

# Smackdown – April 3, 2003: Tournament Rush

## Smackdown

Date: April 3, 2003

Location: Spokane Arena, Spokane, Washington

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

We're past Wrestlemania and that means it's time to reset a few things. It also means that we don't have Kurt Angle around for a long time as he needs a fresh bandage on that pesky broken neck of his. Brock Lesnar is World Champion again and that means he needs a new challenger. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of Wrestlemania set to Crack Addict.

Opening sequence.

Here's Stephanie McMahon for the serious speech about how great Wrestlemania was and the injuries to both Brock (who has a concussion) and Angle (pretty much everything), the latter of whom could be out for several months. But never mind any of that because we'll be having a #1 contenders tournament for the shot at Backlash starting tonight. Here are the brackets:

Rey Mysterio

Undertaker

John Cena

Eddie Guerrero

Chris Benoit

A-Train

Rhyno

## Big Show

### #1 Contenders Tournament First Round: Undertaker vs. Rey Mysterio

Rey tries to speed things up to start and scores with some kicks to the leg, only to have his head taken off with a big boot. A chokeslam is broken up with Rey grabbing a DDT, followed by the 619 for two with Rey being launched off the cover. The West Coast Pop is loaded up and easily countered into the Last Ride to send Undertaker to the next round.

**Rating:** C. It was starting to get energetic when Undertaker realized he was selling for Rey Mysterio. The fact that Rey only got in the 619 and then got finished with one big move doesn't do him many favors, but it's not like Undertaker was exactly known for his selling at this point. Not terrible, but Undertaker didn't give him much here.

Undertaker helps him up post match. It's not exactly Jeff Hardy last year.

Vince McMahon wants to know when Hulk Hogan arrives.

### Jamie Noble vs. Brian Kendrick

Shannon Moore and Matt Hardy, who was the only Hardy to wrestle at Wrestlemania this year and has read his book twelve times, are out for commentary. Jamie stomps away in the corner as Tazz tries to be funny about Matt's diet focusing on yams instead of banana juice. Brian gets sent to the floor where he kicks Nidia away and comes back in with a high crossbody. A powerslam gives Jamie two and a hard clothesline gets the same. Nidia pulls the ropes down to send Kendrick outside but Jamie's dive takes her out by mistake. Sliced Bread #2 gives Kendrick a fast pin.

Matt dumps Kendrick outside and calls out Brock for a champion vs. champion match. Brian tries to come back in and gets beaten down again.

The FBI steals stuff from a truck after tying the driver up.

Highlights of Lesnar vs. Angle. We also see Brock after the show and he was just gone thanks to the concussion. Now let's look at the botched shooting star from multiple angles in slow motion.

Piper's Pit is back next week. And so it begins. Er, continues.

#### #1 Contenders Tournament First Round: Chris Benoit vs. A-Train

Cole points out that we could see Big Show vs. A-Train or Benoit vs. Rhyno in the second round. Tazz: "Cole we can't get nothing past you!" A-Train knocks him to the floor to start so Benoit grabs an early Crossface. That's reversed into a very modified camel clutch with Benoit's legs wrapped around A-Train's legs as A-Train is on his feet. Since that's not enough, A-Train pulls him up by the head and slams Benoit down hard for two.

A chinlock doesn't last long and Benoit is chopped out to the floor. Back in and A-Train talks more trash but misses a charge, setting up the rolling German suplexes to a great reaction. The Swan Dive gets two but Benoit charges into the bicycle kick. There's the Crossface again with A-Train powering up to his feet. Benoit is ready for him though and kicks off the ropes to get the hold again, this time for the tap out.

**Rating:** C. I liked this better than I was expecting to with A-Train acting as a pretty decent tree for Benoit to chop down. In theory this sets up Benoit vs. Big Show for a spot in the finals and if they send Benoit on to face....I'm guessing Cena, everything should be fine. Benoit was his usual good self here and I'm glad to see him back in singles matches as the Rhyno team didn't do much for me.

Stephanie comes in to see Vince, who is ready for Hogan tonight.

Sean O'Haire says break the rules in the weakest of these vignettes yet. Are these things ever going anywhere?

#### #1 Contenders Tournament First Round: John Cena vs. Eddie Guerrero

Cena is all over him to start with some choking in the corner and a delayed suplex for two. We hit the bearhug early on as Cena is showing the power more than usual. Tazz thinks Cena could be the next big thing. Maybe I should listen to the Tazz Show more often. Eddie fights back with some clotheslines and Three Amigos for two. Cena reverses a victory roll into an electric chair but takes too long going for a chain. Instead it's

Eddie dropkicking it away and picking it up himself, only to have the referee take it away. Eddie tries a suplex to set up the frog splash but has to roll through. A charge sends him right into the Death Valley Driver to advance Cena.

**Rating:** C. Well if you need someone to look good, put them with Eddie. This was much more of a showcase for Cena and that's a good sign. There's little reason to go with anyone other than Cena to win this tournament after all the promos he's cut on Brock but it's very cool that he's having to beat some bigger names to get there. Barring a surprise it's going to be Eddie, Undertaker and Benoit, which is nothing to sneeze at whatsoever.

Hulk, his son Nick (with a freaking skateboard) and Jimmy Hart arrive. Nick: "Where's catering?" He was annoying even back then.

Clips of Limp Bizkit at Wrestlemania.

Here's Torrie Wilson for her Playboy coming out party, complete with the cover dropping down over the entrance. Torrie can't believe so many people want to see her in the magazine. Torrie teases taking her top off...and freaking SABLE makes her return to interrupt. Cole: "She's kicking!" The announcers do their "look at \*insert name here\*" stuff and it's still just as annoying as it was when Al Wilson was around.

Sable says she's having her own coming out party because she's back. Torrie clearly just wants to be Sable and a lot of people think there's no room for two Divas like themselves. Sable however thinks they'll be the best of friends and gives her a peck on the lips. Naturally the announcers act like it was the most amazing thing they've ever seen.

#### Team Angle vs. Funaki/Tajiri

Non-title. The champs jump Tajiri to start, leaving Funaki to get backdropped. Shelton offers a quick bow so the Japanese guys beat him down and bow right back in a cute bit. Haas gets knocked to the floor but Shelton uses the distraction to jump Funaki from behind. It's off to Haas, who would rather be facing Tajiri. That earns him a nice spinwheel kick to the face for two as the champs are in more trouble than you might

expect here.

Shelton tries a cheap shot from the apron so Tajiri KICKS HIM IN THE FACE for his efforts. It's back to Shelton to jump over Charlie and land on Tajiri's back, setting up a Boston crab. Funaki makes a save to Tajiri can hit a double handspring elbow and clean house. A high crossbody gets two on Haas and there's the Tarantula to Benjamin. It doesn't last long though and Benjamin chop blocks Funaki, setting up the Haas of Pain for the submission.

**Rating:** B. Where in the world did this come from? This was WAY better than I was expecting with Tajiri and Funaki getting to showcase themselves for a change instead of just being jobbers. We often forget how talented some of these guys are and it's a shame that they don't get to show it off more often. You might get more surprises like this.

John Cena knows his chances against Undertaker are slimmer than a bus full of anorexic women. He'll shock the world next week and leave Undertaker like a clean pool table with no balls.

The FBI comes up to Undertaker, who makes fun of their accents. They ask him to sit down for a chat and Undertaker, who have some coffee and asks if any of them are wearing a wire. Nunzio talks about whacking Nathan Jones at Wrestlemania, which was in retaliation for what Jones did to Palumbo last week. They want to bury the hatchet, which Undertaker can appreciate. However, he brings in Jones and the Italians bail. This was WAY out of the norm for Undertaker and felt really weird.

#### #1 Contenders Tournament: Rhyno vs. Big Show

Show smacks him down to start and steps on Rhyno's chest. Rhyno gets tossed around some more as Show is in full on slow mode. A side slam gets two but Rhyno slips out of what looks like a powerslam. Show misses a charge into the corner so Rhyno hits a Gore in the corner, only to have to chase off A-Train. The regular Gore connects but A-Train comes in for the DQ. I'd hope Big Show thrashes him for that.

**Rating:** D. This was just a step above a squash until the ending, which was rather stupid and little more than a back door to save Big Show's

face. Rhyno vs. Benoit should be fun, though I'm not sure why I'd want to see Rhyno vs. A-Train. Then again, Rhyno should probably buy A-Train a steak for the free pass to the next round.

A-Train holds Rhyno for a legdrop from Show, who doesn't seem to mind what A-Train did.

Here are the updated brackets:

Undertaker

John Cena

Chris Benoit

Rhyno

Here's Vince for the big closing segment, which has a ton of time. Yeah he lost on Sunday and maybe he misjudged Hogan. Tonight though, Vince would like Hogan out here for a talk. Cue Hogan (thankfully minus the pest with the skateboard) so Vince can say Hulk has no idea how to deal with this kind of defeat. He'd like to turn the clock back twenty years if he could (meaning before Hogan had come back from the company) and maybe one day they could be friends again. Vince offers a handshake which Hulk doesn't go for.

The boss heads to leave but Hulk asks if he's serious and extends his hand. They shake hands and Vince leaves but Hulk says stop the music. He thanks Vince, who goes to leave again. Now it's Vince saying thank you for all the memories. That's all people are going to have though as Hogan is in the ring for the last time. Hogan may have pinned him at Wrestlemania but now he's going to sit on the shelf for the duration of his new contract.

That way Hulkamania will rot and finally die a slow, agonizing death of leprosy. If Hulk has something to say about that, Vince will be waiting in the parking lot. Hulk goes to the back where Vince is waiting next to a limo. It's Hulk's limo though with Jimmy and Nick inside. Vince hides behind cops and tells Hulk to get inside, where Nick is begging him to just come on. Hogan gets in and leaves with Vince angrily gloating to end

the show. This would be another example of building up a big match with a big stipulation, doing the match, and then ignoring the stipulation. Such is life in WWE and such is a reason why this story sucked.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This show was rolling and then the crazy long main event segment killed it. It was the better part of twenty minutes while none of the matches even broke seven, which makes for a fast paced start to the show and then a major grinding halt. I liked the tournament stuff and the faster pace with some good action, though next week is going to be a much better indicator of what the future is going to hold for Smackdown.

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# Ring of Honor TV – August 30, 2017: With an Anchor and Without a Map

Ring of Honor

Date: August 30, 2017

Location: Cabarrus Arena and Events Center, Concord, North Carolina

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana

I don't think we're up to the newest batch of TV tapings just yet and that means it's hard to say what to expect from this show. Last week was basically a throw away episode with the focus on the Six Man Tag Team Titles. That means this one could be anywhere really, which isn't exactly the best thing in the world. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

### Jonathan Gresham/Jay White vs. War Machine

Non-title. Gresham and White jump them during the entrances in a somewhat heelish move. That lasts all of ten seconds though as War Machine slams both guys down, followed by Rowe slamming Hanson onto the pile. Gresham is back up with a dropkick to Hanson as White sends Rowe into the barricade. For some reason Gresham thinks a chop off with Hanson is a good idea, earning himself a battered chest.

White comes in for some more effective chops but Hanson runs him over and brings in Rowe. Everything breaks down and Gresham is LAUNCHED off a t-bone suplex. Rowe misses a dive to the floor and gets taken down with a suicide dive as we head to a break. Back with Rowe firing off running clotheslines in the corner. After he hits about twenty in a row, it's a double splash to crush both Gresham and White.

Fallout is broken up so Gresham has to take a springboard clothesline into a German suplex instead. Another Fallout attempt is broken up so Rowe fireman's carries both of them at once. That goes nowhere though and it's Gresham enziguring him into a Downward Spiral for a rare near fall.

White's German suplex gets the same but Rowe comes out of the corner with a seated senton to crush Gresham. Rowe headbutts everyone in sight (save for his partner and the referee of course) until Gresham moonsaults onto Hanson. A 450 is good for two on Hanson but it's a pop up powerslam (Thor's Hammer) to put Gresham away at 13:31.

**Rating:** B. That was a heck of a back and forth match as I don't think I remember a bad White match. He does his thing very well and makes for



some entertaining action. War Machine is better than your average power tag team and while it would be nice to see them get the ROH titles back. Then again that might suggest the Young Bucks aren't the most amazing things ever and we just can't have that. Really fun match here though.

Post match Punishment Martinez runs in and chokeslams White as War Machine leaves him to do so.

Caprice Coleman wants to know where his stuff is. He seems to think he's a preacher and yells at the production staff. We get a nice rant about how he wasn't respected when he was in the Rebellion and he's tired of it. They have a week to get this stuff set up.

QT Marshall is out for commentary. Oh yeah he's a person that exists.

We look back at the Kingdom destroying Jay Briscoe last week.

#### Shane Taylor vs. Josh Woods

Taylor attacked Woods a few weeks ago and this is as soon as we can get around to a follow up. Woods goes right after him to start with a flying knee and a kick to the head to put Shane outside. That's fine with Josh who keeps slugging away, only to be thrown through the barricade to send us to a break.

Back with Woods stopping a corner charge with a raised boot. Taylor switches tactics and kicks him face first into the middle buckle before hitting a running Umaga attack for one. Woods fights up again with another running knee, only to get flattened with a clothesline. For some reason Shane goes after him on the mat and gets pulled into a cross armbreaker. That's broken up as well so it's off to an ankle lock and a German suplex for a nice power display. Shane runs him over again but goes outside to grab a chair instead of following up. The referee takes it away though, allowing Woods to roll Taylor up for the pin at 8:14.

**Rating:** C. Taylor still doesn't do much for me as he's just another big guy who can do some athletic stuff but nothing that really blows me away. Woods is starting to grow on me though, which is a lot more than I was expecting to after dreading the Top Prospect Tournament for so many

weeks. I have a feeling the feud is going to continue though and that's not the best thing in the world.

Post match Marshall comes to ringside to tell Taylor to beat down Woods. After Josh is destroyed, Marshall pays Taylor off. Oh yeah it's continuing.

The Young Bucks are ready to defend against the Motor City Machine Guns because it's not 2009 anymore. Superkicks are promised.

Minoru Suzuki will answer Cody's challenge for Death Before Dishonor. Yep: another import with no connection to ROH getting the shot because he's Japanese and therefore awesome. Screw the stories, screw the talent who has worked to get ROH over and screw everything else. Suzuki is a Japanese legend and that's what Ring of Honor exists for anymore: giving New Japan guys another place to perform and be revered at ROH's expense. I'm so freaking thrilled.

Cody is livid.

Kenny King talks about being on the Bachelorette and getting his rematch with Kushida at Death Before Dishonor in his hometown of Las Vegas. King was a lot more serious here and it worked a lot better. The Bachelorette could have been cut out though.

#### Tag Team Titles: Young Bucks vs. Motor City Machine Guns

The Bucks are defending and get straight in the Guns' faces during the Big Match Intros. Back from a break with the opening bell, meaning Nick can tell Shelley to suck it, which of course makes him the biggest face in the building. The Guns send the champs outside for a suicide dive to both of them as things pick up. Back in and Nick is put on Matt's shoulders for a Downward Spiral from Sabin and a missile dropkick to the back from Shelley.

That's a great example of the way too choreographed style that rubs me the wrong way in most Guns matches. There comes a point where I can't buy that something is natural and the Guns blow past it every match. Shelly dives into a kick to the head though and the Bucks clean house while

making sure to soak in some cheers. A flip dive takes out the Guns again and it's time for Matt to say SUCK IT over and over.

It's off to a double Sharpshooter with the Bucks throwing in some T00 SWEET's at the same time. Back from a break with some miscommunication from the champs as everything breaks down. Sabin kicks Matt in the face and dives onto Nick as the Bucks are in some rare trouble. The champs are sent into the corner with Shelley suplexing Matt into Nick. Skull and Bones is broken up and the wheelbarrow facebuster plants Sabin.

Nick comes in off the hot tag to speed things up with the kicks in the corner. The slingshot X-Factor drops Shelley and the moonsault from the apron does the same to Sabin. Shelley is back up with a high crossbody to a seated Nick and the Guns fire off their running dropkick sequence to Matt. It's superkick time with the Bucks firing off about ten in a row until Shelley takes them down with a double clothesline. And never mind as here's Addiction for the no contest at 14:27.

**Rating:** C+. I'm still not much of a Guns fan. I loved their TNA stuff but now it feels so much more forced, which really does hold them back. The ending doesn't help either as we're pretty clearly setting up ANOTHER three way title match because we haven't had anything like that in...oh at least a month or two.

Daniels and Kazarian clean house post match, including shoving a referee and a plant in a Bullet Club shirt (not acknowledge by commentary, who is likely reading their cards instead of paying attention).

**Overall Rating:** B-. This show was entertaining but it felt really, really long. I'm still not a fan of the tag division (to put it mildly) but Woods is growing on me and the opener was a lot of fun. Basically just keep me away from the Bucks, the Guns and the worship of all things New Japan and I'm a lot better with the show. Good effort this week though as usual, it feels like they're running with an anchor and without a map.

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# ROH War of the Worlds UK 2017: They Lost the War

## War of the World UK 2017

Date: August 19, 2017

Location: Liverpool Olympia, Liverpool, England

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, BJ Whitmer

So this is a show that exists. I mean, you would have almost no idea about it if you just watched the regular TV show because they only mentioned it halfway through the go home show but it does in fact exist. There is such little effort being put into this show and I'm worried about how bad it's going to be as a result. Let's get to it.

The version I'm watching includes the announcers' introductions (and them asking if they can hear each other in a quick sound check) and the pre-show match.

### Pre-Show: The Boys vs. CCK

CCK (Chris Brookes/Travis Banks, the Commonwealth Catch Kings) are from the UK based Rev Pro promotion and their Tag Team Titles aren't on the line. It's a brawl to start with the Boys taking down the giant Brookes (probably a foot taller than anyone else in the match) down by the legs.

It's Banks and we'll say Boy #1 starting things off with #1 being tossed over the corner to land on the apron.

Some double teaming drops Banks though as the announcers aren't sure which Boy is which. Back in and Brookes puts Banks on his shoulders and launches him at #2 for a Codebreaker in a sweet spot. Brookes even drops a backplash onto #2 for good measure as the beating begins. In what must be British humor, Chris puts #2 in a camel clutch and both members of CCK stick their fingers in Chris' mouth and then into #2's ears.

Some Twin Magic allows #1 to come in and grab a suplex as everything breaks down. The Boys hit stereo dives but Brookes catches #1 in a hanging swinging neckbreaker for two. #1 sends CCK into each other and brings in #2 for a Backstabber. Not that it matters as Banks grabs a fisherman's driver for the pin on #2 at 6:36.

**Rating:** C-. Just a tag match here for the sake of firing up the crowd. I'm not sure how smart it is to have your champions lose to some outsiders but then again ROH has never really cared all that much about protecting its titles. I mean, why bother worrying about your own talent when you can put over someone else's talent? The match was watchable with some nice spots but there's a reason it was just a dark match.

Opening sequence.

#### Adam Page vs. Kenny King

Fallout from Page costing King his TV Title shot. They hit the ropes to start until Page misses a standing shooting star and King misses a spinwheel kick to give us a standoff. Both of them wind up on the floor with Page running him over before taking him back inside for Old School, capped off by a thumb to the eye instead of anything else. See he's in the Bullet Club and needs to do "cute" stuff like that. A sunset flip out of the corner gives King two and it's off to a seated abdominal stretch.

That goes nowhere so King grabs a spinebuster for two more. Since selling isn't a thing in ROH, Page is back up with a neckbreaker over the ropes and a tabletop suplex for two. King kicks him in the head again and hits a flip dive out to the floor. The springboard Blockbuster gives King two

but he gets caught with the slingshot clothesline for the same. The Rite of Passage is broken up and it's another kick to the head to set up the Royal Flush to pin Page at 8:43.

**Rating:** C-. This was the Ring of Honor "style" in a nutshell: no psychology, no storytelling, no transitions between moves and little more than "I do a spot and then you do a spot". It completely felt like getting their stuff in and leaving, which isn't what I'm really wanting to see. Some of the spots were good but it felt like just a bunch of stuff instead of a match and that's not good.

#### Ultimo Guerrero/Rey Bucanero vs. Titan/Mistico

Under lucha rules of course. I don't know if ROH brings in these teams because they think it's more interesting than their roster or if they don't have enough talent to fill out a show on their own. The more I watch their stuff, the more I think it's the latter and that's not good. Mistico and Bucanero start things off and it's a LUCHA LIBRE chant to spice things up a bit.

The much bigger Rey turns Mistico inside out with a shot to the mask and it's a quick exchange of near falls. Guerrero and Titan come in with Titan hand walking away from a clothesline and headscissoring Guerrero to the floor. Titan's flip dive is countered into a powerbomb on the floor though, leaving Bucanero to go after Mistico's mask.

Everyone heads to the floor with Guerrero jumping over Rey to crash onto both smaller guys at once. Back in and Bucanero moonsaults onto Titan, whose back is over Guerrero's ribs. A slingshot dropkick in the corner has Titan in trouble but he pops back up with a double handspring elbow.

It's off to Mistico for a hurricanrana each as everything breaks down. Guerrero superbombs Mistico but gets kicked in the head, allowing Titan to come back in. Why things settled back down isn't clear but lucha matches aren't exactly built on enforcing structure (not a bad thing). Titan springboards in with a dropkick to Bucanero before sending him outside for an Asai moonsault. Mistico moonsaults onto Rey as well, leaving Guerrero to hit the Guerrero Special (reverse superplex) to put Titan away at 11:34.

**Rating:** C+. Better match than I was expecting here though the fans cheering all four guys when Guerrero and Bucanero were trying to play heel was odd. The other problem, and I'm sure you've heard me say this many times (and I'll keep at it as long as it's a problem): I don't know who these people are and I have no reason to care.

The background I received here: Bucanero and Guerrero were the Observer's Tag Team of the Decade for 2000-2009. Uh, great, and what have they done in Ring of Honor? Or in the last eight years for that matter? As usual, it feels like I need to have a lot of outside knowledge coming in to get a lot of this stuff and when the show is barely advertised in the first place, that's hardly a good way to expand your product.

The announcers talk about Sanada's vertical leap.

#### Jay Lethal vs. Josh Bodom

Bodom's British Cruiserweight Title isn't on the line. I've seen Bodom's work before and wasn't that impressed but maybe a better opponent will help. They exchange wristlock counters to start until Lethal blocks a hiptoss and grabs a swinging neckbreaker. A springboard dropkick puts Bodom on the floor but he comes back in with a hurricanrana. There's a dropkick to really stagger Lethal, though not enough that he can't hit his cartwheel into a dropkick of his own.

A missile dropkick misses and Bodom knees him in the head. Bodom grabs a reverse hurricanrana to put him outside, followed by a middle rope moonsault. Back in and a top rope double stomp to the back of Jay's head, followed by a standing shooting star, gives Josh a near fall. The Lethal Combination gets Jay out of trouble and Hail to the King gets two. We hit the Figure Four but cue Silas Young for a distraction. Not that it matters as the Lethal Injection is good enough to pin Bodom at 9:18.

**Rating:** C-. Ok so maybe it is Bodom. This did nothing for me, again, and that's not a positive sign when we're only on the third match. Lethal shrugged off the distraction and won anyway, making me think that Lethal vs. Young was the right move here. You know, a match between two people with a story and who happen to actually WORK FOR RING OF HONOR. There were some moments here but it didn't work, again.

Young beats Lethal down post match.

### Bully Ray/Briscoe Brothers vs. Los Ingobernables de Japon

Bushi/Evil/Tetsuya Naito for Los Ingobernables here. The fans are just CRAZY for Naito but he brings in Bushi to start with Mark instead. An early hurricanrana sends Mark into the corner so it's already off to Jay for some harder hitting offense. Evil comes in to rake his eyes and shoulder Jay down, only to get kicked in the face. Bushi gets sent into the wrong corner and actually calls out Bully Ray. Well he certainly has guts.

Ray comes in and rips Bushi's shirt open for some chops before calling in Naito. They take turns sidestepping each others' lockup attempts as there's no contact for over a minute. Even the lockup gets a cheer and Naito grabs a headlock with a fist going into the eye. It's back to Jay for some stomping but Naito rips at his eye too. Bushi comes in with a missile dropkick and we finally hit a heat segment.

That lasts all of a few seconds as Jay dropkicks Evil and brings Mark back in to speed things up. Everything breaks down with Bully coming back in to clean house. Evil is in line for What's Up but Naito dives onto the mat with his signature pose to block Mark's dive. Ok that was clever. It's Bully taking something like What's Up (Ray: "OW MY BALLS!" Ian: "I didn't know Bushi was a baller!") but Bushi mists Evil by mistake. The 3D ends Evil at 13:35.

**Rating:** B-. This was starting to look really good but they spent a bit too much time with the goofiness instead of the actual match. Los Ingobernables are growing on me every time I see them and Naito is clearly one of the top stars in New Japan. Giving the Briscoes and Bully the win was a nice surprise as I would have bet on them going with the New Japan guys in one of the bigger matches so it was a nice twist.

Post match, Bully and Naito have a pose off for some reason. I'm not sure if Ring of Honor thinks Bully is on Naito's level but that's not quite the case...I don't think.

Intermission eats up about twenty minutes.



The announcers talk about what's left on the card.

### Silas Young vs. Mark Haskins

Mark is a British high flier and the referee is taller than both guys in a weird visual. A drop toehold just annoys Silas (like it's so hard) and they slug it out with Haskins actually getting the better of it off a kick to the face. Young bails to the floor and gets faked out off a dive, setting up the regular version on the adjacent side of the ring. Nice little sequence there.

Silas is right back with an apron powerbomb to take over for the first time but we slow down for the trash talk. A middle rope jumping back rake (that's a new one) sets up a lariat (that's an old one) for two. Haskins gets sick of being slapped in the face and comes back with some rapid fire forearms before rolling into a modified Fujiwara armbar.

It's off to a Sharpshooter instead but Silas is way too close to the ropes. An electric chair faceplant and a short DDT give Young two and the short lariat is good for the same. Misery is loaded up but here's Lethal for a distraction, allowing Haskins to roll into a Samoan driver for the pin at 10:14.

**Rating:** C+. The ending was fine as it helps to play up the Lethal vs. Young feud, which has been one of the better things in Ring of Honor as of late. Haskins was a fan favorite though he didn't really show me anything that I haven't seen from a lot of other wrestlers. Still though, good match as the show continues to pick up a bit.

Referees break up Silas vs. Jay.

### TV Title: Hiromu Takahashi vs. Dalton Castle vs. Marty Scurll vs. Kushida

Kushida is defending and it's one fall to a finish. Scurll is of course beloved in his home country. Kushida and Scurll head outside, leaving Takahashi and Castle to play with the former's doll Daryl (who is apparently a big thing). Takahashi gets caught between the peacock pose and the bird pose, allowing Kushida to springboard in with an elbow to the head. Now Daryl is on commentary and the announcers ask him questions

because the idea of being serious around here is just not happening.

Takahashi comes back in to take out Kushida's knee, only to stop to meow at Castle. Dalton stops for his strut but gets superkicked by Scurll. Kushida grabs the cross armbreaker to make Takahashi tap on the floor but gets suplexed into the corner back inside. With Kushida down, Takahashi tries a sunset bomb to send Castle to the floor but the Boys make a save.

Back inside and Scurll hits a modified piledriver and a running knee for two on Takahashi. Castle breaks up the chickenwing attempt with a German suplex before Kushida comes back in for a pinfall reversal sequence with Scurll. It's Castle suplexing everyone in sight but getting sent to the floor.

Scurll misses a moonsault and takes one from Kushida for two. Kushida flips into the chickenwing but slips out into the Hoverboard Lock. Castle and Takahashi grab stereo German suplexes for the save and everyone is down. Cue Adam Page for a distraction so Scurll can hit Castle with the umbrella, only to have Kushida punch him down. Back to the Future on Castle retains the title at 11:28.

**Rating:** B-. Fun match if you ignore all the nonsense with Daryl (which to be fair wasn't all that much). Castle losing via shenanigans helps a bit though he needs to actually win something at some point. Scurll continues to grow on me a lot, even if his in-ring stuff isn't anything great. Takahashi is just kind of there, though maybe he's just one of those characters that I don't get.

Kushida shakes Castle's hand. You know, just after dropping him on his head to beat him.

#### Tag Team Titles: Addiction vs. Young Bucks

The Bucks are defending because Heaven forbid they're not holding titles. Addiction jumps them during the Big Match Intros to Ian's annoyance, which I guess means the Bucks are faces tonight. The Bucks easily fight them off with dropkicks so we hit the Rise of the Terminator pose. Matt gets sent to the apron where Daniels pulls him face first down as the champs are in some trouble. Eh I give it thirty seconds.

Back in and Matt gets stomped down in the corner, followed by a low bridge to the floor. The beating continues with a face to the knee and an STO to give Daniels two. Daniels' Lionsault hits knees though and it's off to Nick off the hot tag. The Bucks speed things up with the double kicks to Daniels in the corner and a Backstabber for no cover. It's off to the Sharpshooter because the Bucks needed another finisher.

Everything breaks down and it's an Unprettier to Nick but Matt hurricanranas his way out of Angel's Wings. Kazarian breaks up a Sharpshooter on Daniels and it's time for everyone to punch everyone. The Bucks get the better of it but More Bang For Your Buck is broken up. Daniels hits the BME for two on Nick, followed by a sitout powerbomb/neckbreaker combo for the same. Back up and Daniels goes up top, only to get caught in the Tree of Woe. That leaves Kazarian in trouble, meaning it's the Meltzer Driver to retain the titles at 13:30.

**Rating:** B. As is almost always the case, whenever the Bucks don't just spam superkicks, they're far more competitive. The problem though continues to be that there's no reason to believe they'll win. Even if they drop the titles, you know full well that they'll be getting them back anytime because that's just how Ring of Honor and New Japan roll. I'm starting to like their work better, but then they'll just do thirty five superkicks in a match again to mess that up.

#### ROH World Title: Sanada vs. Cody

Cody is defending and won't shake hands to start. Jerk. We hit the long form stall to start as Cody isn't cool with the fans being behind Sanada. No contact in the first two minutes. A nice little technical sequence really gets us going with both guys trying headlock takeovers but getting reversed into a headscissors before they try dropkicks at the same time for a standoff.

Now it's Sanada who won't shake hands as they're mirroring each other so far. The Beautiful Disaster is countered with a dropkick and Cody takes another breather on the floor. Cue Naito to cut off an escape attempt so Cody throws Ian into Sanada. Did England not get the notice about Cody turning face? Back in and Cody flips off the fans before getting two off

a delayed gordbuster.

An armdrag pulls Sanada off the top but Cody would rather channel his inner Scott Steiner with some push-ups. After more stalling (WAY too much of that so far), Cody grabs a quickly broken half crab. Instead it's that modified Indian Deathlock to send Sanada slowly crawling to the ropes and then the floor. Cody switches places with him but gets knocked off the apron and into the announcers.

Back in and Sanada ties him up for the dropkick to the hip, only to get caught with the Beautiful Disaster. Cody misses the moonsault press though and la majistral gives Sanada two. A TKO gives him the same but Cody spits at him. That just earns the champ some right hands to the jaw and we have a ref bump.

Cross Rhodes gets no count but Sanada's rollup gets two, only to be countered into a LeBell Lock. With that broken up, Cody shouts that he's waiting on Brian Danielson. Cody loads up a superplex but gets countered into a powerbomb for two. Back up and Sanada grabs the dragon sleeper, only to have Cody flip over into Cross Rhodes to retain at 20:02.

**Rating:** D+. This was WAY too long and felt like a televised midcard title match instead of a pay per view World Title defense. The ref bump didn't need to be there and Cody looked like he was more interested in wasting time than defending the title. Not a good match at all, even with Sanada doing whatever he could to make it work.

Post match Cody grabs the mic and insults the Liverpool fans for being so poor. He'll defend the title against anyone so here's Dalton Castle (thankfully with his title) to interrupt. Dalton doesn't understand why Cody doesn't like these people because he loves them. Castle is no silly goose and the only reason he's not the TV Champion is Cody sending Page out during their match. If Cody wants to know who's left, Dalton Castle is left. Cody bails and Castle thanks the fans for coming out to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D+. This did not need to be a pay per view and it was clear that there wasn't a ton of effort put into it (into the build, not the wrestlers/wrestling). There was almost nothing in the way of story

advancement outside of the ending with the wrestling not being enough to carry things. Things got better in the second half but I really wasn't feeling most of the show. The fact that I didn't know about the pay per view until less than a week before the show tells you almost everything you need to know about the card and that's really not a good thing. There are worse shows, but few more lifeless ones, which is a lot worse.

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## Impact Wrestling – August 31, 2017: In Need of a Blow Torch

### Impact Wrestling

Date: August 31, 2017

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Jeremy Borash, Josh Matthews

It's officially the Eli Drake Era here and that means the talking is going to get a lot better. Last week Drake became the new World Champion by outlasting most of the roster in Gauntlet for the Gold. Now it's time to get ready for Bound For Glory and that means starting to set up a

card, though they have some time to work with for a change. Let's get to it.

Chris Adonis and Eli Drake arrive.

In the far more important story though, American Top Team arrives with owner Dan Lambert telling Jeff Jarrett that he doesn't want any peace with him.

Here are Drake and Adonis for a chat in front of a big zebra print couch. Drake has worked hard for fourteen years and now he has this title. It actually makes him mad because it should have been so much faster. Earlier today, he was at the pool and wound up having a rather nice afternoon with a cougar featuring some nice plastic. He didn't get much rest today but now he's here to say that Drake being champion is just a fact of life, no matter who you are.

Cue Johnny Impact to say he's had more names than Drake has won titles and knows what it takes to become a champion. This brings out Eddie Edwards to say he's been around here a long time and that means he's above Johnny on the totem pole. They both want shots and Johnny is willing to fight to earn his.

Cue Jim Cornette to make a tag match between the four of them for tonight. If Drake gets the pinfall, he doesn't have to defend against any of them. If any of the other three gets the fall though, they get the shot. Of note here: Cornette came out, talked about how hot the title hunt was, made the match and was done in less than 75 seconds. Now that's how this kind of stuff should be.

Allie comes up to ask Taryn Terrell why she was so mean to Gail Kim. Taryn: "You re so f'ing annoying!" Allie gets punched in the face and slammed into a wall with Taryn saying to make sure Gail gets the message.

Mario Bokara/Fallah Bahh vs. OVE

Bokara gets caught in the wrong corner and a swinging neckbreaker gives Jake two. We see LAX watching from their clubhouse. Bahh comes in and runs Jake over but misses the legdrop, leaving Mario to take a double

kick in the corner. Dave comes in for a Doomsday Device with a cutter instead of a clothesline for the pin on Bokara at 2:52. Another squash.

Moose is in Cornette's office where Jim tells him that he'll be on TripleMania in Mexico (which has already taken place), along with Lashley, who is looking for him. Ethan Carter III comes in to ask why he's not on TripleMania but Cornette says he's got a Grand Championship defense. Ethan: "I didn't know about that." Cornette: "Oh you didn't know?" Ethan: "No I didn't know." Cornette and Moose: "Your A\*\* BETTER CALL SOMEBODY!"

### Caleb Konley vs. Petey Williams

This is Petey's first singles match on the show in eight years. Don't care? Well neither do I, but they've mentioned it three times now so it must be a big deal. Konley has Trevor Lee with him. Petey headscissors him over a few times but gets distracted by Trevor, allowing Konley to leg sweep him down.

Petey gets beaten down and sent hard into the corner for two. A Russian leg sweep into a crucifix gives Petey two and he avoids a moonsault for good measure. Lee gets on the apron to break up the Canadian Destroyer though, sending Petey over the top for a slingshot hurricanrana to take Trevor down. A slingshot Codebreaker sets up the Destroyer to give Petey the pin at 5:54.

**Rating:** C. So....Petey Williams is back. I'm not sure why this is supposed to be a big deal but that's exactly what we got. The match was fine but nothing we haven't seen, including all of Petey's big spots. The division can use the extra talent, though Williams isn't someone I've thought of since he left.

Sonjay Dutt saves Petey from a post-match beatdown.

Richard Justice has a match tonight.

Karen Jarrett yells at Taryn for attacking Allie and makes Taryn/Sienna vs. Allie/Gail. She might even throw in some stipulations when we get to the match. Karen is just so forced in this role.

### Richard Justice vs. Kongo Kong

The top rope splash ends Justice at 51 seconds.

Mahabali Shera comes out to save Justice from a post match beating.

Johnny Impact is ready to take Eli Drake's gravy train to Slam Town.

Konnan tells Low Ki to send James Storm to the hospital.

### James Storm vs. Low Ki

This is Storm's first match since Slammiversary. Ki knocks him into the ropes to start so LAX can get in some cheap shots from the floor. Some right hands in the corner set up the same result and it's off to a seated abdominal stretch on Storm. James fights up with a running enziguri and a running neckbreaker.

The Eye of the Storm is countered so Storm tries a catapult, only to get caught with a middle rope Warrior's Way for two. A second attempt at the Eye of the Storm doesn't work either but Ki misses the real Warrior's Way. Now the Eye of the Storm gets two but LAX offers a distraction. The Last Call looks to finish Ki, only to have Santana come in with a belt shot. Ki adds the Warrior's Way for the pin at 9:20.

**Rating:** B-. Good match but sweet goodness I do not care about Ki or LAX in general. They're not interesting in any way and that makes for some dull moments. At least they're not the focus though and this midcard role is WAY better for them than as the top heels in the company. Assuming Alberto doesn't come back as their top star in November, I'm fine with them where they are.

Allie is telling Braxton Sutter about what happened when Garza Jr. comes up to check on her. Sutter doesn't like it and tells him to get out.

Jim Cornette recaps the Lashley/American Top Team stuff, which is mainly a way to show Karen screeching a lot.

Pagano is coming.

Joseph Park goes over Grado and Laurel Van Ness' wedding checklist.



Park's uncle Tobias is going to be DJ and he's one of the best in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Laurel's family is coming down from Canada and Park panics. It's about time they got to that detail.

Taya Valkyrie is coming.

Lashley hasn't made a decision on his future yet but he's ready to go to TripleMania and clean house.

### Eli Drake/Chris Adonis vs. Johnny Impact/Eddie Edwards

If Johnny or Eddie get the pin, they're #1 contender. I'm going to assume there's something else after this as the bell rang at 9:30. Eddie chops Adonis to start before it's off to Johnny for a headlock. Drake comes in and runs from an Impact kick to the face. Instead it's back to Adonis who eats a standing shooting star for two.

Everything breaks down and the Shot of Caffeine drops Drake, followed by a running corkscrew dive to drop Adonis as we take a break. Back with Johnny's breakdancing legdrop getting two on Drake. Impact gets taken into the wrong corner for a beating as the announcers keep name dropping MMA fighters. Not only do most of them not mean anything to me as a casual MMA fan, but if I wanted to watch MMA, I'd be watching that instead.

A double suplex gets two on Impact but he kicks Eli away for the hot tag to Eddie. Some chops and a Blue Thunder Bomb get two on Adonis and we take a break. Back with Adonis grabbing an abdominal stretch on Eddie with some bonus forearms to the ribs. Eddie fights out and brings in Impact to speed things up. Adonis saves Drake from the split legged moonsault and it's a double Moonlight Drive for two on Drake. Eli throws him into a bearhug from Adonis before forearming Edwards off the apron.

The match just keeps going as Eddie saves Impact from taking another double suplex. Everything breaks down and the Flying Chuck sets up kind of a cartwheel 450 (with the fans counting him down) for another near fall as Adonis makes the save. Eddie dives onto Adonis and Drake for no cover but Eli gets in a low blow to set up the Gravy Train (Eli Drop/White Noise) for the pin at 26:00.

**Rating:** C-. Well that was long. I have no idea why this needed almost half an hour when it was an average tag match at best. It was completely watchable but that doesn't mean I need to see that much of it. Drake getting the pin is interesting as he needs a challenger and I kind of like the idea of not going with the obvious for a change.

Post match American Top Team comes out to say these four should be scared to death right now. Cornette comes out and tells Lashley to tell Lambert under control before he goes to TripleMania. That's not all though as Cornette makes Drake vs. Matt Sydal next week for the title. Matt comes out to stare at Drake to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C-. I really don't have any feelings about this show whatsoever, save from wanting to weld Karen Jarrett's mouth shut and ban any mention of mixed martial arts from this show forever. It's pretty clear that the American Top Team stuff is going to be a major story all the way until Bound For Glory and that's really not good news.

It's also not a good sign that the story is completely overshadowing the new World Champion and whatever he's doing but that's always been a trope of this company: you have the biggest title in the promotion but then you have the REAL top story above that. Good enough show this week but as always, it's far from without its big flaws. Like not knowing when TripleMania aired. Get that stuff right.

### Results

OVE b. Mario Bokara/Fallah Bahh – Top rope cutter to Bokara

Petey Williams b. Caleb Konley – Canadian Destroyer

Kongo Kong b. Richard Justice – Top rope splash

Low Ki b. James Storm – Warrior's Way

Eli Drake/Chris Adonis b. Johnny Impact/Eddie Edwards – Gravy Train to Edwards

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# Main Event – August 31, 2017: I Still Can't Get Over That Promo

## Main Event

Date: August 31, 2017

Location: FedEx Forum, Memphis, Tennessee

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Corey Graves

It's a shame that this can't be your classic Memphis style show as it would give things a fresh blast of energy. That being said, I can live with dull wrestling if it means we get to see the Roman Reigns/John Cena promo again, which was easily one of the most entertaining things I've seen all year. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

## Dana Brooke vs. Alicia Fox

They lock up to start with Fox sending her into the corner but getting rolled up for two. A handstand splash gets two on Alicia but she comes

back with some knees to the back. We hit the chinlock as it's pretty clear they don't have much to do here. The northern lights gives Alicia two but Brooke makes her comeback with some slams and a cartwheel splash for the pin at 5:20.

**Rating:** D. Thank goodness they didn't have her job here in a meaningless match. I'll never understand how someone can get back out there so soon after the kind of loss Brooke went through (her boyfriend died less than a week before this was taped) but it's quite impressive that she's back out there performing. The match was exactly what you would expect from something like this but I'm not going to hold anything against Dana at this point.

We look back at Braun Strowman laying out Brock Lesnar two weeks ago.

From Raw.

Here are Brock Lesnar and Paul Heyman for a chat. Heyman talks about what happened last week with Braun Strowman, who is the kind of monster that his parents warned him about. Strowman had an historic night at Summerslam when he, as Corey Graves said, monster handled Lesnar by powerslamming him through two tables. We see a clip of last week's attack on Lesnar, which Heyman says made him know Strowman is a monster. At No Mercy, Lesnar is going to be ready for Strowman. Heyman explains what's going to happen but Brock takes the mic. Brock: "What he's trying to say is Suplex City b\*\*\*\*."

From Raw again.

Kurt Angle is in the ring for the contract signing between Cena and Reigns. Cena is out first to say that he's on Raw to face one man and Angle has made that happen for No Mercy. He's seen Reigns being treated as the untouchable star and we'll see how he can hang at No Mercy. Cena signs and here's Reigns. Roman says that as great as Cena is, there's one thing that he's done that Cena can never do: retire the Undertaker at Wrestlemania.

Cena kneels before him and says some people are still trying to figure Reigns out. We hear about the fans wanting to see Cena change his ways

(with the term heel turn being dropped in a rare moment) before Cena says Reigns is just a guy trying to fill shoes he can never fill. Cena isn't a man at the end of his career with a bad hip. The reason Reigns won't sign that is because the Roman Empire is done if he does.

Reigns says Cena sucks so Cena puts his arm around Angle and says the fans think he does too but he won a gold medal. Roman seems a bit shaken and lost for what to say. Cena: "Go ahead find it. I'll wait. It's called a promo and if you want to be the big dog you're going to have to learn how to do it. SEE YOU FOURTH WALL!" Reigns gets fired up and goes on a rant that sounds straight off a message board, talking about how hard he works on the weekend so Cena can be on the Today Show.

Then Cena gets on his tour bus and shows up at a show if they pay him enough with the big shovel to bury people around him. Reigns is the one guy he can't bury or see. Cena calls him out for being repetitive and says "it took you five years to cut a halfway decent promo but now I'm about to cut you down to size." He talks about the mythical golden shovel but it's always the fans who hold the keys and they always will.

Cena is tired of hearing the same thing for ten years by a lot tougher people. Here's the thing: Cena hasn't main evented Wrestlemania in five years and he was the opening match at Summerslam. He won the US Title and used it to introduce new stars to the WWE including Kevin Owens and AJ Styles (I believe he means Sami Zayn as AJ debuted way later). Reigns took the US Title as a demotion and now stands there blaming Cena for not being able to hang with him.

Cena has seen a lot of people trying to hang at this level and he's heard about one guy getting to do it. Now he sees Roman face to face and gets the line of the night: "You're lucky I'm a part timer because I can do this part time way better than you ever could full time." Reigns signs and turns over the table...and the clip ends before Anderson and Gallows' ridiculous cameo appearance can be mentioned.

#### Ariya Daivari vs. Mustafa Ali

Daivari takes him down without much effort and we hit an early armbar. A dropkick sends Daivari outside and we take a break. Back with Daivari

eating a jumping knee to the face for two but grabbing a spinebuster for the same. Not that it matters as Ali's rolling neckbreaker and tornado DDT set up the 054 for the pin at 8:20.

**Rating:** C. It didn't have much time to do anything (remember the long break) and that's kind of a shame. Ali has become one of the more consistent cruiserweight performers and Daivari isn't the worst, as long as we don't have to hear his lame promos. This was your standard Main Event cruiserweight match though and that's not a good thing.

We'll wrap it up here.

#### Women's Title: Alexa Bliss vs. Sasha Banks

Banks is defending and gets rolled up for an early two. Sasha sends her hard into the corner and grabs an armbar. They're starting with a slow pace and Bliss bails to the floor for a breather. There are the double knees from the apron and we take a break. Back with Bliss holding an armbar of her own before starting in on the back.

It's off to a bow and arrow hold but Banks fights up without too much effort. The Bank Statement doesn't work so Sasha goes with the running knees in the corner, only to miss a second attempt. Bliss goes with a hard right hand and a Code Red for a pretty close two. Banks gets in a few more knees and some aggressive forearms in the corner.

Back up and Alexa catches her in the corner by sending her face first into a buckle. A top rope superplex connects to bust up the back even more. Bliss is slow to cover and gets caught in the Bank Statement. That's reversed into a rollup for two and there's the DDT to give Bliss the title back at 15:00.

**Rating:** B. I'm really not getting the lack of successful title defenses for Banks. That makes four reigns and she's lost the title in her first defense every time. As for the match itself, Bliss winning clean is an interesting call and the right one if you have to change the title. She looked better than she has before in the ring and is getting to the point where she can hang with the better workers. Couple that with the insane charisma and persona and she's quite the force.

Post match Nia Jax comes out and destroys Sasha before putting Bliss on her shoulders. One electric chair later and Jax holds up the title over the new champ to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. The main event and the long promo alone make this an easy show to watch. As usual the original wrestling was nothing memorable in the slightest but I don't think anyone watches this show for that content. Raw is still on a roll right now with even the recap shows being entertaining.

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## Lucha Underground – August 30, 2017: It's About Time

### Lucha Underground

Date: August 30, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

We're into the final stretch of the season now (after what feels like 183

years) and that means we're on the way to Ultima Lucha Tres. With the main event set, there shouldn't be too many more weeks to go before we get to the big show. That being said, this is Lucha Underground so we'll likely have three tournaments and ten new characters before we get there. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at Marty Martinez being creepy, Cortez Castro being unmasked, Son of Havoc vs. Son of Madness and Johnny Mundo retaining last week.

Dario Cueto comes in to see Matanza, whose protection he now requires. In two weeks, Matanza gets to face Mysterio one on one.

Ultima Lucha Tres starts in four weeks and will be four weeks long this year.

#### Son of Madness vs. Mascarita Sagrada

Sagrada comes out in the biker vest given to him by Son of Havoc. Madness kicks him in the back to start and stomps him down in the corner as this is looking squashish. Sagrada gets in a kick of his own but a suplex puts him away at 2:13.

Son of Havoc comes in for the save as Dario makes Havoc vs. Madness in a Boyle Heights Biker Brawl for an Aztec Medallion later tonight. As he's making the announcement, Paul London comes out to carry Sagrada away.

#### Marty Martinez vs. Argenis

Marty drives him into the corner for some rapid fire shots to the face and chest but misses a charge. A springboard....something is broken up with a faceplant and it's time for Marty to start after the mask. Marty gets sent outside for a big dive and a hurricanrana off the steps. Since it's just a hurricanrana, Marty sends him into the post to draw some blood. With his blood on Marty's shoulder, Argenis comes back with a neckbreaker as Striker talks about platelets falling. Marty loads him up for a Dominator and flips it into a Codebreaker (cool) for the pin at 5:11.

**Rating:** C-. The blood was a nice touch and the finisher was cool as Marty looks like a killer all over again. That's the kind of thing you get



around here that's missing from other promotions and it helps a lot. You can pretty much guarantee Fenix vs. Marty at Ultima Lucha and I'm actually looking forward to that one a bit, especially with Fenix's great in-ring performances more often than not.

Post match Marty beats on him even more and steals the bloody mask. Marty gets in Melissa's face, saying he wants Fenix's mask. He'll get it at Ultima Lucha Tres. Fenix comes out for some kicks and issues a challenge for mask vs. hair.

#### Joey Ryan vs. Sexy Star

Watch your arm Joey. Star hammers away in the corner as Striker babbles about smart women loving smart men. A tornado DDT gives Star two and a victory roll gets the same. Joey pulls her down by the hair and here's Taya with a sign to mock Sexy and her fans. I'm not sure how many fans she has but then again Lucha Underground has blown her importance WAY out of the water for a long time now. Star biels him around by the chest hair, followed by Three Amigas for two. She dives onto Taya instead of following up though and it's a superkick to give Joey the pin at 4:57.

**Rating:** D+. Just a match here but Star's recent actions have somehow made me care about her even less. She's already one of the most overpushed wrestlers I've seen in a long time and now there's only one thing you can think about when she's out there. Joey getting the win is a nice surprise, though we're just waiting on Castro to come out for the brawl.

Post match Joey tries to put the lollipop in Star's mouth so Castro comes in for the save with a kendo stick.

Back from a break with Castro coming into Dario's office. He should arrest Dario right now but Dario gives him a street fight with Joey for an Aztec Medallion next week.

#### Aztec Medallion: Son of Havoc vs. Son of Madness

Street fight. Havoc knees Madness (thankfully in a vest so we can tell them apart) in the face to start as the vest is already off. A trashcan shot drops Havoc and they fight into the crowd as Striker makes Repo Man

jokes. They take turns being sent into various objects with some fans catching Havoc as he's thrown into the crowd again.

Madness gets thrown back to ringside for a dive out of the crowd, only to have Havoc knee the barricade by mistake. A backdrop sends Madness into the same barricade though as Striker talks about how you would do some of this stuff in a bar fight. Back in and Madness clotheslines him down (I think. Having these two looking identical is really annoying.) as Striker keeps making jokes about the beards, completely missing the point of something that is supposed to be so serious.

Havoc sends him outside again and into the steps, setting up a handspring elbow in the corner. A cutter gives Havoc two but Madness drops him again and goes to find a toolbox. Instead he picks up a garbage can for a Death Valley Driver. Now it's time for a hammer but Havoc charges into a beer bottle to the head. The shooting star gives Havoc the pin at 13:03.

**Rating:** B-. Good brawl here with both guys beating each other up, though it was rather difficult to keep track of which was which most of the time. Havoc winning is the right move as Madness seems like a one off character. The match was fun enough and felt like a fight, save for Striker being more annoying than he's been in months with all of his unfunny jokes and talking about how you wouldn't do this stuff in a biker brawl. But Striker isn't going to change and the match was still good so it's hard to complain about all that much.

**Overall Rating:** C+. The fact that this season finally has an end date in sight helps a lot but sweet goodness does it really matter at this point? Next week will be a year since this "season" started and it's still got the better part of two months to go after. At least they're starting to set up some more stories for Ultima Lucha Tres than just the main event, which is really needing the build up with so little time to go. Good show this week though and that's important right now.

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## **New Column: Feel the Power of...Inflated Reigns**

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-feel-power-inflated-records/>

One of WWE's latest ideas that solves a problem that I don't think anyone else knows exists.

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## **NXT – August 30, 2017: Strong Style**

### **NXT**

Date: August 30, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Percy Watson, Nigel McGuinness, Mauro Ranallo

We're back to the regular stuff this week as NXT returns home to Full

Sail. After last week's recap/reset episode, this time we'll be having the first storyline advancements since Brooklyn. The big story will see Drew McIntyre as the new NXT Champion and the former Ring of Honor guys biting at his heels. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Sanity, some security guards and possibly other wrestlers are down in the back. Three people, presumably Adam Cole, Bobby Fish and Kyle O'Reilly are seen walking away. William Regal comes in and wants medical personnel.

Here's McIntyre for his first comments as champion. After the required YOU DESERVE IT chants, Drew says this is his life. The last seventeen years have led him to this moment and this is his life's work. He understands that the title comes with a big bullseye on his back. Drew brings up Cole and company and is ready to face anyone so here's Roderick Strong to interrupt. Roderick wants a shot at the title but first, he has to face Bobby Roode. The champ seems game.

Roode says he's already on Smackdown but tonight he's beating Strong and coming after his NXT Title, which he'll bring up to Smackdown with him.

#### Peyton Royce vs. Ruby Riot

They head to the mat to start with Riot getting the better of it and scoring with a dropkick for two. An armbar keeps Royce in trouble so Peyton knees her in the face for a breather. Ruby gets thrown outside and we take a break. Back with Ruby fighting out of a chinlock and firing off a string of kicks for two. A Death Valley Driver gives Royce a quick two but Riot knocks her around even more.

Billie Kay pulls Royce outside though, like a true friend should be doing. That's fine with Riot, who nails a double suicide dive. Royce tries to crawl away until Riot grabs her by the legs. Billie pulls her outside for a big boot though, with the referee seeing no problem with Riot just disappearing while pulling on Royce's leg. Back in and Peyton's fisherman's suplex is good for the pin at 10:45.

**Rating:** C-. I like the idea of Royce and Kay getting a win here and there, especially when they cheat to keep Riot looking strong. With Asuka's status in flux at the moment, Riot could become a major player on top of the division in a hurry. Royce is getting better in the ring though and she has a finisher that works well enough, which should help her in the future.

Kassius Ohno comes in to ask Regal for a match with Hideo Itami. The match is already made but Ohno wants and receives no disqualifications as a bonus stipulation.

Video on Heavy Machinery.

#### Heavy Machinery vs. Edwin Nagrom/Damien Awheel

Otis takes Awheel into the corner with a lockup, sending him climbing the buckles without breaking it up. It's off to Knight for a front facelock on Awheel and a crossbody to both jobbers at once. The Compactor drives Awheel onto Nagrom and it's a double pin for Dozovic at 2:11. Total squash, made only slightly more annoying by the odd jobber names.

We look at Lars Sullivan attacking No Way Jose.

Regal isn't please with Sullivan being so violent and puts him in a 3-1 handicap match next week.

Cezar Bononi vs. Andrade Cien Almas next week.

#### Roderick Strong vs. Bobby Roode

The fans chant THANK YOU BOBBY until we're ready to go. Roode promises to prove that Strong is a failure all over again but takes too long doing GLORIOUS, allowing Roderick to punch him down. A headlock slows Strong down as Roode is a full on face here. Strong will have none of that as he hammers away at Roode's head and grabs two straight backbreakers.

The threat of a third backbreaker on the floor sees Roode shove Strong into the steps, followed by a spinebuster on the floor. Back from a break with Roode hitting a backbreaker of his own and striking the GLORIOUS pose. He poses a bit too long though and it's Strong grabbing a pop up

gutbuster for a breather. An Angle Slam is countered into an armdrag but Strong settles for another backbreaker. A tiger bomb into a Boston crab sends Roode straight for the ropes.

Back up and a TKO into a Stunner gives Roode two of his own. Another spinebuster looks to set up the Glorious DDT but it's the Angle Slam from Strong instead. The fans are split now as Roode breaks up a super backbreaker, only to get enzigured on the top. Strong settles for a superplex for another near fall and both guys are down.

A slugout goes to Roode, who grabs the Glorious DDT for two with Roderick (it sounded like Percy called him Roger) getting his foot on the ropes. Roode makes the mistake of talking trash about Strong's family though and it's a jumping knee to the face. Strong nails End of Heartache, blows Roode a kiss goodbye, and hits a second to put Roode away at 17:48.

**Rating:** B+. This felt like Strong vs. Jay Lethal for the ROH TV Title where Strong needed to win and finally threw everything he had at Roode until there was nothing left. This is the kind of win that Strong has been missing as he's never had that signature victory. If nothing else it's going to put him near the NXT Title picture, either challenging McIntyre or joining the ROH guys as their second in command. Really good match here with a simple yet effective story.

It's pretty clear that this is it for Roode in NXT and I was really surprised by how much I liked his time there. I've never quite gotten all of his hype in TNA but he was excellent in NXT with a very basic style played up to a high level. That made for some good matches to go with that outstanding theme song. I'm glad that they seem to want to do something with him on Smackdown as Roode is already 40 and deserves this kind of a run after spending so much time in TNA.

Post match Drew comes out to stare down Strong but gets jumped by Cole and company. Regal comes out to chase them off as the three of them shout about this being their NXT and how they're doing Regal a favor to end the show. They're doing a solid job of making them feel like the original NWO and that's a good thing.

**Overall Rating:** B. They hit the ground running on this taping and that's

a very good sign. You have a fresh champion with a hot heel act plus Strong as a wildcard. That leaves you with a bunch of different possibilities, all of which could produce some very good results. Having those options is fun but it's a lot more fun to see how they get to an ending, which is a long way off from here. Very good show this week and I'm feeling better about NXT than I have in a long time.

### Results

Peyton Royce b. Ruby Riot – Fisherman's suplex

Heavy Machinery b. Edwin Nagrom/Damien Awheel

Roderick Strong b. Bobby Roode – End of Heartache

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# **Monday Night Raw – March 31, 2003: Who's Next? Eh It's Not**

# That Hard To Figure Out.

## Monday Night Raw

Date: March 31, 2003

Location: Key Arena, Seattle, Washington

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's time for one of the biggest Raw's of the year and it should be interesting to see where things are going. HHH needs a new challenger after he sent Booker packing from the main event scene and Rock finally vanquished Steve Austin at Wrestlemania. There's room for a lot of changes on the show at the moment so let's get to it.

We open with a nearly four minute highlight package of last night. Nothing wrong with that after the biggest show of the year.

Opening sequence.

Rock is looking in a mirror when a makeup guy comes up, only to annoy the Great One. Tonight is Rock Appreciation Night and he needs to look perfect.

Here's Austin to get things going in the arena. Austin says he's always been honest since he's been here and last night Rock was the better man. He'd like to have Rock come out here right now for a handshake but gets Eric Bischoff with some papers instead. Eric doesn't buy Austin wanting a handshake and thinks it's a ploy. The fact is Austin won't be beating anyone up anytime soon.

The night before Wrestlemania, Austin was in a hospital so Eric had his lawyers look into a few things. While Austin was in the hospital for an anxiety issue, there's a lot more to it than that. Bischoff reads off a bunch of neck and back issues that Austin is dealing with (apparently having stolen Austin's personal medical records) and he's not medically cleared to wrestle. Austin says he's going to do whatever he wants and that includes fighting against doctor's orders. That's fine with Bischoff, who fires him. The FedEx is on its way to Austin's home in Texas too.



## HHH vs. Hurricane

Non-title. During the entrances, JR and King say that Goldberg will be part of the upcoming Backlash pay per view. Hurricane gives his mask to a kid so Flair takes it away and breaks the thing. HHH jumps him on the floor and takes him down with a spinebuster back inside. A vertical suplex is broken up and Hurricane's jumping neckbreaker mostly connects.

Some jumping clotheslines and a Shining Wizard give Hurricane two but Flair trips him up. It doesn't really matter as the chokeslam is good for two, followed by a high crossbody for a pretty good near fall. The Pedigree is broken up and the Eye of the Hurricane gets two more. The Blockbuster misses though and it's a Pedigree to put HHH away.

**Rating:** C-. This would also be known as a "take that Rock" match as Rock went out of his way to give Hurricane a rub and then HHH beats him clean in about four minutes. Hurricane's offense looked good and there's nothing wrong with the World Champion getting a clean win but did it just NEED to be Hurricane? Seems rather petty but that's how it goes.

Kane thinks he and Rob Van Dam should go their separate ways but Rob has already gotten them another Tag Team Title shot tonight. If they lose though, they have to join the Bischoff Administration. Kane is livid. Rob: "Dude.....we're gonna win."

Goldberg video. He'll be at Backlash.

## Scott Steiner vs. Christopher Nowinski

Chris has a protective mask on his face and politely requests not to be hit in the face. Steiner threatens to make Nowinski floss with his shoelaces and Nowinski's running doesn't get him anywhere. Scott hammers him down and gets in a kick to the chest but Nowinski uses a headbutt with the mask to get a breather. Not that it matters as a belly to belly and the Steiner Recliner put Chris away in short order. Total squash.

Austin confirms that his neck is messed up.

Rock Appreciation Moment: a song montage. It really is amazing how much great stuff he packed into so little time.

JR goes on a heck of a rant against Bischoff for somehow getting Austin's medical records and getting rid of him this way. Heck yeah JR. Medical reasons like Austin having a horrible neck and back? What kind of problems could those ever cause? I get what they're going for with Bischoff finding a way to get rid of Austin but good luck getting me to take issue with protecting the neck/back of someone who already missed a year due to neck surgery.

The Dudleys aren't happy with Storm and Morely. Here's the Chief to tell them that they're in the Tag Team Title match tonight as well where their jobs will be to get rid of RVD and Kane before laying down to retain the titles.

Flair comes in to see Booker T., who is getting his knee taped up. Booker chokes Flair for being annoying and shows why he's one of the scariest men in wrestling. Seriously he was terrifying when he was shouting down at Flair.

Clip of Ashanti singing America the Beautiful.

### Rosey vs. Maven

Fallout from Maven pinning Rico a few weeks back and of course that requires another match. Maven kicks him in the ribs but gets his head taken off with a clothesline. King ignores the match to talk about being a celebrity photographer for Playboy, which doesn't cause nearly as much excitement as you would expect.

Rosey misses a charge in the corner and gets forearmed down, only to have Maven COMPLETELY miss a dropkick to Rosey's back. The idea was supposed to have Rosey get knocked into Rico on the apron, likely for a rollup pin. Rosey starts to go into Rico anyway but thankfully realizes how stupid that would be since he wasn't touched. They stumble around into an awful looking rollup to give Maven two, followed by a sunset flip to put Rosey away. This was terrible and made some of the Divas matches look horrible. By the way, Maven would have been a perfect choice (one of many) for HHH's squash earlier rather than Hurricane.

Here's Chris Jericho for a match but first he needs some respect. Jericho

talks about having one of the best matches in Wrestlemania history last night and Shawn Michaels knows that he was bested. When people look back at the match, they'll remember Shawn writhing in pain while Jericho walked out with his head held high. Tonight, he'll take out his frustrations on Booker T.

#### Chris Jericho vs. Booker T.

Booker has a bad leg so Jericho goes after it before the bell. Some kicks and elbow drops have the leg in trouble but Booker kicks him over the top for a breather. Back in and a flapjack drops Jericho as JR praises HHH's Indian Deathlock. There's a superkick but here's Flair for the DQ.

HHH comes out and it's a 3-1 beatdown until Shawn makes the save. Jericho breaks up Sweet Chin Music though and it's Shawn taking the beatdown, including the Walls. HHH gets the Indian Deathlock and the good guys tap. Yeah it's still just an Indian Deathlock dude. Try the sleeper again.

#### Jeff Hardy vs. Steven Richards

Jeff is in all white, making him look like he's off to paint an apartment. Richards gets sent outside early on but Victoria pulls him away before Jeff's barricade running clothesline. Back in and a DDT on the arm gives Richards two and we hit the armbar as Jeff's blue arm paint is all over Richards. Jeff makes the comeback and gets two off the leg lariat in the corner. The Swanton is broken up by Victoria so here's Trish, who got out here WAY too fast, to kick her in the head. Now the Swanton can put Richards away.

**Rating:** D. The paint was the most interesting part of the match. This Jeff/Trish thing isn't doing anything for me but I can't imagine it's going to be anything long term. They also need some fresh talent for the women's division as Trish vs. Victoria all over again makes my head hurt.

Trish smiles at Jeff post match.

Austin says goodbye to the production staff and leaves.

Rock Appreciation Moment: Rock insults various crowds and people. "HE SAID TORONTO! THAT'S WHERE WE LIVE!" Still amazing.

Test calls Torrie Wilson because he's dumb enough to do this when his girlfriend is around. Speaking of the girlfriend, Stacy comes up and innocently asks who was on the phone. Test gets nervous and says it was a wrong number. He tries to get Goldust to lie for him but the Tourette's gets the better of him.

Rock finds the dejected production staff (who haven't moved since Austin left) and says he's got a big party after Rock Appreciation Night. I mean, they can't come in or anything but the party will be happening.

Goldberg video.

Tag Team Titles: Dudley Boyz vs. Rob Van Dam/Kane vs. Lance Storm/Chief Morely

The graphic still shows the old title belt design. Morely and Storm are defending and this is elimination rules. Rob and Kane slug it out with the champs with Van Dam moonsaulting to the floor to take out the two of them plus Bubba as a bonus. Kane dives onto all of them and the fans are way into Van Dam, as is usually the case. We really get things going with Rob and D-Von as the fans want tables.

Bubba comes in to club Kane in the chest but takes a jumping clothesline for his efforts. A quick What's Up slows Kane down but it's right back to Rob for a bunch of kicks to the face. Everything breaks until it's Bubba and Van Dam alone in the ring where Rob misses the Five Star. Storm tries to bring in a chair but D-Von takes it away and misses a swing, setting up the Van Daminator to get rid of the Dudleys.

Back from a break with Morely suplexing Van Dam and Kane making a save. Storm comes in and grabs a half crab, which isn't even treated as a finisher anymore. To be fair, did anyone outside of WCW ever buy that as a good move? The hot tag brings in Kane as everything breaks down.

A really bad camera shot shows Van Dam's top rope kick not coming close to Storm (which the announcers didn't acknowledge, making it a bit less bad than Maven's disaster earlier). There's the double chokeslam on the champs and the Five Star to Morely gives Rob and Kane the titles.

**Rating:** D+. Kind of slow here but the ending was the only important part. Kane and Van Dam should have won the titles last night but the extra emotion here did make things a little better. At least the titles are off of Storm and Regal as they were setting new standards for uninteresting champions. The Dudleys didn't really need to be there either but they didn't hurt anything.

Bischoff has a contract of some kind and promises a big surprise.

Here's Rock for Rock Appreciation Night/the most obvious debut ever. Rock has FINALLY come back to sea...all you jabronis appreciate him. The ROCKY chant breaks out and Rock says he doesn't care for what happened to Austin earlier tonight. If Austin just had to get beaten last night, at least it was by the best. Rock brags about all the Rock Bottoms last night and the fans keep cheering him.

We get another montage of awesome Rock moments (edited off the Network due to the music), which still doesn't get them to boo. He talks about going to Hollywood and coming back to boos as the fans FINALLY catch on...by chanting for Goldberg. Rock: "Don't think you're cool just because you know Rock's accountant Ira Goldberg!"

Rock is out of people to beat though so this is the last time you'll ever see him. He tells them what they can do with their booing...and here's Goldberg. This would have been a heck of a surprise if they hadn't said he would be at Backlash and then had Bischoff do the contract thing. Goldberg says Rock is next and a spear ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. This definitely felt like the post-Wrestlemania show with very little wrestling throughout and one match with any significant time. They set up a few things going forward but a lot of this show was about taking a breath after the hard push towards Wrestlemania. There's nothing wrong with that and the Goldberg debut, while highly telegraphed, did feel like a big moment. Not a bad show, but it's not the place to look if you want a lot of action.

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## 205 Live – August 29, 2017: Proof That It's Working

### **205 Live**

Date: August 29, 2017

Location: Verizon Arena, Little Rock, Arkansas

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Corey Graves

We're officially in the Enzo Amore Era on 205 Live and that makes me think doing my own dental surgery sounds like a good idea. It's pretty clear that Enzo is going to be the next big challenger to Neville and the title, which actually gives me a mixed reaction. He's already the biggest star on the show but that means he's around more often and egads that sounds like torture. Let's get to it.

The opening recap looks at Brian Kendrick vs. Jack Gallagher and the buildup to their No DQ match tonight.

Opening sequence.

The announcers chat for a bit.

### Brian Kendrick vs. Jack Gallagher

No DQ and Gallagher is in street clothes. Kendrick says he's a fighter as Gallagher stands perfectly still. They stare each other down for the better part of a minute before Jack uppercuts him into the corner and scores with a headbutt. Gallagher even breaks an umbrella over Kendrick's back to put him outside as the violence starts cranking up. Some hard shots to Brian's face sets up a whip through some equipment cases.

The beating knocks Kendrick down the aisle as Gallagher looks completely calm the entire time. It's almost eerie really. Kendrick gets thrown onto the announcers' table for some hard right hands to the head. The announcers' table is loaded up but Kendrick comes up with a kendo stick to the ribs.

Brian sends him into the steps before tying Jack's foot in the wires underneath the ring skirt. Now it's time for the beating with the stick and Jack is busted open pretty badly. We stop for the medic to tend to Gallagher's head and Kendrick has to stand around for a bit. Kendrick drops him with a DDT onto the bell and puts on the Captain's Hook with the stick for the submission (though Gallagher is out) at 7:30.

**Rating:** C+. This needed more time but there's a good chance that it was cut off due to the cut. It was nice while it lasted though and showed a different side of Gallagher, which he really needs to show. At the same time you need to have Kendrick get a bigger win once in awhile as him putting everyone over isn't going to work forever. Good brawl, cut short by time.

Noam Dar, Drew Gulak and Tony Nese are ready for the six man tag tonight. Dar insists that he beat himself for having a bit too much fun the night before. Gulak thinks Enzo is going to tarnish the 205 Live. He believe in a better 205 Live and you can bet your bojangles that Enzo isn't going to be a part of that. Nese says Enzo isn't on his level.

### Rich Swann vs. Ariya Daivari

TJP, still on crutches, is out for commentary. Daivari dedicates this to another Iranian wrestler. They fight over a wristlock to start with Swann

dancing/nipping up to escape. Swann's front flip into a dropkick gets two but Daivari starts in on the back. TJP talks about how he and Swann are both former champions.

The fact that he had to beat five people to become champion while Swann only beat one is just a detail. Swann's running flip Fameasser gets two and something like Rolling Thunder gets the same. They head outside with Daivari getting the better of it and stealing TJP's crutch, only to get small packaged for the pin at 4:08.

**Rating:** D+. Angle advancement instead of much of a match here as TJP vs. Swann continues. You know they're heading to a big match down the line, even if it isn't likely to mean anything. Well, at least until Enzo becomes the Cruiserweight Champion to turn the whole thing into a big comedy act.

Post match Daivari goes after TJP, who fights back with a variety of kicks and his knee appearing just fine. Swann watches all this in disbelief before handing TJP his crutch and leaving. TJP hits Daivari with the Detonation Kick.

Enzo comes in to see Cedric Alexander and Gran Metalik, offering some coaching tips on a dry erase board. Alexander says this isn't the same as Raw and the two of them have more experience. This turns into a discussion of Enzo's mother's cooking and Gran Metalik being named Pepper Jack. He's really not going to be able to stay a face long, or at least he shouldn't.

Drew Gulak/Noam Dar/Tony Nese vs. Enzo Amore/Cedric Alexander/Gran Metalik

Before the match, Enzo calls this the realest in-ring debut in the history of 205 Live. Drew looks like Captain Underpants and Nese works at Chippendale's. Enzo and Gulak start things off with Drew imitating the dance. It's not like it's hard to make fun of. Gulak starts talking trash as he cranks on an armbar, sending Enzo bailing to the corner. There's no tag though so a front facelock takes Enzo down again.

Now it's off to Alexander as Neville is shown watching from the back.



Tony comes in to pose a bit but Cedric speeds things back up into a headscissors and dropkick to take over. It's back to Enzo to eat a dropkick as the heels take over for the first time. A Downward Spiral gets Enzo out of trouble but everything breaks down with Metalik and Alexander hitting (well maybe as the camera went down too) stereo dives.

That leaves Nese to run Enzo over before he can dive (Corey: "I think, in a roundabout way, Tony Nese just saved Enzo's life.") and mocks the dance as well. Just in case you needed any more proof that Enzo is the star of this show and everyone else is chasing him. Cedric springboards in with a clothesline but gets sent outside so Gulak and Nese can hammer away while Enzo has the referee for reasons of general stupidity.

Cedric fights out of a chinlock and hits the handspring enziguri for a breather. The hot tag brings in Metalik for a superkick to Nese and the rope walk dropkick. Gulak saves Nese from a Swanton so Alexander takes Drew down, allowing for the hot tag off to Enzo. Eat Defeat (now the Jordunzo because of course it is) drops Dar (I had forgotten he was in this match) and a rollup with feet on the ropes pins Nese at 9:48.

**Rating:** C-. I'm not sure how to take this. For one thing I've talked for the better part of a year now about how I thought Enzo as a cheating cruiserweight would be great but sweet goodness now it's actually happening. The character in this form has a short shelf life but if they put the title on him and make him the Honky Tonk Man of the division, he'll be fine.

Here's the way you can tell it's working at the moment though: when else have I ever talked about someone on 205 Live this much? As you knew he would be, Enzo is instantly the biggest personality on the show and draws the most attention. If they could find some more people like him, this show could take off a bit more. As it is, it's Enzo, Neville and everyone else a few miles beneath them.

The winners dance to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. This show flew by and that's one of the better things you can say about 205 Live. They don't have the most interesting stories in the world but if they get in, do their stuff and get out, it's quite

the entertaining way to kill most of an hour. The No DQ match was good and TJP vs. Swann is kind of interesting, though it would be nice if any of this stuff was going to mean anything. If Enzo gets the title though, those people will be getting a lot more attention in a hurry. Fine show this week though nothing worth going out of your way to see.

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