

Dynamite – May 8, 2024: A Bad Sandwich

Dynamite

Date: May 8, 2024

Location: Rogers Place, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Commentators: Excalibur, Tony Schiavone

We're still in Canada with less than three weeks to go before Double Or Nothing. Much like last week, Kenny Omega is here for a special announcement about...well whatever he's announcing. Other than that, we have the showdown between Trent Beretta and Orange Cassidy so let's get to it.

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

Adam Copeland is worried about the House Of Black so tonight, he's facing Brody King in a No DQ -TNT Title match.

Orange Cassidy vs. Trent Beretta

Cassidy starts fast and knocks him outside to start, with the suicide elbow dropping Beretta again. Beretta manages a posting and hammers away but Cassidy goes into the crowd and puts his hands in his pockets before continuing the beating. The running Orange Punch is backdropped over the barricade and they get back to ringside. Cassidy gets kneed in the face but comes right back with the Orange Punch for the double knockdown. Cue Don Callis to ringside and we take a break.

Back with Callis on commentary as Cassidy fires off forearms. Stundog Millionaire is countered so Cassidy grabs the tornado DDT instead. Beretta manages a half and half suplex and they're both down again. Back up and Beretta drops him with a piledriver, followed by another piledriver and a running knee. The turnbuckle is ripped off but Cassidy rips off one of his own. Beretta is sent face first and the rollup gives Cassidy

the pin at 13:09.

Rating: B-. Good fight between the two of them (ignore the complete lack of a count for such a long stretch of brawling) and the ending should leave the door open for a rematch at Double Or Nothing. I'm not sure if I would have had them do a full match like this one if they're supposed to do it again in a few weeks but at least what we got was pretty nice. That being said, Beretta losing so soon isn't exactly the wisest move.

Post match Beretta jumps him again and hits a piledriver onto the steps. Cassidy gets sent into various things so Beretta grabs a toolbox. Cassidy has a chair but Callis breaks it up before anything else happens. That would be Cassidy on his feet about a minute and a half after a piledriver on the steps.

Earlier today, the Elite was in their car and took Tony Khan's parking spot.

We look back at Kenny Omega returning and being attacked by the Elite.

Jack Perry thinks Omega isn't as tough as he thinks he is because Omega was a coward when the Elite needed him. Now they are going to change the world without him.

Omega joins us from the emergency room and says May 26 is when this all started. He issues the challenge for Anarchy In The Arena with the Elite vs. FTR/...two people we'll find out tonight.

Here is Serena Deeb for a chat. She's happy to be here and excited to face Toni Storm at Double Or Nothing. She has been out of action for a long time but we pause for a LET'S GO OILERS chant. Last year she suffered three seizures and talks about how serious they are but here is Toni Storm to say this sounds like a charity case. Deeb tells her to be serious

because Deeb will be fighting to win the title at Double Or Nothing. Storm doesn't care and the fight is on, with security breaking it up.

Rocky Romero checks on Orange Cassidy, saying that if he beats Jay White tonight, the two of them and a third partner get a Trios Title shot. Maybe it could be Trent Beretta. Cassidy isn't convinced.

Harley Cameron vs. Mariah May

Saraya is here with Cameron, who kicks May own to start and talks a lot. May fights up and hits a quick basement dropkick to send Cameron to the apron. That earns May a neck snap over the top and a kick to the back as we take a break. Back with Saraya yelling at fans and May winning a slugout. A chokebomb gives May two and a heck of a headbutt puts Cameron down. It's too early for May's hip attack as Saraya pulls Cameron to the floor, earning herself a hard shot from May. Back in and May Day finishes Cameron at 9:02.

Rating: C. Well that's a match that happened. I'm not sure why May needed nine minutes to beat Cameron, who hasn't wrestled in over a year, but that's what we got. May continues to be in a weird place as she doesn't really have anything going on, though it seems like she might be up for something with Forbidden Door. Either that or get to the point with her and Toni Storm already.

Post match the beating is on but Mina Shirakawa makes the save and toasts the champagne with May.

Bullet Club Gold cuts off Pac (who was talking about bringing back Death Triangle), with Jay White saying he should go after Kazuchika Okada, who he beat before.

Malakai Black talks about having to destroy Adam Copeland so he can live again.

We get a very positive Young Bucks video.

The Bucks praise the video and say they don't want more Kenny Omega updates.

Here is Swerve Strickland to say he is in a really bad mood. We look at the Patriarchy taking Swerve out last week, with Luchasaurus ripping out part of Swerve's hair. Swerve can't say he wouldn't do the same thing, but he is the Conor McDavid (local hockey hero) of AEW. He wants the Patriarchy out here right now so here they are, with Christian Cage saying he is going to take something from Swerve every single week.

That leads to Double Or Nothing, when the wave Swerve has been riding will come crashing down. Violence is teased but Swerve says he wasn't coming alone. Cue the Mogul Embassy so Swerve makes Drake/Kendrick Lamar references. Then the Embassy turns on him, apparently sick of hearing people talk about those two because nothing else is happening in the world whatsoever. Swerve is put through the announcers' table. That was a good close to a loophole, but hopefully Swerve beats Brian cage next week to get his revenge and then moves on.

The Patriarchy goes to the back and runs into the Young Bucks, who seem to have had something to do with that. More business together is teased.

We look at Willow Nightingale beating Skye Blue in a street fight on Rampage.

Willow Nightingale says no one can beat the smile off her face. As for Mercedes Mone, she better be ready at Double Or Nothing, because Willow is always ready. Mone is in for the fight of her life.

Rocky Romero vs. Jay White

Romero starts fast and knocks him outside, followed by some of the Forever Clotheslines in the corner. White gets in a hard

clothesline of his own though and we take a break. Back with Romero fighting out of a chinlock and taking it to the floor to hammer away. Back in and Romero hits a jumping knee, followed by a backslide for two. White knocks him out of the air though and grabs the Bladerunner for the pin (with one finger) at 8:04.

Rating: C+. Why am I supposed to care about Rocky Romero? He's perfectly fine in the ring but you know what you're going to get from him and he isn't going to win any big matches. Other than his ties to New Japan, what about him warrants having him around so often? It just seems like there are a lot of people who could benefit from getting as much time as he does but instead it's more of hearing about how great he is when he never wins anything.

Post match the beatdown is on until Pac makes the save.

Samoa Joe training video.

Big Bill/Chris Jericho vs. Mo Jabari/Harlon Abbott

Jericho knocks Jabari down to start and hands it off to Bill, who slowly pounds away. The chokeslam plants Abbott and Jericho gets the pin at 2:27.

Post match Jericho praises Bill and talks about facing Katsuyori Shibata and Hook. He's not sure where Hook is, but get well soon!

TNT Title: Brody King vs. Adam Copeland

Copeland is defending and this is No DQ. A headlock has Copeland in some trouble to start but he has to escape an early Ganso Bomb attempt. King is sent to the apron where he gets a boot up to stop a charge. A neckbreaker over the ropes drops Copeland and we take a break.

Back with King missing a running crossbody and crashing into the barricade. Copeland chairs him in the back a few times and

they go up to the apron. A DDT onto the chair onto the apron plants King, who comes up busted open. Copeland hammers away for two more so it's time to grab another chair (just in case there wasn't enough blood already, as King is gushing). It's time to break the bar off of a chair, with the delay allowing King to hit a heck of a clothesline. Copeland is sent face first into a chair in the corner and we take a break.

Back with an exchange of shots tot he face leaving both of them down again. King sends him into the corner for the Cannonball but Copeland is back with the Edge-O-Matic for two. They go to the apron where Copeland manages a Death Valley Driver, followed by the spear through the ropes to send King through a table in a nasty crash. Back in and another spear retains the title at 18:26.

Rating: B. There was A LOT of blood in this match and there is a good chance that will go a long way in determining how much you liked this. It certainly felt intense at times, but it also felt long, with the Malakai Black promo earlier all but guaranteeing that he's the next big challenger, likely at the pay per view. Copeland's matches are mostly good, but they're lacking that something to get them to the next level, which makes giving him this much time a bit weird.

Post match King jumps Copeland but Kyle O'Reilly makes the save.

Mercedes Mone is ready for Double Or Nothing. Yes she's ready because Willow Nightingale took a year from her career. Now it's time to get the title because she is that b****. This was every Mone promo: She's a star, she's been hurt for a year, did I mention she's a star?

Adam Copeland thanks Kyle O'Reilly for the help and O'Reilly challenges him for the Cope Open on Collision. Copeland is in.

Here is the Elite (three minutes after the show was scheduled to end) for a chat. Kazuchika Okada tells Kenny Omega to get

well soon. Matt Jackson says Tony Khan is the best boss he has ever had but they had to get him out of the way. They're in for Anarchy In The Arena, which draws out FTR. They don't like the Young Bucks so here are Eddie Kingston and Bryan Danielson to complete their team. The brawl is on to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. That was a really strange way to end the show, as it wasn't like the last thing went long and they had to wrap it up. Instead, they just started doing three more segments when the show was supposed to be ending. That is asking a lot when the middle of this show was more than a bit tedious.

The opener and main event were both good, but the matches between them felt like filler, which tends to be the case way too often in AEW. I've lost track of how many times it feels like they have about an hour of important stuff and then need to fill in the rest. That was the situation here, which makes me wonder just how a three hour block is going to go this Saturday.

Results

Orange Cassidy b. Trent Beretta – Rollup

Mariah May b. Harley Cameron – May Day

Jay White b. Rocky Romero – Bladerunner

Big Bill/Chris Jericho b. Harlon Abbott/Mo Jabari – Chokeslam to Abbott

Adam Copeland b. Brody King – Spear

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Six Pack: On The Open Road In Search Of Wrestlemania By Brad Balukjian (It's A Book)

I found this book at WrestleCon and got to meet the author (Brad Balukjian, a rather nice guy) in person. I asked him to sell me on the book and he started by telling me about the time the Iron Sheik threatened to kill him. That was more or less enough to get my attention and the rest of the premise was more than good enough.

Basically, he looked at some of the bigger names on the card from a WWF house show from the early 80s and went to see what they were doing about 40 years later. Each chapter is about an individual wrestler (some of whom sat down for interviews) and looks at his road trip around the country to meet them.

I sat in the car and read the first fifty pages between Stand & Deliver and Wrestlemania and then blew threw the rest of it when I got home. The writing is very easy to follow and it feels like you're on the road with Balukjian as he is a rather natural storyteller. You get a bit about the wrestlers' careers, but for the most part it is a look at what happens when their careers are mostly over. That isn't something you get to see very often and it made for a fascinating read.

Check this out if you get the chance (I've seen it at Barnes &

Noble and it's available on Amazon) as you should be able to knock it out in a few days as it's not exactly heavy reading but it more than held my interest. It's also easier/more fun than a good many wrestling biographies/autobiographies I've read, which is impressive for someone who is writing as a fan rather than an insider/veteran.

NXT – May 7, 2024: Bad Night

NXT

Date: May 7, 2024

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Booker T.

We're back to normal after a few weeks of Spring Breakin and that should make for some interesting changes. Wes Lee is back after a long absence and wants his North American Title back. I'm not sure I can imagine him being around NXT that much longer but he should be fun while it lasts. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a long video on Wes Lee, who had a great North American Title reign but then he had to leave due to a back injury. Now he's back and wants the title again.

Lee walks through a crowd in the back and is a bit teared up by the video.

Wes Lee vs. Josh Briggs

Briggs gets smart to start and tries a kick to the recently repaired back. Lee kicks him out to the floor instead but misses the slingshot dive. The big boot is blocked on the floor so Briggs settles for a ram into the apron instead. Back

in and Lee snaps off a hurricanrana and Briggs is on the floor again, where another headscissors connects. Cue Ivar as the Cardiac Kick is countered into a backbreaker.

We take a break and come back with Ivar on commentary as Lee fights out of a bearhug. A hiptoss backbreaker puts Lee down again and a Boss Man Slam gives Briggs two. They head outside again, this time with Lee dropkicking him into Ivar. Back in and Lee hits the Spiral Tap for the pin at 10:07.

Rating: C+. Pretty by the book speed vs. power match here and that's all it should have been. Lee gets to show that he still has it while setting up the likely David vs. Goliath showdown with Oba Femi. Briggs has come a long way in recent weeks and he is a good choice for this kind of a spot, as Lee gets to look good.

Post match Ivar and Briggs get in a fight so Lee dives onto both of them.

We look back at Lola Vice beating Natalya in NXT Underground.

Tyriek Igwe and Tyson DuPont would love a Tag Team Title shot one day but the No Quarter Catch Crew comes up to say wait your turn. A match seems likely for later. They all leave so here is the OC to offer a Too Sweet to Axiom/Nathan Frazer. The champs leave instead, with the OC not being happy.

Shayna Baszler vs. Karmen Petrovic

Lola Vice and Natalya are here too. Baszler starts fast and takes her to the floor where she moves the ring skirt and ties Petrovic's arm in the ring. A hard kick to the arm wrecks said arm and Baszler grabs the armbar back inside. The big stomp to the arm has Petrovic in even more trouble but she fights back up and goes to the top. The dive is punched out of the air though and the Kirifuda Clutch makes Petrovic tap at 4:12.

Rating: C. This was short and to the point, which is what it

should have been. Baszler might not be as big of a star as she was before, but she is still miles ahead of Petrovic. It wasn't much of a competitive match and thankfully they got to the point, with Baszler choking her out in short order. If nothing else, disappointed Natalya is a good thing to see.

We look back at Fallon Henley turning heel last week.

Kelani Jordan doesn't get why Henley did that but here is Henley to say it's Fallon Coming First from now on.

NXT held a combine over the weekend, with the top twelve qualifying for qualifying matches for the ladder match for the Women's North American Title. They had to do a bunch of exercises and drills, with Thea Hail and Kelani Jordan doing well in the speed portion. More on this later.

No Quarter Catch Crew vs. Tyriek Igwe/Tyson DuPont

It's Charlie Dempsey and Myles Borne for the Crew here but the referee is...unavailable, according to Luca Crusifino. Instead, Stacks will be the referee and he doesn't like Borne beating up Igwe in the corner to start. DuPont comes in for two off a splash but the Crew needs to yell at Stacks. The distraction lets DuPont get a sunset flip for two but Borne grabs an octopus hold. Everything breaks down and Dempsey grabs a German suplex for a very, very slow near fall. Back up and DuPont gets in a right hand for the very fast pin at 3:52.

Rating: C+. This served two things at once, with the new team getting a win and keeping up Tony D'Angelo's efforts to get a Heritage Cup shot at the Crew. I can go for a screwy referee every so often and it was a pretty nice match. Igwe and DuPont have a long way to go but they're off to a nice start.

Chelsea Green and Arianna Grace think NXT's women's division needs to be saved but Gigi Dolin can't take them anymore.

Roxanne Perez isn't worried about Ava or Chelsea Green,

because it's all about her. No one likes Green on Raw so Perez can beat her up tonight.

Michin vs. Arianna Grace

Grace takes her into the corner to start and drops an elbow for two as Michin is in early trouble. Michin fights back but gets rolled up for a fast two, with Grace getting caught holding the ropes. That lets Michin grab Eat Defeat for the pin at 3:23.

Rating: C. That's a surprise as Grace has been moving up the ladder a bit in recent weeks. I would have expected Gigi Dolin to interfere here and cost Grace the match but I guess they're having that for later. Michin is a name from the main roster, though I'm not sure if I've ever gotten her big appeal.

Thea Hail and Ridge Holland talk about her problems. Chase U comes in to congratulate her but here is Lexis King to mock Holland. Duke Hudson stands up to King, who isn't impressed.

It's time for Supernova Sessions with Trick Williams as the guest, hopefully to find out what is in Lash Legend's envelope. We see a video of Williams' time since winning the NXT Title, but he wants to know what's in the envelope. The envelope has a photo, showing Williams pinning Noam Dar, whose foot was under the rope. Williams isn't impressed and says if Dar wants a title match, all he has to do is ask. Dar is game, but Williams asks if Legend wants to tell them, or if he should.

Legend: "Babe...I MEAN TRICK! I MEAN TRICK!" She goes to leave but Williams stops her, with Legend saying it's not the time or the place. Dar gives Williams a spinning elbow to the face and picks up the title. Good for them for just going with the Williams/Legend deal, as they have great chemistry together.

Back to the combine, with a look at their power/speed. Michin and Jaida Parker to well.

We get a video that sounds like someone snoring. Dang it not Wendy Choo.

Karmen Petrovic feels like she is letting Natalya down. A guy comes in to say Petrovic is still a smoke show and gets kicked in the head. Well that worked.

Fallon Henley vs. Kelani Jordan

Henley doesn't look impressed by the crowd and gets sent into the corner to start. A handspring elbow rocks Henley, who blocks a bulldog and stomps away. Jordan knocks her down and hits a flipping legdrop for two before grinding away with a headlock. Henley is back up to send her throat first into the ropes and we take a break.

Back with Henley in control until Jordan grabs a sleeper suplex. Jordan kicks her down and hits MVP's old Play Of The Day to stagger Henley. They fight into the corner where a turnbuckle pad is ripped off. Jordan is sent into said buckle, allowing Henley to hit the Shining Wizard for the pin at 10:59.

Rating: C-. I like Henley a lot and I'm curious to see what she's going to do, but this really didn't work. They were looking rather sloppy in the second half of the match and it needed to be shorter than it was. Maybe it was just nerves or something, but Henley is going to have to do a lot better to make the heel run work.

The No Quarter Catch Crew is ready to face Tony D'Angelo for the Heritage Cup next week.

Lash Legend and Wren Sinclair did well in strength at the Combine. Then Ivy Nile won the conditioning contest.

Ava announces the 12 qualifiers from the Combine:

1. Sol Ruca
2. Thea Hail

3. Jaida Parker
4. Brinley Reece
5. Michin
6. Fallon Henley
7. Lash Legend
8. Ivy Nile
9. Izzi Dame
10. Kelani Jordan
11. Tatum Paxley
12. Wren Sinclair

Qualifying matches start next week. The combine was cool but is there anyone on the list who would be out of the ordinary?

Lexis King vs. Duke Hudson

Chase U is here too. Hudson goes with the power to start but King trips him down and stomps away as commentary talks about quite a few other things. Some choking on the ropes wakes Hudson up a bit and he gets two off a sunset flip out of the corner. King goes after the leg and runs him over but stops to yell at Hail. Cue Ridge Holland to chase King back inside with a chair, which the referee takes away. That lets King hit a superkick into the Coronation for the pin at 4:10.

Rating: C. King continues to be about the same thing as he was when he started: average at best match, decent talking and being a general thorn in people's side. He did get a win here to boost him up a bit, but he still isn't overly interesting. As usual, Chase U loses and I can't even be surprised by that anymore.

Meta Four, minus Lash Legend, is leaving and doesn't want to talk about her. Je'von Evans comes in and wants to check on Trick Williams but is called a shiny new toy.

Jazmyn Nyx is mad at Thea Hail for hurting Jacy Jayne's nose and swears revenge.

Thea Hail is mad at Lexis King and Ridge Holland comes in to apologize. Chase U isn't sure if they can go with that, but Holland is willing to earn their trust. Chase and Hail believe him.

Shawn Michaels has invited Kendrick Lamar and Drake to come to NXT and settle their differences. How about Benny and Allen instead?

Here's what's coming next week.

Women's Title: Roxanne Perez vs. Chelsea Green

Perez is defending. Green starts fast with a rollup for two and Perez is a bit shaken. Perez gets in a shot of her own to take over and we go to an early break. Back with Perez getting two off a Russian legsweep but Green kicks her into the ropes. A Rough Ryder (Vic: "WOO WOO WOO!") puts Perez down but she's right back with a super hurricanrana for two. Green gets in a suplex and missile dropkick for two but has to block Pop Rox. They trade rollups for two each before Pop Rox retains the title at 8:51.

Rating: C+. They had a good match and both were working hard, but this could not have felt more like a thrown together title match/main event. Green is little more than a comedic nuisance most of the time on the main roster and I'm not sure why I was supposed to buy her as a threat to win here. Perez does get to beat another main roster star, but it only means so much given who it was.

The D'Angelo Family beats up Damon Kemp and kidnaps him. They leave and Charlie Dempsey shows up, wondering where Kemp is.

Overall Rating: C-. This started off with a good match and ended with a nice enough main event, but the rest of the wrestling was pretty worthless. I'm glad they went with the strong Williams/Legend pairing, but other than that, this felt like a big punt of an episode. Points for trying something

different with the Combine, though it didn't feel exactly necessary as it is only setting up qualifying matches. Pretty had miss here, with one of the worst NXT's I can remember in a long time.

Results

Wes Lee b. Josh Briggs – Spiral Tap

Shayna Baszler b. Karmen Petrovic – Kirifuda Clutch

Tyriek Igwe/Tyson DuPont b. No Quarter Catch Crew – Right hand with a fast count to Dempsey

Michin b. Arianna Grace – Eat Defeat

Fallon Henley b. Kelani Jordan – Shining Wizard

Lexis King b. Duke Hudson – Coronation

Roxanne Perez b. Chelsea Green – Pop Rox

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Monday Night Raw – May 6,

2024: Tournament Time

Monday Night Raw

Date: May 6, 2024

Location: XL Center, Hartford, Connecticut

Commentators: Michael Cole, Pat McAfee

It's tournament time as we are starting the King and Queen of the Ring tournaments this week. With the finals less than three weeks away, there isn't much time so they are likely going to cover quite a bit this week. Unfortunately Drew McIntyre has been pulled due to injury but we should have a replacement of some kind on hand. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a long Backlash recap.

Here is the Judgment Day for a chat. Damian Priest is proud to have retained the title and apologizes for what happened after the match. He shouldn't have attacked his teammates because they are his family. As for now though, the Judgment Day is still the dominant faction in WWE and Finn Balor is going to be the next King Of The Ring. Drew McIntyre is out of action so Balor is getting a first round bye. Cue Adam Pearce to say not so fast as we have a replacement right now.

King Of The Ring First Round: Jey Uso vs. Finn Balor

Balor grabs an armbar to start but Uso fights up with some yeeting right hands. A headlock slows Uso down again but he sends Balor outside for a dive. Uso gets posted and sent over the announcers' table though and we take a break. Back with Balor's basement dropkick connecting for two and we hit the chinlock.

That lasts as long as your average chinlock as Uso fights up and hits a high crossbody. A superkick drops Balor again but

it's way too early for the Superfly Splash. Instead Uso hits the spear for two but here is Drew McIntyre for a distraction. The fans want CM Punk though they seem to settle for Uso hitting another spear for the pin at 13:34.

Rating: C+. The McIntyre interference didn't really do anything but this is going to give the fans something to like to start the show while also continuing Judgment Day's issues. Balor got to showcase himself a bit as well but Uso moving forward makes sense as he could very well be a dark horse (or better) to win the whole thing. Assuming McIntyre doesn't kick his head off that is.

We look at Gunther vs. Sheamus from Clash At The Castle back in 2022.

Drew McIntyre yells at Adam Pearce and leaves (with another QR code popping up). CM Punk pulls into the parking lot just as McIntyre leaves and heads to the ring (first bumping Chad Gable on the way) for a chat. Punk talks about being locked in WWE Headquarters over the weekend and then realized the show was so close by so here he is. Punk mocks the 5:46 McIntyre title reign and knows that McIntyre is scrolling through Twitter so what if the fans lets him know he's here.

While we're waiting, Punk tells us about how he was hurt in the Royal Rumble when McIntyre DDT'ed him. He was upset over missing Wrestlemania but now he's waiting to get his dream back. Punk is a five tool player but McIntyre is just a tool. McIntyre picked a fight with the pettiest man on earth and Punk thinks it's because McIntyre hates himself. Punk already broke McIntyre's elbow and next time he'll break his face and heart. The music plays and Punk threatens to show up in Glasgow, Scotland. This is another week that Punk stays in the fans' minds while he recovers, with his return getting closer and closer.

Ricochet is ready for the King Of The Ring when Braun Strowman

comes in. Strowman stood up to Judgment Day last week because he can't stand bullies.

Queen Of The Ring First Round: Iyo Sky vs. Natalya

Damage CTRL is here with Sky. Natalya spins out of a wristlock to start before grabbing a quickly broken leglock. They head outside with Sky being sent face first onto the apron as commentary talks about not knowing what any of the French chants were about at Backlash. Back in and Sky's springboard missile dropkick gets two and we take a break.

We come back with Natalya grabbing a Michinoku Driver for two, followed by a top rope superplex (dedicated to Owen Hart, whose birthday would have been tomorrow) for the same. Sky is right back with a crossface before they trade rollup for two each. Natalya's sitout powerbomb gets two more but the Sharpshooter attempt is broken up. The running knees in the corner set up Over The Moonsault for the pin at 10:24.

Rating: B-. That's Natalya in a nutshell: makes opponent look good, does her own good things, loses in the end. It's a good role for her and they didn't try to do anything further than that. At the same time, Sky gets a win and some of her momentum back after losing at Wrestlemania.

Post match Damage CTRL promises to win the Queen Of The Ring and they're coming for the Women's Tag Team Titles again.

Video on Ilja Dragunov.

Ilja Dragunov vs. Ricochet

Ricochet doesn't even bring the Speed Title with him. They start fast with Ricochet hitting a knee to the face and we're already in a break. Back with Ricochet hitting a springboard clothesline into a standing shooting star press for two. Dragunov is back up with a waistlock but Ricochet backflips out of a German suplex.

Instead he sends Dragunov outside, where a moonsault is countered into the German suplex to put Ricochet down. Back in and a missile dropkick gives Dragunov two but Ricochet snaps off a super hurricanrana to the floor. Multiple dives drop Dragunov again and we take another break.

We come back again with Dragunov hitting the Constantine Special (rebound clothesline) and dropping a top rope backsplash for another near fall. They trade kicks to the face until Ricochet hits a Death Valley Driver. Ricochet tries a springboard but gets knocked out of the air. The H Bomb (a hard right hand on the mat) looks to set up Torpedo Moscow (running headbutt) but Ricochet Recoils him down instead. Dragunov catches him on top with another superplex and the second H Bomb is enough for the pin at 16:35.

Rating: B. If this didn't have the two breaks in there, it would have been even higher. This was getting into Dragunov's bread and butter as he feels like he would rather die than lose and throws everything he has out there to win. It makes his matches feel like wars and that was showing up again here. Heck of a match here for Dragunov's more official Raw debut.

Respect is shown post match.

Sheamus can't stand the idea of King Gunther so tonight he's going to give Gunther the beating he's been deserving.

Video on the European tour.

Queen Of The Ring First Round: Ivy Nile vs. Zoey Stark

Nile goes right after her to start but Stark runs her over. A rather delayed vertical suplex puts Stark down but she manages to pull Nile throat first into the rope. Stark hits a springboard missile dropkick for two, with commentary saying it was like a sniper. They both go up top where Nile wins a quick slugout and hits a super bulldog for two of her own. Nile misses an enziguri so Stark hammers away, with commentary

getting into a weird discussion about ground and pound. Stark drops her face first onto the buckle and hits Z360 for the pin at 5:20.

Rating: C. This started well but they hit a wall in the middle and it kind of dragged to the finish. The top rope bulldog was a unique spot and Nile was fighting here but something seemed a bit off. I could go for seeing Nile get more of a chance, though she is going to need more polish and experience first.

R-Truth brings in UConn men's basketball coach Dan Hurley because he thinks Awesome Truth should face the basketball team. Miz tries to explain things to Truth but Truth insists that a sport is a sport. Miz says he'll get back to Adam Pearce about their next title defense (An exasperated Pearce: "Thank you."). Awesome Truth leaves and Pearce needs a drink but gets to talk to Bron Breakker, who wants to know why he isn't in the King Of The Ring. They'll talk later.

We look at Gunther vs. Sheamus II.

Judgment Day consoles Finn Balor over his loss when Dominik Mysterio comes in with Carlito. Damian Priest doesn't want Carlito here after what happened at Backlash last year but Carlito offers to trade back scratches. Priest tells him to get out.

Chad Gable vs. Bronson Reed

No Alpha Academy here with Gable, who chops away to start but gets Death Valley Drivered (that move is making a comeback around here) for his efforts. Gable manages to muscle him over with a German suplex for two so Reed goes up top. That's fine with Gable, who kind of t-bone superplexes him down, only to have Sami Zayn run in and jump Gable for the DQ at 1:42.

Post match the beating is on but Reed cuts off the Helluva Kick and plants Zayn. Reed beats up Gable as well and stands tall. The camera follows Reed to the back, where Adam Pearce

asks why Reed can't control himself. Reed wants the Intercontinental Title and tells Pearce to do what he needs to do if he wants control.

Video on Lyra Valkyria. It's smart to preview new stars like her as it helps when she's being thrown into a pretty important match.

Gunther is ready to win King Of The Ring and doesn't mind going through Sheamus to do it.

Here is Becky Lynch for a sitdown interview with Michael Cole. Becky loves these people but Cole brings up her appearance at the Kentucky Derby and her...interesting outfit choice. Cole: "What is that hat? Is it a hat?" Lynch got it on Etsy and the fans think it works. Cole moves on to the title, which Lynch will have to defend against a variety of the new stars brought over in the Draft.

Lynch is ready for people like Alba Fyre, Isla Dawn, Kiana James and in particular, Lyra Valkyria. As for Wrestlemania, yes she had strep throat but Rhea Ripley was the better woman that night. Then she won the title two weeks later in a battle royal...and here is Liv Morgan to interrupt.

Morgan is sick of Lynch not talking about her and brings up everything she's done. Lynch cuts her off and says the title match is on at King And Queen Of The Ring (that show needs a better name) but Morgan. Morgan says she has a purpose now but here is Damage CTRL to interrupt. That's enough for Morgan to bail so the fight is on but Lyra Valkyria runs in for the save.

Sami Zayn says it should be over with Chad Gable and Bronson Reed so he'll fight them both at King And Queen Of The Ring. He'll be at his best because he's up against the wall.

Queen Of The Ring First Round: Lyra Valkyria vs. Dakota Kai

Valkyria takes her down with a headlock to start but let's go split screen for a preview for Kingdom Of The Planet Of The Apes. The northern lights suplex gives Valkyria two but she gets pulled off the corner for a crash onto the buckle. We take a break and come back with Valkyria striking away, including a dropkick through the ropes. A suplex gives Valkyria two but Kai slips out of a fireman's carry. The running kick to the face in the corner hits Valkyria for two more but she ducks another kick to the face. Nightwing (Samoan driver) finishes Kai at 8:50.

Rating: C+. The substitution is a good thing for Valkyria as she wasn't likely to defeat someone at Asuka's level in her debut. Beating Kai is certainly not a step too far though and this could help Valkyria up as one of the new stars around here. The division could always use fresh blood and Valkyria has all of the tools to move up the ladder in a hurry.

Kofi Kingston says this was supposed to be Xavier Woods' tournament but Gunther put Woods on the shelf. Now Kingston is going to win the tournament instead and he'll start with Rey Mysterio this weekend. He also gets in a Kendrick Lamar/Drake reference that I don't understand.

King Of The Ring First Round: Gunther vs. Sheamus

Ludwig Kaiser is here with Gunther and Sheamus has already slimmed down a bit from his return a few weeks ago. They waste no time in chopping it out until Gunther kicks him out to the apron. Gunther tries his own ten forearms to the chest but has to block Sheamus from doing the same. Sheamus backdrops him to the floor and hits a dive off the apron as we take a break.

Back with Gunther dropping him again with a hard chop to the back, which even has Kaiser cringing. Gunther starts in on the neck by grabbing a cravate but Sheamus is up with the Irish Curse. One heck of a clothesline gives Gunther two, with White Noise giving Sheamus the same. Now Sheamus can hit the

forearms to the chest but the Brogue Kick misses. Kaiser gets in a cheap shot to the knee but gets ejected (McAfee: "NEIN!") as we take another break.

Back again with Gunther working on the bad knee until Sheamus kicks his way to freedom. Gunther goes right after the knee again but Sheamus manages a clothesline. The jumping knee gives Sheamus two of his own but the knee is banged up. The knee gives out on a powerbomb and Gunther hits a powerbomb into a half crab. Sheamus is in the ropes so Gunther goes up, only to be countered into a Celtic Cross for a delayed two. Some knees put Gunther down for a delayed two but the knee gives out again. Gunther grabs the half crab again and this time Sheamus has to tap at 21:00.

Rating: B+. This was the heavyweight slugfest that you would expect from these two, with those welts on Sheamus' chest making me cringe more than once. The ending is something that makes perfect sense for Gunther, as he exploited an injury. Granted it's an injury that was caused by Gunther's stooge but that's what a heel should be doing.

Overall Rating: B. They were focused this week with a good chunk of the show looking at the tournaments. It helps that the action ranged from awesome to just rather good with the main event being more than worth a look. Two matches got added to the pay per view card as well, making this an efficient show that never hit any really bad part. Pretty great show this week and that's always nice to see.

Results

Jey Uso b. Finn Balor – Spear

Iyo Sky b. Natalya – Over The Moonsault

Ilja Dragunov b. Ricochet – H Bomb

Zoey Stark b. Ivy Nile – Z360

Chad Gable b. Bronson Reed via DQ when Sami Zayn interfered

Lyra Valkyria b. Dakota Kai – Nightwing

Gunther b. Sheamus – Half crab

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WrestleCon Supershow 2024: Vague Memories

WrestleCon Supershow 2024

Date: April 4, 2024

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Kevin Gill, Veda Scott

It's one of the biggest independent events of Wrestlemania Weekend and as usual, the card is rather stacked. You will regularly get some rather nice surprises to boost up what is already advertised and that makes it a lot more fun. This time around most of the card has been advertised in advance to change it up a bit. Let's get to it.

I was in the crowd for this, sitting near the stage (all of three feet in front of commentary, which I could hear

throughout for a really weird feeling). However, I had a bad case of vertigo kick in just before the show started and it didn't wrap up until around the start of the main event so I spent a good chunk of this show trying not to fall over. I don't remember much of it as a result so this should be fun.

ECW announcer Stephen DeAngelis welcomes us to the show and shows us a video on Mark Hitchcock, a graphic designer who passed away on his honeymoon. The show has been named in his honor ever since.

Joey Janela vs. Nic Nemeth

Feeling out process to start with neither getting anywhere off an exchange of lockups. Nemeth wrestles him down without much trouble and Janela seems to realize he's in trouble on the mat. Janela gets over to the ropes before running Nemeth down in a bit more successful strategy. Back up and Nemeth misses a Stinger Splash, allowing Janela to hit a rather snazzy chop.

Nemeth gets sent into the ropes for a quick German suplex and Janela sends him outside as commentary talks about the paths these two took to get here. Back in and we hit the neck crank as Gill has quite the trouble remembering if it's Nemeth or Ziggy (fair enough). Janela hits some more hard chops as commentary talks about how you can hear the chops throughout the arena (true).

An Angle Slam gets Nemeth out of trouble for a much needed breather as they're both down. Back up and Nemeth starts the comeback, with a ram into four different corners. The superkick is blocked though and they go into a pinfall reversal sequence for two each. They slug it out and trade superkicks until Nemeth hits a dropkick for another double knockdown.

Janela manages to grab the Death Valley Driver onto the apron but Nemeth is right back with the running DDT for two. Nemeth's Fameasser is countered into a powerbomb, followed by

the package piledriver for another near fall. Janela takes too long going up and gets superplexed back down for the big crash. Back up and Janela hits a running elbow to put both of them down again. Nemeth shrugs that off and hits a Fameasser into the Danger Zone for the pin at 18:17.

Rating: B. Janela likes to go long in his matches but he did well here. This isn't about some big long term story or anything serious, but rather having an entertaining match. Nemeth getting to do things outside of WWE is rather interesting for a change and facing Janela in a long match is almost a rite of passage. Good stuff here and it felt like a match that could have hung on a more traditional show.

Los Boricuas vs. FBI/???

This would be Savio Vega/Miguel Perez Jr./Nathalya Perez (with the rest of the team) vs. Little Guido/Tommy Rich/a mystery partner in the form of...Deonna Purrazzo (and Tony Mamaluke to even things up a bit). For those of you who don't know who Nathalya is Miguel's daughter, making her the first ever third generation Puerto Rican wrestler. Miguel and Guido start things off but it's quickly off to Savio vs. Rich.

Nathalya comes in and wants Purrazzo, which does not seem to be a good idea. Nathalya actually takes her into the corner and chops away, only for Purrazzo to demonstrate it a bit better. Purrazzo drops her rather quickly so it's off to Miguel, who drives Rich into the corner. An elbow to the head gets Rich out of trouble and Guido comes in for a Paisan elbow in a nice flashback.

Hold on though as Guido is sent outside for some Boricuas cheating, meaning we have a big ejection. Miguel grabs a chinlock on Guido before Savio comes back in and is promptly crossbodied. Miguel is right there to cut him off with a clothesline but Guido gets in a middle rope...we'll call it a clothesline. The tag brings Rich back in for the right hands

as everything breaks down. Nathalya slugs it out with Purrazzo and they trade kicks to the head, only for Purrazzo to grab the Fujiwara armbar for the tap at 9:33.

Rating: C. This was there for the sake of some goofy old school fun and there is nothing wrong with that. The fans are going to be into the FBI and their goofy dancing while Los Boricuas certainly have a reputation. Purrazzo was a nice surprise and fit in well with the team, while Nathalya's biggest flaw is she looks incredibly young. That will change with time, but for now, she looks like a teenager out there. Anyway, fun match to pop the live crowd.

Rob Van Dam vs. Mike Bailey

Veda Scott is a bit biased here, which might be due to her being married to Bailey. Bill Alfonso is here with Van Dam for the old school feeling and yes it's Walk for the entrance music. As a bonus, Jerry Lynn is guest referee. They fight over a lockup to start until Van Dam fakes a clean break by grabbing a headlock. Said headlock takes Bailey over a few times but he headscissors his way to freedom.

Back up and they both miss kicks for a standoff, with the fans dubbing this awesome. For some reason Van Dam thinks it's time to pose, allowing Bailey to kick him down. You don't break up Van Dam's posing so he chokes on the ropes, poses, and hits a slingshot legdrop. Bailey is draped over the barricade for the spinning kick to the back for the nasty landing on the floor. Van Dam takes too long getting some water from a fan and gets taken down by an Asai moonsault. Gill worries about Fonzie being taken out as well but Scott said "don't worry, he's a resilient chap".

Back in and Bailey hits a hard Helluva Kick into a Tajiri handspring elbow into a running shooting star press for two. The moonsault knees miss though and Van Dam gets two off a rollup. That's enough to draw Fonzie in for an argument, which

only allows Bailey to nail the bouncing kicks. Bailey misses a big kick but Van Dam misses the Rolling Thunder. The shooting star misses for Bailey so Fonzie throws in the chair for a Van Daminator. The Five Star finishes Bailey at 10:57.

Rating: C+. Oh like Van Dam was losing in the ECW Arena on a special show like this. The good thing about Van Dam is that unlike most of the former ECW stars, he can still more than hang in there and have a perfectly watchable match. That was the case here as he and Bailey had an entertaining match with the right ending. Nice stuff here and seeing Van Dam in this building was special.

Rev Pro British Heavyweight Title: Michael Oku vs. Titan

Oku, with Amira, is defending. They go with the grappling to start with Titan twisting out of a wristlock. Stereo dropkick attempts miss and they chop it out, with Oku sticking his chest out but getting kicked in the stomach instead. Back up and Oku sends him outside, only for Titan to jump back inside for the suicide dive.

They get back inside where Titan kicks him in various areas but Oku is back with a middle rope dropkick. With Titan on the floor, Oku hits a running shooting star over the ropes to take him out again. A high crossbody gives Oku two back inside but Titan drops him on the apron. That means a top rope double stomp, only to have Titan come up favoring his knee. Back in and Titan misses another double stomp, allowing Oku to knee him in the face.

The Lionsault sets up the half crab (Oku's finisher) but the rope is reached rather quickly. Titan's knee is fine enough to hit a springboard tornado DDT and we get a double breather. They forearm it out until Titan gets the better of an exchange of kicks to the face. Titan's top rope double stomp gets two but bangs up the knee again. Oku pulls him into the half crab and bridges back for the tap to retain at 15:32.

Rating: B. It was a good, back and forth match with the title helping a lot. I'm not sure I get Oku's appeal a lot of the time, but he was feeling it here and the submission/high flying combination worked well here. Titan did well with his own stuff as well and it was a rather entertaining match that felt like it could have been on any regular show, which is a nice fit in on a show like this one.

Rascalz vs. Matt Riddle/Mustafa Ali

That was unadvertised so all three entrances get quite the reaction. Riddle takes Wentz down without much trouble to start and they wrestle to a standoff. Wentz gets a headscissors but Riddle slips out, only to miss the big kick to the chest. Back up and Wentz slips out of a German suplex and they slap each other in the face, followed by an exchange of respectful nods.

Ali comes in and takes over on Miguel's arm but Miguel is right back up with an armbar of his own. They trade some quick near falls and that's good for a standoff. Everything breaks down and Riddle sends the Rascalz to the floor for the big dive from Ali in a nice bit of teamwork. Back in and Wentz kicks Riddle down to grab the chinlock, followed by the wishbone into stereo basement dropkicks (ouch) for two.

Miguel kicks him in the head again but Ali gets over to bring Ali in and pick up the pace. Riddle gets pulled off the apron though and Ali misses a charge into the corner, allowing the double teaming strikes to drop Ali for two more. Wentz's hard DDT gets two but Ali fights right back up (as tends to be the case) and brings Riddle back in to clean house. A snazzy German suplex gets two on Miguel but the Floating Bro is broken up. Ali is back in with the tornado DDT, only to miss the 450 and roll into a cutter from Wentz. A springboard cutter drops Riddle, who bounces back up with a double cutter. The Bro Derek finishes Miguel at 14:20.

Rating: B. Ali and Riddle are something of an indy dream team at the moment and it was cool to see them getting together and having a heck of a match here. At the same time, there is something odd about seeing a makeshift team beating a regular team, which was a major focal point from commentary. That being said, it's hard to imagine most people beating Riddle when he gets into that mode and the match was rather good.

Respect is shown post match.

Josh Alexander vs. Masato Tanaka

Alexander easily takes it to the mat for an early standoff and they fight over hammerlock control. A running shoulder puts Tanaka down but he's back up with the right hands in the corner. They chop it out until Alexander dragon screw legwhips him down. Tanaka's leg is fine enough for him to grab a suplex, only to have Alexander roll some German suplexes for two.

The C4 Spike is countered into the sliding elbow to give Tanaka two of his own. Tanaka's top rope superplex...doesn't really hurt Alexander, who pops back up for the clothesline comeback (?). The Roaring Elbow gives Tanaka two but his top rope splash hits raised knees. That means the ankle lock (the first of many I'm sure) goes on for Alexander but Tanaka rolls out, earning himself the running crossbody to the back.

Back in and Tanaka wins a slugout, even knocking Alexander's headgear off. Alexander elbows him down for two and they forearm it out again. Tanaka knocks him into the corner for Diamond Dust and another near fall but Alexander is back with a powerbomb onto the knee. The C4 Spike finishes Tanaka at 12:16.

Rating: B. Take two hard hitters and let them beat the fire out of each other for about twelve minutes until the bigger name hits his finisher for the pin. It was a good, hard hitting match and one of those "hmm, that's interesting" deals

that you can see on a show like this one. Alexander continues to feel like a big fish in a small pond with TNA so it's nice to see him getting a moment to shine here.

The ring announcer thanks the fans.

Team CMLL vs. Team Dragon Gate

CMLL: Averno/Barbaro Cavernario/Mistico/Star Jr./Villano III Jr.

Dragon Gate: Dragon Kid/Kota Minoura/Kzy/Shun Skywalker/Yamato

The annual ten man tag is a WrestleCon Supershow signature. Skywalker (quite the villain) bails to the floor to start as commentary is flat out saying they can't keep track of all these people. Cavernario and Kid start things off with some grappling on the mat until Cavernario pulls him into a quickly broken surfboard. Cavernario hits him in the face but Kid snaps off a headscissors.

Averno and Yamato come in with Averno taking Yamato down but getting caught with an arm crank. With that not working, we get the big staredown between Skywalker and Mistico, with the handshake not happening. Mistico snaps off a running headscissors to send him outside and there's the dive to take Skywalker out again. Everything breaks down for a brawl on the floor until we settle down to Star chopping it out with Kzy.

Star hits a jumping uppercut to put Kzy down until Star ties him in the ropes for a springboard fadeaway legdrop (ala Carmelo Hayes). A kind of flipping slam plants Kzy for two and Star hits a springboard clothesline. Villano comes in to hammer away on Minoura as everything breaks down again.

We settle down (kind of) to Skywalker throwing Cavernario into the corner, allowing Kid to come in and drop some knees. Averno comes in and gets stomped down before Yamato grabs a quickly broken chinlock. It's back to Villano, who is taken down as well with Dragon Gate holding his partners back in a

smart move. That doesn't last long either as Star comes in and gets taken down in a hurry.

Kzy's elbow to the back gets two with Mistico making the save but getting caught in the wrong corner as well. Mistico and Minoura strike it out until a swinging Boss Man Slam gives Minoura two. Skywalker comes in but Mistico is back with a handspring double elbow and it's back to Star. The big dive to the floor takes out most of Dragon Gate and Mistico hits a bigger dive to send them into the crowd.

Back in and Kid gets triple teamed but manages to hand it back to Averno. Skywalker gets caught in the ropes for a bunch of strikes to the chest/head and back to back triplebombs get two with Kid making the save. Averno gets super hurricanranaed down and a frog splash gets two and Cavernario gets kicked in the head...sending him into the Worm.

Something like a Vader Bomb hits Kid or two as everything breaks down. Mistico gets kicked down by Kzy but Skywalker shoves his own partner down, wanting the win for himself. That lets Star hit a top rope double stomp on Skywalker, setting up an arm/leg crank. Mistico adds La Mistica to Kzy for the double submission at 24:47.

Rating: B. This was quite the display of talent with everyone in there going nuts to get int heir own bit of offense. That being said, the match ran long as the stretch where Dragon Gate triple teamed people and cut the ring off just kept going. It was a fun spectacle but never really did anything all that huge to take it up to the next level.

Post match Skywalker goes after CMLL again and gets stomped down.

Of note: following the show, I went to dinner and wound up sitting next to most of Team CMLL (minus Mistico). They were all unmasked but I recognized Cavernario, who confirmed it was the rest of the team and apparently some others. None of them

could say who they were, but it was a rather cool treat.

Gill hypes up the main event and intros the ring announcer, who isn't quite ready, resulting in a 47 second run on sentence introduction with Gill all but begging him to start talking. You could hear the relief in Gill's voice when the introductions began and he got some applause for his efforts.

Paul Walter Hauser vs. Sami Callihan

Street fight and Hauser is mainly an (Emmy Award winning) actor who occasionally wrestles. Callihan jumps him from behind to start and says F*** Philly/WrestleCon because he's about to cut up an Emmy winner. The stomping is on, followed by a kendo stick shot to the back. Callihan grabs a bag of toys, starting with a piece of paper to cut the creases between Hauser's fingers.

Naturally he follows with a lemon to squeeze the juice into the cuts for the real pain. The pizza cutter slices Hauser's head up as commentary brings up Hauser invading Callihan's Wrestling Revolver promotion. Back in and Callihan carves him up with the cutter again but Hauser busts out some powder for a needed breather. Callihan hits him with a table but chops the post by mistake.

It's time for a door, though we pause for Hauser to trade his torn shirt to a fan for a fresh one. Back in and Hauser misses a charge to get sent through the door and Callihan whips out some staple guns. Callihan even throws one to Hauser and they trade staples to various body parts. Hauser staples him low and drops a headbutt for two. It's time for thumbtacks but Hauser's middle rope elbow only hits said tacks.

A table is brought in and a powerbomb sends Hauser through it for two. Callihan knocks the referee down and grabs the kendo stick. Said stick is thrown down so Callihan kicks him low and gets two from Bill Alfonso of all people. The near fall doesn't work for Callihan, who decks Alfonso and grabs the

kendo stick....for the Sandman's pose.

The lights go out and we get the full Enter Sandman treatment as the Sandman is here. I remember watching Sandman as a kid and thinking this was the coolest entrance ever so getting to see it in person, in the ECW Arena, even when Sandman is 60 and has been retired forever, was an all time wrestling moment. For a bonus, we also cut back to the ring where Alfonso is just sitting in the corner watching the entrance in a funny moment. Sandman finally gets in and canes Callihan, allowing Hauser to hit the White Russian Legsweep into the tacks for the pin at 23:38.

Rating: C. The match itself was WAY too long, but the only thing that mattered here was getting in the big Sandman moment at the end. Hauser gets to beat the evil Callihan in a fun and special ending and it did that well enough. The problem is the match could have been ten minutes shorter, as you can only see so much of Callihan beating him up in between short comebacks. This had to headline for the sake of Sandman though and that was worth the wait.

Hauser thanks the fans for letting him into their world to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This show is always tricky to do as it has so many things going on with all kinds of interesting matches. While some of them didn't quite work, the stuff that was good was very good, especially with just the right amount of ECW nostalgia. I look forward to this show every year and it worked again here, albeit with a few less than great spots.

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Impact Wrestling – May 2, 2024: Over Siege

Impact Wrestling

Date: May 2, 2024

Location: Palms Casino Resort, Paradise, Nevada

Commentators: Matthew Rehwoldt, Tom Hannifan

We are in a bit of a unique place here as we have more fallout from Rebellion and only one day before Under Siege. The latter is not looking to be the strongest card and could use something of a boost. Hopefully we get something like that this week though you never can tell around here. Let's get to it.

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

Opening recap.

Opening sequence.

First Class is in a box to see Joe Hendry's in-ring apology.

Mustafa Ali vs. Chris Bey

Non-title and Ali's security/Ace Austin are here too. They fight over wrist control to start until Ali elbow shim in the face to take over. Bey is sent throat first into the ropes but he manages to knock Ali into the Tree of Woe. A Coast To Coast elbow gives Bey two but Ali pulls him down off the top with a nasty crash. One heck of a whip into the corner puts Ali down again and they slug it out.

Ali's rollup with feet on the ropes is broken up by Austin, who gets taken down by a dive. Bey dives onto Ali, who is right back with a superkick inside. Back up and Bey grabs a Vertebreaker of all things for two and they fight out to the apron. Ali hits a German suplex but misses the 450, allowing Bey to hit the cutter. The security guard gets in a flag pole shot to drop Bey though and the 450 gives Ali the pin at 10:38.

Rating: B-. There was a lot of interference here and it was distracting from what could have been a heck of a match without it. As it was, we had to settle for a good match between two people who are capable of doing more. I don't remember the last time I saw Bey have a bad match and Ali is one of the bigger things going around here at the moment. Good opener here and I could go for a higher profile rematch.

Dani Luna vs. Alisha Edwards

Jody Threat and Masha Slamovich are here and Lars Frederiksen is on commentary. Luna forearms her down hard to start but Edwards sends her throat first into the middle rope. The trash talk takes too long though and Luna is back up with a Blue Thunder Bomb but Slamovich gets up for a distraction. Threat goes after Edwards but the distraction lets Slamovich kick Luna in the head for the pin at 3:27.

Rating: C. TNA loves the heck out of the "this challenger has pinned one half of the Knockouts Tag Team Champions" and that's what we saw again here. It doesn't even have any kind

of impact anymore as we see it happen so often. I'm sure the title match will be fine, but they really need a better way to set this stuff up.

Sami Callihan has his own show called Death Machine TV, where he says...that he has a show. End of first episode.

Cody Deaner vs. Hammerstone

Before the match, Deaner says Santino Marella has allowed them to add a stipulation. It's the people's choice and they seem to like Deaner's idea of a street fight. Deaner slugs away to start and grabs a trashcan lid but gets kicked in the face for taking too long. An annoyed Hammerstone sends him outside and then into the post as we take an early break.

Back with Hammerstone easily blocking a suplex and choking on the ropes. A gorilla press drop onto an open chair has Deaner writhing in pain but for some reason he tries a slam. This goes as well as you would expect, though he manages to escape the Nightmare Pendulum. Now a slam onto the chair puts Hammerstone down and it's time to bring in a table. That takes too long and it's a chokeslam to put Deaner through the table. The torture rack gives Hammerstone the win at 10:05.

Rating: C. The People's Choice gimmick is a unique idea and it's working well enough, though it's not like Deaner is presented as anything serious. He's only going to be able to do so much when he's in there against a new monster like Hammerstone. The Under Siege match against Jake Something should be more competitive, but for now, this was just ok.

Post match the beatdown is on but Jake Something makes the save.

Nic Nemeth's neck is banged up but Matt Hardy will take his place.

Hardy and Speedball Mountain is ready to defeat the System.

Hardy does his Broken stuff and says they will render the System obsolete.

Santino Marella sits down with Jonathan Gresham and welcomes him back. They shake hands and Santino leaves, with what seems like Gresham in the octopus mask replacing him. We cut to Santino washing his hands.

Still in their box, First Class introduces Joe Hendry for the in-ring apology. Hendry comes to the ring with a guitar and says their issues started with a song, meaning they have to end the same way. He sings the first song he wrote about AJ Francis' failures, which would have been bad enough.

That means we need to hear the second song, which focuses on Francis' ineptness with dives. This time we need an apology though and Hendry is going to go go higher, meaning it's time for a Creed inspired theme about how Francis needs to get fired, like he has twice before. Hendry: "I'm sorry." And that's it, with the fans loving Hendry even more (as they should after something that awesome).

Here is the System for a chat. They promise to win at Under Siege and that's about it.

Trey Miguel vs. Ace Austin

Zachary Wentz and Chris Bey are here and the winner gets the X-Division Title shot at Under Siege. They fight over a lockup to start with Austin taking him to the mat before letting it go in a unique look. Both of them try dropkicks and go to the mat, which draws up both of their respective partners. Miguel gets rolled up for two but comes up favoring his knee, meaning it's time to roll outside. The distraction lets Wentz get in a cheap shot and Miguel is rather fine with a slingshot dive as we take a break.

Back with Austin getting two off another rollup but Miguel chokes away in the corner. A moonsault hits raised knees

though and Austin gets a much needed breather. Austin's springboard spinning kick to the head gets two but Miguel's jumping stomp to the back gets the same. The Cheeky Nandos kick staggers Austin again and a super sunset flip gives Miguel two. Not that it matters as Austin hits a quick stomp into the Fold for the pin/the title shot at 13:02.

Rating: B-. Just like the opener, this was two guys who can do a lot of good things in the ring having a solid match. In this case there were some stakes, as Austin gets a title shot on a fairly big show, which should make for a solid addition to the card. It should also be interesting that he is getting a shot at the title while Bey didn't, which could create some issues between the team going forward.

Josh Alexander and Eric Young are ready for Frankie Kazarian and Steve Maclin.

Under Siege rundown.

Knockouts Title: Jordynne Grace vs. Miyu Yamashita

Yamashita is challenging and Ash By Elegance is watching from a skybox. They fight over wrist control to start with Grace rolling away for a break. A kick to the chest puts Grace down but she snaps off a reverse fisherman's suplex as we take a break. Back with Grace getting planted hard onto the apron for two as Ash seems rather interested. They fight over a choke and...I'm not actually sure who is in trouble but Grace rolls to the ropes to break it up.

Grace is fired up and grabs some slams but a hard kick leaves them both down. They both head up top with Yamashita kneeing away until Grace backdrops her down to the mat. The Juggernaut Driver is blocked so Grace hits a clothesline instead. A spinning kick to the head gives Yamashita two but Grace shrugs it off and grabs the Juggernaut Driver to retain at 9:45.

Rating: C+. They had a fine match but this felt like "here's a

random challenger you might have seen a time or two before” and nothing else. Grace is in a weird spot as she doesn’t have much left in the way of viable challengers so putting her in a match like this is about all that can be done. Not bad at all, but nothing to see here for the most part.

Post match respect is shown and Yamashita leaves, allowing Steph de Lander to run in and jump Grace. Kon shows up to twist Grace’s neck but PCO appears for the save. The villains are cleared out to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The wrestling was good but there is absolutely no hiding how lame Under Siege is looking. There is nothing on that show that feels remotely important and it might as well be a house show at this rate. We had some good action this week and it’s wasn’t a bad show, but I wasn’t interested in Under Siege coming into this and I’m less interested in it now.

Results

Mustafa Ali b. Chris Bey – 450

Alisha Edwards b. Dani Luna – Spinning kick to the head from Masha Slamovich

Hammerstone b. Cody Deaner – Torture rack

Ace Austin b. Trey Miguel – The Fold

Jordynne Grace b. Miyu Yamashita – Juggernaut Driver

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NXT LVL Up – May 3, 2024: They Really Did That

NXT LVL Up

Date: May 3, 2024

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Blake Howard, Byron Saxton

It's back for more of this and I'm not sure what that is going to mean. The good thing is that we had some bigger names last time and, again, it helped a lot. It would be nice to see that continue here as it is the only thing that makes the show feel even slightly worthwhile. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Eddy Thorpe vs. Kale Dixon

Thorpe grabs a headlock takeover to start and then armdrags him into an armbar for some cranking. Back up and a jumping elbow to the face puts Dixon down again but he's back up with a tilt-a-whirl slam for two. Dixon hits his own elbow to the face to even things up a bit and another tilt-a-whirl slam gets two more. The chinlock goes on for a bit before Dixon chops him in the back, which just wakes Thorpe up. A German suplex into an elbow into the implant DDT finishes Dixon at 5:55.

Rating: C. As usual, Dixon is a perfectly fine hand in the ring who isn't likely to go anywhere beyond LVL Up. Thorpe on the other hand feels like someone NXT wants to move up but he has only gotten so far. It's nice seeing him on a bit of a winning streak, so hopefully he gets to keep it going and maybe into something a bit better.

Je'Von Evans is willing to go against anyone and that includes Riley Osborne tonight.

Kendal Grey vs. Kelani Jordan

Carlee Bright is here with Grey. They fight over wrist control to start until Jordan takes him down by the arm. An exchange of leg trips lets Grey crank on the arm before a belly to belly gives Grey two. Back up and they trade rollups for two each until Jordan grabs a fireman's carry slam. The split legged moonsault gives Jordan the pin at 5:14.

Rating: C. Grey is the latest star on the roster in great shape with very little else to set her apart from the rest of the women's division. Jordan has the gymnastics background which allows her to do some impressive things, though she is only starting to feel like something of a player. Both of them need the ring time so this works as well as anything else.

Riley Osborne vs. Je'Von Evans

Evans spins out of a wristlock to start and grabs one of his own. Back up and Evans snaps off a springboard hurricanrana to send Osborne to the floor. Osborne is fine enough to hit something like a 619 off the apron and we hit the reverse chinlock back inside. Evans fights up for a kick to the head into a springboard clothesline for the big knockdown. There's the big dive to the floor to drop Osborne again but he switches places and hits a dive of his own. Back in and they trade rollups until Evans grabs a sunset flip for the big upset at 5:52.

Rating: C+. That is a heck of an upset as Osborne has been treated as someone with a big future around here. It made for a good moment and Evans is instantly a bigger deal. I'm not sure how far he is going to go but at some point you need to just try something with someone new. Evans is getting that treatment and now we get to see where it goes.

Overall Rating: C+. That ending helped a lot and it was the first moment in a long time around here that felt like it could matter going forward. For now, the show itself wasn't much but I'm wanting to see what they'll do next with Evans. The fans are behind him and now he's getting an upgrade, which is kind of the point of this entire show. For once.

Results

Eddy Thorpe b. Kale Dixon – Impaler DDT

Kelani Jordan b. Kendal Grey – Split legged moonsault

Je'Von Evans b. Riley Osborne – Sunset flip

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Ring Of Honor – May 2, 2024: Short And...Well That's It

Ring Of Honor

Date: May 2, 2024

Location: Daily's Place, Jacksonville, Florida

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Caprice Coleman

Things have been getting back more towards the pre-Supercard Of Honor ways around here and that has not made for the most entertaining shows. What matters is getting some interest going, which will likely be centered around Athena/Billie Starkz vs. Queen Aminata/Red Velvet. Other than that, there is work to be done. Let's get to it.

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

Of note: the sun is setting at Daily's Place so the whole venue looks really, really cool.

We run down the card.

We recap the Outrunners and the Infantry copying each other's stuff for weeks.

Outrunners vs. Infantry

Laser Linda (debuting) and Trish Adora are here too. Adora runs Linda over to start and the Outrunners are dropkicked out to the floor before we get the opening bell. We settle down to the Infantry working on Floyd's arm, followed by a double hiptoss to Magnum as commentary is impressed by the basic offense. Everything breaks down and Bravo hits a slingshot dive onto Magnum, followed by an old Valiant Brothers middle rope fist drop to Floyd.

Magnum is back in with a cheap shot on Bravo though and the villains (I think?) take over. Floyd grabs the leg to Magnum

can hook a headlock, setting up the Outrunners' double hiptoss as the blatant copying continues. Bravo gets up and manages a slingshot Stunner of all things, allowing the tag off to Dean to pick up the pace. Everything breaks down again and Dean hits a top rope splash, with Magnum's save hitting Floyd by mistake. The Outrunners load up Boot Camp but get it broken up, allowing the Infantry to hit the real thing for the pin on Magnum at 8:50.

Rating: B-. The action was good, but what made this more interesting than usual was it had a story/some stakes to it. These teams have a reason to be mad at each other and I wanted to see the Infantry get the win. It wasn't a classic or anything close to it but I'll definitely take a good match with a reason to see the teams fight.

Nyla Rose vs. Camron Branae

Branae is better known as Amari Miller from NXT and slugs away at Rose to start. This goes very badly as Rose launches her into the corner but Branae manages to knock Rose to the floor. Back in and Rose hits a knee, setting up the Beast Bomb for the pin at 1:24. Branae showed some fire but Rose crushed her in the end.

Angelo Parker says he was going to retire when Ruby Soho told him he was going to be a dad. Now Parker has something to fight or and Matt Menard thinks it's time to come after the Ring Of Honor Tag Team Titles.

Undisputed Kingdom vs. The Qrown

Non-title Proving Ground match, meaning that if the Qrown wins or survives the ten minute time limit, they get a future title shot. Bennett slugs away at Leonis to start and the Kingdom takes turns stomping away in the corner. Leonis blocks a double suplex attempt and snaps off a belly to belly but it's too early for the tag to Maximus. Some hard clotheslines allows the tag to Maximus and house is quickly cleaned. That

doesn't last long though as the Kingdom is right back with the Hail Mary to finish Maximus at 4:17.

Rating: C+. The Qrown were a big deal in OVW when they were known as King's Ransom, which might not be a good name but it's a heck of a lot better than Qrown. The team definitely has potential as they are a good looking power team and I could go for seeing more of them. For now though, it was just a quick cameo and it worked pretty well.

JD Drake talks about being lost in the last month, to the point where his bowling game was messed up. He has a \$2 bill and that means he has two choices. Now he is ready to come back and give a \$2 bill worth of a beating as a Workhorseman.

Toa Liona vs. Jimmy Wild

Liona runs him over and chokes on the ropes, setting up an overhead belly to belly. Wild's comeback is cut off with a superkick and a backsplash on the apron makes it worse. Liona hits a Pounce for the pin at 2:14. Total squash.

Dark Order vs. Zicky Dice/Sean Maluta/Adam Priest

Silver runs Maluta down with some shoulders to start and backdrops a charging Dice. The Order triple team Maluta for two but Dice gets in a cheap shot to Uno from the apron. Dice comes in for some mocking kicks to the head, only to have Uno neckbreaker his way out of trouble. Reynolds gets the tag to clean house and a butterfly powerbomb gets two on Priest. Everything breaks down and a Canadian Destroyer into the triple flipping slam finishes Priest at 4:42.

Rating: C. The Dark Order being on the show in Daily's Place is a fine way to go as they were beloved here during the pandemic shows. Let the fans have something of a treat in a six man tag that isn't going to hurt anyone. It's not a match that took up any significant time and it was perfectly watchable so this was a fine addition to the card.

The Iron Savages are tired of being goofy without having success, so it's time for a change of pace. They're done trying to win over the stupid fans.

Aaron Solo vs. Jon Cruz

Solo wastes not time in stomping him into the corner and suplexing him right back out. Cruz is back with a slam as commentary praises Tony Khan for appearing at the NFL Draft in a neck brace. Solo shrugs it off and hits a spinning kick to the head for the pin at 1:31. Pushing Solo is a choice and he only looked so good here.

Queen Aminata vs. Robyn Renegade

They fight over a headlock to start with Aminata taking her down. Renegade gets up for a kick to the head into a Backstabber but Aminata drops her with some clotheslines. A running kick against the ropes knocks Renegade silly for two but a faceplant gets Renegade out of trouble. Renegade's Death Valley Driver gets two, only for Aminata to German suplex her into the corner. The hip attack and an Air Raid Crash finish for Aminata at 5:14.

Rating: C. Aminata gets a win on the way to her likely title shot against Athena. That should make for a good showdown whenever we get there and this was her warmup. Other than that, there wasn't much to it, though Renegade was firing back and had her usual intensity to make it decent.

Overall Rating: C+. They cut way back on the time this week and for the most part that was a good thing. While the opener is by far the best part of the show, it was nice to have things wrapped up so quickly. They featured some lower level stars this week but kept the show moving well enough that nothing overstayed its welcome. As usual, the brisk pace helps a lot around here and that was certainly true this week.

Results

Infantry b. Outrunners – Boot Camp to Magnum
Nyla Rose b. Camron Branae – Beast Bomb
Undisputed Kingdom b. Qrown – Hail Mary to Maximus
Toa Liona b. Jimmy Wild – Pounce
Dark Order b. Zicky Dice/Sean Maluta/Adam Priest – Triple
flipping slam to Priest
Aaron Solo b. Jon Cruz – Spinning kick to the head
Queen Aminata b. Robyn Renegade – Air Raid Crash

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WWE Speed – May 3, 2024: Wellthatwasfast

Speed

Date: May 3, 2024

Location: Heritage Bank Center, Cincinnati, Ohio

Commentator: Corey Graves

So this is Speed (as the title implies), which is basically a single match series that airs weekly on Twitter. It's not a show I'm going to watch regularly (though the gimmick of a three minute time limit is interesting) but I was in the building for this one, which happens to be for the inaugural title. Let's get to it.

Speed Title: Ricochet vs. Johnny Gargano

For the inaugural title, meaning a special five minute time limit, in a tournament final and they're starting fast here with no entrances. They go to the mat to start as Graves recaps the tournament and even says which is which. Ricochet powers him out to the apron to start, where Gargano manages a kick to the head. Gargano gets knocked to the floor but Ricochet misses the step up moonsault.

That means Gargano can hit a diving tornado DDT for two back inside and the Gargano Escape goes on. Ricochet powers out without too much trouble, only to miss the 450. A superkick into a poisonrana gives Gargano two and he drops Ricochet face first onto the turnbuckle. The low superkick gets two more but Ricochet is back with the Benadriller into the Recoil for two of his own. A Lethal Injection gives Ricochet the pin and the title at 4:21.

Rating: B-. This is a good example of "it is what it is" as WWE is flat out saying that this is about going as fast as you can with as many moves as possible. It's not something I would want to see a full length show from, but for a one off match where you're in and out in less than six minutes, it's virtually impossible to complain.

Ricochet poses with the title and that's the show, which clocks in at 5:38 total. Ricochet cut a promo about being the best and feeling like he would hold the title for a long time because it looks good on him but it didn't air here.

Overall Rating: B-. What is there to say here? The show is

literally one match and you're done in less than six minutes. I'm sure WWE got a nice check from Twitter to run this every week and sure why not. It's filming one match with the thinnest of gimmicks and a tournament can be held to put some continuity with it. The show isn't anything great or brilliant but how much complaining can you do when the whole thing is shorter than a Roman Reigns entrance?

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Backlash 2024: I Hear Voices

Backlash 2024

Date: May 4, 2024

Location: LDLC Arena, Lyon-Decines, France

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves

We're in France for the first time ever for one of these things and if last night's Smackdown crowd is any indication, the fans are going to be going nuts all night. That should help as the card is a bit lackluster, with only five matches. The main event is likely to be Cody Rhodes defending the WWE Universal Title against AJ Styles so let's get to it.

We open with a quick look at Lyon, including where it is on a map of France. That's a nice little touch.

The opening video looks at the show's card, which doesn't take that long.

Bloodline vs. Kevin Owens/Randy Orton

This is Tama Tonga's first televised match in WWE and Paul Heyman (looking terrified) is here with the Bloodline. The fans sing Orton's song to him in a cool moment and you can tell he's loving this. The brawl is on before the bell and a bunch of referees/agents come out to try and break it up to no avail. Owens beats up security so here is Nick Aldis to say that's enough. That's fine so let's make it a street fight.

The bell rings and the fight goes into the crowd, with Owens hitting Tonga in the back with a chair and the fans counting along as Orton hammers Sikoa. They get back to ringside with the Bloodline getting wrecked with trashcans, trashcan lids and kendo sticks, so let's bring in tables too. Owens splashes Tonga through one of the tables but Sikoa gets in a quick shot and Samoan drops Orton through another.

Tonga is back up to unload on Owens, with trashcan shots and a hip attack crushing him in the corner. Another table is loaded up but Owens sends Sikoa through it in the corner. Tonga blasts Owens with a clothesline as the crowd is wondering where Orton has gone. Cue Orton for the slow staredown with Tonga, including the snap powerslam. Sikoa is back up to send Orton into the announcers' table and clear it off for some more violence.

That takes way too long though and the Spike is reversed into the RK0 onto (not through) the table. Owens is back up with some chairs to Tonga's back and loads up four chairs two by two. Tonga catches him up top but Owens hits the swinging superplex through the chairs for the huge crash. Owens covers but Tanga Loa (Tonga's brother) makes the save and hits Orton

with the steps. Sikoa Spikes Owens for the pin at 19:35.

Rating: B+. This was absolutely wild and the fans were pushing it even further up the ladder. What mattered here was the fans having a good time as they never get to see this kind of thing live and they were milking the heck out of the whole thing. At the same time you have Loa arriving to seemingly make the new Bloodline that much better. White hot start to the show here and my goodness the crowd is already an all timer.

Post match Loa poses with the Bloodline.

We recap the Smackdown Women's Title match. Bayley won the title back at Wrestlemania and Tiffany Stratton wants the title. Bayley wanted Naomi to get the shot but Stratton interfered and then won a match of her own, setting up the triple threat match.

Smackdown Women's Title: Bayley vs. Naomi vs. Tiffany Stratton

Bayley is defending and the fans rather approve of her. Naomi snaps off some armdrags to start but Bayley is up with an exchange of rollups for two each. Stratton's handspring elbow hits Naomi in the corner and she kicks both of them down a pair of near falls. Naomi is sent outside so Stratton can stomp away on Bayley, who cuts off another handspring. Stratton plants her with an Alabama Slam as Naomi comes back in for the save.

Naomi and Stratton fight out to the floor, where Stratton hits a handspring elbow against the barricade. That earns her a dive from Bayley but Naomi Blockbusters her off the barricade for a big crash. Back in and Naomi's split legged moonsault gets two on Stratton with Bayley making the save. Bayley gets crotched on top, leaving Naomi to powerbomb Stratton into the reverse Rings Of Saturn. That's broken up with a top rope elbow, leaving all three of them down for a breather.

Bayley sunset bombs Naomi into the corner and Bayley to Bellys

Stratton for two. Naomi pulls Stratton outside for a beating but gets kicked into the barricade. An Alabama Slam plants Naomi onto the announcers' table and there's the same thing to Bayley. Back in and the Prettiest Moonsault Ever misses, allowing Bayley and Naomi to pop up with a 1D of all things to get rid of Stratton. That leaves Bayley and Naomi to trade rollups until Bayley stacks her up to retain at 12:34.

Rating: B-. This was a match that had its strong points but there were more than a few moments that didn't quite click. The crowd helped carry them a lot though and that is always a nice weapon to have in the back pocket. What mattered here was the right result, as it's too early for Stratton to win but she didn't take the fall. Good, though not great stuff.

Bayley and Naomi show respect post match.

The Bloodline comes up to Jey Uso but don't say anything.

We recap Damian Priest defending the Raw World Title against Jey Uso. Priest cashed in Money In The Bank to win the title at Wrestlemania and Uso earned the title shot by winning a four way the next night on Raw.

Raw World Title: Jey Uso vs. Damian Priest

Uso is challenging and comes in through the crowd. We get the Big Match Intros and Uso does YEET a lot before hitting Priest in the face. Priest misses a right hand and falls out to the floor but it's too early for the save. Back in and Priest knocks him down to take over as the pace slows way down. Uso ducks another right hand though and grabs a belly to back suplex.

The step up enziguri knocks Priest into the corner but Uso spends too much time yeeting, allowing Priest to send him to the apron. A high crossbody gives Uso two but cue JD McDonagh for a distraction so Priest can hit his own spear for two. Priest is really not happy with McDonagh and yells at him,

allowing Uso to hit a superkick into the Superfly Splash for two of his own.

Back up and they slug it out until some superkicks put both of them down. Priest is back with the Razor's Edge for two but South of Heaven is escaped, allowing Uso to spear him for two more. Another Superfly Splash is broken up by an invading Finn Balor and South of Heaven...gets two.

Priest hits a nasty spinning kick to the head and then does it again but a third is cut off with a superkick. More superkicks set up a spear into the Superfly Splash but McDonagh puts the foot on the rope at two. Uso dives onto McDonagh and spears Balor on the floor before going up top. This time Priest crotches him and hits a super South of Heaven to retain at 15:49.

Rating: C+. This went longer than it needed to but it never reached a terrible point or even got dull. Priest was just enough of a weak champion that you could see Uso having at least a prayer of winning, but ultimately they went with the right move. Priest getting annoyed at Judgment Day is interesting, though I'm not sure it's going to matter with a red hot Drew McIntyre and Clash At The Castle coming up.

Post match Priest is mad at Balor and McDonagh but poses with them.

Video on the European tour.

One of the French announcers announces that this is the largest gate of any arena show in WWE history.

Women's Tag Team Titles: Bianca Belair/Jade Cargill vs. Kabuki Warriors

The Warriors are defending and have Dakota Kai with them. Belair flips away from Asuka to start before having to power out of something like an Octopus hold. It's off to Cargill for

some spinning backbreakers on Sane and a double powerbomb drops Sane again. Asuka makes the save and knocks Belair outside, with Sane hitting a big dive to take over. Sane hits a top rope forearm for two more as the fans are wanting the hot tag to Cargill.

Asuka misses a splash but Sane is right there to knock Cargill off the apron and cut off the tag attempt. Asuka strikes Belair down for two and she grabs an armbar, only to have Belair power up for the escape. A hard clothesline drops Sane and the diving tag brings in Cargill, who springboards in with a crossbody. Cargill Sky High's Sane for two and plants her again with a Widowmaker. The Warriors strike away at Cargill but Sane isn't legal so there's no count.

Everything breaks down and the Warriors both grab submissions, both of which are broken up with powerbombs (that was a rather rough sequence as they did not seem to know what to do for a good while). Belair tags herself back in and it's a DDT into a wheelbarrow suplex for two on Sane. A missed charge sends Belair into the post and the assisted Insane Elbow gets two, with Cargill making the save. Cargill muscles Sand up and flips her into Jaded (that was amazing) and Belair KOD's Asuka onto her for the pin and the titles at 17:41.

Rating: C. This was a match where the aura and atmosphere helped so much. From a technical standpoint it only worked so well, with that stretch in the middle where they clearly got lost looking rather terrible. At the same time though, you have Cargill being able to muscle up a grown woman and spin her around like a doll. That's the part that is likely to be remembered here and it should be, as you do not see someone like Cargill very often. She needs a lot of ring time, but the good things she does are incredibly impressive. As for the match, it needed to be five minutes shorter and it wasn't great, but the end was right.

We recap AJ Styles vs. Cody Rhodes for the WWE Universal

Title. Rhodes won the title at Wrestlemania and Styles is the first challenger, wanting to prove he can still do it.

Smackdown World Title: Cody Rhodes vs. AJ Styles

Styles is challenging. Feeling out process to start with Styles' early headscissors getting him nowhere. Back up and Cody dropkicks him down into the corner and even mocks the old Stardust post for good measure. Styles strikes away but gets caught with a backdrop for a delayed one. Rhodes grabs a rather delayed vertical suplex, only to have his banged up shoulder sent into the post.

Styles stays on the arm until Rhodes avoids a charge to send him throat first into the ropes with a nasty crash. The announcers' table is loaded up but that takes too long as well, allowing Rhodes to fight back. Back in and Rhodes tries a delayed superplex but Styles slips out and they crash to the mat. Styles' Lionsault hits raised knees though and Rhodes slugs away. There's the snap powerslam into the Disaster Kick for two.

The fireman's carry backbreaker gives Styles two and they head to the apron, where Styles brainbusters him down to the floor. Rhodes is back up with a powerbomb through the announcers' table and they're both down again. They dive back in to beat the count and some stereo kicks to the head give us another double down. We get the big pull up in the corner for the slugout, with Rhodes' Bionic Elbow getting two. Neither can get a Tombstone so Styles settles for a suplex into the corner.

The springboard 450 gets two, followed by a Burning Hammer for...one. Styles is stunned but Rhodes fights up and hits a Cody Cutter for two. Cross Rhodes blocked but Rhodes superkicks the Phenomenal Forearm out of the air. Rhodes switches things up with a Kimura of all things, which is broken up with a powerbomb. The Styles Clash is blocked and

Rhodes rolls him up for two. Another Cody Cutter into Cross Rhodes retains the title at 27:25.

Rating: A-. This match wasn't designed to have drama about the result but rather about giving Rhodes a big win to kick off his title reign. That did just fine, with Styles more than holding his own to make Rhodes look great. Awesome match here and it felt like a main event, even with Rhodes being the most obvious winner on the whole card.

Highlight package wraps us up.

Overall Rating: B. The opener and main event were both very good and the three matches in the middle were...well not great but good enough. The real story here though is going to be the crowd, as they were some of the loudest and most engaged fans I have ever seen. It is definitely an instance where the crowd carried the show that much higher and my goodness it was fun to watch. The show might not have been the most eventful but I was never bored and it was certainly memorable.

Results

Bloodline b. Randy Orton/Kevin Owens – Samoan Spike to Owens
Bayley b. Naomi and Tiffany Stratton – Rollup to Naomi
Damian Priest b. Jey Uso – Super South of Heaven chokeslam
Jade Cargill/Bianca Belair b. Kabuki Warriors – KOD onto Sane
Cody Rhodes b. AJ Styles – Cross Rhodes

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