

NXT LVL Up – July 28, 2023: Call It An Improvement?

NXT LVL Up

Date: July 28, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Blake Howard

Things are not exactly on fire around here at the moment as there isn't much that can be done with the low level stars that are presented on this show. You never know what might be taking place on the show and hopefully things are a bit better this week, just for the sake of making it an easier watch. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Ikemen Jiro vs. Damon Kemp

Jiro does a handstand in the corner for some early posing so Kemp takes him down without much effort. Kemp runs him over so Jiro dances at him a bit, setting up his own shoulder to drop Kemp for a change. Jiro's right hands are shrugged off so Kemp can hit a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. The jacket punches set up a springboard moonsault for two but Jiro misses a charge into the ropes. An electric chair German suplex gives Kemp the pin at 4:54.

Rating: C+. This was a bit better than normal around here with Kemp being better than a lot of the talent on this show and Jiro being rather smooth at just about everything he does. Jiro's gimmick might not be the best in the world but he can work well with just about anyone. That is something that was missing from around here and hopefully it should help matches in the future.

Karmen Petrovic is ready for Ivy Nile. She's a martial artist and ready to prove it.

Ivy Nile vs. Karmen Petrovic

Nile takes her down without much trouble to start but Petrovic reverses into a headlock of her own. Back up and Nile sends her flying with a fall away slam but Petrovic takes her down by the leg. A kick to the head gets two and we hit the leglock. Something close to Eddie Guerrero's Lasso From El Paso is broken up and Nile fights back with some running shoulders. The Diamond Chain Lock finishes Petrovic at 4:08.

Rating: C. This was little more than a way to introduce Petrovic but as tends to be the case, you're not going to get much out of a four minute match against anyone. She has some potential and did fine enough here, but this is just a dip your toe in moment. Odds are she'll be around more in the future and they covered everything they needed to do here.

Duke Hudson vs. Luca Crusifino

The rest of Chase U is here with Hudson, who drives Luca outside without much trouble. Back in and Hudson runs him over with a shoulder but Luca grabs a headlock. A hard slam sends Luca out to the apron, where he manages to snap Hudson's throat across the top rope. Some right hands and an elbow to the face put Hudson down but he starts to Hulk Up. Luca is knocked outside, beaten back inside, and put in a Razor's Edge to finish for Hudson at 6:19.

Rating: C. As usual, Chase U is the best thing about this show and Luca's best stuff is before and after the bell, though that hasn't been the case in recent weeks. It's nice to see Hudson getting a chance to shine in the ring for once and that Razor's Edge looked good. Chase U continues to feel like it's on the brink of imploding and that would be a shame given how over they really are around here.

Overall Rating: C. It was a bit better than last week but still nothing to see here. Maybe everything is focused on the Great American Bash but there just wasn't much to see with this whole thing. There were some slightly bigger names around this week, though still nothing that you need to see. Maybe there is something better coming, but for now it's still the most skippable thing WWE offers, including Main Event.

Results

Damon Kemp b. Ikemen Jiro – Electric chair German suplex

Ivy Nile b. Karmen Petrovic – Diamond Chain Lock

Duke Hudson b. Luca Crusifino – Razor's Edge

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WWF Crunch Classic: This Is Not A Classic

Crunch Classic

Host: Roddy Piper

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Bobby Heenan, Sean Mooney, Lord Alfred Hayes

You ever just feel the need for some Coliseum Video goodness? Well this is from 1992 so the goodness might not be at its highest level but it's a tape I haven't looked at before. I'm not sure how accurate the term "classic" is going to be here but the WWF does have a reputation for false advertising. Let's get to it.

Roddy Piper welcomes us to the show and talks about some of his crunch classic moments, including beating up Mr. T., Jimmy Snuka and Cyndi Lauper, but he never had a belt to put around his waist. Then he met the Mountie.

From the 1992 Royal Rumble.

Intercontinental Title: The Mountie vs. Roddy Piper

Piper is challenging and knocks Mountie, with Jimmy Hart, outside in a hurry. A cheap shot on the floor slows Piper down but he sends Mountie into the corner a few times back inside. Piper hits a bulldog for two but misses a dropkick allowing Mountie to send him into the buckle as well.

Commentary talks about how Bret Hart had a 103 degree fever when he lost the title to the Mountie, with Heenan talking about how he wrestled with 113 degree fever. All it took was a children's Bayer. Heenan: "The orange flavored ones!" Piper atomic drops him over the top but Mountie skins the cat. That's fine with Piper, who sends him into an invading Hart and grabs the sleeper for the win and the title at 5:21.

Rating: C+. I've seen this match more times than I can remember and the only thing that matters is Piper finally getting his moment. No one bought Mountie as a serious champion so this was about as good of an effort as he was going to put up here. Piper was LONG overdue to win something and it's as much of a feel good moment as you're going to get.

Post match Hart tries to come in with the shock stick but Piper takes it away and shocks Mountie instead. With the villains dispatched, we get the big AND NEEEW title call in one of Fink's best ever announcements.

From Dayton, Ohio, October 22, 1991.

Virgil/Big Boss Man vs. Money Inc.

It's not Money Inc., yet but close enough. They also have Sensational Sherri with them, which is kind of a weird combination. Virgil is also Million Dollar Champion, just to make DiBiase all the more annoyed. Thankfully Mooney dubs them Money Inc. just after the bell so I can save time on an edit. Boss Man chases IRS into the corner to start before IRS charges into a raised boot.

Virgil comes in to sunset flip DiBiase for two and there's an atomic drop to send him outside. Back in and Virgil charges into a boot in the corner so IRS can add the flying shoulder. DiBiase's suplex gets two and IRS's legdrop gets the same. Virgil finally gets in a shot of his own and the big (not hot, but big) tag brings in Boss Man to clean house. With nothing else working, Sherri takes her shoe off but hits IRS by mistake, allowing Virgil to get the rollup pin at 7:03.

Rating: C. They were trying really hard with Virgil at this point and the win here was another step, but it just wasn't going to go anywhere outside of the DiBiase feud. Other than that, this was a pretty nothing match, but the fans got to cheer at the end as they should have. For a dark match from a TV taping, I've seen much worse.

Post match yelling ensues but DiBiase calms IRS down with cash.

Here's a special feature on 24 Hours With Jimmy Hart. We catch up with him arriving at a hotel (sans limo of course) over

what appears to be Wrestlemania VIII weekend. Hart's wrestlers are checked in but his room won't be ready for about three hours. He can stay in a room in the basement though, meaning he has an office. Mountie comes in and says Jimmy was supposed to take care of his stick tonight. Later, Money Inc. is here to make sure everything is planned, including an appearance on the Arsenio Hall Show.

Hart finally falls asleep (reading WWF Magazine of course) when a phone call tells him about various problems with his wrestlers. Later, the Nasty Boys aren't ready to go to the ring so Hart runs off on his own. Hart is FINALLY done...and his room key doesn't work, leading to a nervous breakdown. This was funny enough, but Hart can make anything worth a laugh.

From Austin, Texas, December 4, 1991.

New Foundation vs. Nasty Boys

That would be Owen Hart/Jim Neidhart and Jimmy Hart is with the Nastys. Neidhart and Knobbs start things off with the former firing off the big forearms in the corner. Everything breaks down and Neidhart whips Owen through the ropes for a big dive. Owen backflips in from the top to show off a bit and the fans approve. Back in and the Nastys go with the double teaming to take over for all of five seconds before Owen armdrags his way to freedom.

Neidhart comes back in to stay on the arm but it's right back to Owen, who gets slapped in the face. That's enough for the Nastys to finally get him in the corner so the choking can begin. Sags grabs a chinlock until Owen fights up for a failed sunset flip attempt. Some elbows to the back keep Owen down and we hit the reverse chinlock. Owen fights up and brings Neidhart back in to clean house, including a shoulder to Knobbs. That doesn't work for Sags, who throws the referee out for the DQ at 7:26.

Rating: D+ Owen was trying here but the New Foundation never quite clicked. At the same time, you know exactly what you're going to get from the Nasty Boys so there wasn't much to get excited about here. The ending does seem stupid but the Nastys were a bigger deal and given that this was being recorded, it makes sense to try and protect them a bit here.

Roddy Piper talks about beating up Jimmy Hart and Adrian Adonis at Wrestlemania III (Piper: "92,271 paid admission. And me. The Scotsman, I don't may for nothing!"). It was one of the greatest nights of his life because the people were cheering for him.

From Wrestlemania III.

Roddy Piper vs. Adrian Adonis

Hair vs. hair, Adonis has Jimmy Hart in his corner and this has Gorilla Monsoon and Lord Alfred Hayes on commentary to avoid Jesse Ventura issues. They slug it out to start with Piper pulling out a belt to whip away. Hart gets beaten up as well but the distraction lets Adonis take the belt and get in his own whips. Back up and Piper whips him over the corner to the floor (which Adonis can do despite weighing well over 300lbs here), setting up the very 1987 double noggin knocker.

Hart trips Piper though and Adonis gets to rake at the skin a bit. Adonis hammers away on the ropes so Piper says bring it on, earning himself a spray from the atomizer. The sleeper goes on (which is more like a smother) but Adonis lets him go at two arm drops. Cue Brutus Beefcake to wake Piper up and the comeback is on. Piper decks Hart and sleepers Adonis for the win at 6:55.

Rating: B-. This is a good example of a match that is carried by the crowd reactions. The fans were going NUTS for this stuff and it made for a special match as a result. They completely embraced Piper in this role after hating him for so many years and this whole thing was such a blast. Not a good

match from a quality standpoint, but it was a good payoff to a red hot feud.

Post match Beefcake goes to cut Adonis' hair but it's rather wet so the shave only goes so well. Adonis wakes up and sees the hair cut in a well placed mirror, sending him into a rage until he falls to the floor.

And now, a fan request match. From Utica, New York, November 11, 1991.

British Bulldog vs. Undertaker

Paul Bearer is here with Undertaker as commentary points out that Undertaker is being "more friendly" lately, though this was before he turned. Bulldog hammers away to start and knocks Undertaker over the top for the feet first landing. A ram into the steps rocks Undertaker again but he's right back with the uppercuts. The smother to the face slows Bulldog down as Bearer says THE POWER OF THE URN COMPELS YOU. Bulldog fights up and manages a slightly delayed suplex, setting up the running powerslam but bearer offers a distraction. An urn shot gives Undertaker the pin at 7:09.

Rating: C. This is more of a historical curiosity than anything else but it is still kind of cool to see. The Bulldog was around the height of his singles career at this point but Undertaker was a force of a different kind. They had to turn him as he was getting such positive reactions and it's almost weird to hear commentary have to backtrack a bit because of the taping schedule.

Post match Undertaker loads up the body bag but Bulldog fights up and clears the ring.

From Austin, Texas, December 4, 1991.

Texas Tornado vs. Rick Martel

Martel shows off his (rather impressive) physique to start

before going with some knees to the ribs. They fight over a lockup until Martel rakes the eyes until Tornado finally throws him outside. Back in and Tornado works on the arm, including an armbar. Tornado misses a charge into the post though and Martel hits a middle rope ax handle to put him down. Martel dives into the claw but makes the rope, allowing him to spray Arrogance in Tornado's face for the DQ at 5:59.

Rating: D+. Really? You can't have Martel lose to the Claw in TEXAS? I get the idea of protecting some people but Rick Martel? In 1991? I don't get this one, but on top of that it just wasn't that great of a match. Martel is a good hand and did his thing here, but Tornado did little more than the arm cranking and the Claw.

Roddy Piper doesn't like snakes, so let's go to Jake Roberts talking about how Snakes Make Fun Pets. Jake talks about how snakes will feed on themselves and how they have been around since the time of Adam and Eve. But now, a senile old man named Jack Tunney is barring him from bringing a snake to the ring.

Jake likes snakes because they're survivors, and we see a clip of a cobra bit Randy Savage's arm (that TERRIFIED me as a kid). The other nice thing about snakes is how many different kinds there really are. We see Jake holding various snakes and seemingly threatening us with them before promising the snakes will be back. This was pretty much just an extended Jake promo, which isn't a bad thing. What might be a bad thing: including a long Jake promo when he was gone from the company by the time this was released.

From Cornwall, Ontario, Canada, September 10, 1991.

Skinner vs. Jim Neidhart

After standing there for about forty seconds, Skinner gets out and runs up the aisle before coming back with...something. Then it disappears and we continue the stalling before they lock up

about two minutes in. Skinner's running shoulder doesn't hurt Neidhart but a hiptoss does take him down.

Skinner does it again and then grabs a headlock, only to be knocked out to the floor. Back in and an atomic drop puts Skinner right back outside, allowing Neidhart to grab the can of tobacco residue. Skinner is so annoyed that he goes up the aisle for a bit, only to have Neidhart come back with the headlock inside again.

With the match still in first gear, Skinner gets in a shot to the throat to escape and starts choking. That doesn't last long so Skinner switches it up by hitting him in the ribs and then the throat. Neidhart fights back up and they go to the floor for the double countout at 13:15. Actually hang on as it's a time limit draw, because that makes such a difference here.

Rating: D-. Who in the world thought this was a good idea? It's bad enough that the match took place, but then they recorded it on top of that? What were they expecting this to be? They were stalling to get through a bunch of the time and then it got even worse. Awful match here and they seemed perfectly fine with that being the case.

Post match Neidhart wants to keep it going but Skinner leaves. Smart man.

From Lubbock, Texas, January 27, 1992.

Natural Disasters vs. Jim Duggan/Sgt. Slaughter

The Natural Disasters have Jimmy Hart with them. Duggan and Typhoon start things off, with Duggan firing off some clotheslines to finally put him down. It's off to Slaughter for some forearms in the corner as Typhoon stays in trouble. Back up and Typhoon hands it off to Earthquake, who quickly pounds Duggan down.

Earthquake misses a charge in the corner but he's fine enough to knee Duggan in the back. It's back to Typhoon for the bearhug, followed by another one from Earthquake. Duggan fights out and hands it back over to Slaughter as everything breaks down. Earthquake tries to bring in the megaphone so Duggan grabs the 2x4, which earns him the DQ to give the Disasters the win at 9:26.

Rating: D+. Another dull match that didn't go anywhere, making it a perfectly uninteresting way to end a tape mostly full of such matches. Duggan and Slaughter were a fine enough patriotic team and there was a discussion of this match being the Tag Team Title match at Wrestlemania VIII but obviously that didn't happen, which might be for the best if this is what we were going to get.

Roddy wraps us up.

Overall Rating: D. This was AWFUL and one of the worst Coliseum Videos I can remember. The biggest problem here was a lack of energy, as it didn't feel like anyone was really trying. The biggest highlight here was the Piper vs. Adonis match from Wrestlemania, which should tell you everything you need to know about the tape. Dreadful stuff here and I have no idea what about this was supposed to be a classic.

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Rampage – July 28, 2023: All Its B Show Goodliness

Rampage

Date: July 28, 2023

Location: MVP Arena, Albany, New York

Commentators: Excalibur, Tony Schiavone

For the second week in a row, the featured match is a battle royal, though this time it is a tag team battle royal for a future Tag Team Title shot. Other than that, we might get more on the upcoming All In card, as no matches have been announced though you can probably guess quite a few from here. Let's get to it.

[Here is Dynamite if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Tag Team Battle Royal

Luther/Serpentico, Jay Lethal/Satnam Singh, Hardys, Brother Zay/Ethan Page, Big Bill/Brian Cage, Christopher Daniels/Matt Sydal, Butcher/The Blade, Angelo Parker/Matt Menard

Both members have to be eliminated and the winners get a future Tag Team Title shot. Everyone goes after Bill to start but can't get anywhere. It's the usual brawling to start with no one going anywhere until Luther gets a knee in to Cage. Bill isn't having that and dumps Luther, with Blade getting rid of Serpentico a few seconds later.

The fans seem to approve of Big Bill, even as Parker hits him in the ribs. Singh gets rid of Zay and Sydal follows him out. The Hardys get rid of Parker and Singh dumps Page. The Hardys get smart and ram Singh into Lethal for another elimination, leaving Page and Lethal to brawl up the aisle as we take a break.

Back with Menard being dumped, leaving us with Bill, Cage, Butcher, Blade, the Hardys, Singh and Daniels. Butcher and Blade toss Daniels but Matt can't do much with Singh, who tosses him with ease. Jeff manages to stagger Singh and Cage/Bill help out with a double clothesline to put Singh out. Butcher and Blade dump Jeff and we're down to the two of them vs. Cage/Bill in what sounds like a good hoss fight.

Cage gets knocked down with a fisherman's neckbreaker and a Stunner into a lariat drops Bill. Back up and Cage saves Bill but Blade hits him in the face. Bill pulls himself up and hits his own double clothesline as the fans still seem to approve. A powerbomb/clothesline combination gets rid of Blade but Butcher fights away. Bill's splash hits Cage in the corner and a backbreaker puts Cage down again. That's it though as a clothesline/chokeslam combination knocks Butcher silly for the win at 16:36.

Rating: C+. This went on for a good while and Bill continues to get bigger and bigger reactions. I do like having some fresh blood in the division and Cage/Bill have done well so far. The division has fallen through the floor in recent months and maybe they can start building things back up a bit here. It also makes me want to see more Butcher and the Blade, as they still feel like they could be the big bruising heels of the division at any time.

Video on the Kingdom getting a second chance at being great in Ring Of Honor. Why Maria Kanellis-Bennett isn't here isn't clear.

Komander vs. Kip Sabian

Komander is replacing the injured Scorpio Sky and Alex Abrahantes and Penelope Ford are here as well as Sabian takes him down to start. Sabian sends him outside and mocks the salute, earning himself a knock out to the floor and a dive. We take a break and come back with Sabian getting the better of a slugout.

A headscissors gives Komander two and a cradle gets the same. Sabian knocks him back down and hits a running shooting star press for two. Komander fights up but gets his eyes raked by Ford, allowing Sabian to hit a hanging suplex for two more. That's enough for Komander, who hits a springboard Canadian Destroyer into the rope walk shooting star press to put Sabian away at 10:19.

Rating: C+. This was a bit better than most Komander matches as he didn't do a bunch of his usual stuff. His matches have a tendency to be centered around trying to set up one convoluted match after another but this one was about fighting back and hitting a spot here and there. Nice match here, even if Sabian is still as middle of the road as you can be.

Video on Jack Perry disrespecting the memory of ECW and getting called out by Jerry Lynn.

The Kingdom vs. Hayden Backlund/Hyaung-Jae Lee

Taven kicks both of them down to start and hands it off to Bennett for a Death Valley Driver. Just The Tip sets up the Proton Pack to finish Backlund at 42 seconds. I can go for more of the Kingdom.

Video on the Dark Order beating the Righteous and Stu Grayson in a Fight Without Honor at Death Before Dishonor. They will NOT be disrespected and it is time to rebuild. Can it be time for the Dark Order to be dropped already?

Video on FTR vs. MJF/Adam Cole.

Here's what's coming on various shows.

Video on Hikaru Shida vs. Nyla Rose, a feud with quite the history.

Hikaru Shida vs. Nyla Rose

Marina Shafir is here with Rose, who jumps Shida fast to start. Rose grabs the kendo stick but throws it away after realizing that would be stupid. Back up and Shida headscissors her into the corner and rains down some right hands square into the turnbuckle. Rose knocks her outside though and we take a break.

Back with Shida hitting a running elbow and managing a suplex for two. They fight to the apron with Shida hitting a knee to the head, setting up a dropkick from the apron. Shida loads up a springboard but gets chokeslammed down for two. Back up and Shida hits a Falcon Arrow but Rose runs her over with a clothesline. Rose goes up but gets crotched down, setting up a super Falcon Arrow. Shafir puts the foot on the rope though, earning her a heck of a kendo stick shot. Rose loads up the Beast Bomb but gets reversed into the Katana to give Shida the pin at 10:57.

Rating: B-. This is one of the feuds that has been around since the start of AEW and it works well enough, even though both of them have fallen a bit down the ladder. Pushing Shida again isn't a bad idea and that stick shot to Shafir was loud enough to get some attention. On the other hand you have Rose, who feels like she hasn't won anything of note in, like, ever.

Post match the Outcasts come out for the staredown.

Overall Rating: C+. Oh this was the full on B show this week and there was no hiding it. While they did set some things up for the future with the title shot (or possibly shots with

Shida), the show didn't feel important whatsoever with the lack of star power or really anything involving the big stories. It's a completely skippable show, but you won't be bored if you watch it either.

Results

Brian Cage/Big Bill won a tag team battle royal last eliminating Butcher and the Blade

Komander b. Kip Sabian – Rope walk shooting star press

The Kingdom b. Hayden Backlund/Hyaung-Jae Lee – Proton Pack to Backlund

Hikaru Shida b. Nyla Rose – Katana

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Smackdown – July 28, 2023:

Just Get There

Smackdown

Date: July 28, 2023

Location: Smoothie King Center, New Orleans, Louisiana

Commentators: Michael Cole, Wade Barrett

We are eight days away from Summerslam and that should make for a pretty big show. At the very least, Roman Reigns is here and that will boost things up a lot, as we now know he's in for Tribal Combat against Jey Uso. Other than that, we need a #1 contender to the US Title so let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Here is Jey Uso to get things going but Roman Reigns and the Bloodline cut him off. Reigns says this is his show so he'll kick it off. Reigns says he made Jey the right hand man because he has that kind of power. Does Jey think he can run this place? Jey says he stood beside Reigns for years but now Reigns has broken the family, the Bloodline and Jimmy Uso. Reigns says that's Jey's fault and Jey was only the right hand man because Jimmy was hurt. After Summerslam, Jey is wiped off the face of the earth and no longer part of this legacy.

Reigns asks what happens if things get crazy and Jey beats him...but nah because Jey can't do it. So why does he think he can? Jey: "Because I already beat you." He says he'll do it again at Summerslam and walks off, leaving Reigns bewildered. This was Jey countering the mind games that have destroyed him for years now and that's a smart road to take.

Post break Jey runs into Grayson Waller, who offers to give him the Grayson Waller Rub after he loses at Summerslam. Jey slaps him in the face and walks off.

Rey Mysterio vs. Santos Escobar

For a future US Title shot. They shake hands to start with Escobar taking him down by the leg. Back up and they trade slaps until Rey sends him outside for a big running flip dive. We take a break and come back with Escobar hitting a running forearm as US Champion Austin Theory is watching in a sky box. Escobar kicks him in the head and hits a high crossbody for two, followed by a rollup for the same.

The tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gives Escobar two more but Rey sends him outside. The sliding splash misses though and Escobar hits a big dive as we take another break. Back again with the match paused and a trainer checking on Rey. Apparently he hit his head on the landing from the dive before the break. The referee calls the match at 14:13 and Escobar gets the win and the title shot.

Rating: B-. This is a hard one to rate but we'll go with what we got to see here. What matters with this one is that Rey is ok, and the fact that he seems to have gotten his bell rung more than anything else is a good sign. In theory, Escobar was moving on anyway here and we do have a #1 contender. They were starting to rock near the end, but there is nothing else you can do when someone is hurt.

Post match Escobar checks on Rey and pays homage to him. Escobar stares at Theory, who he will face for the title in two weeks.

Bianca Belair is ready to win her title back but Chelsea Green and Sonya Deville interrupt to make fun of her for not having a title anymore. Belair offers to fight both of them but here is Charlotte to call Deville and Green bullies. Charlotte wants Belair at 100% so we'll do the tag match thing later.

Here is Hit Row to mock the fans but LA Knight interrupts, apparently for a scheduled match. Knight didn't know Uncle Phil was a rapper and thinks B Fab has a thing for him. For now though, Ashante Thee Adonis can be the next to get dropped

on his head.

LA Knight vs. Ashante Thee Adonis

Adonis starts fast and Top Dolla gets in a cheap shot. With Dolla dispatched, Knight hits a powerslam, the spelling elbow and Blunt Force Trauma for the pin at 1:32. That's how Knight should be used at the moment if they don't have anything bigger for him.

Adam Pearce tells Jey Uso he has to face Grayson Waller tonight. Works for Jey.

Bobby Lashley is with the Street Profits in a rather nice looking lounge. He likes the team, but thinks they need to dress better. Well, that Angelo Dawkins does at least. Courtesy of Lashley, here are some rather nice suits. Dawkins seems appreciative and I continue to be curious about where this is going.

Bianca Belair/Charlotte vs. Sonya Deville/Chelsea Green

Non-title. Belair and Green start things off with Belair easily taking over. Charlotte comes in for the figure four necklock faceplants before handing it back to Belair. The handspring knocks Green off the apron and there's a dropkick to Deville for a bonus. We take a break with the champs in trouble and come back with Belair suplexing both of them at the same time.

The crawling tag brings in Charlotte to clean house, including a clothesline for two on Green. Charlotte spears Green down and Belair adds a delayed vertical suplex to Deville. Some right hands in the corner miss for Belair but she breaks up the Unpretty-Her. The KOD is loaded up but Charlotte tags herself in and kicks Green in the face for the (delayed) pin at 10:25.

Rating: C. Why does WWE insist on doing this? They act like

they want the titles to mean something and then do something like this. I get that Belair and Charlotte are more talented than the champs, but that doesn't mean the match has to be booked. Just leave the champs out of this or have some kind of screwy finish that doesn't involve them being pinned clean. That shouldn't be too hard to figure out.

Post match the argument is on.

Iyo Sky asks Bayley why she left so fast last week. Bayley says something about wanting to leave quickly before finding a note from Shotzi in her bag. They rush to leave but Asuka comes in and promises to retain at Summerslam. Sky teases the briefcase and leaves with Bayley.

There is going to be a Summerslam Battle Royal, featuring stars from Raw and Smackdown.

LA Knight tells Adam Pearce that he wants in the battle royal. The Brawling Brutes come in and mock Knight, earning them spots in the battle royal and Sheamus vs. Knight next week.

Karrion Kross vs. Karl Anderson

Before the match, Anderson asks the rest of the OC to stay in the back because this is personal (they're cool with that). Kross takes him into the corner to start but Anderson gets a boot up to stop a charge. The middle rope neckbreaker gets two but Kross suplexes him down. A powerslam swung into a DDT (the Final Prayer) finishes Anderson at 2:04. I'm still not sure why Anderson and Gallows remain employed other than maybe HHH feeling sorry for how they were cut so fast last time.

Post match Kross stays on Anderson until AJ Styles makes the save.

Jey Uso vs. Grayson Waller

They circle each other a bit to start until Waller manages to knock him into the corner for a running knee. Back up and Jey

kicks him into the corner but cue the Bloodline for a distraction. Waller runs him over again and we take a break. Back with Jey fighting out of a cravate but getting dropped again as the fans seem rather interested in this Roman fellow.

Waller hits the springboard elbow and a spinebuster, setting up a People's Elbow (with some personalized features) which takes way too long. The rolling Stunner is cut off by a superkick and Jey hits a spear (which might replace Christian's as the least convincing ever). The Superfly Splash finishes Waller at 11:17.

Rating: C+. This wasn't about the match itself but rather about a way to get Reigns and Jey out there at the same time again. In that sense it worked well and gave Jey a bit of momentum, but it isn't like this was some kind of great main event. Jey is going to need all of the momentum he can get and this gave him just enough to get by this week.

Post match Solo Sikoa runs in to beat Jey down but the Spike misses. Jey hits the superkick so Reigns comes in, only to get speared as well. Sikoa breaks up the Superfly Splash and lays Jey out and a spear/Spike combination puts him down again. It works so well that they do it again to end the show. That's a nasty combination and thankfully it made me forget that I'm supposed to buy a Jey Uso spear putting Reigns down for more than half a second.

Overall Rating: C+. Not their greatest show but they're also in a weird place with most of Summerslam already booked. There isn't much left for them to do before the show so there wasn't much to cover here. Reigns vs. Jey is still built around a lot of mind games and Charlotte vs. Belair vs....oh yeah Asuka is in there too. Other than that, Summerslam is fairly light on the Smackdown side, but that battle royal is promising. They did what they needed to do this week and I'll take that so close to Summerslam.

Results

Santos Escobar b. Rey Mysterio via referee stoppage

LA Knight b. Ashante Thee Adonis – Blunt Force Trauma

Charlotte/Bianca Belair b. Chelsea Green/Sonya Deville – Big boot to Green

Karrion Kross b. Karl Anderson – Final Prayer

Jey Uso b. Grayson Waller – Superfly Splash

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Ring Of Honor – July 27, 2023: Dreadful

Ring Of Honor

Date: July 27, 2023

Location: Prudential Center, Newark, New Jersey

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Caprice Coleman

We're done with a high quality but mostly skippable pay per

view with Death Before Dishonor. The biggest change from the show saw Aussie Open becoming the new Tag Team Champions while everyone else retained. That should lead to something interesting, though there is no word on when the next major show is going to be. Let's get to it.

[Here is Death Before Dishonor if you need a recap.](#)

The show is back up to just shy of two hours, the longest in about a month. I'm sure what's what was missing from the build towards Death Before Dishonor.

Josh Woods vs. Eli Isom

Pure Rules, with Pure Champion Katsuyori Shibata as a guest judge (alone with Jerry Lynn and Jimmy Jacobs). Mark Sterling is here with Woods (along with the rest of the Varsity Athletes), who would rather wrestle in front of real New Yorkers rather than fake ones in Newark. Woods wrestles him into the ropes to start and that's Isom's first break. Back up and Isom takes him down into an armbar, only to get kicked hard out of the corner.

Another running shot to the face rocks Isom and Woods sends him shoulder first into the buckle. Isom intentionally uses a rope to escape the beating before using some forearms to stagger Woods. A swinging belly to back suplex gives Isom two but Woods armbars him over to the ropes for the final rope. Woods grabs a sleeper into a PK into the Gorilla lock for the tap at 7:55.

Rating: C. This was more or less a pure rules squash as Woods would seem to be the next challenger for Shibata. That doesn't make for the most interesting match but that is the case with a lot of the Pure Rules matches. They work well from a technical standpoint, but seeing a lot of the same people having not the most thrilling matches in the world doesn't do a lot o good.

Post match Sterling challenges Shibata for a title match against Woods.

Trish Adora is ready to get back on track.

Trish Adora vs. Vita Vonstarr

Vita shoves her away to start so Adora grabs a headlock. The Air Raid Crash is loaded up but Adora switches into the kneeling stretch instead (that needs a name). Back up and Vita grabs a Black Widow but Adora isn't having any of that and runs her over with ax handles for two. Vita's Michinoku driver gets two, only to have Adora come back with the Lariat Tubman for the pin at 4:20.

Rating: C. Vonstarr got in some offense here, which isn't a surprise as she used to be a regular for Ring Of Honor before everything changed. Adora gets some momentum back and still seems like someone who could be put into a heck of a title feud if given the chance. Granted it might be a bit with Leyla Hirsch back, but at least Adora didn't lose again here.

Six Man Tag Team Titles: Mogul Embassy vs. Iron Savages/Jacked Jameson

The Embassy, with Prince Nana, is defending. Commentary points out that Cage has been on 17/22 episodes of ROH thus far, because I guess we just haven't gotten the point already. Jameson and Boulder take turns being thrown at Cage in the corner but Jameson gets taken into the champs' corner to start the chops. A fireman's carry is escaped though and it's Bronson coming in to clean house.

Kaun wastes no time in cutting him off though and it's Loa coming in to elbow Braun in the face. A superplex drops Bronson for two but he's back up with a shot to the face, allowing the tag off to Boulder. Everything breaks down and Boulder powerslams Kaun for two but Toa is back in to wreck things. Bronson chokebombs Cage for two but he's back up to

suplex Jameson. Kaun hits a Pedigree of all things to pin Jameson at 10:10.

Rating: B-. The match was the kind of mostly wild power brawl that made for an entertaining ten minutes. At the same time though, the fact that Cage has been around that often doesn't exactly keep him feeling interesting. It feels like these titles are being defended almost every week against one thrown together team after another. It's not like the matches are exactly great, so why put them on over and over?

Leyla Hirsch vs. B3cca

Hirsch runs her over without much trouble to start and then chokes with the boot in the corner. A gutwrench suplex sets up a waistlock on B3cca but she's back up with a shotgun dropkick. B3cca's running knee in the corner sets up a missed middle rope dropkick, allowing Leyla to hit a running knee for the pin at 3:37.

Rating: C. This was a rather Ring Of Honor match with Leyla mostly dominating and shrugging off almost whatever B3cca throws at her. Leyla continues to feel like one of the stars ready to break through to the other side but, much like Adora, you have to let her move up a bit. Leyla has been back in the ring for a few weeks now and her feet should be adequately watered. Let her do something other than squash people already.

Athena wants someone to step up already because she's tired of beating "local jobbers".

Renegades vs. Tiara James/JC

JC slugs away at Charlotte to start but makes sure to knock Robyn off the apron. Robyn is right back up for a double suplex and the double stomping is on in the corner. That's broken up and the tag brings in James to clean house, including a bulldog to Charlotte. That doesn't last long

though and it's a Sling Blade Hart Attack to finish James at 3:57.

Rating: C. I still like the Renegades but like many women's tag teams, there isn't much for them to do right now. There is no women's tag division and while one of them can be fine on their own, it's a little weird to see one without the other in the ring. Find something for them to do and let the talent play out, but that might be a little trickier than expected.

Athena vs. Christina Marie

Non-title Proving Ground match, meaning that if Marie either wins or survives the ten minute time limit, she gets a future title shot. Marie kicks her in the back to start and adds a Hennig necksnap for one. Athena gets up and blasts Marie with a forearm before hammering away on the mat.

As we hear about Tony Khan only giving title shots to people in the top five or top ten (like Aussie Open and the Best Friends, who hadn't wrestled here in three months before getting a title shot last week), Athena knocks her outside and then chokes on the ropes. A bunch of forearms to the back set up a kick to the head, followed by the big right hand to finish Marie at 3:21.

Rating: C. Remember how Cage has been around for all but five Ring Of Honors? I'd be surprised if Athena didn't have him beat. It's getting really hard to get invested in Athena slaughtering someone else, especially after she beat her best challenger last week. It's a good example of how leaving her off a show or two would help a lot, but for some reason she, and several others, are on almost every show. Marie's minute or so looked good but what is she supposed to get out of that?

Post match Athena gives her the usual post match beatdown.

The Kingdom vs. Rhett Titus/Tracy Williams

Maria is here with the Kingdom. Bennett and Williams chop it out to start and it's quickly off to Taven for a change. A quick middle rope dropkick takes Williams down but Titus comes in to pick up the pace. Titus gets caught in a backbreaker/middle rope elbow combination but he gets the knees up to block a Lionsault.

Williams comes back in and hits a reverse Death Valley Driver to slam Taven's knees into the mat (that's a new one). Bennett and Williams grab stereo holds and sit down on them, setting up the slap off. With those broken up, Titus comes in to knock Taven silly but picks him up instead of covering. The delay lets Taven hit Just The Tip, setting up the Proton Pack to finish for the Kingdom at 7:34.

Rating: B-. Another good match here as the Kingdom continues their roll, but why should I believe that this means anything? When you can get a title match at random, these matches lose the interest that they have. I still like the Kingdom a good bit, but for some reason they're stuck either here or on Rampage while the tag division in both companies isn't exactly deep.

Stokely Hathaway and Samoa Joe announced a new #1 contenders tournament for the TV Title. Like the one that ended last week?

#1 Contenders Tournament First Round: Christopher Daniels vs. JD Drake

Daniels flips him over into an armbar to start before hitting a dropkick to put Drake down. Back up and Drake hits a clothesline, setting up the chinlock with a knee in the back to keep Daniels in trouble. A swinging Boss Man Slam gives Drake two before it's time for a chop off. Daniels kicks the knee out and hits a clothesline to the back of the head, setting up a top rope Downward Spiral for two. Drake crushes him with a cannonball in the corner for two of his own The

moonsault misses though and the Best Moonsault Ever finishes for Daniels at 6:06.

Rating: C+. This was about what you would have expected from a match between these two and that means it was decent enough. What mattered here was having Daniels get a win after fighting from underneath a bit, which he can still do rather well. Him winning the whole thing isn't out of the question and it wouldn't surprise me at this point.

Big Bill/Lee Moriarty vs. Gabriel Hodder/Adrien Soriano

Moriarty takes over on Soriano to start but gets hit in the face for his efforts. Hodder comes in and is dropped just as quickly so it's off to Bill for a double clothesline. The chokeslam finishes Hodder at 3:09.

Rating: C-. I'm not sure what the deal is going to be for Big Bill, as he is suddenly in two teams, both of whom are treated as a threat to win something. At the moment though, the team with Brian Cage seems to be a bigger deal and that is likely a better place for him to go. The Moriarty team is fine, but there is something about a big power team that works rather well.

#1 Contenders Tournament First Round: Tony Nese vs. Cheeseburger

Before the match, Nese does the same "you people are fat so we're going to do group training" speech he has been doing for the last few weeks. Nese whips him into the corner to start but Cheeseburger slides away and climbs on top of him for an arm crank. With that broken up, Cheeseburger is tied in the Tree of Woe for some rapid fire kicks to the ribs. Cheeseburger knees his way out of a suplex and grabs one of his own, setting up a bulldog. The Shotei palm strike gets two on Nese, followed by a DDT for two. Mark Sterling offers a distraction though and Nese grabs a pumphandle driver for the pin at 5:53.

Rating: C. Nese will be fine as a second round villain to be vanquished and that should be enough for him in the whole thing. The health nut/mocking others' looks is a classic way to draw heat, but Nese needs something else to back it up in the ring. For now though, a win over Cheeseburger is a good way to go for him and should set him up for a better second round match.

#1 Contenders Tournament First Round: Anthony Henry vs. Gravity

Gravity takes him down to start and then does the rapid fire nipups to escape a wristlock. Henry is back up with some forearms only to be sent outside for the big dive over the top. Back in and Henry hits a Death Valley Driver, setting up some shots to the back to keep Gravity down.

Gravity is back up with a dropkick before pulling him into kind of a reverse Koji Clutch. That's broken up and Henry hits a PK for two, followed by a Razor's Edge spun into a DDT for the same. Gravity shrugs it off and hits a powerslam into a top rope splash for the pin at 8:00.

Rating: C+. Gravity seems to be Tony Khan's Flavor of the Week now as he is around on quite a few shows as of late. He's talented enough and it's nice to see him getting a win here and there, though I could also see him pulling a miracle run here and winning the tournament. This wasn't exactly a classic, but as a way to give Gravity a win, it worked well enough.

#1 Contenders Tournament First Round: Shane Taylor vs. Serpentico

Serpentico strikes away to start until a forearm knocks him silly. There's a big toss to send Serpentico flying and then Taylor does it again. A big clothesline gives Taylor two but Serpentico flips him off. Taylor gets staggered by a kick but a release Rock Bottom puts Serpentico down again. The big

splash finishes for Taylor at 4:21.

Rating: C-. Another match without any serious doubt for the winner and that isn't exactly something that gets my interest up this late into a very, very long show. There was nothing to make me believe that Serpentico was going to win here and it felt like waiting around until Taylor beat on him enough before getting the win.

Trustbusters vs. Dalton Castle/The Boys

Ari Daivari is here with the Trustbusters. A double hiptoss takes Kay down to start so Kiss comes in to choke away in the corner. It's off to Castle to take Kiss in the corner, where castle gets slapped in the face. They both miss clotheslines until Brent comes in and backflips out of a pair of belly to back suplexes, allowing the hot tag back to Castle. The Boys are thrown outside and onto the Trustbusters (that's always a cool spot) and the Bang A Rang finishes Kay at 5:19.

Rating: C. I could watch Dalton Castle all day and he looked good here, but I'm not exactly going to get invested in the idea of Castle and the Boys going after the Six Man Tag Team Titles again. I can get the idea of sending the fans home happy with these guys though, as they are about as entertaining of a team as you're going to get.

Overall Rating: D. Before I'm told that "a bunch of B's and C's doesn't make a D", that's not the point of this show. The problem here is that this was not an entertaining wrestling show. It was a bunch of stuff that you get almost every week with the first round of a not exactly interesting tournament added in. Commentary even flat out said something to the effect of "yeah Brian Cage is here A LOT". See also Athena, Tony Nese, the Workhorsesmen and more.

This show was long, not interesting, and felt like it could have come from any point in Ring Of Honor's history with almost no changes. There were probably three shows crammed

into one here for no reason, as the pay per view card shows how little this show means for important shows down the road.

Ring Of Honor's wrestling is usually pretty solid to good, but the structure, the presentation and everything else is about as bad and boring as you can get in wrestling. I could not stand this show and if not for some talented people on the card, it would have been one of the worst shows that I have seen in a long, long time. Dreadful stuff this week.

Results

Josh Woods b. Eli Isom – Gorilla lock

Trish Adora b. Vita Vonstarr – Lariat Tubman

Mogul Embassy b. Iron Savages/Jacked Jameson – Pedigree to James

Leyla Hirsch b. B3cca – Running knee

Renegades b. Tiana James/JC – Sling Blade hart Attack to James

Athena b. Christina Marie – Right hand

The Kingdom b. Rhett Titus/Tracy Williams – Proton Pack to Titus

Christopher Daniels b. JD Drake – Best Moonsault Ever

Big Bill/Lee Moriarty b. Gabriel Hodder/Adrien Soriano

Tony Nese b. Cheeseburger – Pumphandle driver

Gravity b. Anthony Henry – Top rope splash

Shane Taylor b. Serpentico – Big splash

Dalton Castle/The Boys b. Trustbusters – Bang A Rang to Kay

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Impact Wrestling – July 27, 2023: They Can Still Do It

Impact Wrestling

Date: July 27, 2023

Location: St. Clair College, Windsor, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Matthew Rehwoldt, Tom Hannifan

We're still in Windsor for the Slammiversary fallout and this time we have a big main event with Nick Aldis vs. Eric Young. Other than that, it seems that World Champion Alex Shelley has all kinds of people coming after him and that could open up quite a few doors for the future. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening recap.

Opening sequence.

Trinity/Dani Luna vs. The Coven

King powers Trinity into the corner to start but Trinity grabs a running neckbreaker for two. Luna comes in and rolls her up for two more so it's off to Wilde for a change. A running basement clothesline hits Wilde for two but a cheap shot from the apron lets the villains take over.

King's forearm from the floor rocks Luna and a clothesline

back inside does it again. Luna forearm her way out of trouble though and it's back to Trinity for a bulldog into the corner. Everything breaks down and Luna and King fall to the floor, Trinity to grab a Bubba Bomb into a rollup for the pin on Wilde at 8:32.

Rating: C. Pretty basic match to start here and it seemed to be more a way to get Trinity in the ring than anything else. The Coven already seems to be falling down and I'm really not sure why. It isn't like the Knockouts tag division has any depth so weakening one of the few good teams is quite the questionable choice.

Post match Deonna Purrazzo comes out to say she's getting her rematch.

We look back at the end of last week's show, with Lio Rush refusing to attack a downed Alex Shelley.

Rush asks Moose and Brian Myers why they're aligned with Bully Ray, who comes in to yell at Rush for having too many questions. Rush needs to decide which side he's on.

We look at Johnny Bravo returning to side with Dirty Dango.

Dango and Bravo aren't worried about Santino Marella (though Dango might have dated his daughter). As for Bravo, he was trained by Villano VI in Mexico.

Johnny Swinger vs. Zicky Dice

Loser Leaves Town. The Fingerpoke puts Dice down for two but he small packages Swinger for two of his own. They exchange eye rakes and hair pulls until Dice gets two off a slam. Swinger teases walking out but Dice stops him and lets him get into the cart. The posing Dice gets clotheslined down though and a rollup with feet on the ropes gives Swinger the pin at 3:15.

Rating: C+. Oh like this was supposed to be anything serious.

These two know how to do their stuff perfectly well and Swinger turning on Dice to get what he wants is exactly how this whole thing should have ended. Swinger is going to need a new goon and I'm not sure who that is going to be, but this was a lot of fun as the legendary team ends.

On Before The Impact, Yuya Uemura pinned Kenny King in a tag match.

Uemura wants the Digital Media Title, which Joe Hendry likes because he can get the title back. Santino Marella makes a triple threat title match.

Nick Aldis promises to beat Eric Young.

Gisele Shaw vs. Masha Slamovich

Jai Vidal, Savannah Evans and Killer Kelly are here too. They fight over arm control to start with Slamovich taking her to the mat. A clothesline gives Slamovich two but Shaw sends her crashing out to the floor as we take a break. Back with Shaw elbowing her down in the corner and hitting a double stomp for two.

The chinlock goes on but Slamovich slips out and fires off some shots to the face in the corner. A full nelson backbreaker into a spinning faceplant gives Shaw two but Slamovich kicks her in the face for two more. Everyone on the floor gets in a brawl though and the distraction lets Shaw hit a running knee for the pin at 10:25.

Rating: C+. Shaw needed the win here and beating one of the Knockouts Tag Team Champions should go a long way towards setting up a future title shot. The new champs need new challengers and Shaw/likely Evans would be a nice fit. The first match went well enough though and I could go for more from the teams.

Video on Jake Something.

Impact is going to the UK for three shows in October. Good for them for getting to expand like that.

Traci Brooks wants Alisha Edwards in the ring for five minutes but Frankie Kazarian tries to talk her out of it.

Moose/Brian Myers vs. Time Splitters

For you non-old school fans, that would be Kushida/Alex Shelley. Kushida ducks Moose's chop in the corner and forearms away. The leglock keeps Moose slowed down but he powers out of an armbar. Myers comes in and the Splitters take turns working on the arm, with Kushida smashing it into the mat. Everything breaks down and Moose drops Shelley on the floor as we take a break. Back with Myers grabbing a chinlock on Shelley but Shelley reverses into a cradle...for the pin at 8:24.

Rating: C+. That's the most out of nowhere finish I've seen in years and I kind of love it. At the very least, it shows the fans that there is a chance for a match to end at any given time. That's kind of the point of wrestling and you don't see it often enough so points for throwing a bit of a bone in there. Not everything has to be some huge finishing sequence with signature moves. Nice job here, just for a quick ending.

Post match Bully Ray comes in for the beatdown, with Josh Alexander making the save. Lio Rush comes in to uneven things again but Chris Sabin makes the real save.

Flashback Moment Of The Week: Eric Young b. Nick Aldis to win the World Title in 2014, which was NOT a ripoff of Daniel Bryan, the bearded popular star, doing the same thing earlier in the week.

Heath laid out Alan Angels on Before The Impact.

Alan Angels says Heath thinks he is a rock star but Angels IS a rock star.

The Rascalz are coming for the Bullet Club and then the Tag

Team Titles. They run into Mike Bailey, who thinks they shouldn't act like idiots.

Zachary Wentz vs. Mike Bailey

Trey Miguel is here with Wentz. Bailey strikes him down to start and we hit the early headlock. Wentz slides outside and cuts off a dive to take over. Back in and Bailey slips out of a suplex and elbows him down. The standing shooting star press gets two and a kick to the head gives Bailey two more.

There's the springboard moonsault to the floor but Wentz is right back with a backbreaker onto the apron to cut Bailey off fast. Back in and Bailey kicks away again but Miguel pulls Wentz away from the tornado kick. Miguel gets ejected, with the distraction letting Wentz spray paint Bailey's eyes. A headlock driver finishes Bailey at 6:15.

Rating: B-. The action was good here and it's always nice to see bad things happen to Bailey. The important thing here though is that the Rascalz are getting a nice push after reuniting. They were a big deal before the team originally split and now we get to see what they can do in a different format here.

Here's what's coming on various shows.

Eric Young vs. Nick Aldis

They fight over arm control to start, with Young armdragging him into an armbar. Neither can throw the other outside so Young tries the piledriver, sending Aldis outside and us to a break. Back with Aldis taking over on the floor, including an elbow to the face for two. Aldis pumphandle suplexes him for two and we hit the chinlock.

Young fights up and hits some shots to the face, setting up a belly to belly suplex for two. Aldis is fine enough to crotch him on top and grab a superplex for a near fall of his own. A

Michinoku driver gives Aldis two more and we hit the King's Lynn cloverleaf. The rope is reached and Young grabs the piledriver for the pin at 12:38.

Rating: C+. That feels like a way to write Aldis off TV, as he lost completely clean in a fairly prominent match. Aldis was doing his normal stuff here, meaning it was only so interesting. On the other hand you have Young, who is almost a folk hero around here and having him get a win like this is going to get a nice reaction.

Post match Deaner and Kon run in to beat Young down. Deaner hits his DDT and sits on Young's chest to end the show. I know there was the whole murder thing, but is that really important enough to make this story worthwhile again?

Overall Rating: B-. This show was more like the ones Impact has been doing in recent months and that is a good thing. They set up some stuff for Resurgence next month and now we should be in for some more positive stuff going forward. For now though, I'll take a nice enough show which set things up and closed a few things off at the same time. Nice job.

Results

Trinity/Dani Luna b. The Coven – Rollup to Luna

Johnny Swinger b. Zicky Dice – Rollup with feet o the ropes

Gisele Shaw b. Masha Slamovich – Running knee

Time Splitters b. Moose/Brian Myers – Cradle to Myers

Zachary Wentz b. Mike Bailey – Headlock driver

Eric Young b. Nick Aldis – Piledriver

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Dynamite – July 26, 2023: They Took A Break

Dynamite

Date: July 26, 2023

Location: MVP Arena, Albany, New York

Commentators: Taz, Excalibur, Tony Schiavone

We're about a month away from All In and nothing has been announced so far. There is still more than enough time to set things up but they might want to start getting things ready. Other than that, it's the fallout from Blood & Guts and that should make for some interesting situations. Let's get to it.

[Here is Collision if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

We get a video from Darby Allin talking about AR Fox and how great/influential he is.

International Title: Orange Cassidy vs. AR Fox

Cassidy is defending and we get a handshake to start. They fight over a wristlock with Fox flipping around to take him

down and grabbing a bodyscissors. Back up and Cassidy rolls away with his hands in his pockets but the dropkick is countered into a rollup. Cassidy is sent outside so Fox runs up the corner for a moonsault to take him down again. Back in and the Stundog Millionaire gives Cassidy two but Fox grabs a spinning suplex for the same.

We take a break and come back with stereo neckbreakers taking both of them down for a breather. Fox sends him outside for a big flip dive, followed by a Swanton back inside. Lo Mein Pain is broken up and Cassidy hits a suicide dive. The Beach Break gets two but Fox is back with Lo Mein Pain for two. Fox's 450 misses and Cassidy grabs the Mouse Trap to retain at 13:47.

Rating: B-. This was a rather flip based match but it was an entertaining one while it lasted. Cassidy continues to run through people and at some point that is going to have to lead somewhere. Granted that has been the case for months now and I don't know if there is any reason to believe it is changing anytime soon.

Post match Cassidy offers him the sunglasses in respect but Fox breaks them and hits him in the face. Cue Darby Allin to yell at Fox, calling it embarrassing. As Fox seems to realize he went too far, Jon Moxley runs in to beat up Cassidy.

Video on Blood & Guts.

Don Callis is still trying to get Chris Jericho on his side and has gotten Jericho a tag team match with Konosuke Takeshita (Jericho approves) vs. Sammy Guevara/Daniel Garcia (Jericho doesn't approve). Jericho agrees, so Callis gives Jericho a painting of the two of them under Bad News Allen's watchful eye.

Claudio Castagnoli says not to mess with the Blackpool Combat Club. He isn't happy with Pac and here is Jon Moxley to say that's what happens when you mess with his friends.

Here is Jack Perry for a chat, now in orange and black with an I BEAT HOOK shirt. Perry said he was going to win a championship, but he didn't mean one like this. It was created in a second class company, but now that he has it, it has become relevant. He insults Taz and the history of ECW, which draws out Jerry Lynn to say there wouldn't be a Jungle Boy without ECW. The challenge seems to be on but Perry says we'll do it next week. One of the last thing this company needs is to turn into an ECW tribute show for a few weeks.

Britt Baker is ready for Taya Valkyrie.

Gravity vs. Pac

Pac actually asks Gravity if he remembers him (as Pac was known as The Man That Gravity Forgot in WWE) and gets dropkicked to the floor. After Pac takes a minute, Gravity sends him into the barricade and hits a splash from the apron as we take a break. Back with Gravity hitting a high crossbody for two. Pac isn't having that and hits a brainbuster, setting up the Rings of Saturn for the win at 8:21.

Rating: C+. For a match that was built around one joke from years ago, I've seen worse. Pac didn't really have a ton of trouble here and he shouldn't have, so this went pretty well all things considered. I could have gone for some follow up with Pac and the BCC but maybe that comes later. Either way, not bad here.

Adam Cole and MJF mock FTR, with the latter promising to punch Dax Harwood so hard that he'll spit out CM Punk's jockstrap. Cole says he wasn't coming for the title because he and MJF are friends. MJF says that win, lose or draw, after their Tag Team Title match on Collision, Cole is getting a rematch for the World Title. Cole is happy but Roderick Strong runs in to shove MJF. Cole asks MJF to give them a second before telling Strong that he's acting crazy. It's ok if Cole has other friends and Strong needs to learn boundaries. This is going

somewhere and it could be an interesting ending.

FTR likes Adam Cole but no one likes MJF. Anyone who gets to know MJF walks away from him, including his fiance. Harwood doesn't like the goofiness and as much as he respects Cole, going after his family and the titles is too far.

Darby Allin vs. Swerve Strickland

Nick Wayne and Prince Nana are here too. Feeling out process to start with neither being able to get very far. Swerve knocks him up against the ropes and out to the floor, where Allin hits a Code Red for two back inside. Allin takes it back to the floor for a whip into the steps but Swerve climbs onto said steps for the House Call (and a LOUD one at that). We take a break and come back with Swerve hitting a suplex for two before going after Allin's arm.

That's broken up and Allin gets two off the Last Supper before hitting a suicide dive to take Swerve out on the floor. Another dive is cut off by a jumping knee though and the Swerve Stomp gets two. Swerve takes him up top but gets caught with a flipping Stunner. Allin takes too much time going up and it's a super AA onto the apron. Since that insane move isn't enough, here's AR Fox to jump Allin, setting up the JML Driver for the pin at 11:58.

Rating: C+. Well, that spot was ridiculous and way more dangerous than it needed to be but that's an Allin match for you. The ending was the logical next step after earlier, but after Allin was knocked silly by the AA, it felt like it was overkill. At least Swerve didn't lose again though, as he has been beaten too often lately.

Post match Fox and Swerve beat down Allin and Wayne. Fox is officially in the Mogul Embassy. Sure why not.

The Jericho Appreciation Society is waiting for Chris Jericho. They go into his locker room, where the Callis painting is

hung on the wall. The team doesn't like where this is going and walk out on him.

We look at Billy Gunn teasing retirement on Collision.

Britt Baker vs. Taya Valkyrie

Baker grabs a headlock to start but gets knocked down with a hard shoulder. The running knees hit Baker in the corner and some hard chops put her down again. Taya loads up a wheelbarrow faceplant but they kind of fall down as we take a break. Back with Baker avoiding a charge into the corner, setting up a forearm for two.

They forearm it out until they trade kicks to the head. Taya's clothesline gets two but Baker is back up on the middle rope. What appeared to be a Panama Sunrise DDT is countered into a northern lights suplex for two. Back up and the Panama Sunrise gets two but Lockjaw is broken up. Taya tries the Road To Valhalla but Baker spins out and grabs Lockjaw for the tap at 9:42.

Rating: D. Oh this was bad in every sense of the word. I don't know if they were just on different pages here or what, but it was a rough sit throughout and almost nothing worked. They needed to slow down somewhere in there and figure things out, but instead it just kept going and got worse and worse. While it wasn't an all time bad match, it was as bad as anything AEW has done in a long time.

Nyla Rose is ready for Hikaru Shida.

Various teams are ready for the tag team battle royal on Rampage. I approve of these rapid fire mini promos. It's better than not hearing from anyone.

Here's what's coming on various shows.

Best Friends vs. Lucha Bros vs. Blackpool Combat Club

The Club's entrance takes some time so the other teams slug it out. Everyone brawls up towards the entrance, where Taylor hits a flip dive onto the pile on the floor. Back in and Fenix is waiting on Castagnoli, with the latter telling him to chop away. The springboard high angle armdrag takes Castagnoli down but everyone else is back in for the parade of knockdowns until Castagnoli gives Fenix Swiss Death for two.

Fenix superkicks Castagnoli but gets taken down by Trent for some forearms to the face. Trent's tornado DDT gets two on Castagnoli, who cuts off Trent's dive with an uppercut. We take a break and come back with Moxley striking away at Chuck, who hits a knee out of the corner. Penta tags himself in and takes over on Chuck, including a Backstabber for two.

Everything breaks down again and we get a pair of three way slugouts. We settle down to the Best Friends vs. the Bros with Fenix ankle locking Chuck. Made In Japan gets two on Trent with the Club diving in for the save. The Riccola Bomb is loaded up but here is Orange Cassidy to go after Moxley. Trent hits the Crunchy on Castagnoli but he's not legal (sure). Instead, the Fear Factor finishes Trent at 14:25.

Rating: B-. This was all about the insanity and not bothering to do anything but go all over the place for most of the match. The Bros winning was a bit of a surprise but they're the kinds of team who could be reheated very quickly. I could go for having them do some more, with less of the Best Friends being nice too.

Post match the Club keeps up the fight but Moxley leaves through the crowd. The Bros beat down the Best Friends as we hear about Moxley vs. Trent vs. Penta in a three way anything goes match next week. Cassidy hits the Orange Punch on Castagnoli to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. It was pretty clear that they took their foot off the gas after last week and it makes to do so. They

still have enough time to get ready for All In and some of the likely matches for the show are already set. We should be in for some bigger shows in the coming weeks, but this was definitely one of their weaker shows in a good while. They'll be fine going forward though and it's nice to have that confidence about a promotion.

Results

Orange Cassidy b. AR Fox – Mouse Trap

Pac b. Gravity – Rings Of Saturn

Swerve Strickland b. Darby Allin – JML Driver

Britt Baker b. Taya Valkyrie – Lockjaw

Lucha Bros b. Best Friends and Blackpool Combat Club – Fear Factor to Beretta

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NXT – July 25, 2023: That's Tonight's Point

NXT

Date: July 25, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Booker T.

It's the go home show for the Great American Bash and believe it or not, Judgment Day is here again. At least Dominik Mysterio being North American Champion gives him a reason to be here, but WWE is getting dangerously close to overexposing the team. Other than that, we get the final showdown between Carmelo Hayes and Ilja Dragunov before their title match. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

We open with a recap of Dominik Mysterio winning and defending the North American Title.

Here are Dominik and Rhea Ripley to get things going. They talk about how great each other is until Rhea has to shout down a CUT THE MULLET chant. As for Lyra Valkyria...and never mind as here is Wes Lee to interrupt. Lee hates seeing Dominik holding that title and wants his rematch TONIGHT.

Cue Mustafa Ali to say he respects Lee but not so much Dominik. Ali wanted his chance to be the new North American Champion but Dominik stole it when this clown...and Lee doesn't like that. Ali didn't mean it like that but Dominik says this is a problem between them. That makes Ali swing at Dominik, only to hit Lee. Dominik: "Excuse me, champ coming through." The other two brawl as Dominik and Rhea escape. Just make the triple threat already, but first of all, make sure you praise Rhea for the little silent things she does. Here she had her head on Dominik's shoulder and the biggest grin on her face

and it made things so much better.

Tony D'Angelo and Stacks are ready to win the Tag Team Titles. Lucien Price and Bronco Nima come in to say they want the belts too, so a match is on for tonight.

Lyra Valkyria challenged Rhea Ripley for tonight. This video might have been more effective if the match hadn't already been announced.

Valkyria says she has been here for seven months and needs to know where she stands. She isn't going to stand in the shadows like Jacy Jayne because people will see who she is.

Carmelo Hayes/Trick Williams/Ilja Dragunov vs. Schism

Hayes and Joe Gacy start things off with an exchange of knockdowns. Williams comes in for a rather high dropkick but Gacy hits him in the face and brings in Reid. That's fine with Williams, who hits him in the face and hands it off to Dragunov. Fowler comes in and gets wrestled down without much trouble, meaning Williams can hit him in the face. Everything breaks down and Schism is sent outside as we take a break.

Back with Hayes fighting up and bringing Williams back in. Gacy gets knocked to the floor as Dragunov tags himself back in and knocks the other two outside. Dragunov goes outside with him but misses a charge which sends Williams hard into the steps. Back in and Fowler actually takes over on Dragunov, who chops his way to freedom rather quickly. Everything breaks down and some of the Schism followers pull Reid and Fowler down. Hayes tags himself in and Nothing But Net finishes Gacy at 11:28.

Rating: C+. The ending is what matters here, as Dragunov has been on a roll in recent weeks so Hayes needed to get some momentum of his own on his way to the title match. the (allegedly) incidental contact is more than enough to make things personal and the title match should be awesome.

Video on Tiffany Stratton, who knows she is awesome and isn't sweating a submission match with Thea Hail.

Von Wagner vs. Javier Bernal

Bernal jumps him to start but gets booted in the face. Wagner hammers away on the mat and hits a swinging slam for the pin at 1:02.

Post match Wagner puts him through the announcers' table but gets blindsided by Bron Breakker. The beating is on and Wagner gets chaired down for a bonus.

Trick Williams goes after Ilja Dragunov in the back, with Dragunov threatening to break him. Carmelo Hayes says he has this but Williams wants Dragunov tonight. He's going to call Dragunov out, even with Hayes not looking happy.

Here is Gable Steveson for his big decision. Steveson lists off some of his accomplishments in the Olympics and says he has options in front of him. He is ready to announce his decision but Baron Corbin cuts him off. Corbin talks about how Steveson should just go back to college because this place is full of sharks. Steveson needs to leave before he gets hurt, which he says makes his decision for him. The challenge is on for the Great American Bash and Corbin gets suplexed a few times.

Dana Brooke vs. Cora Jade

Singapore Cane match and Kelani James is here with Brooke, who seems to have a Catwoman theme going. They fight on the floor to start and Brooke sends her into the steps. Jade is sent hard over the announcers' table, with Booker T. getting wiped out in the process (Fans: "ARE YOU OK?"). Jordan comes back by taking out the legs and there's the stick to the back.

They get inside with Jade piling up a bunch of sticks and slamming Brooke onto all of them. One heck of a running knee

in the corner hits Brooke in the face but she gets in a shot of her own for a breather. The handspring elbow in the corner sets up a failed bulldog though and Jade hits the DDT for...two. A Jordan distraction lets Brooke send Jade into a chair, allowing Brooke to get the pink kendo stick. Brooke slams her onto the chair and drops a Swanton for the pin at 7:40.

Rating: C. Ok that result is a surprise as I never would have bet on Jade actually losing here. Jade seemed to be ready for a push up the card over the last few months but for some reason she lost here in what should be an upset. Those stick shots were rather loud too, making this a more violent than expected match.

Carmelo Hayes warns Ilja Dragunov about Trick Williams wanting to call him out. Dragunov is fine with that, but it won't be for a match. He will break Williams, and then he'll break Hayes at the Great American Bash.

Drew Gulak and Charlie Dempsey are training with Myles Borne, who doesn't impress them. Damon Kemp comes in and wants to train with them, which works for the villains.

Bronco Nima/Lucien Price vs. Tony D'Angelo/Stacks

Scrypts is on commentary as Nima takes over on Stacks. It's quickly off to Price, who gets elbowed in the face. D'Angelo comes in and is taken down but manages to knock Nima into the corner. It's already back to Stacks for a chinlock, which doesn't last long either. Price is back in for a running corner clothesline. Cue Axiom to go after Scrypts and the distraction lets D'Angelo come in to clean house. The Bada Bing finishes Price at 4:55.

Rating: C. I didn't think it was possible, but Scrypts actually made commentary more annoying. I'm not sure what WWE sees in him other than being a heck of an athlete but anything involving Scrypts talking is horrible. As for the match, the Family getting a win makes sense as they have a title match

this weekend, but Price and Nima losing so soon was really surprising.

Post match Gallus pops up to say they're retaining on Sunday.

Dijak is ready to hurt Eddy Thorpe.

Zion Clark is in the crowd (apparently an MMA fighter and author).

Great American Bash rundown.

We get some cell phone footage of Roxanne Perez attacking Blair Davenport in what looks to be a convenience store. Perez beats her up and threatens her for their fight at the Bash before leaving as the cops arrive. No green frogs were harmed in the filming of this fight.

It's time for Supernova Sessions with the Meta Four. Their guest this week is the REAL Heritage Cup champion, Noam Dar! They recap Dar losing the Cup...which they somehow have here! Dar wakes up from his stupor and gets out of his wheelchair before going to stand on his couch. Cue Nathan Frazer (with the real Cup) and Dragon Lee to say Dar is a fraud. Now it's Yulisa Leon and Valentina Feroz to take out the women, allowing Frazer and Lee to clear the ring.

Duke Hudson and Andre Chase narrate a Thea Hail training montage. Thea says she doesn't need a miracle, because all she needs is a chance.

Humberto Carrillo and Angel Garza yelled at each other and officially split up.

Lyra Valkyria vs. Rhea Ripley

Non-title and Dominik Mysterio is here with Ripley. Valkyria's headlock doesn't last long as we hear about Dominik having a triple threat title defense on Sunday. Ripley gets tripped down and looks rather mad, only to get rolled up for two. Back

up and Ripley knocks her down but gets rolled up for two more. That earns Valkyria one heck of a German suplex and we take a break.

Back with Ripley hitting a belly to back faceplant for two but Riptide is countered into a choke. Ripley breaks that up and goes up top, only to spend too much time looking at Dominik. Valkyria sends her outside for an apron hurricanrana but Ripley pulls a high crossbody out of the air. A suplex is countered into a DDT on Ripley for two but Valkyria gets kicked down. The Riptide finishes for Ripley at 10:12.

Rating: B. And that is how you give someone one heck of a rub. Ripley talked about how awesome Valkyria was a few weeks ago and then backed it up in the ring here. This was a great way to make Valkyria look like a star, as while she isn't as good as Ripley, she could be a force around here with some more time. Heck of a match and Ripley made Valkyria look very impressive.

Post match Ripley says prove her right and beat Jacy Jayne.

Great American Bash rundown.

Here is Trick Williams to call out Ilja Dragunov, who comes straight down the aisle. A dropkick hits Dragunov and Williams unloads on him against the barricade. Dragunov fights back and unloads with chops in the corner before dropping a big right hand to the face. Carmelo Hayes tries to make the save and gets dropped as well. Dragunov promises to take the title on Sunday to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This show had some nice moments and the wrestling was mostly ok, but what matters most is it made me more interested in seeing the Sunday's pay per view. That's the point of a show like this one and they made it work. The Bash needs to be a hit as they don't do shows like that very often, but the hype for the show went well and that's what matters the most, at least for tonight.

Results

Carmelo Hayes/Trick Williams/Ilja Dragunov b. Schism – Nothing But Net to Gacy

Von Wagner b. Javier Bernal – Swinging slam

Dana Brooke b. Cora Jade – Swanton

Tony D'Angelo/Stacks b. Lucien Price/Bronco Nima – Bada Bing to Price

Rhea Ripley b. Lyra Valkyria – Riptide

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NXT LVL Up – July 21, 2023: The Most LVL Up Match Ever

NXT LVL Up

Date: July 21, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Blake Howard, Byron Saxton

Back to Orlando and that has meant all kinds of things over the last few weeks. I'm almost curious to see what is going on around here but the bad stuff is so lame that it can be a chore to watch. Then again you can occasionally get a nice match here and there, so maybe there is some hope to be had. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Tank Ledger/Hank Walker vs. Ikemen Jiro/Quincy Elliott

Walker headlocks Elliott to start and gets a dance as a result. Ledger comes in off a blind tag for a running elbow and stereo knees rock Elliott again. It's off to Jiro, who gets shouldered down but nips back up. Jiro gets in a shot in the corner but misses the springboard moonsault. Ledger hits a slingshot splash for two and we're off to the armbar. Jiro kicks his way to freedom though and it's Elliott coming back in for a corner clothesline and bulldog. Everything breaks down and Ledger spansks Elliott, setting up the Flying Fridge to give Walker the pin at 5:41.

Rating: C. Not bad here and it was nice to see Jiro back. I had kind o forgotten about him but he certainly knows how to look smooth in the ring, which is a talent that not everyone has. Nice enough return match here, even if Walker and Ledger aren't exactly the most polished pairing out there (which is kind of the point).

Izzi Dame is the friend that you don't like but you need.

Izzi Dame vs. Dani Palmer

Dame has quite the height advantage so Palmer flips over her to start and hits a dropkick. Palmer's headlock puts Dame down but she powers up and faceplants Palmer in the corner. A bearhug of all things goes on before Dame slams her down for

two. Back up and Palmer hits some running elbows, setting up a high crossbody to finish Dame at 4:35.

Rating: C. As usual, you can only get so much out of someone in less than five minutes so it's not quite fair to judge Dame yet. She was fine enough at what she did and has some attitude to her, but she feels like a long term project, which is the case for a lot of people around here. Palmer is starting to find herself as an energetic star who has to come from behind and it worked well enough.

Dante Chen vs. Javier Bernal

And this would be the most LVL Up main event imaginable. Chen's headlock works for all of two seconds to start so Bernal works on an armbar. That's reversed into the same thing from Chen but Bernal hot shots his way to freedom. A stomp to the ribs and a belly to back suplex gets two on Chen as Bernal gets a bit frustrated.

The chinlock goes on for a bit before Bernal dives into a raised boot. Eat Defeat drops Chen but the referee almost gets bumped, allowing Bernal to get a poke to the eye. A reverse DDT gives Bernal two (I bought that) but Chen is back with the double chop for the pin at 6:51.

Rating: C+. You can definitely see that these two are further along than most of the regulars around here and that makes for a better match. They were doing some more complicated stuff and had more of a story, with Chen being the clean wrestler while Bernal cheated wherever he could. It was a good enough match and I bought on the near fall, even if it meant challenging the undefeatable power of Dante Chen.

Overall Rating: C. The main event helped but this was a show drastically lacking in big names or in anything you needed to see. That being said, going with this kind of a show is certainly a way to go around here. If LVL Up is supposed to be the big developmental show, then this is what it needs to be,

though that doesn't make it the most interesting.

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<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/way-update-injured-aew-star-recovering-ahead-schedule/>

They're In: Two New Matches (And A Fight) Set For WWE Summerslam.

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Next Stop: Interesting Update On Potential WrestleMania 41 Location.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/next-stop-interesting-update-potential-wrestlemania-41-location/>

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WRESTLING RUMORS: Monday Night Raw Star Written Off TV Due To Legitimate Injury.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/wrestling-rumors-monday-night-raw-star-written-off-tv-due-legitimate-injury/>

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