

More On Bully Ray/Aces and 8's

This was a big story last night and deserves a bit more attention. First and foremost, I did like the end result of last night's show. Having Ray be revealed as the President of Aces and 8's was the right move and was one of the few places they could go to extend the life of the whole stupid angle. Ray screwing over the Hogans for the sake of winning the world title with it being a plan all along was perfectly logical as it's Ray's nature to be a self serving jerk. The lines of "I used you and I screwed you" and "D-Von let her cry" were straight MONEY. Also, IT ISN'T BISCHOFF.

However this doesn't solve everything. At the end of the day, Aces and 8's have still been the most inept stable of the last like....ever. They never win anything of note and they lost again last night in their other big match. Also, Ray is now basically the leader of the Eight Stooges. They're still a bunch of losers and you can't use the logic of "now that they have a leader" because Ray has clearly been the leader for months. Oh and one more thing: why did Ray give Hardy a chain? I know he had everything in hand, but it was still an unneeded risk.

As for where this is going now, it appears that we're headed for either Hogan or Sting vs. Ray at Slammiversary before we get to presumably AJ or Storm taking the title at Bound For Glory. If we have to get one of those matches, Sting is BY FAR the better option, as he can at least, you know, move. There are some other downsides to this development also.

Above all else, it means Brooke talking. The story continues to be mainly about them rather than ANYONE else and Brooke just isn't interesting at all. She's annoying, she's whiny, she's not talented, and she's on TV more than any other female

in the company. Also I don't really want to spend the next few months hearing about how Aces and 8's are taking over and all that jazz. The last thing we need is another corporate takeover angle. Having them be the dominant faction is fine, but we don't need another takeover. It's been done WAY too many times.

Overall, it's good but it doesn't solve all of Aces and 8's problems, nor does it make up for the months and months of terrible stuff.

Lockdown 2013: We've Got A Mastermind

Lockdown 2013

Date: March 10, 2013

Location: Alamodome, San Antonio, Texas

Commentators: Todd Keneley, Mike Tenay, Tazz

It's the second of four pay per views of the year for TNA and arguably their second biggest show of the year period. The main events tonight are Jeff Hardy defending the world title against Bully Ray inside a cage along with Lethal Lockdown pitting Team TNA against Aces and 8's. The main question is will we find out who is really behind the bikers tonight as we've been waiting for nine months now. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about the history between Hardy and Ray and how many matches they've had against each other, with none being bigger than tonight. We also hear about Angle vs. Brisco and D'Lo Brown being revealed as the VP of Aces and 8's.

X-Division Title: Kenny King vs. Christian York vs. Zema Ion

King is defending. York knocks the champion down to start before clotheslining Ion down as well. King goes to the floor to let the other guys fight, only to have York dive out onto him, ramming King into the barricade. Ion loads up a dive of his own but runs into a boot from York. King tries to use Ion's body as a springboard but slips off and rams his head into the guardrail in a SCARY looking landing. Ion dives on both York and King anyway before heading back inside with York.

Thankfully King is still alive and comes back in to break up a York cover before pounding away on Christian in the corner. Ion is down on the floor as York chops away at King, only to be poked in the eye. Zema comes back in with a quick rana off the top rope for two on York. A moonsault gets the same result and Ion is frustrated.

York hits a quick legdrop on King for two but Ion baseball slides King to the floor. A slingshot into a DDT gets two on York for Ion as King gets back in. Ion is sent out to the entrance ramp where King drops a leg to keep him down. York pulls Ion back inside for two and all three men are back inside. King loads up a top rope fallaway slam on Ion, only to have York add a powerbomb to make it a Tower of Doom. Christian gets control by hammering away on all three guys, including a suplex on King for no cover.

The Mood Swing neckbreaker gets two on Ion for York and a Capo Kick sends King into the corner. In an interesting combo, York DDTs King as Ion neckbreakers York, with Zema getting two on both guys. York hits a top rope double stomp to Ion's back and a corner roll at King. Kenny comes back with a kick to Ion's head but York rolls through the Royal Flush for two. Not that it matters as another attempt at the Flush ends York to retain the title at 11:10.

Rating: C. This was good, but at the same time it came off much more like a collection of spots rather than a coherent match. I'm not wild on

matches like that, especially when there are that many botches. The one with King at the beginning was scary with him slipping down and nearly breaking his neck in the process. That's scary stuff.

Joseph Park talks about being ribbed by the fans when Bad Influence comes in, saying Dixie Carter wants to talk to him in catering. Park leaves so Daniels and Kaz say they're here to win the titles, insisting that they're not jokes.

Joseph Park vs. Joey Ryan

Before the match, Ryan makes fat jokes about Park and calls him a mark. Ryan says he himself has the size advantage where it matters though. Park says San Antonio rocks and talks about singing karaoke on the River Walk (San Antonio tourist attraction). Ryan runs at him to start but gets caught in an armdrag followed by some chops in the corner. Joey comes back with a middle rope cross body but literally bounces off Park's chest.

Ryan finally takes Park down and pounds away as the fans are all behind Park here. The match slows down a lot as Ryan slowly pounds away until he hits a missile dropkick for no cover. Park comes back by ripping Joey's chest hair out and pulling Ryan's trunks up very hard. A corner splash sets up a middle rope splash but Joey rolls away. Joey tries a sunset flip out of the corner but Park sits on his chest for the pin at 6:05.

Rating: D. This was your standard comedy match minus the comedy. Ryan hasn't been on TV for months now and it's pretty easy to see why here. There's nothing to him at all and he's very boring in the ring. His character is fine on paper but there's nothing in the ring to back it up.

We see Jeff Hardy arriving earlier.

Bully and Brooke are in the back and Bully is nervous about the main

event. Hulk comes in and Brooke leaves. Hogan says tonight the company could launch to the next level and while Jeff has been good for the time being, Ray could be the launch point to the next level. As for Brooke, Hulk is so glad Bully has made her happy again and he can't thank Bully enough. Hulk says he wants Ray to win tonight and Ray says he will. Ray promises people will make them remember him tonight.

Knockouts Title: Gail Kim vs. Velvet Sky

Velvet is defending. Feeling out process to start until the champion hooks a flying headscissors to put Gail down. A neckbreaker gets two for Velvet and she sends Gail to the floor. Back inside Kim gets a quick rollup for two and there's a running shoulder to the champion's ribs. Gail gets her in a fireman's carry and slams her down for two before arguing with referee Terryn Terrell. An attempt at a headscissors out of the corner is easily countered by Velvet into a mat slam for no cover.

Some clotheslines and elbows put Kim down again as does a bulldog. A reverse DDT gets two for Velvet and Gail is staggered. As she gets up she grabs Terrell, allowing Gail to hit Eat Defeat for two. Gail shoves Terryn in the corner before slapping her, begging to be disqualified. Instead Terryn spears Gail down and beats her up, allowing Velvet to hit In Yo Face for the pin at 7:38.

Rating: D. I do not like women's wrestling. Terrell looks GREAT in the little black shorts and that's all I've got here. Oh and Gail Kim is perhaps the least interesting human being on the face of this planet. Therefore, let's make sure to push her to the freaking moon and back for years on end.

Robbie E complains about Robbie T holding him down for two years. Tonight, Robbie is going to make his former bro his ho.

We recap Robbie E vs. Robbie T, which comes down to Robbie T getting tired of Robbie E abusing him, making tonight about revenge.

Robbie E vs. Robbie T

Robbie E wants a timeout to start and there's a hug attempt. Robbie T doesn't seem interested and shoves E down with ease. E does some stretches in the corner before trying a headlock. That goes very badly for E and a one handed top wristlock puts E down. A single leg takedown doesn't work at all so T launches him up into the air. T grabs him by the throat but E slaps his way out of it. E grabs a fast armbar before hooking a sleeper. T finally breaks the hold and catches E's cross body with ease. A fireman's carry into a spinebuster ends E at 5:50.

Rating: D+. This was what it was supposed to be but it doesn't make for a good match. T has never been great but instead of being a comedy guy, he should be allowed to be a monster as he always should have been. Also thankfully this time there's no Orlando Jordan for a stupid feud to derail any momentum he gets going.

Aries says he's ready to go tonight without Bobby Roode...but here's Bobby Roode so they'll be ok tonight.

Tag Titles: Bad Influence vs. Chavo Guerrero/Hernandez vs. Bobby Roode/Austin Aries

Roode and Aries are defending. It's Chavo vs. Daniels to start things off with Daniels running him over early on. A backdrop puts Daniels down and everything breaks down, resulting in Hernandez and Chavo clearing the ring. Hernandez is in legally now against Daniels and there's an overhead belly to belly to put Daniels down. Off to Chavo for a seated dropkick to Daniels before Kaz comes in to get beaten down as well.

Back to Hernandez who gets two off a splash on Kaz. A Daniels distraction allows Kazarian to hit a missile dropkick to take Hernandez down and Bad Influences double teams the big man (Hernandez) for a bit. Aries breaks up a pin attempt before Hernandez counters a double suplex into one of his own, putting down both members of Bad Influence. Off to Chavo again

for Three Amigos on all four opponents in a cool visual.

Things settle down again with Daniels pounding away on Chavo. Kazarian comes in to take over but Roode tags himself in, bringing in the champions for the first time. Roode and Aries double team Chavo down with a double suplex, drawing in Bad Influence for the save. Roode fires away some shoulders into the ribs of Chavo before Aries hits a dropkick to the back for two.

Roode launches Chavo into the corner via a catapult but Chavo punches Aries in the air in a nice counter. A double clothesline puts Roode and Chavo down, but Chavo can't make the hot tag to SuperMex. Chavo and Hernandez are sent to the floor, causing a fourway brawl between the other guys in the match. We wind up with Aries and Kaz who both try cross bodies to put them both down. Chavo hits a top rope cross body on both guys, followed by a double clothesline from Hernandez. Aries is LAUNCHED into the air and down to the mat with a thud before another double clothesline takes down Aries and Kaz.

Hernandez hits a double backbreaker on Aries and Kaz, getting a double countout on Austin. A big shoulder block puts Aries down but Daniels hits an STO on Hernandez to take him down. Roode hits the release Rock Bottom on Daniels but Kaz takes him down with a slingshot DDT. Fade to Black is escaped though and there's the spinebuster from Roode to Kaz.

Daniels and Roode slug it out but Hernandez takes both guys down with a dive from the ramp to the ring. Daniels is caught in an Alpha Bomb from Hernandez but Kaz breaks up Chavo's frog splash. Aries shoves Kaz off the top and rans himself and SuperMex to the floor. Daniels tries a superplex on Chavo but gets shoved down, allowing for a top rope splash, but Roode tagged himself in and steals the pin to retain at 17:22.

Rating: B. As usual these matches have no build to them but they wind up being the most entertaining matches on the card. TNA has gotten really good at this formula and Bad Influence is especially awesome at them. The

match was the usual entertaining stuff here but I'd like a story and some fresh blood soon.

We look at the Knockouts Title match again with Terrell getting involved.

Terrell is in the back and says she made a judgment call when Gail jumps her and a brawl breaks out.

The cage is being set up.

Slammiversary is in Boston.

D'Lo Brown says Doc is starting Lethal Lockdown.

Angle says he's beating up Brisco tonight.

We recap Angle vs. Brisco. Wes Brisco was mentored by Angle but now wants to prove that the Brisco Family is better than Kurt Angle. Brisco is also in Aces and 8's.

Kurt Angle vs. Wes Brisco

You can win by pin, submission or escape. Kurt suplexes him down to start before Wes comes back with shoulders in the corner. Wes tries to escape but gets suplexed out of the corner with ease. Angle pounds away but misses a charge in the corner, ramming his head into the cage. Wes pounds away and puts on a chinlock before Angle fires off some elbows to the ribs to escape. That gets him nowhere though as Wes flapjacks him down for two.

Brisco charges into a boot in the corner and there's a missile dropkick from Angle for two. Angle starts firing off clotheslines and suplexes before slamming Wes into the cage. Now it's time for Rolling Germans with

Angle not letting go no matter what. Angle goes up but a top rope splash misses, allowing Wes to take over with right hands.

The Angle Slam out of nowhere puts Wes down but Brisco starts crawling for the door. Angle pulls him back in with the ankle lock but Wes rolls him through into the cage. Brisco tries to climb out but Angle catches him on the top. They slug it out on the top rope with Angle slamming Wes' head into the cage over and over again. Angle busts out a German off the top rope to put both guys down again.

Wes escapes the Angle Slam and Kurt accidentally clotheslines the referee. There's the ankle lock with a grapevine to make Wes tap but there's no referee. Angle hits another Angle Slam and flips Brisco off before escaping the cage. There's still no referee though but D'Lo Brown runs out and rams Kurt into the cage and throws him back in. Wes escapes the cage and wins at 11:58.

Rating: C+. In less than twelve minutes, Brisco showed me more than Garrett Bischoff has in the last year and a half. The match itself was good because that's what Angle does, but the ending was pretty easy to guess, especially given the stuff that happened on Thursday. Again though, it's still D'Lo Brown which brings things down for me.

We recap the entire history of Aces and 8's which is a very long story to say the least. Basically they're at war against Sting and Hogan for no apparent reason and after nine months, we're going into Lethal Lockdown with TNA vs. Aces and 8's.

Lethal Lockdown

TNA: Sting, Magnus, Samoa Joe, Eric Young, James Storm

Aces and 8's: Mr. Anderson, D-Von, Doc, Mike Knux, Garrett Bischoff

This has some interesting rules. Two men (Anderson and Magnus) start

things off and fight for three minutes. After those three minutes, Aces and 8's (they won a series of matches on Thursday) get a man advantage for two minutes. Then TNA sends in its second man to even it up for two minutes. Aces and 8's then get another advantage for two more minutes. They alternate until everyone is in and then it's one fall to a finish.

Magnus pounds Anderson down in the corner to start before hitting a clothesline. Anderson sends him into the cage though to take over as we have less than a minute before someone else comes in. Off to a chinlock by Anderson to kill the time until Knux makes it 2-1. Also remember that the match can't end until all ten men are in the match. A sidewalk slam and legdrop floor Magnus as this is one sided so far.

Samoa Joe is in to tie things up and TNA takes over for a bit. The former tag champions continue to work well together by taking the bikers apart. Anderson and Knux are beaten down until Garrett Bischoff comes in to make it 3-2. The fans tell Garrett that he can't wrestle as Magnus and Joe beat him up as well. Anderson and Knux finally get up and save their partner as Eric Young is in to make it 3-3. Oh wait he has to strip first.

As is the case with every other period, the team with the latest man in takes over. D-Von is in to make it 4-3 Aces and 8's and the numbers game takes over for the bikers again. Joe fights back with some palm shots to Anderson in the corner but D-Von knocks him down again to take over. The fans want Sting but they get James Storm instead. Storm cleans house with Closing Times and Last Calls but they don't mean much at this point.

House continues to be cleaned until Doc is in to round out Aces and 8's. Doc takes over for Team TNA with his power stuff and the match slows down a lot. Here's Sting with two garbage cans full of weapons to finalize things, meaning it's now one fall to a finish. Team TNA takes over with a bunch of weapon shots as I guess there's no roof this year for a change. It's all Team TNA at this point as the match slows down a bit. Garrett Bischoff gets worn out by Joe via a trashcan.

Sting holds Anderson for Young but Young almost hits Sting by mistake. The break lets the bikers take over with Doc chokeslamming Young. Magnus and Storm come back to take over, sending Garrett running to the top of the cage. They chase after him, resulting in I think Doc and Knux making the save. Joe powerbombs ALL FIVE GUYS down in a big Tower of Doom before putting Anderson in an STF but Doc makes the save. TNA takes over again with Sting hitting the Death Drop on Knox, but he doesn't cover. Instead he sends Young to the top of the cage for an elbow drop for the pin at 26:27.

Rating: B. The problem of the ring being too small to hold ten guys still exists, but as someone with a bad fear of heights I'm very glad to see them not have the roof on the cage. It's a risk they just don't need to take and the Tower of Doom spot was more than able to make up for it. Very solid match here but Aces and 8's continue to fall further into the abyss.

The announcers bicker a bit.

Jeff Hardy is a 51-49% favorite to win the main event via a fan poll.

We recap the main event, which is based on the history these two have and Ray wanting to finally win the big one on his own.

TNA World Title: Jeff Hardy vs. Bully Ray

In the cage of course with Hardy defending. Tenay says Ray has a 50+ pound weigh advantage about a minute after Ray is announced at 275 to Hardy's 227. Feeling out process to start with Ray running Hardy over with a hard shoulder. A quick slam gets two for Ray and the champion bails to the corner. Hardy fights back with the Whisper in the Wind for two but can't escape as Ray rams Hardy's leg into the cage.

Ray starts a slow and methodical offense by working over the champion's

ribs and back. A big backdrop gets two for Ray but Jeff gets in a shot to earn himself a breather. The Twist and the Bubba Bomb are both countered but the second attempt at the Twist of Fate connects. Cue Wes Brisco and Garrett Bischoff into the cage but Jeff and Bully run them over. Bully lets himself be a springboard for Poetry in Motion before throwing both bikers out.

They slug it out in the middle of the ring with Jeff actually taking over. A flying forearm takes Bully down and there's a low dropkick for two. Hardy tries to climb out but Ray makes the save and they slug it out on the top rope. Hardy kicks Ray in the head but falls to the mat, allowing Ray to fall off the top onto Jeff for a VERY close two. The Twist staggers Bully but as Jeff goes up, Ray hits a HUGE sitout powerbomb out of the corner to put both guys down.

Ray covers for two and the fans are split. Cue the Hogans to watch the main event from ringside to cheer on Bully. Ray gets to his feet very slowly but here are Aces and 8's. Ray stands up and has a chain as the bikers come in. To the shock of not many people, Ray is thrown a hammer by D-Von and clubs down Jeff to win the title, revealing himself as the leader at 17:20.

Rating: B-. That powerbomb alone was worth the whole match. The ending isn't really all that surprising but at least Aces and 8's have FINALLY done something of note. Bully Ray as world champion of a major company in 2013 is a huge gamble to say the least, but it appears that we're heading to Hogan vs. Ray down the line. To call that a gamble is an even shorter stretch but it's what we appear to be getting.

Ray demands that his hand be raised post match as the Hogans are all sad. He yells at Brooke and calls her nothing while telling Hulk that he's a worthless old man. Ray says he used the Hogans and trash is thrown into the ring. He admits that he's the President of the Aces and 8's and that he's world champion. The Dudleys embrace end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. The problem for this show is that out of eight matches, four of them were as worthless as you can get. The first hour or so of this show did nothing at all and I was bored out of my mind for a lot of it. The good thing is that the other four matches were all quite good and the ending was a nice surprise, especially given that I didn't know what to expect for the most part. Good show here for the most part, but the lower card is a death trap right now.

Results

Kenny King b. Zema Ion and Christian York – Royal Flush to York

Joseph Park b. Joey Ryan – Seated Senton

Velvet Sky b. Gail Kim – In Yo Face

Robbie T b. Robbie E – Spinebuster

Austin Aries/Bobby Roode b. Chavo Guerrero/Hernandez and Bad Influence – Roode pinned Daniels after a splash from Guerero

Wes Brisco b. Kurt Angle – Brisco escaped the cage

Team TNA b. Aces and 8's – Elbow drop off the top of the cage to Knux

Bully Ray b. Jeff Hardy – Pin after hitting Hardy with a hammer

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Wrestlemania Count-Up –
Wrestlemania I: It All

Starts...With A Tag Match?

Wrestlemania I

Date: March 31, 1985

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

Attendance: 19,121

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Jesse Ventura

We begin here at a show that certainly won't be like the rest of these. This show is far more about the spectacle than the major matches which is shown in the main event. Our big match tonight is Hulk Hogan and Mr. T. teaming up to face Paul Orndorff and Roddy Piper in a grudge match. Yeah the first show doesn't even have the world title on the line. Today, there are at least two world title matches per show. Anyway, this is where it all began so let's get to it.

The opening video is a bunch of shots of New York City with the WWF logo and some pictures of the wrestlers coming in later. The celebrities for tonight's show (headlined by Muhammad Ali) are also shown.

Here's Mean Gene to sing the Star Spangled Banner.

Tito Santana says he's ready for the undefeated Executioner and he's going to teach the newcomer a thing or two about the big leagues.

The Executioner says he's going after Santana's injured leg. So much for secrecy.

Tito Santana vs. Executioner

Executioner is Buddy Rose (of Blow Away fame) under a mask. Tito is WAY over here in MSG so he was a good choice to open things up. We start with a crisscross before Tito dropkicks Executioner out to the floor. Back in and Santana hooks a headlock to take Executioner to the mat as we're still waiting on that promised leg work. Tito charges into a boot in the corner and Executioner takes him down with a knee to the ribs. A spinning toe hold is easily escaped so Executioner goes after the other leg. So which one is injured in the first place?

Tito shrugs him off and the masked guy hides in the corner. Since it's a corner that Tito is looking straight at, the hiding doesn't go all that well and Tito slugs him down. Executioner comes back with a slam and goes up, only to be slammed right back down. A Santana splash hits knees though and we get to the knee work. That work consists of one cannonball down onto it before Tito kicks him to the floor. Back in and the forearm sets up the Figure Four to make Santana the first winner in the history of Wrestlemania.

Rating: C-. This wasn't too bad and the crowd reacted well to Santana, but Executioner was just a guy there to be evil. For an opening match this was a pretty good idea but for a match in general it was pretty lame stuff. Then again they have no idea what they're doing at this point so it's understandable.

S.D. Jones says he's ready for King Kong Bundy. I see why I've never heard him talk other than this show. He's going to get down for Bundy.

Bundy says Jones needs to be ready for the Avalanche and the five count.

S. D. Jones vs. King Kong Bundy

Here's an infamous one. Jones is a guy from the old days who is here to make the fans feel good I guess. The match lasts 23 seconds with Bundy shoving Jones into the corner, splashing him three times and getting the pin. According to the WWF the time was 9 seconds, which doesn't even make bad sense for them.

Matt Borne, the future Doink the Clown, says he's ready to beat a worldwide star in Ricky Steamboat. Steamboat's problem is that he's too nice of a guy. That's likely true.

Steamboat says this is the biggest card ever and he's here to develop his meanness. You don't hear this often, but Steamboat failed miserably in that regard.

Matt Borne vs. Ricky Steamboat

Borne is the Maniac so I have another name to use. Steamboat is looking chiseled here. I've never seen him so ripped up and it's a strange look

on him. Also he isn't called the Dragon yet which is even odder to hear. Ricky speeds things up to start and chops Borne down before hitting a chinlock only about 40 seconds in.

Off to a headlock instead with Steamboat backflipping over Borne twice with the second time resulting in an atomic drop. Back to the headlock which is shifted into a front facelock but Borne comes back with a snap suplex for two. Ricky is like dude I'm Ricky Steamboat and suplexes Borne down, followed by a swinging neckbreaker. A shoulder block puts Borne down and the cross body ends this near squash clean.

Rating: D+. Eh it's Steamboat in the 80s so how bad can this be? Ricky wasn't a huge star yet but he was rapidly becoming known as something special. It would be another year or so before he started tearing the house down on a regular basis and started having his masterpieces. Borne would be a lot better when he had a gimmick to go with his skills.

The Sammartinos are ready for Johnny V and Brutus Beefcake. Bruno threatens Johnny V is he tries to get involved.

David Sammartino vs. Brutus Beefcake

Sammartino was the son of a legend and had a good way into the business as a result. He had a good look on top of that, but he had one thing holding him back: he had no talent. His "career" was really just a way to keep Bruno around for a few more years to draw in some extra crowds and that's the only reason this match is happening. Beefcake is new at this point and is nowhere near what he would become so this is going to be pretty bad.

David's height doesn't help him either as he's about 5'8 or so. They head to the mat to start and Brutus has to bail to the floor for a breather. Back in and Sammartino takes it right back to the mat with a front facelock. A legdrop to the arm has Beefcake in trouble and it's time to talk to the managers a bit. Beefcake comes back with a headlock takeover but David grabs the legs to work them over a bit.

Off to a leg lock as we keep things very basic so far. Brutus fights up with his leg seeming fine all of a sudden. He drops some forearms to

David's back and there's a hard whip into the corner by Beefcake. David comes back with a backdrop and they slug it out a bit. Sammartino strikes like his daddy. A suplex gets two for David but Brutus sends him to the floor. The managers get into a fight and both guys run in for a double DQ.

Rating: D+. This is a hard one to grade as it's a competitive match and not completely terrible, but the problem is how low level of quality this was. Neither guy was terrible but you could tell they were trying which makes a big difference. This could have been WAY worse but it just wasn't that good in the first place.

I forgot to mention how the interviews are being done. Alfred Hayes is standing in the entrance with the ring behind him as the guys come by him for their matches. The interviews are recorded earlier in the day though so it's kind of odd.

Anyway Valentine says he's tough and leaner than usual.

JYD says he's going to take a bite out of Valentine. So he's promising to cheat? Good to know.

Intercontinental Title: Junkyard Dog vs. Greg Valentine

Dog cranks on the arm to start and punches him in the shoulder ala Marciano. A punch to the face takes Valentine down and a headbutt sends the champion (Greg in case you're not familiar with this era) to the floor. Valentine tries his luck at the arm now and pounds away with some forearms to the back of the head. I'm not sure if that should hurt the Dog or not.

The champion goes after the leg now with what looks to be the start of a half crab but he never turns Dog over. A kind of DDT on the leg has the Dog in trouble again and there's a headbutt between the legs. Dog breaks up the Figure Four and hits a headbutt to stagger the champ some more. Jimmy Hart tries to interfere but Dog causes Valentine to blast him in the head instead. Valentine grabs a fast rollup and puts his feet on the ropes for the pin.

Rating: D+. I'm getting tired of using that rating but this is what the matches keep coming out as: not terrible but nothing good at all.

Valentine would get back to his current feud with Tito Santana very soon with the title changing hands pretty soon if I remember properly. Dog was there as more of a fun character than a serious threat so this was fine.

Speaking of Santana, here he is to tell the referee what happened. The referee restarts the match but Valentine walks out for the countout without ever getting back in. That's just building Santana vs. Valentine for later.

Iron Sheik and Nikolai Volkoff say their countries are better than America. Where's my pitchfork when I need to run freaks like these off?

The US Express say they're ready.

Tag Titles: US Express vs. Nikolai Volkoff/Iron Sheik

The Express is Barry Windham and Mike Rotundo and they're defending tonight. A little trivia for you: the song Real American was originally used for the two of them but Hogan wound up using it instead. The heels do their whole Russian national anthem and Iran/Russia #1 deal before the match. Rotundo and Sheik start things off with the Iranian hooking a headlock. A dropkick puts Sheik down and Mike grabs a headlock.

Off to Barry who avoids double teaming and causes the challengers to collide. Back to Rotundo to work over Nikolai with an elbow drop getting two. Windham comes in off the top with a shot to the arm and Rotundo does the same thing. Sheik suplexes Mike down for two as the foreigners take over. Nikolai drops him throat first across the throat and the USA chant starts up.

A sunset flip gets a quick two for Mike but it's back to Sheik for an abdominal stretch. That doesn't last long though as Mike hiptosses out of it and it's off to Barry via the hot tag. The bulldog (Barry's finisher at the time) takes Volkoff out as everything breaks down. In the melee, Sheik hits Windham in the back with the cane for the pin and the titles.

Rating: C. This was a better match than we've seen so far with the fans

getting way into the whole USA vs. foreigners thing. The title change was there only so something historic could happen and the Express got the belts back about two and a half months later. They would split soon after that with both guys heading to the NWA.

Sheik and Volkoff said they've proven their superiority now.

Intermission which is edited out of the home video releases.

Big John Studd says he'll slam Andre and keep the money.

Big John Studd vs. Andre the Giant

This is a bodyslam challenge with some special stipulations: if Andre wins, he gets \$15,000 but if Studd wins, Andre has to retire. Studd charges in to start but is immediately chopped back and he bails to the floor. Back in and Andre punches him in the head and rams him in the corner with all of his weight. Studd goes for a slam and Andre is just like dude please. The fans chant for a slam as Andre puts on a bearhug. That goes on for a good while until Andre shifts over to a facelock. Apparently if this goes to the time limit, Andre has to retire. Andre kicks at the leg for a bit and casually slams Studd for the win. It's as quick as it sounds.

Rating: D. This was pretty terrible but the fans loved Andre and he had to be on here. Also this was part of a big feud as Andre and Studd cut Andre's hair a few weeks before this. The match was pretty weak but then again what are you going to expect from these two guys with Andre's body starting to fail on him.

Andre hands a few bucks out to the fans but Heenan steals the bag and runs off.

Andre says he doesn't care about the money because he's better than Studd and now he's proven it. He isn't retiring anytime soon either.

Cyndi Lauper and Wendi Richter want Wendi's title back. Richter is MAD here and has a nearly man's voice.

Moolah and Lelani Kai are ready to keep the title.

Women's Title: Lelani Kai vs. Wendi Richter

The big deal here is that Cyndi Lauper, pop superstar of her day, is in Richter's corner. Moolah, as in the woman who cost Richter the title a few weeks ago, is in Kai's corner. The camera is on a wide shot for the start of Richter's music (Girls Just Wanna Have Fun) and the whole crowd literally gets up at once. Cool visual. For reasons that continue to elude me, the slow motion shot of Richter and Lauper running through the back and into the arena is a famous clip.

They both pull hair to start and we're clearly in a normal women's match here. By that I mean neither girl is that good in the ring and their moves are really overblown. Richter cranks on the arm for a bit until Kai pulls her hair to take over. Now the champion works on the arm for a bit and Richter is in trouble. More hair pulling ensues until Richter puts on a body scissors.

Kai charges into a boot in the corner and Richter shoves the referee away like a jerk. Moolah chokes away at Wendi in the corner until Lauper comes over to make the save. Richter hits a kind of reverse AA and a splash for two. Lelani hits a backbreaker for two before going up for a cross body, only to have Wendi roll through for the pin and the title.

Rating: D. These two just didn't work that well, but that would be the case for almost any women's match back in the 80s. The girls were out there basically for a spectacle or in this case the pop culture connection that was driving the era. Richter was a HUGE star at this point, occasionally main eventing house shows when Hogan was in another city.

Richter and Lauper dance around the ring in celebration in another semi-famous scene.

Richter and Lauper celebrate in the back as well.

We introduce the celebrities for the main event. The guest ring announcer is Billy Martin, former manager of the Yankees. He introduces Liberace as guest timekeeper, accompanied by four Rockettes. They all get in the ring and do the famous kicks which you'll see in the occasional highlight

package. The guest referee is someone you may have heard of: Muhammad Ali. Jose Torres, another boxer, is on the floor as well.

Hulk Hogan/Mr. T. vs. Roddy Piper/Paul Orndorff

Piper comes out with the full New York Pipe and Drums band while Hogan and T come out to Eye of the Tiger. Advantage Hogan/T. Piper and Orndorff have Bob Orton as their second while Hogan/T have Jimmy Snuka. Advantage Hogan/T. This is looking kind of one sided isn't it? Oh and Pat Patterson is the inside referee while Ali is the outside referee. The heels all hug and we're ready to go.

Orndorff and Hogan get things going but Piper tags in before there's any contact. Therefore T wants to fight Piper and they immediately head to the mat. T and Piper do some amateur stuff and T actually lasts long enough for a standoff. We get some staring until T hooks Piper in an airplane spin. Everything breaks down and Ali gets in to help break it up. Orton and Snuka try to get in as well but Ali glares Orton down.

Things break down again and the heels get rammed together until we get down to Hogan vs. Piper. Hulk rams Piper's head into the mat over and over until it's back to T. Hogan offers his knee as something to ram Piper's head into and it's back to the champion to send Piper to the outside. Orndorff jumps Hogan from behind and knocks him outside where Roddy blasts him with a chair.

Paul chokes away from the apron until T charges in for the save. Pat Patterson has to pull T off and you know he enjoys this in some way. A double atomic drop puts Hogan down and Orndorff hits a vertical suplex. Roddy comes back in to get in his punches and knee shots followed by an Orndorff top rope elbow to the back of Hulk's neck for two. Paul goes up again but misses the knee drop and there's the hot tag to T.

Orndorff and T brawl on the mat for a bit until Mr. gets in trouble via a Piper front facelock. That goes nowhere though as T stands up and makes the tag with no effort to be seen. Hogan pounds away but walks into a belly to back suplex. Orton and Snuka get in the ring for no apparent reason and as the referee calms things down, Orton comes in off the top with the cast but hits Orndorff by mistake to give Hogan the pin.

Rating: B-. Is it great? Not even close, but the point of this match was the crowd reacting to it rather than the match itself. It's easily the best match of the night and while the only question coming into tonight was who was getting the fall. This was exactly what the fans wanted and that's what this was supposed to be about. Nice main event here.

Piper and Orton bail but the good guys let Orndorff leave without beating on him even more.

We recap the ending of the main event.

Hogan, T and Snuka talk about winning.

Credits end the show. That's a sign of the past.

Overall Rating: D+. First and foremost let me make something clear: the overall rating for this show means jack because the whole thing was there for the spectacle and the matches were an afterthought other than the main event. This show was a huge success and kickstarted what is known as the Golden Era, so I don't think you can call it anything but a good show. It's also on the list of shows that every fan has to see at least once, just so they can say they've seen it. Not great quality, but incredible historical significance.

Ratings Comparison

Tito Santana vs. Executioner

Original: C

Redo: C-

King Kong Bundy vs. S.D. Jones

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Ricky Steamboat vs. Matt Borne

Original: C-

Redo: D+

David Sammartino vs. Brutus Beefcake

Original: D-

Redo: D+

Junkyard Dog vs. Greg Valentine

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Nikolai Volkoff/Iron Shiek vs. U.S. Express

Original: B-

Redo: C

Andre the Giant vs. Big John Studd

Original: D+

Redo: D

Wendi Richter vs. Lelani Kai

Original: B

Redo: D

Hulk Hogan/Mr. T. vs. Roddy Piper/Paul Orndorff

Original: B

Redo: B-

Overall Rating

Original: C-

Redo: D+

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/08/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-1-just-a-big-house-show/>

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Thought of the Day: The Revolving Door Of Divas

Two parts to this one. First of all, WWE has put out another stupid top ten list, this one being top ten Divas moments at Wrestlemania.

Not a single one of the Divas in this video are full time wrestlers for WWE anymore.

Second, and more pertinent, I was watching a show setting up Wrestlemania last year and none of the three Divas and none of them are even in WWE anymore. Think about that: in a year the top of the division has been completely eliminated. And yet they wonder why no one cares about these girls.

Bobby Roode Working Without A Contract

<http://www.prowrestling.net/artman/publish/TNA/article10030226.shtml>

So let me get this straight.... Bobby Roode, one half of the reigning tag team champions and a guy whose run as the longest reigning world champion in company history ended less than a year and a a guy who had a world title shot on PPV THIS YEAR isn't worthy of remembering to re-sign??? This is the kind of mistake WCW made back in 1990 with the Iron freaking Sheik. Not only is his status for Lockdown up in the air, but it leaves an opening for WWE to sign him if they want to. The lawsuit is over, so why not? Maybe TNA can hire Bull Buchanan to replace him.

If nothing else, how could TNA let this happen when they stole another company's tag team champion LAST FREAKING YEAR with Kenny King?

The jokes about them being amateur hour write themselves.

On This Day: March 10, 2010 – Wrestlicious Takedown: Remember Shimmer? This Is Nothing Like It.

Wrestlicious Takedown

Date: March 10, 2010

Location: Wrestlicious Studios, St. Petersburg, Florida

Commentator: Johnny C.

Oh sweet goodness what am I doing to myself? For those of you

unfamiliar, go watch the trailer on Youtube right now. It's basically the spiritual successor to G.L.O.W., which is known for good looking women and completely campy comedy and women that are "wrestlers". In this case, it was started by a guy that won a Powerball lottery and used his money on this. Jimmy Hart played a big part in this and I think it's out of business now. This is the second episode. Let's get to it.

Oh and the girls are mostly all wrestlers, some of which you'll know. They're ALL in very stereotypical and overdone gimmicks which I'm sure you'll catch on to. There are also comedy skits to go along with the wrestling. The word "studios" means warehouse too.

Jimmy Hart pops up and is worried about being the host and stuck with a bimbo or stick in the mud. Leyla Milani, the runner up in one of the Diva Searches, appears and is the co-host. Oh geez there's a laugh track.

We do the opening video which is most of the girls in character in front of a personalized screen.

Boot Camp Bailey, the trainer, wants to talk about something. She's a military themed girl with a VERY short skirt. She says attention a lot and says she's looking for a few good women. Bailey asks who wants to be a trainee and calls a few "fans" into the ring. One of the girls is the floor manager who has to take her headset off before she gets in. Bailey apparently is a model with no wrestling experience. This is getting LOUDLY booed by the way.

We get a clip from last week of a six girl tag with the Country Cousins vs. the Mexican team/Felony, a prison character. I have no idea what the announcer's name is. Felony tries to escape during the match. Apparently the commentator's name is Johnny C. and he has no idea what he's calling. The Mexican team and Felony won with what looked like a Snow Plow.

There's going to be a battle royal with the final two facing

each other for the Wrestlicious Title.

We go to "the farm" (green screen) with Cousin Cassie and Tyler Texas who do a comedy bit called "You Just Might Be A Down Home Wrestler." I'm sure you get the idea here.

And now, a game show: Are You Smarter Than A Male Wrestler, hosted by Jimmy Hart. Our contestants are Glory (female wrestler Christie Ricci playing a patriot) and Brian Knobbs. The category is American History and the question is what happened in 1776. Knobbs thinks it's the first beer drinking contest. Glory gets it right (I guess the signing of the Declaration of Independence was all that happened in America that year)....and that's it.

We recap the Bailey segment from like 5 minutes ago.

Now three girls are in a bedroom on a bed. Now they go to make drinks but Bailey stops them. Oh ok they're the trainees. To be continued. Did I mention we're almost halfway through the show?

Package on Lacey Von Erich which is her on the beach in swimsuits.

Tony the Top (mob character) says that Autumn Frost (an Ice Princess, whatever that is. You may know her as Jennifer Blake who does indy wrestling and is a somewhat big female star in AAA) should be on JV Rich's (the owner of the company and owner of a big mansion where comedy bits like this one are shot at) arm. He says she should be on a leash, which gets a HUGE reaction from the laugh track.

Paige Webb (Serena from the Straight Edge Society with hair) answers an e-mail from a male admirer. Included in the e-mail is a picture of his pierced genitals I think.

Three girls are arguing over what to call the aforementioned battle royal. Go vote on their website for the NAME OF THE

MATCH. This show is cut into three parts on Youtube and we're about to start part 3 with no matches.

HOKEY SMOKE A WRESTLING MATCH!

Autumn Frost vs. Paige Webb

Frost is from Alaska so we get a snow effect. Webb is a computer geek. Get it? Johnny C. makes a bunch of bad sex jokes and we're ready to go. Frost jumps her but gets caught in a full nelson. The commentary is nothing but puns. Literally, it's all puns and the occasional name of a move. Frost hooks a full nelson of her own but Webb arm drags out of it. Webb hooks the armbar as the announcer talks about how Webb's box is filled every night. With e-mails of course.

A monkey flip puts Frost down and "the ice girl goeth". Back in and Frost takes over. I can't handle or give you an accurate description of the amount of the puns being used here. Apparently Webb needs to reboot from a snow boot. Frost beats her down "like a computer virus." I'm dying listening to how bad this is.

They do a pinfall reversal sequence and Webb gets caught in a chinlock. Webb comes back with some armdrags and sends Frost to the floor for a beating. Back in a top rope cross body gets two for Webb. After a quick run on the floor, Webb tries a monkey flip but Frost falls on her and puts her feet on the ropes for the pin.

Rating: D+. Both girls are pro wrestlers already so the match wasn't that bad, but the commentary here is going to make or break the match for you. I kid you not, you won't go ten seconds without a terrible pun, but if you just give up on the show being serious and enjoy it for how HORRIBLE it is, the commentary will grow on you quickly. The wrestling wasn't half bad.

We get a preview for next week which is a voodoo chick vs.

Madison Rayne as a cheerleader.

Overall Rating: B. Now let me explain. This show is TERRIBLE. There's about four minutes of wrestling (the show is only half an hour including commercials so it's not a huge stretch), a TON of bad comedy bits that don't go anywhere and the commentary is nothing but puns.

HOWEVER, this is the kind of show where if you saw more than four seconds of the previews, you knew exactly what you were getting into. This show knows it's horrible and it doesn't try to take itself seriously in the slightest. I found it hilarious with how bad it was and if you go into it with that kind of mindset, you'll have fun with it. Plus the girls look good so that helps.

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Five By Five: KB's Favorite Matches

We close out the series with this. Click on the link for the review of the show the match is on if applicable. Also remember: favorite **does NOT** equal best.

Honorable Mention: Undertaker vs. Shawn Michaels (Wrestlemania 25). Any match that had me on the edge of my seat like this one did has to be on this list.

Honorable Mention: Doomsday Cage ([Uncensored 1996](#)). This is the kind of match that is so bad it's hilarious. It looks cool, but if you think about it for more than 8 seconds, the match goes out the window into the land of WOW THIS IS

STUPID. That can be endlessly entertaining and this one is. Check it out, and read my review at the same time to see how many head scratchers you can find in it.

Honorable Mention: TLC II ([Wrestlemania X7](#)). Take six guys, have them beat the tar out of each other for fifteen minutes, throw in Lita taking her top off. What more do you need to know here?

Honorable Mention: Cactus Jack vs. HHH ([Royal Rumble 2000](#)). This is one of those matches where you didn't know who was going to win until the very end because HHH was in so far over his head. Everything was on Cactus' side and the match is one of the bloodiest affairs you'll ever see in wrestling. This is the match that made HHH into a killer and he stayed there for years.

5. AJ Styles vs. Abyss ([Lockdown 2005](#)). I love the David vs. Goliath story and this is a great example of that idea. The opening segment of this match with the two of them outside of the cage is as entertaining a two or three minute stretch as TNA has ever produced, bar none. AJ is all over the place, sliding and diving and jumping to try to slow the monster down but Abyss stops him every time. AJ finally goes straight up Superman and dives over about four rows to take Abyss down. I get into this every time and it's a brawl all the way through.

4. Hart Foundation vs. Demolition ([Summerslam 1990](#)). A friend of mine from WrestleZone has called this the best tag team match ever and I'm not sure he's that far off. This is insanely entertaining as Demolition has held the belts for months now and the Harts have about as much of a chance as I do at winning Miss Nevada 1982. The champions cheat like there's no tomorrow with switches and beating up the referee and whatever else they can pull off. LOD comes out to even things up and stop the cheating and the Harts use the one opening they have to steal the titles. It's great and if you watch it you'll get into it too.

3. Sting vs. Cactus Jack ([Beach Blast 1992](#)). Two of my three favorite wrestlers in a match that Foley said was his best ever for a long time. I think you can figure this one out.

2. Shawn Michaels vs. Shelton Benjamin ([Monday Night Raw – 5/2/2005](#)). For years and years I had this as my favorite match and it's still very hard to top. The idea of Shawn fighting himself from ten years ago is brilliant and the match is so incredibly crisp. On top of that the ending is one of the best looking knockouts you'll ever see anywhere. From a personal standpoint, this was a turning point for me as a fan as for the first time ever I could see a story being told in a match and got way into that aspect of it instead of cheering for my favorites.

1. Sting vs. Vader (Starrcade 1992). This was always one of my favorites but the more I thought about it the more I realized how much I love it. If I'm ever in the mood to watch something fun, this is what I throw on. It's the David vs. Goliath formula again...if David was 6'3 and 240lbs. The idea here is simple: Vader DESTROYED Sting to win the world title in July but this is about revenge and some stupid tournament. Sting had always been able to charge head first into whomever he was facing before this and beat them through pure talent, but when he tried to charge at Vader he got his block knocked off. Instead he needs to use his brain, but since Sting is kind of stupid he tries rope a dope instead. Sting lets Vader pound him down until Vader has nothing left and then Sting goes in for the kill. The visuals of Sting getting beaten down more and more before FINALLY making his superhuman comeback are awesome if you can get behind an underdog, which is what Sting was coming into this. Check this one out for sure.

Lockdown 2013 Preview

It's arguably the second biggest show of the year and I can't say I'm thrilled for it. The show is at the Alamodome which had over 60,000 people in it for the 1997 Royal Rumble, but I don't think they're going to get that many this time. Let's get to it. To begin with, we'll look at the world title match, which has one major problem:

Why are they fighting? It's been made clear that the only reason Ray has gotten this shot is because he's Hulk's son in law. Ray didn't win a big match, he hasn't beaten anyone in a singles match lately (his last televised one on one win was against Jesse Godderz. Before then, his last singles win on TV was in SEPTEMBER when he beat Aries, as in the guy he lost to on PPV in December), he and Hardy have no personal issue, and Ray has barely been around him due to feuding with Aces and 8's. Hardy was gone for a month and is just now back in action but he hasn't had much interaction with Ray either.

At the end of the day, Ray hasn't earned this shot and hasn't won anything of note lately, Hardy hasn't done anything to Ray, and they don't hate each other. What is the interest in seeing them fight?

For a prediction I'll take Hardy to retain, as all signs point to Bully winning and turning heel. Since that would make sense, we'll say it won't happen. Also it would make Hogan look stupid and we can't have that.

Next up is Lethal Lockdown which brings us to Aces and 8's. Let me try to get through this as fast as I can so I don't

have to think about them. Aces and 8's is probably the worst major stable in company history. From taking FOREVER to reveal a member to having D-Von and Anderson as their top names to having D'Lo Freaking Brown revealed as their second in command, they have nothing going for them and they haven't in the NINE MONTHS they've been around. At the end of the day, we have no idea why they're doing what they're doing and there's no sign that such information is coming anytime soon. The whole story is a disaster.

The ONLY chance they have at salvaging it is to win Lethal Lockdown while revealing a big name as their boss. The problem with that is all signs point to either Jeff Jarrett or Eric Bischoff being the boss, which doesn't do much good. The problem is we've seen them both lead massive stables before so it would be the same warmed over stuff we've seen before with lower level names and far more damage coming in.

As for the match, I'll take the bikers but given how things have been going, I'll expect them to lose.

Kurt Angle beats Wes Brisco despite a ton of help from Aces and 8's. If that happens, the bikers win Lethal Lockdown.

I'll take Roode and Aries to keep the belts. It's way too early for them to lose. Either way, for the love of all things good and holy, PLEASE don't put them back on Chavo and Hernandez. I can't take that again.

Velvet keeps her title. I can't take more Gail Kim on top either.

Robbie T destroys Robbie E of course.

I'll take Kenny King to retain and Joseph Park to beat Joey Ryan. You haven't heard of these matches? Most people haven't either, but that's because TNA is awful at setting up a PPV card and they added these matches in at the last second to fill in some time.

Overall Lockdown is a very uninspiring show. Between the lackluster world title match and Aces and 8's dragging things down, This isn't a show that I'm thrilled with watching but TNA has surprised me before. Granted they've also had some of the worst shows I've ever seen but hopefully that won't be the case here.

Thoughts/Predictions?

On This Day: March 9, 1991 – USWA Championship Wrestling: Terry Funk Comes Back To Memphis

USWA Championship Wrestling

Date: March 9, 1991

Location: USWA Television Studios, Memphis, Tennessee

Commentators: Dave Brown, Michael St. John

We had to skip ahead about a month here but it shouldn't be a big problem. As far as I know there haven't been any major changes, although at some point before the 15th, Jarrett's Southern Title was held up after a match with Steve Austin so there's no champion. Other than that everything seems to be the same. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Night Train Jackson vs. Sgt. O'Reilly

The show is starting a little early so some fans aren't there yet. Jackson throws him around and dances a bit. He hits something like Old School and no sells a headbutt. See Jackson is black and in wrestling that means he has a hard head. Dropkick and a fisherman's suplex get the pin. Squash.

The announcers talk about the Open Door Policy, which means if you want a match, talk to the promoter and they'll try to get you one. That leads us to a video on the Texas Hangmen who are apparently violent. They shout a lot and no one, including the announcers, can understand it.

We talk about last week where Jeff Gaylord surprisingly joined up with JC Ice and we get a clip of Gaylord jumping Superstar Bill Dundee. Gaylord bailed on Downtown Bruno in the process.

Ronnie Leach vs. Jeff Gaylord

Gaylord is a power guy so he picks Leach up in a bearhug position and rams him into two corners. Backbreaker hits and he throws Ronnie to the floor. Apparently Ice has stolen all of Bruno's talent, which means Bruno is heading to the WWF I believe. A modified powerbomb, the Dehumanizer, kills Leach and eventually a pumphandle slam gets the pin. Squash #2.

Dundee jumps Gaylord before Gaylord can go for an interview. Dundee rams him into the post to get rid of him. He talks about how he's fighting to get his son Jamie (JC Ice) back. I forgot about that. Dundee says he'll do whatever it takes to get him back and that includes beating up everyone that Jamie brings in.

Jerry Lawler will be at some hardware stores next week.

House show ads.

We hear about how Terry Funk won't show up and defend the world title. We get a clip of him winning the title off Lawler

in November. Eddie Gilbert tried to interfere and wound up costing Lawler the title. We also hear about the bounties that Funk put out over the last few months.

We finally hear from Funk for the first time in the nearly three months I've been watching this show. He's being forced to come back to face Lawler in a rematch which will be two days after this show. Thinking of Memphis makes him spit and the people are even worse. Lawler is the worst of all of them but isn't man enough to take the title from Funk. Apparently Jackie Fargo is going to be the referee again and Funk thinks he's an old pervert. The match should be in Amarillo, Texas where men are men. Funk is only 46 here and he's as evil as ever. Maybe he'll stomp Fargo so Fargo's heart will stop. That could be awesome.

Video on the career of Jerry Lawler. We get clips of him fighting probably 25 legends in a very impressive package. Pretty much every big name from the era (other than Flair, who I've seen Lawler face in Memphis when Flair was NWA Champion) is shown with Lawler beating them up, including both Funks, Hogan, Race, Savage, Rude, Hennig, and about twenty others. It's really cool stuff. We also get a look at his work outside of the ring with kids. We also see clips from the Jerry Lawler Show, which is exactly what it sounds like and was a real talk/variety show that aired in Memphis. The whole thing runs almost nine minutes.

Mid-South show ad, including the Lawler vs. Funk match.

Lawler comes out and talks about the match coming up. It's taken forever to get here but he's ready. He's not really fired up for it but is more calm and cautious. Win, lose or draw it'll be his last match for awhile to heal from some injuries.

We get highlights from El Gran Pistolero vs. Danny Davis for the Light Heavyweight Title. Are there any matches on this

show? The match is thrown out.

Davis says he was expecting a match and got a fight, and that's not cool. He'll fight Pistolero anytime.

Curtis Thompson/Brad Collins vs. Eric Embry/Tom Pritchard

Pritchard and Collins get things going. Tom and Eric are Texas guys so they keep explaining how awesome their home state is. It's off to Embry who gets in some shots and then back to Pritchard. Both heels keep jumping between the apron and commentary. Pritchard tries a slingshot suplex that goes so badly it would make Tully Blanchard shoot himself so he could roll over in his grave. Embry hits a top rope headbutt for the pin. Thompson was never in the match.

The Texans make fun of Lawler and Tennessee.

Southern Heavyweight Title: Jeff Jarrett vs. Steve Austin

The title is vacant coming in. Austin takes over quickly and stomps him down into the corner. JC Ice has the referee and Jeff's small package is missed. Austin hooks a chinlock which only lasts a few seconds. Jeff tries to speed things up but walks into a knee to the stomach. Austin rolls him up in the corner and puts his feet on the ropes for two. A foreign object shot gets the same. Jeff hooks a quick sunset flip and gets the title back.

Rating: D+. Not the worst match ever but it was only a few minutes long and neither guy was all that great yet. This was more about pushing the Monday matches forward because of the post match stuff. Not much to see here and Jeff has the title back that he never really lost in the first place.

Jarrett gets beaten down by Austin and the other Texas guys but Eddie Gilbert makes the save. Jarrett says it ends Monday. Gilbert says bring on the blood.

Overall Rating: C+. This was much more like a go home show

rather than a regular show which is an interesting change. The Lawler video is awesome and could easily be a HOF/retirement video all on its own. The matches were short here but it set up Funk vs. Lawler on Monday which is the whole point here. Good stuff but it could have been great with some better wrestling.

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Smackdown – March 8, 2013: I Believe In The Shield

Smackdown

Date: March 8, 2013

Location: Times Union Center, Albany, New York

Commentators: Michael Cole, Josh Matthews

We continue to move closer to Wrestlemania with this stop in Albany. The main event tonight is the match that the fans picked last week with Alberto Del Rio facing Dolph Ziggler although not for the title. Other than that we're likely to see some more development in Sheamus/Orton/Big Show vs. Shield in a story that started last week. Also I'm sure Swagger and Colter will be here. Let's get to it.

We open with an In Memory graphic to Paul Bearer. Very nice.

The opening video shows the end of last week's show with Orton and Sheamus being ready to fight Shield before Big Show gave them a surprise hand. Tonight it's Sheamus vs. Big Show.

Here are Swagger and Colter to start things off. Swagger introduces Colter, who wants the crowd to admit that they all think like him. Everyone should be able to see what's wrong with America, but everyone

else is too afraid to do something about it. Colter asks how many people know someone who has lost a job to someone who has snuck across the border and will work for a lower wage. He talks about writing a new bill of rights for the citizens because they've had enough of this and if you don't like it that's too bad.

This brings out Alberto and Ricardo with the champion saying that he's got proof of what Colter and Swagger really think America is about. We get a video of Ricardo dressed as Colter and Alberto portraying Swagger. Ricardolter says the real threat to America is Mexican food, because real American bellies can't take those kinds of beans and spices. Real Americans love pizza and French fries you see. Swaggerto wants to go get a pizza but he isn't allowed to because he has to say his catchphrase first. Not bad.

3MB vs. HELL NO

Before the match we see 3MB getting beaten up by Tensai/Brodus Clay/Honky Tonk Man. This is non-title and it's Slater and McIntyre for 3MB. Kane and McIntyre start things off with both guys getting in a shot to the face before it's off to Slater. Kane elbows him down and Bryan gets a tag in. Bryan sends Heath to the floor with a hurricanrana but misses the knee off the apron. McIntyre gets in a shot to the head of Bryan and the band takes over.

Drew pounds away in the corner as 3MB makes some quick tags in and out. McIntyre stays in for a bit and is caught in a belly to back suplex from Daniel, allowing for the hot tag to Kane. Slater comes in as well and is immediately run over by the monster. A low dropkick keeps Slater down as does an uppercut which gets two. There's the side slam for good measure but a Jinder Mahal distraction lets Slater stay out of the chokeslam. Bryan tags himself in and counters a rollup attempt into the NO Lock on Slater for the submission at 3:52.

Rating: D+. This was a glorified squash as HELL NO continues to roll along while having no challengers in sight. There's no one for them to fight at the moment and they aren't having as many problems as they had before, so what is there to be interested about with them right now? They

aren't really even funny together anymore.

We hear about Natalya and Alicia Fox going to Rwanda on a charity trip for malaria relief.

Ziggler talks about how the fans voted him in to face Del Rio because they want to see the most show stealing match in Smackdown history. It's also about the MITB case because history will be made tonight.

Ryback is on the way to the ring for a match when he sees Mark Henry. They stare each other down again but nothing happens.

Brad Maddox has joined the commentary booth.

We see HHH's challenge to Brock Lesnar from Raw.

Damien Sandow is in the ring saying that tonight he's facing the brute that Darwin's theory of evolution forgot. If he's hungry, he should feed himself with the arts.

Ryback vs. Damien Sandow

Ryback takes him into the corner to start before throwing Sandow across the ring. Sandow rolls to the floor for only a few seconds before Ryback throws him back in. Damien gets in one shot but sees Ryback glaring at him, sending him running away. Back in again and Sandow gets in a few shots to the back to take over.

Some knees to the ribs slow Ryback down as Maddox thinks Cole is his employee. Off to a chinlock by Damien but Ryback quickly breaks free and elbows him down. A backdrop puts Damien down again as Maddox thinks Ryback is cheating somehow. The Meat Hook sets up the Shell Shock for the pin on Sandow at 3:23.

Rating: D+. Another squash here as Sandow's offense seemed to annoy Ryback more than hurt him. That's a good sign though as Ryback is starting to string together some victories after the disastrous winter that he just got done with. The fans still seem to like him though and that's a good sign for the monster.

We get a clip from after Raw went off the air where the Shield attacked Big Show and actually managed to hit him with the TripleBomb.

Big Show says he'll fight anyone that gets in his way and knock them out.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Dolph Ziggler

Non-title here again. Brad applauds himself for signing off on this match despite having nothing to do with it. If he wasn't so worthless I might say I like him a bit. Ziggler shoves him into the corner to start and hits a Stinger Splash before choking away a bit. Langston adds in a shot of his own so Ricardo hits him with a towel. Langston goes after Rodriguez so Ricardo picks up the bucket and throws some water, which hits AJ by mistake. AJ chases Ricardo around but gets caught by Big E., earning the two of them an ejection. The match has basically stopped during this whole scene.

We take a break and come back with Dolph getting two off an elbow drop. Off to a chinlock by Ziggler for a bit but Del Rio comes back with a sunset flip for two. Swagger and Colter are watching in the back. Off to another chinlock with a body scissors by Ziggler which doesn't last long again. Del Rio launches Dolph into the air before putting him on the top rope for a reverse superplex. It stuns both guys though so they stand up for a slugout.

Alberto takes over again with some clotheslines and a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker followed by the low superkick for two. Ziggler is sent into the corner but he fights out of the Backstabber, only to be caught in the second attempt, getting two for Del Rio. Josh brings up a good point on commentary: where is Booker? He's barely been around in the last few weeks.

Alberto goes up but jumps into a dropkick which only gets two for Dolph. A German suplex gets a near fall on Ziggler but he comes back with a tornado DDT for the same. The cross armbreaker is countered into a rollup but the second attempt gets the submission from Dolph at 10:02 shown of 13:32.

Rating: B-. This started off stupid with all of the comedy antics but it

picked up by the end. The problem here though is the usual: Ziggler loses yet again, despite probably cashing in soon. I know I've been saying that for awhile now but he has until July, which is a lot closer than it sounds. I hope he loses at this point though, because it would make the title look weak otherwise.

In the back, Bryan makes fun of AJ for being soaked and looking like a Shetland pony. She doesn't care because soon enough she'll be with the World Heavyweight Champion. Bryan reminds her that when they were together, he was world champion. AJ says he lost it in 18 seconds, but Bryan says with Ziggler, AJ should be used to stuff lasting 18 seconds.

Mark Henry vs. Yoshi Tatsu

This is exactly what you would expect with Henry winning in 39 seconds via the World's Strongest Slam.

We get Donald Trump's Hall of Fame video.

Sheamus says Big Show shouldn't blame him for what Shield did to him on Raw. It doesn't surprise him though because nothing Big Show does is his fault. It's not his fault that his gear smells because he never washes it or that people think he's Shrek when he goes to Universal Studios. It won't be his fault either when Sheamus kicks his head off later tonight.

We go back to Raw to see Rock and Cena's confrontation.

Kaitlyn vs. Tamina Snuka

Layla is at ringside. Non-title again here and Kaitlyn starts fast with a backdrop. Cole gets sent face first into the ropes which sends her out to the floor. Layla gets knocked down on the floor so she tries to get in, allowing Tamina to hit a Samoan Drop on Kaitlyn for the pin at 1:24.

Sandow and Rhodes are watching in the back. Damien wants to talk strategy for their match on Monday but Rhodes wants to talk about Kaitlyn. Sandow thinks she's a good wrestler but Rhodes means as a woman. Damien thinks she's a success given how bad her genetic makeup is. These two still have decent chemistry together.

Fandango debuts tonight....allegedly.

Justin Gabriel vs. Fandango

No match again as Fandango doesn't like how Lillian pronounces his name. Fandango calls her Jillian.

Booker and Teddy are in the back and don't know what to think of what they just saw. Booker sends Teddy to tell Fandango that he has to perform the next time he's told to.

We get a video from Raw, summarizing that Undertaker faces Punk at Wrestlemania.

Colter and Swagger video on speaking English.

Sheamus vs. Big Show

Show tries his chop in the corner but Sheamus avoids it and pounds away at the giant. A headbutt puts Sheamus down though and Show pounds away in the corner. Show spears him down to the floor where Sheamus is chopped in the chest. As they come back in, Sheamus gets in some shots to the chest, only to be launched into the timekeeper's area as we take a break.

Back with Big Show holding a nerve hold followed by a side slam for two. Big Show goes up for his Vader Bomb but Sheamus pulls him down. Show escapes again and hits the falling backwards powerbomb for two. We head to the corner for a long series of chops by Big Show before he grabs Sheamus by the beard. Sheamus fights back with shoulders blocks in the middle of the ring as well as in the corner before clotheslining Big Show down.

Sheamus goes up, only to jump into a chokeslam. He counters with a DDT for two though and both guys are down. Big Show blocks White Noise but can't block it twice in a row, allowing Sheamus to plant him with it. Sheamus loads up the Brogue Kick but Big Show rolls to the floor. The Irishman hits a clothesline off the apron to put Show down again and we head back inside. As Show is on the apron though it's a Brogue Kick to put him down again. Here's Shield though and we'll say the match is thrown out at 7:00 shown of 10:30.

Rating: C. This was their usual hard hitting brawl but the match wasn't flowing as well as it usually does. It was more like a collection of moves instead a well built match like they had at Hell in a Cell or one of their later fights. To be fair though this is just a Smackdown match with a run-in finish so it's not like they needed to make it as good as they had before.

With Sheamus surrounded, here's Orton to even the odds a little bit. The numbers catch up with them though until Big Show gets up and cleans house almost on his own. The Shield runs away and Big Show knocks out Sheamus, only to walk into an RKO to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This wasn't a great episode. They're definitely in build mode for Wrestlemania, but there are still some holes with no matches. It's clear that Ryback is fighting Henry and the six man is going to happen as well as the world title, but stuff like Ziggler and the tag champions aren't clear yet. With nothing coming up for them yet, it's kind of dull watching them have the same seemingly meaningless matches that we've watched them have for months.

Results

HELL NO b. 3MB – NO Lock to Slater

Ryback b. Damien Sandow – Shell Shock

Alberto Del Rio b. Dolph Ziggler – Cross Armbreaker

Mark Henry b. Yoshi Tatsu – World's Strongest Slam

Tamina Snuka b. Kaitlyn – Samoan Drop

Big Show vs. Sheamus went to a no contest when Shield interfered

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