

ECW on Sci-Fi – September 12, 2006: ECW In MSG

ECW on Sci-Fi

Date: September 12, 2006

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

Commentators: Joey Styles, Tazz

We're coming up on Unforgiven and in a bit of a lull for ECW. We aren't ready to talk about December to Dismember yet but we don't really have anything planned for in between then. My guess would be we have random matches that don't add up to much until then which is par for the course. Oh and we're in the World's Most Famous Arena tonight. Let's get to it.

We open with Heyman and his masked bodyguards in the ring. He talks about the deal he made to bring ECW to the big time and again says that the fans owe him a thank you. The way he's speaking is kind of strange as you can tell he thinks what he's saying is bull, but he's a native New Yorker and he has ECW in Madison Square Garden. It's an interesting combination.

Sabu almost immediately runs out and goes after the guards with a chair, knocking them to the floor. Heyman makes Big Show vs. Sabu later on in an extreme rules match. In theory that wouldn't be for the title but you never know with his mindset after awhile. Sabu dives onto the guards because he's a bit out there.

Rob Van Dam vs. Hardcore Holly

Van Dam jumps him to start and snaps off a fast rana before being backdropped to the floor. Holly busts out a pescado which is a rare thing to see from him. This is as a result of Holly jumping Van Dam recently at the request/suggestion of Heyman, who hates Van Dam for some reason. Back in and a legdrop gets two for Holly who is in full control. A middle rope

elbow kind of misses as I think Van Dam got his foot up but it looked odd.

Either way Van Dam is making his comeback here and hits the step over kick followed by Rolling Thunder for a delayed two. A monkey flip sends Holly out of the corner and Van Dam heads up. Holly crotches him but the superplex is broken up. The Five Star is loaded up again but here are Stevie Richards and Mike Knox for the DQ for no apparent reason.

Rating: C-. Not bad here but it was too short to go anywhere. Holly was a guy that they wanted to be a big deal in ECW, but at the end of the day he's the same guy that has been a joke on the main two shows for years leading up to this. It's hard to take him seriously when he was the guy running around with Crash for all those years.

Van Dam beats those two up but Test comes out as well, hitting the full nelson slam to take him out. Sandman and Dreamer finally run in for the save. Everyone hits Richards with something and the Five Star finishes his murder.

CM Punk vs. Shannon Moore

Two matches without a commercial or segment? I'm stunned. This is Moore's ECW debut. He slaps Punk in the face to start and pounds him down which is probably about the extent of his offense here. Punk jumps over Moore in the corner and hooks the Tarantula Vice in the ropes. A series of strikes to the ribs stops Moore dead as the fans are chanting for Punk. The corner knee/bulldog hits and the high kick sets up the Rock Bottom into the Anaconda Vice for the tap. Basically just a squash.

Rene Dupree is looking in a mirror.

Punk talks about all the guys he wants to fight when Kelly Kelly comes up to hit on him. She asks him out but Mike Knox makes the save. I think I

smell a feud.

The villain in The Marine says the movie is cool.

Ariel and Kevin Thorn come out for the next match.

Rene Dupree vs. Balls Mahoney

Dupree jumps him to start but Balls comes back with the signature punches in the corner. A charge hits the post for Mahoney though and a bottom rope splash gets two for Rene. Taz: "That's extreme?" A middle rope elbow gets the same and I can't believe I'm watching this on ECW.

I get the idea that they're going with to have Dupree as a heel in ECW, but it doesn't change the fact that we've had guys like Shannon Moore, Mike Knox and Rene Dupree on this show. Mahoney snaps off the Nutcracker Sweet (sitout spinebuster) for two and they head to the floor. Balls gets a chair but Thorn kicks him into the steps, giving Dupree the pin.

Rating: D. Like I said, at the end of the day you can only get so into a match about Rene Dupree. Mahoney is one of the holdovers from the original ECW who at least looks like he belongs on a show about Extreme wrestling. This wasn't good by almost any standard but it set up Thorn vs. Mahoney which is less dull than this was.

Matt Striker doesn't like Sandman or the people drinking his "giggle water". I give up.

ECW World Title: Big Show vs. Sabu

This is non-title. Ok apparently it is for the belt. Why would Heyman agree to that? He and the bodyguards are at ringside and Heyman is panicking as Sabu sets up tables before the bell. We take a break and come back with Sabu holding a chair in the ring and the bell rings. Show

swats that away with ease and knocks him out to the floor. Back in and Show throws the chair to the floor and clotheslines Sabu down for two. This is going very slowly so far.

Sabu finally wakes up and takes out Show's leg followed by a chair shot. Then Sabu shows that he's an idiot by trying a freaking camel clutch on BIG SHOW. Show gets caught on the top rope and kicked to the floor but it doesn't really do anything to him. The fans want tables so Show sets one up in the ring, making him a face for about 5 seconds. Sabu picks up a chair but looks scared to swing it.

The chokeslam is countered by Sabu into a DDT through the table for two. For a crowd that wanted tables, they didn't seem to be that interested in it once Show was put through it. Sabu pelts the chair at Show and knocks him through the table on the floor. The crowd again doesn't seem too interested. Show goes into the post and Sabu gets in a chair shot to the back. Air Sabu to the floor is caught in a chokeslam through another table and Sabu is in big trouble. The Cobra Clutch backbreaker sets up the standing legdrop (called the Showstopper here) for the pin.

Rating: D+. The crowd told the story here: no one bought Sabu as a real threat to Show at all and why should they have? Show has been completely dominant unless he's against more than one person, and Sabu's offense isn't made to face someone like Show, who is way too big and strong for a small guy like Sabu. Some of the bumps were decent but there was no way they could make this be exceptionally good.

Overall Rating: D+. I know I talked about the problems they were having with the ECW guys being the focus, but now we've reached a new section of problems for ECW. No matter what you call it or repackage these guys as, no one was going to care about Rene Dupree, Hardcore Holly, Test and Mike Knox. Those guys aren't people that are going to create interest at all. They've been jobbers for so long on Raw and Smackdown that no one was going to buy them as threats anywhere. That's what wound up happening and it wasn't for a good many months that the problem got solved.

Here's Unforgiven if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/08/12/unforgiven-2006-the-year-of-cena-begins/>

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Unforgiven 2006: The Year Of Cena Begins

Unforgiven 2006

Date: September 17, 2006

Location: Air Canada Center, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Attendance: 16,105

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

For some reason this is a very requested show, so here it is. This is a two match show for the most part as Cena goes for the world title against Edge in a TLC match where Cena will be the HUGE heel. Also here we have DX vs. the McMahons and Big Show in Hell in a Cell. I don't think I've ever seen that match all the way through so that's a nice little bonus reason to watch this show. Other than that there's just not much here, but then again 06 was only an ok year for the company. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about those two matches which is exactly what you would expect it to be about.

Intercontinental Title: Johnny Nitro vs. Jeff Hardy

Wow talk about two different career paths. I'm not sure who

gyrates more: Hardy or Melina. They mention Jeff's three year absence, which was when he was in TNA, but we can't say that name so there you are. Long feeling out process to start which is fine if they have time to work with. Nice armdrag and then another by Hardy as we get the obligatory Ricky Steamboat reference.

Nitro plays the standard heel role by hiding on the floor when Jeff gets momentum. That's such a basic thing and it worked very well. I don't get why more people don't do it. SWEET slingshot dropkick to Nitro and he hits the floor. Baseball slide takes care of him there too as it's all Hardy. Nitro hits a dropkick to Hardy while Hardy is on top to take over though. DAng Melina can scream.

He works on Hardy's knee which is rather smart given the style of offense he uses. Top rope twisting moonsault (Starship Pain but from the top rope and without the leg split) misses and we're back to even. Whisper in the Wind hits very well and Nitro is in trouble. Swanton hits clean but Jeff's leg is hurt and Nitro gets his foot on the ropes. Nitro keeps working on the knee and even gets a leg/ankle lock.

Melina gets up on the apron and down she goes thanks to Nitro which gets a rollup for Hardy for two. She can however take her boot off and apply it to the face of Hardy to make sure Nitro wins. Ross gets in a jab at her which is rather amusing for some reason.

Rating: B-. Competitive but this went nearly 20 minutes which is a very long time for these two. It's pretty good but for some reason it just never clicked. The ending is fine though as it's basic heel stuff which never gets old. What more can you ask for in a match as far as basic face vs. basic heel stuff? Solid, Cruiserweight style stuff which is a good idea.

Marine stuff, which wasn't a bad movie.

Matt gives Jeff a pep talk and Lita shows up and insults

occur.

Kane vs. Umaga

Oh yay. It's this match again. They claim this is Umaga's PPV debut. That's idiotic as he had been at Backlash, 4 months before this. I was kind of there so I think I'd know. Estrada is annoying which is the idea so he's got that right at least. The introduction takes about 5 minutes. Who would guess that Kane would win the world title before Umaga would?

Kane punches him back into the corner to start and it's a slugout. Big boot to the face does almost nothing and then Kane sits up after a kick from Umaga. Some Estrada interference lets Umaga take over, which sucks because I was enjoying the whole neither can do anything at all. King compares this to Godzilla vs. Mothra, because both of them resemble large butterflies.

The running flying hip smash connects and Kane is reeling. And of course such a high impact move is followed up by a thumb to the throat, which is SO DEVASTATING! It appears that all Kane can do is punch. Him vs. Rocky Balboa could be amusing. A flying thumb to the head misses from the middle rope. I do enjoy that flying clothesline from Kane. Then again I like Kane in general so there you are.

Chokeslam is started but almost blocked. More striking and then Kane hits a belly to belly (!) over the top to the floor and they head into the crowd. I think you can put the rest together for yourselves. The brawl keeps going, resulting in absolutely no conclusion at all. They brawl into the set and go through a door in it, ticking off the crowd immensely.

Rating: D+. Kane didn't care at all at this point and can you blame him? He had no reason to as he knew he wasn't getting elevated at all no matter what he did. He was stuck in these dead end feuds with random people that meant nothing such as this one. Umaga would go on to fight Cena for the world title

in a few months while Kane just did his thing over and over again. He's a company man, you have to give him that.

We go to Vince in the back who is watching a tape of him hitting and then pinning HHH on Raw. He and Shane want to destroy DX which they've been trying to do all summer now. The idea is that Vince does nothing but gets to do the pin.

Raw Tag Titles: Spirit Squad vs. Highlanders

The Highlanders were really funny in their vignettes and then debuted to a nice reaction. This is more or less the peak of their importance. Rory (the other is Robbie) looks like Mad Dog Vachon from a facial hair perspective. Imagine Scottish Bushwackers. That sums them up pretty well. Kenny and Mikey are the Squad members here today. All Highlanders so far.

This really isn't much of a match as you can more or less feel the screwy ending coming soon. Robbie misses a dive and the three other guys beat up Robbie to take over. Crowd is DEAD. The top rope legdrop from Kenny misses as this needs to end like now. Rory gets the hot tag which is lacking heat and hits his finisher on Mikey. After a save Johnny kicks Rory in the head and an X Factor (by the beard no less) ends it.

Rating: D. And so what? That's what I was thinking when this match ended: so what. Who cares that the Spirit Squad has ANOTHER win using the same stuff they've used every time? It's just not an interesting dynamic for this long, and then at the end of the day Piper and Flair wound up taking the titles from them. That's the best they could do? This division was long since dead at this point and that was very clear.

We recap the Vince vs. DX feud which went on forever and was pretty badly received. It just kept going and stupid stuff that DX was doing was "breaking" Vince. Steve Austin kidnapped Vince, destroyed his car and threatened to shoot him and Vince never broke. And yet this is enough to get us to a Cell match?

Big Show/Vince McMahon/Shane McMahon vs. Degeneration X

Does anyone else have an issue with Vince and Shane and even Show being in a Cell match? Does that just not fit right with anyone besides me? Show is ECW Champion at this point. This is a different kind of cell too as it's not as wide but taller. Maybe it is as wide. Double low blow immediately on Show and DX takes over. I have a feeling this could go on for a very long time.

Shane gets launched into the cage as HHH beats up his father in law. Shane is busted open already. Show's balls must be throbbing since he's still down. All DX so far as Vince gets his face grated over the cage which is a great spot as it's painful looking and draws blood too. You can't beat that. Show is back up and HHH does his jump over the top in the corner which always looks good.

Shawn hits a dive but it gets caught. I love power spots like that. How can you fake catching a grown man like that when he's launching himself down at you? HHH drops a knee on Vince and it CLEARLY misses by at least 4 inches. Vince not moving an inch didn't help things. Really bad camera shot there as it totally exposed everything. It looked fine to the live fans I guess, but terrible from a TV perspective.

Apparently HHH has a bad ear, which is a rare injury. Vince is bleeding and Shawn goes into the cage. Things have slowed down a lot here. JR calls the fence a javelin catcher. Where does he get some of this stuff? The weapons are brought in, starting with a trashcan. Coast to Coast hits HHH and DX is more or less dead.

Shawn is brought back in and Vince gets to punch on him a bit. Shane hits a slingshot on HHH to launch him into the cage. Vader Bomb to Shawn from Show. Vince picks him up though and then does it again. You imbecile. HHH comes back after a decent rest and it's low blows for everyone. From out of

nowhere Shane gets a torture rack of all things into a neckbreaker on HHH.

Everyone is down until a SICK enziguri takes out Shane again. Vince of course lowers his pants to try to get Shawn to kiss up to him. HHH makes a save but too much Big Show stops that. Shawn manages to avoid a splash with a nip up and Vince takes it. DX takes out Show with a bunch of low blows and here's the big comeback. They do all their favorites and HHH gets some chairs from under the ring.

They Pillmanize Shane's neck which would have killed him in kayfabe but whatever. Show comes back to stop the kick as this is going too long. Actually it isn't as the length is helping to a degree. Chairs and steps plus chin music take Show out again. Vince is all that's left so DX pulls down Show's shorts. You know what's coming. There doesn't appear to be a thong either. You can't say he won't do whatever it takes for his company.

HHH busts out a sledgehammer just for fun. Superkick hits and HHH breaks the hammer over Vince. So between that and attempting to murder Shane, how many years in prison is that for them? Pin is academic. Shane is taken out on a stretcher, as is Vince, which gets cheers. I'll give them this: that's how you END a feud.

Rating: C+. It was entertaining, but this just didn't feel like it belonged in a Cell. If there hadn't been so many people it would have fit in a regular cage better. This wasn't bad, but it just doesn't measure up to everything else. The kissing thing hurts the whole nightmare part a lot. This was a good match, but after the attempted murder, cheering them is kind of hard. It's ok but it doesn't work if that makes sense.

The post match stuff takes like five minutes.

Mania is in Detroit.

We get a package on Trish, as her retirement match is next. It's her hometown, so what do you really think is going to happen? If nothing else the highlight reel of her hotness is nice. The story is that Trish wasn't going to announce the retirement but Lita told WWE.com so that Trish couldn't have her moment, which is different if nothing else.

Women's Title: Trish Stratus vs. Lita

If she's going to go, this is how you do it: in your hometown against your rival for the title. Both of their theme songs freaking rock. Lita is announced from Atlanta which sounds weird. LOUD Thank You Trish chant before the music even hits. She gets the loudest pop for a Diva ever, period. This really is a cool moment and her stumbling up the steps is awesome too.

Lita gets booed out of the building and I had to grab my headphones to get the loudness out of my ears when Trish went on offense. Thesz Press off the apron to Lita and I can't get over how hot this crowd is for this. I know it's a big deal but DANG they're loud for it. They changed the mat during the video package so that the blood is gone, which is nice since the stains on the mat get annoying later on.

Lita's looks never worked that well with bangs. In a cool spot, Lita blocks the headscissors out of the corner and Trish winds up sitting on Lita's lap in the corner as they punch each other. Never seen that before. They fight even more on the top and Trish goes to the mat. Moonsault misses and the Stratusfaction is missed too. A fan at ringside actually asks Trish to marry him as she's down. Well he's certainly trying.

Trish is in trouble as they actually tease her losing here. That's rather amusing. JR mentions she'll be in the Hall of Fame, which better be true. If she's not they might as well close off any other Divas. They slug it out which is something these two can actually make believable, which isn't often said

of the ladies. BIG old kick to the head of Lita gets two.

Sweet move by Trish as Stratusfaction is reversed but Trish twists PERFECTLY in midair into a sunset flip. The sunset flip part isn't great but the twist was nice. It gets two, but Trish gets the freaking SHARPSHOOTER and the crowd absolutely loses it. Lita almost gets the rope but Trish drags her back to the middle for the tap and the title.

Rating: A. This wasn't for the match, although it was good. This was about a last moment, and I'd love to hear a way to go out that is better than this. In her hometown, using the most famous move in the history of the country, she beat her archrival and broke the record for most Women's Championship ever. That is what you call epic. Good match too, but that's expected from these two. Crowd was awesome too.

Everyone gives Trish an ovation, including Lillian, Jim and Jerry. Lita would retire in like 3 months, killing the division once and for all.

There's a season premiere of Smackdown. I think that was the Friday debut.

Orton is in the back and gets a mixed reaction, even though he's a heel here. He says no one cares about her retirement unless you're Canadian. Orton REALLY can't talk yet here and it shows badly. He has Carlito next. Odd interview and not in a good way.

Randy Orton vs. Carlito

I still like Burn in My Light better than Voices. This is more or less the apex of Carlito's WWE push. Standard stuff to start which is fine. Randy takes over and we get an RK0 chant. I love Canadian crowds. So much for that Randy takes over aspect as Carlito hits some nice springboard splashes. Both guys have nice dropkicks also. Orton's mouth is busted, which today would bring a match to a screeching halt.

It's chinlock time, which was more prevalent back in the day if you can believe that. Carlito hits a Downward Spiral which is a required move in this company I think. RKO is countered into the Backcracker and is told they have two minutes left. To end it, Carlito does a double springboard into a spinning clothesline. It doesn't hit though as Orton pulls him into the RKO in a SWEET counter. Awesome ending to a bad match.

Rating: D+. This was rather boring. It's nothing great at all as the whole thing was about the ending. Carlito was a rather odd worker as he had such a different style but it just never clicked for more than like one match in a row. This was rather short and didn't really ever get off the ground, but after the long celebration with Trish they're likely short on time.

We recap Edge vs. Cena, which is happening because Cena wants the title. The idea is if Cena loses here to Edge in Edge's hometown then he goes to Smackdown for three years. There's also a new belt here as Edge threw the spinner belt in the water. He has a new spinner with an R on it. This gets the music video treatment. Oh and Cena's dad got beaten up by Edge.

Raw World Title: Edge vs. John Cena

Oh and it's TLC. Let the Vince hardon begin. No coat for Edge here which is weird. BIG pop for Edge. I really want to see him as a face again. It might have helped to have him be a face for more than like two months or give him more than just shouting SPEAR over and over again. They start booing before Cena's music even hits. Nuclear heat on Cena.

I love having the ladder and chair set up on the tables around the ring. That's always a perk for some reason. Cena just being a two time champion is great. You can barely understand Lillian over the pop for Edge. Ross makes a good point and asks what Buddy Rogers would think of a TLC match. I'd counter with what would he think of the belt that spins with a big R

on it.

LOUD booing for a simple headlock. This crowd is awesome. Impaler hits but since it's not 2000 anymore that move is just average. I've never gotten that: how can a move like that just lose its power? Cena goes into some chairs and Edge is loudly cheered. You'll get used to that tonight. Ladder time as Edge is mostly dominant. I'm getting tired of me saying things and then them changing immediately. A hip toss puts Edge onto a ladder and the American takes over.

It has always confused me a bit how people always talk about experience in these kinds of matches. How much experience do you need to climb a ladder? Sunset powerbomb through the table is kind of botched as the table isn't there so they hit mat instead of table. A powerslam does it instead. These matches are hard to review as you kind of always wind up just listing off spots and it gets rather repetitive.

Edge runs up the ladder and hits a dive over the top to take out Cena which looked awesome. One man Conchairto is avoided by Cena, resulting in the cheering from fans over the lack of massive head trauma. STFU with Edge inside a ladder, which actually would hurt which is nicer than the figure four around the leg which wouldn't really add a lot of pain I don't think.

Cena hits an FU on the ladder. As in the ladder was across his shoulder and landed on Edge who was on the mat. Edge takes over again and sets Cena on a table then sets up another table on top of that. Nothing happens with it though, so I'd bet on that being the big finish. The BIG ladder is brought out and Edge is down, so Cena has to inch up the ladder.

SPEAR to take Cena off the ladder. It's not quite the one to Hardy but it's not bad at all. They fight over big spots near the ladder and Edge hits the floor. Cena almost gets the belt but Lita makes the save and Cena takes a big old fall to the floor and through a table. Lita messes up though and causes

Edge to go flying through a table as well. FU to Lita and it's time for Miley Cyrus' big song from last year.

The double stack table is set up again but for no apparent reason at all as Edge is down on the floor and Cena is capable of climbing. Both guys on are the ladder and in a fairly famous visual now, Edge takes the FU off the ladder through two tables. Cena grabs the belt, which he would hold for the next full year plus.

Rating: B. I thought a higher grade at first but this feels more right. It's definitely a good match and worthy of being a PPV main event, but it just feels kind of anti-climactic. Cena defies the odds again and wins the title? It's not bad or anything but it just lacks that spark I guess you would say. Very intense match though with some very nice big bumps. This is worth checking out.

Overall Rating: B. It's definitely a good show and the two huge matches are definitely a good way to sell the show. This has some issues with it but for the most part it's good. Trish's moment is probably the highlight of the show actually but the whole stupid spot in the Cell match just stopped that one dead. It's worth seeing and is definitely entertaining but not a classic or anything. I'd consider this a good popcorn show if that makes sense.

**Monday Night Raw – November
13, 2006: Brace Yourselves**

People. We've Got A Running Joke Here.

Monday Night Raw

Date: November 13, 2006

Location: M.E.N. Arena, Manchester, England

Attendance: 15,266

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is happening for one reason: my girlfriend was at the show and asked me to review the show. At least I have a reason for it this time which is more than I can usually say. This is just after the McMahons vs. DX war ended but we still have Coach around to mess with them, so I think we have a show long angle cooking. Let's get to it.

Here's DX to open the show. HHH says there have been some loud crowds in the UK but Manchester is going to be the loudest. He does the usual intro but says he doesn't have anything new to say this week. Shawn takes the mic and says what you can do if you're not down with that. HHH says DX has made a list and both male McMahons and Bischoff are checked off said list. They make references to the end of last week's show and we get a clip of Bischoff having his head shoved up a scantily clad area of Big Dick Johnson. JR: "That was controversial and it created cash!" Shawn appears to be getting sick after seeing that again.

That only leaves Edge and Orton on the list, but here's Coach with something to say. DX can forget about the yet to be named Rated RKO tonight. The fans boo him out of the building and DX makes fun of him for trying to ban them from the building. Coach is drowned out by the crowd again. He says he's put out a bounty on them worth \$10,000. HHH: "You cheap bastard!" Coach makes a handicap tag for right now.

D-Generation X vs. Lance Cade/Viscera/Trevor Murdoch/Charlie Haas

This is joined in progress after a break with Shawn taking Haas down with a shoulder block. A hip toss puts Haas down and Shawn grabs a headlock. Shawn and HHH are in street clothes and it's off to Cade who is chopped

in the corner. Murdoch comes in and kicks Shawn's head off but he jumps into a boot in that stupid move that gets on my nerves.

Shawn can't make the tag as Viscera comes in with a side slam which gets two for Haas. A hard kick to the back gets two and it's back to Cade for a chinlock. Shawn fights up and an enziguri lets him tag his male life partner. House is cleaned and it's spinebuster/Pedigree for the pin on Haas.

Rating: D+. What in the world were you expecting here? This is why the feud with the McMahons over the summer wasn't that well received: almost no one can give DX a run for their money in a straight match so there was a revolving door of midcarders to face them in handicap matches. That's why Rated RKO was such a big help as it gave them people who could realistically challenge Shawn and HHH. Matches like these though were just there to give DX new people to beat up.

Kenny tells the three members of the Spirit Squad not in the upcoming tag match to get the bounty.

We cut to DX in the back and a Squad member (Nicky I believe, more famous as current Mr. MITB Dolph Ziggler) charging at them, only to miss completely. Shawn hits him with a trashcan lid and HHH hits Mikey with the same lid. HHH and Shawn have a quick pow wow, talking about how this is going to be a long night. They take a step towards the camera to avoid a diving Mitch in a predictable yet amusing spot.

Highlanders vs. Spirit Squad

The Highlanders were a Scottish team that you don't need to remember. This would be Johnny and Kenny for the Squad. Robbie and Johnny get us going and down goes Johnny via a headbutt. Off to the bald Rory who gets two off a cross body. Johnny rakes the eyes and it's off to Kenny who was supposed to be the breakout star of the team.

The Squad double teams Rory down and it's off to another chinlock. Rory sends Kenny into the top rope (JR: "Does anyone have a last name anymore?" Jerry: "You just have initials.") and it's a hot tag to Rory. Everything breaks down and the Squad sends Rory to the floor so Kenny can

roll up Rory for the pin.

Rating: F. From a technical standpoint this was fine, but I literally cannot think of a match that I have ever been less interested in. This match had absolutely nothing at all that made me care. I mean there was nothing at all in here that made me want to see any of these people wrestle again. This was a failure in that regard, which is a horrible result for these guys, and none of them would have a job in WWE two years from the date of this show.

We recap last week where Lawler had to wrestle a match against Chris Masters while being handcuffed to the top rope. Therefore tonight, Lawler is taking the Masterlock Challenge.

The Challenge is right now apparently. Masters takes forever to put it on and then it's just like everyone else that has been in this. Hey, did you know Masters was really strong? Clearly it's his fault that the gimmick never got over when that was all he was given to work with for years.

DX is in the back when Eugene comes in to try to claim the bounty. HHH hands him a roll of paper towels. Eugene punches the door and then charges into a food table.

Lita says she'll beat Mickie James tonight.

HHH tries to use the bathroom but has to beat up Chris Masters instead.

Umaga vs. John Cena

Todd Grisham has jumped in on commentary to replace Lawler now. Umaga beat up Maria last week until Cena made the save. Cena is world champion and Umaga is undefeated here. The champ can't hurt him to start and Umaga takes him down with an uppercut. A Samoan Drop puts Cena down and it's time for a nerve hold. Cena fights up and hits the Throwback before knocking Umaga into the ropes ala Andre. Estrada tries to interfere but here's Big Show (looking like he ate Umaga) for the DQ.

Rating: D+. This wasn't so much a match but rather angle advancement. Cena and Show were Survivor Series captains in a few weeks so there's your explanation. This would be the Rumble main event as well as I think

Armageddon where Cena had the classic man vs. a monster formula down to a tee. I still can't get over how huge Show is though. I know he's big today (August 2012) but he looks SLIM compared to how he looks in 2006.

The monsters destroy Cena.

DX comes in to see Coach and they already have a Benny Hill style video recap of the last hour. DX says Coach wins and they'll leave, but Coach says they don't get the \$10,000. Shawn steals the money. Ok then.

Intercontinental Title: Jeff Hardy vs. Johnny Nitro

Hardy is challenging after Bischoff cheated to help Nitro get the title a week ago. Jeff grabs a headlock to start but quickly switches to the arm. Nitro is sent to the floor but misses a slingshot splash coming back in. Jeff pounds away in the corner but Nitro bails before the Swanton can be launched. Jeff is like screw that and dives on Nitro on the floor as we take a break.

Back with Jeff dropping the leg between the legs for two. Nitro comes back with the kick eventually known as the Flying Chuck for two and it's chinlock time. Jeff grabs a quick sunset flip out of the corner but Nitro clotheslines him down again for two. Back to a chinlock by Nitro but Jeff breaks it pretty quickly again. Jeff makes a comeback but misses Whisper in the Wind to give the champ control again. A reverse powerbomb gets two for Nitro but he jumps off the middle rope into a powerbomb from Hardy which gets the same. Cool looking counter though.

The Swanton hits but Melina has the referee. Ross freaking out over it makes me miss him as compared to the laid back attitude of Cole. Nitro hits a neckbreaker but an AJ Styles Spiral Tap gets two. Jeff counters the pin out of nowhere into a rollup for the pin and the title. That came so fast that I almost had to rewind the video.

Rating: C. Not a great match here but it seems like it would have been better live. Hardy is a guy that is awesome when he's flying around out there but Nitro wasn't ready to be a real threat to him yet. Melina's screaming gets very annoying very quickly but then again that's the idea. Nitro would get better when he became John Morrison.

Nitro beats up Hardy post match and pulls out a ladder to further the attack with. I think I smell a rubber match.

DX is outside and HHH thinks they should use the money to go inside and buy tickets. They find scalpers instead (in the form of Cryme Tyme) but HHH can't understand them. Shawn says he speaks jive. I wonder if they'll catch an Airplane home after the show.

Carlito is reading a paper in the back when Torrie and some Daily Star (the paper he's reading) girls come in. Apparently there are scantily clad women in there but Carlito says he's reading the sports section. Torrie asks him out and invites him to stay in her hotel tonight.

We run down the Survivor Series card.

DX buys all the DX shirts from the merchandise stand. They throw them into the crowd and apparently my girlfriend caught one HHH threw.

Lita vs. Mickie James

Lita is Women's Champion but this is non-title. DX is in the front row now. Apparently Mickie has to have her feet shackled together for some reason. Mickie says after the match Lita can have the shackles because she needs her legs tied together. Lita jumps Mickie to start and the champ is in full control. DX starts a Lita's A Ho chant as this is completely one sided so far. The champ goes after them and slaps HHH but he sprays mustard on her. Back inside Mickie hits Lita with a salami (I kid you not) and hits the jumping DDT for the pin. Not really funny but good upskirt shots of Mickie are never a bad thing.

With Lita still recovering, here are Orton, Edge and Coach with the final of those three ejecting DX.

Tag Titles: Rated RK0 vs. Ric Flair/Roddy Piper

Flair and Piper took the tag titles from the Spirit Squad so that they could drop the titles to Rated RK0. Seriously, would ANYONE expect the old guys to retain here? I know it's spoiling things early, but dude come on. In case it wasn't one sided enough already, Piper comes out first and gets double teamed with a chair by Rated RK0. Flair comes out to fight

off Orton but Edge hits a Conchairto on Piper, making it a handicap match.

There's a WOO banner that is longer than the side of the ring. That's pretty impressive. Edge starts and Flair's chops only get him so far here. Off to Orton who pounds Flair down in the corner some more. This is domination so far. A clothesline puts Ric on the floor where Orton suplexes him to follow up. Back inside and Edge hooks a chinlock. Flair ges a low blow on Orton so it's back to Edge who gets chopped down. Orton misses a dropkick but as Flair loads up the Figure Four, Edge spears him down for the pin and the titles.

Rating: D. The match sucked, but as I said earlier DX needed a credible pair to fight and giving Orton and Edge the titles gave them something to fight over. There was zero drama here and it wound up being a five minute squash. Edge and Orton would hold the titles into the new year until Shawn and Cena won them. HHH would get injured (again) in the big match between the teams but the idea was right.

DX runs out for the save and beats up security to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This is a tricky one. It's not what I would call a good show as the best match (the IC Title) was the only one with any significant length. That being said, you can't say stuff didn't happen here as we had two title changes and a show long story. Cena was a complete afterthought here other than for about five minutes, but DX was entertaining so I'm not that angry. This is by no means a bad show but there's nothing on it great. It's a show that would be better served if you read the results online and Youtubed some highlights.

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ECW on Sci-Fi – August 15, 2006: He Monkey Flipped A Ladder. A LADDER.

ECW on Sci-Fi

Date: August 22, 2006

Location: Wachovia Arena, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Joey Styles, Tazz

We're past Summerslam now and Big Show is still champion, having beaten Sabu at Summerslam. The main event tonight: Big Show vs. Sabu for the ECW Championship. We also have Matt Striker, who is making his ECW debut tonight after a long time on Raw. We also get a bikini contest between Kelly and Torrie, which I'm sure will be riveting. Let's get to it.

Theme song opens us up.

We open with Torrie and Kelly in their bikini contest. Torrie is in FHM this month. She disrobes first and looks good but Mike Knox stops Kelly from disrobing. Test is with him for the sake of setting up a six man tag. Dreamer and Sandman come in and we're ready to go.

Torrie Wilson/Tommy Dreamer/Sandman vs. Test/Mike Knox/Kelly Kelly

The girls go at it quickly and the fans freak out. Torrie is in a bikini so we get a Stinkface. So that's where Kelly learned it. Test and Dreamer come in, thank goodness, with Test poking him in the eye to take over. A trio of backbreakers gets two. Knox comes in and stays on the back of Dreamer as the fans tell Knox that he can't wrestle.

Test comes in and takes out Sandman before throwing Dreamer in a bearhug. Dreamer finally gets out and hooks a neckbreaker to give himself a breather. Off to Sandman and Knox but it's Test who gets caught in the White Russian Legsweep. Sandman hits a Swanton (Rolling Rock) on Knox for two. After some interference from Test, Knox misses a middle rope legdrop. Dreamer DDT gets the pin on Knox.

Rating: D. This was a mess and the girls didn't add anything to it, but they were only involved for about 30 seconds so it's not that big of a deal. The match was boring though as it was just old school vs. new school which would be the story on this show for months on end. Sandman was a nostalgia act at this point but he got paid for a few months out of it so I can't complain much there. Not a good match but it got the crowd a bit fired up so I can't complain much.

Show tells Heyman not to worry tonight because it's a one on one match with no weapons for Sabu to use.

Matt Striker is in the back and says he's our teacher. The letters ECW bring about images of barbarism but those aren't good. Therefore, he's going to educate us in the future.

Kevin Thorn vs. Balls Mahoney

Extreme Rules. Thorn jumps Balls before he can use the chair and we're off fast. Balls comes back with right hands and a HARD kick to the face. Out to the floor for a good beating of balls. Back in and Thorn beats Balls with a stick. These jokes write themselves. The stick gets rammed into Balls' throat (there is such a thing as making this too easy you know) but Mahoney comes back with punches and the Nutcracker Sweet for two. Balls goes to get a chair but Ariel bites him on the way back in. A chair shot and the elevated Stunner get the pin for Thorn. Quick match with more unintentional comedy than anything else.

More Shannon Moore stuff. The system is oppressive I see.

CM Punk vs. Christopher W. Anderson

He's doing the IT'S CLOBBERIN TIME already. Anderson is introduced as Christopher W. Anderson but screw that, he's CW Anderson. Anderson takes him into the corner and we actually get a clean break. Joey and Tazz argue over how much coffee Anderson had in the original ECW. They go to the corner again and Anderson kills him with the left, resulting in a left/right joke series from our commentators. Anderson works on the arm in the corner but gets caught in the Vice around the ropes. The knee/bulldog combination connects but Punk walks into a spinebuster for

two. Never mind as it's strike sequence, Rock Bottom, Vice, tap.

Sabu says he'll win tonight.

Trailer for The Marine.

Heyman talks to someone and tells them to make an impact tonight. It's Hardcore Holly and Heyman whispers a name to Holly which Hardcore isn't thrilled with. Whoever he whispered has been making trouble for Holly in the locker room.

Danny Doring vs. Rob Van Dam

Doring tries to speed things up but gets his head kicked off instead. Danny drops some elbows on the back to take over but Van Dam has had enough of that. The monkey flip sets up the top rope kick and Doring is in trouble. Rolling Thunder hits and the Five Star finishes the squash.

Post match Hardcore Holly jumps Van Dam with a chair. He hits Doring for good measure before giving Van Dam the Alabama Slam.

Highlight video of Summerslam.

Rene Dupree says he's the best athlete ECW has ever had.

ECW Title: Big Show vs. Sabu

Sabu pounds away to start but gets beaten down almost as quickly. Some LOUD chops put Sabu down so Show picks him up and drops Sabu onto the top rope and out to the floor. We take a break and come back with Show choking away even more. During the break there's been a table set up at ringside, apparently to taunt Sabu.

Sabu breaks up a bearhug with a poke to the eye. The referee goes down, as does Sabu to a fallaway slam. Sabu uses the referee being down to get some chair shots in, taking Big Show down. Triple Jump Moonsault hits but there's no referee. Arabian Facebuster hits and a second referee counts two. Sabu gets the bell and clocks Show with it in front of the referee for the DQ.

Rating: D+. This didn't really have time to do anything, but it wasn't

all that interesting watching Sabu get thrown around and then a ref bump followed by a stupid DQ. These two would feud for awhile while we waited to get something better going in the main event. This was fine for a filler feud though.

Post match Sabu hits him again with the bell, busting Show open. He knocks him through the table (great sound effect) and HOKEY SMOKE Show is busted bad. There's a freaking pool of blood on the ground. It's legit scary looking actually.

Overall Rating: D+. It wasn't a great show, but there was a major shift this week as the main event only ran about five minutes (not counting commercial) as opposed to the usual 15 minutes or so it had been getting up to this point. That can be seen as either good or bad, in that it gives more time to other acts, but it also takes away the long match. In ECW's case though, with just an hour a week, spending $\frac{1}{4}$ of the show on a single match wasn't the best idea. The shift here is good and the show had a lot more to it as a result. The problem is the additional stuff here wasn't that great.

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ECW on Sci-Fi – August 29, 2006: Heyman's ECW Debut

ECW on Sci-Fi

Date: August 29, 2006

Location: Sovereign Center, Reading, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Joey Styles, Taz

It's another week in and the show continues to be decent, at least in theory. Tonight is all about furthering Heyman vs. Sabu in the battle of ECW past, which is probably the best feud this show has going. Also

tonight we have RVD vs. Hardcore Holly, which if I remember right has a scary bump in it, but that might be a rematch later on. Let's get to it.

We open with Heyman of course. He talks about how this is his creation and how he's our messiah as usual. Heyman has never wrestled in ECW, although I'd assume that's probably a good thing. Tonight he's getting into the ring against....Sabu. I don't see this going well. He says that Dr. Frankenstein must destroy his own creation and beat his own child tonight in the ring.

Rob Van Dam vs. Hardcore Holly

This is a followup to last week where Holly jumped Van Dam with a chair. Holly goes right for him but gets kicked down and clotheslined to the floor very quickly. Van Dam puts him on the barricade and this his spin kick to the back. Back in the Alabama Slam is countered but Holly throws Rob to the floor to take over. Off to a HARDCORE chinlock before the dropkick gets two. Van Dam kicks his head off to put both guys down but manages to get up first. A superkick and standing moonsault get two. Windmill kick sets up Rolling Thunder but the Five Star misses. Holly brings in a chair but Rob hits him with it for the DQ.

Rating: D+. That was a pretty lame ending to a pretty weak match. This was only about five minutes long and while they would feud for a few weeks before Van Dam beat him in an Extreme Rules match (meaning this wasn't the match I was talking about in the intro), this was a bad opener to the feud. Not much to see here.

Rene Dupree rides an exercise bike and says he's the most extreme wrestler.

Here's Big Show for a chat. He talks about how dominant he is and how the McMahons saw that. That's why they enlisted him to help in their battles with DX. You mean it's not because there's no way to believe that Vince and Shane can fight Shawn and HHH so they needed to bring in some heavies to do the work for them? DX's fate will be sealed at Unforgiven in the Cell but if they want, they can come face him here next week.

Shannon Moore says fight the power.

CM Punk vs. Stevie Richards

Richards actually gets an intro. They go to the mat to start and Richards fires away with some chops. Punk knocks him to the floor and hits a suicide dive to take over, but back inside Richards crotches him on the top to slow Punk down again. Off to a bearhug from Stevie but Punk breaks out of it very quickly. Punk hammers away with his strikes and hits a butterfly backbreaker for two. Richards ducks the backfist but walks into the Rock Bottom and Anaconda Vice for the tap.

Rating: C+. This was a nice surprise as Punk got tested instead of rolling over the latest ECW jobber that he was facing. Richards is a guy that never quite gets the appreciation that he deserves, because he's most remembered as a comedy guy. He could have some entertaining matches though when he was just being himself, which is what you got here. This was a surprisingly entertaining match.

Video on Sabu.

It's Matt Striker's Classroom. He says he's a teacher and he's here to help. For some reason people don't cheer for him though, because they'd rather cheer for the Sandman. You know, the guy who drinks "giggle water." Sandman is constantly drunk and has a Singapore Cane, but Striker's weapon is his mind. Cue Sandman, but Striker actually beats him down, breaking the chalkboard over his head and hitting him with a stapler before leaving.

Balls Mahoney is in the back and has something to say when Kelly comes up and flashes him. Ok then.

Taz and Joey explain that Angle is gone and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

Paul Heyman vs. Sabu

It's Extreme Rules. The security guards (the Bashams but I don't think that was ever revealed on TV) jump Sabu on the way to the ring of course. Since this is ECW though Sabu beats up both guards who are in riot gear, but Big Show makes save #2 for Heyman before Sabu can, you know, kill

him. Show CRACKS Sabu's head with a chair as I'm sure you can get where this is going already. Sabu is busted already and the three guys not named Heyman beat him down with Big Show holding him so Paul can get in a shot.

We get our first table of the night (that has to be a record for ECW as the show is almost over) as Heyman dances around the ring and calls himself the Messiah. Show lifts Sabu up into a gorilla press position to put him through the table on the floor, but of course he holds him just long enough for RVD to come out for the save. Van Daminator takes down Big Show and it's kicks for the Bashams.

Sabu finally gets his hands on Heyman and destroys him for a bit, even hitting the Arabian Facebuster. Sabu and Van Dam put Heyman on the table but Big Show pulls Sabu out of the air on the dive attempt. That's always cool to see. Cue run-in #5 (I've lost count) in the form of Hardcore Holly. He hits the Alabama Slam to Van Dam through the table as Show hits that walking legdrop thing, giving Heyman the pin.

Rating: C-. This is more ECW's style: a totally mindless and insane brawl with massive carnage. It was clear what they were going for as soon as they said Extreme Rules, but that's ok here. They had to do something to keep this from being Heyman getting killed for eight minutes, and having all these people come out allows for more stories to be advanced. Not a good match or anything but it was fun in an insane sort of way.

Sabu gets put through a table to end the show. Heyman makes the sign of the cross over Sabu's body.

Overall Rating: C-. This wasn't their best show. The main feud is starting to get some traction but it's not exactly the most interesting story in the world. Big Show would hold the title for the next three months or so which didn't really do much for the level of interest in the title. The show here was getting more coherent but it wasn't exactly interesting.

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Backlash 2006: A Shoulder Injury, A Forgotten Classic, And God In A Dance Off (Plus Final Thoughts On WWE PPVs)

Backlash 2006

Date: April 30, 2006

Location: Rupp Arena, Lexington, Kentucky

Attendance: 14,000

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

I can't believe I just typed that. Since I started these reviews I knew this would be the final PPV I would do for one simple reason: it's the only PPV I've ever attended live. I graduated high school around this time so it was kind of a gift to myself. I went with a friend of mine and sat in the upper deck to watch this show and I'll never forget it. This is actually the first time I've seen the show in full since the night it aired, so this is going to be an interesting experience. We've got Vince/Shane vs. Shawn/God tonight as well as Cena defending against HHH and Edge in the main event. For the last time on an old PPV, let's get to it.

As a rare bonus, I'm throwing in the match from Heat.

Rob Conway vs. Goldust

This was in essence our dark match but it aired on WWE.com as well so it's not a big deal. Conway was doing a Buff Bagwell style gimmick at this point. The announcers waste their time by trying to come up with stupid nicknames. The guys talk some trash before Goldie takes over with some rights. Goldust freaks Conway out with his usual antics and things slow down already. Conway comes back with some basic offense and gets two

off a whip into the corner.

A clothesline puts Goldust down and it's off to the chinlock. Yes a chinlock two minutes into a three and a half minute match. They hit stereo crossbodies to put both guys down for another spot you wouldn't think was needed in a match this short. Conway wins a slugout and hits a swinging neckbreaker for two. He ducks his head off a whip though and Goldie hits that uppercut of his. Goldust starts his comeback and takes him into the corner for ten punches. A powerslam gets the pin for the human Academy Award.

Rating: D. Yeah whatever. No one cared about this but then again it was a match to get the crowd warmed up. Conway tried and was a big deal in OVW so he was kind of a hometown boy but his gimmick killed him. Goldust did his thing which wasn't really intimidating anymore but no one had cared about him for the most part in years. Nothing too bad due to the length but nothing good either.

The opening video is about the two main event matches. Vince and Shane are beating up Shawn because Shawn beat him at Mania and Vince went insane. The title match is a rematch from Mania with Edge thrown in.

I would have been sitting in the upper deck opposite the cameras on the right hand side.

Chris Masters vs. Carlito

These two were partners for awhile but have since had a parting of the ways. Carlito turned on him just after Mania, hitting him with a Backstabber. He would be your face in this match. They slug it out to start with Masters taking over. It's so weird to hear about how the Kentucky Wildcats play in this arena. I would graduate from high school in the same arena in less than a month.

Carlito comes back with right hands but gets backdropped down. The announcers talk about God's in ring debut tonight as Masters gets two. Carlito throws on the Master Lock (you read that right) and Masters bails to the floor, where Carlito hits a good looking dive. Back in and Carlito pounds away in the corner at a very fast pace. No counting in Spanish

from the Lexington crowd though so they officially suck.

Masters counters a rana into a buckle bomb and Carlito is in trouble all of a sudden. Off to a neck crank and Masters breaks up a comeback attempt by Carlito. Masters clotheslines him down and things slow down even more. Here comes the Masterlock but apparently shouting the name of the move you're about to use is a bad idea as Carlito counters into a rollup for two.

A springboard reverse elbow puts Masters down and it's apple time. Carlito throws it to him and dropkicks the knee out to take over even more. Masters never was the smartest guy in the world. Carlito fires off some left armed clotheslines and a dropkick for a delayed two. Masters sends him into the corner but a belly to back superplex is broken up. Carlito "hits" a moonsault press for two. Masters was halfway down before Carlito even touched him. Masterlock is countered by sending Masters' face into the buckle and the Backstabber with feet on the ropes gets the pin.

Rating: D+. This felt like a long Raw match. Carlito wasn't that popular but they were trying with him I guess. It's certainly not bad but it was very dull, which is the exact opposite of what you're looking for in an opener. I didn't really like this one live and it didn't work any better six years later.

Outside shot of Rupp Arena. I live five minutes away.

Maria screws up the result of the previous match and we get some fans' opinions on the winner of the triple threat later. Lita interrupts and makes fun of the Lexington fans. Maria implies Lita is...well that she enjoys men, so Lita threatens her. Tonight after Edge wins, it's a private sex celebration.

Umaga vs. Ric Flair

Umaga debuted less than a month before this so this is his first real match. When you need a new kid tested, call in Naitch. Flair jumps him in the aisle and that goes badly for him. We go into the ring for the bell and Flair gets pounded into the corner. Flair pokes him in the eye and

hits him low a few times, only to get chopped right back down.

The running corner attack (NOT FROM RIKISHI YOU NXT ANNOUNCERS) misses and we go to the floor. Umaga misses a charge and hits the post and it's time to go after the leg. The Figure Four is broken up and Flair is put in the Tree of Woe for a headbutt. The running hip attack sets up another headbutt which sets up the Samoan Spike for the pin.

Rating: C+. This was a total squash for Umaga but the idea here was perfect: Flair made Umaga look like a monster here which is exactly the point of something like this. Umaga would be a destruction machine, not losing until January when Cena finally put him down with a rollup of all things. This was a textbook example of how to put someone over using a legend.

Vince is in the back when Shane comes in for a pep talk. Vince insists it's a tag match and not a handicap match. Also, let him take care of God. There's nothing God can do that Vince can't do. To prove it, he takes Shane's bottle of water and pours it in on the floor. He stomps on it and declares that he's walking on water. Now he takes a well placed loaf of bread and a fish. He throws the fish away and breaks the bread and throws it away. Someone off camera throws a lot of bread at him as well as the fish. It's a "holy mackerel." Shane drinks the water and now it's purple. Get it?

We recap Mickie James vs. Trish for the title. Mickie is a psycho that is obsessed with Trish. She won the title from Trish at Mania using some VERY un-PG actions. Mickie was HOT as the psycho.

Women's Title: Mickie James vs. Trish Stratus

The girl I went to this was a lesbian so this was by far her favorite match of the night. Trish is in skin colored attire trimmed with Kentucky Blue. Nice touch. Actually that's a bit lighter than Kentucky Blue but close enough. Trish grabs a quick rollup for two and blows a kiss. She Ma-Trishes out of a clothesline and fires off forearms. A HARD bicycle kick puts Mickie down and there's a Thesz Press off the apron by Trish. That gets two back in the ring and we get a great upskirt shot of the champ.

Trish pounds away in the corner but gets dumped over the top to the floor, dislocating her shoulder in the process. You can see the bulge in her back where it's not in place. The referee throws up a quick X and Mickie covers a bit. She chokes away for the DQ after like four minutes.

Rating: N/A. I can't give this a fair grade as the injury derailed it maybe two minutes in. The shoulder injury was SICK live as you could see it out of joint on the big screen and the crash that hurt it was terrible looking. Trish would be out for about two months because of this which is a shame as this was one of the best Divas feuds in years. Also, as someone that has seen these girls up close, cameras do not do them justice. They are stunning in person, as are most of the Divas.

Maria corrects her mistake about Masters earlier and brings in Shawn. He says God is with him as always and he knows it's a handicap match.

Money in the Bank Briefcase/Intercontinental Title: Rob Van Dam vs. Shelton Benjamin

It's winner take all with Rob holding the case and Shelton holding the title. Shelton takes him to the mat to start and rides Van Dam a bit. The fans are completely behind RVD, namely because this is during the opening part of Shelton's heel run. Shelton backflips out of a wristlock to show that he can hang with Rob in all of the high flying stuff. RVD gets his rolling cradle for two and Shelton bails to the corner.

Shelton keeps getting frustrated and heads to the floor for a breather. Back in and Benjamin pounds him down and fires off some forearms. Rob will have none of that and kicks Shelton down. The champ (Shelton) bails to the floor again to avoid Rolling Thunder so Rob dives to the floor to take him out. Shelton runs back in and hits a sunset bomb to the floor to take over again.

Back in and Benjamin works over the back before hooking a chinlock with a knee in the spine. Rob quickly escapes that but gets caught by a knee lift for two. Back to the chinlock which might be a choke. Not that it matters as Rob makes the rope. Rob fights up and tries Rolling Thunder but Shelton catches him in a Samoan Drop in a SWEET counter. They go up and Rob knocks him off the top, but Shelton JUMPS up the corner (not runs

the corner. He JUMPED from the mat to the top rope and superplexes Rob down for two.

Off to a kind of rear naked choke which is broken up again. A spin kick takes down Shelton as do some clotheslines. Van Dam kicks him down a few more times and FINALLY hits Rolling Thunder for two. See? Build it up, then pay it off. Not that hard. Split legged moonsault out of the corner gets two. Shelton counters the monkey flip but another spin kick puts him down. Five Star misses and Shelton hits a DDT for two. Actually make that six as it's three two counts, the third having feet on the ropes.

Shelton goes to the floor for no apparent reason. Oh ok he's grabbing the briefcase. Rob goes to the floor after him but gets knocked down quickly. Back in and Shelton hits a top rope cross body which Van Dam rolls through for two. Dragon Whip misses Van Dam and he hits a rana to take Shelton down. Shelton goes for the case and there goes the referee. Rob ducks a shot and hits a van Daminator with the case. Five Star gives Rob the title.

Rating: B. This was a very fun match and the Five Star absolutely has to be seen to be believed. He didn't hold the title long but he would cash in the case in about a month and a half for the WWE Title at One Night Stand. Shelton never got back to the point he was at a year before this, which is a shame as he was on fire at that point. Good match here.

We recap Kane vs. Big Show. They were tag champions until Kane started hearing voices that said May 19. The reason for this would never be explained but it would be the date See No Evil came out, as well as the date that it was revealed that Undertaker lit the fire that killed his parents. It might not have been that but it was something related to it. This would result in a fake Kane in the mask feuding with real Kane without the mask. In short: it was ridiculous.

Big Show says Kane has a movie coming out on May 19th and he needs to get over whatever issues he's got going on. Kane attacked Big Show recently and Show's eye is messed up, so tonight it's an eye for an eye.

Kane vs. Big Show

Kane jumps him before the bell so Show GORILLA PRESSES him. That is SCARY power. Show charges into a boot and Kane goes for the eye. They go to the floor and as they get back in, Kane sends him into the post to take over. Some choking and a corner clothesline hit Big Show and with a loud whisper of GO DOWN, another clothesline puts Show down. Show slams him down but misses an elbow drop, allowing Kane to work on the arm.

The arm work goes on for awhile with Show on his knees. While in that position, he's up to Kane's shoulder. Kane goes up but jumps into a fallaway slam as Show takes over. A corner charges hits and Kane is in trouble. The chokeslam is countered into what was supposed to be a DDT but was rather an arm on Show's back that he fell down from. A big boot that literally has four inches between itself and Kane's face gets two.

JR is calling it an ugly match which is the code for "we know it sucks too". Powerslam gets two for Show and he goes after the eye. Kane blocks that and kicks Show in the head, sending him out to the floor. And now we bring out the suck, as the arena goes red and Kane's voice fills the arena, talking about May 19. Kane freaks out and has a bit of a fit on the mat. Show is concerned about him so he grabs a chair and blasts Kane in the head with it to knock him out. The match just ends.

Rating: F. There's no other way to put it. The premise was stupid, the match SUCKED with some of the worst looking miscues I've seen this side of a Divas match, and the ending was ridiculous. The live crowd thought the match sucked, but MAN watching this again shows me what this match was: it wasn't just bad. It was REALLY bad. These two can never have a good match together it seems.

Candice Michelle has a chest cold and goes to Vince to heal it because he's God. Vince puts his hand on her chest and prays for her in a parody of a spiritual healer. Candice sounds like she's having an orgasm. This is so stupid I can't comprehend it. The arena hated it too. Shane comes in to take Vince away and he's annoyed.

We recap the "tag" match. Before Mania, Shawn told Vince to get over Montreal so Vince declared war on Shawn. The idea is that Shawn is a Christian but he has to resort to levels he doesn't want to in order beat

him, which he did at Wrestlemania. Vince created his own religion: McMahonism. This resulted in some skits in a church which reached new levels of bad taste. Vince made a "tag" match between himself/Shane vs. Shawn/God. I was really worried about what they were going to do for God here.

Shawn Michaels/God vs. Vince McMahon/Shane McMahon

Vince introduces God and we get a spotlight. His tron video is clouds and he comes out to harp and piano music. Vince stops and criticizes God before challenging him to a dance contest. I kid you not, this is really happening. The spotlights gets in the ring and Vince tells the referee to check him out. Vince makes the match no holds barred because the idea of Vince wrestling an actual match isn't pleasing. Sexy Boy finally hits to end this stupidity.

Vince starts to run his mouth some more and Shawn finally drills him to get going. The daddy goes to the floor while Shawn beats up Shane. Shawn dives on Vince before clotheslining Shane to the floor and hitting a flip dive to take him out. Michaels chops Shane up the ramp but Shane comes back with knees to the stomach. Shane tries to piledrive Shawn off the stage but gets backdropped instead.

Shawn comes back but here's Vince with a chair as they're all on the stage now. Shawn blocks the shot and takes Shane down again before hitting a cross body on Vince off the stage. This looked like nothing live but it looked good on camera. Shawn climbs back up to the stage but gets hit in the face with the chair by Shane. Michaels is busted which I never noticed in the arena.

Shane and Shawn head back to the ring and Shawn goes into the post. Shawn gets sent into the barricade and then back into the ring as Shane is in complete control. The top rope elbow misses and both guys are down. Vince is on the apron now and apparently they have to tag. Shane DDTs Shawn down and it's off to Vince. Vince takes his belt off and whips Shawn's back because he's that evil. Shane throws in a garbage can and Shawn gets his head caved in.

Vince wants a mic and taunts God a bit. God walks out and Vince says come

back. Vince declares that God has left the building, but Shawn hasn't. He stands Shawn up and tries a superkick but the kick gets caught. Shawn makes his comeback and hits the forearm and nip-up. Shane misses a chair shot and caves in Vince's head by mistake. It's a forearm for Shane followed by an atomic drop and some clotheslines. Shawn's top rope elbow hits and both McMahons taste superkicks.

Shawn, ever the genius, doesn't go for a cover but rather goes to the floor for a table. Make that two tables. My fellow Lexingtonians (yes that's what they're called) want ladders because much like other wrestling fans, they're greedy people. Both McMahons are put on tables and here comes the ladder. It's the jumbo sized ladder too. Shawn climbs up but has to dive on the invading Spirit Squad. That was incredible live but the camera didn't get a great shot of it. The main problem was you didn't see them until the dive so Shawn looked crazy.

The numbers catch up with Shawn and he gets beaten down by the five male cheerleaders who are currently tag team champions at this point. They throw Shawn back in and get the McMahons off the tables. The Squad takes Shawn into the ring and hit their finisher on him, which is them all picking him up at once and dropping him through a table. Vince gets the pin. JR calls this BS but the uncensored version.

Rating: D. The match was boring, but JR put it best during the match: this was uncomfortable. On top of that, the whole thing was stupid. This would set up a feud that ran for the whole year which didn't work all that well either. It did lead to the reformation of DX which was pretty interesting, but dang this first part was torture to sit through. Not a horrible match but dang this was a chore to sit through.

The Squad put the McMahons on their shoulders with the man that would become Dolph Ziggler cheering the loudest.

Cena, drawing mostly boos, says that he doesn't have to get pinned tonight so the wins HHH has gotten over him lately don't matter. He's heard everything lately and the fans are divided. The silence is the voice of the people that want Edge to win the title. The cheers are for HHH, but there's one voice that will stand tall at the end. That would be

the voice of Lillian Garcia who will declare Cena still WWE Champion. I missed most of this promo the first time as I was watching what was being set up in the ring.

It's time for Matt Striker's Classroom because we can't fill in a three hour PPV with just Raw matches. Striker says that there's another miracle tonight: there's an intelligent person in Kentucky. He talks about what Kentucky is known for: illegally recruited basketball players and fried chicken. It's not known for its education though, but he's here to remedy that. Striker brings out the best educated person ever from Kentucky: Eugene, who was mentally slow. Literally, that was his character. His music was very catchy though.

Striker calls Eugene proof that you shouldn't marry your sister. Eugene may be the smartest person ever from Kentucky but Striker doesn't think he can even spell his own name. He hands Eugene a piece of chalk and asks him to write it on the chalk board. Eugene writes that Striker enjoys human waste. Striker criticizes the grammar and punctuation, but Eugene is picking his nose. He starts to eat it but Striker stops it. I think you all know what's coming, and there it goes into Striker's mouth. Eugene stuns him too. This would result in a match a few weeks later on Raw which Striker won.

We recap the world title match. Cena beat HHH at Mania to retain but HHH said he wanted another title shot. Edge came out and said he earned the shot by beating Foley in their famous hardcore match. The solution is of course a triple threat match.

Raw World Title: John Cena vs. HHH vs. Edge

Cena is defending if that wasn't clear. HHH is the huge crowd favorite. The girl I was with was a huge Cena fan so I was for Edge all night. Well I liked Edge so it wasn't completely because of her. Edge tells the other two to go at it and heads to the floor. That's cool with HHH and Cena as they slug it out, won by the champion. Some shoulders take HHH down and there's the release fisherman's suplex for two. Edge makes the save and bails right back to the floor.

Cena punches the Game some more but walks into the high knee which gets

two and some applause. Edge makes another save and heads right back to the floor. HHH and Cena finally have enough of the Canadian and they both go after him. Cena clotheslines Edge to the floor and takes turns with HHH ramming Edge into the announce table. This is awesome as it turns into a contest to see who can do it harder. Edge goes into the table about 10 times and looks mostly dead.

All three go back in but HHH throws Cena to the floor. Cena pulls HHH off the apron and rams his face into said apron. A top rope splash gets two on Edge and Cena loads up the Shuffle, only for Lita to pull the rope down and send Cena to the floor. HHH rams Cena into the steps and goes back in for a facebuster on Edge. The knee to the face gets two as does the spinebuster.

Edge counters a suplex and hits the Edge-0-Matic for two. HHH shrugs that off and puts on a sleeper but Edge reverses into one of his own. We have a Cena chant as he gets both guys up for the FU at once. That blew my mind at the time and he didn't even hit the move. Edge gets off the top and spears Cena down while HHH is still in the FU position, giving the Game a Samoan Drop from Cena. Cool spot.

HHH and Edge head to the floor and HHH gets catapulted into the post to bust him open. Edge DDTs HHH on the table, leaving blood everywhere when the table doesn't break. That made me cringe in the arena. HHH is COVERED in blood. Back in and Edge dropkicks Cena for two. He spears Cena in the corner but Cena counters the regular one into the STFU. Edge is about to tap but HHH pops up and blocks the hand from coming down and hits Cena in the head with the mic to break the hold.

HHH caves Edge's head in with a chair shot, knocking him into the crowd. He heads back inside and walks right into the STFU just like at Mania. There is blood everywhere. HHH keeps his arm up (there need to be more arm checks from the referees. I miss those) and finally makes the rope. FU is countered into a Pedigree but that's countered back into the STFU. Edge breaks it up and there goes the referee.

Cena tries to FU Edge from the middle rope but HHH gets beneath Cena to make it a modified Tower of Doom. Everyone is down so Lita brings in a

chair. She charges at HHH with it but walks into a spinebuster which got a big pop in the arena. HHH gets the chair but throws it down. Instead he pulls out the sledgehammer but Edge spears him down. Edge gets the hammer but Cena loads him into the FU. HHH breaks that up with a low blow but the Pedigree to Cena is countered into a rollup for the pin to retain.

Rating: B+. This was WAY better from this perspective as I wasn't all that impressed when I saw it live. This was actually an awesome match with a great blade job from HHH and almost non-stop action. Cena getting another win over HHH was another big step in his push towards the top of the company as he wasn't quite there yet. This was a great match and it really impressed me on a second viewing.

HHH blasts them both with the hammer and leaves to King of Kings to end the show. To this day I'm not sure why they went with that ending.

Overall Rating: C+. Leave it to me to go with right in the middle to end things. This show is a strange one as it's barely a B-level show, but there are two very good matches on it, including what you could probably call a forgotten classic of a main event. The problem with the show is that the bad parts are VERY bad and they really bring the show down. That being said, it's still the first and to this point only PPV I've attended live so I have to give it the benefit of the doubt.

That's the end of WWE/F. This has an even longer history of PPVs than the other two companies (combined actually) and maybe it's the fanboy in me, but I say they've done it best. WWF (screw those panda people. I grew up calling it WWF so it's WWF) has mastered the art of putting together a major show. That being said, they often times forget how to do it and I'm sure you can name a ton of entries where they did just that.

On the other hand, they pulled off stuff like Wrestlemania X7 and Summerslam 2002 which put just about any other company's stuff to shame. Over time they've had a ton of shows and therefore they've had a lot more practice to pull them off. The days of the Big Four are long gone and I don't think they're ever going to drop down below one a month again. That being said, it's nowhere near as bad as people make it out to be but that's another topic.

Overall, WWF has had better luck in my eyes on PPV, but they're far from perfect. The Brand Split shows never were that good as they flat out did not have enough talent on each show to run full three hour PPVs. I'd love to see the In Your House idea come back as a mid level PPV that was only two hours but cost less money. That's just one of a number of possible solutions that could work, but again I'm getting off track. Just like with the other two companies (ECW only had 21 PPVs so I'm omitting them), the WWF has had its ups and downs but when they shows are good, there's nothing better.

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Monday Night Raw – January 9, 2006: Live Sex Celebration

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 9, 2006

Location: Giant Center, Hershey, Pennsylvania

Attendance: 5,500

Commentators: Joey Styles, Jonathan Coachman, Jerry Lawler

This show can be summed up in three words: Live Sex Celebration. Edge shocked the world last night by cashing in the first Money in the Bank Briefcase to win the world title from Cena after Cena retained in the Elimination Chamber. Tonight, Edge and Lita are going to celebrate by having live sex on Raw, which is more or less the biggest nightmare that Linda McMahon wants to keep in her political closet. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the show last night. I remember talking to a huge Cena fan who I went to school with and freaking her out the next day by telling her what happened. This recap goes on for like five minutes too.

Here's Cena to open the show. He's still mostly a rapper here so he talks

about how life is full of choices. Last night Edge had a choice to make and he won the WWE Championship because of it. Tonight the fans are making choices, including those that have made the choice that he sucks. He'll stand with all the people that love him and for the people that hate him, they can kiss it. Tonight, he's cashing in his rematch clause and he wants Edge right now.

Cue Lita who was in her VERY hot period. She says Cena doesn't get his rematch tonight because of "oral persuasion" she gave to Vince, so the rematch is at the Rumble. Apparently the only wrestling Edge will be doing tonight is with her, in the ring tonight. It's going to be a threesome with the two of them plus the title. See, Edge actually knows what to do in bed. Cena says he'll see Edge at the Rumble.

Women's Title: Trish Stratus vs. Mickie James

Trish is defending but Mickie psycho at this point, so she demands that the fans cheer louder for Trish. Wait Ashley is challenging. So why is Mickie there at all?

Women's Title: Trish Stratus vs. Ashley Massaro

Trish is still defending. Ashley grabs a headlock to start and grabs a quick headscissors. It's clear that she's not ready to be in the ring for an extended period of time yet but she's getting the basics down I guess. Ashley hits a kind of bulldog for two but it causes Mickie to snap and come in for the DQ. Psycho Mickie was awesome. Lillian screws up and announces Trish as the winner.

RVD will return in the Royal Rumble. He had been out for most of a year.

Cena is getting ready in the back when Vince comes in. Vince talks about great those first time things are, such as the first time Edge won the title last night and the first time for Edge vs. Cena at the Rumble. Then he talks about the Live Sex Celebration which isn't his idea either. Cena seems to like the idea, but Vince says if Cena interferes he loses his rematch. Before he leaves, Cena says there's some evidence of Lita's "oral persuasion" on his pants. Cena wasn't quite ready to talk to Vince at this point.

Carlito is getting taped up for his match later when Masters, his partner, comes in and grabs him by the shirt. Masters yells about the loss last night and blames Carlito for it, as Carlito screwed Masters over while he had Cena in the Masterlock. That really was pretty stupid of him when you think about it. They have a tag match later.

Rob Conway vs. Chavo Guerrero

Royal Rumble qualifying match. Conway runs him down to start and poses ala Chavo. Chavo comes back with right hands in the corner as I have to question who thought this match was a good idea. I get that Chavo was getting a push recently because Eddie died but do we need to see him qualify against Rob freaking Conway? Chavo tries to skin the cat but gets kneed to the floor.

Conway works on the back on the floor and Chavo is in some trouble. Back in and it's off to a chinlock with a knee in the back. An Eddie chant brings Chavo back and he kicks Rob to the floor, followed by a pescado to take him out. Chavo pounds away and dropkicks him down for two. Conway rolls through a spinning cross body out of the corner for two as the announcers discuss the live sex celebration. Rob mocks Eddie's chest slap to really make him hated but his suplex is countered into Three Amigos and the Frog Splash gets the pin.

Rating: D. This was in essence a squash match that took awhile. Did we really need to see Chavo Guerrero qualify for the Rumble? This was one of the downsides to Eddie's death: Chavo getting pushed because of it. Chavo is a talented guy but at the end of the day, there's nothing of note to him. The match was pretty weak here too. Oh and in case you were wondering, Chavo would last 59 seconds in the Rumble.

The Wrestlemania Big Time Moment is Edge winning MITB. Seems appropriate for tonight.

Shawn is in the back when Angle comes in. Kurt is mad at Shawn for superkicking him out of the Chamber last night. Shawn says he did it because Angle busted him open. They're a team tonight so they need to forget about last night. Apparently a match against Carlito/Masters is bigger than a world title match in the main event of a PPV. Ok then

Shawn. Shawn wants to know if he can trust Angle. Angle shows off his medals and asks if he can trust Shawn. Kurt mentions something about a zero tolerance policy.

Shelton and Mama Benjamin are here with Mama running into Val Venis. She recognizes him from some of his movies but can't place him. He lists some titles and is told where he's going when he dies. This was one of those questionable choices they made around this time, as Mama Benjamin is a comedian in a fat suit.

Chris Masters/Carlito vs. Shawn Michaels/Kurt Angle

Shawn and Angle argue over who starts the match so the other team jumps them. Angle sends Masters to the floor so it's Shawn vs. Carlito to get us going. Carlito gets taken to the mat via a headlock and things settle down a bit. Shawn pulls the hair which is a bit more evil than it usually would be due to the massive afro that Carlito has. Off to Angle who gets a big response here in Pennsylvania. He hooks a headlock of his own as Daivari (Angle's manager) yells a lot.

Carlito finally hits a suplex but Angle runs him over with a clothesline for two. Shawn comes in and gets a good reaction in his own right. It's quickly back to Kurt who takes Masters down with a headlock. That's a popular move tonight isn't it? Masters fights up and hits a powerslam but the Masterlock is countered into a release German. Angle misses a charge into the post and Carlito knocks Shawn to the floor as well.

We take a break and come back with Carlito stomping on Angle in the corner. Angle finally snaps off an overhead suplex to get himself a breather and it's a double tag to bring in Masters vs. Shawn. Shawn slams him down and hits the top rope elbow for no cover. He loads up Chin Music but Carlito makes the save. Carlito comes in legally now and hooks a chinlock. Shawn is bleeding a bit over the eye.

The Backstabber stops a Shawn comeback but Shawn hits a backdrop out of nowhere. Angle walks away from the tag though and Shawn is in trouble again. Shawn breaks the Masterlock before it goes on and DDTs Masters down. Angle walks away from another tag attempt to check on the shine on his medals. Shawn superkicks Kurt down which counts as a tag apparently.

Masters throws on the Masterlock which gets the win via knockout. Daivari gets a superkick too.

Rating: C. This was the main event style tag match but it was more about furthering Shawn vs. Angle which is more than fine with me. This would continue an incredible series between the two which saw them stealing almost every show they were on. Carlito and Masters would self-destruct soon after this without many people caring. Carlito had a ton of potential but it never really went anywhere.

Vince comes up to Shawn in the back and says that was the real Shawn. He makes Shawn vs. Kurt for next week to end their feud once and for all.

We get some stills from last night where HHH used a sledgehammer to beat Big Show.

HHH says it's funny that Cena lost the title to someone that meant nothing a week ago. That was a big change, but the one constant around here is him. He warned Big Show that he would get hurt if he came after HHH and that's what happened. Now it's time to go to the Rumble and then to Wrestlemania.

Vince's Devils (Torrie, Candice and Victoria) are in a bed in the back. Ok then.

Last night after the win, Edge and Lita said they would have sex on TV tonight.

Clip of Stacy Keibler on Dancing with the Stars.

Shelton Benjamin vs. Val Venis

Another Rumble qualifying match. Val takes over to start but Shelton hides behind his Mama. Back in and Shelton works over the back to take over. Off to a chinlock which Val fights out of pretty quickly. Mama shouts that Shelton better win here. Val comes back with a half nelson slam and small package for two each. A spinebuster looks to set up the Money Shot but Shelton rolls away and grabs an Oklahoma Roll for two. Val gets a cradle out of the corner for two as Mama keeps shouting. She stabs Val in the tights with something, allowing Shelton to hit the Exploder

for the pin.

Rating: D. This was a comedy match that forgot to be funny. It was a common thing both then and now to see the company trying to be funny and probably amusing themselves, but for the masses, this comes off as really stupid and unfunny. Hey look, a stereotypical fat black woman yells a lot and gets a win for her son. This totally makes me want to watch more of the show right?

Royal Rumble ad, with the theme of Ancient Rome with Vince as Caesar. This guy's sexual fantasies would scare me to death.

Kane vs. Snitsky

Rumble qualifier, Snitsky assault, Kane no sells, chokeslam, pin, less than a minute.

Kane says that's the first casualty on his way to Mania. There will be 29 others at the Rumble, which isn't the error that I thought it was.

Edge arrives and is met by Lita.

Here are Edge and Lita for the Live Sex Celebration. Edge says that the champ is here and that no one saw it coming. He outsmarted everyone and cashed in when no one expected it. To be fair that's true, as this wasn't a total cliché like it's become now. Edge says that in this industry, you don't have to be the biggest or the toughest, but you do have to be the smartest. He was patient, just like he was with Lita. He took everything he wanted and last night he did that again.

We get a highlight reel of Edge's past set to Right Here by Staind. It's actually a decent recap of his career. That brings us to last night but they didn't have sex. Edge wants to do it right here live on Raw. We get the special music and they take each others' boots off. Lita's top comes off as does Edge's. The skirt and pants come off next so they're in their underwear. Edge throws her down in front of him so she's bent over and there goes her bra. They go under the covers and we get a full on shot of Lita's breast. Edge takes her underwear off and Lita seems to go down a bit.

And here's Ric Flair because who wants to see Lita right? He calls Edge a disgrace to the title and says he's dead in the bed. Flair dances down the aisle as Edge puts his pants back on. Flair chops him to the floor but gets his head cracked with a chair. Say it with me: Flair is busted open. Edge loads up the announce table and puts the chair on it before going to get another one. There's a Conchairto for Flair and Cena finally runs through the crowd to make the save. Edge runs off so Cena goes and looks under the covers at Lita. Smart man that Cena. Lita takes an FU to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Ok the wrestling here pretty much sucked, but this was ALL about Edge vs. Cena. If I remember right, and I could be wrong, this show did one of the highest ratings in years, which is to say that Edge was a popular choice as champion. The Live Sex Celebration may be the second pinnacle of his time in WWE, which is saying a lot all things considered. This was a big moment, but unfortunately Cena got the title back just three weeks later, as they didn't trust Edge at Mania yet. Still though, this is more about a memory than a great show, which is ok.

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Slammiversary 2006: Another Montreal Ending

Slammiversary 2006

Date: June 18, 2006

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Attendance: 900

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Don West

It's the anniversary show again with the main event therefore being the King of the Mountain match. It's Christian defending this year and since Jeff Jarrett is in it, I think you know what's going down here. Tonight

we also have the debut of the new face of TNA management in the form of Jim Cornette. Other than that there isn't much else to talk about so let's get to it.

The opening video is about the King of the Mountain match which is almost always at least interesting. We hear from all five people in the match tonight, all of whom say that they're going to win and that it's their time. Jarrett thinks Sting and Christian are going to explode and he'll be able to step in and take the title.

Team 3D vs. James Gang

This is called a Bingo Hall Brawl. There aren't intros or anything like that as they're fighting in the tunnel before we have time for any. This is an open challenge of some kind but the story isn't really explained. Billy and Ray have a chair duel, resulting in BG James interfering and letting Billy crack Ray with the chair for two. D-Von makes the save and the Dudleys hit the reverse neckbreaker for two.

They brawl into the crowd and over into the LAX area which causes LAX to beat up both teams for some reason. Ray sets up a piece of barricade across a pair of chairs at ringside. BG dives off the steps and over the rail to take out D-Von but Ray blasts him in the head for his efforts. They all go into the crowd and Billy blasts both Dudleys with a trashcan lid. Ray is back at ringside and throws in a trashcan full of weapons.

Everyone is in the ring now and Ray finds...a bra? He chokes Kip (Billy) with it before pulling out the cheese grater. That goes over Kip's head and we've got blood. D-Von and BG hit each other with trashcans and everyone goes down. Team 3D loads up What's Up but BG gets up a trashcan lid to block the head. Billy hits a Fameasser to Ray onto a trashcan for two.

The fans think this awesome and while that might be a stretch, it's certainly not that bad. Billy goes for some punches in the corner but he gets caught in a Doomsday Device for two as BG makes the save. Now the fans want tables which of course get loaded up. The fans want fire too but that's a bit too much to ask apparently. Instead they have to settle for a 3D for Kip through the table for the pin.

Rating: C+. Solid opener here as the fans were way into the violence here, which is what the point of an opener is. The fans think it was awesome and again I think that's too much of a stretch, but the match was certainly good for what it was supposed to be. Naturally it was because of something WWE was doing at the time (restarting ECW) but that goes with the territory.

Post match Ray rips the WWE, saying that's how it's done.

We run down the rest of the card which is something I've never gotten.

Jeff Jarrett talks about overcoming the eyes time after time in his life and how that's what he's going to do tonight as well, just like Joe Montana or Reggie Jackson or Michael Jordan. Jarrett lists off everyone else in the match and talks about how he's going to overcome them as well. Larry Z pops up and says Jarrett won't like who the new face of TNA management is going to be.

We recap Rhyno vs. the Canadians. This is fallout from Abyss beating Rhyno because of the Canadians. Rhyno challenges Bobby Roode and any member of Team Canada that he chose. Naturally he picked Coach D'Amore. For some reason this gets the music video treatment.

Scott D'Amore/Bobby Roode vs. Rhyno

D'Amore runs his mouth about being better than Rhyno pre-match. He tells Roode to stand back and let D'Amore do all of the work here. Uh...k? Here's Rhyno and D'Amore runs up the other ramp which is funny for some reason. Roode runs as well so we can stall before we start. D'Amore is already blown up after running that far so Roode has to start. The Canadians have to tag here.

Rhyno chases Roode to the floor but gets distracted by D'Amore, allowing Roode to clothesline him in the back of the head to take over. Back in and D'Amore does jumping jacks. Rhyno gets up but Roode hits him again before Rhyno can kill the Coach. Off to Roode who rams him into the buckle for two. D'Amore gets in some more cheap shots but almost gets caught in a piledriver. Roode makes I think the third save in five minutes and comes in legally.

Scratch that as the Coach comes back in to drop a leg. This has been pretty boring so far and I don't see it getting any better by the end of the match. Roode comes in again to continue the wide array of stomping we've got going on. Rhino snaps off a belly to belly but gets put right back down for more stomping. D'Amore takes off his shirt and goes up for the moonsault but Rhino moves. Roode comes off the top but jumps into a punch. D'Amore hits Rhino with the hockey stick but for some reason he tries to put him in a Death Valley Driver. A spinebuster and the Gore pin D'Amore.

Rating: D-. What a boring match. Nothing happened here and the offense by the Canadians was terribly uninteresting. The Gore to the fat guy (who wasn't that fat really) was kind of cool to see but other than that, there was nothing at all to see here. Rhino was in a limbo at this point and would be that way for a few more months.

Samoa Joe isn't worried about Scott Steiner tonight.

Senshi vs. Shark Boy vs. Alex Shelley vs. Sonjay Dutt vs. Petey Williams vs. Jay Lethal

Elimination rules and the winner gets a title match this week on Impact. In what is probably a good thing, people have to tag here so there are only two people in the ring at once. Shark Boy and Petey get us going with Sharky grabbing the arm to start. Petey escapes and tries the Tree of Woe 0 Canada deal but Shark Boy bites his way out of it. They head out to the floor where nothing happens so Shark Boy tags in Lethal. This is before he's Black Machismo so he's just a 20 year old guy who is talented.

Jay works on the back and things speed up a bit. Petey hits a knee to the ribs and dropkicks the knee out. Off to Senshi who chops away, only to get chopped right back. A dropkick gets one for Lethal. Senshi comes back with the kicks before tagging in Shelley to a good reaction. He hooks a necktie choke and bends Lethal over the his knees. Lethal backflips out of it but Shelley backflips out of that and hits a kind of Backstabber to put Jay back down.

Jay gets in a low dropkick and it's off to Dutt to start the flips. A

standing swanton followed by a standing moonsault gets two. Dutt goes up top, only to get crotched by Shelley, who follows that up by dragging the crotch along the top rope for some rope burns. Alex stays on Dutt but taunts Sharky. This draws everyone in and it's a triple suplex in a fairly cool looking spot. We get down to Dutt vs. Shark Boy with the masked man hitting a slingshot splash for two.

The Dead Sea drop is countered so he hits a regular neckbreaker instead. Shark Boy tries a top rope elbow but crashes, allowing Dutt to hit a standing shooting star to eliminate Shark Boy. Shelley vs. Dutt now and it's a loud enziguri to Dutt. Dutt no sells that and hits a neckbreaker to put Shelley down. Dutt goes up but gets launched onto the middle rope, where Lethal tags himself in.

Lethal comes in with a springboard dropkick to Alex but Shelley comes back very quickly. A brainbuster looks to set up a swanton bomb but Jay avoids it and eliminates Shelley with a dragon suplex. Everyone comes in now and Senshi is sent to the floor. Petey hits a slingshot rana to the outside so Lethal dives onto the Canadian. Dutt hits a huge moonsault press onto all three to put all four down.

It's Lethal vs. Petey in the ring with Jay kicking Petey's head off. Petey shrugs that off and kills Lethal with the Destroyer to get us down to three. Dutt comes back in as it's him, Senshi and Petey to go. Senshi and Williams team up on Dutt for a bit but Williams accidentally drills the bald guy in the face. An enziguri gets two for Dutt on Williams as Petey is in trouble. Senshi comes in and clotheslines Williams down because he's not a nice guy.

Senshi goes up but Petey stops him, starting a fight on the top. Williams tries the Destroyer off the top but Senshi hangs on. Dutt takes Williams down and the Warrior's Way gets us down to Senshi vs. Dutt. Both guys go up again and Dutt hits a rana to take Senshi down. A low dropkick gets two as does a floatover DDT. Senshi takes him down and hits a standing Warrior's Way (double stomp) for two. Dutt trips him down and goes up top but his 450 hits knees. A HUGE running dropkick puts Dutt down and Senshi puts him in the Tree of Woe. The Warrior's Way from that position is more than enough for the pin.

Rating: B-. This was your usual mindless X-Division match and that's fine. This ate up almost half an hour and it was certainly entertaining. Senshi was the new hot thing in the division so putting him over like this was certainly the right idea. There isn't much to say here as this was exactly what you would expect from this kind of a match, but it was pretty good.

Shelley is with Nash and apologizes for the loss, but he thinks there were knives and guns involved. Nash isn't worried about his X-Division match tonight with Sabin. Today is Father's Day and he talks some trash about Sabin's papa.

We recap Nash vs. Sabin which is part of the Paparazzi Productions feud, which I still don't think anyone involved could actually explain to you. Nash talked about how he was going to take over the X-Division, making Sabin stand up for its defense. This feud didn't make a ton of sense but it was pretty funny.

Kevin Nash vs. Chris Sabin

Nash hits a hard knee to the ribs and Sabin goes flying. A pair of elbows miss and Sabin goes for the knees. So this is your basic small guy vs. giant match isn't it? Sabin comes back with some fast strikes and Nash bails to the floor. He calls out Shelley for backup and we continue the stalling. Nash takes over again and pounds Sabin down into the corner, allowing Shelley to take the turnbuckle off. Sabin goes up for a middle rope dropkick, getting two.

He tries the Cradle Shock and you can join me in rolling your eyes if you like. That injures Sabin's back so Nash bends Chris over his knee. The Jackknife is countered into a seated senton for two. Sabin loads up Cradle Shock again but this time Shelley grabs Nash's foot to break it up. That ticks Sabin off so he dives onto Shelley for good guy revenge. Back in and a dropkick gets two on the big guy as does a guillotine legdrop. After another distraction by Shelley, Nash gets up, hits the big boot and Jackknifes Sabin for the pin.

Rating: D. This was another dull match that didn't really accomplish anything. Sabin was more of an annoyance to Nash rather than a credible

opponent, which doesn't help the division at all. That being said, it lets Nash brag some more which is the right idea at the end of the day. I still do wish the story made any kind of sense though.

AMW says they're not worried about Daniels and Styles tonight. They laugh off the notion that they're disrespecting the titles because they're the best thing that's ever happened to the titles. Storm says sorry about your luck.

We recap the tag title match. Daniels and Styles have had the titles won time after time but AMW cheated to win the title each time. Tonight it's the last chance and the challengers say they have a way to keep Gail out of things.

Tag Titles: Christopher Daniels/AJ Styles vs. America's Most Wanted

AMW has the titles of course. Gail is looking great in all white tonight. Storm hides something behind the steps before the match starts. Styles and Storm start us off, which is a potential PPV main event today. Storm takes him down with a shoulder block so Styles starts jumping around to take over. There's the dropdown dropkick and Storm is in trouble. The challengers start tagging in and out quickly as they work over Storm's arm.

It's off to Harris vs. Daniels for a battle of arm control. Daniels gets him down and steps on the head of Harris just to be evil, although in a friendly way of course. Storm comes in and we get some homosexually suggestive positions as a result. AMW gets sent to the floor and Styles hits a huge flip dive over the top to take them both down. Daniels brings Storm back in for a slingshot elbow drop for a delayed two.

Back to Styles and the perfect double teaming begins. Styles slides through Harris' legs to ram his face into the apron. Styles goes back in to face the legal Storm but everything breaks down on the floor. Gail gets involved out there and AMW takes over again. AJ tries to use the barricade as a launch pad but Storm takes the legs out and sends AJ's chest into the steel.

Back in and it's Storm vs. Styles before a quick tag brings Harris back

in. With Harris doing nothing he brings Storm back in for some kicks to the head for two. Back to the Wildcat who chokes away. I'm starting to get why Storm was the successful one after the team broke up. AJ gets spun around and almost makes a tag out of it, only to get caught in a spinning mat slam by Storm.

Styles counters the reverse tornado DDT and hits the Pele to put both guys down. There's the double tag and Daniels speeds things up. The slingshot moonsault gets two on Harris as Storm messes up his save. A Blue Thunder Bomb puts Harris down but Gail makes the save. Sirelda, a Chyna wannabe, makes her debut and lays out Gail.

Back to the match, AMW tries a double team move off the top but AJ makes the save, allowing Daniels to hook a victory roll for two. Storm throws in a chair for Harris to blast Daniels to two. Hot tag brings in AJ with the springboard forearm followed by a pumphandle gutbuster. Spinal Tap misses and Harris blasts AJ in the face with the brass knuckles.

Daniels makes the save and AJ hits a slingshot splash for two. Back to Daniels but Angel's Wings is broken up. The Last Call is blocked by a low blow and Angel's Wings hits the second time but Harris elbows the referee. Storm brings in the beer bottle but it hits Harris in the head. A frog splash from AJ followed by the BME gives the Dream Team the titles.

Rating: B-. Another good match here and it would start a pretty solid reign for the new champions. AMW would slowly slip into a funk and be broken up by the end of the year. AJ and Daniels were a solid team though and they had some awesome matches against LAX, which was the whole idea of putting them together in the first place.

Sting says he's been around for awhile and he knows how to multitask. If he has the chance to get the title, he'll take it but more importantly, he wants to keep the title away from Jarrett.

Tenay is in the ring and we get a video of the first four years of TNA. Tenay brings out the new face of TNA management: Jim Cornette. Cornette praises TNA and says how great the tag title match was. He's here for Panda Energy and to protect their investment and won't back down. Somehow

that took almost ten minutes.

Scott Steiner isn't worried about Joe.

We recap Samoa Joe vs. Scott Steiner. This isn't the time with the machete either. Joe is undefeated here and Steiner wants to break the "half breed's" streak. Joe debuted a year ago at Slammiversary and he'll be undefeated for a year after tonight. This is the Joe that had an attitude and a chip on his shoulder and you knew he was going to run over anyone that he faced.

Scott Steiner vs. Samoa Joe

Joe is the X Champion here if that means anything. Steiner grabs the arm to start and easily flips Joe over. They go to the mat but Joe pulls guard (I've been watching some MMA lately) and Steiner lets him up. Steiner hiptosses him over and poses so Joe spits in his face. Joe gets all fired up and lays in the chops and kicks to take over. Scott snaps off a release belly to belly and takes over again.

Joe takes him down into the corner and we get the Facewash. Steiner thinks he can hide on the floor but the suicide elbow sends him into the barricade. Back in and Steiner clotheslines him down and we get the push-up elbow. Another belly to belly puts Joe down, followed by a powerbomb but Joe grabs a triangle choke. He can't keep it on all the way though due to the suplex and powerbomb hurting his neck.

Joe snaps off right hands in the corner but charges into a release Rock Bottom, which is one of Joe's moves. They go to the floor and up towards the stage with Steiner picking up a chair. Naturally that winds up going upside his own head but Steiner shrugs it off and puts Joe against the post and cracks his head with the chair. The referee says they have a ten count to get in for some reason. Steiner cracks him with the chair again and gets nine.

Back in and Joe fires off the palm strikes to take over. An atomic drop sets up the running big boot followed by the senton backplash for no cover. Now Steiner charges into the release Rock Bottom. A slam attempt by Steiner is countered into a Blue Thunder Bomb for two. Steiner comes

back with some clotheslines but gets caught in the Clutch. Steiner fights up and breaks the hold then does it again, the second time with a low blow. A half nelson suplex puts Joe down. The Recliner is countered into an electric chair position and Steiner charges into a powerslam for the surprise pin.

Rating: C+. This was a pretty good power match as Joe gets another win over a big enough name. That's all you need to do at times and it was another good building block for him. He wouldn't really do anything for way too long which is where they screwed up with him, but it was TNA so they weren't going to be considered geniuses back then.

Christian, the world champion, says that he'll be the first champion to retain in the King of the Mountain match. If he had a dime for every time someone said he would lose, he'd have at least 51 dimes. The NWA World Title is like a drug and tonight he's going to keep it from Jarrett.

We recap the world title match, which is really just based on qualifying matches.

NWA World Title: Christian Cage vs. Ron Killings vs. Jeff Jarrett vs. Sting vs. Abyss

King of the Mountain, which has some complicated rules. It's a reverse ladder match, meaning you have to hang the title above the ring to win it. However to be eligible to do that, you have to gain a fall over someone else. If you pin or submit someone, they go to the penalty box for two minutes. After the big match intros we're ready to go.

Big brawl to start with only Truth and Jarrett left in the ring. Christian gets back in and dances with Truth for some reason, getting himself punched in the face for his efforts. It's Christian vs. Jarrett in the ring at the moment but they quickly go to the floor with the Canadian diving onto Jeff. The other three go into the ring and Abyss' double chokeslam attempt is broken up.

Truth knocks Abyss to the floor and hits a huge dive to take everyone down. Sting goes to the top of the penalty box and dives on all of them because he's just that awesome. Sting vs. Jarrett in the ring now and

Jarrett gets hit with the splash, followed by a missile dropkick from Truth, who gets the pin. Sting stood back and let him get the pin. Truth is now eligible and Jarrett is in the box for two minutes.

There are two tables set up next to the box. Truth tries to bring in a ladder but Christian launches it into his face for a two count. Abyss gets into the ring and sets for a gorilla press on Christian but Cage slips down the back and rolls Abyss up to become eligible as well. Jarrett gets out about two seconds after Abyss goes in so we've got four active people now with Christian and Truth both eligible.

Truth gets slammed by Sting and Jarrett crushes Christian with the ladder on the floor. Something that might have been the Death Drop on Truth gets two and Abyss is freed. He throws Christian into the barricade and now there are four tables in a 2x2 stack on the floor. Everyone but Christian is in the ring now with the good guys taking over. Sting and Abyss knock each other to the floor and Jarrett Strokes Truth off the apron into the barricade for the pin to become eligible.

The four people left fight into the crowd and Sting cracks Abyss with a chair to the head and then does it again. Christian tries to throw Jeff over the end of the balcony but Jeff fights back to prevent death. Sting throws Abyss into a wall as Christian and Jeff are back at ringside. Abyss throws Sting into the same wall as earlier and Truth is out of the box. There's no one near him so...let's look at the crowd.

Killings grabs the ladder and goes up but he takes forever but Abyss makes the save. Everyone is in the ring now and Jarrett/Abyss beat on everyone else with a ladder. Truth gets launched to the floor but Sting and Christian dropkick the ladder into the evil ones. Christian crushes Jarrett between the ladder but Abyss makes the save, sending both guys out to the floor in the process.

Truth goes up again but Abyss shoves him off again. The ladder swings back and falls on Hebner so there's no referee. Jarrett goes for the title but Abyss objects and hits the Black Hole Slam. A second referee comes out to count the pin, meaning only Sting isn't eligible. In a TERRIBLY contrived spot, Abyss sets the ladder next to the ropes, only

for Sting to shove him through the four tables.

Christian and Sting stare each other down and they slug it out. A Stinger Splash hits and he puts on the Scorpion but Jarrett comes out of the box early. He hits Sting with the belt and loads up the guitar shot, only for Christian to steal the guitar. The Death Drop puts Jarrett down and he puts the Scorpion on Jarrett, telling Sting to go up. Larry Z hits Christian low and gets drilled by Sting.

Another Death Drop puts Jarrett back down but there's no referee to count. Sting does the Austin thing and slaps the mat three times with Hebner's hand. Sting goes up but Christian stops him. EARL HEBNER shoves the ladder over as Jarrett goes up and hangs the belt (he never went into the box) to win in a Montreal angle. Larry even gets Earl out of there to complete the stupidity.

Rating: B. Other than the STUPID ending, I liked it. Montreal is easily the most controversial moment in wrestling history and is probably the most famous ending to a show ever. I personally hate it because we're nearly FIFTEEN YEARS LATER and I still have to sit through reenactments of it. The match was pretty fun, but Jarrett winning was just a way to set up Sting vs. Jarrett again.

Post match another referee steals the belt from Jarrett and gives it to Cornette to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This show worked for the most part, although there were some weak matches in there as well. There's more good than bad though which is all that matters at the end of the day. This was a hit or miss time for TNA but you could see the great elements they could have in there with guys like AJ and Daniels and Joe, but that usually goes without saying. Good show here though.

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Sacrifice 2006: Samoa Joe's First Step Towards The Main Event

Sacrifice 2006

Date: May 14, 2006

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Attendance: 900

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Don West

Another show here in Orlando with Christian as the world champion. Tonight he defends against Abyss in a Full Metal Mayhem match, which is the TNA version of a TLC match. Abyss took the belt itself at Lockdown even though Christian is still champion. Other than that it's another chapter in the Sting vs. Jarrett saga, in this case Sting/Joe vs. Jarrett/Steiner. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about how everyone has troubles in their lives and how everyone has to make sacrifices.

We open up with a scoreboard update for the World X Cup. This is one of those things that I never quite got into but a lot of people loved. The idea is that you have four teams of four X guys competing in a round robin style tournament for national supremacy. America has five points, Mexico has two points and Japan and Canada have zero each. This is the last match of the second round and I guess it's for one point.

World X Cup Second Round: Jushin Thunder Liger vs. Petey Williams

Actually this is worth three points. Petey takes him to the mat and the fans are all over him. To be fair he's fighting a legend so it's understandable. I think they botch an elbow drop spot as Liger dropped the elbow but Williams took over anyway. A headscissors puts Liger to the

apron but he low bridges Williams to the floor. Liger adds a huge dive to take over again.

Team Japan acts all evil and pounds on Petey on the floor. Back into the ring and Liger hooks the surfboard which is one of his signature holds. He drops Petey down into a dragon sleeper and now the annoying fans have to do the dueling chants. A frog splash by Liger hits knees and Petey hits a spinwheel kick to put Liger down again.

Liger tries a palm thrust but walks into an enziguri and tornado DDT for two. Petey loads up the Destroyer but Jushin comes back with a palm thrust and the Liger Bomb for two. A member of Team Japan interferes with a low blow. Liger follows with the Crash Thunder Buster (wheelbarrow facejam) for the pin.

Rating: C+. This was pretty good and a solid choice for an opener. Liger is one of the few guys from Japan that people actually know a bit here in America so his appearances are actually worth something. Having people go out there and just saying they're from Japan or Mexico or wherever doesn't really mean anything. Liger could still go in his late 30s or early 40s so this worked pretty well.

The PPV froze at the end of the match. Such is life in TNA.

Updated World X Cup Standings:

America – 5

Japan – 3

Mexico – 2

Canada – 0

We'll be back to this later on.

We run down the card for the rest of the show.

AMW with Jackie (Gayda) and Gail say they're not worried about tonight. Jackie is here against her will. Storm threatens Jackie to not cost them anything tonight. The girls are barred from ringside. Jackie says she's pregnant and Gail fires her.

We recap AMW vs. Styles/Daniels. The idea is that AMW is the undefeatable team so a dream team has been put together to fight them. They already had one match but Gail cheated to keep the belts on AMW.

Tag Titles: America's Most Wanted vs. Christopher Daniels/AJ Styles

Styles and Daniels jump the champions to start and Daniels/Harris go to the floor so AJ can hit the dropdown dropkick on the Cowboy. Daniels comes in and we're ready to go. He takes Storm down and cranks on the arm but it's off to Harris who runs Daniels over. The challengers double team Storm and Harris' full nelson slam is countered into a bridging Indian Deathlock with a chinlock but the Cowboy makes the save.

Styles comes in legally now and the challengers tag in and out quickly to work on the arm. AMW finally starts cheating and get Daniels into the corner to take over. The champs cheat like true heel champions would do with choking and face pulling before Harris hooks a chinlock. A back elbow gets two on the Fallen Angel. Daniels counters an Irish whip to send Storm's shoulder into the post and it's hot tag to AJ.

AJ speeds things way up with his headscissors but Storm makes the save. Daniels gets tagged back in for some reason and we get a Tower of Doom with Daniels on top. Oh scratch that as he shoves the Tower down and hits a top rope cross body for two on Harris. I wish AMW would have their names on their trunks because when their backs are to the camera it's very hard to tell them apart.

Daniels throws Harris into the crowd and AJ dives from the top rope over the barrier and onto Harris. The match kind of breaks down a bit and everyone is on the floor. A fan has a box of cereal for some reason. Back in and Daniels breaks up the Death Sentence before putting Harris into a fireman's carry. AJ hits the Pele before the DVD hits to kill Harris dead. BME misses but the Last Call does as well. Harris hits his spear to take Daniels down for two.

It's Storm vs. Daniels legally now but Daniels hits a double clothesline to bring in Styles. AJ goes up high with a double clothesline of his own but he charges into a boot from Storm. AJ loads up a superplex but Harris makes the save, resulting in a Doomsday Device into a reverse tornado DDT by Storm for two. That looked awesome.

Daniels comes back in for the save and the challengers hit a BME/Frog Splash combo for two on Storm. Styles tries the Clash but the Cowboy escapes with a low blow and the superkick for two. Angel's Wings hits Storm for two as Harris makes the save. This is getting awesome. Daniels, Harris and the referee get knocked to the floor and something falls from the rafters into the ring. It's a nightstick and Gail Kim is seen in the rafters. AJ hits the Clash on Storm but Harris blasts him in the back of the head with the nightstick for the pin to retain.

Rating: B+. This was getting awesome at the end but we had to have Gail Kim interfere to end the thing. This would set up another match at Slammiversary which wasn't as good but it gave us the title change which we needed. Still though, this was the old school idea of putting four guys out there and giving them fifteen minutes to have a great match. As usual, it worked.

Larry Z is with A-1 and says that all of his problems are because of Raven. A-1 is going to take out Raven for him tonight. A-1 has no idea what's going on and thinks Larry's name is Barry. He leaves and Slick Johnson comes in and says we're going to find out who the face of TNA management is next month. Larry has no idea who it's going to be but

Johnson says he knows. He suggests it'll be Piper but that's just a joke. It might be Vince Russo but that's also a joke. The third joke is Ultimate Warrior. I think we get it by this point. Johnson still won't tell.

We recap the Larry Z vs. Raven feud which has gone on forever. Larry was told that someone was going to be the new face of TNA management on the same day that his biggest rival, Raven, was reinstated. Team Canada offered A-1 to take Raven out for some reason.

Raven vs. A-1

Larry sits in a chair in the ring before the match starts. Larry gets in his face so A-1 hits Raven with said chair to get an early advantage. A-1 rams him into the corner a bunch of times as Larry sits in on commentary. They head to the floor and A-1 rams him into the post a few times to stay on the back. Raven's back goes into the barricade as the beating on that thing continues.

Back into the ring and A-1 fires off shoulders in the corner. A corner splash/forearm puts Raven down again as we're still waiting on Bird Boy's first offense. A-1 kicks him down but Raven FINALLY gets in some right hands in the corner. A clothesline out of the corner butts A-1 down and he fires off some kicks. An Edge-0-Matic puts Raven down but Larry's distraction lets A-1 get in a cheap shot. A charge misses and the Raven Effect gets the pin.

Rating: D. This was a really dull match, but that could be said about almost any match in this Raven vs. Larry feud. It just kept going on and on with nothing ever really being accomplished. We got matches like Raven vs. Kanyon out of it which didn't make anyone interested in the match or anything like that, but who cares about stuff like that?

Larry calls Raven back to the ring and they have a weak brawl.

Jarrett and Steiner say Sting hasn't one-uped them but rather the opposite. Jarrett says that Sting is desperate for picking Joe as his partner when Joe isn't trustworthy. Steiner says that Sting's mistake will result in pain.

We recap Rhyno vs. Roode. Team Canada cost Rhyno a match with Abyss for some reason that isn't quite explained here. Rhyno has vowed to go through all of the Canadians to get to Coach D'Amore.

Bobby Roode vs. Rhyno

The is power vs. power and they fight over a lockup to start. A shoulder block puts Roode on the floor but Rhyno doesn't follow up. Roode comes back in and slaps Rhyno in the face, which gets him punched and backdropped for his troubles. They go to the floor for a slugout which goes to Roode. Back in and Rhyno goes to the middle rope but a disitraction by the Coach lets Roode knock Rhyno to the floor.

Back in and Bobby pounds away at the Man Beast's head before choking away a bit. Neckbreaker gets two. There's the Hennig neck snap for the same result and it's off to a neck crank. The jingoistic fans chant USA so Roode hits a belly to back suplex and a middle rope kneedrop for two. Off to a chinlock which stays on the neck. Like any good stupid heel, Roode slaps Rhyno in the face a few times which fires Rhyno up.

Roode takes him right back down by sending him into the corner and it's back to the chinlock. Rhyno fights out of it and speeds things up, running over Roode with clotheslines and elbows to the face. A spinebuster gets two for Rhyno and Roode goes to the apron. He goes up top but gets superplexed back down for a close two.

Roode comes back with a spinebuster of his own and it's hockey stick time. Since that gets taken away, Roode has to settle for getting two boots into the face of a charging Rhyno. The Northern Lariat is countered into a belly to belly but D'Amore gets in a hockey stick shot so that the

Lariat can hit for the pin.

Rating: D+. This wasn't bad but it was pretty boring. I never quite got the point of the feud between Rhyno and the Canadians but it didn't last long. It was more like a way to bridge the gap from Rhyno being world champion to his next big feud, which would wind up being Christian Cage. Still though, nothing great here but Roode would get much better over time.

Team 3D talks about how you always remember where you were when big things happen (this leads to an argument about OJ Simpson but we'll skip that). Ray remembers being in Hartford, Connecticut in 2000 and winning their first WWE Tag Titles after beating the New Age Outlaws. Tonight it happens again.

We recap Team 3D vs. the James Gang. The argument is that the match six years ago ended with a pipe shot and also about the Dudleys getting big in a bingo hall while the Outlaws were headlining MSG.

Team 3D vs. James Gang

Roadie says that he isn't a mark so he doesn't remember his wins and losses. Ok then. Kip and D-Von start us off with D-Von hitting a jumping clothesline for two. With nothing of note in the first minute and a half, it's off to Ray vs. BG. They trade armdrags and no one can really get a distinct advantage. BG fires off an armdrag and dropkick to send Ray into the corner. He yells at Ray about being fat so Ray hits a dropkick of his own to shock BG.

They trade the dancing punches and both hit their big punches at the same time. If this is supposed to be some big and epic clash of legends it really isn't working. D-Von pulls BG out to the floor and crotches him on the post before coming in legally. D-Von beats on BG for a bit before it's back to Bubba for a neckbreaker, getting two. Off to a chinlock as BG is in some serious trouble. Ray misses a charge in the corner and BG

clotheslines D-Von down.

Hot (I guess?) tag brings in Kip who cleans house. He hits a Stinger Splash on Bubba and everything breaks down. The James Gang is in control but Bubba throws Kip over the top and out to the floor. Doomsday Device gets two on BG and the double neckbreaker gets the same on Kip. Fameasser to D-Von misses but BG brings in a pipe like the one mentioned in the match in 2000. A shot to the back of D-Von is enough to end this.

Rating: D+. Was this supposed to be some big battle? It was ok I guess but it felt like they were going on pure reputation rather than actually having a good match. It wasn't a bad match or anything but I don't get if this was supposed to be a big and great match or a revenge match or what. Either way, it was just ok at best.

Mitchell says Christian has nothing to live for other than the world title, and tonight Abyss is taking that from him too. Abyss is going to take the title in the match that Christian is best known for. Mitchell will make sure to come visit Christian in the morgue.

We see the ending of the Liger vs. Petey match because the feed went out earlier. That's nice of them.

The newest Knockout, Christy Hemme, comes out to present the World X Cup to the winning team.

World X Cup Final Round: Gauntlet Match

All sixteen participants in the match are in this. It's a two minute starting period followed by one minute intervals after that. It's over the top rope eliminations until we get down to one on one when it becomes a singles match. The teams that make it to the final match receive two points apiece and the winner of the match gets an extra three. If the two finalists are from the same team, their team receives seven points and

automatically wins the tournament. In the event of a tie, the captains will face each other in a singles match...on Impact.

We start with Minoru Tanaka (Japan) and Puma (Mexico). Tanaka offers a handshake to start but as Puma shakes it, Tanaka Mists him to take over. A springboard missile dropkick puts Tanaka down and an enziguri staggers him. Tanaka gets in a suplex but covers out of instinct. #3 is Petey Williams (Canada) and he joins forces with Minoru to double team Puma. That lasts a good 20 seconds before Petey turns on Puma.

#4 is Chris Sabin (USA) and things speed up again. Sabin whips all three guys into the corner but only hits Tanaka with a forearm. A double clothesline takes the other two down and Hiroki Goto (Japan) is #5. He hits a spin kick to take down Sabin and teams up with his teammate to clean house. #6 is Incognito (Mexico) who seems to wrestle in slow motion. He knocks Petey to the floor and hits a suicide dive but neither guy went over the top so everyone is still in. Before I forget, Incognito is currently known as Hunico in WWE.

#7 is Johnny Devine (Canada) and he puts Incognito down in the corner for some running knees. #8 is Sonjay Dutt (USA) to continue the pattern the entries have taken. All eight are still in at the moment. The Americans double team Williams but Devine makes the save. And never mind as Dutt snaps off an inverted rana to send him flying. In at #9 is Black Tiger (Japan) and he runs over Dutt very quickly.

Tiger hooks an ankle lock on Williams but Devine makes the save. Magno is #10 (Mexico) and he comes in with some springboard flips. It's impossible to tell what's going on as there are too many people in the ring at the moment. Eric Young (Canada) is #11 as two people go through the ropes, as in not being eliminated. We get a LOUD Eric chant as we're told that Incognito and Dutt are both out with Dutt having an injured ankle.

#12 is Alex Shelley (USA) and house is cleaned. He hits a complicated double team move on the Canadians and a spin kick Devine. Sabin and

Devine go out in a big rush of offense as Liger (Japan) is #13 and the final member of Team Japan. Magno charges into a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker from Liger and they go to the top rope. Liger gets superplexed down and Shocker (Mexico) is #14. Magno charges at someone and is backdropped out.

Black Tiger goes up top but gets powerbombed down and eliminated as we see Tyson Dux (Canada) in at #15. Dux sends Puma to the apron but he gets back in. Shelley throws out Goto and Jay Lethal (USA) is #16 and the final entrant. By my count we have eight people left: Young, Minoru, Shelley, Lethal, Puma, Dux, Liger, Shocker and Williams. Lethal dropkicks Minoru out. That leaves Japan with just Liger.

Shocker charges at Dux and gets monkey flipped to the floor. Dux and Young go at Liger and get palm strikes to the chest for their efforts. They combine to eliminate Liger, eliminating Japan entirely from the gauntlet and the competition. Lethal immediately puts Young out and we're down to five: Dux, Lethal, Shelley, Williams and Puma. There goes Dux and we're down to four. The Americans double team Williams but Shelley misses a charging knee to eliminate himself. Lethal goes to the apron but jumps back in, right into a spin kick from Puma to get us down to two.

Puma hits a fast brainbuster and remember that it's now a regular one on one match. The Canadian Destroyer hits out of NOWHERE and the Canadians in the form of Williams wins, meaning it's Williams vs. Sabin for the Cup on Impact (Sabin would win the match and the Cup).

Rating: B-. That's as high as I can possibly go with this. The match wasn't bad at all but it's the walking definition of throw A LOT of stuff out there and have them do flips and dives with the hope that the crowd likes it. I don't really know what else there is to say about this. I don't see the need in having it go over to Impact and not ending it here, but I guess it gave them something else to do on Thursday. Not a bad match, but it was only going to be able to be so good if that makes sense.

Post match Kevin Nash comes out and Jackknifes Puma to show what he's going to do to the X-Division. He brags about how Puma got in no offense on him and says a medium big man can beat an X-Division guy any day. Size does matter you see.

Samoa Joe says he doesn't need to be Sting's friend to beat up Steiner and Jarrett.

We recap the tag match. Basically Steiner is Jarrett's top flunkie and they offered Sting a tag match. There was this stupid game show thing with guys like Rick Steiner, Lex Luger and I think Buff Bagwell being partners that Jarrett/Steiner turned down. It wound up being Samoa Joe. See, THIS is how you push someone: put them in the main event or tip feuds and have them seem like they belong there.

Scott Steiner/Jeff Jarrett vs. Sting/Samoa Joe

Jarrett and Sting get us going after some stalling. Sting takes him to the mat and rams his head into the mat in a simple yet effective move. Steiner comes in and charges into a big boot and a Vader Bomb of all things. Sting moves to send a cheating Jarrett into Steiner before taking them both down with a double clothesline off the top. Off to Joe for the showdown with Steiner.

They stare each other down and Joe pie faces him. Joe pounds him into the corner but gets suplexed down which seems to shock him. They slug it out in the corner but Steiner takes his head off with a clothesline. The elbow sets up the pushups which ticks Joe off enough that he fires off forearms and an enziguri to slow Steiner down. Jarrett hits a knee to the Samoan's back and Joe is in trouble.

Jeff comes in legally and struts a lot but he charges into the release Rock Bottom. Off to Sting who cleans house and powerbombs Jarrett down for two. He loads up the Death Drop but has to put Jarrett in an STO of all things. The Scorpion on Steiner is broken up as is one on Steiner.

Jarrett DDTs him down and Steiner hits a belly to belly for two. Jarrett comes back in and uses a Garvin Stomp followed by a front facelock. Riveting stuff from Double J there.

Sting fights up and gets the tag but Steiner has the referee. The classics always work. Speaking of the classics, the guys collide and Sting's head falls onto Steiner's balls. Double tag brings in Joe and Jarrett and the snap powerslam gets two on Jeff very quickly. Joe cleans house on Scott and hits the backsplash for two. He runs over both guys at once with a double clothesline and everything breaks down.

Joe throws both guys into the same corner followed by Joe hitting a leg lariat to take them both out. The Stinger Splash hits but the second sends Sting over the top to the floor. The Stroke hits Joe but he takes too long to cover, only getting two. Sting beats up Steiner on the floor as Jarrett tries the middle rope Stroke. Joe punches out of it and the MuscleBuster gets the pin.

Rating: C+. This was your usual main event tag match and it wasn't half bad. Joe getting the win was fine but at the same time he never got near the world title picture this year, which made little sense after he beat Jarrett again on PPV when Jarrett was world champion. This would be the main event feud that ran all summer and it was pretty decent, although I still didn't like the way it ended.

Joe finally shakes Sting's hand post match.

Joe leaves and Steiner blasts Sting with a chair. Joe doesn't see it but he should have been able to hear it, although he doesn't turn around. Instead he keeps walking and lets Sting get beaten down. Sting takes a guitar shot which Joe hears. He turns around and looks at Steiner and Jarrett standing tall, then walks away. A bunch of guys run out for the save, including the James Gang and Daniels plus others.

We recap the world title match, which is Full Metal Mayhem. Nothing is

said here so I guess there's no point in recapping it.

Christian says simply stealing a title belt doesn't make you a champion.

NWA World Title: Abyss vs. Christian

This is basically a TLC match and Christian is defending. Christian immediately takes him down but can't overcome the power soon afterwards. Abyss goes for a ladder but Christian dropkicks it back into his face. Back into the ring and Abyss throws him to the apron, only to have the ladder see-sawed into his face. They head to the floor with Christian pounding away on Abyss' head.

Out into the crowd and they go to that wall that the people in every big TNA brawl fight to. They head back into the ring and the ladder is set up in the corner. Abyss misses a splash onto said ladder so Christian puts it up in front of the challenger. He tries a charge at the ladder but Abyss throws it back at him, knocking Christian down. Abyss wedges a chair between the ropes, and due to the law of wrestling #1, goes crashing into it for his trouble.

Christian goes up and gets his hand on the belt but Abyss makes a pretty easy save. They fight over a German onto the ladder but after neither can get it to go, it's Christian that is sent crashing into the ladder. Abyss goes outside and sets up a pair of tables next to the ring. Now there's a table set up in the ring as well but Christian gets in a boot to the ribs to break things up.

Abyss puts him on the ladder but misses a cross body kind of move onto the climbing instrument. A frog splash onto the ladder misses but so does a chain shot against the post. Christian chokes him with the chain but gets flipped through one of the tables at ringside. Abyss goes up but Christian makes the save with a chair. They both fall off the ladder with Christian hitting the top rope. Abyss lays out the tacks but walks into an Unprettier onto the ladder. Mitchell takes a Rock Bottom into the

tacks and Abyss is put on the table. He has a chance to go for the belt but drops a frog splash through Abyss, then grabs the title.

Rating: B-. This was ok but it never hit the level that a lot of these matches hit. This felt like something you would see on a TV show, meaning that while it was good there was nothing above the usual level of violence or carnage. For a B level main event it was fine, but it's absolutely nothing you'd ever want to see a second time unless you were completely obsessed with Christian or something.

Overall Rating: C-. This show was really nothing that great. If I was watching it live I likely would have said it wasn't bad but I would have been a bit disappointed. By no means is it a bad show but there's nothing on it worth going out of your way to see. This was before TNA really hit its stride so for the time, this was a pretty good show. It hasn't really aged that well, but in just over six years it can only age so much anyway. Overall not bad, but it's just ok at best.

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Final Resolution 2006: This Is TNA's #1 Moment? Why?

Final Resolution 2006

Date: January 15, 2006

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Attendance: 900

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Don West

This is another of those shows where not a ton happens but it's supposed

to be a big deal. Sting is back tonight and it's in the form of a tag match. This didn't work when Rock came back at Survivor Series and it's not likely to work for me here. Other than that there isn't much here because the main event guys are all in the main event. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about how Sting is coming. Jarrett and Brown say it's 2006 so it doesn't mean as much as it used to. There had been signs that he was coming back and he finally did at the beginning of the year. The main event is Sting/Christian vs. Jarrett/Brown.

Alex Shelley/Austin Aries/Roderick Strong vs. Chris Sabin/Sonjay Dutt/Matt Bentley

Recipe for this match: take six fast paced guys and give them ten minutes to pop the crowd. Sabin and Shelley get things going. Chris is freshly blonde here and things speed up to start. Sabin takes him to the mat and hits a pair of kicks to the back. Dutt comes in and Sabin powerbombs him down onto Alex for two. Shelley bites Dutt's thumb to escape and it's off to Strong.

I've always been a fan of Strong but the more I see of him the less interesting he comes off as. That's saying a lot as he never was anything of note in the first place, but there's just NOTHING there. Dutt spins around a lot and it's off to Bentley to work on the arm. Traci is looking very bouncy tonight which is never a bad thing. Aries comes in and gets suplexed right down for two.

Dutt tries his rope walk but Aries crotches him as the heels take over. The heels hit a sick triple team top rope double stomp (only Shelley stomped) on Dutt as Dave Hebner is here watching things. Aries comes in and hits a springboard knee to the back for two. Dutt is sent to the floor as Jerry Lynn is also here watching. He's an agent at this point but he inspired a lot of these guys.

Shelley comes in and hooks a Rings of Saturn with a leg trap. That's not

normal human bending by Dutt. Back to Strong who slugs Dutt down but Sonjay hooks a tornado DDT for the tag to Sabin. A standing rana takes down the freshly tagged in Shelley. We go to the Tree of Woe and Sabin hits a pair of dropkicks. Sabin takes down all three guys at once but Shelley escapes Cradle Shock.

Bentley drops a top rope elbow on Alex as everything breaks down. Strong hits an Irish Curse on Bentley but Sonjay takes him down. Aries breaks up the Hindu Press but he goes to the floor where Sabin dives onto him. Strong breaks up Bentley's superkick and Traci gets on the apron. Bentley superkicks Strong down but it allows Shelley to roll Matt up for the pin.

Rating: C. This wasn't their best match but it was fine with the dives and such. There was nothing of note here though as we had seen most of this stuff before. All six guys were moving well out there and the dives were good, but the ending was pretty weak with no big move or spot for it. Still though, nothing wrong with this and it was fine for what they were going for.

We recap the split of 4 Live Kru and the fallout after that. Konnan is the one that went insane because of Kip James having to force his way in because Kip has nothing to do without BG James. It's almost like he's a guy that got over in a tag team but had no ability to get over on his own. Konnan beat up BG's dad because he's a bit nuts.

Diamonds in the Rough vs. James Gang

It's Elix Skipper/David Young and this is the return match for the James Gang. BG and Skipper start things off. Skipper shoves him down and it's a very slow start. Skipper suplexes BG over and works on the arm for a second. BG comes back with the dancing punches and shaking knee drop for two. David and Kip come in for a few collisions that go nowhere.

The Diamonds try some double teaming but get caught in a double Japanese armdrag by Kip. They get sent to the floor and the Gang beats on them on

the floor. The fans chant for the Outlaws but BG walks into a spinebuster from Young for no cover. There's a reason the guy lost like 86 matches in a row. Skipper pounds on BG for a bit before it's back to Young who covers, only to have Kip distract the referee. David misses a moonsault and it's hot tag to Kip. Skipper clotheslines him down and everything breaks down. Young breaks up the pumphandle slam but Kip hits the cobra clutch slam for the pin on Elix.

Rating: D. You know there's a running theme with these New Age Outlaws matches: they're not that good. These guys were never known for their in ring work and it's pretty clear why. The matches just aren't any good with the action being generic the whole way through. There was nothing to this and it was a horrible return for the James Gang or whatever they're called this month.

Daniels says Joe hasn't gotten to him yet and tonight it's about what they both believe in. Joe believes no one in the X-Division can stand up to him. Daniels believes there's a big difference between unbeatable and unbeaten.

AJ Styles vs. Hiroshi Tanahashi

This is a match for the sake of a match. Tanahashi is basically the superman of NJPW at the moment (2012) and he's a rising star at this point (2006). AJ is Mr. TNA for 2005. Remember that as it'll come into play later. Feeling out process to start as they head to the mat. That goes nowhere so the fans chant for both guys. AJ gets armdragged down as Tenay talks about the history of Japanese guys in America.

They trade armdrags and Tanahashi takes over with an armbars. AJ is like screw that and dropkicks him to the floor. He sets for a dive but Tanahashi moves. AJ catches himself on the apron and we stop for some staring. Back in and Styles drops a knee for two. Tanahashi hits a release German for the same. Off to an abdominal stretch so Tenay can list off Tanahashi's wins so we can have a reason to think something of

him.

Styles gets caught in a sleeper and then its dragon cousin. A dragon sleeper swing gets two. That looked awesome. A middle rope elbow misses and Styles hits an enziguri to put both guys down. Tanahashi escapes a brainbuster but for some reason he puts AJ on the apron. There's the springboard forearm for two. Hiroshi gets a knee up in the corner and hits a full nelson slam for two.

AJ misses a spin kick and Tanahashi takes him down with an enziguri. Tanahashi tries a belly to back superplex but AJ counters into a crossbody while in mid-air. Shannon Moore runs in with AJ's plaque but it hits Tanahashi by mistake. AJ Pele's him down and hits the Styles Clash on Tanahashi for the pin.

Rating: B-. Good match here but the ending holds it down a lot. Moore was doing his punk thing at this point and they put him with Styles for a few weeks until everyone realized that no one cared about Shannon Moore. The match was going really well as Tanahashi really is good, but again there's no story to the match so it's hard to care about it at all.

Moore steals the plaque again.

We recap Raven vs. Larry Z which went on forever. Raven won the world title but then he got screwed out of the title at a house show in Canada. Larry refused to grant him a rematch so Larry kept trying to make Raven retire. Raven has a mystery opponent tonight.

Raven says that Larry is an idiot and says he wants the title back. Someone is getting hurt tonight and Larry better pray that it's Raven.

Sean Waltman vs. Raven

This is Raven's Rules and if Raven loses he's fired, but if he wins he

gets a title match. Raven shoves his shopping cart into Waltman's ribs and chases after Larry. They head into the ring and Waltman gets in a kendo stick shot as Larry watches from the floor. They hit each other with trashcan parts at the same time to put both guys down. Raven is busted open but goes after Larry again. Larry's security holds Bird Boy back so Waltman can dive on him to take over again.

Sean rams the cart into Raven a few times and they go up the ramp. Raven grabs a trashcan lid to blast Waltman in the head to take over. Waltman gets put in the shopping cart and shoved off the stage in a big crash. Back to ringside and Raven pulls out a table. There's a ladder in there too but the referee goes down. Raven hits the DDT but there's no referee to count the pin. Larry comes in for a very slow two.

Waltman gets a belt from somewhere and pops Raven with it to take over. Bronco Buster on the ladder misses and Raven gets two. Raven sets up the table and the ladder for a DDT off the ladder. Well at least that's what he was planning but Larry grabs his foot. Pac hits an X-Factor off the ladder through the table for the pin. Raven had his foot on the rope but Larry counted anyway despite seeing it.

Rating: C. Nothing to see here but it had some fun brawling spots. The ending looked good and it got Raven off of TV, which I believe was due to a legit medical condition he had. The shopping cart stuff was good and Raven sold like a madman as usual, so I can't complain much here. Just like the six man though, there's nothing new here which is what holds it back.

Larry gloats post match. Raven leaves very sadly.

Ron Killings says he has two of the fastest wins ever over Bobby Roode and he's going to do it again tonight. Konnan comes up and wants to know why Killings won't call him back. Killings isn't happy with him but Konnan says think about it.

Raven leaves the building and Larry gives him his bag. Jackie Gayda comes up and SWEET GOODNESS those things are huge. She implies Larry screwed her over too but won't say over what.

Bobby Roode vs. Ron Killings

Killings beat Roode twice in about 40 seconds so Roode jumped him and won the third match. This is the fourth in the series. Truth grabs a very fast rollup for two which scares Roode to death. He tries it again and gets another two so Roode heads to the floor. Back in and Roode hooks a hammerlock which is quickly broken up. Roode bridges into a backslide for one followed by a pinfall reversal sequence which results in a standoff.

Roode goes to the floor again so Truth dives on him to speed things up a bit. Truth goes after D'Amore and gets rammed into the post for his troubles. Back into the ring and there's an abdominal stretch by the Canadian. D'Amore does what any good manager would do and offers a hockey stick to help with the hold. The hold is broken so Killings grabs another rollup for two. Roode hits a running knee lift and then a reverse bearhug on the mat. Killings escapes and hits a top rope missile dropkick to put both guys down.

Truth comes back again with his dancing punches and a spinning forearm for two. The splits into the side kick gets another two. Roode breaks up a superplex and hits a top rope cross body for two. Killings may have a bad arm. Konnan comes out for no apparent reason and the distraction lets Roode hit the Northern Lariat for the pin.

Rating: D+. When your whole match is based around the idea that one of the guys might get a rollup for a pin and that's the majority of his offense, you're going to have to pull off something special to have a good match. This didn't do that at all really and it felt like something that belonged on Impact. That was one of the major issues with TNA back in the day: they weren't quite ready to have full three hour PPVs due to only having an hour a week of TV, so a lot of the matches on the PPVs

didn't have a ton of story to them, such as this one.

Konnan (in a Boston Bruins jersey for some reason) says to listen to him instead of the people. Cue BG James but Homicide runs in to help Konnan beat him down. Killings walks away. Kip comes out to clear the ring before he can do their hair.

Mitchell says Sting arriving means that the war begins tonight. Rhyno will be going into battle with Abyss but he's too distracted to beat the monster. There was something going on with Rhyno's daughter at this point but it isn't really made clear here.

We recap Rhyno vs. Abyss. Basically Rhyno was feuding with Team Canada when D'Amore made a deal with Mitchell for Abyss' protection. I'd assume it was in exchange for money but it was never specifically said.

Rhyno vs. Abyss

Rhyno goes right after him on the floor and the fight starts fast. They head inside, only for Abyss to get clotheslined back to the floor. Rhyno slingshots out onto Abyss but Abyss shrugs it off and pounds him down. Abyss hits him with a chair a few times and wedges the chair in the ropes back inside. To my great shock, Abyss doesn't wind up going into it, thus violating a wrestling law. A quick neck crank gets Abyss nowhere but a big boot gets him two. So the big boot is better than a neck crank. Got it.

Back to the crank as the match slows WAY down. Rhyno fights out of it and hits a bad TKO to escape. A few chair shots to the head stagger Abyss and another one puts him down. Mitchell hooks the leg to avoid the Gore and Abyss clocks Rhyno with the chain for two. Black Hole Slam is countered into a spinebuster for two. Rhyno tries the Rhyno Driver (middle rope piledriver) but Mitchell interferes again. A chokeslam is broken up but the Black Hole Slam onto the chair gets the pin.

Rating: D+. Not much here as this felt like it was about five minutes instead of the nearly ten that it got. This wasn't a No DQ match or anything like that, but for some reason the referee didn't seem to mind. Rhyno had absolutely nothing to do after he got out of the title picture so let's just let him do hardcore stuff I guess.

Shane talks about how the Dudleys went through the fires of various companies, in case you forgot they were there. Bubba lists off various teams that are great, all of whom have held the NWA tag titles I believe. D-Von says don't screw with us.

We recap AMW vs. Team 3D. In short, the Dudleys have held all tag titles but the NWA versions, so they're here to get them. AMW gave Team 3D a huge beatdown a few weeks ago so this is also about revenge.

Tag Titles: America's Most Wanted vs. Team 3D

We get big match intros and we're ready to go. D-Von and Storm get things going in what would be a very different match today. Storm takes him down to the mat with a headlock but gets hiptossed and dropkicked down. Harris jumps D-Von from behind and the champs take over. Scratch that as D-Von hits a double clothesline to take over again. Off to Ray as things speed up. One thing you can never say about Ray is that he's dull. The guy knows how to keep people fired up.

Harris clotheslines Ray down for two and it's a standoff. They go to the corner and Ray fires off his chops. The middle rope backsplash misses (duh) and it's back to Storm. Ray is like screw that and cleans house before bringing D-Von back in. A spinebuster gets two on Storm, and What's Up Cowboy? The Dudleys go for a table because disqualifications mean jack in this company, but AMW dropkicks it into their faces.

Harris takes D-Von down with some tape to the throat and it's off to Storm for a chinlock. Back to Harris but he gets sent into the post shoulder first. Hot tag brings in Ray and house is cleaned. Side slam

gets two on Harris and heel miscommunication lets Ray hit a DDT for two on Wildcat. Everything breaks down and AMW hits a modified Hart Attack for two o Ray. They loads up the Death Sentence but D-Von makes the save.

Ray returns the favor by breaking up a superplex and the Doomsday Device gets two as well. Harris makes the save and gets two on Ray off a big boot. Storm grabs a chair but accidentally clocks Harris into the reverse 3D for two. Bubba shoves Storm off the top through a table and a rollup gets a VERY close two on Harris. Gail hands (not slips, hands while in the ring) Harris powder but Ray knocks it into the referee's eyes. 3D gets the pin and the titles, but remember that the referee is blind.

Rating: B. This was getting good at the end, but that powder looks like Instant Dusty to me. TNA did a good job at pushing its tag teams at this point and making them seem to be like something that actually mattered. This was a good example of that as the fans were wanting to see the title change here, and that's what they got.

Oh of course it isn't, as the Canadians come in, beat up the Dudleys and put Harris on top of Ray as the referee gets his vision back, calling the win for AMW. I'm sure ALL FOUR CANADIANS DESTROYING THE DUDLEYS didn't shake the ring or anything at all either right? Dusty Finish as you likely saw coming.

Jarrett and Brown say that they'll win tonight because Christian and Sting both think they're going to be the savior of TNA. Brown says the time is up on Sting and he has to come to the Serengeti. Brown was way more engaging here.

We recap Daniels vs. Joe. Joe came in and took over the X-Division and destroyed Daniels, badly injuring him. Tonight Daniels wants respect, revenge and the title. See how easy it can be?

X-Division Title: Samoa Joe vs. Christopher Daniels

Joe is champion if that doesn't come through some how. Daniels has to use speed here and Joe misses a charge. He flies around as fast as he can and takes Joe down with a pair of ranas. A dropkick misses though and Joe gets him in the corner. Daniels tries a side roll but Joe hooks a freaky Rings of Saturn kind of hold on Daniels. Christopher makes the rope but Joe walks out of the way of a Lionsault press. I've always loved when Joe did that.

Joe drops a knee for two which is a lot more when you're his size. Daniels gets an elbow up in the corner but walks into a powerslam to put him right back down. A Codebreaker out of nowhere puts Joe down, followed by an STO and the slingshot moonsault for two. A Death Valley Driver (good one too) out of the corner gets two. Joe powerbombs him half to death for two, followed by a triangle choke into an STF.

Daniels escapes so Joe pounds him on the head in the corner. Daniels tries to powerbomb him out but Joe ranas him and kills Daniels with a clothesline for two. Joe is getting frustrated and charges into a release Rock Bottom and the BME for two. Joe goes to the floor and Daniels BLASTS him in the face with a kick. A slingshot elbow to the floor hits Joe but it hurts Daniels too. Daniels throws Joe back in but gets kicked right back out.

The champ sets up a chair on the floor and it's the Ole Kick. Remember that Daniels had a bad concussion a few weeks before that. Daniels is busted open now and Joe stomps away at the bad head. Here's AJ to play cheerleader but it just makes Joe hammer away even more in the corner. Daniels comes back with palm shots and forearms but Daniels can't stay on his feet.

A running enziguri gives Joe control again and he follows it up with a Punk knee in the corner. There's the MuscleBuster and the Clutch but Daniels gets his foot on the rope to stun Joe. Joe brings in the chair and hits another MuscleBuster on the chair. The fans want him to do it again, because they're evil people. Joe hits two punt style kicks to the

head and then drives in knees. AJ finally throws in a towel to end this.

Rating: B+. This was more about story than the match but the match itself was good too. There was a poster for Summerslam 1993 with a picture of Yokozuna and the tagline: "Somebody has to stop him." That's what TNA had here with Joe as no one could beat him and the question became who was going to finally be able to beat him. That wouldn't be for nearly another year but dang it was awesome at the time. Good stuff here as I was getting into the beating at the end.

We recap the main event. The idea is that Jarrett is evil and Sting/Christian want to stop him. This would go on for like 10 months so tonight is the first step.

Christian says he's someone you can trust and you can call his brother or Chris Jericho and ask them if you don't believe him. "On second thought, that's a bad idea." He says he'll win the world title soon, which is true.

Monty Brown/Jeff Jarrett vs. Sting/Christian Cage

Sting has different music here and it's not working nearly as well. Brown and Christian start things out as the fans chant for...Christian instead of Sting. Ok then. A quick rollup gets two for the Canadian and it's quickly off to Jarrett. Christian makes fun of the strut and Jarrett makes sure to block a tag. Christian gets one anyway and Jarrett stalls. They lock up and do some very basic stuff before Sting dropkicks him to the floor.

Back in and Sting blocks a ram into the buckle and bulldogs Jarrett down. Brown gets one of his own and Christian tags himself in. A Gail distraction lets Jarrett hit Christian low and toss him to the floor. Gail adds a rana on the floor so that Monty can drop Christian on the rail. Back in and Christian is in trouble as we get to the main part of the match. Jarrett and Brown take turns on him for a bit until Jarrett

puts on a front facelock.

We get the classic "referee misses the tag" and it's back to Brown for some two counts. Brown sends him to the apron but Christian bites his way out of a superplex. There's the frog splash but Christian can't cover immediately so it only gets two. Jarrett breaks up the tag and Sting has to chase him away. The heels bring in chairs but their Conchairto misses and Christian hits a double DDT to take them both down.

There's the hot tag to Sting and he cleans house. Stinger Splash hits Jarrett but Brown takes out the referee with a missed clothesline. The Deathlock goes on Jarrett and he taps but there's no referee. In a cool counter, Brown hits a fallaway slam on Christian into Sting to break it up.

Sting and Christian almost get in a fight due to the title belt but they make up in about 8 seconds and clean house. Team Canada runs in but Sting and Christian hit Death Drops to take them out. Christian jumps Brown as Jarrett hits a belt shot on Sting for two. Sting Hulks Up but both he and Christian miss Stinger Splashes. Sting crushes the guitar with the bat and the Death Drop pins Jarrett.

Rating: C+. Not bad here but the ending was a little more overdone than it needed to be. It did need to be overbooked but not that much I wouldn't think. This would be the start of a VERY long story with Sting leaving immediately after this until he came back as Steve Borden for one night and then back as Sting on a full time basis. He would go after Jarrett and things would go from there until Angle arrived. This was fine for what it was though.

Christian leaves Sting alone in the ring with the bat so he can have the spotlight to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This wasn't one of their best shows ever. For some reason the main event and Sting returning was the #1 moment in TNA's

first ten years which is baffling. At the end of the day, it's just nothing that great. I get that Sting coming back to wrestling is a big deal....but he had been in TNA before. He had four matches in 2003, so this wasn't all that big of a deal. As for the rest of the show, it's just ok. It's not bad, it's not great, but it was ok so we'll go with right in the middle.

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