

# NXT LVL Up – March 17, 2023: The Mixing

## NXT LVL Up

Date: March 17, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Blake Howard

Last week's show was a good example of how much better this show is when the bigger names are around. While you won't be getting any major star power, it can help to have some decent sized NXT names on the show. Hopefully that is the case this week, as it can be a rough sit otherwise. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

### Lyra Valkyria vs. Dani Palmer

Valkyria grabs a front facelock to start but Palmer fights up for a standoff. They go to the pinfall reversal sequence for two each until Palmer's backslide has Valkyria frustrated. Palmer rolls her down into a basement dropkick for two and Valkyria is a bit stunned. Back up and Valkyria strikes away to take over until a forearm to the face gives Palmer two more. The chinlock goes on until Valkyria drives her into the corner, setting up a spinning kick to the head for the pin at 3:56.

**Rating:** C+. All things considered, this was an entertaining match with Palmer continuing to show some potential. She still has a long way to go but there are some tools there and that is a good start. Then you have Valkyria, who WWE seems ready to move into the next level of the division, which could have some benefits. They had a much better match than I was expecting here though so well done.

Eddy Thorpe is happy to be 2-0 and he's ready to be 3-0. He is ready to live up the Native American people tonight.

### Eddy Thorpe vs. Xyon Quinn

Quinn powers him around to start and grinds away on a headlock. Thorpe tries to pick up the pace but gets muscled into a fireman's carry. That's broken up and Thorpe hits a middle rope crossbody for an early breather. Quinn knocks him into the ropes for some choking though and some right hands stagger Thorpe again. A backbreaker and splash to the back give Quinn two and we're off to the chinlock. With that not working, Quinn pulls on both arms and puts a boot on the back of Thorpe's head. Thorpe powers up and grabs a Saito suplex for two of his own. Quinn misses his running punch, gets German suplexed, and the suplex neckbreaker finishes Quinn at 5:38.

**Rating:** C. You can tell that WWE sees something in Thorpe and is protecting him well enough around here. Let him get out there and get his feet wet in WWE before he moves on to something more important on the regular NXT. WWE needs some fresh blood and if Thorpe can offer that, good for him.

### Oro Mensah vs. Charlie Dempsey

Drew Gulak is here with Dempsey, who grabs the cravate to start things off. Mensah fights out and uses a headlock takeover to get to the mat. Back up and Mensah kicks him out of the corner, only to get his arm wrenched for his efforts. A back suplex plants Mensah and Dempsey is right back on the arm. Mensah fights up and his springboard missile dropkick connects for two. Dempsey isn't having this though and grabs the leg, only to switch into a cross armbreaker, followed by an ankle lock and then that nasty neck and leg crank (that needs a name) to make Mensah tap at 6:36.

**Rating:** C. There is something fun about watching Dempsey rip people apart and he does it very well, especially against

someone like Mensah. This was a fine showcase for him and he destroyed Mensah here. Mensah got in a few shots here and there, but there was only so much he could do when Dempsey was picking him apart limb by limb.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This show had more of a variety than most episodes of the series so this could have been a lot worse. Thorpe continues to feel like someone who could become a star and it is good to see him taking people down. Valkyria also comes off as having potential and Dempsey as the wrestler who hurts people worked well too. Solid show from LVL Up, mainly due to the featured stars.

### Results

Lyra Valkyria b. Dani Palmer – Spinning kick to the head

Eddy Thorpe b. Xyon Quinn – Suplex neckbreaker

Charlie Dempsey b. Oro Mensah – Neck and leg crank

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and head over to my Amazon author page with 30 different cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

AND

[Remember to check out Wrestlingrumors.net](http://wrestlingrumors.net) for all of your [wrestling headline needs](http://wrestlingrumors.net).

---

# Daily News Update – March 22, 2023

Make sure you check out some recent reviews:

[Wrestlemania XXVIII \(2015 Edition\)](#)

[NXT – March 21, 2023](#)

---

WATCH: WWE Releases “WrestleMania The Musical”.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-wwe-releases-wrestlemania-musical/>

It’s A Problem: WWE Stars Unhappy With Being Hounded By Fans Over Extreme Autograph Requests.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/problem-wwe-stars-unhappy-hounded-fans-extreme-autograph-requests/>

Gone For Now: WWE Star Misses Live Events Amid Absence From Television.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/gone-now-wwe-star-misses-live-events-amid-absence-television/>

WATCH: Roman Reigns Is Furious After Monday Night Raw Goes Off The Air.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-roman-reigns-furious-monday-night-raw-goes-off-air/>

Trailblazer: First Ever Fourth Generation WWE Star Set For Official In-Ring Debut.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/trailblazer-first-ever-fourth-generation-wwe-star-set-official-ring-debut/>

On The Mend: Missing WWE Star Reveals She Is Recovering From Recent Medical Procedure.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/mend-missing-wwe-star-reveals-recovering-recent-medical-procedure/>

WRESTLING RUMORS: Roman Reigns May Be Going Away For A Long Time.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/wrestling-rumors-roman-reigns-may-going-away-long-time/>

Already Back: Injured NXT Champion Reportedly Cleared To Return.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/already-back-injured-nxt-champion-cleared-return/>

It's Over: 35 Year Old WWE Star's Lengthy Winning Streak Came To An End This Week.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/35-year-old-wwe-stars-lengthy-winning-streak-came-end-week/>

Hang On: WWE Postpones Major Change After 30+ Years.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/hang-wwe-postpones-major-change-30-years/>

**As always, hit up the comments section to chat about what is going on and [get on the Wrestling Rumors Facebook page.](#)**

---

# NXT – March 21, 2023: They're Almost There

## NXT

Date: March 21, 2023

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Booker T., Vic Joseph

We have two shows left before Stand & Deliver and things have been picking up around here. That should make for some interesting moments on the way forward and we should be in for two nice weeks of NXT on the way to Los Angeles. NXT does know how to build up a show and hopefully they do it again here. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of Johnny Gargano vs. Grayson Waller, including Waller invading the Garganos' house last week.

Here is Pretty Deadly for a chat. They are your Stand & Deliver hosts so they are erasing all footage of last week's beatdown from the NXT archives. Cue Carmelo Hayes and Trick Williams to interrupt, setting off an argument about titles. A challenge is issued for tonight with Williams accepting on behalf of...Hayes and Bron Breaker? The fight is on with Hayes getting double teamed, drawing out Breaker for the save.

Post break Hayes rants about how they didn't need Breaker's help. He doesn't want to team with Breaker but Williams says this is a front row seat to study Breaker up close, which seems to work for Hayes.

Roxanne Perez has sent out a tweet saying she will be back, but she doesn't know when.

Women's Title Qualifying Match: Tiffany Stratton vs. Indi

## Hartwell

Stratton clotheslines her down to start but Hartwell hits some of her own. They fight to the apron with Hartwell being dropped on the apron as we take a break. Back with Hartwell fighting out of a chinlock as Booker T. can't remember who Razor Ramon fought in a ladder match (thinking it was the 1-2-3 Kid, which never happened). Stratton double stomps her down but gets caught in a belly to back suplex. The kickout has Stratton frustrated so she misses a springboard Swanton, allowing Hartwell's spinebuster to get two. Stratton Regal Rolls her to set up a moonsault for the pin at 9:16.

**Rating:** C. Hartwell has fallen so far in recent months and Stratton shrugging off her signature spinebuster with commentary not even making it a big deal tells you a lot. Stratton seems ready to move up to the title scene and getting into the ladder match is a good start. Not a great match, but it did what it needed to do.

Gallus is playing pool when the Creeds show up and want to shoot some pool. Gallus wins but lose at darts. A Tag Team Title match is set up for Stand & Deliver. The four go to leave but Tony D'Angelo and Stacks are outside. They would like to discuss some Stand & Deliver business, with Julius saying it's going to be a long night.

Lyra Valkyria trains in what seems to be an empty building.

Gigi Dolin doesn't feel bad about Jacy Jayne being hurt because she can watch Dolin win the Women's Title. Tiffany Stratton comes in to laugh off the idea of Dolin winning. She'll climb the ladder to the tippy top!

Wes Lee is in the ring to talk about having to give it everything he had, hence all of the challenges. He needs four challengers for Stand & Deliver...and here is Dragon Lee (no relation) to interrupt. Dragon wants to prove himself as well and wants in, with Wes saying he's fine with that. Cue JD

McDonagh to say he wants in as well but they both mock him for the upcoming beating at the hands of Ilja Dragunov. Cue Dragunov and we're ready for our scheduled match.

Indi Hartwell is livid at her loss and Zoey Stark makes fun of her.

Kiana James watches the Hartwell outburst when Fallon Henley comes in to yell about what she found in James' office last week. As you might expect, James is livid about the invasion of privacy but Henley is more upset about how James is treating Brooks Jensen.

### Ilja Dragunov vs. JD McDonagh

Dragon Lee is watching at ringside. Dragunov knocks McDonagh down hard to start but McDonagh takes over and hits the slingshot spinning splash. Back up and they both avoid shots to the face before an exchange of hard forearms leave them down. Dragunov grabs some rolling German suplexes (the fans approve) before the 6 1 Line gets two. McDonagh sends him outside in a heap though and we take a break.

Back with McDonagh's leg wrapped around Dragunov's neck until he turns it into a Brock Lock (from the mat) to escape. McDonagh strikes him down and ducks the jumping enziguri before kicking away at the face. Now the jumping enziguri gives Dragunov a breather as the fans are rather interested in AEW's (surely soon to be released) Fight Forever game. Dragunov plants him down but gets caught with a German suplex. Back up and Dragunov kicks him in the head but has to fight off McDonagh's Twister. They fight to the floor again and both get into it with Dragon Lee, which is enough for the no contest at 14:34.

**Rating:** B-. This was two guys hitting each other rather hard until they went to the ending to save both of them. Normally that would be annoying but it is a good idea here, with both guys needing to be kept strong as they (likely) head to the

ladder match in Los Angeles. Sometimes you need a hard hitting fight and that is what you got here.

The brawl is on with Wes Lee taking them out and helping Dragon up.

Carmelo Hayes and Trick Williams come in to see Bron Breakker. Bron says they have the chance to do something special at Stand & Deliver but accuses Pretty Deadly (and Trick) of being clowns who can screw it up.

Wes Lee grants Ilja Dragunov and JD McDonagh spots in the North American Title ladder match. There is one spot left and here is Axiom to claim it. Wes says a lot of people want the match so next week, we're going to have a battle royal for the last spot. Axiom is cool with that because all he wanted was a chance.

Here is Johnny Gargano.....'s music, as we get Javier Bernal instead. Bernal wants to know why people love Gargano instead of him. What does Gargano have that Bernal doesn't? Cue a ticked off Gargano to beat Bernal down before grabbing a microphone. Gargano has a contract for Grayson Waller to sign to make their match unsanctioned. Waller pops up on screen to say he'll sign it...next week, as long as Gargano isn't in the building. Gargano leaves the paper with Vic Joseph and knocks Bernal down again.

Eddy Thorpe (better known as Karl Fredericks) is coming next week and wants to honor his people (which appear to be Native Americans). Then he plays some DJing equipment (that's certainly a combination). He's here next week.

Ivy Nile is upset after what Tatum Paxley did to her last week but is ready to go to Stand & Deliver.

Video on Hank Walker.

Drew Gulak and Charlie Dempsey watch the Walker video, with

Gulak wanting Dempsey to be a good student, seemingly telling Dempsey to hurt Walker.

### Women's Title Qualifying Match: Ivy Nile vs. Lyra Valkyria

Nile rolls her up to start before going after the arm and kicking her in the face. Valkyria sends her into the corner but Nile is right back with a snap suplex. The Diamond Chain Lock is broken up though and Valkyria nails a spinning kick to the head for the pin at 2:53. I know they're pushing Valkyria and that makes sense, but dang that didn't make Nile look very strong.

Isla Dawn and Alba Fyre jump Fallon Henley in the back, with Kiana James making the save.

Wes Lee is looking forward to the battle royal when Jinder Mahal, Dijak and Daba Katto take turns coming up to him, threatening to win next week.

And now, Chase U and Schism have a debate. First up, Rip Fowler talks about how much inclusion matters to the Schism. They even offered Duke Hudson a chance to take off his mask of school spirit. Hudson mutters something about taking off his mask and sits down, with Andre Chase asking what the f\*\*\* was that.

Next up we have Ava and Thea Hail talking about safety. Ava is happy to be under the Schism Tree and Hail...recites (rather quickly) a statement that sounds like it's from a Chase U handbook. Then she goes into quite the rant about how evil Schism is, which has Chase rather impressed.

Finally we have Andre Chase and Joe Gacy talking about how prepared their associates are to be on their own. Gacy cuts Chase off and mocks the students before Tyler Bate comes out of the crowd. Bate goes into a big speech about how you need a prepared mind to be ready, and that is something you get at Chase U, not with Schism. The match is...not on, as Gacy says

they have already beaten Chase U. Hudson offers to put up the school and that's enough for the match to be set. Schism talking isn't a good thing, but that should set up the blowoff match for good.

At the bar, Gallus, the Creeds and Tony D'Angelo/Stacks seem to have done a lot of drinking. Now a triple threat match is set for Stand & Deliver, as the bar is wrecked.

Stand & Deliver rundown.

### Bron Breaker/Carmelo Hayes vs. Pretty Deadly

Trick Williams is here too. Hayes takes Wilson into the corner but Prince comes in to knock Hayes outside. Back in and the ring is cleared, with Hayes and Breaker looking a bit nervous about each other as we take a break. We come back with Hayes cleaning house but double teaming takes him down.

Wilson grabs a chinlock with a knee in the back and a clothesline keeps Hayes in trouble. Hayes misses an enziguri but gets over to Breaker anyway. Everything breaks down and Breaker almost charges into Hayes in the corner. Instead Hayes hits a Codebreaker so Breaker can spear Wilson down. Breaker hands it back to Hayes for Nothing But Net and the pin at 12:01.

**Rating:** C+. This was a pretty run of the mill tag team formula match and while I'm not wild on Pretty Deadly taking another fall, at least it was two two juggernauts whose combined forces could be pret...never mind. Nice match here and Breaker can feel like a monster when he is let loose. Throw in Hayes looking as smooth as anyone in NXT and this worked well as a main event.

Hayes hands Breaker the title to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. Much like Raw and Smackdown, there isn't much left to do for Stand & Deliver outside of filling in a

few empty spots. They added enough this week to make the show feel important, though Stand & Deliver needs to get here before they lose momentum. For now though, this was a good enough nudge in Los Angeles' direction. Just don't screw up next week and get to the big show safely.

### Results

Tiffany Stratton b. Indi Hartwell – Moonsault

JD McDonagh vs. Ilja Dragunov went to a no contest when Dragon Lee interfered

Lyra Valkyria b. Ivy Nile – Spinning kick to the head

Bron Breaker/Carmelo Hayes b. Pretty Deadly – Nothing But Net to Wilson

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and head over to my Amazon author page with 30 different cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

AND

[Remember to check out Wrestlingrumors.net](http://Wrestlingrumors.net) for all of your [wrestling headline needs](http://Wrestlingrumors.net).

---

# Daily News Update – March 21,

# 2023

Make sure you check out some recent reviews:

[Wrestlemania XXVII \(2015 Edition\)](#)

[ECW On Sci Fi – April 8, 2008](#)

[Monday Night Raw – March 20, 2023](#)

---

BREAKING: WWE Announces New Inductee For Hall Of Fame Class Of 2023.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/breaking-wwe-announces-new-inductee-for-hall-of-fame-class-of-2023/>

The Small Screen: WWE Superstar Appears On NCIS: Los Angeles.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/small-screen-wwe-superstar-appears-ncis-los-angeles/>

Elite 8: WWE Announces Full List Of Competitors For WrestleMania 39 Match.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/elite-8-wwe-announces-full-list-competitors-wrestlemania-39-match/>

There It Is: Long Awaited Title Match Officially Added To WrestleMania 39.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/long-awaited-title-match-officially-added-wrestlemania-39/>

Open Season: Wrestling Legend Officially Done With WWE, Now A Free Agent.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/open-season-wrestling-le>

[gend-officially-done-wwe-now-free-agent/](#)

On A Break: Update On Miro's Status During AEW Hiatus.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/break-update-miros-status-aww-hiatus/>

She's Mad: WWE Star Threatens Executive Over WrestleMania 39 Spot.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/shes-mad-wwe-star-threatens-executive-wrestlemania-39-spot/>

WRESTLING RUMORS: WWE Working On Splitting World Titles, Vince McMahon's "Final Obstacle".

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/wrestling-rumors-wwe-working-fix-vince-mcmahons-final-obstacle/>

WATCH: WWE Releases WrestleMania: The Musical

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-wwe-releases-wrestlemania-musical/>

As always, hit up the comments section to chat about what is going on and [get on the Wrestling Rumors Facebook page.](#)

---

## Monday Night Raw – March 20, 2023: Don't Drop It Now

### Monday Night Raw

Date: March 20, 2023

Location: Enterprise Center, St. Louis, Missouri

Commentators: Kevin Patrick, Corey Graves

We are less than two weeks away from Wrestlemania and the show is mostly together. That means this week is going to be about firming up everything that is already set for the show, which will include some Roman Reigns. Other than that, it might be time to add in one or two more things, as WWE does on occasion. Let's get to it.

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

Here are Kevin Owens and Sami Zayn to get things going. They think the fans might like them before Sami goes into a talk about how he was wrong for a long time. They have always used each other to get to the next level but they have always done it as brothers. Owens has always said that Zayn is the best he has ever been in the ring with and that's what made it harder watching him in the Bloodline. It's time to take the Bloodline down though...so let's look at that Wrestlemania sign.

Cue the Usos to say Owens and Zayn are just going to stab each other in the back. Zayn says Jey wants to stab Roman Reigns in the back, so we get straight to the Wrestlemania challenge. Jimmy says no, but Jey wants the chance to end the Zayn/Owens problem, so let's do the brother vs. brother title match. The fight is on with the Usos being cleared out, only to grab chairs.

Cue Roman Reigns and the rest of the Bloodline arriving, which makes the Usos leave. You knew this match was coming but they took their time to get here, which is not a bad idea. The fans want to see the match and that is one of the hardest things to do with any match, let alone one of the bigger ones on the Wrestlemania card.

Montez Ford vs. Austin Theory

Non-title and Angelo Dawkins lets Ford do this one on his own. The fans want the smoke but have to settle for Theory shouldering Ford down and mocking his dance. Theory gets in a big beatdown in the corner but Ford is back up with some

stomps of his own. A running clothesline puts Theory on the floor and there's the toss over the barricade. Ford sits on some fans at ringside and we take a break.

Back with Ford hitting a high crossbody and a running uppercut to drop Theory again. Ford throws in a You Can't See Me before hitting the standing moonsault for two. A DDT sends Theory outside and there's the big running flip dive. Back in and Theory gets in a quick dropkick, setting up A Town Down for the pin at 8:45.

**Rating:** C+. Letting Ford rub elbows with a champion is an interesting idea as he continues to look ready to break out on his own. Theory wasn't going to lose so close to Wrestlemania though and he shouldn't have, so burning off a Ford loss might be a bit of an odd way to go. It makes sense after last week, but Ford should be better protected if he's going to get a shot on his own.

Post match Theory says he'll make John Cena believe in him at Wrestlemania.

Roman Reigns doesn't seem pleased with the Usos but Jimmy Uso says he'll never forgive Sami Zayn for causing trouble with Jey. Jimmy says they've got Zayn and Owens at Wrestlemania, with Reigns saying he hopes so. Reigns asks for the room to be cleared...except for Jey.

Post break (and what I'm guessing was a rousing spelling bee), Reigns says Jey went off for weeks and now he's back making decisions. Should Reigns believe him? Jey says he's Bloodline, which is all Reigns needed to hear. Reigns says he loves him and Jey leaves. Paul Heyman comes back in and Reigns says he got the answers he was looking for, while looking a bit serious.

The men's four way showcase tag match will include the Street Profits, Braun Strowman/Ricochet, the Alpha Academy and the Viking Raiders.

Chelsea Green interrupts Adam Pearce, who isn't happy with Carmella not being available tonight. Instead, Piper Niven will be her partner tonight. Pearce reminds her that he is the same manager over and over so Green wants to be in the Wrestlemania match. Threats ensue.

Video on Omos vs. Brock Lesnar, complete with various measurements of Omos' gigantic hands and reach.

### Omos vs. Mustafa Ali

Dolph Ziggler is watching in the back as the chokebomb finishes Ali at 55 seconds.

Post match MVP promises that Brock Lesnar will face Omos at Wrestlemania.

Logan Paul is on the way to the ring and blows off Miz on the way.

It's time for Logan Paul and Impulsive TV. Paul knows that no one but his dad and that one fan with a sign for his energy drink like him. No one here is going to respect him, but who cares, because it isn't his fault that they can't see the talent in front of them. He is a 360 degree entertainer and mocks the St. Louis Rams for heading to Los Angeles. Paul is looking forward to being with the Rams in Los Angeles at Wrestlemania on April 1, his 28th birthday.

We look at Paul knocking Seth Rollins out last week a few times, complete with Rollins' head turning into a clown as we see the punch land over and over. Paul's mic goes out and we see Seth Rollins (in a leopard print suit) in the control truck. Rollins asks how we're going to save this edition of Impulsive TV...so he plays his own music and comes to the ring.

Cue Rollins, with Paul talking over the fans singing along in a funny bit (Paul: "No one told me St. Louis was tone deaf.

Your outfit is stupid.”). The fight is on fast and they go over the announcers’ table, with Rollins getting the better of things. Rollins dives off the top onto some security (that was a nasty landing) but Paul knocks Rollins out again. They’re doing a good job of making Paul feel like a real threat to Rollins at Wrestlemania and that right hand is getting over.

Now available: Wrestlemania the Musical, starring the Miz.

### Dominik Mysterio vs. Johnny Gargano

Damien Priest and Dexter Lumis are here too and Gargano has bad ribs after being attacked on NXT. Gargano starts fast and hammers away with left hands in the corner. The rolling kick to the head and running hurricanrana put Dominik on the floor, setting up the suicide dive (which made good contact). The ribs are banged up though and Dominik drops them onto the barricade as we take a break.

Back with Dominik staying on the ribs until Gargano suplexes his way out of trouble. A missed charge in the corner lets Dominik roll him up for two but the referee sees the feet on the ropes. The Lawn Dart into a basement superkick gives Gargano two but Dominik knocks him off the top. Dominik hits the frog splash for the pin at 10:15.

**Rating:** C. Dominik stays warm on the way to a probably match with Rey Mysterio at Wrestlemania and he beat a bit of a name on the way there. Gargano on the other hand just feels stagnant and seems to be living off of the reputation he built in NXT. It doesn’t help that he has been kind of floating around since returning to the main roster, but maybe that can be fixed after Wrestlemania.

Post match Dominik grabs the mic and talks about Rey Mysterio turning down his Wrestlemania challenge. Dominik isn’t done yet though and promises to not stop until he gets what he wants. This Friday, the entire Mysterio family will be live in Las Vegas, as in the same family that kicked him out of the

group chat. Dominik: "That's ok though because the Judgment Day group chat is much better." He'll be asking his mom for permission to face Rey at Wrestlemania, if she'll let Rey's testicles out of her purse.

Paul Heyman sends the Usos to the jet for seafood, because Roman Reigns is giving them the night off. Solo Sikoa doesn't get to though, as Roman Reigns wants to see him.

Edge is in a room full of candles and talks about what a hostile man that he is. He has been taken into the Cell by the Deadman himself. We get part of the 23rd Psalm with Edge talking about how he is the valley of the shadow of death. So at Wrestlemania, bring the Demon to face the Devil. Edge's delivery was good but the candles/Bible quotes/everything else felt almost cliched here. At least it gives Balor a reason to bring back the Demon.

Here is Rhea Ripley for a chat. She doesn't want to live in the past like Charlotte, who keeps talking about what happened three years ago at Ripley's first Wrestlemania. That was when she was trying to make a name for herself and earn respect. When Charlotte hears the name Rhea Ripley, she begins to question everything. Ripley: "Don't WHAT me. You're all pathetic."

Charlotte has to admit that it is over for her and when she sees Ripley holding the title up, she'll know her insecurities were true. She won't respect Ripley, but she will fear her. Cue Damage Ctrl of all people, seemingly offering help with Charlotte. Ripley doesn't need it, but Bayley says this is their show. Threats are made and Ripley is game, even if she isn't in her gear. Bayley is in her gear though and we're ready to go.

### Bayley vs. Rhea Ripley

The rest of Damage Ctrl is here too. Ripley sends her into the corner to start but gets tossed to the apron. A Stunner over

the apron sends Ripley to the floor where she blocks the dropkick under the bottom rope. Bayley is fine enough to send her into the post, only to have Ripley hit a flip dive off the apron to drop Bayley for two back inside. A hard knee to the face gives Ripley two but some interference breaks up Riptide. Cue Becky Lynch, Trish Stratus and Lita (with Becky carrying a big bag of popcorn) as we take a break.

Back with the Bayley to Belly hitting for no cover, as Ripley plants her with a belly to back faceplant. Bayley hits a running knee to the face though and they're both down. Ripley kicks her down out of the corner though and the Prism Trap sends Bayley to the ropes. The others get in a fight at ringside, leaving Ripley to hit Riptide for the pin at 10:43.

**Rating:** B-. You can tell when wrestlers are a cut or two above the people around them and that is the case here. Ripley feels ready to break out to the next level and Bayley is one of the most established names in the women's division. Becky and company coming down with the popcorn was a little weird, but at least they helped cost Bayley the match.

Chad Gable finds Otis getting a manicure and a facial and wants him ringside later. Otis seems game but Maxxine Dupri comes in to say Otis has a hand modeling gig. Otis leaves with...Gable actually.

This week's Wrestlemania trailer: Drew McIntyre and the Brawling Brutes in the 40 Year Old Virgin, with Ridge Holland getting his overly hairy chest waxed. These still aren't really funny.

### Chad Gable vs. Ricochet

Otis and Ricochet are here too. Gable wrestles him to the mat to start as Otis keeps looking at his freshly manicured nails. Back up and Ricochet starts flipping away before dropkicking Gable into the corner. A super hurricanrana is blocked though and Gable...kind of release AA's him down. Gable hits a top

rope clothesline for two as we take a break.

We come back with Ricochet hitting a running shooting star press. Gable muscles him up though and hits something like a Razor's Edge Dominator (that could be a finisher for someone) for two. Gable suplexes him for the same but here is Maxxine Dupri to take Otis to the back. Ricochet reverses Chaos Theory into a standing Sliced Bread, setting up the shooting star press for the pin at 10:35.

**Rating:** C+. The still frustrating thing about the way WWE uses Gable is he can go in the ring. I'm not at all saying he should be some kind of a next big thing, but giving him nothing to do but put others over for a long time has taken a lot away from him. Just seeing him having something fresh to do with Otis recently has helped, but it's still not quite enough.

#### Bianca Belair/Asuka vs. Chelsea Green/Piper Niven

Belair drops Green for the moonsault but Asuka tags herself in and the heroes clear the ring. We take a break and come back Niven taking over on Asuka. Everything breaks down though and Niven misses a charge in the corner allowing Belair to hit an impressive KOD for the pin at 6:36.

**Rating:** C-. I'm still not sure what the appeal is to having these matches where half of them take place during the break. Belair vs. Asuka still feels like a pretty weak Wrestlemania match, even if the actual product will work well. They need something to bring the interest up and Belair looking scared of Asuka isn't doing it.

Post match Asuka takes out Belair. At least that's taking a side instead of just looking at each other.

Here is the Bloodline (Roman Reigns/Paul Heyman/Solo Sikoa) for a chat. Reigns asks for acknowledgment but cue Cody Rhodes to cut him off. Rhodes wants to know why he is a problem and

tells Heyman to stop, because he's talking to the Tribal Chief. Reigns says the problem is what Rhodes represents and makes fun of his daddy for being a professional rasser.

Let's look at Rhodes' track record: he didn't want to be Stardust so he ran away. Then he started a promotion and he couldn't get over in it so he ran away. Then he got over and his body gave out so he ran away. Rhodes keeps talking about finishing the story at Wrestlemania but that's not what's going to happen. The real choice is April 3, when Rhodes isn't the champion. Reigns hopes Rhodes will do something that makes his daddy happy and not run away.

Rhodes says what Reigns said is true, but what he did when he ran away helped every locker room make a lot more money. Yeah his daddy was a wrestler and Cody wanted to be a superstar but maybe it's true that he's just a runaway violent professional wrestler. No one needs to bring up his father one more time because he isn't going to show up with a Bionic Elbow. Cody's brother works elsewhere so all you have is him.

Instead let's talk about Cody's Cuban mother who would tell him to knock Reigns out and then hit him again for good measure. Let's talk about April 3, which is when Reigns is going to wake up and remember how to lose. And then Jey is going to leave him too. Then Jimmy will be gone, and all that is left will be Solo, who Rhodes knows isn't ready.

Sikoa will leave him too and Heyman will become an advocate again. That leaves Reigns without a family, a Roman with no more reigns and a chief without a tribe. Reigns leaves and Cody mocks Sikoa for following him before kicking Sikoa in the face. Reigns stops Sikoa from using the Samoan Spike to end the show. That was kind of a weird ending, and this one, while full of big shots at Rhodes, didn't land nearly as well as their Smackdown faceoff.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This show did some good stuff and helped

firm up some of the other stuff for Wrestlemania, but it seems they're readying the point where there isn't much left to say in some of the matches. The show is either set or mostly set and that doesn't leave much to be done. They only have the big hard sell Raw left and that should be ok as long as nothing goes too far down next week.

### Results

Austin Theory b. Montez Ford – A Town Down

Omos b. Mustafa Ali – Chokebomb

Dominik Mysterio b. Johnny Gargano – Frog splash

Rhea Ripley b. Bayley – Riptide

Ricochet b. Chad Gable – Shooting star press

Asuka/Bianca Belair b. Piper Niven/Chelsea Green – KOD to Niven

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and head over to my Amazon author page with 30 different cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

AND

[Remember to check out Wrestlingrumors.net](http://wrestlingrumors.net) for all of your wrestling headline needs.

---

**ECW On Sci Fi – April 8,**

# 2008: The Saving Grace

## ECW On Sci Fi

Date: April 8, 2008

Location: TD Banknorth Garden, Boston, Massachusetts

Commentators: Joey Styles, Tazz

We are still starting the new reality around here, with Kane as the ECW Champion and CM Punk as the star who is way too big for this show. Other than that, we have the continuing adventures of Colin Delaney, who is still trying to get a contract. That hasn't been going well for him and odds are it doesn't get better this week. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

## Miz vs. CM Punk

John Morrison is on commentary. Punk grabs a headlock to start and runs him over with a shoulder to start. Back up and Miz hits his own shoulder, only to have his leg tied up for some hard cranking. Punk gets sent outside though and Miz drives him back first into the apron. Morrison gets caught interfering and gets ejected as Miz grabs a chinlock.

We take a break and come back with Miz snapping Punk's throat across the middle rope for two. Punk gets out of the double arm crank without much trouble but Miz pulls him into a reverse chinlock. Back up and it's a double clothesline for the double knockdown, followed by Punk making the comeback. The powerslam gives Punk two and it's the running knee in the corner into the GTS for the pin on Miz.

**Rating:** C. Punk continues to feel like the biggest star in ECW but Miz has improved by leaps and bounds. He still isn't exactly polished but he can wrestle a completely watchable

match. You can see the effort that he has put in and it is starting to pay off. Just find some actual challenges to go after he and Morrison and you might be on to something.

Colin Delaney and Tommy Dreamer come up to Armando Estrada to ask about Delaney getting a contract. Estrada says sure...if Delaney can beat Dreamer tonight. Oh and if Dreamer goes easy on him in any way or loses, he's fired. Neither seems pleased.

Here is Armando Estrada in the ring for the Kane/Chavo Guerrero contract signing at Backlash. Guerrero, with the Edgeheads, comes out first, with Kane following. Kane goes to sign first, but Chavo says that means signing away the title. That makes Kane laugh as he signs, but Chavo says he'll have someone watching his back at Backlash. Cue a bald man in a suit to start the brawl, including a belt shot to Kane. The beatdown is on and Chavo frog splashes Kane through the table. Now Chavo signs.

### Elijah Burke vs. Nunzio

Burke works on the arm to start and sends him face first into the apron to keep Nunzio rocked. A hard shot to the face sets up the running crotch attack to the back of Nunzio's head. There's a middle rope forearm into a release German suplex before an STO finishes Nunzio off. Total squash.

### Kofi Kingston vs. Domino

No Deuce or Cherry here. Before the match, Kofi talks about having a good time in the ring and bringing the good vibrations. Domino even wrestles without his shirt to really make things different. Kofi slides between the legs and takes him down, setting up the armdrag into the armbar. It works so well that Kofi does it again before sending him into the corner. Domino manages a faceplant out of the corner (kind of a reverse powerbomb) for two, followed by a knee to Kofi's face. The chinlock goes on but Kofi fights out and hits his jumping back elbow. Domino ducks a crossbody but charges into

Trouble in Paradise for the pin.

**Rating:** C. Kofi is still building himself up but this was a win over a slightly bigger name. You need to do something like this over the months as Kingston needs to move up the ladder. He still needs a lot more than beating Domino, but you can tell that WWE is paying attention to him and sees something there.

Eve Torres is in the back with Kelly Kelly when Layla comes in. Layla says there is room for one Diva Search winner around here. She is the top Diva around here and Eve needs to learn that. This stuff continues to be bad.

### Colin Delaney vs. Tommy Dreamer

Basically only the winner has a job and Armando Estrada is at ringside. Dreamer wrestles him to the mat to start and grabs a slam. The elbow misses though as they are firmly in first gear here. Delaney gets in a shot or two before low bridging Dreamer to the floor. There's the slingshot dive and a slingshot hilo gets two on Dreamer back inside. Dreamer grabs some kind of a reverse suplex and avoids a missile dropkick to send Delaney crashing down. The Tree of Woe dropkick sets up the DDT to finish Delaney.

**Rating:** C-. There was a story here with Delaney wanting a contract and Dreamer having to beat him up despite not wanting to. The problem though is the Delaney matches are only so good as he can't do much in the ring and is mainly getting squashed. Delaney got in a little more than usual here, but it is still only going so well. They need to go somewhere with this, as I don't know how much fuel this version has left.

**Overall Rating:** C. Kind of a lackluster show here, as there is only so much that you can get out of this roster. Kane is a star and Kofi feels like he is on the way up, but then you have whatever is left of Elijah Burke, Chavo Guerrero and a somewhat out the door CM Punk. That isn't going to make for

the best show, with the hour long run time being this show's saving grace.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and head over to my Amazon author page with 30 different cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

AND

[Remember to check out Wrestlingrumors.net for all of your wrestling headline needs.](http://wrestlingrumors.net)

---

## **Daily News Update – March 20, 2023**

Make sure you check out a recent review:

[Wrestlemania XXVI \(2015 Edition\)](http://wrestlingrumors.net)

---

Sounds Fishy: Matt Hardy Reveals How Vince McMahon Needed A Fish For Bray Wyatt At 2AM.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/sounds-fishy-matt-hardy->

[reveals-vince-mcmahon-needed-fish-bray-wyatt-2am/](#)

WATCH: Rhea Ripley Gets A Little Confused At WWE Live Event.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-rhea-ripley-gets-little-confused-wwe-live-event/>

One More? 54 Year Old WWE Hall Of Famer Would Have One More Match Under Special Conditions.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/one-54-year-old-wwe-hall-famer-one-match-special-conditions/>

On The Mend: More Details On Bray Wyatt's WWE Absence.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/mend-details-bray-wyatts-wwe-absence/>

Angering The Boss: Former WWE Star Reveals Why Vince McMahon Ejected Him From An Arena.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/angering-boss-former-wwe-star-reveals-vince-mcmahon-ejected-arena/>

WATCH: Shayna Baszler Brilliantly Angers Her Hometown Crowd At WWE Live Event.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-shayna-baszler-brilliantly-angers-hometown-crowd-wwe-live-event/>

**As always, hit up the comments section to chat about what is going on and [get on the Wrestling Rumors Facebook page.](#)**

---

# Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania XXVI: As Only Shawn Should Go Out

## Wrestlemania XXVI

Date: March 28, 2010

Location: University of Phoenix Stadium, Glendale, Arizona

Attendance: 72,219

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, Matt Striker

In addition to the two main events, there's a third big match that people never thought would actually happen. Back on January 4, 2010, Bret Hart returned to the company for the first time in over twelve years. After burying the hatchet with Shawn Michaels, there was only one score left to settle: Vince McMahon. Therefore, it's Bret vs. Vince, naturally in a no holds barred match. Let's get to it.

## Pre-Show: Battle Royal

Mark Henry, Shad Gaspard, JTG, Goldust, Yoshi Tatsu, Santino Marella, Primo, Kung Fu Naki, Slam Master J., Jimmy Wang Yang, Chris Masters, Vladimir Kozlov, Great Khali, Finlay, William Regal, Luke Gallows, Carlito, Tyler Reks, Zack Ryder, Lance Archer, Mike Knox, Caylen Croft, Trent Barretta, Tyson Kidd, David Hart-Smith, Chavo Guerrero

Gaspard and JTG are Cryme Tyme, Tatsu is a talented Japanese wrestler who didn't go anywhere, Slam Master J. is Jesse in a bad rap gimmick, Kozlov is a Russian mixed martial arts fighter, Gallows is a big power guy, Reks is a surfer, Archer is another big power guy, Croft and Barretta are a team called the Dudebusters and Hart-Smith is Kidd's partner in the Hart Dynasty. The NXT rookies (from back when NXT was a competition) are watching from the stage.

Primo and J. are sent out in the first thirty seconds but the ring is still really full. Henry puts out the Dudebusters and Chavo, only to get dumped by Khali. As you might expect, a bunch of people get together to

put Khali out as well. Cryme Tyme gets together to put out Gallows but Shad eliminates JTG. Things settle down for a change but there are still too many people in there.

Ryder and Funaki save themselves from elimination. Masters catches Finlay in the Masterlock, only to get kicked in the face to put Chris out. Kozlov gets rid of the Hart Dynasty but Knox gets rid of Kozlov. Funaki and Goldust are out next with Regal putting Gaspard out a few seconds later. Finlay dumps Regal and Ryder eliminates Reks. We're down to Santino, Tatsu, Yang, Ryder, Finlay, Archer, Carlito and Knox. The fans get behind Santino and he brings out the Cobra to clean house, only to get dumped by Finlay, making him the most hated man in the stadium.

Yang fires off some nice kicks to Archer but he's quickly eliminated, as is Archer via a kick from Tatsu. To show how annoying Striker can get with nicknames, he calls Tatsu "the Poison Fist of the Pacific Rim." Uh, sure. Hornswoggle makes his annual appearance to throw Finlay the shillelagh. Knox gets knocked out and there's a tadpole splash, followed by Carlito being tossed. Ryder dumps Knox and Finlay from behind but Ryder goes after Hornswoggle, allowing Tatsu to kick him out for the win at 8:34.

**Rating:** D+. This would be the traditional not great battle royal but it was cool to see someone young getting a win for a change. You could see a lot of new names showing up around the company, though a lot of them really never went anywhere. Unfortunately that would include Tatsu, who never went much higher than this, partially due to ECW not being around to take away some of the roster spots.

We open with another fly over.

Fantasia (from American Idol) sings America the Beautiful.

The set is a big pyramid made of Titantron screens. It's another cool idea.

The opening video talks about how many people spent their lives reaching this night but now the page turns. For some it's a new story and for some it's the end. Tonight is their chance to earn their moment, which would

become the most important thing Wrestlemania offered in years to come.

There's a really cool miniature cylinder that lowers from the ceiling before every match with the Titantron video playing.

#### Tag Team Titles: R-Truth/John Morrison vs. The Miz/Big Show

R-Truth is a rapper still around today and is challenging along with Morrison. Miz is US Champion and there are still four Tag Team Title belts a year after the titles were unified. The champs have their themes put together and it really doesn't work. Miz and Morrison get things going with John scoring off a slam before it's off to Truth.

That's about it for the good times though as Show comes in and throws Truth across the ring. Morrison gets knocked off the apron but he's still able to kick Show off the middle rope to save Truth. Back to Miz vs. Morrison as Truth stupidly dives at Show, earning himself a ram into the post. Morrison rolls out of the Skull Crushing Finale and into a nice rollup for two, only to have Show knock him cold to retain at 3:26.

**Rating:** D. Well they made good time. I'm not sure why they got out of there so fast but maybe the rest of the show was running long. It's not like this was missing much by turning it into a Raw match so it's acceptable. The tag division was getting stagnant again but at least Miz was flying up the charts.

Video on Wrestlemania week in Phoenix.

#### Randy Orton vs. Ted DiBiase vs. Cody Rhodes

These three were part of a group called Legacy but the young guys (Ted Jr. and Cody if that's not clear) rebelled, basically turning Randy face again in the process. This is officially a triple threat but it starts as a glorified handicap match. Rhodes gets clotheslined to the floor so Orton can stomp Ted down. The numbers quickly catch up with him though and the double stomping begins to some INSANE booing.

They take turns holding Orton so the other can get in some right hands, followed by a double suplex. A DiBiase clothesline stops Orton's comeback but as is the case in almost every triple threat match ever, the two who

work together get in a fight over who gets the pin. They fight to the floor and the crowd is suddenly much more silent. Striker: "Perhaps a future Wrestlemania main event right here."

Orton makes his comeback and Rhodes takes out DiBiase by mistake. Striker says that's Wrestlemania experience. Most people would call it wrestling experience in general but Striker is the professional. The double elevated DDT, which Cole has never seen before (certainly not at Wrestlemania), takes Rhodes and DiBiase down. The Punt knocks Rhodes out and the RKO ends DiBiase at 9:01.

**Rating:** C. So much for Rhodes and DiBiase. Cody would be fine but DiBiase never did anything in WWE after this (to be fair he hadn't done much in the first place). Orton was on fire again as his style and finisher are way too easy to cheer, yet for some reason WWE insists on making him a heel, even though the crowd is almost always going to turn him back.

Vickie Guerrero and her fellow heel divas promise to win their ten Divas tag. Jillian Hall (now a horrible singer, which may have been designed to make fun of Brooke Hogan) comes in to sing Simply the Best. All of the other women leave so here's Santino for a Slim Jim commercial. He takes a bite and Jillian becomes Mae Young. Another bite turns her into Gene Okerlund (in the same dress) and a third turns Okerlund into Melina. No more biting as Santino leaves with another good looking woman.

Kofi Kingston vs. MVP vs. Evan Bourne vs. Jack Swagger vs. Shelton Benjamin vs. Matt Hardy vs. Dolph Ziggler vs. Drew McIntyre vs. Kane vs. Christian

Money in the Bank with TEN ENTRANTS. Thankfully they would split it up next year where they went with two eight man versions. Bourne is a high flier, Swagger is a really good amateur wrestler, Ziggler has gone from nothing to a solid midcarder, McIntyre is an arrogant young Scottish wrestler and the Intercontinental Champion and Kane has a black eye for reasons that aren't explained.

Standard wild brawl to start with MVP throwing in a ladder but Drew intercepts it and climbs until Matt makes the save. Seven guys all try to climb the same ladder to predictable results. Bourne gets chokeslammed

over the top and down onto a bunch of people. Kofi knocks the ladder over to send Drew and Matt into the top rope. Now it's Christian going up but Ziggler runs up and pulls him down, which is called a Zig Zag. That's quite the stretch.

MVP knocks Kane to the floor but walks into Pay Dirt (jumping downward spiral) from Shelton. Swagger uses the top of the ladder to stop some climbs until Bourne drops him as well. Christian and Matt bring in ladders and slide them into the rings of the one standing, creating two platforms and crushing Swagger in the middle in the process. They climb up onto the platforms while Bourne is on the side of the ladder and this isn't ending well.

Swagger shoves Matt's ladder away and Bourne breaks up a Killswitch onto the platform by knocking Christian face first into the ladder. Instead of going for the case, Evan hits Air Bourne (shooting star) and then tries to go up, allowing Matt to hiptoss him to the mat in a huge crash. Swagger shoves Matt onto the bridged ladder but gets pulled down by MVP. Shelton and MVP fight to the floor where Kane takes them both out with a ladder.

Back in and Kane shoves the ladder over to drop Ziggler before throwing the ladder away. He's not done though as Ziggler gets chokeslammed onto another ladder and then crushed inside of it. Kane crushes him so much that he breaks the ladder in two. Kofi is back in with Trouble in Paradise but now he has no ladder (because getting another of the more than half dozen on the floor is out of the question) so he gets an idea.

Kingston picks up both halves of the ladder and uses them as stilts, only to have McIntyre break it up because the stilts idea, while VERY creative, is also kind of stupid. Matt stops Drew's attempt by crotching him on the top rope but Christian goes up to slow Hardy. They both have to knock Kane off, followed by a reverse DDT from Christian to put them both down. Christian goes back up but Swagger knocks him down and pulls down the briefcase (taking his sweet time to do so) for the win at 13:44.

**Rating:** C+. This is the weakest of the Money in the Banks that they've had yet and again it's due to having so many people. In the last five

minutes of this match, several people just disappeared while everyone else did their thing. If you're not going to do anything with most of the people, stop having them in the match and put them in a match somewhere else on the card.

Swagger would become one of the weaker World Champions of all time, which is a big reason why he's in the spot he's in five years later. Instead of being a solid midcarder, he's that guy who used to be World Champion and has fallen this far. It's a major problem with something like Money in the Bank: instead of building someone else up, someone jumps to the title scene but doesn't have any roots to support them. It happened with Swagger and it would happen again later.

Extreme Rules ad.

Hall of Fame, with Ted DiBiase headlining. He called this one of the few moments you can't put a price on and made \$100 bills fall from the ceiling, even though that's not something he would have done in his day.

The Class of 2010 includes Stu Hart (represented by most of his kids), Wendi Richter, Mad Dog Vachon (in a wheelchair), Antonio Inoki, Bob Uecker (he deserves it), Gorgeous George (represented by his wife) and Ted DiBiase. It's a bit of a smaller class this year which is something they need to address in the future. Something they don't need to address is the awesome music that plays for this every year. It's really good stuff.

We recap Sheamus vs. HHH. Sheamus won the Raw World Title in December 2009 in a huge upset but then lost it at No Way Put 2010 when HHH eliminated him in the Elimination Chamber for his first loss (assuming you ignore ECW). Sheamus wanted to fight HHH one on one at Wrestlemania to prove that the pin in the Chamber was a fluke. HHH compared Sheamus to himself back in 1996 when he tried to fight Ultimate Warrior and got crushed (you almost never hear about that anymore). It's a simple story here but one that has worked for years.

Sheamus vs. HHH

They circle each other to start and HHH slaps him in the face. An early

Pedigree attempt doesn't work so it's a suplex and knee drop for two instead. Sheamus' attempt to bail outside doesn't work as HHH drags him back in for a Figure Four because we haven't praised Flair recently enough. Sheamus grabs the ropes and takes it outside for a whip into the steps as Striker tries to dub HHH the Ace of Spades.

Two straight Irish Curse backbreakers put HHH down as the match slows a lot. An ax handle gets two and some simple right hands to the face get the same. We hit the chinlock because this is the point in a WWE style match where you would put on a chinlock. After a powerslam, Sheamus grabs an armbar. Dude come on. HHH fights up out of the devastating armbar (because nothing else had been done to his arm) and grabs a DDT.

The high knee and facebuster get two but Sheamus counters the Pedigree into the Brogue Kick for two (of course HHH gets to be one of if not the first person to kick out of it). After the spinebuster sends Sheamus to the apron, another Brogue Kick drops HHH. No cover though as HHH pops up and hits the Pedigree for the pin at 12:10.

**Rating:** C+. Good power match here, assuming you ignore HHH kicking out of one of Sheamus' finishers (to be fair it wasn't his big finisher yet, as a Razor's Edge called the High Cross was still his go to move) and get the pin that he didn't need. Sheamus would win the rematch at Extreme Rules 2010 in the standard formula: HHH wins the big match on the big stage but loses the rematch as a consolation prize.

We recap Rey Mysterio vs. CM Punk. Mysterio had cost Punk a spot in Money in the Bank so Punk and his Straight Edge Society (a stable led by Punk as a near religious figure who would save them from their lives of addiction by the powers of a straight edge lifestyle) went after Rey, including interrupting Rey bringing his daughter into the ring on her birthday. Rey wouldn't fight with his family there so Punk branded him a coward. The match was set for Wrestlemania and if Rey loses, he has to join the Straight Edge Society.

### CM Punk vs. Rey Mysterio

Punk has Luke Gallows and Serena (a talented wrestler who rarely got in the ring in WWE) with him. Before the match, Punk accuses the 70,000+

people here of being on drugs or alcohol, thinking it would make all of their problems go away. After tonight's win, Punk will see all these people join him as one nation under Punk with sobriety for all. This year Rey is dressed as one of the aliens from Avatar which didn't work all that well as it looked like his normal attire outside of the piece of black hair on the back of his mask.

Punk (with G.I. Joe themed trunks) jumps him from behind to start as Striker says Punk's mind is a vile pigsty. Rey gets caught in the Tree of Woe but pulls himself up to avoid a baseball slide, sending Punk up against the post. That's not enough to slow Punk down though as he drops Rey face first onto the steps and puts on a chinlock. Rey gets up but his springboard cross body is caught in a belly to belly for two.

Punk holds him down with a test of strength grip until Rey fights up and springboards to the top for a moonsault into a DDT (that looked way better than I was expecting). Another moonsault is caught in the GTS (Go To Sleep) but Rey grabs the rope to save himself. Rey kicks him down and tries a frog splash but Punk sits up just in time. Back up and Serena saves Punk from a 619, only to have it connect a few seconds later, setting up the springboard splash for the pin at 6:30.

**Rating:** C. This could have been good with some more time but there's only so much you can do for a big match in less than seven minutes. The Straight Edge Society was a cool concept and had a lot of potential but they lost almost every important match they had, which ultimately led to the stable falling apart.

We recap Bret vs. Vince. As mentioned earlier, Bret returned on the January 4, 2010 Monday Night Raw and seemed to make peace with Vince, only to have Vince kick him low. Eventually Bret broke his leg in a car wreck backstage which was finally enough for Vince to sign for the match. Bret agreed to wrestle with the injury after being called a coward. Vince signed the contract and gloated, but as he turned around, Bret's cast was on the table and his leg was just fine. You would think seeing Bret goldbricking for years would have taught Vince something but no one ever seemed to get the idea.

## Bret Hart vs. Vince McMahon

Anything goes. For reasons that I'll never understand, they remixed Bret's music for his return. Bret is in jean shorts here because this is going to be a fight instead of a match. Before the match, Vince says Bret deserves a Wrestlemania sized screwing. Therefore, he's paid to have the Hart Family at ringside (well at least the ones that will talk to him) as lumberjacks and Bret's brother Bruce (in sunglasses of course) is going to be guest referee.

We're still not ready to go though because Bret says that the Harts were on to Vince in the first place and it's Vince that is going to get screwed. Bret slugs him out to the floor to start and the Hart Dynasty gives him a Hart Attack off the top. Back in and Bret starts in on the knee, sending Vince bailing to the floor. He can't quite get underneath the ring but does find a crowbar.

Bret punches it out of his hand though and beats on him for a bit, followed by stomping away at the "lower abdomen". Someone throws Bret a chair so he can have a seat for a bit. Bret beats on him with the chair for a good while and Vince appears to be in shock. The Sharpshooter finally makes Vince tap at 11:09.

**Rating:** A. This was all it needed to be and exactly what people were expecting. Neither guy is a wrestler anymore so having the Hart Family, especially Kidd and Hart-Smith, helped a good bit. There was never any doubt as to what this was going to be and while it went a bit longer than it needed to, it did everything it needed to.

Wrestlemania XXVII is in Atlanta. Cole promises a great guest host.

The attendance is 72,219, again not announced as a record.

We recap Edge vs. Chris Jericho. They had been the Tag Team Champions in June 2009 but Edge had destroyed his Achilles and put him on the shelf for a very long time. He returned early at the 2010 Royal Rumble to win in a major surprise. Edge immediately chose to challenge Jericho for the Smackdown World Title because they suddenly hated each other, even though there wasn't a very strong reason for them to. Edge threatened to spear

Jericho over and over again which was really the only thing he said during the buildup.

### Smackdown World Title: Chris Jericho vs. Edge

Jericho is defending and shoulders Edge down to start before Edge charges into a boot in the corner. The early threat of a spear sends Jericho bailing to the floor but he avoids a baseball slide and hits one of his own to put Edge on the floor. Striker name drops Sexton Hardcastle (Edge's pre-WWE name) as Jericho puts on a chinlock. Back up and gets draped over the top rope, only to knock Jericho off the apron and into the announcers' table.

That goes nowhere so Jericho rolls through a high cross body for two. They're really not burning the place up out there. The Walls and Codebreaker are both blocked but the spear is countered into the Walls for our first big spot. Edge rolls out of that as well and gets two off a small package. The Lionsault misses and the Edge-0-Matic gets two more. Jericho walks into the Impaler for the same but Edge is winded.

With Edge in trouble, Jericho loads up a spear of his own (Striker: "WHAT A GENIUS MOVE!") only to charge into a boot to the face. Edge tries his own spear but runs into a one knee Codebreaker for two. Jericho starts in on the ankle before putting on the Walls. He gets smarter though and goes with a single leg crab which really cranks on the ankle. Edge gets to the ropes because it's just a half crab so Jericho goes to get the belt. As you would expect, the referee is bumped a few seconds later and the belt shot gets two on Edge. The Codebreaker connects for the clean(ish) pin to retain the title at 15:48.

**Rating:** B-. This took some time but was really getting going near the end. Again though, it feels like it got cut off short and that's getting annoying tonight. At least it worked while it lasted, especially for one of Edge's first major matches back. This is still a weird feud but since it's WWE, you know this isn't ending with one match.

Post match Edge goes after Jericho again and throws him on the announcers' table. A big run down the tables sets up a spear to drive Jericho through the barricade and set up a rematch. That would have

worked a lot better if the pin had come off the belt shot instead of the Codebreaker.

We look at the pre-show battle royal because the matches haven't been cut short enough already.

Maryse/Michelle McCool/Alicia Fox/Layla/Vickie Guerrero vs. Eve Torres/Beth Phoenix/Mickie James/Kelly Kelly/Gail Kim

Michelle is Women's Champion and Maryse is Divas Champion. All of the villains save for Vickie bail to start, leaving her to face Beth. Vickie gets beaten up in the corner to start but Michelle makes the save with a Faithbreaker (Styles Clash) to Kelly. Everyone comes in and it's time for a parade of finishers until it's only Beth left standing against Vickie. Michelle saves the praying Guerrero and lays out Beth. Kelly is still down so Vickie goes up top (again with help from Michelle and Layla) for a "hog splash" and the pin at 3:26.

**Rating:** D. Well at least it was quick. The Divas were in a weird place here as they were trying to find a new top name but everyone was kind of getting lost in the shuffle. Laycool (Layla and Michelle) were trying but they needed some top stars. Kelly eventually became the main star, even though she was just a model who could only kind of work a match. Anyway, this was a nothing match that was only there for the Vickie stuff, which was another problem around this time.

We recap Batista vs. John Cena. Batista had helped the McMahons out of a few jams so he was granted a title shot at Cena's Raw World Title right after Cena had won the title in the Elimination Chamber. This turned into a feud over who was the bigger star in the last five years because Batista thought he should be the face of the company. Batista had won their first major showdown at Summerslam 2008 but Cena said he was here because he loves it instead of for the money like Batista did.

Raw World Title: Batista vs. John Cena

Batista is defending and you can feel how big this really is. Cena is introduced by the United States Air Force Honor Guard Drill Team. The fans aren't exactly thrilled with Cena but that's the standard anymore.

They do the big power lockup to start and Cena actually takes him down with a headlock. That goes nowhere so Batista fights up and hits a clothesline to the back of the head to take over.

Batista gets into his gloating power offense but Cena grabs a quick suplex to get a breather. An early AA attempt is countered into a DDT for two and now Batista gets his real advantage. We hit the chinlock with a body scissors (Striker: "Look at this potential submission hold!" Just stop. Please.) but Cena fights up and wins a slugout, only to get caught in a neckbreaker. Now we get the real Cena comeback with all his usual stuff, including the STF which sends Batista crawling to the ropes. A quick spear gets two for the champ and both guys are down.

They head to the top for a test of strength on the ropes (that's a new one) until Cena headbutts him to the mat. A top rope Shuffle looks to set up the AA but Batista counters into the Batista Bomb for two. Another AA attempt is countered into a reverse suplex but Cena counters into a tilt-a-whirl slam, only to muscle Batista up into an AA for a really close near fall. Cena goes up top again for the Fameasser but dives into a spinebuster (Striker: "That's how he broke his neck the last time!" No it wasn't Striker.). Another Batista Bomb is countered into the STF and Batista taps at 13:30 to make Cena a nine time World Champion.

**Rating:** B+. That's the only kind of match these two needed to have as they're just beating the heck out of each other the whole way with big move after big move. It's also a big stadium style match which almost always makes for a really good atmosphere. Much like the build, I'm not sure what else there is to say here. It's Cena vs. Batista at Wrestlemania. You really don't need any more of an explanation.

We recap the main event, which all stems from last year. Shawn's loss has eaten at him for a year now and he has to beat Undertaker to exercise his demons once and for all. Undertaker wouldn't fight him again so Shawn cost him the World Title at No Way Out 2010. That was enough for the match to be made but Undertaker wanted Shawn's career on the line. Shawn agreed because if he can't beat Undertaker, he doesn't want to wrestle anymore.

## Undertaker vs. Shawn Michaels

No DQ and no countout. Shawn just walks down but Undertaker makes his big entrance by rising up through the stage. Shawn breaks up the staredown with a throat slit of his own so Undertaker pounds on him in the corner early. Snake Eyes and the big boot set up Old School but Undertaker might have tweaked his knee. Shawn goes right after the knee to break up a chokeslam and starts in on the arm for some reason. Striker: "Shawn Michaels is very adept at submission grappling." For the love of all things good and holy will someone SHUT HIM UP???

The threat of Sweet Chin Music sends Undertaker up against the ropes and it's back to the knee. Undertaker knocks him to the floor and teases the Taker Dive but Shawn charges back in and grabs the leg. A reverse Figure Four doesn't work and Shawn is sent into the post to keep Undertaker in control. The apron legdrop is a pretty stupid move and Shawn slaps on the Figure Four.

Undertaker does the sit up and turns it over so Shawn immediately breaks. At least he's smart enough to let go as so many other people just let it stay on forever. Since Shawn let go so fast, his knee is good enough for the forearm and nipup, only to walk into a chokeslam for two. The Tombstone doesn't work as Shawn crawls down Undertaker's body and grabs an ankle lock, complete with a grapevine.

Undertaker gets Shawn on his back and kicks him in the face to break it up (Shawn's stunned look is great). The big man heads outside but has to catch Shawn's springboard cross body, countering it into a Tombstone on the floor. Somehow that only gets two so it's a Last Ride but Shawn counters with an X Factor/Undertaker's leg gives out (some combination of both) to give Michaels two. The top rope elbow hits knees and thankfully Undertaker's knees are more banged up than Shawn.

Hell's Gate goes on out of nowhere but Shawn counters into a rollup for two in an awesome reversal. Sweet Chin Music is good for two more. Another superkick is blocked and now the Last Ride connects for a big near fall. Striker: "We've auditioned our entire lives for this moment!" It's time to load up the announcers' table but the Last Ride is escaped

and Undertaker takes Sweet Chin Music onto the table. Shawn's moonsault onto the table only hits Undertaker's legs and both guys are done.

Back in and Shawn hits Sweet Chin Music as well as he can but Undertaker kicks out again. Yet another attempt at the superkick is countered into a chokeslam. Undertaker's knee won't let him cover so it's a Tombstone for two, even with Undertaker's tongue sticking out. There go the straps and Undertaker tells Shawn to stay down. Shawn is on his knees and does another throat slit, admitting that he just can't do it. Undertaker doesn't move so Shawn slaps him in the face, triggering a jumping Tombstone to end Shawn's career at 24:01.

**Rating:** A. It's not an A+ because it's just a hair beneath last year but sweet goodness this is amazing. The leg work made for a good story and the symbolism of the second throat slit was perfect. Shawn going out at Wrestlemania really was the only way to go about it and this was the kind of match he deserved to go out on. Outstanding stuff from one of the best big match performers ever.

That isn't to take away from Undertaker though, who continues to take this Streak and his career to places that never seemed possible before. Ever since that Batista match it's been classic after classic in an amazing career resurgence. Undertaker ending Shawn's career was great and the jumping Tombstone made it even better. This was more than just trading finishers as the story told of Undertaker trying to hang on and Shawn fighting for everything he had and just not being good enough. This was great stuff and another classic.

Undertaker poses and helps Shawn up. Shawn soaks in all the cheers and takes his time going up the aisle, shaking a lot of hands. Shawn: "I'm going to drive my kids crazy in three weeks!" After applauding the fans, Shawn walks off to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** A-. This is a heck of a show with the double main event taking up the last fourth of the show. There's nothing too terrible on here save for the opener and Divas match which combined to be less than seven minutes in the ring. Some of the stuff in the middle isn't great but it's certainly good enough to get by. This was another really good

show as Wrestlemania is on a hot streak. Well save for XXV of course.

### Ratings Comparison

Awesome Truth vs. ShoMiz

Original: D

2013 Redo: D+

2015 Redo:

Randy Orton vs. Ted DiBiase vs. Cody Rhodes

Original: D+

2013 Redo: C

Christian vs. Matt Hardy vs. Kane vs. Jack Swagger vs. Kofi Kingston vs. Drew McIntyre vs. Dolph Ziggler vs. Shelton Benjamin vs. MVP vs. Evan Bourne

Original: B

2013 Redo: C+

HHH vs. Sheamus

Original: B-

2013 Redo: C+

CM Punk vs. Rey Mysterio

Original: B-

2013 Redo: C

Mr. McMahon vs. Bret Hart

Original: A+

2013 Redo: A+

Edge vs. Chris Jericho

Original: A-

2013 Redo: B

Beth Phoenix/Kevin Kelly/Mickie James/Gail Kim/Eve Torres vs. Vickie Guerrero/Alicia Fox/Laycool/Maryse

Original: F

2013 Redo: D

John Cena vs. Batista

Original: A

2013 Redo: B+

Undertaker vs. Shawn Michaels

Original: A+

2013 Redo: A+

Overall Rating

Original: A

2013 Redo: B+

Dang and I liked it even better on the first view. I might have been closer to right a few years back.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/04/03/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-26-john-cena-vs-batista-do-you-need-more/>

And the 2013 Redo:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/04/04/wrestlemania-count-up-wrestlemania-xxvi-goodbye-mr-wrestlemania/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the paperback edition of the WWE Grab Bag (also available as an e-book) from Amazon. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2018/03/23/new-paperback-kbs-grab-bag/>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

---

## **Daily News Update – March 19, 2023**

Make sure you check out some recent reviews:

[Rampage – March 17, 2023](#)

[Wrestlemania XXIII \(2021 Edition\)](#)

[Wrestlemania XXIV \(2023 Edition\)](#)

[Wrestlemania XXV \(2015 Edition\)](#)

---

Gone: WWE Employee Done With Company After 12+ Years.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/gone-wwe-employee-done-company-12-years/>

Switch: WWE Star Undergoes Name Change (Along With Another Big Change).

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/switch-wwe-star-undergoes-name-change-along-another-big-change/>

On The Mend: Update On Ronda Rousey's Injury Status.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/mend-update-ronda-rouseys-injury-status/>

WRESTLING RUMORS: What To Expect From WrestleMania 39 Showcase Matches.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/wrestling-rumors-expect-wrestlemania-39-showcase-matches/>

Painful: AEW Star Reveals He Missed Dynamite Due To Emergency Surgery.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/painful-aew-star-reveals-missed-dynamite-due-emergency-surgery/>

Out Of Nowhere? Update On Randy Orton's WWE Backstage Status.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/nowhere-update-randy-ortons-wwe-backstage-status/>

**As always, hit up the comments section to chat about what is going on and [get on the Wrestling Rumors Facebook page.](#)**

---

# Rampage – March 17, 2023: The Early Night Hour

## Rampage

Date: March 17, 2023

Location: Canada Life Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Commentators: Paul Wight, Excalibur, Tony Schiavone

We're still in Canada for St. Patrick's Day Slam, which will actually air very early on Saturday due to the NCAA basketball tournament. That means the audience is going to be down, which means the show might not be as stacked as usual. It would make sense, but that could make for an interesting show. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

TNT Title: Rey Fenix vs. Powerhouse Hobbs

Hobbs, with QTV (Aaron Solo/QT Marshall), is defending and Fenix flips around to start. Fenix knocks him to the floor for a dive, setting up an Asai moonsault to drop Hobbs again. Back in and Hobbs runs him over for a change and takes it right back to the floor for a whip into the barricade. Hobbs takes it back inside and is rather pleased with how crumpled Fenix seems to be. The nerve hold goes on, followed by a suplex for two on Fenix as we take a break.

Back with Fenix being pulled back inside and the nerve hold going on. Fenix fights up and bounces on the ropes before having his springboard armdrag pulled into a powerslam for two. Fenix is able to snap off a German suplex for two and the rope walk kick to the head drops Hobbs again.

Hobbs is fine enough to drive him HARD into the corner,

setting up a nasty spinebuster for two. Fenix gets back up and kicks him down, setting up a frog splash for two. A roll is pulled out of the air into another spinebuster though and Town Business (a reverse FU, which I don't think was what they called Town Business before) retains the title at 14:13.

**Rating:** B-. Good power vs. speed match here and it's nice for Hobbs' first title defense to be against someone with credibility. That being said, my goodness does it feel like a waste for Hobbs to be part of a group. Hobbs is a force but now it looks like he's part of the Factory 2.0, with QT Marshall being the star of their vignette last week. I don't get the thinking here, as Hobbs could be fine on his own, but AEW does love its stables.

Post match, Hobbs beats up Alex Abrahantes for a bonus.

Adam Cole is ready to come back on March 29.

Stu Grayson wants Jon Moxley next week.

#### Taya Valkyrie vs. Ava Lawless

This is Taya's in-ring debut and she powers Lawless into the corner for a running clothesline. The running knees in the corner set up a spear and the Road To Valhalla (better known as Jaded around here) finishes Lawless at 1:17. Total dominance.

Post match Jade Cargill, Leila Grey and Mark Sterling come out to glare at Taya.

Matt Hardy (in a Ribera Steak House jacket) train Stokely Hathaway for Hook. Hathaway's tickle counter to a slam and having a cookie might not be the best idea.

#### Bollywood Boyz vs. Jericho Appreciation Society

The Boyz give Parker a modified Hart Attack (top rope elbow instead of a running clothesline) to send him to the floor to

start fast. Back in and it's off to Menard to take Gurv down as we go to a break. We come back with Harv cleaning house, including a running spinwheel kick to Parker. The Society double teams him down though and grabs the double implant DDT for the pin at 6:47.

**Rating:** C. I still do not get the logic behind having almost half of a match take place during a break, especially one as low level as this one. The Boyz are always worth at least a glance just due to how much fun they seem to be having out there but the Society is only so interesting. They're a good enough team, but the idea of them feuding with the Acclaimed feels like as much of a downgrade as you can get after losing the titles.

Post match the Society mocks the scissoring.

Don Callis greeted Konosuke Takeshita at the airport with flowers and a Japanese man banging a drum.

Video on Hijo del Vikingo vs. Kenny Omega next week on Dynamite.

We look at the triple threat Trios Titles match from Dynamite.

Here's what's coming at various shows.

The Gunns are happy about being Tag Team Champions and run into Top Flight, who they think are the valets. They get in an argument about being the best brother team and Top Flight wants the titles. The title match is set for next week. The Gunns leave their bags though and Top Flight takes them. Thieves.

### Daniel Garcia vs. Brody King

Chris Jericho is here with Garcia while King has Julia Hart. Garcia bails to the floor to start and the chase is on and lasts over a minute until Garcia dropkicks the knee. With that not working, King sends him into the corner, only to miss a

splash. Garcia gets sent outside where he stops to hit on Hart, earning himself a heck of a chop. The running crossbody against the barricade crushes Garcia again but he avoids a charge and sends King into the steps.

We take a break and come back with King planting him with a swinging Boss Man Slam for two. A piledriver gets the same and there's a Cannonball in the corner to give King two more. Garcia goes after the ankle and slaps on a sleeper, which is broken up through straight power. Another missed charge lets Garcia grab his own Walls, sending King to the rope. Jericho gets in a baseball bat shot so Garcia grabs a choke to win at 12:26.

**Rating:** C+. Well that's one way to go. King has been presented as a monster for the last few weeks and the solution is just "hit him with a baseball bat". The fans went nuts for Jericho (of course) but I'm not sure how wise it is to have Garcia pin the monster like this. If you need Jericho to do something like this, do it in a dark match and save King's unstoppable aura.

**Overall Rating:** B-. As usual, Rampage is an enjoyable watch and nothing was bad but it feels like another show where they were just supplementing Dynamite. The good thing is that everything served at least something of a purpose, which puts it above most Rampages. Now just have Hobbs crush the rest of QT and feed them to his cat (I'm picturing one named Milo) and everything is a lot better.

### Results

Powerhouse Hobbs b. Rey Fenix – Town Business

Taya Valkyrie b. Ava Lawless – Road To Valhalla

Jericho Appreciation Society b. Bollywood Boyz – Double implant DDT to Harv

Daniel Garcia b. Brody King – Choke

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and head over to my Amazon author page with 30 different cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

AND

[Remember to check out Wrestlingrumors.net for all of your wrestling headline needs.](http://Wrestlingrumors.net)