

Extreme Rules 2015: Extremely... Something

Extreme Rules 2015

Date: April 26, 2015

Location: Allstate Arena, Rosemont, Illinois

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's time for the night of Wrestlemania rematches, which often makes for a very entertaining card. The main event will see Seth Rollins defending the World Title against Randy Orton inside a cage with the RKO banned and Kane guarding the door. We also have Roman Reigns vs. Big Show in a last man standing match and Rusev vs. Cena III in a Russian chain match. Let's get to it.

Here's Bad News Barrett on the pre-show to tell us that Daniel Bryan isn't here tonight to defend the Intercontinental Title. Since Bryan can't be here, let's bring out Neville for a replacement so he can take the Bullhammer destined to go upside Bryan's head.

Bad News Barrett vs. Neville

The fans are entirely behind Neville as Barrett grabs a headlock to start. Neville takes him to the mat and hooks a nice rollup for two before the front flips have Barrett even more confused. A dropkick sends him to the floor but Barrett trips Neville up to take over. Back from a break with Barrett holding a chinlock before throwing Neville into the air for a kick to the ribs and two. A big boot to the face gets the same on Neville and Barrett follows up with a nice slingshot backbreaker.

The second chinlock doesn't last as long, allowing Neville to fire off some kicks to the ribs to send Barrett outside, setting up the big spinning dive from Neville. Back in and Barrett catches him going up before planting Neville with Winds of Change for two. Wasteland gets a VERY close two but the Bullhammer misses, allowing Neville to hit an enziguri. The Red Arrow is broken up but Barrett misses another Bullhammer. A second kick to the head sets up the Red Arrow from (Cole:

"Adrian") Neville for the pin at 10:40.

Rating: C+. Well that's a surprise. Neville getting the win is a big deal as it's his biggest pin ever, even if everyone and their mother pin Barrett. In theory this sets up a feud between the two of them over who gets the title shot whenever Bryan comes back, if he does at all.

The opening video talks about how this is the most extreme night of the year and focuses on Rusev vs. Cena and Rollins vs. Orton. Again, it makes sense to add gimmicks so it's not just the same show as last month without the big stage.

Luke Harper vs. Dean Ambrose

Street fight, meaning the fall must take place in the ring. Dean takes over to start and knocks Harper to the floor for a suicide dive. Back in and we get the kendo sticks to Harper's back, followed by a chair being thrown inside. Dean sits down and licks his lips until Harper comes back and suplexes him through the chair. Luke starts going after the knee with the kendo stick before wedging a chair in the corner.

In a unique spot, Harper LAUNCHES Dean face first into the chair for two as the fans stay behind Ambrose. Back up and a tornado DDT gives Dean a breather as the fans want tables. Luke counters Dirty Deeds and the rebound clothesline before they head back to the floor. Dean's suicide dive is countered with a shove, so Dean does a kind of 619 and comes back with a clothesline in a cool spot.

They fight to the back with Luke being rammed into various things. Luke goes behind a wall and the camera has to run around to find him. THANK YOU! I can't remember the last time that happened but it drives me absolutely insane when there's a camera waiting on them. Harper and Dean get inside a car.....and drive away with the referee in the back. So I'm guessing the match is still going and continues later in the night?

HHH tells Kane to find that car before those two hurt someone. Rollins comes in and tells them to calm down because this is a big night. Kane goes off on Rollins and calls him a punk, but HHH wants things calm head into the main event. Kane better not screw up though. The fans could be

heard calling this boring and I can't say I disagree. Don't put this stuff on the pay per view. We know the story is boring by now so don't make it even worse.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Sheamus

The winner has to kiss the winner's....uh yeah. Sheamus shoves him away to start but Ziggler comes back with forearms to the face. A dropkick staggers the big man and they fight to the floor. Ziggler is thrown at the steps but jumps on top of them for the slingshot DDT to stun Sheamus even more. Back in and Sheamus hits something like a Brogue Knee to take over. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Dolph fights up with another dropkick, only to get caught in a sitout powerbomb for two more.

Sheamus starts talking trash and follows it up with another devastating, yes DEVASTATING I say, chinlock. It's not devastating enough to prevent Ziggler from fighting up with right hands and a splash in the corner. The neckbreaker is countered and Sheamus nails a running ax handle, only to walk into a superkick for two. Sheamus plants him with a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker as they're trading big shots here. The Brogue Kick misses and Ziggler rolls him up for two before a rolling cradle is enough to pin Sheamus at 9:25.

Rating: C+. This was just a TV match with a quick ending but the two worked pretty well together. The idea here was to have Ziggler bounce off Sheamus and make all the power moves look good, which he excels at. Solid enough match here, even if the gimmick was really stupid.

Post match Sheamus takes nearly five minutes to do what he's supposed to do but of course he hits Ziggler low and gives him a Brogue Kick before making Ziggler kiss up to him like a heel should.

Long video on what's coming on the Network.

Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Tyson Kidd/Cesaro

Kidd/Cesaro are defending and are the default heels here. Cole says that it's Kofi and Big E. Langston for the New Day. Kofi takes Kidd to the mat to start but Tyson wraps the arm around the ropes to take over. Off to

Big E. vs. Cesaro with Cesaro catching Big E.'s leapfrog in midair and throwing him into the corner. It's back to Kidd as the champions stomp Big E. to the tune of New Day Sucks in an awesome moment. Tyson sends both challengers to the floor for a suicide cannonball dive on Kofi, only to have Big E. clothesline him down. Fans: "NEW DAY! SUCKS!" Woods: "WHAT DID WE DO??? WE'RE WINNING!"

Back in and Kofi hits a basement dropkick in the corner before we hit the chinlock. Big E. misses the splash and gets low bridged to the floor, allowing for the hot tag to Cesaro. The Swing is teased but it's a catapult into the corner, where Kofi jumps to the top for a spinning cross body, but Cesaro catches him in mid air for a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for two. Cesaro's apron superplex sets up the springboard elbow from Kidd for two, only to have Big E. dive through the ropes to spear Kidd down.

Back in and the Midnight Hour gets two on Kidd with Cesaro making the save. Kofi gets caught in the Sharpshooter and this time it's E.'s turn to make the save. There's the Swing into the dropkick but Woods gets on the apron for a distraction, only to be taken out by Natalya. Kofi uses the distraction to slide in with a rollup and a handful of trunks for the pin and the titles at 9:37.

Rating: B+. I had a really good time with this as Cesaro and Kidd are one of the most polished teams for such a short amount of time together as you'll ever see. Hopefully these teams have several more matches together as they've got great chemistry and work together really well. Awesome match here and I'd love to see more of it.

The pre-show panel chats for a bit and talks about Neville vs. Barrett.

New Day celebrates their win as Ambrose and Harper return. They fight back to the arena and throw a bunch of weapons into the ring. Harper hits a quick powerbomb onto the chairs for two but takes too long putting Dean under the chairs, allowing Ambrose to toss him onto the steel. Dirty Deeds connects for the pin at somewhere around 59:00.

Rating: D+. So uh....what the heck was the point of this? If they had done something like Mankind vs. HHH at In Your House XVI where they kept

fighting all throughout the night this would have been fun but instead it was three fourths of a match, then a 50 minute break, then a quick finish. Were they just five minutes short or something?

Long recap of Cena vs. Rusev. They traded wins at the previous two pay per views but tonight Cena is defending the US Title in a Russian chain match.

US Title: John Cena vs. Rusev

Russian chain match of the four corners variety, meaning forward momentum has to be maintained or your streak of corners is erased. They start with a tug of war and Cena gets three quick buckles, followed by Rusev getting two of his own. Rusev sends him to the floor and suplexes him over the ropes for two buckles but Cena hits him with the chain to break it up. They head outside with Rusev being pulled into the post, knocking him half silly in the process.

Cena gets two buckles but Rusev wraps his legs around the ropes for the save. Rusev scores with the spinwheel kick and chains Cena in the back a few times but can only get two buckles. For some reason Rusev goes up top, only to get pulled down onto the chain. Cena starts his finishing sequence but gets caught in the fall away slam, setting up the jumping superkick. The fans want Lana so she gets on the apron, only to be ejected by Rusev. Cena hits his usual stuff but the AA is countered into the Alabama Slam.

The Accolade is reversed into the STF and the rope Rusev grabs means nothing. Rusev pulls him down and hooks the Accolade so Cena gets to his feet and drives Rusev into two corners. He collapses from the hold though and Rusev hits the third, only to walk into the AA to break the streak. Back up and they both quickly get three, setting up a tug of war over the fourth. Rusev rushes for it but Cena pulls him into the AA and slaps the fourth to retain at 13:35.

Rating: C. I'm actually surprised but they did find a different way to end the thing. That being said, these matches can only be so good as the gimmick gets in the way of the match. Other than the match being called a Russian chain match, there's no distinct advantage here for Rusev and it

makes for a pretty average match. Not bad or anything, but I'll never want to watch this again.

Roman Reigns talks about how he'll keep getting up and win the last man standing match tonight.

Divas Title: Nikki Bella vs. Naomi

Nikki is defending and Naomi got the shot after attacking Paige, who had won a battle royal to earn the title match. Naomi has new music, stupid looking glasses and shoes that light up. Nikki puts on an armbar to start but gets suplexed down for two. The shoes are already really distracting as Naomi hooks a chinlock. Back up and Nikki avoids the Rear View but Naomi stops to dance a bit.

Naomi charges into an elbow in the corner and the Alabama Slam gets two. Back up and Naomi gets the same off a falling reverse DDT. A quick Bubba Bomb into a rollup gets the same but Nikki comes back with something like a Beautiful Disaster from the middle rope for two. Brie gets in a cheap shot on Naomi, setting up the Rack Attack to retain the title at 7:17. Those are our new heroes?

Rating: C. The Bellas (they're a collective entity in my mind at this point) are acceptable in the ring and improving, but they're far too annoying to make me ever care about/like them, especially with the one not in the match shouting COME ON *insert other sister's name here* a dozen times a match. It also doesn't help that they might be the worst written characters I've seen in years with the stories starting and stopping and them suddenly being faces with no reason given. Also their Total Divas personas haven't done them any favors. Somehow this is going to wind up as the Funkadactyls vs. Bellas isn't it?

Rusev yells at Lana and storms off. Lana hangs her head and walks into the Authority's locker room. That's something I guess and the fans gasped when they saw whose room it was.

We recap Reigns vs. Big Show, which exists to prove that there is a devil and his name is Vince McMahon.

Roman Reigns vs. Big Show

Last man standing. They slug it out to start and Reigns knocks Show to the floor before getting an early table. Big Show shoves it back under the ring so Reigns posts him, setting up the apron kick for five. The table reappears and is set up at ringside but Big Show breaks it with his fists so Reigns can't put him through it.

Reigns opts for a kendo stick and nails Show with it a few times, only to have Show break it apart, saying he's a giant. Thanks for pointing that out. Show goes into his slow offense and the fans chant BORING, so Reigns gets a chair and blasts Show about ten times to put him down. A DDT on the chair stuns Show and allows Reigns to get two tables. The delay lets Show get back up for the KO Punch though, sending Reigns down for eight.

Show is annoyed so Roman hits a Samoan drop through the table. Back up and Big Show hits a spear, followed by the most polite, least impactful Vader Bomb you'll ever see. Reigns gets to his feet so Show goes up, only to get slammed down for almost no reaction. Two Superman Punches connect but Show catches the third and chokeslams Roman over the top and through the two tables Reigns set up earlier.

Naturally it only gets nine so Big Show leaves Reigns alone as he sets up the announcers' table. In a funny bit, Show sees the announcers' notes that say he needs to lose weight and yells at JBL. Back in and Reigns avoids a charge through a table in the corner, setting up a spear for eight.

Show rolls outside so Reigns spears him through the barricade for a spot we've seen before. It doesn't help that Show was motionless at seven and on his feet at nine. Show loads up a chokeslam on the table but Reigns escapes and runs the tables to spear Show through the Spanish table for eight. Reigns finally buries Show under the table for the win at 19:43.

Rating: C+. The worst part? The match wasn't really even that bad. Just too long though and the ending didn't do what they were hoping. Why did they need to have the table cover him when they could have done the spear for the win? In other words, it was a table that kept Show down instead of Reigns. Great way to make your next big star look awesome there guys.

This could have been WAY worse, but the lack of crowd interest had them dead on arrival.

Randy Orton tells Kane that the Authority will turn on him.

We look at some Tough Enough applications.

Here's Bo Dallas, who wants to know why Chicago is the Second City when they're clearly #1! That would be #1 at rejecting someone trying to make their lives better. The people here shouldn't worry about how extreme the rules get because they should be worrying about bo-lieving. Cue Ryback and the obvious happens.

Rusev is annoyed about the loss when Lana comes in and says it's done. There will be one more match between Cena and Rusev at Payback and it's I Quit.

WWE World Title: Randy Orton vs. Seth Rollins

In a cage with Rollins defending, the RK0 banned and Kane guarding the cage door. Pinfall, submission or escape to win. Rollins goes for the cage twice early and Randy pulls him down on the second attempt. A third attempt goes just as badly so Rollins climbs one more time and sends Orton into the cage to take over for a change. Seth gets reversed into the cage again and the chase is on up the cage wall with Orton making a save.

Rollins almost escapes again and this time the Stooges come out to help, only to have Orton superplex him off the top for a big crash and two. Kane yells at the Stooges as Orton can't follow up. To change up the pace of the escape counters, Orton crotches him on the top rope instead. The Elevated DDT plants Rollins and Lawler is already proclaiming Orton the next champion.

Orton loads up the RK0 but opts for a decent looking Pedigree for two instead. The fans chant YES as Orton loads up the Punt but Rollins ducks to the side and hits a quick enziguri. Kane is told to open the door and obeys the champ but Randy is right there with the backbreaker to stop Rollins again.

The door stays open so Orton stops to think about it, but the threat of Kane sends him back. That threat proves to be well founded as Kane slams the door when Orton tries to leave. Randy does the smart thing by kicking the door at Kane before it turns into a fight to escape. Kane slams the door on both men and takes off his jacket, so the Stooges send Kane into the cage. The monster chokeslams both guys and loads up a tombstone on Orton, only to have Randy escape and RK0 Kane. Seth uses the distraction to RK0 Orton, allowing him to escape and retain at 20:50.

Rating: C. This wasn't terrible but it took longer than it should have and ended with a pretty lame surprise. They were treating the RK0 from Rollins like Austin siding with Vince when it was really just a technicality. The match was good enough but the gimmick continues to drag things down. Some of the early escape attempts were good though.

Overall Rating: C+. I liked this more than I thought I would but it still wasn't a blow away show. Unfortunately we seem to be heading for round 3 of multiple feuds at Payback, despite there being very little left for these people to fight over. Definitely a watchable show, but can we please get some fresh ideas on top? Like, even adding someone else to Orton vs. Rollins and no Kane doesn't count. Better than I was expecting but still not great.

Results

Dolph Ziggler b. Sheamus – Rolling cradle

New Day b. Cesaro/Tyson Kidd – Rollup with a handful of trunks

Dean Ambrose b. Luke Harper – Dirty Deeds

John Cena b. Rusev – Cena touched the fourth buckle

Nikki Bella b. Naomi – Rack Attack

Roman Reigns b. Big Show – Show couldn't answer the ten count

Seth Rollins b. Randy Orton – Rollins escaped the cage

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Daniel Bryan Out Of Extreme Rules, Neville To Replace Him

In a non-title match on the pre-show. Wasn't the Tag Team Title match on the pre-show already? If there are two matches there, we have a six match pay per view card. That's an awfully thin show, but maybe Nikki vs. Naomi can go 15 minutes or so.

Thought of the Day: It's Been A While

You know what we haven't had in a long time in WWE? A good mystery. Like a masked man, someone attacking others in the back but not getting caught, a mystery opponent (that was properly built up), finding out who was behind something, figuring out what something meant (like a logo/symbol being left backstage) etc. Everything is revealed in like a week at most and there's no waiting on anything. Remember the search

for Vince's child, or who ran over Austin, or finding out what the Taz logo was? Mix it up a little and let us wait every now and then.

Extreme Rules 2015 Preview

This isn't going to be the longest one in the world as NorCal and I already did the full podcast preview for this show. In case you didn't listen to that show for some reason (and you should. Check it and the other episodes here <http://mightynorcal.podbean.com/>), here's a shorter than normal version.

On the pre-show, I'll take Cesaro and Kidd to retain the Tag Team Titles. Cesaro and Kidd have been on fire with the belts and there's no real need to give the belts to New Day, who can stay over as heels for six months on that clap alone. I like New Day, but they don't need the belts yet.

Rollins over Orton in the Kane Show with Orton and Rollins as the backup players. I'm almost sure Orton will hit an RKO or two but Kane will somehow screw him over, because NO ONE would see a swerve like that coming because the Authority is just so much smarter than we all are. My interest in this match fell through the floor when Kane became involved and that's not how you want your first title defense to go.

Cena retains of course in probably the most brutal match on the show. Those two are going to beat the fire out of each other and probably go on to have yet another match, which will only make Rusev look all the lamer. It's a shame too as the guy has shown he can hang in there with the top guys, but since we NEED a tetralogy instead of just the regular trilogy. Also, can we please find a different way to end the match instead of Cena following him around?

I don't think Bryan is going to be able to go, meaning it should be Neville getting the shot. Who will it be though? Probably Truth or Ryder

or one of the other designated losers. Barrett walks out with the belt either way, but my goodness do they really have to wait until the day of the show to announce that Bryan is hurt? Barring a shocker, they've known for a week and should just announce it instead of jerking the fans around with their "well he MIGHT be there!"

Sheamus beats Ziggler in the stupidest gimmick of the night that I'd assume only Vince and Dunn find funny.

Nikki retains the Divas Title. All hail the Bellas and forever praise be their names, even if it defeats the purpose of turning Naomi heel, which defeats the purpose of common sense as she wrestles the natural face style but they decided to turn all the Divas heel for some reason.

Reigns over Big Show to FINALLY END THIS STUPID STUPID FEUD THAT WAS DEAD FIVE MONTHS AGO BUT LET'S JUST KEEP THEM FIGHTING BECAUSE BIG SHOW IS BIG AND THAT MEANS FANS WANT TO SEE REIGNS BEAT HIM UP EVEN THOUGH SHOW BEAT HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME IN WWE BECAUSE HE'S BIG AND THEREFORE INTERESTING!

And Ambrose over Harper in what should be a hot opener.

Overall this show doesn't have me all that fired up, but it's usually a sleeper hit. If they let the violence get cranked up, they can overcome the lame build but it's going to take some work. As usual, this is the Wrestlemania rematch show and you almost have to have the gimmicks to keep it from being Wrestlemania Part II.

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Thunder – December 2, 1999: As Close As They Can Get

Thunder

Date: December 2, 1999

Location: Landon Arena, Topeka, Kansas

Attendance: 2,467

Commentators: Larry Zbyszko, Mike Tenay

After a week off due to Thanksgiving, we're back for one of the final live Thunders as the tapings would soon move to Tuesday nights. In other words, this might be the last "good" show in the series' run. We're less than three weeks away from Starrcade and the World Title scene is very slowly rounding into form. Unfortunately everything else is rounding into form and it's not a pretty sight. Let's get to it.

Hardcore Title: Norman Smiley vs. The Wall

Norman, the champion, is in karate attire and Berlyn comes out for commentary. There are weapons in the ring already but Norman relies on the power of the 80s with a Crane Kick pose, earning him a clothesline. Wall blasts Norman with some weapons shots as Berlyn is suddenly fine with speaking English and demanding an apology from the big guy.

Norman keeps screaming as the beating continues but eventually kicks the trashcan into Wall's face. The Big Wiggle is teased but Wall hot shots him instead. The chokeslam is loaded up but Berlyn hits Wall with the belt, knocking him out with his hand still around Norman's throat. Norman covers while still being choked to retain the title.

Rating: D+. I love Norman. Even when he's just getting beaten up he's fun to watch as he's clearly trying, unlike so many of the other wrestlers on this show. Wall is fine for a big man, but do you really want him jobbing in one of his first singles matches? Just have him maul some people, like

maybe those worthless cruiserweights. Actually we can't because they're getting beaten up later to further the parody of Jim Ross. I guess we just have to make the new monster lose in a comedy match.

Luger isn't happy that he's fighting Sid tonight.

Silver King wants his check back from Dr. Death, as apparently Williams hasn't cashed it for some reason. Football insults are hurled and death will come soon for Silver King.

Kaz Hayashi doesn't like Maestro. Time for a transition!

Kaz Hayashi vs. Maestro

No Symphony here, meaning my interest quickly fades. They hit the mat for a faster sequence than you would expect with Maestro getting two off a rollup. Tenay is of course talking about Jeff Jarrett, because Russo likes getting announcers involved. Kaz comes back with a dropkick but gets sent face first into the buckle. Choking and stomping ensue to show that Maestro is a heel. It's actually not clear otherwise, even with David Flair kidnapping him on Monday.

We hit the chinlock on Kaz and here's David with the crowbar. Kaz flips out of a German suplex and hits a dropkick but the referee gets bumped, bringing David inside. His crowbar hits Kaz by mistake, sending Maestro running for the hills. The unconscious Kaz wins by countout and is shocked when he wakes up.

Rating: D. Another day, another match with a stupid finish designed to get a bad angle over instead of the wrestling. Maestro is a guy whose looks deceive you as he had a decent match despite looking out of shape. Kaz is solid in the ring as well and can give you a good performance when he isn't cannon fodder for a David Flair feud.

Disco and Lash Leroux arrive but have to run from the Mamalukes.

Lex Luger loses his bag, takes Jimmy Hart's by mistake, then gets his own bag back. He tries to leave but has flat tires because....I have no idea actually.

Chavo Guerrero vs. Buzzkill

Buzzkill's entrance: "It's me, it's me, it's that B-U-Double Z!" Chavo tries to sell him some tyedye and a broken lava lamp, which Buzzkill tries to turn on despite a lack of electricity. The fans are ALL OVER this and Chavo only makes it worse by giving Buzzkill a Walkman to make him go down on the mat to the music, but it's only good for two. Chavo gives up on the sale but has a shirt for the referee, allowing Buzzkill to hit him with the briefcase for the pin.

Buzzkill is mad at himself for cheating, but borrows money from the referee to buy the tyedye and lamp from Chavo.

I'm pausing now and trying to compose myself. Normally I would write up some rant about how Russo doesn't get wrestling and what a waste of talent this is, but I can't bring myself to care. That was one of the stupidest segments I've ever seen in wrestling and it was painful to watch. There's nothing wrong with a comedy segment here and there, or even more than one a show. However, when your entire promotion is one comedy/stupid segment after another, you lose the benefit of the doubt. You lose your audience too but that's another story.

Chris Benoit is ready for his match with Liger, who he respects very much. For once, there's nothing else going on in a promo. The idea of Benoit vs. Liger is one of the only things that can bring me back after what I've sat through already.

Meng gets into his dressing room but Lash and Disco show up and swap his name plate for theirs.

Evan Karagias is in the back with Madusa and implies that he's rather, shall we say, antsy. Madusa promises him "everything" after Starrcade.

Long recap of Nitro. That doesn't help things, though at least it's shorter.

Luger is still worried, but he knows he's the best and has nothing to worry about. But doggone it, do people like him?

Sid is playing with a Luger action figure as Gene tells him that he has a

powerbomb match vs. Nash at Starrcade. Gene doesn't have the match if that's not clear. Nash wouldn't take it after seeing Gene and Hogan team up against Steele and Fuji back in 84. Sid breaks the figure to show what's going to happen to Luger tonight.

Luger calls a cab. Can't he just walk to a bar or something and wait until the show is over?

The Mamalukes beat up some production guy and lock him in a freezer so he can give Disco and Lash a message.

Steve Williams vs. Villano IV/Villano V/Silver King

This should be short. Larry leaves the booth because Oklahoma disgusts him so much. For once, I can't say I disagree. The trio gets destroyed to start until Silver King nails a dropkick. A triple headbutt is shrugged off though and King gets press slammed. I'm missing a good chunk of the match, though as a consolation I do get a lot of shots of Oklahoma talking. Vampiro comes out to go after Oklahoma, which allows Silver King to sneak down and take his check. Williams pins a Villano off the Stampede in a quick match.

Luger is trying to get into his cab but the Mamalukes stop him to ask for Disco and Lash. In one of the smartest things Luger has ever said, he recommends the dressing room with their name on it. As this is going on, Silver King dives into the cab and leaves. Luger is completely thwarted, because that was the only cab (or form of transportation it seems) in all of Topeka.

After a break, the Mamalukes are outside the dressing room door. Thankfully they're nice enough to not go in or do anything else until after the next match.

Jushin Thunder Liger vs. Chris Benoit

Please let it go long. Please let it go long. Please let it go long. Larry is back on commentary and annoyed at all the guest announcers screwing up. We can't start just yet though as Juventud Guerrera comes out for commentary with his arm in a sling and flanked by Psychosis and

La Parka (rocking the red skeleton attire). Juvy sits in on commentary and he's going to be the focus of the match isn't he?

Liger rolls out of an early suplex attempt and they hit the mat for a technical sequence into a backslide attempt from Benoit but Liger powers into a sunset flip. A stalemate gets some polite applause from the crowd as Juvy says IT DOESN'T MATTER what the wrestlers are doing. Benoit is taken down in a test of strength but Liger can't break his bridge. The Liger Kick connects as Juvy takes credit for building the Cruiserweight division. He doesn't mention his current reign as the IWGP Junior Heavyweight Title but why should he do that?

Tenay announces Benoit vs. Nash on Nitro and a US Title shot in a ladder match at Starrcade. That's quite the schedule. Liger hooks his feet under Benoit's arms and takes him to the floor in a crash before putting on the Surfboard back inside. The brainbuster gets two and Liger wins a chop off. Benoit breaks up a tornado DDT attempt and it's a double clothesline to put both guys down. There's the snap suplex and a belly to back for two on Liger and Benoit nails him with a clothesline to the back of the head. Liger is able to crotch him down and nail a superplex, but the other cruiserweights come in for the double DQ.

Rating: B-. I want to complain about the ending destroying what could have been a great match, but this is such a rare treat these days that I can't bring myself to do it. Instead, I'll go on about what a shame it is that they bring in Jushin Thunder Liger and use him as a way to get over Juvy's (albeit funny) Rock imitation, which could have been done with almost anyone on the roster. At least we got about seven minutes of Benoit vs. Liger though, which is better than anything else we were going to get.

Benoit and Liger clean house.

Buff promises to beat Meng tonight.

Speaking of Meng, the Mamalukes find him in the dressing room and get beaten up as you would expect.

Luger disguises his voice and calls the WCW offices to say he has a

family emergency and needs to leave. Terry Taylor pops in to say....I'm assuming nice try as Buff's music was drowning him out. I don't know if that kind of thing is a Russo joke or if the WCW production guys all just stopped caring at once, because it's been a thing for months now and it's really annoying.

Buff Bagwell vs. Meng

Well it would have to be this match after that last segment wouldn't it? Meng throws him around like a Tongan monster throws around a pretty boy to start. Buff's right hands and clotheslines have no effect but some dropkicks stagger Meng. Apparently Buff has an easily built ego as Buff tries ten right hands in the corner, only to get dropped on the top rope before he gets to nine. Meng comes back with strikes in the corner as Larry thinks there's something up with the Outsiders and Russo. Gee Larry, YOU REALLY THINK SO???

A lot of choking ensues before Buff gets bent over Meng's knee in a backbreaker. Buff comes back with his swinging neckbreaker and a cross body for two as we have Mamalukes. Say it with me: the ref gets bumped, allowing the mobsters to beat up both guys for reasons not exactly clear. Meng fights them off and Buff goes up, only to miss Meng and hit the Blockbuster on Vito. The Tongan Death Grip gives Meng the win.

Rating: D. Can we get some tougher referees? Or some wrestlers that aren't quite as careless and don't hit a referee on half the matches every show? I like that they're keeping Meng strong, even if it doesn't seem likely to lead anywhere. You can always find a way to use someone like him, but in Russo's case he'll probably wind up as a bus driver with an unhealthy fear of parrots.

Meng beats up the mobsters for fun.

Gene is in the back with Mona and Jarrett and can't stop looking at her chest. Mona: "Do you see something you like Gene?" Jeff yells at her for taking half his interview time and calls her Miss Slappy. This Monday, Goldberg and Dustin Rhodes are on his hit list.

The Mamalukes drink Surge to make themselves feel better, though Johnny

could go for a cheese sandwich.

Jeff Jarrett/Mona vs. Evan Karagias/Madusa

Is there a reason why Jarrett and Mona got together and I just missed it? Larry: "If he's so chosen, why is he in a match he doesn't want to be in?" Tenay wants Jeff fined and suspended for his actions on Monday. Evan and Mona get things started as Jarrett walks around ringside. He takes her down with ease to start but the camera goes to see Jarrett and Tenay yelling at each other. I wonder if that's what the TNA meetings were like.

Mona armdrags Madusa down but gets caught in a double backdrop. Now Jeff sits on the steps (which is nothing like when Mankind did the same to the Rock, appropriately enough against the Hollys) while Madusa cranks on an armbar. Back up and Mona slams her off the middle rope and crotches Evan, followed by a top rope hurricanrana. Madusa gets back with a German suplex though, allowing Evan to hit a corkscrew plancha for the pin.

Rating: D. So to recap we have a woman who is using sex to get a title shot at Starrcade, another woman who wrestles hard but gets beaten up at the end, but the whole thing is about Jeff Jarrett arguing with an announcer. They really thought this was the answer to women like Chyna?

Mona dropkicks Jarrett post match and eats a guitar to the head. Serves her right for trying in her match.

Long recap of Bret's WCW career. No real context or reason for this but it's there.

The Revolution talks about having their own country. Saturn: "And our own continent! Asya!" Get out while you can boys.

Luger is on the phone with Russo and is told that the winner of the match with Sid gets a World Title match this Monday.

Gene is with Lash and Disco and recaps the Mafia angle. Wouldn't it have been better to do this EARLIER? They agree that they need each other to survive and Disco asks Lash not to do the splits tonight because dancing is his gimmick. I can't even roll my eyes at these terms being dropped

anymore.

Disco Inferno/Lash Leroux vs. Perry Saturn/Dean Malenko

Shane makes fun of Disco and Lash's accents before the match. Cue the Mamalukes to go after Disco and Lash but the Revolution mocks them as well, triggering another brawl. Disco and Lash are smart enough to stand outside and watch as Asya hits the Italians low, allowing the Revolution to clean house. Security gets them out of here so Disco and Lash jump Saturn from behind and get two off a Russian legsweep.

Tenay announces Evan vs. Mona vs. Madusa on Monday with the Cruiserweight Title shot on the line. Logic would say Mona vs. Madusa in a singles match, but why do that when it can be men vs. women? Lash beats Saturn up even more and does the split into a punch spot, prompting Disco to angrily tag himself in. This time it's Disco knocking Saturn around but stopping to dance, allowing Dean to come in and kick Disco's head off (yet the hair still doesn't move). Disco fights back with a sunset flip but Saturn kicks him again to break it up.

The Last Dance is broken up and Disco gets sat on top, allowing Saturn to bulldog him out to the floor in a nice spot. Lash and Dean get tags and the Cajun cleans house on Malenko but Whiplash is broken up by Saturn. A superkick drops Lash to the floor where he almost gets into it with Asya, allowing Shane to get in a cast shot. The Cloverleaf on the unconscious Lash gets the win as Saturn holds Disco.

Rating: D+. Disco and Lash are prime examples of guys that were doing nothing but were given a unique story by Russo. Unfortunately, Russo's intelligence ends as soon as the matches start as they were cannon fodder for the Revolution in their first match as a team. It doesn't help that they've gotten into a buddy comedy instead of a tag team, but Russo thinks he's writing B movies instead of a wrestling show anyway.

Total Package vs. Sid Vicious

Winner gets Hart on Monday for the title. Bret comes out to do commentary and doesn't seem interested in talking about facing Sid. Luger does a quick easy way/hard way promo but gets caught holding pepper spray. Sid

stomps him down with ease but gets hit low, allowing Luger to go into his offensive arsenal. Cue Liz as we get a double clothesline to put both guys down.

That's some clothesline as neither can get up after LESS THAN A MINUTE of action. Liz gets the pepper spray and goes for Luger but he takes the bottle away and sprays Sid, who powerbombs the referee, because pepper spray takes away your ability to feel a shirt. Luger grabs a rollup (with Sid's feet in the ropes) for the pin from a second referee and the title shot.

Post match Sid can suddenly see and powerbombs Luger to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. Let's recap quickly: interference – belt shot, interference – crowbar, briefcase shot, interference (didn't change ending), interference – double DQ, interference – sets up pin, double teaming, cast shot, pepper spray. The closest thing we had to a clean finish in nine matches was double teaming in a glorified handicap match. All night long we couldn't a rollup for a pin or just someone hitting their finisher to win without someone cheating or interfering? I know there are a lot of common criticisms against Russo, but with shows like these, they're not exactly unfounded.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of 1998 Pay Per View reviews at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00UYAMB8U>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

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

Wrestling Wars Podcast #3

The show gets WAY more streamlined this week as we have our first pay per view preview with a look at Extreme Rules 2015, complete with a little fantasy booking, Dixie Carter's face on chocolates and of course a fire on a life raft. Come check us out as we run down the post Wrestlemania pay per view offering.

<http://mightynorcal.podbean.com/e/wwp-episode-3-extreme-rules-preview-with-kb/>

Also keep in mind that we'll be back with an Extreme Rules fallout show the same night.

Let me know what you think.

KB

Impact Wrestling – April 24, 2015: It Can Be Done

Impact Wrestling

Date: April 24, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentator: Josh Matthews

This is a special episode, focusing on the Knockouts. We'll be seeing new

Knockouts debut, a Knockouts Title match with Taryn Terrell defending against Awesome Kong, a four way for the #1 contendership and an announcement on Mickie James' in ring future. In non-Knockouts news, we have another announcement from Ethan Carter III and Kurt Angle defending the World Title against Eric Young. Let's get to it.

The opening video hypes this up as TKO: A Night of Knockouts.

Here's Angle to call out Eric Young for a talk. Eric comes out in his crazy attire instead of the old version that Kurt wanted to see. Before they fight tonight, Angle wants to know which version he's getting. Young talks about being called crazy all his life but one day last year, that turned into a World Title. The crazy kept going but last week it stopped when Angle turned his back on him to offer Eric a free shot. Eric says he'll fight Angle tonight, but it's going to be the best version of him.

They shake hands but here's Austin Aries, who says he's cashing in tonight so Eric can find something else to do. He tells Angle to go get ready because it's going to be one of the biggest fights of his life. Young doesn't look pleased and will likely be back around for later in the night. Sidebar: what exactly is crazy about Eric Young? He's certainly angry and aggressive, but not crazy.

Taryn Terrell says she's keeping the title.

Gail Kim vs. Angelina Love vs. Brooke vs. Madison Rayne

Madison jumps Brooke in the aisle and it's a big brawl before the bell. We take a very early break and come back with Brooke and Madison fighting over a suplex until Brooke gets sent to the apron, only to snap both Madison and Angelina across the top rope. Gail gets back in it with a double dropkick and a splash to Madison, only to eat Angelina's spinwheel kick to put her down again. Brooke gets knocked to the floor, leaving Madison to get two off a northern lights suplex.

Gail sidesteps a missile dropkick but Brooke intercepts her charge and hammers on Madison in the corner. A middle rope X Factor gets two on Madison and Love gets dropped by a flapjack. We get the big multi-submission spot which has never gotten a fall ever, followed by Brooke

dropping a top rope elbow on Rayne. Gail dropkicks Love down before both good girls cross body each other down. It's time for the parade of finishers and Brooke hits the Teshocker on Madison for the pin at 10:40.

Rating: C. If the Divas got time like this, I might be able to care about them a lot more. I also like that there aren't many perky, happy Knockouts. It helps to have some shades of gray in there and girls with slightly more developed characters. Queen Bee, perky model and serious wrestler aren't in depth characters, but they're miles more defined than Alicia Fox, Layla and Natalya.

The Rising wants a fight with the BDC tonight, one on one. I'm still waiting on an explanation for why the Rising needs to exist.

Eric Young isn't happy.

Micah vs. Kenny King

Rising vs. BDC. MVP says it's going to be one on one but King jumps Micah in a surprise to get things going. The Rising is quickly ejected as Micah fights back and stomps King in the corner. King sends him to the floor for a beating from the BDC and puts on a chinlock, only to miss a spinning kick to the head. A Big Ending puts King down but MVP distracts the referee, allowing Low Ki to grab Micah's foot. King kicks Micah in the head for two but springboards into a Samoan drop to give Micah the pin at 5:00.

Rating: C-. The match was fine but I have no idea why this feud needs to exist. Both teams are pretty generic and they would have been better off just doing MVP vs. Galloway. Not a bad match here but it's a story I don't care about because I haven't been given a reason to care.

The Rising runs in but gets beaten down, including some shots with a pipe.

Post break, Galloway wants Low Ki next week in a steel pipe on a pole.

Jade vs. Laura Dennis

Dennis is better known as indy wrestler Cherry Bomb while Jade is Mia Yim

as one half of the Dollhouse. She and Marti Belle skip to the ring to piano music and dance with each other in the ring. Laura kicks her in the side of the head to start as a Cherry Bomb chant starts up. Jade gets more fired up and pounds Laura in the head for two. Marti hands Jade something that looked like a jawbreaker, which seems to fire Jade up even more as she hits Laura in the head. Marti trips Laura up and gets ejected so she nails the referee and helps with a double team on Laura for the DQ at 4:03.

Rating: D+. Well that was creepy. Dollhouse is definitely something interesting and WAY different than the rest of the Knockouts. It's the kind of different we haven't seen since Winter, but hopefully this doesn't turn into something really stupid. Really effective debut though and I want to see more from this team.

Dollhouse isn't cool with how Christy announces the decision so they beat her up and stick the jawbreaker in her mouth and dropkick her into the steps.

Angle tells Young that he didn't know Aries was going to do that. Young says history keeps repeating itself but Angle offers him the next shot. That's not cool with Young, who threatens to leave. Amazingly enough, Angle doesn't try to stop him. Smart man that Kurt.

Magnus introduces Mickie James for her big announcement. Mickie talks about her history in the ring and how amazing it feels to be in action, but now she has something more important: their son Donovan. She's very grateful for the fans, but as of tonight, she's going home to be a mom. This brings out James Storm, who says people know he loves hot women, fast cars and cold beer. He sees a female version of himself in Mickie and knows she loves to hear those chants.

No one wants to see her go, but Magnus says this was too hard of a decision. James keeps going but Mickie asks him to stop because her decision is made. Storm understands the love she has for her son but these people love Mickie James. He's asking for one more match and actually talks Mickie into it. This was more Cowboy James Storm than Revolution James Storm, which is rather interesting indeed. Magnus looks

annoyed at the decision but forces a smile.

During the break, Magnus says he supports the decision but still doesn't look thrilled. Davey Richards comes up and warns Magnus to stay away from Storm because he's evil. Magnus appreciates the advice.

Davey Richards vs. Manik

In a case of bad editing, Davey is in the ring three seconds after he was shown walking to the ring and Manik gets an entrance. Feeling out process to start with Davey nailing a dropkick but charging into a hurricanrana with Manik going into a cross armbreaker. A snap suplex into a belly to back puts Richards down for two and we hit the chinlock. Manik puts on another armbreaker over the ropes but dives into a kick to the chest. The double stomp misses so Davey throws him into the air for a kick to the chest, setting up Creeping Death for the pin at 5:40.

Rating: C. Well, that was in fact a wrestling match and I'm kind of struggling to come up with anything else to say about it. The X-Division is just filler at the moment and I actually had to think for a second to figure out who has the title right now. Nothing to see here but the match was fine.

Post match the Revolution comes out to beat on Davey but the Hardys make the save, likely setting up a six man.

Ethan Carter says he debuts a new campaign tonight.

Here are Ethan and Tyrus (in a suit and hat, holding balloons) for the announcement. Josh says we've been wondering about this for weeks. I've been wondering about it for maybe an hour and a half as I hadn't heard about it until the beginning of this show. Carter declares himself the next World Champion and brags about beating every member of the Hall of Fame. This brings out Mr. Anderson for some easy political jokes but Tyrus gets in his face. Anderson gives a good speech about the work it takes to win championships but Ethan wants to fight. They start brawling but Carter bails before it gets too bad.

Video on Taryn Terrell wanting to fight Awesome Kong.

Knockouts Title: Awesome Kong vs. Taryn Terrell

Terrell is defending. Before the match, Taryn asks to make this No DQ and Kong has no issue. Kong easily knocks her to the floor and giant swings the champ into the barricade. It's kendo stick time, because those were just laying under the ring in case a No DQ match broke out. Taryn escapes a powerbomb into the steps and avoids a splash back inside.

An ax handle puts Kong down and it's table time, as per the fans' request. As she's setting it up though, here's the Dollhouse. They stand at ringside as Kong puts Taryn on the table for a splash before getting on the apron for some very weak kendo stick shots. Taryn gets up and a triple powerbomb puts Kong through the table for the pin at 5:12.

Rating: D+. Angle instead of a match here but I'm digging the idea of Taryn leading the Dollhouse. It's certainly an interesting idea that they haven't tried before, and the Knockouts division has needed some fresh blood for way too long now. Good idea here and an interesting turn.

Taryn grabs a mic and says everyone told her she couldn't do it. Well now no one can beat her because her friends don't play nice. This is their house: the Dollhouse. Jade and Marti dance around her before giving Kong the jawbreaker.

Aries is coming to the ring and runs into Young as he leaves. Austin apologizes and offers Eric the first shot.

Magnus comes up to the production staff and asks them to follow Mickie while he's working.

TNA World Title: Austin Aries vs. Kurt Angle

Angle is defending but it's 10:56 and Angle's music hasn't even started playing yet. As you probably expect, Eric Young sneaks in and attacks Aries with the briefcase before Kurt appears and piledrives him on the floor. A second piledriver on the steps FINALLY brings Angle out for some shouting. Young sends Angle into the steps to bust him open and goes after the knee, setting up the Figure Four.

The show ends with a preview for next week's Hardcore Justice, which was

April's One Night Only and includes at least one match from the show. That's a new idea and based on the old One Night Only shows, one of the worst possible things they could do.

Overall Rating: B. Other than the Eric Young stuff (more on that later), I really liked this show. The Dollhouse is an interesting idea and a fresh direction for the division and the focus on the Knockouts held up WAY better than I was expecting. As I said earlier, just adding some character to their matches helps it so much and gives you something to cheer for. I also dug the idea of Storm going after the family unit for whatever reason. Him not having the Revolution around him makes him so much more enjoyable too.

As for Young, this was another example of why I don't like him in this spot. In addition to not liking the CRAZY thing (because he isn't acting crazy), there are so many other people who could be in this spot. Storm, Carter, Bram, Aries, even MVP or Galloway would be more interesting opponents for Angle. Young comes off as a guy who is in over his head and is just there to get beaten in the end. Why have average when you could have really good? Anyway, really solid show tonight and a very big surprise.

Results

Brooke b. Gail Kim, Angelina Love and Madison Rayne – Tesshocker to Rayne

Micah b. Kenny King – Samoan drop

Laura Dennis b. Jade via DQ when Marti Belle interfered

Davey Richards b. Manik – Creeping Death

Taryn Terrell b. Awesome Kong – Powerbomb through a table

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<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00UYAMB8U>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

WWE Survey On New DVDs

WWE does this from time to time. They've sent out a survey asking about potential DVD topics. Here they are with my thoughts on each.

* **20 Years Later: Best of 1996** – Matches and discussion from the best WWE and WCW PPVs as well as historic Nitro, Raw and ECW matches and moments.

Eh I could go for that, as at least it's not yet another rehash of the Monday Night Wars period.

* **Booker T** – Extended WWE Network documentary plus matches, interviews and memories.

The documentary was good so sure why not. Booker deserves a 6 hour set or so.

* **Bruno Sammartino** – Bruno documentary with exclusive material filmed at his home as well as Bruno backstage at Wrestlemanias, plus archival footage and matches.

Take my money now. If they're going to do this they need to do it soon as Bruno is going to be 80 this year. Get this while you still can.

* **Dudley Boyz** – Documentary and match collection.

Fine, though it could easily be expanded to include Edge and Christian and the Hardys.

* **Eric Bischoff** – Similar in vein to the Paul Heyman release, a documentary on the only man who came close to taking WWE down with matches and interviews as well as a documentary on his time in pro wrestling.

I've had my fill of Eric Bischoff in my life and his story is really well documented already.

* **Greatest Rivalries: Eric Bischoff vs. Vince McMahon** – Sitdown interview discussing the Monday Night War interspersed with footage from that era.

LET

IT

DIE!

* **Greatest Rivalries: Tommy Dreamer vs. Raven** – Dreamer and Raven discuss their feud with Joey Styles, interspersed with complete matches, clips and interviews.

I could see this one but it's not my cup of hot chocolate.

* **How to Become a Self-Made Millionaire with JBL** – Following a day in the life of JBL, focusing on his life and how he made his fortune, including personal wealth tips.

That's a bit outlier and I'm not sure how big the audience would be, especially given how big a market there are of these things already. This sounds more like a book.

* **Hulk Hogan: Immortal** – Hulk Hogan documentary and matches presented, built around the story of a Hogan bronze statue being created and released.

How many Hogan documentaries do we need? That statue thing sounds like a 20 minute special, not a feature attraction.

* **Lex Luger** – documentary on life and career of former WCW World champion.

Zero issue here as Luger actually has some good stuff and doesn't get a lot of attention.

* **OMG! ECW's Top 50 Craziest Moments** – A countdown of the craziest moments in Extreme Championship Wrestling and WWE ECW's collective history.

Again, not my thing but there's certainly a market for it.

* **Roman Reigns** – Documentary and match collection, built around Reigns heading into his first Wrestlemania.

Are you kidding? Win a title first.

* **The Sheamus Experience** – Sheamus interview as he tours Ireland plus matches, interviews and memories.

I could go for this but it wouldn't be on the top of my pile.

* **Stone Cold** – One Man Show with Steve Austin.

This exists?

* **True Story of Tribute to the Troops** – Documentary on creation and execution of the annual WWE event for the United States military plus matches and memories from different events.

If it's the original stuff the fine but the new glorified house shows need to just end already.

* **WWE Divas** – documentary looking at the past, present and future of women's wrestling in WWE.

There's some good stuff in there, but I don't need to hear about Sunny, Sable, Trish and Lita again.

Dana White Says Ronda Rousey Will Not Have A Match In WWE

Wow that's.....pretty much the least surprising thing I've heard in a long time. I'd have loved to see Rousey in a WWE ring (or anywhere for that matter), but this was a long shot at best so I'm not at all surprised.

You Should Buy My E-Books

Really you should. I've been told they're quite good. Granted I was talking to myself but it was in fact said. I have quite the selection to pick from and all are available on Amazon Prime:

- [1. History of ECW Pay Per Views](#)
- [2. History of Starrcade](#)
- [3. History of the WWE Championship](#)
- [4. History of the Royal Rumble](#)
- [5. Only On Pay Per View 1998 \(Every pay per view from WWF and WCW in 1998\)](#)
- [6. History of Saturday Night's Main Event](#)
- [7. History of In Your House](#)
- [8. Complete Monday Nitro Volume I – 1995/1996](#)
- [9. History of Clash of the Champions](#)
- [10. History of Summerslam](#)
- [11. Complete Monday Nitro Volume II – 1997](#)
- [12. History of Survivor Series](#)
- [13. Complete 1998 Monday Night Raw](#)
- [14. Complete 2001 Monday Night Raw](#)

All of them run over 200 pages and many break 400. That's not bad for under \$4 each. Check them out as I've yet to hear someone who doesn't at least like them a little bit. They're

all e-books and can be read on pretty much any device and you can find free apps to read them on for almost any device [here](#).

KB