

# ECW on Sci-Fi – August 29, 2006: Heyman's ECW Debut

## ECW on Sci-Fi

Date: August 29, 2006

Location: Sovereign Center, Reading, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Joey Styles, Taz

It's another week in and the show continues to be decent, at least in theory. Tonight is all about furthering Heyman vs. Sabu in the battle of ECW past, which is probably the best feud this show has going. Also tonight we have RVD vs. Hardcore Holly, which if I remember right has a scary bump in it, but that might be a rematch later on. Let's get to it.

We open with Heyman of course. He talks about how this is his creation and how he's our messiah as usual. Heyman has never wrestled in ECW, although I'd assume that's probably a good thing. Tonight he's getting into the ring against....Sabu. I don't see this going well. He says that Dr. Frankenstein must destroy his own creation and beat his own child tonight in the ring.

## Rob Van Dam vs. Hardcore Holly

This is a followup to last week where Holly jumped Van Dam with a chair. Holly goes right for him but gets kicked down and clotheslined to the floor very quickly. Van Dam puts him on the barricade and this his spin kick to the back. Back in the Alabama Slam is countered but Holly throws Rob to the floor to take over. Off to a HARDCORE chinlock before the dropkick gets two. Van Dam kicks his head off to put both guys down but manages to get up first. A superkick and standing moonsault get two. Windmill kick sets up Rolling Thunder but the Five Star misses. Holly brings in a chair but Rob hits him with it for the DQ.

**Rating:** D+. That was a pretty lame ending to a pretty weak match. This was only about five minutes long and while they would feud for a few weeks before Van Dam beat him in an Extreme Rules match (meaning this wasn't the match I was talking about in the intro), this was a bad opener

to the feud. Not much to see here.

Rene Dupree rides an exercise bike and says he's the most extreme wrestler.

Here's Big Show for a chat. He talks about how dominant he is and how the McMahons saw that. That's why they enlisted him to help in their battles with DX. You mean it's not because there's no way to believe that Vince and Shane can fight Shawn and HHH so they needed to bring in some heavies to do the work for them? DX's fate will be sealed at Unforgiven in the Cell but if they want, they can come face him here next week.

Shannon Moore says fight the power.

#### CM Punk vs. Stevie Richards

Richards actually gets an intro. They go to the mat to start and Richards fires away with some chops. Punk knocks him to the floor and hits a suicide dive to take over, but back inside Richards crotches him on the top to slow Punk down again. Off to a bearhug from Stevie but Punk breaks out of it very quickly. Punk hammers away with his strikes and hits a butterfly backbreaker for two. Richards ducks the backfist but walks into the Rock Bottom and Anaconda Vice for the tap.

**Rating:** C+. This was a nice surprise as Punk got tested instead of rolling over the latest ECW jobber that he was facing. Richards is a guy that never quite gets the appreciation that he deserves, because he's most remembered as a comedy guy. He could have some entertaining matches though when he was just being himself, which is what you got here. This was a surprisingly entertaining match.

Video on Sabu.

It's Matt Striker's Classroom. He says he's a teacher and he's here to help. For some reason people don't cheer for him though, because they'd rather cheer for the Sandman. You know, the guy who drinks "giggle water." Sandman is constantly drunk and has a Singapore Cane, but Striker's weapon is his mind. Cue Sandman, but Striker actually beats him down, breaking the chalkboard over his head and hitting him with a

stapler before leaving.

Balls Mahoney is in the back and has something to say when Kelly comes up and flashes him. Ok then.

Taz and Joey explain that Angle is gone and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

### Paul Heyman vs. Sabu

It's Extreme Rules. The security guards (the Bashams but I don't think that was ever revealed on TV) jump Sabu on the way to the ring of course. Since this is ECW though Sabu beats up both guards who are in riot gear, but Big Show makes save #2 for Heyman before Sabu can, you know, kill him. Show CRACKS Sabu's head with a chair as I'm sure you can get where this is going already. Sabu is busted already and the three guys not named Heyman beat him down with Big Show holding him so Paul can get in a shot.

We get out first table of the night (that has to be a record for ECW as the show is almost over) as Heyman dances around the ring and calls himself the Messiah. Show lifts Sabu up into a gorilla press position to put him through the table on the floor, but of course he holds him just long enough for RVD to come out for the save. Van Daminator takes down Big Show and it's kicks for the Bashams.

Sabu finally gets his hands on Heyman and destroys him for a bit, even hitting the Arabian Facebuster. Sabu and Van Dam put Heyman on the table but Big Show pulls Sabu out of the air on the dive attempt. That's always cool to see. Cue run-in #5 (I've lost count) in the form of Hardcore Holly. He hits the Alabama Slam to Van Dam through the table as Show hits that walking legdrop thing, giving Heyman the pin.

**Rating:** C-. This is more ECW's style: a totally mindless and insane brawl with massive carnage. It was clear what they were going for as soon as they said Extreme Rules, but that's ok here. They had to do something to keep this from being Heyman getting killed for eight minutes, and having all these people come out allows for more stories to be advanced. Not a good match or anything but it was fun in an insane sort of way.

Sabu gets put through a table to end the show. Heyman makes the sign of the cross over Sabu's body.

**Overall Rating:** C-. This wasn't their best show. The main feud is starting to get some traction but it's not exactly the most interesting story in the world. Big Show would hold the title for the next three months or so which didn't really do much for the level of interest in the title. The show here was getting more coherent but it wasn't exactly interesting.

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# ECW on Sci-Fi – September 5, 2006: A Big Show Commercial For Raw

## ECW on Sci-Fi

Date: September 5, 2006

Location: Columbus Civic Center, Columbus, Georgia

Commentators: Joey Styles, Tazz

Tonight we get really EXTREME as DX is here to face Big Show, which is basically a preview for Unforgiven and their Cell match which will also involve the McMahons. Other than that we have Heyman punishing RVD and Sabu for existing by putting them in a tag match against Knox and Test. Then again that might be punishment for all of us in general. Let's get to it.

DX arrives to open the show. Shawn: "You think this is the place?" HHH: "Bingo."

Sabu/Rob Van Dam vs. Mike Knox/Test

Extreme Rules. Sabu and Knox start because you have to tag in an EXTREME rules match. They have about as technical of a match as Sabu has ever had before it's off to Van Dam. Knox comes in as well and pounds away as Sabu loads up a table. He gets a chair as well as Knox drops a freaking elbow for two. This match is already boring me to death and we're only two minutes into it.

Test comes in with a clothesline and sends Van Dam to the floor. The Originals hit a nice slingshot legdrop and Rolling Thunder combo as things breaks down. Van Dam hits a top rope kick to break up Sabu being thrown through the table. Through a series of counters everyone but Sabu winds up on the apron. He springboards off the chair to take all three of them down and through said table in the first good spot of the match.

Back from a break with Test hitting Sabu with a chair for no cover. Van Dam blasts Test with the same chair and Surfs it into the corner. Knox breaks up the Five Star with a chair shot and hits a superplex. Sabu breaks up the cover with an Arabian Facebuster and puts Knox in the camel clutch. Van Dam kicks the chair into Knox's face but Test saves the pin. Sabu hits Air Sabu in the corner and Test falls onto the chair. Triple Jump Moonsault gets two. Another table is brought in and the Originals mess up the legdrop/Five Star combo through the table so only the Splash hits and gets the pin on Knox.

**Rating:** D+. Those of you that have read my stuff over the years know that I am by no means an ECW fan. That being said, Van Dam and Sabu are at almost no fault here. Test and Knox sucked the ever loving life out of this match and brought it through the floor. They were the perfect idea for heels in ECW but that doesn't mean they were interesting in the slightest. I can't stand those two and I'm sure they'll be pushed even more in the future.

Kevin Thorn and Ariel pull a tarot card which reveals sexuality. Are they ever going to do anything with these two?

Here's Striker again to talk about Sandman. He says that last week brain prevailed over brawn and that he's smart enough to never go swimming with stingrays. This would be the day after Steve Irwin was killed by a

stingray so the fans give Striker more heat than ever. Here's Sandman so Striker runs away. Sandman writes SUX under Striker's name. What biting commentary.

### Balls Mahoney vs. Stevie Richards

Kevin Thorn comes to commentary for some reason and Ariel grinds on Joey a bit. Balls pounds him into the corner to start but Richards clotheslines him down for two. A neckbreaker gets the same and Richards takes over. A bad X-Factor gets two and it's off to a chinlock. Balls slaps the mat which doesn't count as a tap out for some reason and they're back to their feet. Mahoney makes his comeback but has to stop to hit Thorn for some reason. A cane shot to the head of Mahoney gets the pin. Too short to rate but it was more about angle advancement than anything else.

Punk slaps Moore and calls him a poser. Yeah this is who they gave Punk for his first feud.

### Big Show vs. D-Generation X

The world champion doesn't even get an intro. Extreme Rules here, at least until Heyman comes out and says it's a regular match. DX doesn't have to tag here so they try to double team Show as much as possible. They get him down with punches but a double suplex is just a bad idea. Show takes over with his usual power offense, chopping both guys in the chest HARD.

DX tries to speed things up but the security guards pull the ropes down. HHH goes after them before they can beat up Shawn but Show pulls Shawn back into the ring for the one on one beating. HHH is down in the aisle and Shawn gets put in the bearhug. Show loads up the chokeslam but HHH makes the save. The Game fights him down and manages a kind of spinebuster as Shawn is back up. He dives onto the security guards but Show blocks the Pedigree. Hardcore Holly of all people comes in, and that's a DQ.

**Rating:** D. This was like a preview of some sort but it was nothing interesting at all. For what was called the biggest match in ECW history,

I was expecting more than a five minute match with Hardcore Holly coming in for the save. Nothing to see here as the match sucked for the most part, followed by a bad ending.

Shawn gets beaten down until HHH gets his sledgehammer for the save. DX stands tall to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D-. This was probably the worst show they've had in the few months this has been on. The main event was basically a preview for a PPV match involving Raw guys and the other featured match was slow and boring because the new ECW guys absolutely suck. Punk was only here for about 20 seconds so there was almost nothing to care about here. Awful show.

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## NXT – July 18, 2012: Who Would Have Thought NXT Would Be The Best Show Ever Week?

### NXT

Date: July 18, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: William Regal, Byron Saxton

It's week four or five here and things are seeming to change on this show, which is fine but it also would have been fine if nothing had changed at all. I believe this is the beginning of the second set of tapings so things are likely going to change a bit more here. I don't remember any announced matches for this so it'll be a surprise. Let's get to it.

As I said I don't know any of the matches but WWE has promised me a great

main event tonight.

Welcome Home.

The main event is Slater vs. Gabriel. I forgot about that one.

#### Tamina Snuka vs. Kaitlyn

Kaitlyn is called the girl next door. I've never had a neighbor that looks like her. Tamina tries her power stuff but results in a chop to take Kaitlyn down instead. Kaitlyn leg whips her down and things slow down again. Tamina is screw this wrestling stuff and chops her right back down again. Now it's a flying chop to mix things up. Kaitlyn hooks a kind of abdominal stretch in the ropes to take over.

Bulldog gets two for Kaitlyn and she hooks a bodyscissors on the mat. Tamina gets up and hits a spinning hair grab to slam Kaitlyn into the mat. Wouldn't that hurt Tamina too? Tamina tries the splash but Kaitlyn grabs her leg. A Russian legsweep puts Tamina down and Kaitlyn hooks an arm hold while using her legs to hold down Tamina's head. Tamina is like SAMOA POWER and uses a Samoan Drop to escape. Superfly Splash gets the pin at 5:20.

**Rating:** D+. I know that the complaint about the Divas that I usually have is that the matches are too short, but then we have matches like these where I don't care at all no matter what they do. I have no idea who I was supposed to cheer for here or why I'm supposed to be interested in them. This was five minutes of moves with some flow to it but nothing of note. Also, that splash is on the verge of losing the name Superfly Splash because it's barely the same move.

Raw moment is Jericho debuting in 99.

Big E. Langston, a very muscular black guy is coming. He has more personality in his calf than Ezekiel Jackson has in his whole body from what I can tell.

#### Jinder Mahal vs. Percy Watson

Mahal grabs a headlock to start as Regal tells stories of facing Mahal's



uncles over 25 years ago. I'd love to just hear Regal tell old wrestling stories. Watson comes back with a suplex but Mahal fires in the knees out of the cravate to take over again. A knee drop gets two for Mahal. Apparently Watson and Cena are friends. Ok then.

Regal points out how the hand grips that Mahal has in this chinlock make the hold more painful. Now that's some good analysis. Watson comes back with his jumping attacks and the Heisman Splash for two. Percy takes too much time though and walks into a jumping knee and the camel clutch gets the tap at 4:22.

**Rating:** D+. They've wanted to push Mahal for awhile here so I guess this works as well as anything else. NXT is a good place for him but Mahal needs more promo time. We really don't know anything about Mahal though other than the Khali stuff from a few years ago. Still though, the idea of having a heel like that here is fine for a show like this. The match was dull though.

#### Richie Steamboat vs. Leo Kruger

Kruger takes him into the corner with chops to start but you can't chop a Steamboat and gets away with it. Richie rips some skin off Kruger's chest and a monkey flip sends Kruger flying. Steamboat chargers into the corner but Kruger uses a move I've never seen before. He grabs a rollup but uses it to ram Steamboat's head into the bottom buckle to take over.

Steamboat grabs a small package for two but Kruger puts him right back down with ease. Steamboat gets in a clothesline and some forearms to send Kruger to the floor. We get a chase but as they head back in, Steamboat hits a cross body but Kruger rolls through and puts his feet on the ropes for the pin at 4:30.

**Rating:** C+. This is what we've been building to on NXT for awhile. Not this match in particular, but putting these guys that we've built up together and seeing who comes out on top. That's how you start a new promotion or a brand in this case, and it works very well when it's done right. They're doing that here on NXT and it's working well.

Raquel Diaz promo, I believe the same from last week.

### Raquel Diaz vs. Paige

Diaz comes off like something resembling Lady Gaga. She's on a wireless mic and says she wants to give this show a makeover and sounds like a chick imitating Cher from Clueless. Her parents are Eddie and Vickie Guerrero so the genes are there. Diaz takes her to the mat and rams Paige's face into the mat. Paige comes back with a kind of superkick but Diaz will have none of that, and hits the Gory Bomb for the pin at 1:49. That's the kind of debuting squash you need.

Alex Riley is looking for catering and runs into Aksana. Nothing of note happens here but Antonio Cesaro pops up. Aksana says Riley was hitting on her, which Cesaro says is so American. Cesaro wants a match next week, which Riley says is very European of him.

### Heath Slater vs. Justin Gabriel

JR is on commentary here as usual for the main event. Gabriel armdrags him down and hooks an armbar for early control. Slater fights up and gets taken down by the exact same sequence again. Gabriel tries to go up but Slater shoves him to the floor as we take a break. Back with Slater holding a chinlock for a few moments followed by a neckbreaker for two. A hard Irish whip into the corner gets two. Back to the chinlock as the fans chant that they want Frostees.

Slater sends him to the apron and catches Gabriel with a knee coming back in. A middle rope neckbreaker gets two as Slater is staying on the neck which was hurt when Gabriel fell to the floor earlier. Gabriel fires off some kicks and a sitout powerbomb gets two. Slater comes back with a good looking spinebuster for two. They trade some counters resulting in Slater hitting a reverse suplex for two.

A neckbreaker out of the corner gets two for Slater and he loads up a belly to back superplex. Gabriel knocks him off and tries AJ Styles' backflip into a reverse DDT, but he doesn't hit it quite right as it looks like he lands in an over the shoulder gutbuster. Not that it matters though as Gabriel hits the reverse DDT for the pin at 8:50 shown of 12:20.

**Rating:** B-. This is exactly what people like Gabriel and Slater need. They're not going to get this kind of TV time on Raw or Smackdown anytime soon, but here on NXT they can go and have a 10-12 minute match and get the experience that they need. This was an entertaining match and for a TV main event on the lowest level show, that's all you can ask for.

**Overall Rating:** B. NXT continues to be awesome with only the Divas being weak, but that almost goes without saying. There's one thing here that I'd like to point out that I really like about NXT: Dusty Rhodes is the GM and has appeared I think twice in 5 weeks. What is cool about NXT is that we know who is in charge and who is making these matches, but we don't have to see Dusty making these matches. Think about how much time is spent on Raw and Smackdown just seeing people say hey, you two are in a match. NXT is as fast paced as you could ask for and man is it refreshing. Another good show here.

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## NXT – July 11, 2012: A Totally Different Kind of Show But Still Great

### NXT

Date: July 11, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, William Regal

We're back with the fourth week of the show which I believe is the final show from the first batch of tapings. After the six man that ended the last episode, there really isn't anything set for tonight. I've heard talk of creating an NXT Title but that wouldn't be for at least four more weeks because the next set of tapings is already done. Let's get to it.

Welcome Home everyone.

### Tyson Kidd vs. Camacho

See, this is what NXT is good for: you can get a guy like Camacho some ring time. He hasn't had much but he can get some here and it's fine for him to get it at this level. Kidd avoids a kick to the ribs and nips up into a dropkick. Camacho takes over with a fist to the head but Kidd flips through a backdrop and grabs a quickly broken leg hold. Backslide gets two on Camacho and it's off to an armbar.

Camacho sends him to the apron but Kidd skins the cat and sends Camacho to the floor. Hunico tries to interfere and gets ejected for his efforts. Kidd dives on both guys and we take a break. Back with Kidd kicking Camacho in the face and trying the Sharpshooter but a rope is grabbed. Camacho goes to the floor but grabs a running boot, sending Kidd face first into the apron.

Back inside and Camacho is in control and working on the back of Kidd. A backbreaker gets two and he stomps on the chest of Kidd a bit. Another backbreaker gets another two and Kidd gets draped over the top rope. Camacho hooks a seated third cousin twice removed of an abdominal stretch which Kidd breaks, only to be headbutted right back down. A belly to back suplex puts Kidd down and a legdrop gets two.

Kidd tries to speed things up but gets caught in a wheelbarrow slam for two. A middle rope legdrop misses for Camacho and Kidd fires off his kicks. Camacho is draped over the bottom rope and Kidd hits a slingshot legdrop to the head to keep Camacho down. Back in and Camacho hits a butterfly suplex off the top for two. Camacho sends him to the apron but charges into a kick to the head. A Blockbuster gets two on Camacho as he gets his foot on the rope. Dang I thought that would have been it. Kidd loads up the Sharpshooter but here's McGillicutty for a distraction. Kidd knocks him to the floor but walks into a DDT from Camacho for the pin at 12:15 shown of 15:45.

**Rating:** B-. I was really getting into this by the end of it. It's amazing what guys like Camacho are capable of when they have time and a guy like Kidd to work off of. I'm so glad that Tyson is getting a main show push

as it's long overdue for someone as steady in the ring as he is. This McGillicutty feud has gone on for awhile though and it's hard to see why it needs to continue.

Bray Wyatt video, this time about faith. It's a shame that he's out for so many months.

Hugh Jackman was on Raw once.

Justin Gabriel says he's back to make a statement. Heath Slater comes up and says that Gabriel will make a statement of failure. Slater talks about taking out legends and Gabriel says it'll be a young guy beating up Slater tonight.

### Aiden English vs. Bray Wyatt

Wyatt talks on the way to the ring, calling himself the angel in the dirt and singing Time is on My Side by the Rolling Stones. Wyatt pounds him down and sends English to the floor and into the barricade. Back in and Wyatt rolls around on the apron before splashing English in the corner. Wyatt dances with English a bit (literally) before hitting a rolling Downward Spiral for the pin at 1:48. Awesome debut here and a good transition from promos to in ring work which was what I was worried about from Wyatt.

Video on Seth Rollins, who will knock you out.

We run down the MITB card.

Richie Steamboat says he's got a great opportunity here. Leo Kruger comes up and they get in a brawl.

Video on Raquel Diaz, featuring Tweets from her.

### Usos vs. Prime Time Players

Apparently Slater vs. Gabriel is next week. JR sits in on commentary for this one and there's no AW for the Players. Jimmy and Darren get us going and Jimmy goes nuclear by going for the hair. Young gets takes into the Uso corner for a continued beating before it's off to Titus for more of

the same. Back to Young who charges into a powerslam from Jey for no cover. The Players head to the floor and Jey has a hair pick.

Jimmy hits a dive onto both Players and we take a break. Back with Jimmy uppercutting Titus, only to be knocked down after looking at Young. Young comes in with a kind of spinning toe hold. It's clear JR has no idea which Uso is which, nor does he care. Jimmy kicks Darren to the floor where Darren trips up Jey before there can be a tag. Back in and Young works on the knee some more and tags Titus.

Jimmy gets in a shot to Titus but O'Neal breaks up the tag at the last possible second. Back to the knee but Jimmy breaks it up. For some reason though he goes to the Players' corner instead of his own. A backdrop puts Titus down and there's the tag to Jey. Jey cleans house and hits the running Umaga attack on Young in the corner for two. Titus takes Jimmy's leg out again which allows the Players to hit the Demolition Decapitator on Jey for the pin at 9:51 shown of 13:21.

**Rating:** C+. Nothing great here but another win for the Players before they finally get their title match is just fine. The Usos are still stuck in limbo but they're good at a job like this. JR not knowing which was which says a small something, as there's nothing to tell the two guys apart unless you're looking at their chest. That being said, they're a tag team and there's nothing wrong with them being so similar, as it makes them look more like a unit.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This was a totally different kind of show this week but it still worked. This came off a lot more like a show that the old NXT did and that's ok for the most part. Having a fresh batch of faces makes that work well, and given the match quality was good all around, what more can you ask for? With talk of the tournament coming for a title, there's a lot of upside on NXT in the future.

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# NXT – July 4, 2012: The Most Efficient Wrestling Show Today

## NXT

Date: July 4, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Jim Ross, Byron Saxton

Happy (day after) Independence Day for those of you in America. Happy Wednesday to those of you not in America. It's episode three of the new NXT and I'm actually looking forward to it. We've had two very good shows so far and we still have people that haven't debuted yet. Tonight we have the debut of Kassius Ohno (what names these people have). Let's get to it.

## Sofia Cortez vs. Paige

Cortez is from Puerto Rico and Paige is from England. Both are good looking but they're not that great in the ring. Cortez (blonde) hooks a headscissors to take Paige (black hair) down and stomps away in the corner. Paige gets a boot up so Cortez enziguris her down. Cortez hooks an arm trap chinlock which Paige breaks free of pretty quickly. Sofia kicks her in the head and hits a sitout DDT (thing the move that Mysterio does where he jumps at his opponent and hooks his legs under their arms and lays out into a bulldog but with a DDT instead) for the pin at 2:27. Usual Divas stuff but Cortez's kicks weren't bad.

## Seth Rollins vs. Camacho

Dang they don't waste time on this show. I love that. Ross says that WWE officials are high on Rollins. I've never heard that said on WWE TV before. Rollins starts out fast and hammers away before getting two off a rollup out of the corner. He pounds away again in the other corner but charges into a boot.

Camacho drops a leg (hermano) and chokes in the corner. A belly to back suplex gets two for Camacho but Rollins pulls himself up off the ropes and hits a standing enziguiri. Seth hits a running dropkick but has to stop to take out Hunico. He rams them together and hits the Blackout for the pin (on Camacho just in case that's too complicated) for the pin at 4:33.

**Rating:** D+. This wasn't a great showcase for Rollins. It's a good idea to have him beat a main show guy but the match didn't quite work that well. Rollins has a good finisher that looks like it would knock someone out cold but the rest of him looks like he's trying to figure out a style. The idea of him being full of energy isn't much of a gimmick either. Not a bad match but it was underwhelming.

Hunico and Camacho jump Rollins post match and beat him down until Bo Dallas makes the save.

#### Corey Graves/Jake Carter vs. CJ Parker/Nick Rogers

Carter is Vader's son. Graves and Carter used to be FCW tag champions and may have been when this was taped. JR acknowledges Carter's heritage which surprises me a bit. Graves and Parker start us off but it's quickly off to Carter off a blind tag. Carter hits a quick splash in the corner and brings in Graves again. Graves hooks a neck crank but Parker hits a backdrop and it's off to Rogers vs. Carter. Carter picks Rogers up in a powerslam position and Graves slides in with a neckbreaker in a move called Bottoms Up for the pin at 2:25. Just a squash.

Video on Kassius Ohno.

#### Kassius Ohno vs. Mike Dalton

They trade wristlocks to start and Dalton takes him to the mat for two. Kassius (Chris Hero for those of you unfamiliar) hits a running clothesline in the corner and Dalton is in trouble. Off to a cobra clutch but Dalton escapes and hits a spinwheel kick for two. Ohno sends him into the ropes and hits the spinning forearm for the pin at 2:32. That's a good finisher but hopefully he gets some promo time to expand things beyond "I knock people out."



Ohno says he knocks people out and when they hear Kassius coming, they say OH NO.

Bray Wyatt video with him talking about going through a lot and getting stronger as a result. Now he feels no fear or pain and he wonders what is going to happen when people realize they can't hurt him.

#### Derrick Bateman vs. Jinder Mahal

Mahal pounds away to start but Bateman throws him to the floor. He dives on Jinder to take over and they head back in. Mahal hits a neckbreaker on the top rope for two but a regular neckbreaker is countered into a backslide for two for Bateman. A small package gets the same as does a rollup. Bateman grabs a DDT and then a running flip neckbreaker for a close two. Jinder avoids the falling bulldog and hits a knee to the back and the camel clutch gets the submission at 4:02.

**Rating:** C-. Not a horrible match or anything but these two do absolutely nothing for me. Bateman is treated like an everyman and Mahal is Indian and rich. That's nothing interesting as we've seen both kind of guys before. Nothing to see here but I'm sure we'll be seeing these guys again for a long time.

#### Seth Rollins/Bo Dallas/Tyson Kidd vs. Michael McGillicutty/Hunico/Camacho

That's a pretty fast turn around for a feud. McGillicutty and Dallas get us going but Kidd is tagged in before there's any contact. McGillicutty tags in Hunico rather than fight and now we get going. Regal and Chris Russo are on commentary now and get in a debate about Hunico's dew rag with JR. Hunico busts out a Gory Special but Kidd counters into a sunset flip for two. Off to Rollins who gets beaten down by the Mexican contingent and we take a break.

After hearing about DX invading WCW (the only WWE promo of the show so far) it's back with Camacho holding Rollins in a chinlock. Rollins quickly breaks it and makes the tag to Bo Dallas. He cleans a few rooms of the house but gets sent shoulder first into the post to stop his momentum dead. McGillicutty comes in who hooks a chinlock of his own. Off to Hunico who hits a butterfly backbreaker for two.

He keeps Dallas on the mat and brings McGillicutty back in. Another backbreaker gets another two but McGillicutty charges into a boot. There's the real hot tag to Kidd who comes in with a springboard dropkick for two. They head to the floor and Dallas dives on all three of his opponents. Kidd sets for a dive of his own but walks into the McGillicutter for the pin at 9:49 shown of 13:19.

**Rating:** C+. Not much here but it was way better than last week's short main event. I like that they didn't just do the tag match immediately but more importantly they didn't repeat the main event from two weeks ago which would have given them one of the biggest problems they had on the older seasons of the show. Kidd continues to be awesome as usual.

**Overall Rating:** B-. Another good show here although a step behind the previous two weeks. As usual though, there is no messing around on this show as we got in six matches in under 45 minutes with only one WWE promo. On top of that there's a major perk to this show: since it was taped about a month ago, there is zero talk about what is going on in WWE at this point. It is so refreshing to watch a good show and not have to hear about the same storylines which have nothing to do with the match we're watching time after time. Another good show this week.

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## NXT – June 27, 2012: The Hits Keep On Coming

### NXT

Date: June 27, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton Jim Ross

We're back again after last week's great debut episode. Tonight we're

going to get a lot of new people debuting which is a cool idea. The perk of NXT being merged with FCW is that there are a ton of guys that the masses haven't seen before and they're letting them trickle in, which is a good way to keep people watching. Let's get to it.

#### Seth Rollins vs. Jiro

Rollins is Tyler Black from ROH. Jiro is a Japanese guy who looks to be a jobber. Regal isn't on commentary this week which makes this show go down a bit already. They chop it out and Rollins sends him into the corner. Rollins hits a kind of running curb stomp called The Blackout for the pin at 1:32.

Rollins says he's here to rip the roots out of the ground and the clouds out of the sky and change the world. Jinder Mahal comes out and glares at him on his way to the ring for the next match.

#### Jinder Mahal vs. Jason Jordan

Jordan is regarded as a top prospect according to JR. The bell rings twice for no apparent reason. Mahal pounds him down in the corner and hits a neckbreaker for two. Off to a chinlock followed by a butterfly suplex for two. Jordan tries a comeback but is quickly kneed down. Camel Clutch ends this at 2:51.

Mahal says he's going to remake NXT in his vision. My goodness why does WWE think we care about this guy?

Leo Kruger is coming. He comes off like a smarmy heel from Africa. He says he's the alpha male lion. So he's a white Monty Brown? Apparently he debuts tonight.

The first Raw is a Raw moment.

#### Leo Kruger vs. Aiden English

Kruger pounds him down but English hits a quick dropkick. That's the extent of his offense though as Kruger chokes away in the corner and hits a snap suplex. Kruger looks like a psycho Al Snow with curlier hair. Rear naked choke/sleeper gets the pin at 1:25.

Richie Steamboat says he's not trying to fill his father's shoes, but rather his own. He looks JUST like his daddy too.

### Usos vs. The Ascension

Regal and Chris Russo are on commentary now along with JR. You know the Siva Tao is popular here with a college crowd. The Usos take over to start and double team Cameron for two. Cameron goes insane and pounds both Usos down until he brings in O'Brien for the same kind of stuff. They tag in and out a lot and pound away on Jey with a bunch of pounds and stomps. Jey hits a headbutt to bring in Jimmy who runs over Cameron a bit. Samoan Drop puts him down as does the Umaga Attack in the corner. Jey gets sent to the floor and Jimmy walks into the Downcast for the pin at 3:40.

**Rating:** C+. The match was nothing of note but I'm more impressed by the entrances. This is something you don't get in the homogenized world of WWE anymore. The Usos had their full screaming entrance while the Ascension looks like something out of a thriller movie. That's not something you get with the big arenas and Cole riffing on half the people that come out and ignoring the other half. The match was basically a squash.

### Richie Steamboat vs. Rick Victor

Man they don't waste any time around here do they? Papa Steamboat is in the front row. Richie armdrags Victor down a few times and hooks an armbar. Steamboat chops in the corner and the fans chant WOO, so apparently we have an educated crowd here. A clothesline gets two for Richie and it's back to the armbar. Richie hits a crossbody and some clotheslines followed by elbows in the corner. A running spinning mat slam (Heath Slater used to use it) called the Slingblade gets the pin at 4:25.

**Rating:** D+. I really wasn't huge on Richie here. He didn't come off as anything special and his offense was just a step above basic. I'm also not a fan of that spinning finisher and I'd have rather seen him use a superkick like he used in FCW. Either way, this was a pretty disappointing debut, but that's just his first match and there's no way

you can predict a career off of one match.

Antonio Cesaro is a dangerous man.

Raw ReBounce is about the end of the show.

#### Dante Dash vs. Antonio Cesaro

Dash is a big muscular black guy. Cesaro takes him to the mat almost immediately and rubs his face in the mat. A gutwrench suplex puts Dash down and it's off to a chinlock. A spinebuster puts Dash down again and the Neutralizer gets the pin at 1:48.

Bray Wyatt video with him talking about real love.

#### Derrick Bateman vs. Johnny Curtis

Curtis slaps him in the face and runs away almost immediately. Bateman chases him back inside and dropkicks him down. Curtis takes over and goes after the leg and we're told Kassius Onoo debuts next week. Curtis hooks an inverted Indian Deathlock but Bateman chops his way out of it. There's a spinning toehold by Johnny but Derrick escapes pretty quickly. He comes back with a falling forward DDT and the falling bulldog which he calls the DVD for the pin at 3:45.

**Rating:** D+. The match was pretty dull and it wasn't helped by the fact that we saw them fight for the better part of a year. This was nothing of note and it being so short made it even less interesting. At the end of the day these two aren't that interesting as Bateman is kind of an everyman who has some quirks to him while Curtis is "weird". Nothing to see here.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This wasn't quite as good as last week's show but it was still a very solid show. The running idea of debuts is fine as you have to introduce the characters to the audience as a lot of them are new guys. They're putting together some very good stuff here as they have a lot of fresh faces and a GREAT presentation. Also there are no frills to this show and they flew through six matches and some video packages in under 45 minutes. That's not bad.

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# NXT – June 20, 2012: Why Isn't This On In America???

## NXT

Date: June 20, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Jim Ross, William Regal

It's FINALLY a new season of this shindig and things are really shaken up. We're permanently in Florida now with FCW and NXT merging and I can't say I'm complaining a bit. These will now be up on Thursdays instead of Wednesdays as they only air internationally at the moment, so I have to wait for the videos to surface online. I don't know what to expect from this so let's get to it.

The opening video is about how each generation has its own stars that define their era. NXT is about those that strive to make their own history. Cool video and this looks great so far.

Regal welcomes us to the show in a voiceover. I really like the arena as there's a small Titantron which looks like it belongs in a more intimate setting.

Here's JR to welcome us to the show. He brings out Dusty Rhodes who apparently is the new General Manager of NXT. The main event is McGillicutty vs. Kidd and Dusty is very excited about it. You can say a lot about Dusty Rhodes and a lot of it is critical, but you can NEVER say he comes off as bored or dull. The guy always sounds like he cares about what he's talking about and that makes a ton of difference.

Video on Bo Dallas which I believe we saw last week. His dad is Mike

Rotunda, more famous as IRS. He talks about smiling all the time and being ready to go at any time.

We get the Vince Hospital clip from Raw.

#### Bo Dallas vs. Rick Victor

Regal and JR are on commentary so I can't complain there. The crowd sounds fired up already and I'm really digging this so far. It looks different from the regular WWE setup which is a nice change of pace. Dallas controls with some armdrags to start but Victor chops away in the corner. Snap powerslam puts Victor down and a spear gets the pin for Dallas at 2:17. I didn't see enough of Dallas here to tell what I thought of him but it wasn't bad.

Dallas says you just saw his game plan being executed and that this is just the beginning. He talks about his smile some more. Dallas is only 22 and looks even younger than that, but that's the point of being in the minors like this. He has potential at least.

Video on Seth Rollins who talks about being the change we've been waiting for. He debuts next week.

Video on Antonio Cesaro and how awesome he is. He's The Future and will also debut next week.

#### Damien Sandow vs. Jason Jordan

The announcer messes up Sandow's hometown, calling it Palto Alo. Sandow does his usual schtick, talking about how this is an unworthy opponent. Therefore, he won't be wrestling tonight. No match.

Video on The Ascension, which is a stable I've heard a lot of good things about. They're standing on a rooftop and say they will rise. There are only two here instead of the three that I believe they usually have.

Raw ReBound is about John vs. John.

#### The Ascension vs. Mike Dalton/CJ Parker

Ascension is Conor O'Brien and Kenneth Cameron. Their entrance is pretty

awesome with music that sounds like something out of a thriller movie's trailer and blue lighting. They actually look intimidating and above all else, they look DIFFERENT. That's been missing so badly on this show as everyone is just out there in trunks wrestling. Cameron and Parker start things off and the Ascension controls early. Off to O'Brien who stomps away on Parker in the corner. Ascension hits rapid fire elbows followed by a jawbreaker from Cameron into a flapjack by O'Brien for the pin at 1:11. I like what I see again. The finisher is called The Downcast.

Video on Bray Wyatt, more commonly known as Husky Harris. He's in a small town in the south and says that it's time for parents to quit lying to their children because monsters like him are real. I've heard rave reviews about this character and I think I can see why.

Derrick Bateman is looking for Johnny Curtis in the bathroom where Curtis is brushing his teeth. They leave the room together and Bateman looks annoyed. Apparently they're the main event next week. Curtis washes his hands on Bateman's shirt. These two still annoy me.

#### Tyson Kidd vs. Michael McGillicutty

Kidd works over the arm to start as the fans chant USA. McGillicutty runs Kidd over and counters an O'Connor Roll, only to have Kidd fire off kicks. Michael bails to the floor for a breather before locking up in a test of strength. Kidd climbs the ropes to escape and hooks the armbar again. Kidd throws him over the top and face first into the apron. That's followed by a suicide dive and we take a break.

Back with Tyson stomping McGillicutty down in the corner and hitting a leg lariat for two. McGillicutty sends him to the apron and hits a knee lift, followed by an elevated neckbreaker for two. We hit the chinlock but Kidd gets back up quickly. Kidd hooks a sunset flip but McGillicutty hits a clothesline to the back of the head for two. McGillicutty puts him in the Tree of Woe and chokes away.

Kidd gets put in the Tree of Woe again but his baseball slide misses, giving us his pop's signature crotch shot into the post. Kidd speeds up and fires off a bunch of kicks including a dropkick to the side of the head for two. McGillicutty counters a springboard clothesline with a



dropkick for two.

Kidd comes back with a moonsault press for two. The fans are really getting into this. Dungeon Lock doesn't work and McGillicutty hits a Saito Suplex for two. McGillicutty puts on a half crab which is supposed to be called a Sharpshooter. The Perfectplex is countered into a small package for two. Kidd grabs the Dungeon Lock for the tap at 14:07.

**Rating:** B. These two continue to have some excellent chemistry together. Their styles mesh just right and they have yet to fail to have a good match. Kidd is in that weird spot where he's not going to be able to be a full time guy on the main rosters but he's great for something like this. McGillicutty is about the same but he's not quite as good. Together though they're a solid combination.

**Overall Rating:** B. For a debut episode, they nailed this one pretty well. Based on this episode, it's a great upgrade over what I spent a year watching. It's nice to see some fresh faces and above all else, this show had an energy to it. I want to see more of this and that's the most important thing for the first episode of a show like this. Good stuff and I'm excited about this show.

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## NXT – June 13, 2012: This Is How The Season Finally Ends

### NXT

Date: June 13, 2012

Location: Verizon Wireless Arena, Manchester, New Hampshire

Commentators: Josh Matthews, William Regal

So I went to WWE.com, sort of dreading this show as usual when I saw it:

"On the final episode of NXT before the ALL NEW NXT...". For the first time in a good many Wednesdays, the sight of NXT brought a smile to my face. After SIXTY SIX WEEKS, it's finally ending. This is the last episode of this season and I can't believe it's really here. Let's get to it.

I can't believe I'm saying this but it's kind of saddening to hear this song for the final time this season.

### Curt Hawkins/Tyler Reks vs. Derrick Bateman/Percy Watson

Regal says the bright green is apparently a tribute to the Dynamic Dudes. There's something you'll never hear again. Hawkins and Bateman gets us going here. Bateman takes it to the mat so Hawkins celebrates his escape. The fans start clapping for Bateman so it's off to Reks who gets crucified down for two. Watson comes in and speeds things up a bit.

Reks gets knocked into the wrong corner by a European Uppercut. Hawkins: "REKS I'M OVER HERE!" Bateman hooks a headlock but charges into a boot in the corner to shift momentum again. Hawkins hooks a chinlock which is quickly broken by a jawbreaker. Watson comes in for some dropkicks and throws Hawkins into Reks to send them out to the floor. Bateman dives on both guys and we take a break.

Back with Watson fighting off both guys but getting dropped on the top turnbuckle for two. Reks hooks a chinlock for a bit followed by a neckbreaker for two. Back to Curt who hits a suplex for two. Off to another chinlock as Regal talks about how a chinlock is supposed to be executed. Another the shoulder bicycle kick gets two on Watson. Josh confirms that next week the New NXT begins.

Back to Reks who kicks Percy in the ribs and hooks chinlock #3. Watson finally comes back and hits an enziguri to Tyler, allowing for the hot tag to Bateman. Reks doesn't tag out at all and things speed up. Bateman hits a running flip neckbreaker (think Morrison's flip neckbreaker) for two. After a Hawkins distraction, Reks hits his powerbomb into a spinning DDT for the pin at 11:05.

**Rating:** C+. This was fine. It was a formula based tag match and the ending was pretty solid. Bateman has gotten a lot better in the last few

months and it's no longer a strain to watch the guy. I don't see him as anything better than a jobber at the moment but maybe things could change with the proper changes.

During the break we get a clip of the All New NXT. It looks pretty awesome actually.

### Kaitlyn vs. Natalya

Natalya immediately takes her down with a heel trip and they trade rollups for two each. Another rollup gets two for Kaitlyn. Natalya sends her to the floor and poses before knocking Kaitlyn off the apron. She sits on Kaitlyn for two and then hooks on a bow and arrow hold. Kaitlyn rolls her up again for two. That seems to be her only offense. Nattie misses a charge in the corner and Kaitlyn shoves her down. A crossbody gets two. Natalya cradles her in the corner with feet on the ropes for two. Her argument with the referee lets Kaitlyn hook ANOTHER rollup for two. A sunset flip out of nowhere gets the pin for Kaitlyn at 5:20.

**Rating:** D-. This was horrible. Kaitlyn looked terrible out there, both in the ring and in the face. For some reason all she did here were rollups other than just a few shots here or there. The match was terrible with neither girl really doing anything at all other than Natalya posing and Kaitlyn rolling people up. Terrible match.

Natalya throws a fit post match.

We get a quick word from Bo Dallas (Taylor Rotunda) who is ready to fight.

Raw ReBound is about Vince/Ace/Show/Cena.

### Usos vs. Michael McGillicutty/Johnny Curtis

They have almost fifteen minutes for this. Before the match starts, Richie Steamboat says he's looking to fill his own shoes, not his father's. Michael and Jimmy start things off and McGillicutty takes him down to the mat with ease. Regal talks about how great Samoans are at wrestling as well as rugby. Jimmy takes him down with an armbar and it's off to Jey. Curtis comes in and rips at Jey's face.

A legdrop misses and Jey hooks a chinlock. McGillicutty offers a distraction and Curtis drops him onto the top rope in the EXACT same sequence from the first tag match. Curtis drops Jey's leg onto the top rope to ground him even further and McGillicutty adds some cheating offense of his own to it. Curtis cannonballs down onto the knee as we take a break. Back with McGillicutty with a knee hold on Jey.

Back to Curtis and the knee gets wrapped around the post. We get a full Indian Deathlock but Jey chops his way out of it. When all else fails, hit the other guy I guess. Curtis prevents the tag but McGillicutty's attempted cannonball onto the leg is countered by having him kicked over the top. Off to Jimmy who cleans house. Jey is almost immediately tagged back in for a double team Samoan Drop. Curtis drops a guillotine legdrop to break up the cover and both guys are down. The McGillicutter is countered and after a superkick from Jey, the Superfly Splash from Jimmy gets the pin on McGillicutty at 11:42.

**Rating:** B-. Another good match here with the leg work being a good idea, as the Usos are a flying team so slowing them down is the right idea. There's something appropriate about the Usos winning the last match of this season, and there's something even more appropriate about it being a meaningless tag match as so many of their matches have been.

**Overall Rating:** C+. And that's NXT Season 5. The overall rating of slightly above average is about right for the whole season too: there were some ok moments, but all in all it was just ok. Nothing significant ever happened, no one won, almost everyone wound up on Smackdown, and it was clear that the contest part of the show was worthless by the end of it. The new season will help things a lot as it can be just a regular show instead of a contest, which is something they've needed to do for about a year now. Tonight's show was decent but as usual, it means nothing at all.

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# NXT – June 6, 2012: End My Pain

## NXT

Date: June 6, 2012

Location: Colonial Center, Columbia, South Carolina

Commentators: Matt Striker, Josh Matthews

Back to the land of no storylines allowed. I would usually say that this should be interesting, but for the most part I'm pretty sure it won't be. At the end of the day, we have about 45 minutes of wrestling here which isn't bad between guys that aren't good enough to get into the top two shows. Let's get to it.

Dang it no Regal this week.

## Tyler Reks vs. Jey Uso

Feeling out process to start with Reks running over Uso a few times. Jey comes back with a running chinlock (looked pretty cool actually) to take over. Uso charges into a boot in the corner and a belly to back suplex for two. Reks pounds him down with power strikes but misses a charge, sending his shoulder into the post.

Jey goes after the arm and hits a spinning forearm. He starts doing the chants to the crowd the pops are great. Samoan drop gets two. Reks takes him down again and goes up, but Jey slams him down for two. Now Jey goes up but gets crotched for his efforts. Reks puts him up in a Razor's Edge position then spins Jey down into a kind of a DDT move for the pin at 5:00.

**Rating:** D+. Not bad here but other than the crowd popping for the USO shout, things were pretty dead here. It's not a bad match but it's likely

to lead to Usos vs. Reks/Hawkins #19 or so, which isn't a match I can really get behind anymore. I still don't get the appeal of Reks at all. It's just not clicking for him.

### Percy Watson vs. JTG

JTG speeds things up to start which actually works. This is supposed to be the new and improved version of him and I guess that's true as the tights are less annoying than what he used to wear. Watson smiles a lot in the ring. JTG controls for the opening until Watson avoids a charge. Watson's headscissors out of the corner is countered and he falls out to the floor.

Back in and JTG pounds away before hooking a seated abdominal stretch. A kind of slam gets two. JTG is getting frustrated. If I had hair like that I likely would be too. He goes to the middle rope but dives into a facebuster to put both guys down. Watson speeds things up and hits his usual jumping attacks. The crowd doesn't seem to care as much this time. Heisman gets two. We get a freaking JTG chant as Persecution gets the pin at 6:01.

**Rating:** D. This crowd has lost all of its chanting privileges. I mean.....THEY WERE CHANTING FOR FREAKING JTG! The match itself was nothing of note at all as JTG being on offense is never a good idea. Watson again has the same problems: he's the same guy over and over again, doing the same stuff every week.

### Tamina Snuka vs. Natalya

Natalya now wears a kind of cape. She quickly powers Tamina down to the mat and they trade headlocks. Back up and Natalya runs her over as Striker calls her Nattie. Whatever her name is she gets dropkicked down for two. The crowd is almost silent for this. Tamina misses a charge and Natalya sits on her with arms folded for two.

Suplex gets two as well. Natalya tries another one but gets small packaged for two. Off to an abdominal stretch but Natalya picks up Tamina's leg on top of the regular hold. Tamina escapes and comes back with chops but Natalya rolls away before Tamina can try for the splash. Sharpshooter is broken up as Tamina kicks her to the floor. Natalya charges back in to a Samoan Drop and the Superfly Splash gets the pin at 6:21.

**Rating:** D. This was nothing. Both girls have jobs because of their dads, but that doesn't always mean success. Well to be fair Natalya is good but there's nothing going on for her due to it not being her time right now. The match was your usual boring affair from the Divas, but a longer version of it.

Raw ReBund is about Cole's destruction.

#### Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel vs. Heath Slater/Johnny Curtis

Kidd and Slater get us going. Slater grabs a headlock but Kidd makes a blind tag. Kidd and Gabriel kind of mess up a double hip toss and it's off to Curtis instead. Justin sweeps the legs out and brings in Kidd for a slingshot reverse victory roll for two. Tyson tries the Dungeon Lock but has to settle for a wristlock instead. Slater comes in but Kidd dropkicks them both down at once.

Sharpshooter to Slater doesn't work so it's back to Gabriel. A BIG suicide dive takes Slater out and Kidd/Gabriel pose in the ring as we take a break. Back with Kidd in control of Slater. He goes up but gets distracted by Curtis, allowing Heath to powerslam him off the top for two and control. Off to the chinlock for a bit and then into the heel corner.

Kidd fights both guys off at once but walks into a spinebuster before he can make the tag off to Gabriel. Curtis comes in and hits a suplex for two. After a quick wear down hold, Curtis and Slater try a double team but Kidd counters and drops them both. Slater blocks the tag again with a

running neckbreaker for two. His middle rope knee drop misses though and it's hot tag to Gabriel. Justin speeds things up as you would expect and hits a jumping tornado DDT for two on Curtis. A combination Hart Attack/Blockbuster gets the pin on Curtis at 10:05.

**Rating:** C+. This was by far the best match of the night but it's a far cry from some of the main events we've been having lately. Still though it wasn't that bad and the double team finisher wasn't bad at all. The problem is there was no doubt as to who would win given the levels of talent on either side.

**Overall Rating:** D. This was really dull. The same problems I've been talking about for weeks are still here and they're not going to change anytime soon. I can't believe I'm saying this, but Maxine being on this show is such an improvement that it's almost uncanny. The show wasn't bad or anything, but it was really uninteresting.

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# Backlash 2009: The First Time Cena Got Blown Up

## Backlash 2009

Date: April 26, 2009

Location: Dunkin' Donuts Center, Providence, Rhode Island

Attendance: 8,357

Commentators: Jim Ross, Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

Back with the final chronological Backlash before we jump back to 2006 to close out WWE PPVs. The main events tonight are Edge vs. Cena in a last man standing match and Legacy vs. HHH/Shane/Batista for the other world



title which is one of those "whoever gets the pin gets the title" deals. I remember really liking this show so hopefully it's still good. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about Wrestlemania and how this is just a replay of the main matches from there. It worked last year so hopefully it does here too. The Hardys fight again tonight too.

#### ECW Title: Jack Swagger vs. Christian

Christian recently returned and is getting his title match here after winning an overly complicated competition. Swagger takes him down but Christian comes back with right hands and a jumping back elbow for two. Swagger is like screw that and picks Christian up and launches him to the floor. Back inside and Swagger wraps him up on the mat. That gets shifted to a bearhug and the Canadian is in trouble.

Christian breaks it up with some forearms but Swagger gets behind him into a gutbuster for two. Back to that body vice on the mat which plays into Swagger being an All-American wrestler. The Canadian escapes and hits the pendulum kick in the corner but Swagger drills him again. Vader Bomb hits knees but Christian's tornado DDT is countered as well. Sunset flip gets a VERY close two for the challenger.

Gutwrench powerbomb is countered but Christian's ribs are getting really banged up now. Swagger puts him on the middle rope and this time the tornado DDT connects, getting two. Jack hits a belly to belly to put Christian down again and they head to the floor. Swagger BLASTS him with a right hand and tries a German off the apron but Christian holds the rope.

Back inside Christian goes up top but gets backdropped down. A top rope Vader Bomb gets two but an Oklahoma Stampede is countered into a rollup for two. The second attempt at the Stampede gets two so they both take off buckle pads. Swagger goes into one first and the Unprettier gets the pin and the title.

**Rating:** B-. This was the right kind of match for an opener with Christian having to fight from behind until he caught Swagger using his own tricks.

Christian would dominate ECW for the next ten months or so until it was replaced by NXT while Swagger would move over to the main shows and become world champion in a questionable move.

Christian celebrates in the back but stops to go talk to Edge. Edge says this must make Christian think he's better than he is now because Edge doesn't have a title. Christian wants to know what changed Edge and Edge says it was Cena. That's why he's not fun anymore.

#### Chris Jericho vs. Ricky Steamboat

This should be a treat. The story here is that Jericho went on an anti-legend kick in the past few months until he beat three of them (Piper, Snuka and Steamboat) at Mania. The thing is Steamboat, who might have wrestled one match in 15 years, stole the show and looked like he could still go out there and wrestle for 45 minutes and beat half the guys on the roster. He was 56-57 at this point, so he wanted one last match, one on one with Jericho.

Steamboat takes him down to the mat and Jericho has to get to the rope to escape. Ricky goes to the floor and makes Jericho miss him a few times before hitting a dive over the top and out onto the Canadian. Back in and there's the armdrag into the armbar. The fans tell Steamboat that he still has it. Jericho gets up but walks right back into the armdrag/bar again. They slug it out and Steamboat is knocked over the top but he skins the cat, because he's that awesome.

Jericho clotheslines him to the floor and springboard dropkicks him right back down. Off to a chinlock but Steamboat fights out and hits another armdrag. Back to the chinlock as Jericho talks trash. That's one of the things I've always liked about him: he keeps things from getting completely dull during a usually dull part of the match. Back up and Steamboat shoves off the bulldog and Jericho gets caught on the ropes.

Steamboat goes all the way to the back for a belly to back suplex but the delayed cover only gets two. Some chops get another two count as does a powerslam. Jericho comes back with a running enziguri for two and the bulldog puts Steamboat down. The Lionsault is broken up but Jericho reverses the reversal into the Walls. Steamboat slips out from under them

but can't remember how to put on the figure four. That's where the match gets kind of sad.

Jericho escapes and charges into the post, allowing the top rope crossbody to get two. Ricky goes up again but dives into the Codebreaker...for two. We get the WM 3 ending with the small package out of the slam for two, but Jericho slaps on the Walls and cranks hard for the tap. That's one of the only times (if not the only time) I can remember Steamboat submitting.

**Rating:** C+. This is a really hard one to grade. Steamboat tried as hard as he could, but at the end of the day he's nearing 60 and had wrestled two matches in almost fifteen years. Now don't get me wrong: Steamboat DID NOT look awful out there, but he looked old. It's sad to see him when you know what he used to be capable of, but all things considered, this was a solid performance. It's VERY good that it was the last time too, because it would have gotten bad if he had kept going. The match was fun but it didn't blow me away like the Mania performance did.

Steamboat gets a standing ovation post match, which he deserves.

Santino runs into Beth in the back and talks to "Santina" on the phone, who says she's coming. Oh geez I forgot about this. Santino won't admit he's Santina and says Beth is the delusional one. Beth breaks up with him.

### Kane vs. CM Punk

Punk won MITB and Kane isn't happy about it. Punk holds him off with some kicks but has to stick and move against the monster. Kane charges into a boot and gets caught in an arm hold over the ropes. Punk dropkicks him to the floor but his dive is caught in a chokeslam position. He fights up to the apron and hits a clothesline down onto Kane to take over again. Kane sends Punk rib first into the post and baseball slides into them, giving him his first advantage.

Off to a bodyscissors as it occurs to me how boring matches can become when there's no story to them. The reviews of them become boring too because there's nothing to say here other than the play by play. I don't

like doing them like that but there's nothing else to do as there's no story to this at all. Punk elbows out of it but charges into a clothesline. Punk hits a backbreaker to stay on the back which is the same kind of boring match stuff that I was talking about. The wrestling is fine but it's the same stuff we've seen a million times and there's no reason to care about it because of a lack of a story.

Chokeslam is countered into a DDT on the arm and Punk follows up with kicks to the leg. Well of course he does. Punk hooks a kind of crucifix hold on the arm in the corner but the knee in the corner is countered by a kick to the face. Kane goes up for the clothesline but Punk hits a running enziguri. The GTS is countered but there's the bulldog and knee. Scratch that, reverse it. You get the idea I'm sure. Punk tries the springboard clothesline but jumps into an uppercut. Kane gets caught in a Fujiwara Armbar but he comes back with a side slam. Punk fires off the strikes but walks into a two arm chokeslam for the pin.

**Rating:** C-. Nothing to see here as they were totally going through the motions. The match wasn't bad or anything but there was nothing interesting to it at all. This was there to fill in about fifteen minutes total of PPV time which was fine, but this was nothing you couldn't see weekly on Smackdown. I was expecting a bit more too.

We recap the battle of the Hardys. Matt went crazy on Jeff after losing the ECW Title and was revealed to be the guy that was causing all kinds of problems for Jeff and ultimately the world title. They had a match at Mania where Matt went insane and got the pin. Then Matt won a stretcher match on Smackdown so tonight it's an I Quit match. The problem at the end of the day was that people didn't really want to see these two guys fight. This gets the music video treatment.

### Matt Hardy vs. Jeff Hardy

I Quit rules remember. Jeff goes off on him in the corner and hits a seated dropkick to send Matt to the floor. Jeff hits a dive and the referee asks if they want to quit. Yeah they'll quit a minute into the match, sure. With a running start, Jeff hits Poetry in Motion off the steps. Back in and Jeff hits the slingshot dropkick in the corner. A

middle rope legdrop hits Matt and it's off to a chinlock. The lack of covers is always a bit hard to get used to in these matches.

Matt rams him into the buckle to break the hold but can't do much to follow up. Jeff goes up but gets shoved to the floor in a great crash. Matt wraps Jeff's leg around the post and we get the first ask with the mic. Jeff says no both times so Matt bends the knee around the post. Matt puts on a figure four and Jeff still won't quit. Jerry thinks Matt is going after the knee. You can't buy this kind of analysis people!

Jeff escapes but gets put right back in it again. That doesn't work so Matt hooks a seated half crab but Jeff still won't quit. Matt puts him in the Tree of Woe and bends Jeff's head back but Jeff won't quit. Instead of holding him there longer, Matt rants and probably posts a YouTube video about it. He puts Jeff on top but his belly to back superplex is countered into a crossbody.

Jeff hooks a standing Texas Cloverleaf and Matt taps but won't say he quits. They botch a Twist of Fate so the second attempt works a bit better. Matt still won't quit so Jeff gets a table. Matt rolls to the floor but Jeff follows with the Twist to take him down again. Back in the ring now and Jeff puts him on the table.

Before he does anything though, Jeff grabs some tape from under the ring and ties Matt's hands and feet together. Now he gets a rope and ties Matt to the table. Matt still won't quit so Jeff gets a ladder. Jeff climbs said ladder but Matt begs for mercy. He says Mom and Dad wouldn't like it and that he loves Jeff. Matt quits to prevent Jeff from jumping.

**Rating:** C. This was a fun match but the ending hurt it badly. With all the stuff that Matt has been through over the years, he quits to avoid a legdrop through the table? The match was just ok up to that point but at the end of the day like I said earlier, I don't think people were really that interested in seeing these guys fight. This ended the feud, which is probably best for everyone involved.

Jeff jumps on him anyway.

Orton talks about Batista and how he (Orton) wants the title. He tries to

manipulate Dave into believing that HHH is using him.

Here's Great Khali because he wants to kiss Santina. This isn't going to end well at all. Ok so there was a battle royal at Mania for the title of Miss Wrestlemania. Santino wore a dress and said he was his own twin sister and won the battle royal. Beth said that it was Santino in drag but he wouldn't admit it. Khali fell for Santina and wants to kiss her so Santino is in a tight spot. This is one of the dumbest stories I can remember in a very long time, so of course it went on for months.

After Singh says Khali wants Santina, here "she" comes to Billy and Chuck's old music. Santina says she can't kiss Khali because she's not who she says she is. She isn't single because she's in love with another man. That man is....JR. Oh give me a break. From what I can tell, this was another unplanned shot at JR. JR gets annoyed when Santina says he calls her his little slobberknocker. Khali apologizes but wants to see proof of their love in the form of a kiss.

Santina says she's about to faint and here's Beth to complain about how stupid this is. She challenges Santina for the crown RIGHT NOW. Khali complains about what's going on here so Beth explains the whole cross dressing thing to him. She says all of the women in Punjab must be ugly. Either that or Khali is a big idiot. He chops her and the bell rings, giving Santina a win in three seconds. This is one of the dumbest angles I have ever seen and I had almost completely forgotten it. Khali rips Santina's top off for no apparent reason.

We recap Legacy vs. Batista/HHH/Shane. Orton has basically declared war on the McMahons, having punted Vince and attacked/kissed Stephanie. Shane is the only one left and Batista has been brought in to help with HHH to counteract Legacy. Orton injured Batista and this is his return feud.

Raw World Title: Randy Orton/Legacy vs. Batista/HHH/Shane McMahon

Only Orton can win the title and it can be by pin, submission, countout or DQ. HHH is champion coming in. Legacy is Ted DiBiase and Cody Rhodes in case you're a young'un. HHH goes right after Orton and they head to the floor. The other four are kind of staring at each other. This is all before the bell. Orton has run off somewhere as HHH comes back to clear

the ring. The bell finally rings and there's no Orton.

Batista starts with Rhodes and destroys him in the corner with the shoulder blocks. He shouts that DiBiase is next and it's off to Shane who drops a middle rope elbow. Shane works on the arm and it's off to the champ. HHH fires off right hands and a crotch chop in whatever order you would like to think it was in. DiBiase comes in and is clotheslined down. Shane comes in to play Bret in a Hart Attack for two.

Big Dave comes in again as does Cody. Legacy has had no offense so far at all. There's a delayed vertical suplex to Rhodes but Cody rakes the eyes and brings in Ted. Legacy gets in some basic offense in the corner as they double team a bit. Batista shrugs that off and hits the spinebuster on DiBiase but Ted bails to the floor before the Bomb can hit. We're over five minutes into this and Orton hasn't been seen for any of the actual match.

DiBiase and Batista go up the aisle a bit but it's more Ted running than anything else. They head back to the ring and here's Orton to jump Big Dave, sending him into the post. He gets the tag (which wasn't seen) and goes off on Batista. The fans are into the match now, probably because they knew nothing was going to happen without Randy there. Batista gets beaten down in the corner as the tag is made to Cody.

Legacy and Orton work over Batista on the floor and Orton hits the Elevated DDT for two. Back to DiBiase who hooks a Million Dollar Chinlock. Big Dave comes back with a belly to back suplex but he still can't make the tag. This is looking like it's going to be a long match given how early Batista is getting beaten down. Randy comes back in and things slow down again. Even JR is thinking he's going too slowly.

Off to another chinlock which is pretty quickly broken. Batista comes out of nowhere with a freaking flying headbutt of all things. Hot tag brings in Shane who cleans house. Neckbreaker gets two on Rhodes. They head to the floor and Shane pulls the top off of the table but Cody heads back in. The top rope elbow gets two as DiBiase makes the save. Orton sends Shane into the steps and we go into heel control segment #2.

Randy is legal now but he brings Ted back in for fear of being

interesting. Shane gets worked over on the floor a bit more and it's back to Cody again. Legacy keeps tagging in quickly as it's back to Orton who pulls Shane back into the wrong corner. He dropkicks Shane down and DiBiase comes in for some elbow drops. It's amazing that this is the peak of DiBiase's career to this point, especially when it was him who everyone thought he was the star of Legacy.

Cody hooks a front facelock which lasts about a full minute before Shane suplexes him out of it. Back to DiBiase who keeps Shane in the ring even longer. There's the Million Dollar Dream but Shane escapes. There's the double tag to Orton and HHH with the Game pounding away in the corner. Legacy gets thrown to the floor and there's a spinebuster to Orton for two.

Everything breaks down and Cody blasts Shane with a chair. Batista gets hit in the throat with it too as the Pedigree and RK0 are both countered. HHH has to take the chair away from Batista to avoid the DQ, but he walks into the RK0 for two. The bell rings but it has to be waived off. The Punt gives Orton the title.

**Rating:** B-. This was a bit of a mess but after the mess that was the main event of Mania, it was definitely the right idea to bring in four other people. Orton would feud with Batista for awhile until Big Dave got hurt (again) before feuding with Cena to end the year. HHH would feud with Orton and Legacy for awhile before hooking up with Shawn again for another DX reunion.

HHH gets taken out on a stretcher.

We recap Edge vs. Cena, which is a rematch from the triple threat three weeks ago minus Big Show. That's the match with the double AA to both guys in the mind blowing spot of the match. Cena took the title from Edge and tonight is Edge's rematch in a last man standing match. The theme of the video is that Edge has had Cena's number over the years and it's really well made.

Smackdown World Title: Edge vs. John Cena

The brand of the titles is pretty much a guess at this point as they were



moving around a lot at this time. Cena is defending and this is last man standing in case you forgot what you read about 20 seconds ago. Cena took a Conchairto on Raw so he's a bit messed up in the cranium. This is billed as the last match between the two. I'm sure. Edge avoids the bulldog to start and it's a standoff.

The challenger bails to the floor but misses the spear back in. Edge takes over by pounding on him in the corner before walking into a release fisherman's suplex. An Edge-0-Matic puts Cena down as we focus on the back of Cena's head. Edge wins a slugout and puts Cena down with another shot to the head. A flapjack puts Cena down again and we get a logical sleeper. Edge puts him down and finally lets go but Cena is up at seven.

Cena comes back with the shoulder blocks but Edge breaks up the Shuffle. There's a Sharpshooter of all things but Cena gets up again. Edge knocks him off the apron and into the table as we get to the more wild part of the match. That shot only gets another seven so Edge loads up the steps. The spear that Edge tries hits the steps though and Cena gets a breather. At six though Edge comes back and sends him into the steps again, putting the champ down.

Now Edge goes into the steps again as this is feeling like it's on a loop. After another eight count Cena picks up the steps and puts them in the ring albeit with some difficulty. Edge gets in another shot to the head and Cena is down again. The Canadian crushes Cena in the corner with the steps and dropkicks them into his body but both guys are down as a result. Back up and Cena launches Edge to the floor. We're about twelve minutes into this and it hasn't been all that great so far.

Things pick up a bit with Cena picking up the steps and throwing them over the top rope and right onto Edge's head. Edge is up at eight and Cena is getting fired up. Back in the ring and they slug it out some more with a double punch putting both guys down. Back up and three AA's, an Edgecution and an Edge-0-Matic are all broken up before Edge hits a belly to back suplex to take over.

He brags too much though and Edge gets caught in the STF. He taps but it doesn't matter. As with any submission hold, Cena lets go early (I wonder

if he did that with Mickie...allegedly) and Edge is up at 8. The AA is broken up again and Edge spears him down. Edge goes up top and Cena FINALLY hits the AA off the ropes but it doesn't finish things either. Cena goes up but dives into another spear. Now this is getting better.

The spear only gets nine and Edge is stunned. Both guys are barely able to stand at this point. Scratch that as Cena collapses and falls to the floor. Edge won't let the referee count and tries the Edgecution on the table, but Cena counters and hits an AA into the crowd. That wouldn't really do a ton of damage in theory but the landing would, as the fans mostly caught Edge. It gets another nine and Edge is up, although he's leaning on the barricade. Cena is stunned.

Edge is like screw this and runs off into the crowd with Cena chasing him up the stairs. They head into the concourse and Cena catches up with him, only to head right back into the arena. They go back down some different stairs and Cena bulldogs him onto the equipment area. Edge pops up and hits Cena with something metal as they go to the stage.

An Edgecution (the inverted DDT in case you don't remember what that move is) on the steel puts Cena down for nine. Edge goes into the back and comes back with a chair. Gee that's kind of lame now. He gives Cena a Conchairto on the stage...for eight. Edge's spear is caught in the AA and here's Big Show to chokeslam Cena through an exploding spotlight, giving Edge the title.

**Rating:** A-. This is one of those matches that really is better when you watched it live. I remember wondering what they could POSSIBLY do to end this and then Big Show came out to blow stuff up. They had to do something like that given all of the stuff they had done so far and the explosion filled that role pretty well. The first ten minutes are just ok but after that it kicks into gear in a hurry. Great match here.

Cena is taken out on a stretcher as Edge watches from the stage. People were BEGGING for Punk to cash in here but that wouldn't be for a few more months.

**Overall Rating:** B. Another good show here with a solid main event. These Wrestlemania repeat shows are usually good despite having the same

matches for a lot of the time. This one wasn't quite as good as the previous year's show but it was still a very solid entry with mostly satisfying matches, other than a few questionable ones here and there. Oh and the Santino stuff was freaking stupid. Other than that, good stuff though.

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