

NXT LVL Up – June 30, 2023: The Short Version

NXT LVL Up

Date: June 30, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Blake Howard

For once, this show might actually be a bit different for a change, as next week's regular NXT will be taped in advance due to the 4th of July. As a result, NXT might switch things up somewhat, for the sake of not having to tape too many matches before the show. That could be a nice way to go so let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Blair Davenport vs. Kelani Jordan

Jordan takes her down with an armbar to start before a sunset flip gets two. An armdrag out of the corner into a rollup gets two more but Davenport hits her in the face to take over. The cravate has Jordan in more trouble but she fights up with some shots to the face. A springboard spinning crossbody gets two on Davenport but a backbreaker into the Falcon Arrow finishes Jordan at 5:25.

Rating: C. Jordan got a chance to shine here and that is nice to see as she is still brand new. Let her do her thing for a bit, assuming she already knows what that thing is. That being said, Davenport seems to be a candidate for next big bad in NXT and if that is the case, she is not about to be losing to a newcomer like Jordan, especially on LVL Up.

Myles Borne wants a challenge in Joe Coffey.

Joe Coffey vs. Myles Borne

Coffey grabs a cravate to start but Borne is right back up with a dropkick. An armbar puts Borne down and Coffey cranks on the arm a bit more. Coffey's headlock doesn't last long as Borne is back up with a dropkick. Borne gets his own armbar and Coffey is sent to the apron, where a Stunner can connect to stagger Borne again. A powerslam gets Borne out of trouble but Coffey knocks him into the corner, setting up All The Best For The Bells and the pin on Borne at 5:40.

Rating: C+. Coffey as the name of the week around here is a weird way to go as he has had enough success to not belong on this show. That make it all the more interesting and Borne even got in some offense here. Decent enough match, even if it was there for the sake of having Coffey around.

Overall Rating: C+. As nice as the thirty minute version of the show may be, the twenty minute version actually suits it even better. It's more or less the Main Event of NXT and I got a little something out of it, just by having some not quite squash matches. This was a nice change of pace and we'll probably get the same next week, so well done for a bit.

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NXT LVL Up – June 23, 2023: Is A Feud Too Much To Ask?

NXT LVL Up

Date: June 23, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Tampa, Florida

Commentators: Blake Howard, Byron Saxton

Things took a bit of a turn back to the norm last week as we didn't have much in the way of star power or anything interesting. In other words, it was nothing more than the usual LVL Up with almost nothing worth seeing. Hopefully they can make it better here again as LVL Up can be a snappy enough show when it gets the chance. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Stacks vs. Kale Dixon

Dixon goes with a headlock and some right hands to start but Stacks runs him over without much trouble. What looks to be Shattered Dreams is broken up so Stacks goes with an atomic drop instead. Back up and Dixon sends him throat first into the middle rope, followed by a running knee for two. A gutwrench faceplant gets two and the abdominal stretch keeps Stacks in trouble. That's broken up and Stacks kicks away before ducking an enziguri. Cement Shoes finishes Dixon at 5:51.

Rating: C. Stacks isn't doing anything revolutionary in NXT but it's cool to see someone on this show who has a story going on at the moment. The reveal of whodunit should be good

and Stacks is going to be in the middle of the whole thing. Dixon isn't supposed to be beating someone of Stacks' caliber yet so the winning streak coming to an end (at one) is acceptable.

Tavion Heights is ready for Luca Crusifino and wants to bring the same energy he brought to the Olympics.

Tavion Heights vs. Luca Crusifino

Heights takes him down by the arm to start and he armdrags Luca to cut him off. Luca fights up and runs Heights over a few times before getting one off a slam. The reverse chinlock doesn't last long so Luca grabs a suplex for two instead. Luca rips at his face until Heights fights up to dropkick his way out of trouble. An overhead belly to belly sends Luca flying and Heights loads up the Doctor Bomb, only to have Luca grab the rope for the rollup pin at 5:57.

Rating: C. Luca is a weird case where he is getting better in the ring, but the gimmick stuff that makes him stand out is going by the wayside. It is something that could be done in a few different ways but instead we are just seeing him go out there and doing basic stuff, which is only so interesting in the first place. Heights is another name on a long list of people who feel like potential stars but need something to make them stand out.

Ivy Nile vs. Jacy Jayne

Nile takes her to the mat for an armbar to start before snapping off a hurricanrana. Jayne is right back and gets in a charge in the corner, followed by a neckbreaker for two. We hit the chinlock for a bit but Nile fights up and hits the running kick in the corner. The Diamond Chain Lock is blocked so they trade superkicks, followed by Jayne hitting a discus lariat for the pin at 5:15.

Rating: C+. Slightly better here and again having the bigger

names on the show helps a lot. Jayne and Nile are fairly regular features on the main NXT show and it's nice to have them around here. The star power, at least in Jayne, helps a lot as you feel like you're watching someone who matters. Do something like that around here and the show feels that much more important.

Overall Rating: C. Not much to see here and the main only helps things to a certain extent. As usual, the show is about half an hour long and the wrestling is decent enough, but a feud that goes over a few weeks might be nice. I'm not sure how much you get out of having one off matches like this, but that's what you're getting and there is nothing that is going to be done about it anytime soon.

Results

Stacks b. Kale Dixon – Cement Shoes

Luca Crusifino b. Tavion Heights – Rollup while grabbing a rope

Jacy Jayne b. Ivy Nile – Discus lariat

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Collision – July 1, 2023: They Tried Something Else

Collision

Date: July 1, 2023

Location: First Ontario Center, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, Nigel McGuinness

We're taped this week and the focus is going to be on tournament matches. We have three Owen Hart Foundation Tournament matches and that should be enough to carry the show. Other than that, we have the Collision debut of MJF and some Forbidden Door fallout to cover. Let's get to it.

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

The Owen Hart Foundation Tournament participants are ready to win.

Opening sequence.

Maxwell Jacob Friedman vs. Kip Morst

Non-title, Morst is a hometown boy, and MJF is in USA flag colors on Canada Day. MJF jumps him to start and the Heatseeker gets two, with MJF pulling him up. A LeBell Lock makes Morst tap at 40 seconds.

Post match MJF wants a local star to come out here so here is a rather large man, only to have Ethan Page come out instead. Page talks about his father coming here as a laborer and being told he would never be anything more. Then he wound up being the president of several companies, which makes Page better than MJF, who is a bare minimum b****.

AEW calls Page when they need something done and his wife wants to know when he'll get paid back for all the extra he does. Page told her in due time, and now it's time. The challenge is on and let's have a title match. This was straight fire from Page and the best thing he has ever done.

AEW World Title: Ethan Page vs. Maxwell Jacob Friedman

MJF is defending and gets stomped down in the corner to start. The Ego's Edge is escaped though and MJF starts in on the leg. Page tries a handstand in the corner but gets caught in an Alabama Slam. The half crab (ala Lance Storm) goes on until Page finally makes the rope. We take a break and come back with Page hammering away and hitting a Twist of Fate.

The Swanton takes too long though due to the leg, allowing MJF to crotch him on top. MJF goes up as well and it's a super powerslam to plant MJF down again. The very delayed cover gets two and MJF sends him to the apron. A dragon screw legwhip on the apron sets up the Heatseeker to retain the title at 10:58.

Rating: B-. I get that Page couldn't win the title here and that this was a one off moment, but dang that was a great promo to set him up really well. Page has never quite broken out around here so it was nice to see him getting to do something special. Good enough match too, as MJF did have to work to retain here.

Men's Owen Hart Foundation Tournament First Round: Dustin Rhodes vs. Powerhouse Hobbs

The QTV crew is here with Hobbs. Rhodes grabs a headlock to start and hammers away before going up, only to have Hobbs load up a gorilla press. That's escaped but QT Marshall trips Rhodes up, allowing Hobbs to knock him down. A posting cuts Rhodes open and we take a break.

Back with Rhodes hitting a jumping clothesline into Cross Rhodes. A piledriver gets two on Hobbs and a Panama Sunrise

gets the same. Rhodes has to deck Marshall off the apron though and Hobbs hits the spinebuster...for one? Back up and Rhodes' powerslam gets two but Marshall gets in another cheap shot. The spinebuster finishes Rhodes at 11:07.

Rating: C+. Rhodes put up a nice fight here and it was a lot better than having Hobbs run through him. Hobbs is someone who has all kinds of potential, but it wasn't a great sign when he was looking a good bit tired less than ten minutes into a match. If he can get that figured out, he should be in a great place for a long time to come.

Video on Roderick Strong vs. Samoa Joe.

Miro vs. Anthony Henry

Miro suplexes him down to start and then suplexes him a few more times for good measure. Henry gets a boot up in the corner and goes up top, only to get kicked in the head. The camel clutch finishes for Miro at 3:08.

Rating: C. What else is there to say here? Miro ran through him and finished with his hold in short order. Doing that again and again is going to make Miro into a star again as he does everything else needed to make it work for him. It's a shame he has to start over, but he's awesome enough that it shouldn't take long.

Here is Bullet Club Gold, complete with official new members the Gunns. Jay White is happy with the team being at full strength and promises Juice Robinson is advancing in the tournament tonight. The Gunns brag about their success and everything that they have done. Tony Schiavone tells them that the Club is barred from ringside, which causes quite the freak out.

With that out of the way, White says he wanted what CM Punk brought back with him in that bag two weeks ago. Oh and they'll take the Tag Team Titles too. CM Punk/FTR/Ricky Starks

pop up on screen, with Punk saying he isn't worried about White. Punk says he has friends instead of bodyguards and FTR could go for a piece of them too. Starks is ready for Robinson tonight. This version of White felt like a star and you can see why some people are so gung ho about him.

Men's Owen Hart Foundation Tournament First Round; Ricky Starks vs. Juice Robinson

They fight over arm control to start until Starks grabs a headlock takeover. Back up and Robinson takes out the knee, sending Starks face first into the rope. Robinson works on the leg for a bit until Starks fights up with some shots to the face. The leg is kicked out again though and we a break. Back with Robinson hitting a cannonball but Starks tells him to bring in.

A few shots to the face set up a DDT and Starks nips up, damaging his knee again in the process. Starks grabs a tornado DDT but a hanging DDT is countered into a hot shot. Robinson grabs the Texas Cloverleaf, with Starks finally making it to the rope. Robinson rolls him up for two but something like a spinebuster gives Starks two of his own. A super hurricanrana is blocked but Robinson hits his own spear for two. Starks hits a spear for two but a rollup gives Starks the pin at 15:44.

Rating: B-. What matters the most here is having Starks get the win, as that is something that hasn't happened often enough. With this out of the way, there is a good chance that Starks can move on from Bullet Club Gold, who have taken his attention for months now. Starks seems to be coming up the ladder a bit in recent weeks and that is great for his future, assuming Hobbs doesn't crush him in the next round.

Post match the Bullet Club runs in but CM Punk/FTR make the save.

Christian Cage is feeling nice on Canada Day but here is Shawn

Spears to say he wants to talk to the champ. Cage gets in between them and says talk, only to say that Spears isn't dangerous. Spears says he'll see the champ soon.

TBS Title: Lady Frost vs. Kris Statlander

Frost is challenging and gets powered down to start. Statlander blocks a headlock takeover attempt and they trade missed flips. A backbreaker works a bit better for Statlander and we take a break. Back with Statlander planting her again but Frost grabs a German suplex. A tornado DDT plants Statlander for two but she flips out of a piledriver and hits a discus lariat. Saturday Night Fever retains at 7:56.

Rating: C. This match suffered from the same problem that so many women's matches in AEW have to deal with: a break cutting out nearly half of the match. I know there's picture in picture and all that jazz, but going to a break and hearing about where I can get a cheap pizza or what is coming up on TNT is a pretty easy way to take me out of the match. Statlander's roll continues though and she is feeling like a star. If those knees can hold up, she could be going a long, long way around here.

Andrade El Idolo is annoyed at the House Of Black, who pop up on a monitor behind him. El Idolo turns over a camera.

Here's what's coming on various shows, including a video on Wheeler Yuta vs. Kenny Omega on Dynamite.

Men's Owen Hart Foundation Tournament First Round: Roderick Strong vs. Samoa Joe

CM Punk is on commentary. Feeling out process to start until Strong gets in a few strikes. Joe sends him outside but it's too early for the dive, allowing Strong to switch places. Strong's dive can connect just fine and they head back inside for the chinlock. Joe fights up and hits the release Rock Bottom out of the corner for two as we take a break.

Back with Strong hitting a running knee but Joe knocks him right back down. A knee drop sets up a neck crank but Strong fights up and hits another dropkick. Strong manages a backbreaker and the Sick Kick gets two. A middle rope dropkick gets two and a jumping knee rocks Joe again. End of Heartache is broken up and Strong gets pulled into the Koquina Clutch for the win at 13:27.

Rating: B-. These two know how to beat each other up very well and it can be very fun to hear those strikes landing. Eventually though, it's hard to get away from Joe when he tries to choke you out and that is what happened to Strong here. It made for a good main event, though Joe vs. Punk is going to be the real attraction here.

Post match Punk and Joe have to be held apart, which lets Joe Emerald Flosion Strong onto a chair. Strong has to be taken out on a stretch with Adam Cole coming out to check on him too. Punk looks rather serious to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Maybe it was the emphasis on tournaments, but this didn't feel anywhere near as big or important as the first two shows. The stuff they're building towards should be good, but this wasn't keeping my interest as well. I'm not the biggest tournament fan in the world and having so much of the show focus on them didn't help. Not a bad show, but the weakest of the three episodes so far.

Results

Maxwell Jacob Friedman b. Kip Morst – LeBell Lock

Maxwell Jacob Friedman b. Ethan Page – Heatseeker

Powerhouse Hobbs b. Dustin Rhodes – Spinebuster

Miro b. Anthony Henry – Camel clutch

Ricky Starks b. Juice Robinson – Rollup

Kris Statlander b. Lady Frost – Saturday Night Fever

Samoa Joe b. Roderick Strong – Koquina Clutch

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Money In The Bank 2023: It's Over

Money In The Bank 2023

Date: July 1, 2023

Location: O2 Arena, London, England

Commentators: Michael Cole, Wade Barrett

We're going international with this one and things could get very interesting. Aside from the two regular ladder matches, we also have the Bloodline Civil War, which is the real meat of the show. Throw in Seth Rollins defending the Raw World Title against Finn Balor and this could go somewhere. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at London itself with a James Bond style theme. The matches get their usual hypes.

Butch vs. Ricochet vs. Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Logan Paul vs. LA

Knight vs. Damian Priest vs. Santos Escobar

Men's Money In The Bank, with Butch and Knight getting some crazy reactions. Paul gets surrounded and jumped to start before the people pair off. The ring clears out until Paul slides in the first ladder but Nakamura makes the save. Back in and a bunch of people crush Priest in the corner with a ladder until Knight drops everyone. Nakamura kicks Knight down and drops a knee to drive Priest into the ladder. Butch and Nakamura slug it out until Paul goes up again, only to get pulled down and beaten up again.

It's time for the table and the cricket bat as Butch gets to clean house. Paul tries to get an alliance going with Priest, which includes setting up some tables before Priest lays him out. Escobar is back with a dive before Priest knocks a diving Paul out of the air. Paul is back up with a frog splash off the apron onto Priest onto a ladder, which doesn't move. Back in and Escobar and Nakamura climb up, with Escobar's arm getting cranked through the ladder.

Butch chokes Escobar on the ladder and they fall down onto a bridged ladder, allowing Ricochet to add a springboard 450 onto both of them. Almost everyone gets back in and Priest goes up until Knight suplexes him down. Paul drops Knight with a springboard Blockbuster and Nakamura dives off the ladder with a knee to Escobar. Butch climbs a ladder at ringside and moonsaults onto almost everyone, only to have Paul pull him down back inside.

It's Escobar coming in to make the save but Nakamura makes another save. They both climb up on a ladder each until Ricochet and Paul join them. The big brawl is on until Knight shoves Nakamura and Escobar down. Knight shoves the other ladder over and Ricochet and Paul try to land on the ropes, with Ricochet hitting a springboard Spanish Fly onto (only through one) two tables at ringside.

As the referees check that Paul isn't dead (since he landed on his face), Priest cuts Butch off but Knight breaks that up as well. Blunt Force Trauma hits Escobar and Nakamura is tossed, leaving Knight to...get cut off by Priest, who Broken Arrows him down. Priest gets the briefcase at 20:34.

Rating: B. Oh that's going to be a risky move, as the crowd was all but begging for Knight to win. Priest was the third best option after Knight and Paul but it still only feels so interesting. They did a good job of making Paul feel like a star here as everyone was trying to cut him off, which had me thinking he would pull it off. For now though, I can go for this much carnage, though less going through stuff with your head would be nice.

Women's Tag Team Titles: Shayna Baszler/Ronda Rousey vs. Liv Morgan/Raquel Rodriguez

Baszler and Rousey are defending. Morgan avoids Baszler's arm stomp to start and sends Baszler to the apron for a springboard dropkick. Rodriguez powerbombs Morgan over the top onto the champs but Baszler goes after the arm back inside. Rousey comes in for some arm cranking but Morgan gets over to Rodriguez for the tag.

A choke doesn't work for Rousey, who gets caught in a superbomb for a heck of a crash. Morgan comes back in and gets armbarred by Baszler...and ankle locked by Rousey at the same time. Rodriguez makes the save and Morgan has to escape the Kirifuda Clutch. Rousey comes back in and Baszler decks her, setting up the Clutch on Rousey as Morgan looks shocked. Oblivion gives us new champions at 8:28.

Rating: C. Well, uh, ok then. I'm assuming this is a way to set up Baszler vs. Rousey in a hurry, but the Women's Tag Team Titles continue to look rather worthless. I'm sure there will be a good reason for what happened, but Morgan and Rodriguez as the latest thrown together team with all of a few months'

of experience being some great team is a bit much.

Damian Priest doesn't know which title he'll cash in on, but he'll be champion.

Intercontinental Title: Gunther vs. Matt Riddle

Gunther is defending and has to fight out of an armbar to start. Riddle's kicks to the ribs are blocked and the big chop puts Riddle down hard. Some forearms don't get Riddle very far so he goes for the leg, only to have Gunther stomp him down. Gunther goes after the previously damaged ankle, including a legbar.

Riddle fights up and hits a heck of a clothesline but Riddle is right back with a Penalty Kick. The Floating Bro gets two (because Riddle's leg can heal really fast) but he gets chopped down. The splash is countered into a triangle choke but Gunther powerbombs his way out of trouble. The half crab is broken up so Gunther chops at the ankle (that's a new one) and then cranks away to retain at 7:40.

Rating: C+. This was an interesting one as Riddle is just good enough to be a threat to Gunther, but that ankle injury wasn't going to let him get very far. At the end of the day, Gunther only felt like he was in so much danger and then he mixed it up to beat Riddle. Nice match, but nothing we haven't seen done better before.

Post match Drew McIntyre makes his return and lays out Gunther with the Claymore. Yeah he's still popular.

We recap Dominik Mysterio vs. Cody Rhodes. Dominik was his usual disrespectful self and slapped Cody in the face. It's time for revenge, as Cody wants to teach him some respect.

Cody Rhodes vs. Dominik Mysterio

Rhea Ripley is here with Dominik, who runs off to start. Back in and Dominik slaps him, only to have Cody rip off the cast

on his arm. Now the beating is on, including the drop down uppercut and a powerslam, meaning it's time to head outside. Dominik tries to bail through the crowd but gets sent back, where Rhea gets between them. The distraction lets Dominik get in a few cheap shots and we hit the chinlock back inside. Cody fights up and, after shrugging off the Three Amigos, hits the Disaster Kick. An Alabama Slam sets up the Cody Cutter and Cross Rhodes finishes Dominik at 6:35.

Rating: C. I don't think there was any doubt about the result here, save for some shenanigans, as Dominik isn't someone who is going to win a big match. Like many a good heel, the best thing about Dominik is that he can shrug off a loss and get the fans on him all over again with the same stuff he has been doing. This felt a bit like a Raw match, or at least just a way to get Cody on the show, which isn't a bad thing.

And now, here's John Cena! He doesn't know what to think of the fans singing the right words to his song and wonders why it took twenty years to come back here for another major event. The decision makers around here think this is a hostile environment with fans who try to take over the show. The people ARE the show and he is here to let them know that they are underappreciated.

Cena is big on respect and the people here have earned his respect. The fans chant him a thank you and Cena talks about how much fun it is to stop like this for a special moment. He's here to try to bring Wrestlemania to London (oh the people like that one) and seems to officially announce it (Maybe. It's not entirely clear.). Cue Grayson Waller to talk about how much he loves Cena's movies. He loves Cena's hustle, loyalty and respect, so why is Cena lying to these people about Wrestlemania?

Waller thinks Australia sounds better but the fans don't agree. He could even get Cena a spot on the show! Waller brings up Cena's recent Wrestlemania failures and says he can

be on the Grayson Waller Effect. Cena will pass and doesn't understand Waller, who decks Cena from behind. The AA leaves Waller laying. That wasn't an official announcement, but it's hard to imagine that kind of a tease with something that specific without it going somewhere.

Trish Stratus vs. Becky Lynch vs. Zoey Stark vs. Iyo Sky vs. Bayley vs. Zelina Vega

Women's Money In The Bank and according to the ring announcer, Bayley is now part of Judgment Day. Stratus sends Stark to jump Lynch in the aisle and the fight is on fast. Sky jumps off the apron to take out Bayley before Trish and Stark grab another ladder. Becky sends them into the ladder and Bayley (as the fans serenade her) throws in the big ladder. Sky and Bayley get into it, allowing Becky go try a climb.

Stark cuts her off and gets beaten down for her efforts and the Disarm-Her goes on, only to have Stratus make the save. Vega and Trish slug it out on a pair of ladders until Becky goes up, with Bayley not far behind her. Sky goes up but the ladder is off center, meaning it's a moonsault to take out the pile instead. Becky and Trish go up top for a slugout but Zelina makes a save. That earns her a double powerbomb and it's Trish vs. Becky fighting again. Stark pulls Becky outside for a ram into the post and let's get the handcuffs.

Becky blocks being cuffed and bridges a ladder between the announcers' table and the apron. As commentary points out that this is taking a LONG time, Becky hits the Manhandle Slam onto Trish onto the ladder. Back in and Vega hits a Code Red to bring Stark down off the ladder onto another bridged ladder in a scary crash. Sky goes up but Bayley shoves the ladder over. With Bayley going up, Becky makes the save and tries to handcuff Bayley's mouth. Sky breaks that up and cuffs them together (through the ladder), allowing her to pull down the briefcase at 18:01.

Rating: C+. The ending was the big saving grace here, as that was one of the most clever finishing sequences I've seen WWE run in a ladder match. Other than that though, this was a lot of things that had little to do with getting the briefcase, as it felt more focused on hitting spots. I wasn't big on this, but they got the winner right and the finish was rather good.

We recap Finn Balor challenging Seth Rollins for the Raw World Title. Balor wants revenge on Rollins for costing him so much of his career after Balor beat Rollins with one arm. This is about revenge, with the title being there too.

Raw World Title: Seth Rollins vs. Finn Balor

Balor is challenging. They go to the mat to start and slug it out with Balor getting the better of things off a shot to the bad ribs. The fight heads outside with Seth hitting a suicide dive but having to dodge another double stomp to the ribs back inside. The Pedigree attempt is countered though and now the stomp can connect.

Balor stays on the ribs and knocks Rollins back to the floor as the confidence is picking up. Back in and Balor hits some shoulders to the ribs but Rollins manages a clothesline. Some kicks to the face and a backbreaker give Rollins two but Balor goes right back to the ribs. A Sling Blade hits Rollins, who Buckle Bombs Balor right back.

Balor gets his knees up to stop a splash and a rollup gets two. Rollins manages a Pedigree for a delayed two....and here's Damian Priest with the briefcase. There's no cash -in yet as Rollins hits a superkick to send Balor to the floor. The Priest distraction lets Balor hit a pair of Coup de Graces but another misses inside, as Balor was glaring at Priest. Rollins hits the Stomp to retain at 12:34.

Rating: B-. The Priest stuff is interesting as the Judgment Day issues continue. I'm not sure where they're going, but there's certainly a story there. Rollins beating Balor isn't a

shock, though I was hoping for something a bit more epic here. Balor not winning the big one continues, and unfortunately I don't know how many more chances he is going to get.

Balor isn't happy with Priest.

Kevin Owens and Sami Zayn are watching in a sky box.

We recap the Bloodline Civil War. The Usos finally got fed up with Roman Reigns treating them like garbage and fought back. The team is splitting and now it's time for the big fight.

Usos vs. Solo Sikoa/Roman Reigns

Paul Heyman is here with Reigns and Sikoa. Jimmy and Sikoa stare at each other to start before Sikoa knocks him down hard. Jimmy isn't sure what to do here but it's off to Jey via a blind tag and Sikoa gets dropped. Reigns wants in and, after a rather long time, he gets to headlock Jey. Jey gets powered down but is fine enough to bring Jimmy back in. The threat of a double superkick sends Reigns bailing to the floor, where Heyman says I Jey has his way, Reigns' son will be sitting at Jey's table.

Back in and Jimmy slugs away but gets dropped with a single right hand. Sikoa gets to stomp away and we hit the nerve hold for a bit. One heck of a forearm drops Jimmy again as the fans decide that they should stand up if they hate Roman Reigns. That makes Reigns sit on the apron and complain to Heyman about how much he hates England. With that out of the way, Sikoa hits the running Umaga Attack and Reigns comes back in to add some shots of his own.

The nerve hold goes on again but Jimmy fights up. Reigns comes in and cuts Jimmy off so Jimmy kicks him away. There's no Jey though as Sikoa makes a perfectly timed cut off so the beating on Jimmy can continue. Jimmy dodges the Superman Punch though and a Cactus crossbody puts them both on the floor. Back in and the hot tag brings in Jey to clean house, including a high

crossbody for two on Sikoa.

Reigns tags himself back in but gets knocked outside, where the Superman Punch cuts off a diving Jey. Another one connects back inside but Jimmy makes his own blind tag and a double spear hits Reigns. Sikoa has to make a save this time around as Reigns wasn't getting up. We get the big showdown and Reigns Superman Punches Jimmy (didn't get all of it) for two. Reigns is frustrated and it's made even worse when the spear is cut off with a superkick.

The Superfly Splash is pulled into the guillotine but Jimmy powers up. Jey comes in....and the referee gets bumped. Jey superkicks Reigns into a not great 1D with no one to count. Sikoa breaks up the double Superfly Splashes and it's a pair of release Rock Bottoms to the Usos. Jimmy gets Spiked and a spike/spear kill Jey dead so Reigns can stack them up for....two. Reigns looks like he's about to cry and Heyman is speechless.

Sikoa loads up the announcers' table but the splash misses Jimmy and Reigns knows he's in trouble. Jey superkicks Reigns (camera misses it) but he cuts Jey down with the spear for two....and a low blow on the kickout. A bunch of superkicks drop Reigns and Jey hits the Superfly Splash for the pin at 31:55 and a ROAR from the crowd.

Rating: B. This is another big step in a long, long story as we're seeing Reigns fall off his mountain. He's lost his cousins, he's lost his security, and now he's lost a match. This is some awesome storytelling and that's how it should have gone. The match itself could have been better as the heat on Jimmy went on for the better part of ever, but the last ten minutes or so were excellent, with the kickout from the spear/Spike completely catching me. This is the only way the show could have ended and it was great.

The Usos celebrate as the Bloodline looks lost to end the

show.

Overall Rating: B. This show was not a home run, but it got enough done to make it work. The opener and main event are the matches of the night and the Cena segment, while long, was a nice surprise. As has been the case for most of the last several WWE pay per views, there was nothing terrible to drag it down and the big emotional moment worked. Solid show, though I was hoping for a bit more.

Results

Damian Priest won the Men's Money In The Bank ladder match
Liv Morgan/Raquel Rodriguez b. Shayna Baszler/Ronda Rousey – Oblivion to Rousey
Gunther b. Matt Riddle – Leg crank
Cody Rhodes b. Dominik Mysterio – Cross Rhodes
Iyo Sky won the Women's Money In The Bank ladder match
Seth Rollins b. Finn Balor – Stomp
Usos b. Roman Reigns/Solo Sikoa – Superfly Splash to Reigns

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Daily News Update – July 1, 2023

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[Smackdown – June 30, 2023](#)

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<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/shes-back-former-aew-star-returning-ring-nearly-four-years-away/>

WRESTLING RUMORS: Possible New Title Feud Coming For United States Champion.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/wrestling-rumors-possible-new-title-feud-coming-united-states-champion/>

WATCH: The Usos Make Bold Prediction About Roman Reigns' Future In The Bloodline.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-usos-make-bold-prediction-roman-reigns-future-bloodline/>

He's Back: WWE Announces Return Of Hall Of Famer For Special Segment Next Week.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/hes-back-wwe-announces-return-hall-famer-special-segment-next-week/>

WRESTLING RUMORS: Update On Bray Wyatt's WWE Return, Looking To Be In Great Shape Again.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/wrestling-rumors-update-bray-wyatts-wwe-return-looking-great-shape/>

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<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/boss-work-interesting-details-vince-mcmahons-recent-changes-wwe-tv/>

WATCH: WWE Superstar Releases New Music Video (And It's Pretty Cool).

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Rampage – June 30, 2023: The Rampage Standard

Rampage

Date: June 30, 2023

Location: First Ontario Center, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Excalibur, Tony Schiavone

We'll close out the first half of the year with the first Rampage after Forbidden Door. This week's Dynamite was a bit off (but still good) and now we get to see if Rampage is the same. The big draw this week is Claudio Castagnoli defending the Ring Of Honor World Title, which should make for something interesting. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Ring Of Honor World Title: Claudio Castagnoli vs. Kommander

Castagnoli is defending and drops Kommander with a forearm to start. Kommander balances himself in the corner and snaps off a headscissors. The sleeper is broken up and Castagnoli plants him hard to break up a rollup attempt. The Swing sends Kommander flying again but the Riccola Bomb is armdragged to the floor. Kommander's dive is pulled out of the air so he fires off some knees to the head to escape again.

Castagnoli isn't having this though and kicks Kommander over the barricade for a nasty crash. Back in and a DDT gets two as we take a break. We come back with Kommander needing a super hurricanrana to counter a superbomb. Kommander spins around Castagnoli's shoulders to send him outside, setting up the big flip dive. Castagnoli misses another running boot so Kommander (very slowly) walks the barricade for a shooting star to the back.

A top rope hurricanrana gives Kommander two back inside but Castagnoli drops him with an uppercut. Back up and Kommander climbs onto Castagnoli's shoulders, jumps backwards, and then tornado DDTs him down. A double jump phoenix splash gives Kommander two but the rope walk shooting star misses. Castagnoli uppercuts him out of the air and that's enough for a knockout via referee stoppage at 13:45.

Rating: B. This was some crazy amped up version of power vs. high flying as Kommander was doing all of his nutty stuff and Castagnoli finally just stopped it with straight strength. Kommander cut down on some of the ridiculous time it takes to set up some of his stuff here and it made for a more exciting match. Castagnoli just knocking him silly for the win was a great way to go and the champion looks as dominant as possible given how much Kommander threw at him.

Shawn Spears vs. The Blade

The Butcher is here with Blade. They go to the floor for a chop off to start with Spears getting the better of things. Spears thinks his chop was a ten and drops Blade back first onto the apron. Butcher gets in a cheap shot though and Blade drops Spears face first inside. More chops just wake Spears up though and he strikes away to take over. The left hands in the corner set up the C4 to finish Blade at 4:02.

Rating: C. They didn't have much time here and neither guy is exactly the best choice to keep things fired up. Spears hasn't been around much in recent months but I'm sure the Canadian crowd was happy to see one of their own. The match was far from boring and Spears had to overcome some cheating so it was a completely fine use of some time.

Video on the Owen Hart Foundation Tournament matches on Collision.

QTV vs. Matt Hardy/Brother Zay

It's QT Marshall/Johnny TV with Harley Cameron and Ethan Page as the respective seconds. Zay works on Johnny's arm to start before Marshall comes in to hit Zay in the face. It's off to Matt for a double elbow but QT drives him into the corner for some alternating shots to the face.

Matt shrugs it off and hands it back to Zay for a springboard crossbody. Zay tells Cameron to call him until he is sent outside, setting up a heck of a dive from Johnny. We take a break and come back with Zay kicking Johnny into the corner...and right back to QT. Zay shrugs it off and brings Matt back in to clean house as the pace picks up.

A powerbomb out of the corner gets two on Johnny, followed by the middle rope elbow to the back of the neck. Everything breaks down and Johnny's Flying Chuck gets two. Johnny can't hit his flipping neckbreaker and it's back to Zay, who hits a big dive onto both villains on the floor. Back in and a Cameron distraction lets QT crotch Zay on top. Starship Pain finishes Zay at 10:12.

Rating: C+. Well at least Marshall didn't get the pin. I'll take TV in here as the ace of QTV over Powerhouse Hobbs as if nothing else he feels like a more natural fit. Beating Matt Hardy and Zay won't hurt them a bit, especially when it's just a temporary thing with Jeff out of action. If they keep QTV on low level stuff like this, they're a fine nothing heel group.

Post match Page offers a save but gets superkicked. The Acclaimed and Billy Gunn make the real save.

Video on Hikaru Shida vs. Taya Valkyrie.

Here's what's coming on various shows.

Video on Wheeler Yuta vs. Kenny Omega next week on Dynamite.

Hikaru Shida vs. Taya Valkyrie

Taya powers her into the corner to start but gets caught with

a running knee. Shida hammers some right hands and knocks Taya outside, meaning it's time for the chair. The launched knee misses but an enziguri connects back inside. Taya sweeps the leg though and wraps it around the post as we take a break.

Back with Shida barely able to stand but being able to hit some strikes to the head. The knee is fine enough to hit a jumping knee but Taya knocks her off the ropes. Shida gets in another shot to set up the running Meteora off the apron. The Katana is blocked and Taya hits the running knees in the corner for two. Road To Valhalla is loaded up but Shida reverses into a cradle for the pin at 10:36.

Rating: C+. It's nice to see Shida getting a win for a change and the knee being fine enough to do some of her stuff didn't even go too far. Taya has fallen hard since those losses to Jade and I'm not sure how much she is going to be able to come back from them. Shida is a rather successful star around here, but it's another loss as Taya has yet to beat anyone that really matters.

Overall Rating: B-. The opener was good and the last two matches were certainly fine. This feels like a better than average version of the normal Rampage, with matches that don't have much major impact on storylines and little more than some people getting in the ring. It's a show that can be rather entertaining, but it's not important or required viewing in any way.

Results

Claudio Castagnoli b. Kommander via referee stoppage

Shawn Spears b. The Blade – C4

QTV b. Matt Hardy/Brother Zay – Starship Pain to Zay

Hikaru Shida b. Taya Valkyrie – Cradle

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Money In The Bank 2023 Preview

We're back to one of WWE's signature shows but this time they have taken it overseas to London (I think it's in Paraguay) to spice it up a bit. As usual there are two namesake ladder matches but in this case we also have the Bloodline Civil War and some other stuff that probably won't feel anywhere near as important. The show will certainly be a big one so let's get to it.

Intercontinental Title: Gunther(c) vs. Matt Riddle

Gunther is in a weird place as while he is only a few months ago from breaking the all time record for longest Intercontinental Title reigns but it doesn't feel like this must reach achievement. Gunther has long since been established as a big star and even losing the title won't particularly hurt him. It might not be what happens here, but it's something that feels like it's possible.

Now that being said, no I won't pick Riddle to dethrone the

monster here as it doesn't feel like the right change. Riddle has been built back up a bit as a serious fighter and the MMA stuff could give Gunther trouble, but ultimately this feels like a way for Gunther to get another nice win on his resume as the roster continues to be cleared out on the way to....whatever is next for him. Gunther retains, as he should.

Women's Tag Team Titles; Ronda Rousey/Shayna Baszler vs. Raquel Rodriguez/Liv Morgan

This is a match that could go either way, though that might not be a good thing. Rousey and Baszler feel like a team who could dominate the division for a long time to come, but WWE LOVES itself some thrown together teams ala Rodriguez and Morgan. They only lost the titles in the first place so putting the titles back on them here would hardly be some big shock.

Perhaps for the sake of my own sanity, I'll go with the champs retaining here. Rousey and Baszler haven't even had the titles for a month and I would hope they don't lose them to the combined forces of Rodriguez's back and Morgan's spunkiness. The villains winning here makes sense and dethroning them this soon would feel like a really bad idea. That makes me think I'm wrong, but I'll hope that the champions retain.

World Heavyweight Title: Seth Rollins(c) vs. Finn Balor

Here we have a rather WWE dilemma: do you go with the title change that makes Balor a star all over again and give him the chance that he never really had, or do you stick with the guy who makes the crowd "sing" and has a gimmick that is so odd that it really can't be explained? I think you know where this is going and unfortunately there isn't much of a way around it.

Rollins retains here, as for some reason that weird conducting the crowd deal is one of the biggest things in WWE at the moment. I'm not sure what the point of the whole thing is, but

the fans being into it is at least a sign that they're doing something right. Unfortunately that means Balor continues to spin his wheels, even as they close one of the bigger stories that he has had in WWE.

Women's Money In The Bank Ladder Match: Becky Lynch vs. Trish Stratus vs. Zoey Stark vs. Zelina Vega vs. Bayley vs. Iyo Sky

As is usually the case with these things, we'll go with a process of elimination. First of all, we'll drop Stark, Bayley and Vega. While the latter is at best a dark horse underdog, Bayley and Stark just aren't winning the thing and shouldn't. That leaves us with four options, and it's hard to imagine Stratus getting there either. Therefore, it's down to Lynch and Sky and that opens up some doors.

I'm going with Sky here, as the women's division is in serious need of some fresh blood other than Rhea Ripley. The Horsewomen are WAY past their peaks, Bianca Belair has been the top star for so long that she needs a replacement, and Asuka can only carry things for so long. They need someone fresh and Sky would fit that bill. As a bonus, Bayley can get annoyed at Sky for winning the briefcase and their issues can continue. Sky wins here, as she should.

Men's Money In The Bank Ladder Match: LA Knight vs. Logan Paul vs. Santos Escobar vs. Butch vs. Ricochet vs. Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Damian Priest

This is a trickier one as there are more options for potential winners. Again, we'll take out some people who just aren't going to win, meaning Butch, Ricochet, Nakamura and probably Escobar are out. That leaves us with three options, which has kind of been the case for the last few weeks. In other words, it depends on if you want to go with the logical choice, the people's choice, or the "HE'LL GET VIEWS" choice.

I want this to be Knight and it almost NEEDS to be him. Knight's reactions have been growing bigger and bigger and at

some point, WWE needs to pull the trigger on someone that hot, being 40 years old or not. I'll hope beyond hope that they do, but Priest makes some sense as well given his recent history with Rollins and Paul is Paul. Those are some solid options, but this would/could/should be Knight so we'll go that way.

Roman Reigns/Solo Sikoa vs. Usos

And now for the real main event, despite WWE announcing something else as the main event. The Bloodline story has dominated WWE for a very long time now and it is almost impossible to imagine that anything else is going to be nearly as important. This story has gotten one huge reaction after another and this is a showdown that has been built up for a long time. But someone has to win.

There is absolutely no reason for the Usos to lose here so we'll go with that. The Bloodline is falling apart right in front of your eyes and Reigns has to lose everything before the end. I don't think that involves him taking the fall here, but Sikoa getting pinned and earning a yelling from Reigns before they split as well makes sense. This is all about the Usos, and they'll go over in the end.

Dominik Mysterio vs. Cody Rhodes

Well not really the end because THIS is the main event due to reasons that should makes sense later. This is giving me a Kurt Angle vs. Mark Henry from the 2006 Royal Rumble vibe, as the only reason for the match to headline is for something screwy to happen. That something is likely to be from the king of "here he is to end the show" and I think you know where this is going.

I'll take Mysterio to win here, as a mixture of the crowd hating him so much and Brock Lesnar returning to screw Rhodes over would fit nicely. Rhodes vs. Lesnar III has to be set up and that can be done with one heck of a massacre to end the show. Rhodes flat out told Lesnar where to come to fight him

again so Rhodes will have no one to blame but himself. Lesnar interferes and gives Mysterio the win to end the show, because Lesnar is more important than anything else. Again.

Overall Thoughts

As much as I can't stand the build towards Money In The Bank most years (though this year's has been a notable improvement), the show has a tendency to be good. The ladder matches will both work by definition and some of the other stuff involved should hold up as well. If that is the case on both ends we will be in for a strong night as the Road To Summerslam can begin almost immediately.

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Smackdown – June 30, 2023: Just Don't Screw It Up

Smackdown

Date: June 30, 2023

Location: 02 Arena, London, England

Commentators: Michael Cole, Wade Barrett

We are less than a day away from Money In The Bank and that means it is time for the final push towards a pair of ladder matches and a Bloodline Civil War. That should make for a safe but secure night, though Charlotte is challenging for the Women's Title, which could go bad in a hurry. Let's get to it.

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

Here's a preview of what's coming tonight.

Tag Team Titles: Kevin Owens/Sami Zayn vs. Pretty Deadly

Home country boys Pretty Deadly are challenging. Sami cranks on Wilson's arm to start and armdrags him into an armbar. Prince gets in a cheap shot from the apron though and Wilson gets to choke away on the ropes like a cowardly villain should. We take a break and come back with Sami caught in a chinlock and Prince cutting off a tag attempt. Granted the save lasts all of three seconds before Sami gets to Owens anyway, meaning house can be quickly cleaned.

The backplash crushes Wilson on the floor and there's a Cannonball to Prince back inside. The Swanton hits Prince for two but Owens is favoring his leg/ankle. Owens can't hit the Stunner and the leg gives out, allowing Prince to go after the leg. An assisted Codebreaker sets up Spilled Milk for two, with Sami having to make the save. It's right back to Sami to pick up the pace, including a Blue Thunder Bomb for two. Wilson's rollup gets two on Sami but he exploders Wilson into the corner. Owens drops Prince and the Helluva Kick retains the titles at 11:12.

Rating: C+. Well what else were you expecting here? Pretty Deadly are the kind of team who can steal the win over beaten down opponents, but they're not taking the titles from a team who won them in the main event of Wrestlemania. Owens and Zayn

had to work to retain, but this wasn't exactly a stunning come from behind win. Nice opener though, as the fans are starting off hot.

We recap Sheamus vs. Solo Sikoa last week.

Ridge Holland wants Sikoa but gets a Championship Contenders match against Austin Theory instead. Works for Holland.

Austin Theory vs. Ridge Holland

Non-title but if Holland wins, he's in the title hunt. Theory takes him into the corner to start but a shoulder to the ribs is countered into a swinging front facelock (the Yorkshire Merry Go Round) for two. Another shot puts Holland back down but Theory spends too much time talking. That means Holland can fight up with a suplex, only to have Theory slip out of a powerslam. A shot to the throat and a throat ram into the top rope sets up Theory's rolling dropkick to finish Holland at 2:53. Bad start for the Brits on this show.

Post match the beatdown stays on but Sheamus runs out for the save.

Karrion Kross, with Scarlett, promises to checkmate AJ Styles next week.

Long video, complete with awesome voiceover, on the Bloodline Civil War. As usual, this is what WWE does really, really well.

Bayley vs. Shotzi

Bayley's Money In The Bank ladder match spot is on the line and she has Iyo Sky in her corner. Bayley gets caught with a reverse Sling Blade to start as the fans sing about Bayley being their girl. The Bayley To Belly gets two but Shotzi is right back with a DDT for a breather. An enziguri misses for Shotzi but she's fine enough for the reverse Cannonball. Sky puts Bayley's foot on the rope, which is enough of a

distraction for Bayley to rake the eyes. The Rose Plant secures Bayley's spot at 3:32.

Rating: C. I'm not sure how what the point was if Bayley was going to win this quickly, but at least they went with something involving a story over the "building momentum" nonsense. Shotzi continues to be rather energized but she hasn't ever really gotten over the hump. That might change some day in the future, though getting over said hump might need a little more than a tank.

Video on the men's Money In The Bank ladder match.

Shotzi goes after Bayley and Iyo Sky in the back and gets put through a table. They throw in a hair cut for inconvenience as well.

It's time for the Grayson Waller Effect and Waller wastes no time in bringing out his guest: Logan Paul. Waller gets to the point again, by asking what winning the briefcase would mean. Paul says it would mean a lot in London because being the champ is the ultimate goal. Maybe he cashes in tomorrow, or maybe he just hits LA Knight with the briefcase.

Cue Knight and my goodness the reactions continue (with commentary flat out saying the fans love him). Knight knows Paul can go viral but he's in the middle of Knight's ring. Paul says he sees someone who was supposed to be a manager but Knight tells him to listen to the fans. Paul to the fans: "You're drunk. Go home." Cue Santos Escobar to say he needs the briefcase but now it's Butch to interrupt and the fight is on fast.

Butch vs. LA Knight vs. Santos Escobar

Joined in progress with Knight stomping on Butch in the corner and Logan Paul at ringside. Butch misses the big kick to Knight, who drops him down HARD instead. Escobar sends them into the corner for a running knee and Knight has to make a

save. Knight loads up the spelling elbow but Butch breaks it up and hits the Bitter End to pin Escobar at 3:30.

Rating: C+. It was energetic and done in a hurry, as something like this should have been. Butch is about as long of a shot as you can get to win the briefcase tomorrow but points for at least throwing him the tiniest of bones here. Knight and Paul have to be the heavy favorites, but Money In The Bank is the definition of anything could happen. For now, Butch gets a nice win, which will mean all of nothing tomorrow.

Post match Butch gets to pull down the briefcase.

AJ Styles is down to face Karrion Kross and has Michin to deal with Scarlett.

Smackdown Women's Title: Asuka vs. Charlotte

Charlotte is challenging and Bianca Belair is sitting in the front row. Asuka cuts off a charge with some knees to the face for two, followed by a Backstabber as we take an early break. Back with Charlotte's moonsault missing but the spear connecting for two. Asuka bails to the floor where the moonsault in her general vicinity puts her down again. Charlotte accidentally drops Belair with a big boot, which is enough to draw Belair over the barricade to go after Asuka (smart) for the DQ at 8:38.

Rating: C+. It was nice while it lasted but this was all about keeping the story going. I'm sure Charlotte will get to whine about how unfair everything has been to her as the triple threat is set for some point in the future. For now though, it was a hard hitting match that served its purpose.

Post match Belair stays on Asuka but gets dropped by Charlotte. Back up and Belair takes them both out and stacks them up on the announcers' table.

Money In The Bank rundown. Cody Rhodes vs. Dominik Mysterio is

set for the main event.

Here is the Bloodline to wrap things up. Roman Reigns says for the last two or so years, he has allowed the Usos to call themselves the ones. The truth is that Reigns is the only one because he is the Tribal Chief. He is the only one who loves the Usos and lifted them into the promised land.

The fans say Reigns sucks but he says family betraying you is what really sucks. A good father, or Tribal Chief, will give his family chance after chance, but now they need to come out here and bow down in apology. Cue the Usos to say this is about consequences, like the ones that hit Reigns if he loses. When Reigns loses the war tomorrow, he's the only one out. There will be a new Tribal Chief and that would be....Solo Sikoa!

Reigns cracks up in laughter but gets a look, which earns the Usos some yelling. Jey and Reigns yell at each other until Jimmy superkicks Reigns. Sikoa gets taken down and the big fight is on, with security being taken out as Jimmy hits a big dive to wrap things up. This feud has been built up for years now and this was just one last "here's the next big step" for tomorrow.

Overall Rating: C+. The final show before Money In The Bank is always a weird one as the show is set and there isn't much to do. This show offered a pair of title matches to fill in the time and they worked well enough, but the ladder matches and the Bloodline stuff is what matters most. Neither had much to add, but tomorrow is ready to launch. As usual, this was more about "don't screw anything up" and they managed to avoid that problem just fine.

Results

Kevin Owens/Sami Zayn b. Pretty Deadly – Helluva Kick to Wilson

Austin Theory b. Ridge Holland – Rolling dropkick

Bayley b. Shotzi – Rose Plant

Butch b. Santos Escobar and LA Knight – Bitter End to Escobar

Asuka b. Charlotte via DQ when Bianca Belair interfered

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Ring Of Honor – June 29, 2023: Guest Stars Are Fun

Ring Of Honor

Date: June 29, 2023

Location: Scotiabank Arena, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Caprice Coleman

We're done with Forbidden Door but like so many other things AEW does, we'll be seeing some of the same people here this week. There are likely going to be several New Japan stars on this show and that means we could be in for a high quality week. Not so high quality that Jerry Lynn could actually say

something important, but still good. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Tony Khan and Stokely Hathaway are here to talk about how there are a bunch of New Japan stars here. We hear about some of the stars, with Tony saying he'll be at the Gorilla position and Hathaway can find him if needed. Another thing AEW does better than ROH: not having Tony Khan on the show so often. It feels like he's using this show for practice to be on AEW TV more and no. Please goodness no.

Dralistico/Preston Vance vs. Mark Wheeler/Vikram Prashar

Dralistico knocks Wheeler down to start and strikes away to take over fast. Vance comes in with his spinebuster for two and demands the now legal Prashar to hit him. It's back to Dralistico for a knee to the face and Vance adds the lariat for the double pin at 2:25. Well that was efficient.

Dark Order vs. The Righteous

Evil Uno is here with the Order while Stu Grayson is here with the Righteous. The Order jumps them to start fast and clears the ring, allowing Grayson to hand Uno a chair. That's enough for an ejection, with the distraction letting Dutch run Silver over for two. Silver gets caught in the wrong corner and the beating is on until Dutch charges into a boot.

The big tag brings in Reynolds to clean house, including a hard running knee to Vincent in the corner. Everything breaks down and the Righteous is sent into various things on the floor. Back in and Silver brainbusters Vincent but Dutch makes the save. Vincent grabs a small package to finish Reynolds at 5:32.

Rating: C+. The Order did look more aggressive here and that helps, but at the end of the day, it's another loss in a

rather long string of them. The Righteous might not be great, but they're more interesting than the Order. I could go for more of the Righteous' mind games, though it's almost time to move them over to some new opponents.

Post match the beatdown is on until Uno runs back out for the save. Grayson gets in the way of the chair shot though and we get the big staredown, with Grayson leaving before anything gets violent.

Leila Grey vs. Diamante

Mark Sterling is here with Grey. A headlock has Diamante in some early trouble but she slips out and works on the arm instead. Grey bails to the floor and gets sent into the steps for her efforts. Sterling offers a distraction though and Grey gets in a cheap shot to take over. The double arm crank with a knee in Diamante's back doesn't last long so we'll go with a normal chinlock instead. Diamante jawbreaks her way to freedom but it's too early for a running knee in the corner. A running corner dropkick connects instead but Sterling puts the foot on the rope. Not that it matters as Diamante hits Cross Rhodes for the pin at 6:03.

Rating: C. This was more about Diamante overcoming Sterling's interference, as it isn't like beating Grey is overly impressive. I still think there is something to be done with Diamante as she has a unique look and the charisma to make it work. Give her a chance already, as this feud isn't getting her anywhere.

Claudio Castagnoli says no one wants the World Title because they're scared of him. Cue Chuck Taylor to say he'll challenge if Castagnoli is interested. Taylor leaves and Castagnoli says it can be a Proving Ground match, but they'll scrap the time limit so the beating can be on.

Lucha Bros/El Hijo del Vikingo/Kommander b. Gringo Loco/Shane Taylor/Workhorsemen

Wouldn't be Ring Of Honor without the Workhorses getting in their required appearance. Penta and Loco start things off and the fans are a bit split here. There's no major contact for a minute and a half so everything breaks down with a series of strikes and flips to the floor. The spike Fear Factor is loaded up for Loco but he slips out and kicks Fenix down. Taylor's splash gets two so it's Kommander coming in to get crushed in the corner as well.

A springboard moonsault gives Loco two but Kommander kicks his way over to bring in Vikingo. Everything breaks down and the Bros snap off kicks. Drake breaks up the Fear Factor and it's off to Fenix vs. Henry in a chop off. Taylor comes in and gets to wreck some people until Kommander and Vikingo do their big dives to the floor. The spike Fear Factor finishes Henry at 8:55.

Rating: B-. It was exactly the fun match that you would expect and they got a bit of time to make it work. This is where the Lucha Bros get to shine, though I'm not sure who is supposed to be their next challengers. Other than that, Vikingo and Kommander flipped, Loco did well when he could, Taylor is a monster and the Workhorses are here a lot.

Samoa Joe is ready to defeat Roderick Strong in the Owen Hart Foundation tournament. Stokely Hathaway comes in to say he runs things around here but Joe says he runs Hathaway, which has panic ensuing.

Big Bill/Lee Moriarty vs. Karou/Tariq

Karou slugs at Bill to start and can't get very far, even with the heavy shots. The swinging Boss Man Slam drops Karou and it's off to Moriarty to take over on Tariq. A hurricanrana sends Moriarty into the corner but he slips away and brings in Bill for the house cleaning. Everything breaks down and the Border City Stretch makes Tariq tap at 3:22.

Rating: C. Tariq and Karou didn't exactly look great in there

and Bill/Moriarty still don't feel like anything important. Some of that might have to do with the fact that one of their names is "Big Bill" but it also might be that they aren't exactly interesting. They could be fine enough as a one off challenger for the Tag Team Titles, though that could still be a ways off.

Six Man Tag Team Titles: The Embassy vs. Los Ingobernables de Japon

The Embassy is defending and has Prince Nana with them. Bushi bounces off of Cage to start so Takagi comes in to strike away. With that not working, Takahashi comes in and sends Cage into the corner for a triple team. The Gates make a save and Cage hits the apron superplex on Takahashi. Toa grabs a neck crank but Takahashi DDTs his way to freedom. Takagi comes in to clean house but gets cut off by Kaun's Backstabber.

Kaun gets dropped as well though and it's Bushi coming in off a missile dropkick. Everything breaks down and Kaun blasts Bushi with a clothesline. Cage World's Strongest Slams Takagi and powerbombs Takahashi at the same time (because that's something someone can do) but Bushi mists him. Back in and Opening The Gates finishes Bushi at 7:42.

Rating: B-. They packed a ton into this match and it's nice to see a match where the Embassy breaks a sweat. The six man division more or less doesn't exist but Ring Of Honor insists on having one anyway, which makes things quite annoying. The Embassy still is only so interesting, but as shown here, they can rise up against better opponents.

The United Empire want better opponents around here.

El Desperado vs. Willie Mack

Feeling out process to start until Mack hits a heck of a dropkick to take over. Desperado can't strike his way out of the corner and gets knocked down much harder. The fall away

slam into the nip up into the standing moonsault gives Mack two but Desperado starts in on the leg to take him out.

A leglock, with what looks like a Tranquilo pose thrown in, has Mack in more trouble but Mack makes the rope. Mack knocks him silly with a right hand but he has to kick Desperado away again. The double underhook faceplant is broken up but the second attempt finishes Mack at 9:05.

Rating: B-. More good stuff here, even as Mack's losing streak continues. The guy can't catch a break around here but it still works well as he is able to put on a nice match against anyone. At some point he needs to win, but that wasn't going to come at the expense of one of the New Japan guest stars. Granted commentary hyping up Desperado's upcoming match with Jon Moxley didn't help either.

Roppongi Vice vs. Sho/Yujiro Takahashi

Vice get jumped at the bell but come back with stereo dropkicks to send them into the corner. A kick to the chest and standing moonsault get two on Takahashi as we hear about all of Romero's partners and students (including Sho but save for Trent) turning on him. Sho gets in a cheap shot on Trent on the floor though and a backdrop gets...well nothing back inside actually.

Some kicks rock Trent but he gets a boot up on Takahashi so the hot tag can bring Romero back in. The Forever Lariats crush Sho and Takahashi but Strong Zero is broken up. Takahashi brings in the cane but gets it taken away, only to have Sho hit a backstabber for two on Trent. Everything breaks down and Vice hits a double jumping knee on Sho. Strong Zero finishes Takahashi at 8:53.

Rating: B-. Another fast paced match here between teams that know how to do that style. Vice getting the win is nice to see as they might actually be around here for a little while. Takahashi and Sho are a good team but they're going to be back

in Japan sooner than later. Let the regular AEW/ROH team get the win instead, which is exactly what they did here.

Post match Sho is back up for the beatdown but Orange Cassidy makes the save.

United Empire vs. Action Andretti/Darius Martin/Christopher Daniels

Andretti and TJP start things off and go to the mat with TJP headstanding his way out of a headscissors. A cartwheel gets TJP out of a hurricanrana but Andretti hits a dropkick (harder to block you see). Daniels comes in to take over on Fletcher but it's Cobb coming in to muscle Daniels up.

Cobb and Fletcher do the passing suplex for two on Daniels, who manages to get over to Andretti anyway. TJP is right there to plant him with a Falcon Arrow and the Mamba Splash gets two. The Empire clears the ring as everything breaks down. Back in and Daniels sends TJP into a kind of double slam from Andretti and Martin for the pin at 8:15 (TJP kicked out at about 3.1 and things seemed a bit confused).

Rating: C+. I didn't see that ending coming and based on how things looked, I'm not sure how many others did either. The match was what you would expect, but they did something new with having the normal powers lose. I can't imagine Andretti and company win the titles out of this, but they are likely set up for a title shot if/when no one better comes along.

Jerry Lynn actually gets to talk! This time it's to the Kingdom, who have been sucking up to him about what a legend he is. Mike Bennett brings up retiring Lynn and as a result, it's the Kingdom vs. the Infantry/Trish Adora. Maria isn't happy.

Athena vs. KC Spinelli

Non-title Proving Ground match, so if Spinelli can win or

survive the ten minute time limit, she gets a future title shot. Spinelli runs her over with a shoulder to start but Athena does the same and stops to dance. A backslide gives Spinelli two so Athena hammers her down. Athena hits a right hand for the pin at 2:41.

Post match Athena crushes her against the steps.

Claudio Castagnoli vs. Chuck Taylor

Another non-title Proving Ground match but with no time limit. Taylor wastes no time in hammering away in the corner and Soul Food sends Castagnoli outside. Castagnoli knocks him over the barricade and sends Taylor face first into various things. Cue Roppongi Vice to check on him and the revived Taylor grabs the Koji Clutch back inside. Castagnoli breaks that up so a piledriver gives Taylor two and the Neutralizer is countered into a rollup for the same. Back up and Castagnoli hits the Riccola Bomb for the pin at 5:30.

Rating: C+. They were trying here but Taylor is the weakest link in a lower level group so this wasn't the biggest challenge. That's the problem for Castagnoli: despite having an insane amount of opponents to pick from, he hasn't felt like he has been in any real jeopardy in a long, long time outside of Eddie Kingston. That is going to have to change, but right now there is no one on the horizon, as even Kingston has only been wanting to fight him and not go after the title.

Overall Rating: B-. Maybe it was having some fresh blood around, but I did like this show a bit better than recent efforts. It's also a hair shorter at just under two hours, which does take away some of that "how much longer is this thing" feeling. The one issue I'd have is the same thing that happens with a lot of Tony Khan produced wrestling: there are three episodes of this show left before Death Before Dishonor and a grand total of nothing has been announced.

There are a few matches ready, likely including Eddie Kingston

vs. Claudio Castagnoli (taking place pretty much solely on AEW), but it would be nice to not have most of the card dumped on us with a week or two to go. I'm not sure why this is such a common thing around here/in AEW but you can almost guarantee that is how things are going. For now though, nice show with the New Japan stars adding in some nice flavor.

Results

Dralistico/Preston Vance b. Mark Wheeler/Vikram Prashar – Double pin

Righteous b. Dark Order – Small package to Reynolds

Diamante b. Leila Grey – Cross Rhodes

Lucha Bros/El Hijo del Vikingo/Kommander b. Gringo Loco/Shane Taylor/Workhorsesmen – Spike Fear Factor to Henry

Big Bill/Lee Moriarty b. Tariq/Karou – Border City Stretch to Tariq

The Embassy b. Los Ingobernables de Japon – Opening The Gates to Bushi

El Desperado b. Willie Mack – Double underhook faceplant

Roppongi Vice b. Sho/Yujiro Takahashi – Strong Zero to Takahashi

Action Andretti/Christopher Daniels/Darius Martin b. United Empire – Double slam to TJP

Athena b. KC Spinelli – Right hand

Claudio Castagnoli b. Chuck Taylor – Riccola Bomb

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