

# Summerslam Count-Up – 2007: Guess Who's Back

## Summerslam 2007

Date: August 27, 2007

Location: Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, New Jersey

Attendance: 17,441

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Joey Styles, Taz

It's still an awkward period for the company as there isn't much going on and they're sort of just going through the motions. The big things tonight are the rise of Randy Orton and the return of HHH to face King Booker in the Game's first match since December. Other than that there's nothing noteworthy on the show. It's just such a dull time for the company and it shows in their major events. Let's get to it.

The opening video comes off like a long TV show intro. Mysterio is back tonight and Batista gets another world title shot. The main event is covered a bit as well and they get ready to throw it to the arena but the video is hijacked by a \$6 Million Man bit about rebuilding HHH. He's already hijacking things.

### Kane vs. Finlay

Kane has banged up ribs due to a recent attack by Finlay. Apparently Finlay knocked some coffee onto Kane and didn't apologize. I've heard worse reasons for a brawl. Kane starts fast and uppercuts Finlay down in the corner and drops him with a back elbow to the jaw. The ribs are already bothering the big bald but he pops Finlay in the chin with more uppercuts. Finlay gets a boot up in the corner but Kane pops him with a right hand so hard it sends him to the floor.

Back in and Finlay gets in a shot to the bad ribs to knock Kane to the outside. A backsplash to the bad ribs is good for two and Finlay puts on a half crab. This has been very physical so far. Kane finally powers up and hits an enziguiri to escape. A big boot drops Finlay and some

clotheslines in the corner stagger him. Kane hits a one armed side slam which is a bit of a stretch given the rib injuries. JBL is doing a great job on commentary here, talking about how a rib injury affects how you move in the ring.

The top rope clothesline connects but he can't follow up. Kane misses a charge in the corner and gets dropped by a clothesline. Cue Hornswoggle who runs from Kane, allowing the big man to hit a big boot on Finlay. Horny is thrown back inside but shoved down. Kane tries the chokeslam on Finlay but the ribs give out, allowing Finlay to hit a DDT for two. In a classic heel move, Finlay goes to unhook the buckle and uses the distraction to go for his club but the referee catches him. Horny throws in another club but Kane kicks out at two. Finlay misses a charge into the corner and the chokeslam is good for the pin.

**Rating:** B-. That's probably high but I was really liking this match. It was a good choice for an opener with both guys working hard and pounding on each other with some solid force. The fans were into it too and popped quite well for almost everything in there. Kane sold the ribs well and the fans liked his comeback. Nice choice for an opener here.

All the GM's are in the back at a party when Vince comes in and wants to know why there are no women here. That's a good question actually. Vince says the mother of his illegitimate son will be here tonight. Santino comes in and suggests he's the illegitimate son but Regal yells him away. MVP comes in as well to complain about Teddy Long and issue an open challenge to Matt Hardy for anything other than a wrestling match. He leaves and Regal suggests that he himself is the son. Now Regal leaves and Coach suggests it might be Regal, but Vince apparently doesn't like English women.

Rey Mysterio is coming back! Tonight! Why did we need a promo for this?

Intercontinental Title: Mr. Kennedy vs. Carlito vs. Umaga

No real story here other than Umaga is defending and these two are at the Intercontinental level. Kennedy tries to negotiate and gets punched in the face by Umaga. Carlito loads up the apple but gets punched as well, giving the champion complete control so far. The challengers fall out to

the floor and finally start going after Umaga at the same time, though it has the same result. Carlito gets in a cheap shot from behind to send Umaga to the floor and Kennedy rams the champion into the steps.

Back in and Carlito gets two off a rollup but gets caught using the ropes. Everyone in this is either a heel or close enough to call them one. Carlito hits a springboard back elbow to the jaw for two on Kennedy but gets caught in a Stroke for no cover. Instead Kennedy goes after Umaga but gets pulled to the floor instead of getting in a cheap shot. Umaga hits a middle rope headbutt on Carlito but Kennedy saves Carlito from a charging Samoan.

Carlito knocks Kennedy to the floor and gets two on the champion before asking for an alliance with Kennedy. The champion won't be double suplexed but easily hits one on the other guys. Umaga is back up first to clean house and a spinning Rock Bottom gets two on Kennedy. A superkick puts Carlito in the corner and a running hip attack crushes him again. Kennedy sends Umaga to the floor and hits a rolling senton on Carlito, only to have Umaga come back in with the Samoan Spike on Kennedy for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. The match wasn't bad but this could have been on any given episode of Raw. Umaga was fine for a monster and would soon be slain by Jeff Hardy. Kennedy was supposed to be in a huge story coming up but a Wellness violation derailed those plans. As for Carlito....there's just nothing interesting to say about him. He exists and that's about it.

Undertaker is coming back. Again. Seriously there's at least a five hour DVD of just his returns.

We recap Rey Mysterio vs. Chavo Guerrero. This time it's a more standard story: Chavo is jealous of Rey's success and injured Rey's knee, setting up this match for revenge. Chavo even dressed up as Rey and wrestled a match to destroy a jobber's knee.

#### Rey Mysterio vs. Chavo Guerrero

For some reason Rey's torso is covered in silver paint. The fans are all over Chavo to start as you would expect. The heel goes right after the

knee of course but Rey slips away before the damage can be done. They do the gymnastics routine out of a test of strength as the fans chant for Eddie. Rey's paint is already coming off, making him look really stupid. Chavo tries to bend the knee around the ropes but is sent to the floor for a big dive from Mysterio.

Back in and Rey goes up but gets caught in the Tree of Woe which is similar to what hurt his knee in the first place. Guerrero goes right for the knee and asks him if he quits. Off to the Brock Lock (Chavo bends the knee around his neck) but Rey counters into a headscissors. Chavo stays on him though and hooks another leg lock until Rey FINALLY gets out with a kick to the head.

He tries for 619 but the leg gives out, allowing Chavo to put on a half crab. Mysterio finally gets to the ropes but the knee is still too hurt to follow up. This time it's Chavo going up but getting pulled down into the Tree of Woe so Rey can go after the knee. The paint is entirely off Rey's chest now, making it look like he's been fixing up his house.

Rey hits a seated senton off the apron before hitting a hard kick to the head for two. Chavo catches a springboard moonsault press but gets countered into a tornado DDT for two. Chavo comes right back with a Gory Bomb for two followed by two of the Three Amigos. Rey spins out of the third and takes Chavo into the ropes for the 619 and the springboard splash for the pin.

**Rating:** C-. The match was ok but at the end of the day there was no doubt that Rey was winning at all. It wasn't boring but I liked last year's action more. The story this year was better, but the paint and the obvious ending didn't do it any favors. Chavo doesn't work that well as a heel whatsoever.

King Booker says he'll beat HHH tonight. That's hilarious.

### Divas Battle Royal

Beth Phoenix, Torrie Wilson, Victoria, Layla, Brooke, Kelly Kelly, Kristal Marshall, Michelle McCool, Mickie James, Jillian Hall, Melina, Maria

The winner gets a title shot at Candace Michelle at some point in the future and you don't have to go over the top rope. It's a Divas battle royal so you know this is going to come down to about three people as potential winners. It's a huge brawl to start with Brooke (Miss Tessmacher) being sent out early. Jillian Hall eliminates Maria and those great little shorts of hers. Layla, who looks much better with curly hair, is out and the loud screaming continues.

Kristal actually knocks Victoria out and Michelle puts Kristal out a few seconds later. Kelly is thrown out and Mickie helps Michelle eliminate Jillian. Melina dumps Mickie and we're down to Torrie, Melina, McCool and Phoenix. Melina screams a lot and takes Torrie down but gets clotheslined out by Michelle. Torrie and McCool go after Beth but Wilson is quickly tossed. Beth easily tosses for the win.

**Rating:** D. There's just NOTHING to talk about in these things. It's all about the girls looking good and while that worked, it doesn't make for an interesting eight minutes of "action." Beth would go on to dominate the division for several years as the wrestling was phased out in favor of models who MIGHT wrestle a match here or there. Then they brought in a second belt for some reason that didn't work. Less than nothing of value here, other than looks.

Here's MVP for his challenge to Matt Hardy as Beth's music is still playing. He says no one bought a ticket to see the girls (likely true) so here's the US Champion to entertain you. MVP talks about growing up drinking beer but now he drinks the finer beverages. Tonight though, he's lowering himself to challenge Matt to a beer drinking contest. This was the latest in a LONG series of challenges before these guys actually had a match. It went on for over six months before Matt actually won the title at Backlash. They would even win the Smackdown Tag Titles in a few days.

Anyway Matt comes out for the contest and sounds drunk before the first can is opened. Matt says MVP isn't better than anyone and is proud to be a common man. He knows he can out drink MVP, but tonight he isn't going to try. A few weeks back MVP brought in a substitute for a boxing match against Hardy: former world champion Evander Holyfield.

The fans immediately get what's going on and here's Austin to drink for Matt instead. Gee good thing he was in the building and Matt knew it would be a beer drinking contest. Cole says this is fair. JBL: "THIS IS NOT FAIR! EVANDER HOLYFIELD IS JUST EVANDER HOLYFIELD!!! THAT IS FREAKING STONE COLD!" Austin does warmups before the contest and Stuns MVP before they drink the first beer. It's hard to argue with these nostalgia moments as the fans went NUTS for Austin.

Wrestlemania 24 is in Orlando.

Cryme Tyme comes in to see the GM's and Vince and suggest they might be Vince's son. They start talking about that money money yeah yeah and since this is WWE, it turns into a dance off with Regal stealing the show as always. Cue Ron Simmons for the obvious punchline.

ECW Title: CM Punk vs. John Morrison

Morrison is defending, having taken the title from Punk at Vengeance in what was supposed to be Benoit winning the title. John is freshly changed over from Johnny Nitro so he's still rocking the poetry. Punk takes him down by the legs to start but John has him in a chinlock a few seconds later. They trade hiptosses until Punk slams him down to take over. Punk dropkicks Morrison down onto the apron but John blocks a suplex back in with a neckbreaker onto the apron.

Morrison pounds away at Punk and puts on something vaguely resembling a Tazmission. A knee to the ribs gets two and it's back to the chinlock. Back up and Punk misses the backfist but gets two off a rolling sunset flip out of the corner. A spinning cross body out of the corner gets the same and there's the running knee I the corner. The bulldog, of course, doesn't work but a powerslam gets another near fall for Punk.

Morrison comes right back with a backbreaker and neckbreaker for two but CM counters the flip neckbreaker (Morrison's finisher) into a clothesline. A moonsault of all things gets two for Punk and he crotches John on the top rope. Punk clotheslines him down for two and a high kick has Morrison in trouble, but he manages to block a middle rope hurricanrana and put his feet on the ropes to retain.

**Rating:** C. Again this match could have been on any given episode of ECW on Sci-Fi, which is exactly where it was when Punk won the title nine days later. Why they didn't just do that here is anyone's guess, but I don't think anyone really gave much thought to what was going on with ECW anyway. The match was pretty good but it needed more than seven minutes.

We recap HHH vs. Booker, which doesn't have much of a story to it. King Booker was going after Lawler and Ross for not respecting him enough and HHH, noted defender of the little guy, is coming back to defend their honor. The hook is King vs. King but in other words, HHH is returning from injury and we need to feed him someone with some credibility.

#### HHH vs. King Booker

HHH's return is of course over the top and not as good as the one in 2002. Booker gets in a cheap shot to start but HHH comes back with right hands. A clothesline puts Booker on the floor and a second clothesline does the same. Back in and Booker gets in some forearms but walks into the facebuster for two. Queen Sharmell finally helps her man out and Booker goes after the injured leg.

HHH counters a slam and takes out Booker's leg before putting on a Figure Four. Sharmell interferes again to break the hold and a quick kick to the face gets two for Booker. Back up and they slug it out with HHH taking over by sending Booker to the floor. HHH whips Booker into the steps and gets caught in a spinebuster back inside for two. The Pedigree is escaped and the Book End gets two. The Houston Hangover misses though and the Pedigree is good for the pin.

Rating: D+. One former world champion squashed, dozens to go. HHH is back and the match was never in doubt at all. The match wasn't even eight minutes long and yet again Booker looks like a goon against HHH, albeit with roles reversed from Wrestlemania XIX. Nothing to see here and HHH didn't look like anything great.

We recap Batista vs. Khali but there isn't much to say. Khali won the title in a battle royal due to Edge being injured. Batista challenged him to try to slay the beast. Khali is using a vice grip around this time.

## Smackdown World Title: Batista vs. Great Khali

Khali immediately takes him into the corner and chops him down. Some elbows to the head put Batista down again and there's a hard clothesline for good measure. All champion so far. Batista falls down to the floor and gets back in for the big chop for two. Big Dave is sent shoulder first into the corner and there's a nerve hold to really keep up the suck. The hold stays on for over a minute and a half, drawing a boring chant.

Batista finally hits a jawbreaker but Khali chops him down for two. Cole even acknowledges the boring chant. Batista blocks the vice grip to finally wake the crowd up a bit before hitting a spinebuster. The champion escapes the Batista Bomb and catches him coming off the middle rope in the Punjabi Plunge for two. Then to really screw over the fans, Khali's manager sends in a chair and Khali whacks Batista for the DQ.

**Rating:** F. Oh come on. They've GOT to be screwing with us right? This wasn't even seven minutes long and over a minute and a half of that was in a nerve hold. The fans were absolutely right in booing the match but the worse sign is they cheered for the comeback. It was clear they cared about Batista and wanted to see him win but the solution is to make them wait so Batista could win the title next month in a stupid three way.

Batista destroys Khali with the chair post match. Even JBL rips into Khali for such a lame ending.

Vince and Coach are wondering where the aforementioned woman is when Regal pops in to say she's here. Say it with me: here are Mae and Moolah. Apparently Mae wants to give Vince another illegitimate son and you know what's coming: Mae nearly molests Vince to death until Regal and Coach drag her off. Vince seems to like it. COMEDY!

We recap the main event. Cena has been champion for eleven months and Orton has been rising up the card as the legend killer. He was named #1 contender on Raw and spent the next several weeks RK0ing Cena.

## Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Randy Orton



They lock up to start with Cena taking over via a headlock. A hard shoulder puts Orton down and the fans aren't pleased at all. Cena takes him down with a headlock takeover but Orton fights up quickly. Back up and Orton hits a shoulder and headlock takeover of his own to take over. The fans hate Cena as he tries to grab the STFU but Orton makes it to the rope and pops Cena in the face to a big reaction. Orton was a mega heel coming into this match so the fans cheering him is very bizarre.

Orton pounds away even more but Cena comes back with a bulldog for two. A forearm to the back of John's head puts him right back down for two though and momentum shifts again. Cena tries a leapfrog but Orton stops on a dime and blasts him in the head instead. Randy knocks him from the apron onto the announce table as the head trauma continues. Back in and Orton takes Cena down with a chinlock as the champion is in trouble.

Randy even lays on his back to crank even more but Cena fights up again, countering with a belly to back suplex to put both guys down. Back up and Cena misses a charge, going head first into the buckle to shake up the head again. Orton stomps away on Cena including a hard shot to the back of the champ's head. A knee drop misses Cena's head but Orton takes him down with a powerslam for two.

Back to the chinlock for a bit before Orton snaps off a gorgeous dropkick for two. We hit chinlock #3 but this time the suplex is countered into a headlock takeover to keep Orton in control. Orton hooks a bodyscissors to go with the chinlock but John fights to his feet and powers out of the hold before initiating his finishing sequence. The ProtoBomb puts Orton down but the Shuffle is countered by Orton's over the back backbreaker. Orton's Elevated DDT (Cena's feet hanging on the middle rope) gets a very close two count and Randy is getting a look in his eyes.

Orton's RK0 (jumping cutter) is countered but Cena charges at Randy, only to go sailing over the top and out to the floor. Randy rams him into the steps and Cena is in big trouble. Back in and Cena gets in a quick shot to stagger Orton but gets crotched as he goes up. A superplex is blocked though and Cena hits the top rope Fameasser, but Orton blocks the FU. A shot to the head puts Cena down again but his running punt to the head misses. There's the STFU but Randy grabs the rope. Back up and the RK0

takes Cena down for two. They get up again and the FU hits to retain Cena's title.

**Rating:** B-. While this wasn't the epic showdown they were hoping for, it definitely was a good fight. Orton going after Cena's head and not worrying about the consequences for the sake of winning the title made him seem ruthless but Cena never giving up was exactly what you would expect from him. Good stuff here but not great.

**Overall Rating:** D+. The show isn't bad but I'm looking for more out of Summerslam than this. Orton vs. Cena was the match of the night and that's just ok. That's the best way to sum up most of these matches: just ok. Only two matches crack nine minutes here and that's just not enough time for a lot of them. The show isn't worth seeing, but brighter days were ahead.

#### Ratings Comparison

Kane vs. Finlay

Original: C

Redo: B-

Carlito vs. Mr. Kennedy vs. Umaga

Original: C+

Redo: D+

Rey Mysterio vs. Chavo Guerrero

Original: B-

Redo: C-

Divas Battle Royal

Original: F

Redo: D

CM Punk vs. John Morrison

Original: B+

Redo: C

HHH vs. King Booker

Original: B-

Redo: D+

Great Khali vs. Batista

Original: D-

Redo: F

John Cena vs. Randy Orton

Original: B

Redo: B-

Overall Rating

Original: B

Redo: D+

DANG I liked this way too much the first time.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/08/10/history-of-summerslam-count-up-2007-hhh-is-back-again/>

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# Impact Wrestling – August 10, 2017: For Those Of You Who Like To See Me Rant

## Impact Wrestling

Date: August 10, 2017

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, D'Angelo Dinero, Jeremy Borash

The battle between Alberto El Patron and LAX continues but this time around LAX has some help in the form of Low Ki. Last week Low Ki helped LAX against El Patron and his family, revealing himself as the newest member of the team. Other than that we'll find out the other finalist in the Super X Cup tournament. Let's get to it.

We open with LAX and the Veterans of War brawling in the parking lot. They'll fight for the Tag Team Titles later tonight. I like the idea of pushing the Veterans of War but is there a reason they weren't even mentioned last week?

Video on the Last Knockout Standing match between Sienna and Rosemary with Sienna narrating about how you have to govern in light or darkness but the hero always falls.

Opening sequence.

Sienna is sitting in the ring and says she's the epitome of a champion. She's dealt with every challenge Karen Jarrett has thrown at her but now she has a mystery opponent at Destination X. This show isn't continuing until she gets some answers, so here's Karen to respond. Sienna says no one can be ready for her in a week but Karen says the opponent is always ready. In the worst surprise ever, it's Gail Kim. I'm laughing. Really, I am. We're supposed to be stunned that Gail Kim is getting a title shot. I'm laughing. The fight is on with Gail diving off the apron with a clothesline and some right hands. Referees break it up.

Joseph Park gives Grado a pep talk before they have a handicap match against Kongo Kong later. Park says his football coach taught him that the fear of the hit is worse than the fear itself. Grado doesn't know what that means and Park doesn't either. Grado: "Why don't you call and ask him?" Park: "He died a few years ago."

#### Laredo Kid/Garza Jr. vs. Hijo de Fantasma/Naomichi Marufuchi

Fantasma and Kid start things up with an exchange of non-near falls into a standoff. Garza comes in and eats a basement dropkick for two but catches Marufuchi with a Codebreaker for the same. Everything breaks down with Kid and Fantasma both hitting huge dives to the floor. Back in and a hurricanrana sets up a frog splash for two on Garza but Kid takes Fantasma down with a tornado DDT.

In quite the complicated spot, Garza picks Fantasma up for a powerbomb while also holding Marufuchi in a World's Strongest Slam. At the same time, Kid adds a top rope leg lariat to Fantasma to make it kind of a Doomsday Device to put both opponents down at the same time. Naturally, it gets two. Kid misses a Phoenix Splash and it's time for that stupid deal where you throw partners together and make one DDT the other.

We pause for Garza to take off his pants but thankfully the distraction lets Marufuchi and Fantasma superkick him down. Something like a GTS puts Marufuchi down but a double kick to the head drops Fantasma and Kid to put all four on the mat. Since they haven't gotten enough stuff in yet, Fantasma hits a dive onto Kid, leaving Garza to get in the stripping. He

misses a moonsault to give Marufuchi two but Sliced Bread #2 finally puts Garza away at 9:20.

**Rating:** B-. Here's the thing: this feels like they're trying to channel the Monday Nitro cruiserweight formula and while the match was entertaining, it doesn't quite work as well. There's probably a half dozen promotions on YouTube offering either something similar or better and that keeps this from feeling as special. When you have people like Will Ospreay, Ricochet or others like them out there, this doesn't quite measure up. It also didn't help that it felt like they were just cramming stuff in for the sake of cramming stuff in, which made the match feel a bit longer than it should.

That being said, there's FAR worse stuff they could be using this time for and the match was fun. It's just not as awesome as I think GFW thinks it is. If nothing else, it would be nice to have them put some of these teams towards a title instead of just having them out there doing random flips and superkicks.

#### Kongo Kong vs. Grado/Joseph Park

Grado starts, looks at Kong, and hands it off to Park. Joseph hurts himself on a headbutt attempt but Kong misses a Cannonball. Some splashes in the corner have Kong in some trouble but he runs them over with clotheslines. The Cannonball puts Park away at 2:46. Remember a few years ago when Park was one of the most entertaining characters in wrestling because he got to show off how good he could be with comedy and let you see how much more he could do than Abyss? Well screw that because we need this fat, embarrassment to wrestling named Kongo Kong to get a monster push instead.

Post match Kong loads up a top rope splash to both of them but Laurel Van Ness comes down and slaps him. Kong loads her up for something but Tyrus of all people comes down for the save. Laurel and Kong bail.

Low Ki, Trevor Lee and Lashley are ready for a six man tag tonight. Low Ki speaks Spanish and rants about Alberto turning down an offer from Konnan.

Video on Trevor Lee stealing Sonjay Dutt's X-Division Title and declaring himself the real champion. Lee says he never got his rematch and he has the belt so he's the title's rightful owner. They meet in a ladder match next week.

Jeff Jarrett talks about Lashley being a pro wrestler and an MMA fighter. The head of Lashley's MMA gym wants him to pick MMA but he and Jarrett have agreed to work together.

Dutch Mantel sat down with Matt Sydal and Lashley to talk about their upcoming match. Lashley says he might be the #1 athlete in the world because he dominates two sports. Sydal says he's the #3 X-Division athlete in the world, which Lashley laughs off because Sydal is just an X-Division guy. A fight nearly breaks out and security makes the save.

#### Tag Team Titles: LAX vs. Veterans of War

LAX is defending and this is a street fight. Before the match, Konnan brags about how awesome LAX is. The brawl is on in a hurry on the floor with some trashcan lid shots putting LAX in early trouble. Santana gets belly to belly suplexed onto the ramp and it's already table time. The Veterans botch the MOAB through the table on Ortiz but Homicide pulls the referee out at two.

Back from a break with Mayweather handcuffed to the ropes and LAX stomping away. Wilcox cleans house with a Samoan drop but Ortiz sends him into a chair in the corner for two. Something like Poetry in Motion puts Wilcox through a table in the corner to retain the titles at 11:37.

**Rating:** C-. This was two different matches with the break changing everything. As usual, the tag division has one set of challengers at a time and since LAX is apparently the most amazing team EVER, the Veterans are easily dispatched. As usual, the numbers game dominates everyone, except for Alberto of course after he beat the whole team in about nine minutes a few weeks back.

Matt Sydal, Alberto El Patron and Sonjay Dutt are ready for the six man.

#### Super X Cup Semifinals: Taiji Ishimori vs. ACH

ACH headlocks him down to start but Ishimori spins away and grabs a headscissors to put ACH on the floor. Back from a break with Ishimori hitting a double stomp out of the corner for two. ACH gets in a hard clothesline but his back gives out on a suplex. Ishimori's superkick is no sold so ACH hits a clothesline for two. Ishimori hits a gutbuster and a 450 for the pin at 10:28.

**Rating:** C. Yeah whatever. This is a great example of all the problems in this company in a nutshell: it's a tournament for a prize that hasn't been around in over ten years between people who have barely ever wrestled here. All we've seen are a few entertaining matches between the participants and the same promo from all of them.

That's not enough to make this feel important and the tournament just keeps going with no reason for fans to care. That's the promotion in one statement: these people are having watchable matches but there's no reason to care about any of them. That's really not good and it's plagued this company for years.

Dezmond Xavier comes out to stare Ishimori down.

Recap of Low Ki joining LAX.

We run down the Destination X card.

Trevor Lee/Bobby Lashley/Low Ki vs. Sonjay Dutt/Alberto El Patron/Matt Sydal

Alberto goes after Low Ki to start and it's quickly off to Dutt and Sydal for stereo standing moonsaults. Sydal stays in and kicks away at Lashley but gets taken down with a crossbody. Back from an early break with Sydal getting choked by Lashley and then chopped by Low Ki. Pope: "There's something about Low Ki that makes you think HITMAN!"

Lee comes in to beat on Sydal too and Lashley adds a running shoulder in the corner. Matt gets out of an abdominal stretch but gets put in a dragon sleeper. Low Ki misses a charge into the corner though and it's off to Dutt for a hurricanrana. A roll into a dropkick drops Lee but Lashley comes in for a Dominator to Dutt.



Sonjay finally gets in a tornado DDT to escape and the hot tag brings in Alberto, because he's always the one who gets to do the big house cleaning segment. Alberto powerslams Low Ki and hits a suicide dive onto Lashley. Everything breaks down and Alberto hits everyone in the knees but Dutt springboards into a powerslam from Lashley. The Warrior's Way ends Dutt at 17:48.

**Rating:** C-. Totally standard (and WAY too long) six man tag with Low Ki getting a push towards next week's World Title match. Everything else was just filling time because, as usual, this company seems to have no idea how to use its time well. This felt like they were trying to stretch a match because that's what a main event should be, even though it did very little to make me want to see the three matches next week.

**Overall Rating:** D. Sweet merciful goodness I'm glad this is over. GFW has gone from a watchable enough promotion to one of the most dull, lifeless places I've seen in years. There's no reason to care about anything on this show and they cram in so much stuff that it feels like it's about 19 hours long every week.

You know what would help this promotion a lot? Some promos. When is the last time you had someone in this company come out, talk for three to five minutes about what they're doing and why the fans should care without being interrupted by either one of the three bosses (yes three bosses) or the person they're feuding with to start a brawl? You'll get one every now and then but more often than not it's all rushed along because we need to get in some international tag match or an extra ten minutes on the main event or another tournament match in a tournament with no meaning or significance whatsoever.

There's no connection to any of these people and it's killing the shows. Why should I care if Grado can't stay in the country? Or why should I want Alberto to overcome LAX? Or why should it matter which newcomer wins the Super X Cup? I have no idea, because none of these people are presented as anything more than people who come in, have a match, and then get off screen as fast as they can so we can move on to something else.

The commentary isn't helping either. The three of them are really just there to do their individual thing. Pope is the guy who gets excited about moves, Josh is the self obsessed heel and Jeremy is the guy who plugs everything. Not once do you see them slow down for a second and add any emotion to anything. All those times when JR and King would have a camera on them talking about how important something was actually mattered. They gave you a connection to the stories and that makes a difference. I know more about Pop's sitcoms than I do about why Alberto and Low Ki are fighting for the World Title next week.

I'm really hoping that this hyper focus on the X-Division changes after Destination X because it's crippling the show. There were three different matches (out of five) involving the X-Division tonight and none of them felt like anything more than run of the mill X-Division stuff. Having the people come out and do the flips and such is fine, but it needs to be part of a package instead of the focal point of the show.

This show was a mess but it's just a part of the bigger problem. The promotion seems to think that throwing as much stuff as possible at the fans is the way to go but don't seem to understand that you need a reason to care about someone. Fans gravitated to Austin, Hogan, Cena, Bryan and any other top face you can think of because they either felt a connection to them or were sucked in by their personalities and charisma. GFW offers neither of those and it makes for really hard to sit through television a lot of the time, which is what happened tonight. Bad show, and it's for one big reason.

### Results

Hijo de Fantasma/Naomichi Marufuchi b. Laredo Kid/Garza Jr. – Sliced Bread #2 to Garza

Kongo Kong b. Grado/Joseph Park – Cannonball to Park

LAX b. Veterans of War – Flip dive through a table

Taiji Ishimori b. ACH – 450

Trevor Lee/Bobby Lashley/Low Ki b. Sonjay Dutt/Alberto El Patron/Matt

Sydal – Warrior's Way to Dutt

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# WWF New York City House Show – August 7, 1976: In Which Stan Hansen Gets Squashed

## WWF House Show

Date: August 7, 1976

Location: Madison Square Garden, New York City, New York

Attendance: 22,000

Commentator: Vince McMahon

This was added to the Network recently and I almost always enjoy these older shows. There's something about going this far back into history and seeing how things really were back in a different era. The main event, or at least the featured match as the last match wasn't always the biggest, is Stan Hansen challenging Bruno Sammartino in a rematch of their original rematch at Showdown at Shea. Let's get to it.

A note on the Network says this isn't the complete show. I'll try to let you know if anything is missing as far as I know.

Vince welcomes us to the show and explains the main event.

### Johnny Rivera vs. Jose Cadiz

The ring announcer says there are nine matches on- the card but I can only find eight. Maybe something is missing from the records or maybe they're counting a 2/3 falls match as two matches. He also has some of the worst charisma I've ever heard. It's also weird to see the referee in khakis and such a dark atmosphere.

Rivera grabs some armdrags to start and Cadiz is already frustrated. A headlock slows things down a bit and this is just such a culture shock compared to modern stuff. Cadiz fights off the mat and puts on a fireman's carry with some choking at the same time. That's not cool with a fan who is seemingly well known to both Vince and the rest of the crowd. Rivera flips over the back and dropkicks him to the floor for a breather.

Back in and something like a Wasteland gives Cadiz two but Rivera spins up into a sunset flip for two. Rivera misses a flip splash and gets covered for one as this is trying to speed up a bit. A few snapmares set up a chinlock from Cadiz as Vince is surprised that someone can do this well in their Garden debut. Rivera fights up and gets the better of a full nelson before a not terrible ankle scissors gets two. Cadiz grabs a headscissors on the mat but Rivera just backs away for the escape.

Back up and Rivera snaps off a hurricanrana but misses a dropkick, allowing Cadiz to bite his face (no reaction from Vince on that). With nothing else working, Cadiz ties him into the ropes for a running knee to the ribs. How dastardly of him. Rivera slips out and gets in a dropkick before grabbing a chinlock of his own. That's finally enough as Rivera hits a few dropkicks and a high crossbody for the pin at 10:41.

**Rating:** C. These are going to be on a slightly sliding scale as there's such a difference in eras at this point. The match wasn't horrible but it would have been better served with about three minutes cut out. Rivera

had some nice high flying (for its time) stuff and Cadiz was more of a vicious heel than I was expecting. Not terrible here but Rivera kept slowing down instead of stringing much together.

### SD Jones vs. Johnny Rodz

Rodz is more famous as the trainer of Tommy Dreamer and the Dudleyz among others. They trade control on the mat to start with Rodz likely choking to take over. We hit the armbar for a bit and Rodz pulls whatever he can to stay in control. Jones finally shoves him off and Rodz backs off in the corner like a good heel should. Some stomps and a middle rope kick to the back of the head gives Rodz a one count but he hurts his hand punching Jones in the jaw.

Rodz wants time out so Jones delays a bit before sending Rodz into the corner. That's kind of nice of him in a rather mean way. Rodz gets in a cheap shot and some middle rope elbows to the neck but Jones shrugs it off and knocks him into the corner without much effort. They very slowly slug it out (it's only been eight minutes) until Rodz tries a bridging German suplex but Jones lifts his shoulder to pin Johnny.

**Rating:** D. This really didn't work as they didn't have much to offer other than punching each other. Jones looked like someone who was there for charisma (a common trait back in the day) because all he seemed to do was throw punches and then counter a suplex for the pin. Rodz was billed as Unpredictable but he wasn't much outside of the norm. Pretty dull match and the fans didn't seem to care until the ending.

### Tag Team Titles: Executioners vs. Jose Gonzalez/Dominic DeNucci

Two out of three falls and DeNucci (Mick Foley's trainer) and Gonzalez (the guy who murdered Bruiser Brody) are challenging. The Executioners are your standard monsters in masks but they're played by Killer Kowalski and Big John Studd. Gonzalez and we'll say #2 (normally Studd and that's clearly him) start things off with #2 grabbing a headlock and grinding the much smaller Gonzalez down.

It's off to #1 vs. Dominic with the rather popular DeNucci getting cheered as he chops and slugs away. Double teaming keeps Dominic down and

we have a double stomach claw to show that it really is 1976. The champs slowly take turns hammering on Dominic in the corner and it's off to another stomach claw. Dominic finally gets over for the hot tag off to Gonzalez as everything breaks down.

The Executioners are whipped into each other for a BIG reaction and Gonzalez slams #1 for two. A sunset flip gets the same and it's back to Dominic for some double arm shots to the back. #1 gets tied in the rope and Dominic goes for the mask but can only get it over the chin. A catapult sends #1 into the corner and #2 gets slammed for two as everything breaks down again. The referee gets Gonzalez out of the ring and that means a double backbreaker puts DeNucci away for the first fall at 10:12.

After a brief breather, DeNucci bails into his corner and almost seems scared of the Executioners, which makes them quite the imposing force. #1 sends DeNucci's back into the corner over and over before stomping away as the champs have a target. Now it's a back claw, which makes it look more like a massage than anything painful. Gonzalez finally comes in to try for a save, only to not be there when Dominic gets over for a tag. Man you had ONE JOB.

A top rope stomp to the back doesn't even get a cover and DeNucci gets over for the tag, which is allowed despite clearly not being seen. Gonzalez cleans house and dropkicks one over the top as the referee has no idea who is legal (fair enough in this case as save for a bit of hair sticking out, the Executioners are nearly identical). With regular strategy not working, Gonzalez just unloads on #1 and keeps ramming him face first into the mat. Simple stuff often does it better. DeNucci comes in to hammer away with some more of those double shots, followed by an airplane spin of all things to tie it up at 19:12 total.

There's a quick break (which might have been missing tape) and we come back with DeNucci punching a dizzy #1 into the corner as the crowd is losing it over this stuff. A backdrop is enough to allow a tag off to #2 and the match just kind of stops for a bit as #1 can't get back up.

We settle down to Gonzalez being backdropped but #1 can't even get up to

the top out of exhaustion. It's back to Dominic to slug away on #2 and load up the airplane spin, only to have #1 make the save. Gonzalez and starts cleaning house again but a slam on #2 is broken up by a kick from #1, causing #2 to fall on top to retain at 25:37 total.

**Rating:** C+. I liked this more than I was expecting as Gonzalez was a good fast paced guy while DeNucci, with that odd double strike style, made for a good veteran presence. The Executioners were a good team and would have been better off with Lou Albano talking for him, though he wasn't here for some reason. Good match here and the time didn't actually bother me all that much, which is rather surprising.

#### Bruiser Brody vs. Kevin Sullivan

Sullivan is billed as popular (right) and Brody is #1 contender in his MSG debut. Brody wastes no time in hammering away on Sullivan whose shots to the ribs have no effect at all. A whip into the corner allows Brody to pound away even more, followed by some no selling of the right hands. Brody throws him up in a rack for the submission at 2:29. Total squash and Brody did little more than forearm/punch until the end. He looks AWESOME though and that's all that matters.

#### Chief Jay Strongbow/Billy White Wolf vs. Baron Mikel Scicluna/Rocky Tamayo

Strongbow and White Wolf are a big time team and #1 contenders. Tamayo and Strongbow start things off but hang on a second as we have to wait for the microphone to be raised. Jay starts a crisscross before sliding between Tamayo's legs for a fairly fast paced spot for these days. An armdrag sends Tamayo down so it's off to the Baron, who gets caught with a foreign object. The nitwit of a referee doesn't actually take it away from him so Baron gets in a cheap shot with the object to take over.

Tamayo kicks away from the apron and more foreign object shots have White Wolf reeling as well. It's back to Tamayo as the slow beating continues. The Baron allows White Wolf to roll over for the hot tag to Strongbow and that means it's time for the chops. Everything breaks down and the good guys clean house, capped off by a double chop to put Tamayo away at 5:56.

**Rating:** C. This was straight Memphis with the foreign object before the Indians (which they were called over and over again during the match) started picking up the pace. That was the most entertaining part of the show so far and it was a face paced ending. I could have gone for more here, which I didn't expect to say in the slightest.

#### WWF World Title: Bruno Sammartino vs. Stan Hansen

Bruno is defending inside a cage with elimination only to win. Hansen has long blond hair here and it's a very weird look for him. Bruno takes a bit for his entrance and the fans get more and more excited until he finally comes out, getting easily the biggest reaction of the night so far. As you might expect, Stan jumps Bruno as he gets in and the fight is on in a hurry. The place just goes NUTS for Bruno's comeback though and it's easy to see why he stayed on top for so long with this kind of reaction.

A knee to the ribs cuts Bruno off and Hansen stomps away, only to get sent into the cage. The wall rocks backwards, which makes for a cool visual compared to the rigid cage you see today. Bruno kicks away and even blocks the lariat, sending the crowd into an even bigger frenzy. Hansen elbows and forearms his way to freedom but Bruno is right back with knees to the back to set up a reverse chinlock (which Vince calls a Boston crab).

A quick attempt to escape gets Hansen beaten up even more and Bruno just chokes away. Stan hits him in the throat and goes up as a drunk fan is carried out through the entrance. There's a low blow to Stan as this is almost all Bruno so far. Hansen elbows the cage (which Vince calls the lariat) and Bruno keeps kicking away. Stan goes for the door again and earns himself another beating.

Some shots to the back have Bruno in the closest thing to trouble he's had all match but he sends Stan into the post for his efforts. Hansen is busted open and Bruno takes off Stan's elbow pad (which may have been loaded) to go after the cut. Bruno just unloads on him with shots to the head and Hansen is DONE. Sammartino looks at Hansen as he's draped over the ropes and then walks out to retain at 10:33.



**Rating:** B-. Sammartino was getting vicious here but this was basically a squash as Hansen only got in a few brief bursts of offense. Other than that it was Bruno kicking the stuffing out of him for about nine out of the ten and a half minutes. It was rather odd to see Hansen destroyed like this but it gives Bruno the definitive win, which is probably the idea they're going for here.

Hansen poses on top of the cage and then collapses backwards in a funny bit. Even Vince says this was annihilation.

#### Bobo Brazil vs. Doug Gilbert

Brazil is 52 years old here because I don't think he was ever actually young. Gilbert jumps Brazil before the bell and hammers away but a kick to the head and the Coco Butt (headbutt) send Gilbert outside for the countout at 35 seconds. Were they running REALLY short or something? Bobo never even took his vest off.

#### Ivan Putski vs. Skandor Akbar

Before the match, Putski says he wants Hansen. Akbar is far more famous as a manager but he did wrestle too. He looks a bit like Rusev. Putski grinds on a headlock to start and hits him in the face a few times. Grabbing the trunks doesn't get Akbar out of trouble but raking the eyes does.

Vince admires Putski's thighs and calves as Akbar chokes on the ropes. Putski shrugs it off, hammers away, hits the Polish Hammer (running ax handle to the chest) and hits a seated senton for the pin at 2:56. My guess is they had to wrap it up early for the sake of the curfew (in MSG you had to be done in a hurry or the match would be stopped).

I'm not sure what was up with the announcement about the show being in its most complete form as every match was there according to every card I can find.

**Overall Rating:** C. I liked the show well enough but it was only going to be so good. The version on the Network runs about an hour and forty minutes, though the intermissions to put up and take down the cage are of

course gone. There's some good wrestling on here but the 1970s were a VERY different time and it was all about the personalities instead of any of the in-ring work. It's still cool to see all these famous names in their primes though and it's so awesome that the Network is there to let us see all these things. Check out some of these old school shows, if nothing else just to say you saw them.

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## Mini Column: The Sun Sets on Velvet Sky

I was asked to look at the career of Velvet Sky and why she got over as well as she did in TNA. Sure why not.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/sun-sets-velvet-sky/>

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# Summerslam Count-Up – 2006: Why Does This Not Work?

## Summerslam 2006

Date: August 20, 2006

Location: TD Banknorth Garden, Boston, Massachusetts

Attendance: 16,168

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole, Tazz, Joey Styles, John Bradshaw Layfield

This is an interesting show as a lot has changed since last year but WWE is still in the same kind of situation: the shows are coming and going and not a lot is changing. The shows aren't bad, but there's nothing that feels like required viewing. This year we have DX vs. the McMahons, Edge defending the Raw Title against Cena, Batista challenging King Booker for the Smackdown Title, Flair vs. Foley in an I Quit match, Hogan vs. Randy Orton and the first ECW Title match in WWE PPV history. The card is stacked but nothing on here feels must see. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about DX taking over the company with their sophomoric jokes. The other matches get some lip service as well.

### Rey Mysterio vs. Chavo Guerrero

Guerrero claimed that Rey was leeching off the Guerrero name, which he totally was but Guerrero is still playing the heel here. We get videos on Eddie's relationships with both Rey and Chavo, conveniently ignoring Rey vs. Eddie from last year. Apparently Chavo is coming out of retirement for one night only. The brawl is on fast and JBL is WAY into it already. Chavo hits a quick uppercut and catches a standing Lionsault into a powerslam position, only to have Rey armdrag him out to the floor.

Mysterio misses a plancha to the floor and Chavo hits a big dive of his own to take over. Chavo shouts that it's his blood instead of Rey's as JBL calls this the biggest comeback since the resurrection. Rey charges into the corner but Chavo drops him face first onto the buckle to put him down again. Chavo does the Eddie dance, drawing the crowd into the Eddie

chant. The masked dude is knocked to the floor and then face first into the buckle to keep him on defense.

Chavo puts him on the top rope and tries to powerbomb Rey to the floor but Rey fights out to avoid death. They facejam each other down to the mat and both guys are in trouble. Back up and Rey gets two off a springboard cross body. A hard kick to the head gets the same for Rey before he hurricanranas Chavo into the 619. The seated senton misses and Mysterio hurricanranas both guys out to the floor.

Chavo takes control and sends Rey back in but here's Vickie to yell at him. Rey dives off the apron with something the camera misses to take out Chavo and we head back inside. Chavo hits two of the Three Amigos as Vickie is screeching at them to stop fighting. Rey hits the Three Amigos and goes up top but Vickie keeps shouting at him to stop before accidentally crotching him down. Chavo hits a brainbuster and the frog splash for the pin.

**Rating:** C+. The match was entertaining enough but the bleeding dry of Eddie's corpse is well beyond old here. Seriously, they were fighting over who was really defending Eddie's honor. It was fun stuff but the Vickie screeching is getting already getting annoying. She's been around seven years. How is that possible?

Booker is holding the title with a maniacal look in his eyes. He rants in a British accent for a bit and says he and Sharmell are the most powerful couple in wrestling. This brings in Edge and Lita who just happened to be standing off camera when Booker said that. They debate how important they are and make a wager: if Booker loses he has to be Edge's servant but if Edge loses he has to kiss Booker's feet.

This is a good example of what I mean when I talk about the show looking too structured. Why were Edge and Lita right there to respond to those comments? It comes off as so fake and set up in advance that it kills whatever air of realism the show has. Have Booker say they're the powerful couple, then have Edge and Lita come in later in the show. Same amount of time spent, same result, doesn't look forced. Why is this so complicated?

## ECW Title: Big Show vs. Sabu

Big Show is defending after Sabu beat Van Dam in a ladder match this past week. It's extreme rules, which is a rarity for these title matches anymore. Sabu starts fast by swinging a chair and gets a quick one count off the Arabian Facebuster. The chair is set up in the middle of the ring but Big Show drops Sabu face first onto the steel. Big Show crushes the chair with his boot and chops Sabu down with ease.

We hit an early bearhug but Sabu pokes the eyes to escape. A springboard is caught in a fallaway slam from Big Show to send Sabu to the outside. The small one grabs a chair to blast Show in the face before dropkicking it into Show's face. Sabu is too banged up to immediately cover so it's only a one count. With nothing else working, Sabu loads up a table in the corner and hits a tornado DDT for no cover.

Sabu finally knocks him through the table off a springboard from the chair but Show pops up and electric chairs Sabu down. A Vader Bomb crushes Sabu and Show brings in two sets of steps. He bridges a table across them but his chokeslam is countered into a DDT through the table. Sabu sets up another table but charges into a chokeslam through it for the pin.

**Rating:** D. I don't care. Seriously that's the first thing that came to my head. This was less than nine minutes and the ending was never in double at all. At least a third of the match was spent setting up the next spot, especially near the end. The early days of WWECW with the old ECW guys were just torture to get through as it was clearly trying to recreate magic and it wasn't anything of note. Dull match here and it would be several months before ECW picked up.

Layla won the Diva Search earlier this week.

The Divas welcome Layla to the company. These stupid girl power segments got old fast. Everyone gets on her and then say they're all kidding. Layla is dragged into the shower and spanked for her initiation. Everyone is clothed so this goes nowhere.

We recap Hogan vs. Orton. Hogan is a legend, Orton is the legend killer,

I think you can do the math. There was a stupid bit with Orton hitting on Brooke thrown in which went nowhere.

### Randy Orton vs. Hulk Hogan

Hogan has a bad leg coming in, meaning he's perfectly normal. Hulk easily shoves Orton down out of lockup to start before running him down with a shoulder block. The bandana goes into Orton's face before Randy grabs a headlock. Hogan fights out with a top wristlock as we're still going very slowly so far, much to Hogan's liking. Randy finally gets in some shots to the face to put Hogan down, thereby making him the biggest heel in the world.

Hogan fights Orton off in the corner and sends him into the buckle. Almost all Hogan so far which continues as Hogan pounds down right hands in the corner. He bites Randy's forehead and pokes him in the eye to keep us firmly in the mid-80s. Hogan rakes his back and pounds away on the mat before threatening the referee with a right hand. Orton holds the ropes on an Irish whip and pulls Hogan to the mat to work on the knee.

Back in and Orton cannonballs down on the leg before doing a short form of the circle stomp. A chop block puts Hulk down again but he ducks/collapses to avoid a high cross body. Hogan pounds away but misses the big boot, allowing Orton to dropkick him down. The RK0 connects for three but Hogan's foot was on the ropes. Orton argues with the referee, Hulk Hulks Up and the legdrop ends it.

**Rating:** D. Well let's see: the booking was out of the 80s, Hogan broke a sweat for maybe a minute, and Orton was pinned clean by a 50+ year old man in about eleven minutes. This is the opposite of last year with Shawn as Michaels didn't have much to gain from a win. Orton on the other hand could have ridden this win for months, but instead we get Hogan's last WWE match (which you couldn't have known at the time) as a tribute to him, complete with the 1985 formula all over again. Not a fan of this but you had to know it was coming.

We look at a big party yesterday which is exactly what you would think it was. This was also the announcement for WWE 24/7, which was nowhere near as cool as it sounded.

Melina isn't sure if Foley can beat Flair but he freaks out on her, saying he'll do it. This was an awkward on screen relationship.

### Ric Flair vs. Mick Foley

In something else that was kind of awkward, these two traded shots at each other in their books with Foley saying Flair wrestled the same match for years and Flair calling Foley a glorified stunt man. Tonight is an I Quit match and it's all about respect. Foley jumps Flair in the corner and pounds away before hitting the running knee to the head. A running trashcan shot to the head has Flair in early trouble and it's already Socko time. Flair won't give up so Foley says he'll suffer.

Foley wraps barbed wire around the sock but Flair grabs Mick's crotch to block it. We're not even two minutes into this and we've already had a crotch grab. A low blow puts Mick down and Flair wraps the barbed wire sock around his hand for some chops. Ric sends Foley knees first into the steps but Foley rams him into the announce table to get a breather. Foley pulls out a barbed wire board and blasts Flair in the back with it to make Naitch scream.

We head inside again and the fans want fire. Flair is busted open (duh) so Foley rubs the barbed wire over the cut for good measure. A barbed wire board to the head and the shoulder have Flair in even more trouble but he tells Foley to kiss something instead of quitting. Foley spreads out the thumbtacks and slams Ric down onto them in a scary looking but perfectly safe spot. Think about it: the tacks are what, half an inch long? All they're going to go into is fat so while it'll hurt, there's no real danger to the spot. It's like being stung by a bunch of bees.

Anyway Flair still won't quit so Foley brings in the barbed wire ball bat to cut at Flair's head even more. Flair hits his second low blow to escape before sending him shoulder first into the post. The ball bat to the shoulder has Foley in big trouble as Ric goes into old school brawler mode. Foley won't quit so Flair threatens to kill him by cutting out his heart.

A third low blow has Foley on the apron, allowing for Ric to knock him off the apron and onto the concrete. Foley is apparently out cold so

medics and Melina come out to check on him. The trainer says it's over and the bell rings. That's not good enough for Flair though and he sends Foley back in to rub the ball bat over Foley's face again. He runs the barbed wire over Mick's unconscious eyes and Melina throws in the towel to end it. Wait that's STILL not good enough for Flair because Foley has to say it. Ric threatens Melina with the ball bat and Foley quits to save her.

**Rating:** B. This was one heck of a bloodbath until Melina had to get involved. I get that they didn't want either guy to quit but dang man, did we really need Melina out there? Like I said it never was a good fit on screen and would end with Melina screwing over Foley for no apparent reason. Good match, but Flair flat out doesn't need to be doing this at his age.

Vince, Shane and Armando Alejandro Estrada (Umaga's manager) make fun of Foley until Vince asks if they have Umaga's support tonight. Armando says si.

#### Smackdown World Title: Batista vs. King Booker

Booker is defending and Batista never lost the title, only being stripped due to injury. This is his first major match since December/January. Booker's wife Sharmell reaches Vickie levels of annoying by saying ALL HAIL KING BOOKER about 18 times on the way to the ring. Feeling out process to start with Booker taking him into the corner and slapping him across the face. Batista easily shoves him across the ring to prove a point as things are starting slowly.

The champion grabs a headlock but completely misses a spin kick, allowing Batista to counter into a powerslam for two. Booker tries to bail with Sharmell but Batista doesn't even let him get close. Back in and Booker blocks a Batista Bomb by snapping Batista's neck across the ropes to take over. We hit a chinlock less than four minutes in and the fans aren't pleased. Back up and Batista hits a sloppy belly to belly suplex for two but Sharmell sends in the scepter for a cheap shot, giving Booker more control.

Booker goes after the arm, which is the injury that kept Batista on the



shelf for so long. That makes too much sense though so it's off to a regular chinlock. Batista finally gets up and crotches Booker on the top before hitting some weak clotheslines. They head to the floor with Booker sending him into the barricade to take over. A missile dropkick gets two on Big Dave but the ax kick misses. Batista Jackhammers him down for two and busts out a full nelson slam of all things. He loads up the Batista Bomb and Sharmell comes in for the lame DQ.

**Rating:** D. Well at least it wasn't that long. These two had horrible chemistry together so of course they had two more PPV matches until Batista finally took the title at Survivor Series. The ending sucked, the match sucked, Batista looked as slow as Hogan out there, and the fans were bored by the match. Sounds like it needs a sequel to me.

Post match Batista "destroys" Booker, which translates to him not being able to get him up for a Batista Bomb until Booker clearly pulls himself up. Again, this feud went on for three more months.

Jeff Hardy is coming back tomorrow. Why bother announcing it when you can have a big surprise like that?

DX talks to someone we can't see. They tell him how much Vince praised Umaga, calling him the REAL monster in WWE. They leave and whoever was in there bangs on the door.

We recap DX vs. the McMahons. This feud started with Shawn vs. Vince but HBK recruited HHH to help him out. DX destroyed a bunch of Vince's stuff and made fun of him, basically getting on the nerves of everyone over 17 years old. Vince and Shane brought in everyone imaginable to help them but DX dispatched them easily because they're both Hall of Famers and they were fighting jobbers to the stars. Umaga was the only one who could beat them one on one, making those matches the only interesting parts of the entire feud.

#### D-Generation X vs. Vince McMahon/Shane McMahon

Vince and Shane head back to the entrance and send out the Spirit Squad as the first line of defense. Superkicks, backdrops and Pedigrees abound, getting rid of the Raw Tag Champions (the cheerleaders) in less than

fifteen seconds. DX beat the Spirit Squad about five times in this whole thing but never won the tag titles. I never quite got why.

Next up are Kennedy, Finlay and Regal who do a bit better thanks to Finlay's club but only last about 40 seconds. Now it's Big Show to really challenge DX. Why all nine guys didn't come out at once is never really addressed. The three midcarders take down HHH on the floor, leaving Shawn alone with Show. A cobra clutch backbreaker and the Log Roll knock Shawn silly as HHH is destroyed. Now the McMahons come to the ring and there's the opening bell.

Vince slams Shawn down to start and it's off to Shane for some dancing. He peppers Shawn with left jabs and hits a big right cross to put him down. HHH is still down from a chokeslam through the announce table. Vince comes back in for something like a clothesline to the ribs and fires off elbows in the corner. A double back elbow puts Shawn down and HHH is finally remembering what planet he's on. Shane of course slides to the floor to knock him down again, which is pretty smart.

Shane hits a backbreaker on Michaels and it's back to Papa McMahon. There's a double elbow but HHH is on his feet. Shane, again, wisely baseball slides him onto the other announce table. The McMahons bust out the Demolition Decapitation and the Hart Attack of all things, complete with signature Bret pose. They even hit a bad looking Doomsday Device but Shawn pops up at two and fires off right hands. Vince sneaks in with a shot to the back and down goes HBK again. Shawn scores with a double clothesline and everyone is down.

HHH is back up on the apron and actually takes the hot tag. Adrenaline kicks in and house is cleaned with a high knee and a neckbreaker to Shane. Clotheslines take both McMahons down and there's a spinebuster for the young one. Shawn drops the elbow on Vince and hits a Cactus Clothesline to take Shane out.

Here's Umaga to superkick Shawn and hit a quick Samoan Spike to HHH. This brings out Kane as the guy DX was talking to so he can fight Umaga to the back. Shane can only get two on the Game so Vince punches the referee. Shane loads up a Coast to Coast but Shawn superkicks him out of the air.

A trashcan shot to Vince sets up Sweet Chin Music and the Pedigree for the pin.

**Rating:** B-. That's about as high as they can get and there's nothing wrong with that. The booking was as smart as you could get since there might not be two guys in the company that could be a legitimate threat to DX in a straight match so making it eleven on two to start was all they could do. The rest of the match is your usual tag team formula match and that's all they could do here. The fans popped for the ending too so I can't complain much.

Wrestlemania 23 is in Detroit.

We recap Edge vs. Cena. Edge won MITB last year at Wrestlemania and cashed in on Cena at New Year's Revolution nine months later. After some title trading with Van Dam and Cena, Edge wound up with the belt on Raw, setting up the one on one showdown here tonight.

Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Edge

Cena is the hometown boy tonight. If Edge gets disqualified he loses the title. Cena charges him into the corner and the booing begins. John pounds away and gets one off a back elbow and a belly to belly suplex. Edge avoids a charge to send Cena shoulder first into the post and out to the floor. It's kind of early for that spot. Back in and Edge beats on Cena with basic strikes before knocking him off the apron and into the barricade.

Cena makes it back in at nine but Edge immediately drops an elbow on his back for two more. John makes a comeback with right hands as the fans are booing even louder now. A quick fisherman's suplex gets two on Edge but he sends Cena over the top and out to the floor for the third time. Back in again and Cena misses a cross body to put him down again. Why it puts Edge down as well isn't clear.

We hit the chinlock for a good while until Cena breaks the hold with pure power. Cena hits a knee to the chest but walks into a big boot for two. Edge goes up top and fights off Cena so he can hit a top rope clothesline for two. Off to a camel clutch but Cena again powers out of it. Both guys

are down so Lita sends in a chair. Edge picks it up before throwing it down out of fear in a cute bit. Cena initiates his finishing sequence but the FU is countered into the Impaler for two.

Edge goes up again but has to escape the FU off the ropes into an electric chair but Cena gets two off a victory roll. A middle rope cross body is rolled through into the FU but a Lita distraction makes Cena drop Edge. The champion is sent into his chick and Cena gets a close two off a rollup. A double clothesline puts both guys down until Edge rolls over for two.

The Canadian is up first but the spear is countered into the STFU. Lita tries to come in with the belt but Edge waves her off and gets the rope. The referee has to drag Cena off, allowing Lita to load up brass knuckles on Edge's hand. Cena grabs the FU anyway but Lita comes in, only to be thrown on top of Edge in a double FU. How that isn't a DQ isn't clear but Cena flips her to the mat, allowing Edge to knock him out with the knuckles to retain the title.

**Rating:** B-. This took some time to get going but the ending was great. Edge winning is an interesting concept and they would go with the same idea next month when Cena beat Edge in Edge's signature match in his hometown. The match wasn't all that good though as it felt like they were just killing time until the end, which makes for a dull match.

**Overall Rating:** C. Right in the middle is about perfect here as there are almost equal amounts of good and bad. The interesting things about this show are the match lengths. Usually there are some very short matches and one or two longer ones. Here there's only one match under nine minutes and the longest is the main event which isn't even sixteen. That makes for a show where there's nothing huge to save the bad stuff and everything is almost equal in length, meaning you can weigh almost everything the same. The show is definitely watchable but skip Booker vs. Batista.

### Ratings Comparison

Rey Mysterio vs. Chavo Guerrero

Original: C+

Redo: C+

Big Show vs. Sabu

Original: C

Redo: D

Hulk Hogan vs. Randy Orton

Original: B

Redo: D

Mick Foley vs. Ric Flair

Original: B-

Redo: B

Batista vs. King Booker

Original: D

Redo: D

Vince McMahon/Shane McMahon vs. D-Generation X

Original: C-

Redo: B-

Edge vs. John Cena

Original: C+

Redo: B-

Overall Rating

Original: C+

Redo: C

Other than Hogan, not a lot changes here. This show pretty much is what it is.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/08/09/history-of-summerslam-count-up-2006-hogan-and-dx-are-in-charge-are-we-in-1998/>

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## **New Column: Lost and (Hopefully) Found**

Looking at the women's divisions and why they mostly suck at the moment.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-lost-hopefully-found/>

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# Ring of Honor TV Results – August 9, 2017: Out of Way Too Many, One

## Ring of Honor

Date: August 9, 2017

Location: Lowell Memorial Auditorium, Lowell, Massachusetts

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Rico De La Vega

It's a big night for Ring of Honor as we have the World Title being defended as Cody faces former champion Christopher Daniels in a 2/3 falls match. This is a rematch from Daniels losing the title to Cody back at Best in the World where we got a rare double turn to make Cody one of the top faces in the company. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

We open with a look at Cody winning the title and deciding that he deserves it. He's still not signed to a Ring of Honor contract and is supposed to be an outsider despite not having a contract not really changing anything.

Daniels, in the same promo we've seen three times now, says one loss doesn't define him.

Cody thinks Daniels' rise to the top is amazing and Daniels is a classy professional wrestler but he doesn't understand that Cody isn't giving up this soon. He even takes credit for the higher buyrate when he's in the title match, which isn't quite the line you expect to hear but it fits for him. Cody is tired of all the mediocrity because he's ready to be magnificent. Yes but is he DASHING?

Here are Daniels and Kazarian to the ring, albeit from a few weeks ago.

This footage was barred from airing on ROH TV but it's making its debut here. Kazarian rips into the fans for booing Daniels, including a row of fat guys in Bullet Club shirts flipping him off. Those fans are the same "stupid marks" that congratulated Daniels when he won the title. It's the same out with the old, in with the new mentality that makes Kazarian sick.

Daniels, sitting on the top turnbuckle, talks about hearing dueling "DANIELS SUCKS/CODY chants", which he finds interesting because no one cared about Cody when he was Stardust. He brings up Cody being a free agent but no one talked about him signing a two year contract. Daniels calls the fans a bunch of something censored, and then promises to win the title and get released. That way he can defend it around the world, except for here in Ring of Honor. From now on, it's all about Daniels and Kazarian. Good heel promos, though I have no idea why we had to wait three weeks to see them.

Silas Young and Beer City Bruiser are here for their weekly Jay Lethal update. It's now been 43 days since he's been injured and Lethal isn't coming back anytime soon. Silas remembers Lethal begging him not to do it but the Bruiser came up with the idea of splashing Jay through a table. There go the lights though and here comes Lethal. House is quickly cleaned with a chair and Young takes Lethal Injection. Lethal grabs the sign and writes a ZERO on it for the big visual.

#### ROH World Title: Christopher Daniels vs. Cody

Cody is defending and this is 2/3 falls. Daniels hits the floor immediately so Cody does some push ups. No contact in the first minute. They finally lock up with Cody grabbing a quick rollup for an early two. A headlock doesn't do much as they're firmly in first gear. Cody shrugs off a slam and hits a gordbuster, followed by some trash talk. Daniels bails to the floor for an argument with a fan and we take a break.

Back with Daniels jumping over Cody in the corner and taking him outside for a hard whip into the barricade. Cue the trainer to pop Cody's shoulder back into joint, allowing him to hit a dropkick. Daniels breaks up a springboard though and Cody bangs his ribs on the apron. Back from a



second break with Daniels still on the arm but stopping to yell at a fan. Not bright dude. Daniels heads up top so Cody runs the corner for a super armdrag and a powerslam gets two.

A quick Figure Four eventually sends Daniels over to the ropes so Cody tries a Rainmaker of all things. Daniels kicks him into the referee though and they trade low blows. Kazarian runs out but Marty Scurll chases him off. Cody grabs a rollup for the first fall at 17:48 but Daniels chairs him down before the second fall beings.

We take a third break and come back again with Cody still on the floor. It's only a nineteen count though and Daniels is getting frustrated. The trash talk goes on a bit too long though and Cody grabs a Flatliner for a breather. Cody wins a slugout and hits the Bionic Elbow but Cross Rhodes is countered. Daniels hits Cross Rhodes of his own for two but Angel's Wings are countered. The second attempt works just fine...for two. The BME misses as well and Cody flips over him in the corner, setting up Cross Rhodes to retain at 25:43.

**Rating:** B. Not a great match but it puts Cody over very strong with a straight falls win to vanquish Daniels once and for all. This didn't need to be some kind of a classic as long as Cody won and having it be clean in both falls helps so much more. Now Cody needs a new monster villain to come after the title and hopefully that's not too hard to find.

**Overall Rating:** B+. Take a good main event and throw in a solid Jay Lethal segment and the whole show is quite the sit. It's time to build towards Death Before Dishonor and I have no idea what to expect for Cody going forward. You can figure out a lot of the card but I really don't know what to expect in the World Title scene, which is a good thing in a way. Really good show this week, though that's likely more to do with them only focusing on one story in an hour.

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# NXT – August 9, 2017: And That's A Good Thing

## NXT

Date: August 9, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson, Mauro Ranallo

With just two shows to go before the biggest show of the year, it's time to really push home the main event and that's what we'll be doing this week. Tonight NXT Champion Bobby Roode will be in the ring with Drew McIntyre for a showdown, as well as getting ready for everything else we have on tap for Brooklyn. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's Sanity through the crowd with Nikki Cross shouting about wanting the Authors of Pain to get out here. The Authors don't make them wait long but Eric Young makes his return and helps beat them down. Razar is tied to the barricade as Akum is destroyed. Eventually Razar pulls the barricade to the ring but gets beaten down as well. Cross grabs the belts and Sanity leaves with them.

We look back at Ember Moon laying out Asuka with the Eclipse last week.

Video on the Street Profits, who debut tonight.

Billie Kay and Peyton Royce are going to explain how to do perfect makeup but stop to make fun of Ruby Riot instead.

### Metro Brothers vs. Street Profits

The Metro Brothers are a couple of greasers named Chris and JC. The Profits are NXT mainstays Montez Ford and Angelo Dawkins in another repackaging. Ford and Dawkins dance to the ring with Ford holding out a cup, presumably to ask for change. Angelo shoulders Chris down and hits a good looking armdrag before handing it off to Ford for a basement dropkick.

Back up and Ford flips over Chris' back, only to get taken into the wrong corner. The Metro dominance lasts all of five seconds until it's back to Dawkins for a spear. A Sky High into a frog splash gives Ford the pin on JC at 2:19. The Profits looked very crisp and have the charisma to back it up, at least so far.

We look at Hideo Itami trying to attack Aleister Black in the parking lot last week. They'll fight at Takeover.

General Manager William Regal brings out McIntyre and Roode for the face to face meeting. Roode comes out with a security team in his corner though as Roderick Strong is running around like a crazy man and we need to protect the big money match. Well to protect Roode that is because he's the big money. Roode talks about Drew feeling entitled to his shot but he's done everything he's set out to do.

This is Roode's NXT and the fans know that he's the one. Drew thinks Roode might have had the best year ever for an NXT Champion but there's one problem: Roode is kind of a jerk. That's just going to make taking the title from him all the sweeter though. This brings out Strong, to say that he's not done with Roode no matter what Regal says. Strong says this isn't about the NXT Title but rather Roode disrespecting Strong's family.

All Strong wants is one more fight with Roode and it doesn't even have to be for the title. Regal tries to calm him down but Roode says he'll fight

Strong anytime with the title on the line....if Strong can beat Drew first. If Strong wins, he can fight Roode after Takeover, which will be Roode vs. McIntyre for the title no matter what. Drew agrees to the match next week and Regal eventually agrees.

Johnny Gargano was nervous last week but needs a match at Takeover so he can feel the rush of walking through the curtain in front of a Brooklyn crowd.

#### Oney Lorcan vs. Danny Burch

Rematch from when Lorcan beat him a few weeks back. They lock up to start as Mauro compares Burch's boxing career to Conor McGregor's. Neither can get much of an advantage out of a lockup so Burch grabs a quickly broken cravate. Back up and Lorcan's leapfrog is countered into something like a flapjack, followed by some European uppercuts. Lorcan sends him hard into the corner though and we take a break.

Back with Burch still in trouble but blocking a running European uppercut with a raised boot. Burch can't hit the Tower of London so he settles for a release German suplex. A lariat gets two and now the Tower of London off the top rope gets two more. Lorcan comes right back with a running Blockbuster and tells Burch to hit him. A slugout goes to Lorcan but he can't get the half crab. He can get a regular Boston crab though, only to have Burch reverse into a cradle for the pin at 12:52.

**Rating:** C+. This was more of the hard hitting style that these two are capable of having. I wouldn't mind seeing these two team up after two good matches as it's not like either of them have anything else going on. Lorcan and Burch both have potential and if a team is what lets them get somewhere, so be it.

They shake hands post match.

#### No Way Jose vs. Andrade Cien Almas

Jose dances through the crowd to get to the ring. It worked so well for Adam Rose. Almas has Zelina Vega with him. Jose dances his way out of a waistlock and Almas has a breather on the floor. Back in and a flapjack

drops Almas again and he's knocked to the floor for a second time. Vega yells at him this time and Almas responds by pulling Jose down by the afro. Jose gets stomped down in the corner and there are the running knees to the head. The hammerlock DDT ends Jose at 3:46.

**Rating:** D+. This was a win to get Andrade back on track as he basically squashed Jose. Having Vega as the driving force is fine as Almas could be a good choice for a heel but he's only going to do so much with the losing streak gimmick. This was a good sign, but he needs something a bit better than this going forward.

Post match Vega goes to commentary and says, in a very New York accent, that she wants Almas on the grand stage. If Johnny Gargano still wants an opponent, they'll see him in Brooklyn.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This was all about setting up Brooklyn, though I'm not quite sure I get the idea behind having Strong vs. McIntyre next week. It makes Roode look smart but if they're setting up Strong vs. Roode II, I'm not sure how that helps McIntyre. Odds are Drew goes over but otherwise, it's rather curious booking. Other than that though we had some good development for the rest of the card and Gargano vs. Almas being set up is a smart idea. Throw in the Street Profits looking good and this was a rather nice episode that did its job.

## Results

Street Profits b. Metro Brothers – Frog splash to JC

Danny Burch b. Oney Lorcan – Rollup

Andrade Cien Almas b. No Way Jose – Hammerlock DDT

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# Monday Night Raw – March 10, 2003 (2017 Redo): HHH Can Dream All He Wants

## Monday Night Raw

Date: March 10, 2003

Location: Gund Arena, Cleveland, Ohio

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

With less than three weeks to go before Wrestlemania, it's time to really start hammering things home. The big draw tonight is Rock vs. Booker T. and if Rock wins, he can either face HHH for the title or Steve Austin for pride at Wrestlemania. Why this is even happening isn't clear as there's no reason to think Rock would want the World Title but that's Raw in general at times. Let's get to it.

Eric Bischoff and Chief Morely give the midcard a speech about wanting to properly welcome Austin when he gets here. Bischoff: "NOT THAT KIND OF WELCOME!" The roster leaves and here's Rock to interrupt. Rock thinks the match with Booker T. is a waste of time (because it is) because he only cares about facing Austin. Eric understands and can go with that but Rock still has to wrestle tonight. That's cool with Rock, who will face anyone.

Rob Van Dam/Kane vs. Chris Jericho/Christian

Van Dam kicks Jericho in the face to start but eats the running forearm

for his efforts. It's quickly off to Kane to clean house with the top rope clothesline getting two on Jericho. The Canadians have to fight out of a double chokeslam so Kane settles for a backdrop to put Jericho on the floor. Kane follows him out but gets set into the steps to slow him down. Van Dam kicks Christian in the face and adds the Five Star, only to have Jericho come back in with the Lionsault for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. The match didn't have time to go anywhere (a common problem around here) and I'm not sure why Van Dam and Kane needed to lose here. They've been pushed as contenders to the Tag Team Titles and now they're losing clean in less than four minutes? The tag division isn't exactly deep in the first place and this isn't helping things.

Jericho goes to leave but walks into a superkick from Shawn Michaels. Shawn poses over him and says he'll see Jericho at Wrestlemania. I've always liked that bit.

Here's Booker T. for a chat. He's disappointed about not facing Rock tonight but that's not what he wants to talk about. Instead he'd rather talk about HHH calling him an entertainer instead of a contender. It's true that Booker is an entertainer but there's more to it than that. He's the youngest of eight children and he comes from a single parent household. Booker got involved in some bad things over the years, including armed robbery which landed him in jail. If HHH thinks Booker dances, come down here right now and he'll dance all over HHH, just like he'll do at Wrestlemania.

This brings out Ric Flair, to say that Booker is no Michael Jordan or Tiger Woods and he's certainly no HHH. The champ sent Flair out here to say that he's not lowering himself to Booker's level again. Next week though, Booker can carry their bags to the limo and drive them downtown, which is all Booker is qualified to do. Or he can make the mistake of a lifetime and show up for the beating of a lifetime. Booker decks Flair and goes to find HHH...who is in the bathroom. HHH throws money at him and says get him a towel. Booker lays him out too. So much for rolling back the racism angle.

Post break HHH says Booker jumped him. At least he lies like a heel.

## Jeff Hardy vs. Rico

And hang on a second as we need to see Austin arriving and shoving a drink into a backstage worker's face. Back to the match (or to it to the first time really) and Jeff hits the Whisper in the Wind, only to have Jamal grab his foot. The Samoans get taken out and Jeff grabs a rollup for the pin. This was barely a minute and a half long and we missed fifteen seconds on Austin.

HHH yells at Maven and gives him a match later tonight.

Austin eats a hot dog and runs into Goldust, who stutters about Bischoff wanting to apologize for something. Since Goldust takes forever to get to the point, Austin shoves the hot dog in his mouth.

Rock is playing his guitar and singing about how Cleveland sucks when his opponent for the night comes in. It's Hurricane, who asks if Rock is ready to go toe to toe with the superhero. Rock is ready and is even willing to make it any superpowers go. The Scorpion King will bring his heat vision, x-ray vision and cable vision. What about WrestleVision?

Rock wants to know if Hurricane is going to throw a cheeseburger at him but Hurricane says "I got my Hurripowers b\*\*\*\*!" That makes Rock a bit more serious, but he DID NOT get thrown out of the battle royal two weeks ago and he DOES NOT have a tiny ding-a-ling. Rock offers a handshake and then punches Hurricane in the jaw like he should be doing.

## Trish Stratus vs. Jazz

#1 contenders match and apparently this is after a very long break due to technical difficulties. Trish sends her into the corner to start and grabs the Stratusphere, only to have Victoria come in and hit both of them (Trish first) with the belt to give Trish the DQ win. Well it should be a DQ win but we're officially going with no contest because disqualification rules only count when the story calls for them. The match was about twenty seconds long and of course we couldn't just do it next week with the proper amount of time instead of rushing it like this due to the technical issues.



Here's Bischoff to apologize for his actions last week but more importantly, he wants to apologize for firing Austin via FedEx back in WCW. Oh and sorry to JR for smashing his head with a cinder block. Bischoff deserves some credit for Stone Cold Steve Austin though because he got rid of Austin in WCW and caused him to come to WWE. They're a lot alike when you think about it though. Neither of them are ever going to be caught dead in a three piece suit, they both love to hunt and fish, and they both went head to head with Vince.

Cue Austin to get in Eric's face and ask about the desire for a handshake. Instead Austin flips him off and calls Eric boring. The threat of violence brings out the Rock, who gets Austin's attention. Austin points out the 15,000 people chanting ROCKY SUCKS but Rock wants to slap Austin in the face. That's cool with Austin but Rock won't come down there just yet. Instead he brings up their two previous Wrestlemania matches, both of which Austin won of course. Rock says Austin is nothing so Austin literally lays down in the ring to entice Rock to come to the ring right now. Rock: "Nah." JR: "NAH??? NAH???"

Rock wants to wait until Wrestlemania but Austin isn't leaving without beating someone up so Bischoff gets a right hand. Rock tries a sneak attack but Austin stares him away. The match is going to be great, though it really does feel like Austin is coasting through this. There's something missing in him and it feels like he's just acting like Stone Cold instead of being in that same place again.

#### HHH vs. Maven

Non-title. JR calls HHH the best in the game. So the Game is in the game? I mean I know HHH is full of himself but that's a very different way of saying it. HHH is also in the very rare red trunks this week and it still doesn't quite work. HHH jumps him to start and Maven is sent outside, followed by going into the steps.

Back in and HHH drives an elbow into Maven's head as JR casually mentions that Batista and Orton are both going to be out THREE MONTHS each. So much for Evolution until the summer then. HHH grabs a sleeper to make sure the crowd doesn't get interested in the match but lets it go a few

seconds later. Maven gets in a jawbreaker and some right hands....but HHH cuts him off with the spinebuster. The Pedigree ends the dominance.

**Rating:** D-. And that's HHH for you ladies and gentlemen. Rock comes back in between movies and makes Hurricane look like a star. HHH on the other hand insults his #1 contender last week in a racist angle and then squashes Maven, who got in a total of no significant offense. But hey, HHH gets to look like a big deal by beating up a jobber before he goes on to beat Booker and crush his fan base at the biggest show of the year. Such is life in HHH's WWE.

I'm not saying that HHH should have gotten pinned by Maven and I'm not saying Maven should have given HHH a run for his money. I'm saying there's really no reason for this match to have happened. HHH just randomly started yelling at Maven backstage and then beat him up in a nothing match. This doesn't really boost HHH and it's really just a way to fill in time with HHH having one of his usual boring matches. How does that help anyone, other than maybe HHH?

Post match HHH wraps the ropes around Maven's neck to choke him out. Al Snow runs in for the save and eats a Pedigree too. Did you get that HHH is amazing? I didn't know if that was coming through yet or not.

Bischoff rants to Morely about his issues. Morely says Bischoff went even further than Vince did to make amends with Austin, which gives Eric an idea. Vince isn't going to be paying attention to Raw because he has to deal with Hulk Hogan going into Wrestlemania. Therefore, next week it's Austin vs. Bischoff II under Bischoff's Rules. Not only is this not the best idea, but good job on saying that Vince isn't going to be watching Raw for the next few weeks.

Stacy Keibler calls Test, who is at South Padre Island, and hears a girl in the background. She's not happy.

Austin is with Scott Steiner and laughs off the idea of facing Bischoff. Steiner didn't get to say a word and really could have been a cardboard cutout here.

Chief Morely/Lance Story vs. Dudley Boyz

Hang on a second as Morely says this is going to be a handicap match and if D-Von loses, the team is still suspended. So is this like on Smackdown where Brian Kendrick keeps wrestling but doesn't officially have a job? Bubba goes to swing at Morely but D-Von cuts him off, earning Bubba an ejection.

#### Chief Morely/Lance Storm vs. D-Von Dudley

D-Von slugs them both down and grabs a rollup with trunks for two on Morely. The Chief gets sent outside and D-Von hammers on Storm with a flapjack getting two. Morely gets in a cheap shot from the apron though and a leg lariat sets up the Money Shot for the pin on D-Von in short order.

We look at Shawn Michaels getting beaten down last week.

And now, a wet t-shirt contest to promote the Girls Gone Wild show. Naturally Lawler gets to host and he's got a Super Soaker. Lawler promises puddles on the puppies but here's Stacy to interrupt. She's going to handle the soaking actually but Lawler says don't shoot prematurely. He introduces each one and Stacy sprays them down in turn.

The fans are about to pick a winner but Stacy cuts them off. She'll be at the show too and has Lawler spray her shorts to end this waste of time that made me long for the PG Era. I get that the women are good looking and I certainly get what they're going for but this has NOTHING to do with wrestling and the #1 contenders match was cut to 21 seconds. That sums up the issues that the women have had to fight through, which Trish has brought up for years.

#### The Rock vs. Hurricane

No DQ and JR suggests that you send the women and children to bed. We just watched HHH vs. Maven, D-Von in a handicap match and hyping soft core films but we shouldn't watch the Rock? Come on JR. Rock doesn't think much of Hurricane to start so Hurricane knocks him outside to give Rock a breather.

Back in and a Samoan drop puts Hurricane down but stops to put on his

cape. Rock pretends to fly so Hurricane slugs away, only to eat a hard clothesline. We hit the chinlock for a good while until Hurricane fights up and hits a jumping clothesline. This sends JR into a rant about how this is AMERICA and we never give up on anything. That's why we needed to send the women and children to bed?

A Shining Wizard and a high crossbody give Hurricane two, followed by a Blockbuster for the same. Rock gets in a DDT for a breather but stops to pose again, allowing Hurricane to kick him low. The chokeslam gets two more but Hurricane walks into the spinebuster. The People's Elbow is loaded up and heeeeeere's Austin. Hurricane rolls up the distracted Rock for the pin while Austin's music plays to end the show.

**Rating:** D. The match was junk but this is a great example of someone being unselfish in wrestling. Rock doesn't lose a thing by putting Hurricane over here because he knows he's getting Austin at Wrestlemania in one of the show's main events. This was hardly Rock laying down for the chokeslam and losing clean. He had Hurricane beaten, got distracted, and was pinned on a fluke.

The loss doesn't hurt him in any way because he'll cut a promo next week and no one will remember this. Hurricane on the other hand can now say he went toe to toe with Rock on the mic and then pinned him. Compare this to HHH squashing Maven and you'll see why Rock is just that much more awesome (among the other obvious reasons).

**Overall Rating:** D-. The wrestling is horrible and boring for the most part, the women are treated more like sex objects every single night, HHH is a MAN and Austin isn't acting like himself. That leaves us with the Rock, who is trying his hardest to make this work but you can only have him do so much. He's trying so hard to get people over but when you have HHH and the sledgehammer of dominance, even Rock's greatness is limited. Setting up Rock vs. Austin is what matters, but sweet goodness they're trying hard to ruin the Wrestlemania buzz.

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# 205 Live – That's What You Have to Expect

## 205 Live

Date: August 8, 2017

Location: Air Canada Center, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Corey Graves

We're north of the boarder this time around and the big story is TJP vs. Rich Swann, who have been having "friendly" competitions for weeks now. This week though it's a little less friendly as they're facing off in the main event. There's likely some more about the Cruiserweight Title match but I'm sure we'll be getting development on the 205 Live exclusive stories as well. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of TJP vs. Swann with TJP talking about how Swann can't handle losing, including in the Cruiserweight Classic. Swann beat him a few weeks back and TJP has gotten a bit more sinister since then as he tries to get things even.

Opening sequence.

Tony Nese vs. Cedric Alexander

Nese does his long posing entrance on the ring again and the counting abs thing is starting to grow on me. Hang on a second as Nese needs to pose some more. Cedric takes him down with a leg trip and kicks Nese away, setting up a dropkick and his own bicep pose. Alexander sends him outside for a dive but gets caught in a gutbuster back inside.

Tony ties him in the Tree of Woe for the crunch kicks to the ribs, which is becoming one of my favorite spots. We hit a bodyscissors to stay on Cedric's ribs for a bit, only to have Alexander fight up with an enziguri. The springboard clothesline gets two on Nese and a fan starts chanting boring. Nese ducks a clothesline and nips up, only to eat an elbow to the jaw. They fight over a rollup until Tony grabs the trunks for the pin at 7:24.

**Rating:** C+. Nese has grown on me in recent weeks and the gimmick is getting better and better every time he's out there. He's a perfectly acceptable power heel, which isn't something you have many of out here. On top of that you have Alexander, who continues to be one of the most naturally smooth wrestlers around here and I still don't know why he's not in bigger matches.

Post match Nese says you saw the difference between a great athlete and a premiere athlete. This sounds like they're setting up something more going forward.

Brian Kendrick doesn't think much of Jack Gallagher attacking him last week as it only proves that Gallagher is a fake. Besides, all that matters is he won. Gallagher comes in from behind and beats the heck out of Kendrick again.

#### Noam Dar vs. Mark Thomas

Before the match, Dar says he's been watching Thomas for years, which just seems to confuse Thomas. Somehow Thomas is still chasing the dream, which Dar can't relate to because he's a WWE superstar at 24. Thomas punches him down to start and Dar needs a breather on the floor. Back in and Dar unloads on him with shots to the back and a European uppercut. The running enziguri (Nova Roller) ends Thomas at 1:51. Just a squash.

Corey Graves brings out Akira Tozawa for a sitdown interview. Before he can answer any questions though, here's Neville to say this should be his interview. Neville isn't happy with his old friend Corey trying to hype his match without talking to the hype himself. Tozawa isn't competition for the King of the Cruiserweights but he takes off his tie. He asks Neville what he thinks he's doing before dropping Neville with a shot to the head. Neville bails before Tozawa can try the top rope backsplash. That's fine with Tozawa who decks Neville again for good measure. This was perfectly acceptable.

### TJP vs. Rich Swann

Swann is back in his old trunks. TJP takes him to the mat to start but gets headlocked for his efforts. Back up and they trade flips over the other before catching stereo kicks to the ribs. Swann chops him down again and gets in a clothesline to put TJP on the floor, setting up a corkscrew dive from the middle rope.

Back in and we hit the hammerlock on TJP as the fans chant for Graves for some reason. A pair of suplexes give TJP two and he grabs a bow and arrow hold for some extra punishment to the back. It's back to an armbar and that BORING chant starts up again. That goes nowhere so they both miss middle rope dives but Swann is able to catch him with a dropkick to knock TJP off the ropes.

Swann's double underhook is countered into the kneebar but Rich is right next to the ropes. A kick to the head sets up a standing moonsault for two and Rich is getting frustrated. The Phoenix Splash misses though and Swann winds up on TJP's shoulders for an electric chair into the corner. The Detonation Kick ends Swann at 10:29.

**Rating:** B-. Nice match here and that electric chair looked great. TJP winning clean is interesting and likely sets up one more match as Swann won the initial match. These are two of the better talents in the division and I'm liking TJP mostly being a heel again. It naturally suits him and that's what the show needs at this point.

Post match TJP gets in Swann's face to brag about the win before doing Swann's dance. After some replays, TJP catches up to him in the back and

asks what's wrong. Swann isn't cool with that victory celebration and is starting to know who TJP really is.

**Overall Rating:** C+. The show has found its groove but at the same time, it's not exactly the most entertaining thing in the world. The best thing I can say about 205 Live is that it's not the worst show in the world and that's really not a good place to be. It's no secret that this show doesn't need to exist and that's not a good thing. I'd be surprised if the show is around in another few months and that's probably for the better.

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