WCCW TV – February 6, 1988: Anyone Want To Wrestle?

WCCW TV
Date: February 6, 1988
Location: Dallas Sportatorium, Dallas, Texas
Commentator: Marc Lowrence

It's more WCCW as it's the one year listed on the Network that I haven't covered. As usual I have very little idea of what is going on here but I'd assume that the Von Erichs will be involved. I was three days old when this show aired, meaning it was on a Saturday, thereby ending my trivia about this show. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

We open with a clip from Christmas 1987 as Shaun Simpson faces Eric Embry in a cage for the World Lightweight Title. The bloody Embry rolls through a high crossbody and pulls the trunks to win the title.

Then about a month later, Simpson faced and pinned Embry in a rematch, though the title didn't appear to be on the line.

Then they fought again and Embry accidentally bumped the referee so there was no count when Simpson got a cover. Another wrestler came in to count the fall, which I can't imagine counted. Thankfully another referee came in to say not so fast and gave the title back to Embry because the other referee understands how wrestling works. Even commentary was almost calling Simpson ridiculous for that one.

Now we look at John Tatum/Jack Victory vs. the Fantastics from some undated show. Some cheating gave Tatum the pin as we're told this is from the same Christmas night show from before. Then another referee comes out to reverse the decision and

give it to the Fantastics. The villains came back and got cleared out again.

Then about a week later, the Fantastics beat an unnamed team but Victory and Tatum ran in to beat them down.

Tatum and Victory don't care that their Texas Tag Team Titles are held up because they won them in the first place and are still the Wild West Tag Team Champions. We see a video from the Fantastics promising vengeance, sending Tatum into a rant about how they won the titles fair and square. They'll win the titles the first chance they get.

Al Perez vs. Matt Borne

It's our first match, over a third of the way into the show. Wild Bill Irwin joins commentary and Gary Hart is here with Perez as they grapple around to start. The feeling out process continues with Borne not being able to get very far with Perez. A rollup gives Borne two and Hardy isn't pleased so far. Perez shoves him into the corner for a change but the ans stay behind Borne. The test of strength goes on but neither of them can get very far again. Perez cranks on a hammerlock but Borne seems to go low to escape. That only gets two though and they trade rollups until Perez gets a backslide for the pin at 5:31.

Rating: C. The face/heel stuff was a little strange here as Perez wasn't quite the crowd favorite but won in the end anyway. I've always liked Perez and it's nice to see him getting a win. Unless Hart was a good guy at this point (which is hard to fathom), this was kind of backwards and commentary isn't exactly explaining things all that well.

We look back at the end of last week's show with the Von Erichs beating up Buddy Roberts, the Angel of Death and Iceman Parsons, the latter of whom is handcuffed in the corner (ala Fritz Von Erich on Christmas night, with commentary actually explaining something for once). The villains eventually ran

off.

Angel of Death/Buddy Roberts/Iceman Parsons vs. Chris Adams/Kerry Von Erich/Kevin Von Erich

This is a Penalty Box match, meaning if you get caught cheating, you go to the penalty box (a small cage) for one minute. Get caught again and you're sent in for two minutes. Kerry (he's popular) and Buddy start things off with the former cranking on a wristlock. The discus punch sends Roberts outside fast and we pause a bit for some planning. Angel comes in and knocks Kerry into the corner so it's off to Adams for a headlock.

Kevin comes in for the (barefoot) dropkick as commentary says there is no way Roberts can hang with any of these guys on his own. Roberts gets caught with a cheap shot and gets sent to the box and it's off to Parsons to stomp on Kerry. The discus punch gets Kerry out of trouble but Parsons grabs a sleeper. Roberts comes back in as the fans won't stop chanting for Kerry.

Another sleeper has Roberts in trouble for a change and Kerry drops a nasty looking middle rope knee. Roberts cheats again so Kevin gets in a shot from the apron, earning himself a trip to the box. Parsons comes in and quickly bails straight to the floor from the threat of the Claw. The Angel tries to go after Kerry without a tag and it's off to the box for him as well. Parsons knocks Kerry to the floor (Marc: "Right in the asteroid.") and Kevin goes over to check on him as Angel is out.

Kerry walks around the ring for some reason before catching Parsons' leg and snapping it across the rope. The Figure Four goes on the bad leg but everything breaks down. Kevin chairs Roberts and Parsons as Angel and Kerry slug it out. Angel is knocked down and walks away as Adams is in the box and Roberts comes in.

We take a break and come back with Kerry gorilla pressing Roberts and Adams getting out of the box (making me think nothing changed in the break). Adams comes in with a top rope ax handle as things have slowed way down. The referee says that's cheating and sends Adams into the box (with Kevin, who apparently went in off screen). Kerry Claws Roberts but here is the Angel again. Not that it matters as Kerry small packages Roberts for 14:38 (commentary didn't notice).

Rating: B-. The penalty stuff was a WCCW mainstay but it got a bit confusing at times, as there were penalties that just seemed to pop up with no announcement. Either that or the penalties didn't do much, as nothing would change while someone was in the box. The action was good and it felt like they were mad at each other though so I've seen far worse ideas. Better match than the rest of the show, as the Von Erichs vs. the Freebirds (or bird here) is always worth a look.

Post match Angel uses some handcuffs to lock Adams and Kevin inside…for all of ten seconds before they get out and save Kerry from the beatdown.

Overall Rating: C. I'm not sure what to make of this show as so much of it was spent on those recaps of things that happened weeks ago. I can't say it was bad as I got where things were going, but do you really want to just air old stuff for the first 20 minutes or so of an hour long show? The main event was good, but this felt like a recap show for a long time and that's a weird way to go on any given week.

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WCCW TV – April 30, 1983: Oh Yeah That's Different

WCCW TV
Date: April 30, 1983
Location: Dallas Sportatorium, Dallas, Texas
Commentator: Bill Mercer

I might as well look at some more of this place, as I have something from almost every year throughout the 80s save for 1983 so let's check off a box. WCCW is a promotion with a great reputation from around this time and there is a good chance that they are going to be able to keep that going here. I have no idea what to expect from this show and that can be a lot of fun. Let us know in the comments below.

Opening sequence.

Bill Mercer welcomes us to the show and previews the main event. That main event will feature Texas Champion David Von Erich and Iceman Parsons, who join us to talk about how they're ready for the Freebirds. They're ready to go, though Parsons says he's ready to boogie.

Chris Adams vs. The Mongol

Mongol (who looks like King Kong Bundy after a good diet and growing a strange beard) has Skandor Akbar with him. Mongol knocks him into the corner to start but Adams slugs his way to

freedom. Adams gets knocked down to set up a chinlock, which is broken up without much effort.

A slam gives Mongol two but Adams is back up with….an unidentified shot to the stomach area. Adams drops him with a superkick (Mercer: “He must have learned that one from the Orient) and gets two off a rather difficult powerslam. Another superkick (which didn’t get overly close to the jaw) sets up another superkick in the corner but Mongol throws him over the top for the DQ at 3:59.

Rating: C. This was starting to pick up when they went to the DQ, which is likely to set up a rematch. Mongol feels like someone who could be a nice monster for someone to slay later on. I’m not sure if that is going to be Adams, but he looked good enough slugging away here. Nice opener, but it was only going to get so far in around four minutes.

Post match the brawl is on until referees break it up.

Chavo Guerrero (Senior, who looks a bit like Ricky Steamboat) talks about what it’s like on his ranch. He is now an American citizen but grew up in Mexico City. We hear about the Guerrero wrestling family and how glad Chavo is to make it to Dallas. Texas is his home and he knows the talent is here. Chavo throws in some Spanish and then jumps in the ring for his match. This was Chavo’s getting to know you segment, but it was kind of rambling.

We get a preview of the rest of the show in Spanish for a strange way to go.

<u>Jimmy Garvin vs. Chavo Guerrero</u>

I’m assuming this is Chavo’s debut and Garvin has Precious with him. It takes a good while to have Precious get Garvin ready to go, as tends to be Garvin’s custom. Chavo starts fast with some dropkicks and the upset Garvin is on the floor (Garvin: “HOW’S MY HAIR???”). Back in and Chavo takes him down

with a headscissors, leaving Precious rather nervous.

Garvin slaps the mat, a good ten years before the tap out became a thing in wrestling. The headscissors is broken up and Garvin cranks on the legs, which is broken up for a standoff. Garvin doesn't like standing off though and goes outside to yell about how Chavo escaped. Back in and Chavo takes him down into another headscissors before twisting his boots around Garvin's head (and his HAIR).

Garvin gets up and tries to hammer away, only to have Chavo backflip over him out of the corner. Chavo pulls him into a surfboard as Garvin has no idea what to do here. Garvin gets outside again and comes back in for some right hands from Chavo. The Gory Stretch is loaded up as time expires at around 8:52 (called 10:00).

Rating: C+. Total star making performance here from Chavo, who was showing some insane stuff for the early 80s. Chavo was flipping around and making Garvin look lost as he couldn't figure Guerrero out and it made for an entertaining match. The more I see of Garvin the more entertaining he is and that was certainly the case again here.

Post match Garvin thinks there is someone messing with him but now he has film on Chavo.

<u>Kimala vs. Tom Renesto/Bill Rathke</u>

Kimala is of course Kamala with Kim Chee, while the other two have Armand Hussein with them. The two of them jump Kimala to start and get chopped the head for their efforts. The double teaming doesn't work either as Renesto gets chest clawed down and Rathke gets hit in the throat. Kimala sends them into each other, setting up some splashes to finish Rathke at 2:20. He has to pin both though so it's some splashes to Renesto to finish for good at 2:53. Total destruction in a good way.

Post match Skandor Akbar brags about the power of Kimala.

David Von Erich/Iceman Parsons vs. Freebirds

Michael Hayes/Buddy Roberts for the Freebirds here and Jimmy Garvin/Precious are at ringside. Roberts and Parsons get things going with Roberts taking him down but having the spinning toehold broken up. Parsons monkey flips him down and scores with some dropkicks, meaning it's time to dance. The fans want Hayes but have to settle for Parsons grabbing a headscissors.

Roberts can't get up to drag him into the corner as Parsons keeps him in trouble. A rake to the eyes finally allows Hayes to get in for a slam and fist drop. That doesn't last long as Von Erich comes in to take Hayes into the corner. The Freebirds need a breather on the floor, while Precious films things for some reason. Back in and Hayes gets in a cheap shot on Parsons to take over, leaving Parsons' arm tied in the rope.

That lasts all of two seconds before it's back to Hayes for a backbreaker. Parsons gets right back up and brings in Von Erich as everything breaks down. Von Erich is sent outside in a crash, where he teases smacking Sunshine. The distraction lets Garvin hit him with the camera as Parsons is sent outside. Garvin tosses Von Erich back inside where Hayes get the pin at 9:30.

Rating: C+. The action wasn't exactly great but you could feel the energy here as the Von Erichs and Freebirds were the top stars in the promotion. The crowd HATED the Freebirds and it got worse as the match went on. Garvin as a Freebird associate makes sense, though that might be more him going after Von Erich and the Texas Title. Good main event though and the most energized part of the show by far.

A very quick preview for next week wraps us up.

Overall Rating: C+. World Class is a show that takes a lot of getting used to as they don't really have much in the way of

big stories. You would have feuds, but it was rare to see something specific about why these people are fighting this week. It's more along the lines of "well, they were fighting last week so they're still fighting this week." until a big angle or moment takes place. That's not a bad thing, but it's different than what you would see later. The energy was certainly there though and you could see how unique this place was for its era.

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NXT LVL Up – April 14, 2023: Those Are Stars

NXT LVL Up
Date: April 14, 2023
Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida
Commentators: Blake Howard, Byron Saxton, Mr. Stone

Last week's show saw Schism main event and this week almost

has to be better than that. It was nice to have some bigger names come down, but there is only so much you can get out of having those people around here. Maybe we get to see some fresh stars for a change, as they might have a future in the main NXT. Let's get to it.

Here are last week's results if you need a recap.

Opening sequence.

Hank Walker vs. Kale Dixon

Walker tries to power him into the corner but Dixon flips him in instead, much to Walker's surprise. One heck of a chop has Dixon screaming though and Walker starts in on the arm. Dixon gets in a cheap shot to take over though and an old school swinging neckbreaker gets two. Walker isn't having that and slugs away, setting up a Thesz press and right hands (like that would ever get over). A jumping back elbow finishes Dixon at 4:58.

Rating: C. Walker is the definition of someone who isn't that great in the ring but the fans get behind him, meaning it makes sense to leave him around. He isn't exactly polished but there is a charisma to him and that is something that can serve him well. I can't imagine him getting very far, but this is already a step that a lot of stars don't have.

Elektra Lopez and Lola Vice are ready for Kayden Carter and Katana Chance. Vice says they aren't ready for Latina Heat.

Xyon Quinn vs. Tavion Heights

Quinn doesn't look impressed but Heights powers him into the corner to change his attitude. They trade rollups for two each before Quinn takes him into the corner for the stomping. A double stomp to the ribs sets up a backbreaker for one and Quinn is already getting frustrated. Heights fights out of a double arm crank but gets forearmed straight into the ropes.

Back up and Heights grabs a fireman's carry slam for two but Quinn ax handles him down. The running punch finishes Heights at 5:14.

Rating: C. Quinn is the opposite of Hank Walker, as he was treated like someone who should be the big star but it never came together in any way. He has the looks and some of the charisma, but there is only so much that he can do for whatever reason. Unless something clicks in a big way, I don't see his status changing, though he is good enough for a spot like this one.

Kayden Carter/Katana Chance vs. Lola Vice/Elektra Lopez

Vice isn't impressed with Carter to start and takes her down, meaning it's off to Lopez vs. Chance. Lopez isn't having any of this Chance picking up the pace thing and knocks her out of the air. Vice kicks Chance in the corner and it's back to Lopez for a torture rack of all things. Chance flips out of a double belly to back suplex though and Carter comes in to clean house. The running boot to the face in the ropes gets two on Vice and it's a slingshot legdrop/moonsault combination for the same. Everything breaks down and Chance Codebreakers Lopez. The 450/neckbreaker combination finishes Lopez at 6:35.

Rating: C+. This picked up a bit more and was the best match of the night, partially because Carter and Chance have some more experience together. It made for a better match and I'll take that over the same kind of singles match that we get around here so often. Not a great match, but it was big enough for a main event on this show.

Overall Rating: C. They took the star power away here and went with the same people that we see around here most of the time. Carter and Chance were your big names and that isn't quite enough to make up for focusing on Quinn and Walker in the first two matches. Just not a very interesting show, as it just came and went again.

Results
Hank Walker b. Kale Dixon – Jumping elbow
Xyon Quinn b. Tavion Heights – Running punch
Kayden Carter/Katana Chance b. Lola Vice/Elektra Lopez – 450/neckbreaker combination to Lopez

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Monday Night Raw – August 30, 1999: The Saving Grace?

Monday Night Raw
Date: August 30, 1999
Location: FleetCenter, Boston, Massachusetts
Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

As usual, it's been a minute since we've been here and things have been changing a bit. HHH is the new WWF Champion, having defeated Mankind last week. He also successfully defended the title against the Rock last week on the debut of a new show

called Smackdown. We're on the way to Unforgiven and the card needs to get started so let's get to it.

Here are last week's results if you need a recap.

Here is the Rock to get things going and yep the people seem to like him. After declaring that he is FINALLY in Boston again, Rock blames a wannabe cowboy commissioner named Shawn Michaels for costing him the WWF Title on Smackdown. Rock is going to take Shawn's little cowboy hat, spin his six shooter around, and stick it, uh, somewhere. He calls out HHH for a fight but doesn't get him, which sends Rock to the back to find HHH himself. We cut to the Rock in the back, where HHH, Chyna and Shane McMahon all jump him in a hallway. Mankind makes the save.

Here are Shane McMahon and the Mean Street Posse for a chat. Shane has heard that Rock and Mankind want a WWF Title shot tonight so they can have it….if they can defeat their respective opponents. We'll start with the Rock, who gets to face the Undertaker in a no holds barred, falls count anywhere match. As for Mankind, Shane beat him last week but first, Mankind attacked the Mean Street Posse. That's why tonight, Mankind has to beat all of them RIGHT NOW!

Mankind vs. Mean Street Posse

If Mankind wins, he gets a WWF Title shot against HHH tonight. Oh and Shane McMahon will be the guest referee! As expected, it's a triple teaming to start but Mankind fights back like he's Mankind and they're the Mean Street Posse. The beating is on with Mankind hitting the running knee in the corner on Rodney but Joey Abs gets in a chair shot (behind Shane's back of course) for a breaker.

Back in and Joey (with his foot in a cast) stomps away as Pete throws in a trashcan. Shane misses the beating but does stop to yell at them, allowing a double suplex to get two on Mankind. Joey's street sign hits Rodney by mistake but Shane

has hurt his ankle. A shovel to the head drops Joey but Shane won't count. That earns Shane the Mandible Claw, which draws in HHH for the brawl. The match is thrown out with Mankind being declared the winner by DQ, but Shane makes the correction (as Lilian Garcia seemed to mess up).

Rating: C-. There was only so much you could get out of this was it wasn't going to be anything more than a joke. That's what the Posse was there for, but they didn't bother trying to do anything more than goofy nonsense. They had to have a way to keep Mankind from getting the title shot and these shenanigans are as good as they could have done, all things considered.

Undertaker, with Big Show and Paul Bearer, isn't worried about facing the Rock tonight. He's ready to shove a soup bone down Rock's throat, as Undertaker isn't exactly speaking like his normal self here.

Undertaker vs. The Rock

No Holds Barred and Falls Count Anywhere, which is different than hardcore because there's probably going to be a hardcore match later. Undertaker has Big Show and Paul Bearer with him and Rock gets a WWF Title match later tonight if he wins. Actually never mind, as Undertaker doesn't think Rock has earned the right to do this so Big Show is doing it instead.

Big Show vs. The Rock

Same everything as before as that's a lot to type again. Undertaker is on commentary (that's a WEIRD one) and Rock is in street clothes as he punches away at Show to start. A clothesline puts Show on the floor but he sends Rock into the barricade to slow him down. Rock is fine enough to hit a Russian legsweep on the ramp but Show knocks him down again without too much trouble.

Back in and Show misses a charge into the corner so they head

right back to the floor. Rock slips out of a ram into the post though and puts on a headset, offering to slap the dead off Undertaker's head. A right hand drops Undertaker but the distraction lets Show chokeslam Rock through the announcers' table for the pin. Lilian: "Your winner, the Undertaker!"

Rating: C. This didn't have time to go anywhere, but at least they got in a hardcore match in about three and a half minutes. Throw in the fact that they managed to have two of the three biggest heroes in the company lose in the first 40 or so minutes of the show and that's not too bad. That's a rather Russo style show for you and I have a feeling it's going to get even worse.

Post match HHH comes out to go after Rock but Undertaker grabs him by the throat. Cue Mankind to go after Show and Undertaker, allowing HHH to escape.

Al Snow is rather upset about Big Boss Man stealing his dog Pepper. As he pleas for people to help him, we can hear sounds of some rather adult actions taking place off screen.

Here is Big Boss Man for a chat. He asks for and gets Al Snow out here, with Boss Man saying Snow lived up to his end of the bargain on SmackDown. Then Snow was crying on Heat and Boss Man got the feeling. Snow keeps asking where Pepper is and Boss Man tells him to come to his hotel this week on Smackdown and he'll get Pepper back. They even shake on it.

We look back at Chris Jericho putting Road Dogg through a table on Smackdown and injuring his back, putting Dogg on the shelf for a long time.

<u>X-Pac vs. Taka Michinoku</u>

Funaki is here with Taka. X-Pac hammers away to start but Funaki gets in a cheap shot. Taka knocks him outside and gets in a few shots, only to miss a moonsault back inside. A sitout powerbomb sets up the Bronco Buster and the X Factor for the

fast pin on Taka.

Rating: C. X-Pac is in a weird place here as he's too big to be fighting these smaller guys but not big enough to be in the main event scene. What matters is the fans are behind him though and he is more than good enough in the ring to back it up. They just have to find the right way to use him though and this was just a way to keep him warm.

Post match X-Pac takes out an invading Funaki as well. X-Pac says he wants the big guys.

Edge and Christian vs. The Acolytes vs. The Hollys vs. The Hardys

Elimination rules and the winners get a Tag Team Title match. It's a brawl to start but Viscera, Mideon, Prince Albert, Droz, Stevie Richards and the Blue Meanie come in for the no contest. In a four way elimination match. In about a minute. The referees breaking it up takes longer than the match.

Here is the Rock to say Undertaker and Big Show didn't impress anyone so he wants a handicap match tonight. First though, he wants to stick Undertaker's head inside Big Show. Mickey Mouse tattoos are mentioned as well. Cue Mankind to say he didn't like the Rock at some point, but now the people want and need him to be the Rock's partner for a shot at the Tag Team Titles. Mankind even loads up Rock's catchphrase but Rock cuts him off and says sure. Just DON'T YOU EVER steal his catchphrases again, but Mankind even rips off the IF YOU SMELL, which has Rock annoyed.

Here is Meat, with Terri Runnels, for a chat, but Terri hits on the Rock on the way up the ramp. He isn't impressed. Hold on though as we get a GTV segment of Meat and Marianna, shall we say enjoying each other behind the interview set earlier. Terri goes after Meat but here are Marianna and Chaz (her boyfriend) for the big brawl.

Miss Kitty helps with Debra's hair because the hair stylist has no idea what she is doing.

Jeff Jarrett/Mark Henry vs. D'Lo Brown/Billy Gunn

Debra and Miss Kitty are here with Jarrett and here is Chyna to do commentary. Brown clotheslines Jarrett down to start and something like a Sky High gets two. Jeff gets in a shot of his own and it's Henry coming in for a gorilla press drop. Choking on the rope ensues as Kitty works on Debra's hair. A clothesline puts Brown down as Chyna promises to get revenge and Jeff Jarrett's Intercontinental Title. Brown gets in a shot of his own and everything breaks down. The distraction lets Chyna come in with the guitar….which hits Gunn by mistake, giving Jarrett the pin.

Rating: C. It wasn't even four minutes long but it was nice to have a pretty run of the mill tag match until the screwy ending. There is nothing wrong with putting two potential title matches together, but Chyna seems more likely to get the Intercontinental Title shot (signing a contract helps). That's more interesting than Gunn, which is the case with just about anything.

Test names Pat Patterson and Gerald Brisco the best men for his wedding to Stephanie McMahon. Whichever has the better memory gets to hold the ring.

Gangrel vs. Ken Shamrock

Gangrel has the Hardys with him, with commentary getting on Lilian Garcia for not calling them the New Brood. The bell rings and you can hear what sounds like a fire extinguisher putting out the Brood's ring of fire entrance. Shamrock goes for the leg to start and Gangrel heads straight to the floor. Gangrel slugs away outside but the Hardys' distraction is enough to get them ejected. Back in and Shamrock can't quite get the ankle lock so Gangrel elbows him in the face. Shamrock kicks away and elbows him in the face, setting up the ankle

lock for the tap.

Rating: C. It's almost weird to see a match from this era getting about five minutes and of all their options, it's Gangrel vs. Ken Shamrock? Gangrel wasn't the biggest threat to Shamrock but it was nice to have him doing something other than drinking red liquid. Shamrock was in a weird place at this point and needs something to do, as just beating up Gangrel isn't the most interesting.

Post match avowed Jericholic Howard Finkel introduces Chris Jericho, who says he isn't coming out here to fight Shamrock. Instead, Shamrock can show up at Smackdown and clean his boots. Shamrock gives a slow motion chase.

Mankind wants to do the People's Elbow but Rock tells him to stick with the sock gimmick. Mankind: "Mr. Socko."

Here is Women's Champion Ivory for a chat. After yelling at Michael Cole for undressing her with his eyes, she declares that she is not a sl**. Tori on the other hand is, so here is Tori to jump Ivory (and hitting Cole in the process), with Luna Vachon and Jacqueline coming in to join the brawl.

We look at Big Show chokeslamming Rock through the announcers' table earlier.

Tag Team Titles: Big Show/Undertaker vs. Mankind/The Rock

Show and Undertaker are defending and Show hammers Mankind down to start as Undertaker doesn't look overly interested. Undertaker gets in some shots to Mankind on the floor, with Rock having to make a save back inside. The bearhug goes on (showing how big Show really is) until Mankind punches his way to freedom. With that not working, Show punches him outside for another beating from Undertaker.

Mankind gets dropped on what is left of the broken announcers' table as Paul Bearer comes out. Bearer says something to

Undertaker, who walks out as Mankind gets in a shot of his own. The hot tag brings in Rock to clean house, only to have Show plant him with a chokeslam. Mankind's chair is knocked into his face before Show's delayed cover gets two on Rock. The referee gets bumped though and Rock BLASTS Show in the head with the chair. A double People's Elbow gives Rock the pin and the titles.

Rating: C. This was another rare match that got some time and it helps a little bit, but there were so many things going on through the match that you can only get so much out of it. Between the chair shot, the ref bump and the Bearer/Undertaker stuff, it was hard to get into things. Throw in the fact that the Tag Team Titles mean nothing and this is little more than a big pop at the end without much else going on to get there. Kind of like most of the Attitude Era when you think about it.

Overall Rating: C+. It was another show with all kinds of stuff going on at the same time, but the addition of Smackdown can help things out a bit. If nothing else, it is nice to see some of the rapid fire stories siphoned off to Smackdown instead of doing everything on Raw for a change. It was a show with a bit more coherent string of stories throughout and we should be in for some good things on the way towards Unforgiven. Nice stuff here, with Smackdown possibly being the saving grace.

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Rampage – April 14, 2023: The Rampage Special

Rampage
Date: April 14, 2023
Location: UW-Milwaukee Panther Arena, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Commentators: Jim Ross, Excalibur, Tony Schiavone

We are about a month and a half away from Double Or Nothing but this week's show has a bit of an international feeling. The major advertised match will see Aussie Open, the new IWGP Tag Team Champions Aussie Open defending against the Best Friends. Other than that, we should get at least some stories advanced with the action to back it up. Let's get to it.

Here is Dynamite if you need a recap.

Opening sequence.

IWGP Tag Team Titles: Aussie Open vs. Best Friends

Aussie Open (Kyle Fletcher/Mark Davis) is defending with Davis running Trent over to start. As Excalibur lists off all kinds of former champions, what happened recently and what is coming tonight (taking about a minute to do so), Trent hits a high crossbody to take over on Fletcher. That doesn't last long

though as Fletcher drops him on top and the Best Friends are sent outside.

The Friends are rammed into each other before the hand off suplex drops Trent for two back inside. We take a break and come back with Chuck saving Trent and a double chokeslam putting Davis down. We get the Big Hug and a Doomsday knee gets two on Fletcher. Back up and Davis kicks Chuck into a spinning Tombstone, followed by a nasty piledriver to Trent. The double clothesline sets up Coriolis to retain the titles at 9:45.

Rating: C+. Nice stuff here as the Aussies get a win to establish themselves a bit better. The Best Friends are going to be over no matter what they do so there is little for them to lose in something like this. The match was energetic enough to be a featured showdown on Rampage and that’s a pretty good place to be.

Mark Briscoe isn’t sure that he’s on the same page as Sonjay Dutt and company, because apparently a misleading statement leads to a legally binding agreement. Dutt talks to Briscoe about working together and even has a shirt with the entire stables’ faces on it. Isn’t this more or less the same thing as Matt Hardy (also a legendary tag wrestler) with the Firm?

Here is FTR for a chat. It took them two years and five months to get the AEW Tag Team Titles back. There has been some speculation about their futures, but they have signed with AEW for another four years. They are retiring when their contracts are done, but for the next four years, you’re getting everything they have because they want to be the best team ever.

This is their redemption story after they have been beaten down. They have fought and fought to be here and the only difference between themselves and the fans is having the fans in their corner. They have four years left and it will be

awesome. Top guys out. It’s nice to have some clarification for their futures and they’re back on top, where they should be.

The Hardys, Isiah Kassidy and Hook are glad to have Jeff Hardy back, after a rough nine months. They are ready for their match against the Firm so Matt and Private Party can be free from their contracts. The match will take place at the Hardy Compound (oh geez) as Matt seems Broken again.

Wardlow had no comment on destroying Powerhouse Hobbs’ card. Hobbs is mad, but he’s ready to destroy Wardlow in their TNT Title match next week.

Mark Briscoe/Jeff Jarrett/Satnam Singh/Jay Lethal vs. Spanish Announce Project/Jake Manning

Briscoe and company have Sonjay Dutt with them and the brawl is on fast. Dutt trips Manning down and Briscoe isn’t happy, leading to everything breaking down. Singh comes in for a gorilla press and chokeslam, setting up the Froggy Bow to finish Manning at 2:00.

Video on the Blackpool Combat Club vs. the Elite.

Taya Valkyrie vs. Emi Sakura

Taya chops away to start and hits a running elbow in the corner to rock Sakura. The running knees make it worse and Taya powering out of a waistlock doesn’t help. The Road To Valhalla is loaded up but here are Leila Grey and Jade Cargill for a distraction. Sakura drops Taya and we take a break. Back with Taya hitting a sliding German suplex but another Cargill distraction lets Sakura send Taya into the steps. Back in and Taya has had enough of this, setting up a spear into the Road To Valhalla for the pin at 8:33.

Rating: C+. It was nice to see Taya having to work for a win for a change as she continues to be built up for Cargill.

Sakura is someone who has done well enough to make this mean something and Taya getting a win helps enough. Good match here, and now the question is whether Taya can take the title from Jade. I mean she probably won't, but it's nice to see her having more of a chance than most.

Post match Grey comes in but gets Road To Valhalled as well. Cargill comes in and slugs it out with Taya but Leila breaks up the Road To Valhalla. Jade plants her with Jaded to stand tall. It's so nice to see Jade having an actual challenge to one of her upcoming title defenses rather than the next designated victim.

Jose The Assistant challenges El Hijo del Vikingo for a AAA Mega Title shot on behalf of Dralistico.

The Jericho Appreciation Society "raps" about the Acclaimed. Cue the Acclaimed, with Caster not even bothering to rap. The beating is on, with Billy Gunn whipping out some scissors to try to cut off Matt Menard's hard nipples. The challenge is thrown out for Dynamite.

Jungle Boy and Shawn Spears are ready for the main event. Spears isn't friends with MJF anymore but he wants the World Title too. If beating Jungle Boy gets him that much closer, so be it.

Here's what's coming on upcoming shows.

Jungle Boy vs. Shawn Spears

Spears rolls him up for two (and a ten) but Jungle Boy hits a dropkick for a ten of his own. They both go to the floor where the other can tease a dive but pull up at the last second. Spears gets sent into the barricade as we see Darby Allin and Sammy Guevara watching in the back. Jungle Boy gets sent over the barricade and we take a break.

Back with an exchange of near falls until Spears pump kicks

him down. Jungle Boy hits a clothesline for his own knockdown though and they both get a breather. A rollup gives Jungle Boy two but Spears is back with a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. Spears goes for a cradle but Jungle Boy stacks him up for the pin at 9:04.

Rating: C. This was a completely watchable match which never broke through to the next level. In other words, it was a Shawn Spears match and little more. Spears is one of the good hands around here who won't give you a bad match but also won't get anywhere beyond his ceiling. Jungle Boy gets another win to keep up the brilliant yet shockingly simple build towards Double Or Nothing of "have challengers win matches".

Overall Rating: C+. This was a show that existed, with a bunch of stuff that didn't really mean much and Jungle Boy getting a win in the main event. That's Rampage in a nutshell for the most part and it isn't something you need to see in any way. It's a complete watchable show, but the big draw of this show was a guest team defending another company's titles and finding out what is going to happen on Dynamite. That's not the most interesting hour.

Results
Aussie Open b. Best Friends – Coriolis to Chuck
Mark Briscoe/Jeff Jarrett/Satnam Singh/Jay Lethal b. Spanish Announce Project/Jake Manning – Froggy Bow to Manning
Taya Valkyrie b. Emi Sakura – Road To Valhalla
Jungle Boy b. Shawn Spears – Cradle

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Smackdown – April 14, 2023: The Simple Version

Smackdown
Date: April 14, 2023
Location: Pinnacle Bank Arena, Lincoln, Nebraska
Commentators: Michael Cole, Wade Barrett

The Draft is coming up and that is going to change quite a few things around…well everywhere really. The good thing is we still have enough time before it gets into the lame duck period. Backlash is coming up in less than a month and it is time to start getting things ready for the show. Let's get to it.

Here are last week's results if you need a recap.

Opening sequence.

Here are Kevin Owens and Sami Zayn to get things going. Sami talks about how they closed out Wrestlemania by winning the Tag Team Titles but they haven't had the chance to process it all. There is the Bloodline and the Draft, which makes things uncertain. Owens doesn't care where they wind up, because they are the undisputed Tag Team Champions and they will defend them with everything they have.

One day the Usos are coming for a rematch….and here they are (with Solo Sikoa) to interrupt. The Usos don't want to hear about a two week reign but Sami says they'll keep going back to their daddy Roman without their titles. Jey promises that they'll get the titles back because Owens and Zayn are going to turn on each other, again. Sami says Jey is great at lying to himself and the fight is teased but here is Matt Riddle to even things up. The Bloodline gets knocked down before bailing.

Post break, Adam Pearce makes Solo Sikoa vs. Matt Riddle for tonight's main event.

LA Knight vs. Xavier Woods

This is fallout from a broken controller. They fight over a headlock to start until Woods snaps off a dropkick to take over. Woods' headlock doesn't last long as it could due as Knight shoulders him down. Knight it sent outside and taken out with the big running flip dive. He's fine enough to post Woods though and we take a break.

Back with Knight getting two off a neckbreaker and choking on the ropes, only to have Woods pop back up for a leg lariat. Knight plants him with a DDT but Woods blocks a suplex attempt. Woods manages to drop him ribs first across the top, setting up a top rope double stomp. A middle rope legdrop gets the same but Knight catches him in a powerslam. Knight's jumping elbow connects so he tries a rollup, only to get caught pulling the trunks. Then Woods grabs his own rollup (also with trunks) for the pin at 11:20.

Rating: C+. Nice back and forth match here with Woods getting to show Knight how the cheating thing worked in the end. Woods is the last remaining member of the New Day at the moment and it's no surprise that WWE wants to keep him strong. As for Knight….just let him do something other than lose for a few weeks. Please.

Gunther gives Imperium a pep talk/instructions when Xavier Woods, with his trombone, comes in. Gunther isn't happy and calls Woods a goof, but Woods challenges him for the title. There's no answer but Gunther isn't one to turn down a challenge.

We look at Solo Sikoa taking out Matt Riddle in December.

Sami Zayn and Kevin Owens give Riddle differing forms of advice, but Riddle is rather serious when he talks about taking out his aggression on Sikoa.

Judgment Day, minus Finn Balor, has had it with the LWO. Damien Priest is going to do his talking about Bad Bunny in the ring.

Here is Judgment Day for a chat. Damien Priest says Backlash is in San Juan, Puerto Rico and Bad Bunny is guest host. We look at the team taking out Bunny on Raw two weeks ago and we even see it in slow motion. Cue the LWO and it's time to fight, with the LWO quickly clearing the ring.

Damien Priest vs. Santos Escobar

The rest of their groups are here too. Joined in progress and they head outside, with Priest knocking him out of the air. Back in and the Broken Arrow gives Priest two and he fires off the kicks to the chest. Escobar fights up and hits a few kicks of his own, setting up the running knees in the corner. Some right hands have Priest in trouble but he knocks Escobar outside in a heap as we take a break.

Back with Priest getting two off a Downward Spiral and cranking on both arms. Priest goes up top but gets hurricanranaed right back down for a delayed two. They slug it out until Escobar hits a jumping knee and running hurricanrana to send Priest into the corner. There's the jumping kick to Priest's head and a top rope moonsault press gets two.

Rhea Ripley offers a distraction though and it’s Priest decking Escobar. Everyone gets into it on the floor with Priest joining the fight, only to get taken down by a suicide dive. Back in and Ripley grabs Escobar’s foot, leaving Zelina Vega to hurricanrana her into the barricade. That leaves Priest to kick Escobar in the face and hit South Of Heaven for the pin at 11:33.

Rating: B. These guys were rocking by the end and I wasn’t sure who was going to win. That’s a nice feeling to have, much like seeing Priest get a win. Escobar losing again is tough to take, but you can tell there is going to be more of this feud sooner than later. Heck of a match here, with everyone putting in the energy.

Post match Priest goes after Escobar again but Rey Mysterio runs in for the save. Rey gets to beat on Dominik, who has to be saved from the 619.

The Usos and Paul Heyman give Solo Sikoa a pep talk about how Matthew Riddle insulted the family, with Heyman listing off a bunch of members of the family who were insulted. Solo puts his hand on Heyman’s shoulder and says tell the Tribal Chief that he has this. Has Sikoa spoken since he debuted on the main roster? If he has, it hasn’t been very often.

Here are Liv Morgan and Raquel Rodriguez for a championship celebration. Raquel appreciates Morgan allowing her to be used as a projectile and Morgan can’t wait to see how good they can get. Cue Chelsea Green and Sonya Deville to interrupt, with Deville telling the fans to sit down and shut up.

They want to know why Morgan and Rodriguez are champions when there is nothing special about them. It must be an upper management thing! Like from Adam Pearce! Where is everything for Green and Deville? The fight is on and the champs stand tall. This was every other not great women’s tag team segment and Morgan’s talking continues to be weak.

Madcap Moss vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

Emma gives Moss a pep talk in the back and is in his corner here. Moss starts fast and hits a running shoulder in the corner for two. Nakamura strikes back, hits the sliding German suplex and finishes with Kinshasa at 1:30.

Post match Moss goes after him again, leaving Emma to have to pulls him to the floor for the save.

Scarlett has a Nakamura tarot card and Killer Kross says tick tock.

The Viking Raiders jump Ricochet and Braun Strowman, with Ricochet being powerbombed through a table.

Matt Riddle vs. Solo Sikoa

The Usos, Paul Heyman, Sami Zayn and Kevin Owens are here too. Before the match though, Heyman says that Roman Reigns has decided the Usos will get their title rematch in two weeks. Riddle kicks away to start but his armbar is counters with a hard slam. It's right back up with a chinlock but Sikoa punches him down again. The Usos offer a distraction and a trip so Zayn and Owens come over. The referee ejects them all, leaving Sikoa to take over as we go to a break.

Back again with Sikoa elbowing him in the face for two, meaning it's time to get frustrated. The nerve hold doesn't work on Riddle as Sikoa knocks him away again, only to get forearmed into the corner. The Floating Bro connects but here are the Usos again, with Zayn and Owens not far behind. Riddle dives onto the Usos but dives into a superkick back inside. The Samoan Spike finishes for Sikoa at 10:45.

Rating: B-. Riddle losing his first match back is certainly a weird way to go, but Keeping Sikoa strong is a good idea as well. Yes he lost to Cody Rhodes, but it was a few days before Rhodes headlined WrestleMania. There is going to be at least

one six man tag in here to build Riddle back up so he'll be fine for the time being, kind of like this match really.

Post match Sikoa plants Riddle on the announcers' table and then turns it over to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. There was good action throughout and some stuff was set up for the future. This was a nice, productive episode of Smackdown, even though nothing was added to the pay per view card. The main thing about this show is that it flew by, with nothing dragging (save for maybe the Women's Tag Team Title segment). Good show this week, as Smackdown seems to continue its successful run.

Results
Xavier Woods b. LA Knight – Rollup with trunks
Damien Priest b. Santos Escobar – South Of Heaven
Shinsuke Nakamura b. Madcap Moss – Kinshasa
Solo Sikoa b. Matt Riddle – Samoan Spike

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Impact Wrestling – April 13, 2023: Worth Filing Out For

Impact Wrestling
Date: April 13, 2023
Location: St. Clair College, Windsor, Ontario, Canada
Commentators: Tom Hannifan, Matthew Rehwoldt

The road to Rebellion end this week and that means it is time to finish off the build towards the show. In this case it means we are going to be seeing more build towards the new World Title match of Kushida vs. Steve Maclin. This week will also see what happens with Mickie James and the Knockouts Title. Let's get to it.

Here are last week's results if you need a recap.

Opening recap.

Opening sequence.

Kenny King vs. Frankie Kazarian

The winner gets the advantage in the Hardcore War at Rebellion and the other teams are at ringside. They fight over a lockup to start until Kazarian snaps off some chops. King cuts him off though and starts hammering away in the corner to take over. A backbreaker gives King two and we hit the one armed camel clutch. Kazarian breaks it up and makes the clothesline comeback, capped off by a running forearm.

The springboard spinning legdrop gives Kazarian two but King is back with a tiger driver for the same. King sends him to the floor but Kazarian comes back in with a slingshot cutter for two. The brawl on the floor finally breaks out as Kazarian

gets the chickenwing. Cue Brian Myers for a distraction, allowing Moose to spear Kazarian down for the pin at 8:18.

Rating: B-. These two were having a good match until the screwy ending, which was quite the twist as Myers and Moose haven't had anything to do with this feud so far. They would be an upgrade over the Good Hands for the match but that might be asking too much. For now though, I'll settle for talented wrestlers having a good match to open the show, as is the norm around here.

Post match the beatdown is on and Team Dreamer is left laying.

Earlier tonight, Steve Maclin interrupted the Canadian National Anthem. Kushida made the save and cleaned house in a brawl.

Lince Dorado vs. Black Taurus vs. Laredo Kid vs. Rich Swann

Crazzy Steve handles Taurus' intro. Taurus sends everyone to the floor to start and hits the big dive, only to have a triple superkick send him to the floor. That means the dives can take him out and leave everyone down as we take a break. Back with Taurus launching Dorado onto the top, where he can superplex Kid (while on top of Taurus' shoulders for a crazy visual).

Back up and Kid hits a springboard armdrag to Swann, followed by a double Golden Rewind from Dorado. Taurus is back in to clean house, including a heck of a pop up Samoan drop to Dorado. That's not enough as Taurus powerbombs Kid onto Swann at ringside. Taurus cleans house and goes up, only to have Kid catch him with a super Spanish Fly for the pin at 10:44.

Rating: B-. This might not have broken the mold for a match like this but they did their thing well. Kid has felt like he should be the next breakout star in the division almost every time he is around but nothing has ever really clicked. It seems like they're trying it again and pinning Taurus is

certainly a good way to start. Taurus got to show off again here and that power is always worth a look. Fun match, as expected.

Long video on the Bullet Club vs. the Motor City Machine Guns in Ultimate X for the Tag Team Titles.

Jessicka and Rosemary want to go to the Undead Realm to get Taya Valkyrie back but Rosemary says she's going alone because Jessicka doesn't know how to do it. She opens the coffin….but it's just a regular one instead of the portal. The Coven must be behind this!

Jessicka vs. Taylor Wilde

Rosemary and KiLynn King are here too. Hold on as Wilde gives Jessicka a tarot card to start so Jessicka shows it to Rosemary. That lets Wilde jump her from behind so Jessicka says STOP HITTING ME. Jessicka misses a charge and gets choked in the corner before a Backstabber brings Jessicka down again. Back up and some jabs stagger Wilde, setting up a running crossbody for two. Rosemary and King get into it, allowing Wilde to slip out of a Sick Driver and grab a fisherman's neckbreaker for the pin at 4:28.

Rating: C. The more I see of Wilde, the more amazed I am by the fact that she is the same woman who came back to almost no reaction last year. This is a completely different way to go for her and it is working rather well. The Coven has been a nice breath of air for the division and I could go for them holding the titles that much longer.

Jordynne Grace is ready for the Knockouts Title match at Rebellion but she can't control what happens with Mickie James. She can control winning though.

Alisha Edwards is glad to have brought Eddie Edwards back to the right path. Now they want to get rid of the monster blocking his path.

Dirty Dango/Joe Hendry vs. Angels/Callihan

Before the match, Hendry confirms our belief in him. The rest of the Design is here too because what would it be like without the rest of them. Callihan suplexes Hendry for a fast two so Angels comes in, only to get suplexed as well. Dango comes in for the Dirtbag Shuffle but Angels takes him down. Callihan is whipped into Angels though and it's back to Dango to clean house. Kon grabs the leg though and it's a standing Sliced Bread to drop Hendry. A frog splash gets two, with Hendry making the save. Callihan hits Angels by mistake so Deaner stops to yell, leaving Hendry to hit the Standing Ovation for the pin at 4:39.

Rating: C. Egads I don't know how much more I can take of this story. It feels like it has been going on forever and the Design somehow gets lamer every single week. Just get to someone turning on someone so they can have their big violent match and we can move on. Dango continues to do fine in his role and it's nice to see him getting away from the dancing stuff. Hendry continues to be awesome and that's all he needs to be.

Post match the Design jumps them again, until Santino Marella comes out for the save. This includes the Cobra because….oh my head hurts again.

Video on Steve Maclin vs. Kushida.

PCO promises to bury Eddie Edwards in a Last Rites match at Rebellion.

Bully Ray introduces Moose and Brian Myers as new members of his now seven person army. They're ready for Rebellion and promise destruction because they're family. Keep in mind that this is all to destroy TOMMY DREAMER.

Gisele Shaw vs. Tasha Steelz

Jai Vidal and Savannah Evans are here with Shaw. Steelz scares her to the floor to start before Steelz slaps her in the face back inside. That sends Shaw back to the floor and we take a break. Back with Shaw slapping her in the face as the theme continues. Steelz chops away but Shawn knocks her outside, where Evans hits a chokeslam onto the apron.

A snap suplex gives Shaw two more and we hit the reverse chinlock. With that broken up, Shaw hits a double jumping stomp in the corner and we take another break. Back again with Shaw hitting a running jumping uppercut for two more, followed by a swinging suplex for the same.

Steelz fights up and hits an ax handle into an atomic drop into a…completely missed jumping neckbreaker. Shaw's belly to back toss sets up a running shot to the back of the head for two. The annoyed Shaw stomps away in the corner before they head outside for a slugout. Steelz sends her into the steps but misses a running knee, which only hits said steps. Back in and Steelz kicks the knee out for the pin at 21:23.

Rating: C+. Something tells me we didn't miss much between those breaks as I have a hard time believing that these two had a pay per view main event length match out of nowhere. It wouldn't surprise me if this had to be extended due to the Mickie James injury and if that is the case, they did rather well in an area they probably haven't been in before.

Mickie James tells Santino Marella that the doctor has given her a diagnosis of her rib injury.

The fans leave the arena for Mickie's announcement. I'm assuming this is to avoid the announcement getting out, but it comes off like some tragedy.

Rebellion rundown. Apparently Brian Myers and Moose are taking the Good Hands' spots on Team Bully. At least they don't have to find two more people for Team Dreamer.

Video on Mickie James' Last Rodeo and path to winning the Knockouts Title again, plus Jordynne Grace and Deonna Purrazzo waiting for their shots.

Here is Mickie for her big announcement. When she started the Last Rodeo, she wanted to show that she still had it and that is what she did. At some point, every champion has to lose and she can handle some of that, but she can't fight age. There is a difference between her and most of the division, but she feels like she is 20.

The fact that she isn't makes this even worse and she thanks everyone for this Last Rodeo. She just got off the phone with the doctor though and she isn't cleared to compete at Rebellion. She is a woman of her word and it is Deonna and Jordynne's (watching in the back) time now. Mickie leaves the title, and her hat, in the ring and leaves. Grace leaves and Deonna looks on to end the show. This felt a lot like a retirement speech, but retiring over a broken bone feels like quite the stretch. James should be back and probably will, as ending a legendary career over something that will heal in a month or two is nuts.

Overall Rating: B-. The Mickie angle at the end was actually emotional and felt like a huge deal, which should set up the Knockouts Title match that much better. Other than that, the card for Rebellion was already mostly set coming into this show so there only so much that needed to be done. This show did well enough with the little that it had to cover, so nice job on hammering things down on the go home show.

Results
Kenny King b. Frankie Kazarian – Spear from Moose
Laredo Kid b. Black Taurus, Lince Dorado and Rich Swann – Super Spanish Fly to Taurus
Taylor Wilde b. Jessicka – Fisherman's neckbreaker
Dirty Dango/Joe Hendry b. Callihan/Angels – Standing Ovation to Angels

Tasha Steelz b. Gisele Shaw – Kick to the knee

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Ring Of Honor TV – April 13, 2023: They're Listening To Me?

Ring Of Honor
Date: April 13, 2023
Location: Ryan Center, Kingston, Rhode Island
Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Caprice Coleman

The show continues to go on the road with AEW and that could make for some changes to how things work. It is almost impossible to imagine doing the nearly two hour show in front of Dynamite so maybe things are going to be shuffled up a bit. Either way, I would still bet on Athena and Tony Nese getting

in their regular appearances. Let's get to it.

Here are last week's results if you need a recap.

Opening sequence.

Ari Daivari vs. Mark Briscoe

Tony Nese, Josh Woods and Mark Sterling are here with Daivari. They roll around a bit to start until Daivari charges into an overhead belly to belly. A vertical suplex sends him outside but the distraction lets Nese get in a cheap shot to take over. The chinlock goes on for a bit, followed by a hammerlock DDT for two on Briscoe. The frog splash misses though and Briscoe gets to chop away. A Rock Bottom suplex into a hangman's neckbreaker plants Daivari but it's too early for the Jay Driller. Sterling's distraction lets Nese and Woods interfere but they're thrown out, meaning the Jay Driller can finish Daivari at 6:10.

Rating: C. This was a way to get Briscoe back on track and that is a perfectly fine way to go. Daivari is still enough of a name around here that beating him means enough when you combine him with the rest of his goons. If nothing else, it's not the Trustbusters so this could be a heck of a lot worse.

Post match the Varsity Athletes jump Briscoe but FTR makes the save. Mark Briscoe: Friend Of Tag Teams is an interesting way to go.

Eddie Kingston reveals that he is suffering from a hernia and has been dealing with it since September. He went through the Supercard Of Honor match against Claudio Castagnoli but isn't making any excuses. Odds are he is going to need surgery though and a lot of that is due to the beating Castagnoli gave him. He has been thinking back to his match with Cody Rhodes, when he gave his heart to AEW in the first place. Then he went home and he thought about it and now he is going to have to do it again. Kingston going away for a bit might help him, as he

has been kind of all over the place in recent months.

Kelly Madan vs. Skye Blue

Blue teases a superkick to take Madan down and another kick puts her on the mat. Madan gets in a kick of her own and stops to dance, allowing Blue to kick her down again. Skyfall finishes for Blue at 2:06. Not quite a squash but it did what it needed to do.

Mike Bennett vs. Darius Martin

Matt Taven and Maria Kanellis-Bennett are here with Bennett. Martin wins a slugout to start and they trade chops in the corner. The fight goes to the floor with Bennett being sent into the barricade but Taven offers a distraction on the way back inside. That's enough for Bennett to take over on the apron, with a superkick rocking Martin. Bennett drops him hard onto the apron but Martin manages to get up for a clothesline through the ropes. Back in and a Spanish Fly gives Martin two but Taven comes in for the DQ at 4:57.

Rating: C+. It's almost strange seeing a DQ on one of these shows, but it's also weird seeing Martin doing this on his own. That's what we're going to have to get used to in the coming months, but he did look comfortable out there in a singles match. I'm curious to see who is going to make the save/help Martin against the Kingdom, as he certainly can't do it on his own. For now though, nice start to his singles run, even in a limited time.

Post match the beatdown is on but Action Andretti makes the save. I've heard worse ideas.

Wheeler Yuta vs. Tracy Williams

They go technical to start (shocking I know) but it's too early for Williams to get in his crossface. The cross armbreaker is broken up as well and it's Yuta grabbing a

German suplex. Yuta ties up the legs and forearms away but Williams slips out. A belly to back suplex rocks Yuta but he's right back with the strikes in the corner. The double arm DDT onto the top sets up a brainbuster and Yuta is down again. The crossface still doesn't work and Yuta is back up with an Angle Slam. A dragon sleeper with Williams' arms tied back is enough to give Yuta the win at 5:11.

Rating: C+. Williams is rather good at this kind of a match and Yuta can go move for move with him the entire way. Yuta is on a roll right now (save for the Shibata loss) so getting a win here is no surprise. What is a bit of a surprise is seeing Williams lose again, as has been the case since he came back to Ring Of Honor. I get the idea of having someone with a name do some jobs, but Williams has a strong enough resume that he should be able to do better than this.

Darius Martin is glad that he has a friend in Action Andretti, who knows what it's like to deal with numbers. The challenge to the Kingdom is on for next week.

Katsuyori Shibata/Alex Coughlin vs. Workhorsemen

Drake won't shake Shibata's hand to start so Shibata starts with Henry instead. They go to the mat for a quick standoff and Shibata blocks an early Penalty Kick. Drake adds a headbutt to Shibata and it's off to Coughlin to give Drake a belly to back. Another suplex drops Coughlin though and a Vader Bomb from the middle of the ropes crushes Coughlin again.

Henry comes in and goes technical with Coughlin, who starts while sitting down and manages to grab a suplex and stand up while holding Henry in the air (WOW). It's off to Shibata, who tries a sleeper but can't get anywhere. Drake breaks it up with a chop to the back so Shibata sleepers Henry again,, with Drake breaking it up again. A kick to the back/Downward Spiral combination plants Shibata but Coughlin makes the save.

Coughlin takes Drake outside and it's the Penalty Kick to finish Henry at 8:46.

Rating: B-. That suplex alone made this worth a look as Coughlin might be able to live up to that cyborg nickname. Shibata was a bit off here and even commentary was surprised at some of the mistakes that he was making. The Workhorsemen were their usual reliable selves and this was the best match on the show by a wide margin so far.

Post match Coughlin says he wants the Pure Title.

Willow Nightingale vs. Little Mean Kathleen

Nightingale slams her down to start but gets sent into the corner for some running stomps. Back up and Nightingale runs her over, setting up a Stampede for the pin at 1:47. As it should be, given that Kathleen is rather tiny and not overly impressive.

Stu Grayson vs. Tony Nese

You knew Nese would get a match in there somewhere. Mark Sterling, Josh Woods and Evil Uno are here too. Grayson starts fast and sends him outside, only to have Sterling's distraction let Nese get in a cheap shot. Back in and Nese hits a running uppercut in the corner before a hard kick to the face gets two. Another forearm wakes Grayson up and a swinging Rock Bottom gives him two more. A fireman's carry spun into a faceplant gives Grayson another near fall but Nese sends him face first into the buckle. Back up and a Pele kick rocks Nese, setting up Knightfall to finish for Grayson at 7:14.

Rating: C+. Well at least the right person won, as I was worried Grayson would take another loss. Grayson has something with the look and energy so giving him a win over anyone, even Nese, is a nice boost. If nothing else, it would be nice for the Dark Order to have someone who might be able to win a

match of some value at some point. The team has needed that for a long time now so maybe they are finally getting the idea right.

Post match the Righteous come out to stare down the Dark Order. Er, actually just Grayson.

Post break the Righteous says the Dark Order is about power (How?) but now it's like a shell of itself. Vincent has the keys to Grayson's freedom.

Ashley D'Amboise vs. Athena

Non-title Proving Ground match, meaning that if Ashley can survive ten minutes or win, she gets a title shot. Ashley dropkicks her down to start so Athena dropkicks her a few times to take over. The Crossface is broken up and Ashley gets two off a cradle. Something like a leg lariat gives Ashley two and a Samoan drop gets the same. Athena isn't having that and dropkicks her off the top for a big crash. A clothesline on the floor drops Ashley again and the running knees against the steps make it worse. Back in and the O Face finishes for Athena at 5:09.

Rating: C+. I've heard of D'Amboise before but I've never seen her in a match that let her shine a bit. She did well with the time that she had here, though this was all about keeping Athena as a monster. I'm not sure who is going to take the title from her, but they are making her feel like a force. Maybe just give her a week off here or there though, just to keep her appearances feeling more special.

Post match Athena throws her to the floor.

Post break D'Amboise isn't happy with the lack of honor so Athena jumps her again. Athena wants better competition and sends D'Amboise face first into the title.

Ring Of Honor World Title: Claudio Castagnoli vs. Metalik

Metalik is challenging and gets taken into the corner to start. A legsweep drops Metalik but he kicks Castagnoli into the corner without much trouble. Castagnoli gets sent outside, where he cuts off a dive and drops Metalik hard onto the apron. The neck crank goes on back inside and there's a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for two. Metalik fights up and slugs away but Castagnoli sends him into the corner for the stomping. Back up and Metalik manages a kick to the head and a springboard hurricanrana.

A pop up Sling Blade (cool) drops Castagnoli again but the Metalik Driver is blocked. Code Red gives Metalik two more but a moonsault only hits raised boots. Castagnoli hammers away in the corner until Metalik kicks him in the head again. The rope walk elbow is cut off though and a Crossface has Metalik in trouble. That's broken up so Castagnoli blasts him with the uppercut. The Neutralizer retains the title at 11:59.

Rating: B. I wasn't expecting much coming into this one but they had a nice power vs. speed match with Metalik getting in a lot of offense. This could have been a four minute squash but they stretched it out a bit and made Castagnoli break a sweat. While there was no drama over a title change, it was nice to see this be more competitive than it could have been

Overall Rating: B-. This show was about 20-30 minutes shorter than the show's average so far and my goodness it was more enjoyable as a result. Running just shy of an hour and a half, this show didn't drag or feel like it just kept going and that is a huge improvement. I had a good time with the show and the action was good, but I never sat there wondering how much more they could squeeze in. Keep it around this length (or maybe a hair shorter) and it goes WAY up in value. Good show this week, with one of the biggest issues being addressed, at least for now.

Results
Mark Briscoe b. Ari Daivari – Jay Driller

Skye Blue b. Kelly Madan – Skyfall
Darius Martin b. Mike Bennett via DQ when Matt Taven interfered
Wheeler Yuta b. Tracy Williams – Dragon sleeper
Alex Coughlin/Katsuyori Shibata b. Workhorsemen – Penalty Kick to Henry
Willow Nightingale b. Little Mean Kathleen – Stampede
Stu Grayson b. Tony Nese – Knightfall
Athena b. Ashley D'Amboise – O Face
Claudio Castagnoli b. Metalik – Neutralizer

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City Championship Wrestling Episode 88: Who, What, When, Why?

City Championship Wrestling Episode 88
Date: April 7, 2023

Location: L'Anse Creuse High School, Harrison Township, Michigan
Commentators: Paul Jones, Cat Daddy

I haven't done this in a long time and it's something I've been wanting to do more often. This is a show that popped up in my YouTube recommendations and I know nothing about it. From what I can tell, it's a small promotion out of Michigan and their weekly show is about half an hour long. In a question I'm sure I won't regret, how bad can it be? Let's get to it.

Keep in mind that I'm coming into this completely blind and have no idea bout history or people involved etc.

An unnamed host hypes up an upcoming show featuring Alex Shelley (ok they have some connections) and brings in Shelley's opponent, a bald man named Gutter. Apparently Gutter has beaten Shelley before and wants to do it again tomorrow, but first he has two challenges to deal with tonight. What sounds like about 20 people (never shown) seem to approve.

Gutter vs. Nick Moss

Moss works on the arm to start as Cat Daddy (the interviewer from earlier) is VERY excited. Gutter takes over and goes for a leglock, sending Moss to the ropes. With that broken up, Gutter calls out Jason DeMilo (the other challenge he has tonight) and puts on some sunglasses to mock him. Cue DeMilo, whose distraction lets Moss get in a right hand. Moss misses a slingshot legdrop though and gets sent into DeMilo, setting up a fisherman's neckbreaker to give Gutter the pin at 3:07.

Rating: C. Gutter was ok enough, but he feels like one of those homegrown stars where you have to have been around for awhile to get why he is interesting. He was just there for the most part and while he did win, I'm not sure why he wants to fight both Moss and DeMilo. Maybe letting us know that would help quite a bit, as Gutter's match was only ok.

DeMilo won't fight so Gutter goes to commentary to say DeMilo can't hide. Again, no reason why any of this is happening.

Commentary recaps what we saw when someone in sunglasses and holding a referee shirt tries to get in. He says he's ready to work but some referees get rid of him. Apparently his name is Straud.

Aaron Ashura is ready to face Darion Ultra, the leader of the Darion Nation.

Ultra isn't impressed and is ready to fight, including fighting the Cat Daddy (who seems interested).

Aaron Ashura vs. Darion Ultra

Ultra stomps away in the corner to start but Ashura grabs a headscissors to send him into the buckle. A backbreaker gives Ultra two but Ashura's kneebar sends him into the ropes. Ashura's running knee is countered into a powerbomb for two. The Darion Death Trap (DDT) finishes Ashura at 3:02.

Rating: C. Ultra showed more than either of the people in the first match and does seem to have something going for him. He didn't have much time to do much but I got the idea behind him more than anyone else on the show so far. Ashura came off as a speedster who was moving around as well as he could before falling in the end.

Ajon vs. Justin Fields

They go with the grappling to start with Ajon getting the better of things to start before they go to a standoff. Fields wrestles him down for two and then does it again, albeit for a waistlock this time. A rollup gives Fields two and it's time for a breather. Ajon takes him down this time as things are getting a bit more serious. Back up and Ajon manages a belly to back suplex for the pin at 5:56.

Rating: C+. This was rather different than the rest of the

show and it worked out fairly well. What mattered here was changing things up, though it was a little strange to have almost all amateur stuff until the ending. It felt like something out of a different promotion and given what I had seen earlier in the show, that's not a bad idea.

Cat Daddy introduces the next match but gets interrupted by Jason DeMilo. He is tired of getting beaten up, including getting speared by Rhino. Tonight, he is taking down an MMA champion.

Ty Wilmo vs. Jason DeMilo

They go straight to the grappling to start with Wilmo taking over and driving in some elbows to the head. An ankle lock sends DeMilo over to the rope as this is one sided so far. Back up and DeMilo grabs a neckbreaker to take over, setting up a neck twist on the mat. The chinlock with a knee in Wilmo's back makes it worse and a suplex gets two. Wilmo is right back with a spinebuster and belly to belly but DeMilo gets his foot on the rope. DeMilo pulls out…something, which is taken away by the referee, allowing a low blow to take Wilmo down. The Rings of Saturn finishes Wilmo off at 5:42.

Rating: C. This was a weird match, but it made Wilmo look a lot bigger than DeMilo, who had the big focus to start the show. The match was set up a little bit oddly as DeMilo got beaten up to start but then came back, only to have to cheat to win. Wilmo was definitely better in the ring, though DeMilo's promo before the match showed he had some personality.

Overall Rating: C. That's on a sliding scale as some of the action was ok, but this show really wasn't very good. After having watched a little over half an hour of the show, I have almost no idea of who these people are or why they're fighting. Gutter is coming up on a match with Alex Shelley but I don't know anything about him or why he's facing Shelley. It

was acceptable enough wrestling and they did pack in a good amount of stuff into just over thirty minutes, but there is next to nothing about who these people are or why they're doing these things. Work on that and the show is a good bit better.

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Memphis Wrestling – November 25, 2006: What's Lawler Doing?

Memphis Wrestling
Date: November 25, 2006
Location: WLMT Studio, Memphis, Tennessee
Commentator: Corey Maclin

So this is another promotion from Memphis which is probably trying to recreate the glory days of the territory. This is likely going to feature a bunch of local guys and maybe some

people you have heard of, though I have no idea what to expect coming in. These shows can be a lot of fun or really bad and I'm not sure what to expect here. Let's get to it.

This is an old VCR recording so yes, the local commercials are included.

Derrick King vs. Matt Foley

King (who I've heard of/maybe seen before) has an unidentified title but his manager Reggie B. Fine says Foley isn't getting any closer to be champion, making me think this is non-title. King hammers away to start as the unnamed commentator's southern accent is getting old fast. Foley gets two off a suplex but gets sent outside in a heap. Back in and King hammers away before finishing with a superkick at 2:37. Pretty much a squash.

Post match the beatdown stays on but someone runs in for the save with a chair. Apparently King is the Junior Heavyweight Champion.

Fire And Flame/Bobo/Giggles/Wild Bill/??? vs. Picture Perfect/The Posse

Fire And Flame are two large guys in masks, Bobo and Giggles are clowns and Wild Bill/??? are evil cowboys. Picture Perfect seem to be the pretty boy team and one of the members of the Posse made the save after the first match. Bobo and Chris Michael (of Picture Perfect, with partner Chris O'Neal) start things off but it's off to O'Neal, who has to kick Fire in the head.

One of the Posse (looking to be ICP knockoffs) comes in for a suplex and a backdrop on Giggles. Michael comes back in to crank on the arm before it's Flame coming in to hammer on Michael. The villains take turns beating on Michael, including Fire punching away in the corner. Michael manages an enziguri to Bobo and everything breaks down, with the referee throwing

it out at 4:51.

Rating: C-. I really wish promotions would learn the power of telling us the wrestlers' names. It also doesn't help that Maclin has that thick accent that makes it even harder to understand him. This was the idea of getting in as many people as possible and I'm still not sure who all was even involved, so you can only get so much out of it.

Post match the brawl is on until the good guys clear the ring.

Drew Donovan/Hillbilly Jethro

Jethro is the Hillbilly Assassin and shrugs off an early dropkick to hammer away in the corner. A big elbow gives Jethro two and a sidewalk slam is good for the same. Jethro chokes him for two and we hit the chinlock with a knee in Donovan's back. A whip into the corner drops Donovan and Jethro has to pull up on a charge. Jethro's manager distracts the referee so a chain shot can finish Donovan at 4:26, despite it being a total squash.

Rating: C-. What exactly can you get out of a match with a big hillbilly monster wrecking people? It was fine enough for some destruction, though the ending was weird as there was no need for the cheating. Jethro wasn't exactly an interesting monster, but maybe this plays better in a rather southern area.

Post match someone comes in to shove Jethro's manager down and then runs away from Jethro himself.

Lance Russell, in Florida, introduces us to a classic match from Jerry Lawler (complete with some childhood photos of Lawler), but first we get an old interview with Lawler talking about how he got into the business. Lawler drew some sketches of the matches and sent them in, with Russell showing them on the air when they didn't have footage of the Mid-South Coliseum matches. That's actually rather cool and seemed to

work well.

The match in question is from March 23, 1981 against Terry Funk, a No DQ match which was one of the first five star matches (as rated by Jim Cornette, who can be seen as a photographer at ringside). Unfortunately we're joined in the middle of Lawler's comeback, which is one of the best I've ever seen and something I'll throw on from time to time just for a nice smile. Lawler would ultimately win by countout.

We also get a Lawler highlight package, set to Boulevard Of Broken Dreams by Green Day (I'm guessing that's not the original song).

Flash Flanagan/Too Cool 2 vs. Jerry Lawler/Dustin Starr/Kevin White

Too Cool 2 are Flex/Tim Grind, while Flash was a fairly big deal in OVW. White and Starr are the new Tag Team Champions. Flex and White start things off with Flex complaining about a rollup for two. Starr comes in but gets poked in the eye, meaning it's off to Grind instead. Starr works on the arm and hands it off to Lawler for more of the same. Lawler gets taken into the wrong corner but comes out swinging because he isn't about to get beaten up by Too Cool 2.

Flash comes in and snaps off some right hands in the corner, which just wake Lawler up enough to punch him down. It's back to White vs. Grind, with White getting taken into the wrong corner. White (who has stars on his gear, as opposed to his partner named STARR) gets a boot up to stop a charge and hits a running clothesline for a breather and the hot tag brings in Lawler as everything breaks down. Somewhere in there Grind hits White with a foreign object but there's no referee, allowing Lawler to roll Flanagan up for the pin at 6:27.

Rating: C. Perfectly fine match here, which was little more than a way to get Lawler on the show. Lawler is still the biggest thing ever around here so putting him in the main

event, especially for an out of nowhere pin, is a good move. Flash showed his usual talent but the other four might as well have been anyone else. Nothing to see here otherwise, but as usual, Lawler was the only thing that mattered.

Post match the brawl stays on with the villains getting the better of things.

Maclin recaps the show and wraps things up.

Overall Rating: C-. I'm not exactly surprised that this didn't work, as there was only so much notable talent involved. I could see how this show could get better if I watched it week after week, but it really doesn't hold up that well as a one off. The Memphis style takes some getting used to, but it doesn't work so well with such a basic roster that is mainly built around how they can fit Lawler in.

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