nails a nice dropkick, only to have Stevie pull Midnight out to the floor. Cue Disco, Tony Marinara and Disco as we now have more people interfering than in the match. Booker yells at his brother and takes a Slapjack to the head as Leroux hits Whiplash on Crowbar. As the referee yells at Harlem Heat, Vito and Johnny come in and lay out Lash, giving Crowbar the pin.

Rating: D-. Here's a spoiler for the rest of the show: this match, which ran 5:15, is the longest match on the entire show. Also, in a match just over five minutes long, six people interfered, giving us three stories (Mafia vs. Lash, Harlem Heat splitting, the match itself) in one match. I know we get on Russo for overbooking but come on man. Calm down for like a minute please.

Lash yells at Disco in the back but Disco says he has to deal with the Family, who come in and attack Lash as Disco has to look on.

Here's Luger Luger, still dressed as Sting and yes, this is really WCW's

best idea to fight Raw. Luger talks about Sting being afraid of him and wants the no name wrestler to come out here and face him.

Total Package vs. Tank Abbott

Stalling by Luger leads into the mace from Liz for the DQ in less than a minute. But remember, Luger is a veteran and therefore still a draw.

Jerry Flynn comes out and beats up Abbott with less than no one caring.

The NWO takes their ball bats to the limo.

Rob Garner of the WCW front office comes out to talk about the “writers” “swerving” WCW and how Sting and Goldberg are currently out of commission. Therefore, let’s bring in someone new to help fight the NWO. That brings us to the new commissioner: Terry Funk. Yes, the big solution to the NWO is to bring in a guy who first retired about sixteen years earlier.

Now don’t get me wrong: Terry Funk is awesome and one of the best wrestlers and performers of all time, but this is not the right move in this spot. This needed to be someone young who could be a future for WCW, not another legend who shows up, basically in the same role as Piper.

Anyway, Funk says he loves wrestling and wants to get rid of these fat hogs at the trough. To do this, he needs an enforcer, and who better than Arn Anderson? Anderson gives his usual great speech about putting the heart back in wrestling, but the WE WANT FLAIR chants almost drown him out. Cue the NWO so Hart can offer Funk a spot on the team. Terry shrugs it off and makes some new stipulations for Hart vs. Goldberg. Wait didn’t they officially cancel that last week? It wouldn’t be the first time they lied about a match they had coming up so why not do it here too?

The match will have Arn as guest referee and the title can change hands on a DQ. As for tonight, it’s Jeff defending the US Title against Sid in a powerbomb match. Oh and Nash and Steiner will indeed get screwed in their matches tonight. Nash threatens David Flair and we’re done here.

Tag Team Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Buff Bagwell/Chris Kanyon vs. Norman Smiley/Asya

Buff and Kanyon argue over how awesome this town is because Kanyon thinks it's not Hollywood. Kanyon offers him some champagne so Buff, the hero that he is, breaks the bottle over Kanyon's head. That's a great way to advance in a title tournament Buff. Norman is dressed as a mascot of the local baseball team, complete with a three foot long tail, which is shaken in Buff's general direction.

Buff doesn't take kindly to Norman mocking his strut and nails him with a clothesline, only to have Asya knee him in the back. We get the spanking dance from Norman before it's off to Asya, who is quickly suplexed down by Bagwell. Everything breaks down and Asya hits Buff low, only to have Norman accidentally hit her with the mascot head. A Blockbuster sends Buff on his own (presumably) to the semifinals.

Rating: D-. Comedy ladies and gentlemen! This is what you get when you have no reason for these teams to be fighting and you just throw them together and have no chemistry or time to go anywhere. It doesn't help that neither team even tried to do more than comedy spots to get to the ending. Couple that with Kanyon not even being in the match and what were you expecting here?

The Revolution comes in to beat up Buff, drawing down Duggan for a failed save attempt. The Filthy Animals come out for the real save.

The old guys and the NWO look for David.

Funk and Anderson find Daffney in the boiler room.

Tag Team Title Tournament Semifinals: Kevin Nash/Scott Steiner vs. Harris Brothers

You know, in a decent company, this could be a watchable power match. Again Steiner sits in on commentary and lets Nash do the match himself. The twins double team Nash until he gets a ball bat. They obviously run away from the combined force of the bat and the hair, only to have the Varsity Club come in and chair them down. Sullivan throws Don back in and Nash pins him in less than a minute and a half.

Jarrett kidnaps Daffney.

Tag Team Title Tournament Semifinals: Buff Bagwell/Chris Kanyon vs. David Flair/Crowbar

Kanyon comes out for no logical reason, only to get jumped by Bam Bam Bigelow and slammed off the stage. This brings out Vampiro, who is apparently going to be Buff's partner whether Bagwell likes it or not. Vampiro starts with some spinning kicks to put Crowbar down but Buff tags himself in. Cue Anderson and Funk to talk to David because he's not doing anything important right now.

Vampiro superplexes Crowbar down and Buff tells Vampiro to stay in for the finish. There's a Ligerbomb to Crowbar but Vampiro stops to argue with Anderson because it's the least logical thing possible right now. Funk punches Vampiro in the face and Buff adds a Blockbuster to his partner, again for no apparent reason, allowing David to get the pin to go to the finals.

Rating: F. This was a circus with the partners basically saying screw the tag belts because we want to do stupid stuff instead. I've completely lost track of what's going on with Bagwell (feuding with Page I believe), Vampiro (feuding with no one that I know of) and almost everyone else in this company. The sad part: I really don't care what they're doing either.

The NWO drags Daffney out so Steiner can call her ugly.

Flair and Crowbar can't find Daffney.

US Title: Jeff Jarrett vs. Sid Vicious

Powerbomb match and Sid is in a neck brace. He shoves Jeff away to start and kicks away, only to have Jarrett go right for the neck. A backdrop puts the big guy on the floor and Jeff rams him into the barricade. Back in and a high cross body gets two for Jeff but Sid powers out and nails a big boot, followed by the chokeslam. The champ shoves the referee down of course and Sid hits the powerbomb, only to have Bret come in with the ball bat for the DQ.

Standard beatdown and spray painting follows.

Tag Team Titles: Kevin Nash/Scott Steiner vs. David Flair/Crowbar

Steiner and Nash clean house to start and I have no idea who to cheer for here. There's no referee to start and Steiner sits in on commentary to say the opponents suck. Nash slams Crowbar off the top and pokes him in the eye as this has been completely one sided so far. A double noggin knocker puts Flair and Crowbar down again but here come Terry Funk and Arn Anderson in a referee shirt. Crowbar gets jackknifed as security and Funk yell at Steiner. The distraction lets Crowbar hit Nash with a crowbar, giving David the pin and the titles.

Rating: F. It's the slip on the banana peel ending as this was just a beating until the wacky ending. In other words, Russo probably thought it was great and the wrestlers loved it too as they didn't have to do much. This wasn't a match and that really shouldn't surprise me at this point.

Post match Jeff Jarrett drags Daffney to the ring as David hits Anderson with the crowbar. The new champs stumble away and the NWO swarms Funk. Bret and Jeff kidnap Anderson and throw him in the trunk of a car to end the show. The new champs were complete afterthoughts here.

Overall Rating: F. So tonight we had seven tournament matches. Those matches combined to run less than nineteen minutes, for an average of about two minutes and forty seconds each. If you take away the marathon match that ran over five minutes, you're looking at six matches taking less than fifteen minutes combined. There were two other matches on this show: Tank Abbott in a match with literally no wrestling and a two minute powerbomb match which ended in a DQ. They've taken the wrestling out of this show and now I'm really not sure what Nitro is supposed to be. At least it's shorter now I guess.

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