

Thunder – July 19, 2000: They're On A Roll

Thunder

Date: July 19, 2000

Location: Breslin Students Events Center, East Lansing, Michigan

Attendance: 5,738

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan, Mike Tenay

This is a rare live Thunder though I can't imagine it's going to make the show any better than it usually is. The big story at the moment is Scott Steiner being all insane and breaking various things, only to get beaten down by Kevin Nash, like so many people before him have been. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap from Nitro. As usual, that was the kind of show that flew by so fast that I could barely remember half of it anyway so for once this was helpful.

Harlem Heat arrives. I know I ask this a lot but what is Russo's obsession with showing people getting out of cars?

Jeff Jarrett is doing commentary tonight. Oh geez. He gets in two slappy's before he even sits down.

Crowbar vs. Mike Sanders

Sanders is Above Average and had been on Saturday Night all the way back in 1998. Crowbar looks out at the crowd for some reason, allowing Sanders to get in some forearms to the back for an early two. A German suplex sends Sanders flying as the announcers point out Lenny Lane's huge USE ME sign. Hopefully that makes him put the thing down because it's really distracting.

They head outside with Sanders stopping a charge with a superkick, followed by a dancing knee drop back inside. We hit the chinlock for a bit as the USE ME sign is back. I'm sure the handful of fans that paid

for seats behind him (as he goes up and down the row) are thrilled to have their view blocked by a lame angle that isn't going to go anywhere.

Crowbar gets two off a Lionsault and Daffney adds a Frankenscreamer (is she immune to the no interference policy?) to send Sanders outside. Mike is sat in a chair for a plancha from Crowbar (Jarrett: "What kind of rasslin is that?") but Daffney's distraction allows Sanders to steal Jeff's guitar and knock Crowbar out for the pin. Jarrett: "He won the match with Slapnuts." So is Slapnuts the guitar?

Rating: C. Sanders will soon find his calling as a talker but this was much more about establishing someone new on the roster. There's definitely a push of some new talent around this time but it's so far past too late at this point that it's only more false hope. Still though, it's always cool to see someone fresh instead of the same horrible acts that have choked the life out of this company.

Lenny Lane is escorted off by security. Thank goodness.

Here's Booker T. with something to say but Rick Steiner jumps him from behind before anything can be said. Stevie Ray comes out for the save and Jeff joins in on the brawl until security breaks it up.

Daffney screams a lot and runs off with a chair to find Mike Sanders. For some reason I want to see where this goes.

Lane is being taken away when he runs into the Cat. All the Laniacs (I believe they meet in the same room as the Jericholics) want is their leader back. Cat: "You're not a leader. You're a jobber." For some reason Cat has a pebble in his pocket and says Lane can have a match if he can take it from his hand. Lane takes it away easily so Cat shouts that he didn't say go. The result: a tables match vs. the Wall.

Here's new US Champion Lance Storm. After the full Canadian national anthem, Storm gets right to the point by listing off some great US Champions. However, that title is dead because he's renaming the US Title the Canadian Heavyweight Championship and puts a Maple Leaf sticker on the front.

As the announcers freak out (save for Heenan because he's Bobby Heenan), Storm demands respect from the fans and asks security to bring in a typical American fan. This means an overweight woman, who Storm rips on for not being in shape. Cue Mike Awesome for the save but Kanyon runs out to try a Kanyon Cutter on the woman. This brings in Buff Bagwell and I'm guessing it's a tag match later.

Jarrett offers to teach Sanders how to swing a guitar and knocks him cold. So much for Sanders meaning anything.

Miss Hancock has gotten David Flair a Cruiserweight Title shot tonight and promises, ahem, some fun to him if he wins.

Lenny Lane vs. The Wall

Tables match because that's what Wall does. Wall powerslams him to start and throws Lane across the ring with ease. Lane breaks up a superplex attempt and pounds away in the corner, only to charge into something like a backdrop/hot shot, sending him throat first into the middle turnbuckle. They go outside with Lane going throat first across the barricade before Wall sets up the first table. He takes too long though and gets knocked off the apron and through the table to give Lane his job back....in his last match with the promotion. Only in WCW.

The Misfits are given their assignments.

Mike Sanders is still getting up (that's quite the guitar shot) when Daffney comes in and hits him with a chair. "How do you like that rookie?"

Lenny Lane is happy in his locker room (because if you show up with no job, you have a locker room) when Wall comes in. It's implied that Wall took a dive.

The Filthy Animals sneak into Kronik's locker room.

Cruiserweight Title: David Flair vs. Lieutenant Loco

David is challenging and wearing a suit here. Loco jumps him from behind and gets two off an early side slam. Hancock distracts Loco because.....well

because she's Miss Hancock and it's not that difficult for her to distract someone, allowing David to take over off a suplex. Loco comes right back with basic stuff, including a bunch of chops after ripping off David's shirt. Hancock tries to bring in a chair but David gets caught in a sunset flip instead. Some cheating backfires as the referee catches Hancock holding David's hands. Cue Major Gunns to chase Hancock off, leaving Loco to tornado DDT David onto a chair to retain.

Gunns goes to give David mouth to mouth but Hancock starts a catfight. Yep it's time for this feud.

Cat reinstates Lane and fires Wall for taking a dive. That earns Cat a beating from the big man. Security breaks it up and I'm pretty sure Chris Harris and James Storm could be seen.

Sanders is getting up again when Kanyon runs in for a Cutter. Well if they're going to treat the guy like a goon, at least it's funny.

The Jung Dragons beat up the Cat because they finally have an open shot.

Tank Abbott vs. Great Muta

Mike Tenay has had to leave commentary due to some throat issues. Tank forearms a few times but gets kicked down to set up the Power Drive elbow. Cue the Dragons to help with a beatdown so here's the Cat to help Tank. That earns him some mist to the face, allowing Tank to knock Muta out for the pin. Was Muta REALLY that bored in Japan that he called up WCW and agreed to put over Tank Abbott on live TV?

Major Gunns challenges Miss Hancock to a Rip off the Camouflage (ROTC) match at New Blood Rising. Gene is WAY too happy about this.

Kronik's locker room has been trashed so they tell a crew member to keep an eye on the door. As soon as they leave, it's another Kanyon Cutter. He's getting really good at those things.

Jarrett and Rick Steiner are making plans for the match when Midajah comes in to say she'll do anything tonight.

Kronik vs. Filthy Animals

Disco/Juvy/Rey here in a handicap match with Juvy and Rey coming out in Kronik's vest coats. Juvy tries to jump Clark from behind as Konnan babbles in whatever language he uses on commentary. I know it's not English and I know it's not Spanish but it involves cherries and potatoes. Kronik gets annoyed at the Animals for getting in their way and chases them out to the apron.

Rey comes in and gets to face Adams, which is one of the most backwards face vs. heel dynamics I've ever seen. Mysterio springboards into a full nelson slam and Adams throws Disco into him for good measure. The Animals finally take over on Clark with a Bronco Buster but Clark throws Juvy away with ease. Everything breaks down and High Times plants Disco for two (called three by Tony), followed by the powerbomb/top rope clothesline for the pin a few seconds later.

Rating: D+. Some of Kronik's offense looked cool here but the commentary from Konnan took away any of the good this match had going for it. Thankfully the Animals aren't in the Tag Team Title match at the pay per view because it would have been really stupid to have them lose like this. Don't worry though because I'm sure WCW will find far more stupid things to do in the coming weeks.

Here are Shane Douglas, carrying a bag, and Torrie, with the latter wearing a dress tighter than should be physically possible. Shane pulls out the Stuff Magazine with Torrie inside and asks about her turn-ons listed in the magazine. Apparently she likes seeing her man work out so Shane pulls out a dumb bell and starts lifting, causing Torrie to rub his chest. This brings out Kidman to dropkick Shane but a Torrie distraction lets Shane hit him in the neck with the dumb bell, likely breaking his neck in the process.

We get the Road Report but the guy doesn't have his phone. Perfect Event comes up to suggest that he use 1-800-CALL-ATT. Problem solved until it's another KANYON CUTTER for the best fake commercial I've seen in a very long time.

The Artist, who can talk now, issues an open challenge to any champion. I think you know what's coming.

Hardcore Title: The Artist vs. Big Vito

Vito is defending in case you're a bit slow. They quickly go into a room with Paisley and Kwee Wee watching.....I'm guessing a monitor or something. Artist hits him with an ironing board before doing the same to Kwee Wee for no apparent reason. Pink hater. Vito takes over again and brings him down to ringside, only to get hit with a chair a few times. Artist goes with a low blow because good guys are just less bad in WCW.

The Mafia kick and a suplex set up a top rope elbow from the champ and it's already table time. Vito sets it up in the middle of the ring for the implant DDT....and the table breaks as they're standing on it. The fans boo it out of the building as Vito hits him with a trashcan, followed by the DDT to retain.

Rating: D-. So we're using the lame Hardcore Title match to set up what's going to be an even worse Kwee Wee vs. the Artist feud. I can kind of understand Russo's obsession with Jeff Jarrett but I will never get WCW's love of Artist. The guy just isn't that good and it shows worse and worse every time he's in the ring.

Awesome wants to bring one of his women to the ring but Bagwell doesn't think that's the best idea.

Positively Kanyon/Lance Storm vs. Buff Bagwell/Mike Awesome

Kanyon during his entrance: "BUY MY BOOK!" We get the Canadian national anthem again until Awesome runs down to clean house. A clothesline puts Lance on the floor and Awesome nails a nice dive to take him down again. Back in and Bagwell beats Kanyon up as Tony recaps Judy Bagwell's recent problems. It's off to Awesome vs. Kanyon with Mike coming in via the slingshot shoulder. A nice suplex plants Kanyon again and it's back to Storm, who walks into an Awesome Bomb.

The Awesome Splash gets two on Kanyon with Storm making the save and everything breaks down. Storm gets the Maple Leaf on Awesome but Buff breaks it up with the Blockbuster. Kanyon makes a quick save though and pulls the ref in the way of a baseball slide. He hits Bagwell with the book (which I'm assuming he reloaded with a fresh brick) and does the

same to Awesome, setting up a Canyon Cutter for the pin.

Rating: C. Not a bad little match here but we had to speed through things because we needed to see stuff like the Cat earlier in the night. Storm has somehow been a breath of fresh air for the company despite his character being one of the most boring guys in the history of wrestling. Maybe it's just that he's a fresh name or something but he's working very well here.

Rick Steiner and Jarrett say nothing of note. Jarrett uses the acronym NOFYB.

Cat doesn't know what that means but is sick of Steiner and Jarrett.

Harlem Heat is ready. Well that's good for them but it's time for the real star power.

We get a sitdown interview with Kevin Nash. He thinks the people behind the scenes of WCW are trying to keep Hall out. The only time WCW ever had a spark was when the two of them came down from New York to make the company go somewhere. Hall has been healthy for months now but he's sitting around because WCW doesn't want him around.

Nash has seventeen months left on his contract and he'll honor that deal, but then who knows because it's not about money anymore. As for Goldberg, WCW gave him too much power too soon. Nash has to keep him in check because he's never paid his dues and won't have nine years from now. It's nice to see guys like Booker make it and he was glad that "they put the strap on him."

Hudson asks about the three way at New Blood Rising (Nash: "It won't be a dance.") which is now a #1 contenders match. Apparently there's a problem with who is going to come out on top. Nash says he's coming out on top no matter how the match is booked and he's not going to lobby for a finish. He's going over (his words) because he says so and it's time for him to get his.

These are the kinds of segments that I never know what to say. Nash talking about someone not wanting Hall around was fine because you can

pin that on Russo and Bischoff (Is he even still around anymore? I don't remember seeing him after Bash at the Beach.). Hinting at going to the WWF was even fine, but then you get to him talking about how a match is going to be booked or who is going to go over in a big match because of how the finish was lobbied. I have no idea what this was supposed to accomplish but I'm sure the internet will be talking about it tomorrow, right Russo?

Jeff Jarrett/Rick Steiner vs. Harlem Heat

This is the closest we're going to get to Harlem Heat vs. the Steiners. Cat is out here to make sure things are fair. Booker and Rick start things off with the champ taking over. This brings out Midajah to try to come off the top but Cat calls her down and handcuffs himself to her. Well what did she thing was going to happen with the boss out there and her in bright pink pants?

It's off to Stevie vs. Jarrett with Jeff getting kicked out to the floor. Back in and Steiner clotheslines Stevie for two and we hit the chinlock after all that grueling work. A belly to back puts Steiner down and the hot tag brings in Booker as house is cleaned. Jeff breaks up the missile dropkick and nails a superplex, only to have Booker tie their legs up for a small package and the pin.

Rating: D+. The Booker comeback was good but Rick Steiner is just killing anything he's doing at this point. The guy isn't any good and hasn't been for a very long time yet for some reason they just won't get rid of him. Jarrett was Jarrett and Stevie was more energetic than usual but there's only so much you can do in a five minute main event.

Booker gets beaten down to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. Dang they're on a roll lately. These last few shows have taken out a lot of the nonsense and just let them have their dull wrestling shows. The point though is you can see the stories they're telling and for the most part, they're working fine. There's still a lot of stuff they need to fix but at least there's some good stuff going here and far less bad, which is the most important thing. Enjoy it while it lasts though because you know this is going to go bad soon enough.

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Happy Anniversary

To me, as I started this place on December 8, 2010. For some reason I can never get the date right.

I can't believe it's been five years and the site has hit levels I never expected it to reach. Thanks to everyone for following me all this time and I'll be around as long as you'll have me.

KB

Raw 2000 Being Added To The Network

Merry Christmas. It's only six shows so far but this is one of the times we've been waiting for.

Ring of Honor TV – December 9, 2015: We're Indy Wrestlers

Ring of Honor

Date: December 9, 2015

Location: Tennessee State Fair Grounds, Nashville, Tennessee

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Kevin Kelly

Final Battle is rapidly approaching and last week saw the first real build towards AJ Styles vs. Jay Lethal for the ROH World Title. The rest of the show is starting to come together and it's looking like a good show. We still have two shows left before the pay per view but the syndicated schedule could cause problems with the second episode. Let's get to it.

Silas Young/Beer City Bruiser vs. ReDRagon

The Bruiser shoves Fish down to start so Bobby asks for a test of strength. As you might expect, that earns Bruiser a kick to the ribs, followed by a right hand to Fish's jaw. Kyle (sweet goodness that is a pale man) tags himself in for some tandem kicks to Bruiser. Not wanting to feel left out, Silas tries to come in but gets both arms worked over.

With his limbs hurting, Silas goes to the eyes to take over and brings Bruiser back in for a right hand to the jaw. Bruiser's running Umaga attack sets up a Broski Boot for two on Kyle and here's Adam Cole to sit

in on commentary. Back from a break with Kyle's comeback being stopped again. Silas takes him into the corner (showing off the really old looking ring ropes) but Kyle avoids a charge and sweeps Bruiser's leg for the hot tag.

Fish gets the better of a slugout with Silas (that's a bit surprising) and a belly to belly sends Young hard into the corner. Now it's a double team on Bruiser until he takes Kyle down with a clothesline. Young is back up to DDT Fish onto the bottom buckle (that was cool) but Bruiser misses a top rope splash.

Kyle has to kick a Boy down and dive onto Bruiser but the distraction means Misery only gets two on Fish. A Samoan drop puts Silas down and it's a double tag to Kyle and the Bruiser. Kyle grabs a guillotine choke on Bruiser for a long time until he reaches the ropes, only to leave Silas to take a beating. Chasing the Dragon puts Bruiser away at 12:10.

Rating: B-. As usual, the tag division is the best part of ROH as they continue to have good match after good match. Well at least entertaining match after entertaining match but I'll take what I can get. The Bruiser is a lot less worthless than I thought he was going to be when I first saw him, though that's not really covering a lot of ground.

Cole and O'Reilly almost get in a fight after the match.

Silas orders the Boys to beat up the referee and they don't seem to mind complying. The villains leave but here's Dalton Castle to say Silas has something that belongs to him. Bruiser goes after Castle but gets knocked out by a microphone shot. The Boys tease getting in but walk away, nearly bringing Castle to tears.

Here's Chris Sabin to vent about the man in the red mask. That person has cost the Addiction the World Tag Team Titles but more importantly, they've been STEALING HIS GIMMICK. Sabin demands that whoever it is come out here right now so here's the masked man. He takes off the mask and it's.....Alex Shelley, Sabin's former partner in the Motor City Machine Guns. Nothing is said but I think you know what's coming.

TV Title: Roderick Strong vs. Samson Walker

Strong is defending, Walker is a good sized power guy and Bobby Fish, the #1 contender to the title, is on commentary. Walker shoves him around to start so Strong fires off a leg lariat to stagger the big man. It's out to the floor with Strong's back being driven into the post and the fans chant SEXUAL CHOCOLATE. We hit the kneeling bearhug on the champ, followed by a nice spinebuster for two. There go the straps (drawing gasps from the crowd) but Roderick nails a dropkick. Fish grabs the title and sits back down as Strong hits the running knee and the Sick Kick to retain at 5:37.

Rating: D+. Not much to see here but it's always a plus to have the champ get a win like this where he wasn't in much danger in the first place. Fish isn't the most interesting challenger in the world but the fans love him and the match should be fun so it's kind of hard to complain.

Fish gets in the ring with the title on, ticking Strong off even more.

Inside ROH recaps the 2015 Survival of the Fittest, won by Michael Elgin, who wants the World Title shot in New Japan.

Briscoe Brothers vs. Young Bucks

We continue the night's trend with Kenny King sitting in on commentary and Rhett Titus standing behind him. Mark and Nick get things started after a quick fourway staredown but a quick superkick party takes the Briscoes down. Stereo suicide dives take the Briscoes down again and it's back inside with Nick chopping away at Mark.

Everything breaks down with Jay cleaning house until Mark suplexes Nick down (and dances a bit) for two. Back from a break with Matt superkicking Mark on the apron to take over again. A Whisper in the Wind into a Diamond Cutter gets two on Mark but he comes back with Red Neck Kung Fu, allowing the tag off to Jay. Nick tries to speed things up but misses a moonsault off the apron, allowing Mark to come back with a Blockbuster.

Jay dives onto both Bucks and everyone is down. The Bucks tell Jay to suck it because the Bullet Club is turning the NWO/DX into a goofy comedy bit and the ROH fans eat it up due to irony or whatever, only to have the Briscoes take over again. Matt flips out of a Doomsday Device because

he's no selling a top rope clothesline from Mark. A double superkick and the Indytaker set up More Bang For Your Buck for the pin on Mark at 11:20.

Rating: C+. This was much better suited to the ROH style but I liked the first tag match, which was a much more traditional power vs. speed match. It doesn't help that I still don't care for the Bucks. I get the idea behind them ("WE'RE DOING STUFF THAT MAKES US LOOK LIKE INDY WRESTLERS!") but it still doesn't do it for me. The Briscoes are fine and the match was good, but the Bucks are just not for me in the slightest.

The Express gets in the ring and it's a big three team brawl with security failing to break it up to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. As usual, ROH is nailing it going into the biggest show of the year. The only major problem I have with them is they have so much stuff going on and the matches getting this much time means you don't get a touch on every program each week and I forget where things are going at times. Tweak that and this is up there with NXT for best wrestling show of the week.

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Wrestling Wars Podcast

Episode 32

TLC Preview with Shocky.

<http://mightynorcal.podbean.com/e/wwp-31-the-historian-himself-shockmaster-joins-us-for-a-tlc-preview-and-a-lot-of-anger/>

Smackdown – December 10, 2015: Waste Of My Time

Smackdown

Date: December 10, 2015

Location: Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Jacksonville, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Jerry Lawler, Booker T.

It's the go home show for Tables Ladders and Chairs and the show isn't looking like the most interesting in the world. Most of the card is set though and that means tonight is all about the build. I have a feeling we'll be seeing more about the main event, which is a bit of a shame as Smackdown was getting good about building up the midcard. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Roman Reigns vs. Alberto Del Rio

Non-title because I don't think Del Rio has defended the thing since he won it. Swagger vs. Del Rio on Sunday is officially a chairs match. The rest of the League, Ambrose and the Usos are at ringside. Del Rio takes him into the corner for a kick to the back to start but Reigns pounds him in the head. Alberto comes back with some kicks and a way too early

chinlock (Sheamus: "SQUEEZE THE LIFE OUT OF HIM!"). That doesn't exactly work as Reigns fights up, only to be greeted by what sounded like a Y2J chant.

Reigns takes it to the floor but gets in a staredown with Sheamus, allowing Del Rio to kick him in the ribs as we take a break. Back with Del Rio coming off the top with a right hand to the head for two. With the everything else not working, Del Rio puts on the armbreaker over the top rope for all of four seconds until Reigns powers him off the ropes and out to the floor. As usual, I don't know why I'm supposed to cheer for Reigns when he can do anything. Well aside from get the ratings up that is.

Reigns wins a slugout (duh) and fires off the clotheslines in the corner. The Superman Punch is countered into the Backstabber for two but Reigns does his rollup into a powerbomb for two. A Sheamus distraction lets Del Rio get in the enziguri for two of his own but there's the Superman Punch for two with the League pulling Del Rio away. The big brawl is on and it's a double DQ at 14:38.

Rating: C+. They work well together but as usual this was an obvious ending and not for the title because Reigns is programmed for the World Title and therefore doesn't care about the US Title. It's the same, standard operating procedure stuff and I'm getting really tired of it, as are most of the fans it seems.

There's going to be an eight man tag main event. That's not all though as we also get a CONTRACT SIGNING between Ambrose and Kevin Owens. Good grief this is like a Greatest Hits Smackdown.

Tyler Breeze vs. Dolph Ziggler

Speaking of the exact same things we've seen time after time, here's Dolph Ziggler in the second segment of the show for I think the third show in a row. Oh and it's in a rematch too because this was screaming for a trilogy. They fight over arm control to start until Tyler grabs a headlock. A nice running dropkick gets two for Breeze and he starts in on the leg.

Ziggler tries to roll out of a knee bar but gets caught in a half crab instead. With that broken up, Breeze tries to wrap the leg around the post but gets pulled face first into the steel instead (with no mention of this from the commentators because Lawler is reading a line about selfies). Back in and the superkick ends Breeze at 4:44. That was Ziggler's only major offensive move of the match.

Rating: D+. So let's see. Breeze arrived about a month and a half ago and already has a losing record in general and to Dolph Ziggler. I'm so glad we saw him go through all that work down in NXT, only to have him come up here and lose a feud to the perennial jobber to the stars, who TOTALLY needed to win this feud. As usual, it's the same old things that we've seen for years that don't work but they keep doing because they're sure it's a brilliant idea.

We recap Ryback vs. Rusev. I'm assuming they'll fight on Sunday.

Here's New Day and since it's Smackdown, this is probably their only appearance for the night. Before their match, Kofi talks about LeBron James just signed a lifetime deal with Nike. Big E.: "Lifetime? As in like it and put a ring on it?" Kofi shows off his shoes as E. gives us a quick commercial. As for Sunday, they're defending their titles in a triple threat ladder match, but getting the belts off of them is harder than getting Adele to answer a phone call. Why you ask? It's because NEW DAY ROCKS of course.

New Day vs. Lucha Dragons

Again non-title and a rematch from Raw, though this time it's Big E. on the floor. Kalisto flips Kofi down to start but both guys try a dropkick to give us a stalemate. The Dragons take over again with Cara monkey flipping Kalisto onto Kofi for two. New Day finally gets it together with Kofi sending Cara to the floor as we take a break. Back with Woods stomping in the corner and Big E. not being able to master the trombone.

We get an awkward sequence where Woods misses a clothesline and then hits it a second later with Cara standing there so he can hit it. Cara lifts Kofi up into a powerbomb (ala Reigns), finally allowing the hot tag to Kalisto as things speed way up. The hurricanrana driver gets two with

Kofi making the save. When that doesn't work, Kalisto kicks Xavier in the head and hits the Salida Del Sol for the pin at 8:14.

Rating: C-. This didn't have much time due to the break and was another rematch from Raw. Just like with Owens in the Intercontinental Title feud, the Usos have been completely forgotten in this whole thing and should have been in this match instead of the rematch with the Dragons where New Day loses AGAIN. In other words, they're using the same idea in the Tag Team Title feud that they're doing in the World Title feud. And people wonder why this isn't the most well received time in creative's history.

It's time for the contract signing for Owens vs. Ambrose. Dean comes out first and has to yell at Owens' attorney. Owens has an attorney? That doesn't fit for some reason. Owens has been instructed to not show up tonight because it's not a safe working environment. Oh sweet goodness with the legal storylines. That's another trope you can check off the list for this show.

Dean says he was hoping for a quick beatdown tonight instead of having to actually do something. He goes to sign but here's Owens, blowing off the ploy a good three minutes after it started. Dean is sent into the barricade but whips Owens into the steps and takes out the attorney as a bonus. Owens bails and the attorney gets Dirty Deeds before Dean signs.

Ryback vs. Ascension

Lana and Rusev are on commentary. Ryback throws Viktor around to start and plants Konnor with a spinebuster. The Meat Hook and Shell Shock put Viktor away at 1:29.

If you're going to do that, BRING BACK JOBBERS! Good grief man. Someone explain to me the reason why we need to beat down a team that could be used somewhere else for the sake of pushing this midcard feud. If you're going to have someone lose in 90 seconds, bring in jobbers who have nothing to lose. I know Ascension doesn't have much to lose, but they COULD mean something if they're built up. Add this to the list of annoying things WWE doesn't understand that gets on my nerves because they're so obsessed with this way of thinking and no one comes in and

says "hey, that's stupid."

Ryback stares at the Russians or whatever country they're from this week.

Recap of Rhyno returning Monday.

Becky Lynch vs. Paige

Paige's early headlock doesn't get her anywhere so she punches Becky in the ribs instead. Some knees to the head set up a chinlock on Becky but she comes back with some hard uppercuts. A double clothesline puts both of them down but here's Charlotte coming to the ring, complete with full music. The distraction only works on Paige (because they're feuding you see) and the Disarm-Her makes her tap at 3:23.

Rating: D+. So instead of having the champion get beat, let's have the challenger get beat so we have even less of a reason to like her. I think they're trying to make Paige the face here but much like everything else, they have no idea how to make the women likeable either. I'm sure the solution is to have her take credit for the Divas Revolution though and then have her be catty with everyone else.

Long video on Reigns vs. Sheamus. As I've said ever since it started: it's a great Intercontinental Title feud but a lame main event.

League of Nations vs. Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose/Usos

Alberto shoulders Jimmy down to start but Jimmy (who Booker identifies as having the facepaint on the right hand side, even though they're exactly the same in the ring) comes back with a loud uppercut. Off to Jey vs. Rusev with the Bulgarian taking over as you would expect. Sheamus comes in with a kick to the head and we take a break. Back with Jey having his shirt ripped open for some forearms to the chest.

Reigns has to be held back from interfering but the distraction allows the tag to Ambrose but the fans aren't ready to react. The middle rope dropkick puts Sheamus down and the bulldog sets up the strikes against the ropes. Barrett finally does something by tripping Ambrose from the floor, allowing Rusev to come in and choke away. Del Rio comes in for another chinlock (he's a big fan of those tonight) and a Backstabber for

two.

Sheamus' suplex slam gets two and it's off to another chinlock. Back to Rusev for a bearhug but Dean counters into a neckbreaker. A tornado DDT to Del Rio is enough for the hot tag to Reigns, though the crowd doesn't seem that thrilled to see him again. Everything breaks down and the Usos take out Sheamus and Del Rio with stereo dives. The spear finishes Rusev at 13:47.

Rating: D+. Totally uninteresting main event here with nothing standing out. Reigns wins again before he gets screwed over on Sunday like we're all expecting because that's what the fans want to see: more of the same thing we've seen for a year now while we keep pedaling towards the carrot on a string that we can never reach.

Overall Rating: D-. I don't say this often but this show was a huge waste of my time. I understand that this was the same taping as Tribute to the Troops but this felt more like that "special" ("Yeah it's for the troops and totally not just us taping a house show so we can feel good about ourselves. USA!") than a regular show.

Almost every single thing that happened on this show felt like it came from the book of WWE Easy Ideas and that's not how you ever want a show to go. Between the champions losing, the contract signing and the tag team main event, I saw nothing on this show that makes me care about TLC. Nothing. Not a single thing. I'm sure the show will be fine, but this was a waste of my time.

It's very clear right now that WWE isn't trying. I know it happens every year at this time when the creative team basically puts it on autopilot and throws their feet up for the holidays, but this is the kind of show that makes me wonder why I should bother at this time of year. I never had that feeling before but it's happening almost every November and December in recent years because WWE is stuck with five hours of TV a week and nowhere near enough ideas.

They need to give me a reason to care in a hurry (hint: you can have a face hold the title for more than five minutes in fifteen months) because this is getting old. Stop having champions lose, stop treating these

shows like they don't matter, stop repeating the same matches with guys trading meaningless five minute wins and stop using the same ideas every few weeks and expecting us to care. I usually give WWE the benefit of the doubt (more often than I should) but this is the kind of show that makes me feel like I've wasted my time and that's the last thing I should feel when I'm watching something that should be entertaining.

Results

Roman Reigns vs. Alberto Del Rio went to a double DQ when the League of Nations, the Usos and Dean Ambrose interfered

Dolph Ziggler b. Tyler Breeze – Superkick

Lucha Dragons b. New Day – Salida Del Sol to Woods

Ryback b. Ascension – Shell Shock to Viktor

Becky Lynch b. Paige – Disarm-Her

Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose/Usos b. League of Nations – Spear to Rusev

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Impact Wrestling – December 9, 2015: What A Dim Light At The End Of The Tournament

Impact Wrestling

Date: December 9, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: D'Angelo Dinero, Josh Matthews

It's week #10 of the World Title Series and we're down to the final eight. In theory that means we're getting the quarterfinals tonight, though I'm not sure if that's going to be enough to fill in a full two hour show. There's still no date announced for the finals but they have four weeks left on Destination America and only three rounds of the tournament to go. Let's get to it.

We get the double preview via voiceover and the announcers.

Video on Mahabali Shera vs. Lashley.

TNA World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Mahabali Shera vs. Lashley

The announcers can't remember the name of Shera's dance. Can't they just go outside because IT'S SWEEPING THE NATION??? Shera takes over with a hard clothesline and some stomping in the corner to start. Lashley remembers that he's fighting a guy who is only know for a lame dance that is sweeping the nation, minus the announcers' booth of course, and powerbombs him out of the corner.

Back from an early break Lashley in control on the floor and high fiving fans. Lashley tries a dive off the apron but Shera catches him in mid air (ok that's good) and slams him on the floor. They head back inside for more clotheslines from Shera before he drops Lashley off a gorilla press. The Sky High is countered though and a spear sends Lashley to the semi-finals at 10:27.

Rating: C-. Not a terrible match here and thank goodness they went with

Lashley instead of the glorified rookie because they thought they were going to India before that got screwed up again because of whatever reason they're claiming. Lashley is the much better option here though I wouldn't put the title back on him again. TNA needs something fresh on top right now and being back where they were a year ago with Lashley as champion around the time they head to a new network isn't the right idea.

The announcers talk about Lashley a bit.

Video on Eric Young and Tigre Uno's paths to the final eight.

Video on Awesome Kong vs. Jesse Godderz from last week.

Godderz promises to show what the Man is capable of tonight.

TNA World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Tigre Uno vs. Eric Young

Before the match, Young calls Tigre stupid like the rest of the fans. He wants Tigre to leave like the coward that he is and Tigre teases going, only to come back in and take Eric out instead. A hurricanrana into a rollup gets two for Tigre but Eric drops him with a hard shot. There's a backbreaker for two from Eric and we take a break.

Back with Young still in control as Josh skills merchandise. A shot to the ribs gets two and Eric throws him to the floor. Young chokes some more back inside and tries a moonsault for no apparent reason, resulting in a big crash and burn. Tigre hurricanranas him down and drops a top rope legdrop between the legs for two. A top rope hurricanrana gets the same but Eric grabs the piledriver to advance at 11:42.

Rating: D+. This was another obvious ending, which is a major problem with this tournament as a whole. Young would be the worst choice of the realistic contenders for the title but he's fine as a guy to lose in the semi-finals. Tigre looked like a jobber here though, which is exactly what was expected when he fought against the adults outside of the X-Division.

The announcers recap Young winning and preview Jesse Godderz vs. Matt Hardy.

Matt Hardy is ready for Jesse, who is going to take a Twist of Fate and get pinned as one more step towards getting the title back.

Eric Young says these have been warmups for what he's going to do to everyone else in this tournament.

TNA World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Jesse Godderz vs. Matt Hardy

Matt grabs a headlock to start until Jesse shoves him away. Josh tries to explain the situation that got us to this tournament and it really still doesn't make sense. A few slams drop Jesse and it's time for Matt to pose a bit. They head outside with Jesse driving him into the steps and nailing a dropkick as we take a break.

Back with Jesse working on the back (smart) with forearms and a bearhug. A slow motion powerslam gets two for Godderz and it's back to the bearhug on the mat with feet on the ropes. Back up and Matt hits a quick Side Effect (with very little elevation) followed by a sleeper drop. Well at least it's different than the four moves he usually uses.

A throw off the top sets up a middle rope elbow to the back of Jesse's head for two. The Twist of Fate is broken up and a dropkick gets two for Jesse. Back up and an enziguri (kind of) sends Matt into the corner but the Adonis Lock is broken up. The Twist of Fate sends Matt to the final four at 17:22.

Rating: C. They had to have one longer match like this and this was one of their best option out of the four matches they had tonight. Godderz was a glorified jobber here but it was nice to see him doing some good stuff. He's gone from a total goof to a pretty decent midcarder, which is more than most people expected from him. Good enough match here but longer than it needed to be.

The announcers talk about Matt.

It's time for a sitdown interview with Dixie freaking Carter where she gives her thoughts on the major events of the year: Drew Galloway debuting was cool, Ethan Carter III is family but he was kind of a jerk, Matt Hardy vacating the title was sad, the tournament was awesome and let

the Knockouts have a chance to be the best. The big news here: the semi-finals and finals are going to be on the live show on January 5. So wait, what are they doing for the next THREE WEEKS?

Long recap of the ending of Bound For Glory and the tournament up to this point.

Next week it's Group Future 4 vs. Group X-Division in an eight man tag. Also Eddie Edwards vs. Rockstar Spud vs. Mr. Anderson vs. Bobby Roode. These will be the first non-tournament matches in nearly three months.

We recap the night so far.

Quick video on Ethan Carter III vs. Davey Richards.

TNA World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Ethan Carter III vs. Davey Richards

Before the match, Ethan makes fun of Davey's Wolves' howl. Richards says he doesn't have a rich aunt or a bad tan, but he has a bunch of fans who are going to howl with him. Ethan grabs an armdrag to start but Davey comes back with a wristlock. A dropkick puts Ethan on the floor, only to have a Tyrus distraction cause Davey to charge into a forearm. We hit a chinlock for a few seconds and an elbow to the mat (called the face) gets two on Davey. Tyrus gets in a cheap shot on the floor (where is Eddie anyway?) and we take a break.

Back with Ethan whipping Davey hard into the corner and putting on the chinlock. Davey comes back with some kicks in the corner, only to miss a charge and crash face first into the buckle. They slug it out until Davey gets low bridged out to the floor, setting up a suicide dive to Tyrus and two in a row to Ethan. A German suplex gets two for Davey but he misses the top rope stomp, setting up a TKO for two.

Ethan goes up top for some reason but gets headbutted several times, setting up a superplex into a regular suplex for two. Both finishers are broken up and Ethan tries a rollup, only to get caught in a triangle choke. Ethan lifts him up and flips him over, giving us a weird edit into a TKO. The 1%er sends Ethan to the final four at 16:37.

Rating: B. This was the best match of the night by a mile with the hot segment right before the finish. The ending was totally obvious but at least we had a good match before we got to the ending. Richards clearly wasn't the one that was going to take Carter down but he got things moving here instead of just sitting around waiting for the obvious finish.

Here are the semi-finals:

Ethan Carter III

Lashley

Matt Hardy

Eric Young

Overall Rating: C-. This show's problem can be summed up in one line: the winners were never in doubt. Mahabali Shera, Tigre Uno, Jesse Godderz and Davey Richards are not going to be in the final four of a World Title tournament no matter how you look at it. The wrestling was fine, but the endings were never in doubt and that's rarely a good idea for a full show.

The semifinals are coming up in four weeks, but that brings us to the biggest problem: what are they going to do to fill time? Two matches were announced for next week but I have no idea what they're going to do unless it's Best Of shows. You knew these scheduling issues were coming but I didn't think it was going to be this bad. This wasn't a bad show but it felt like a lot of waiting around before we got to the obvious, which made the whole thing feel long.

Results

Lashley b. Mahabali Shera – Spear

Eric Young b. Tigre Uno – Piledriver

Matt Hardy b. Jesse Godderz – Twist of Fate

Ethan Carter III b. Davey Richards – 1%er

New Column: Heaven Help Whoever Is NXT

Looking at the problems with some of the callups and how stupid WWE looks with some of their booking.

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-heaven-help-whoever-is-next/46393/>

NXT – December 9, 2015: Trying To Get Hyped

NXT

Date: December 9, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Corey Graves, Rich Brennan

It's the go home show for Takeover: London and that means it's time for all the hard pushes before the next major show. The bit match for tonight is the always useful combining of two matches into a tag as Finn Balor and Apollo Crews face Baron Corbin and Samoa Joe. The card for next week's show looks good though and that's all that matters. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Colin Cassady/Enzo Amore vs. Corey Hollis/John Skyler

Enzo and Cass are totally serious for once. Hollis and Skyler actually get an entrance. Cass pounds Hollis into the corner for some hard elbows to start before easily tossing him across the ring. Enzo comes in for some trash talk and a nice dropkick before it's back to Cass, who throws his partner at Hollis in the corner. The East River Crossing sets up the Rocket Launcher for the pin on Hollis at 2:40.

Enzo says that's how they feed their family and Dawson/Wilder aren't messing with that. They've been doing this longer than any team in NXT and the champs had the nerve to try and take out Cass. That jeopardized their futures and the only people who get to determine their futures are in this ring right now. Cass isn't standing for those two taking them out either and they're getting retribution and the titles in London. Where in the world did that come from? For their first ever serious promo, this was excellent and I was loving it.

Dana Brooke and Emma are ready for Asuka and want her to remember that this isn't Japan. Emma was the one that paved the way for the Divas Revolution (can we PLEASE find a new plot device for the Divas?) and they imply interference in Asuka's match tonight. Dana is annoyed at Tom Phillips for being too tall to pat on the head.

Video on Tye Dillinger.

Asuka vs. Deonna Purrazzo

They circle each other for a bit until Asuka grabs the hammerlock. After going over to a wristlock, Asuka snaps on an armbar to send Deonna into the ropes. A hip strike drops Deonna again and here are Emma and Dana on the stage. Deonna tries to use the distraction and gets KICKED IN THE FACE for a knockout win at 2:55. The gasp from Emma and Dana made the whole thing even better.

Mojo Rawley talks about Blake and Murphy not being successful in the club and Zack Ryder has no idea what he's talking about. They're sure they'll win tonight though.

Alexa Bliss yells at Blake and Murphy for losing recently but they promise that the Hype Bros will be broken.

Another long song by who appears to be Elias Sampson.

Hype Bros vs. Blake and Murphy

Blake, Murphy and Bliss are wearing what look like Freddie Kruger shirts that were run over by lawnmowers. Even the fans call them Freddie Kruger. Mojo dances a lot to start and Ryder facepalms on the apron. Blake works on a wristlock to start as Graves wants to go to prison instead of watching the Hype Bros. Blake and Murphy are sent to the floor, leaving Mojo to declare that none of them are hyped. Ryder baseball slides both of them and drops Blake with a flapjack to set up the Broski Boot.

Murphy comes in for the first time and takes Ryder down before it's back to Blake for a chinlock. That goes nowhere so it's Murphy coming in with a chinlock of his own. Ryder fights up and kicks them into each other before diving over to tag in Mojo. Rawley cleans house (Corey: "It's like someone shaved a Tasmanian devil.") and everything breaks down. Blake's superkick only gets two and it's the Hype Ryder for the pin on Blake at 6:24.

Rating: C. Totally fine match here between two teams that aren't the most interesting in the world. Blake and Murphy don't seem to have much of a future aside from being a midcard team here in NXT while the Bros look like they've been thrown together for the sake of giving them something to do. Still though, not a bad little match here.

Baron Corbin doesn't like Apollo Crews because he's a rookie who doesn't deserve anything. Joe is still mad about Finn Balor not giving him the title shot he deserved. Tonight, Crews and Balor get their warmup beatings.

Peyton Royce vs. Bayley

Non-title. Royce is clearly a heel here as she's a sexier character than the majority of the roster. Peyton starts with an armdrag (Fans: "BETTER THAN EVA!") and Bayley doesn't look to be 100% coming in. A running knee gets two for Royce and there's that annoying Bayley chant again. We hit the chinlock on Bayley but she comes back with some right hands, only to walk into a spin kick for two. The middle rope elbow staggers Royce

though and the Bayley to Belly is good for the pin at 4:07.

Rating: C+. Not a great match or anything but this is the kind of match that Royce needed to look like a future player in the division. If there's one thing NXT is great at, it's setting up someone as a threat after they start off looking like any other wrestler. She might not go anywhere, but this was a really good performance from someone who hadn't shown much potential otherwise.

Post match Eva Marie and Nia Jax come out. Eve is booed out of the building until Jax takes the mic and says she doesn't need Eva to do the talking for her. Bayley is lucky that Nia didn't get here earlier because Bayley has been lucky so far but that ends in London. I still see no reason why Nia has Eva with her.

Apollo has been trying to get in touch with Balor all week but Finn hasn't answered. Balor says he's ready and that's all that matters. Crews is fine with that but promises to come for the title after London. Balor doesn't seem cool with that.

Video on Sami Zayn getting hurt back in May and his return next week.

Finn Balor/Apollo Crews vs. Samoa Joe/Baron Corbin

Joe immediately tags out to avoid fighting Balor. Finn tries to bring in Apollo so Corbin tags out as well. Apollo slams Joe down and we take a way too early break. Back with Crews in the wrong corner and Corbin flipping him to the mat for two. Joe comes in for an armbar and a big elbow to the jaw. It's back to Corbin but he misses a charge and hits the post, allowing the hot tag to bring in Balor.

The champ hammers away on Joe in the corner but Joe reverses him and tries the Muscle Buster. Finn reverses into a sunset flip for two, followed by the Sling Blade. Baron shoves Balor off the top and into a Death Valley Driver (I haven't seen one of those in a long time), setting up the Koquina Clutch to knock Balor out at 9:46.

Rating: C+. Again this wasn't great but it set up the two matches quite well. I could have gone for more interaction between Crews and Corbin

here as their match isn't the most interesting in the world but it's good enough so far. Joe vs. Balor has gone from what felt like a filler feud to a match I want to see so they're certainly clicking there. Good stuff here and it accomplished its goal.

Joe poses with the title over the unconscious Balor to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Above all else a go home show is supposed to make me want to see the big show more than I did coming in and that goal was accomplished here. Other than that we had some good wrestling and a solid promo from Enzo and Cass, but I'm not as hyped up for London as I've been for recent Takeovers. The show is going to be awesome because that's how Takeovers work but I'm not as interested as I could be. Still though, another good show this week as you should expect.

Results

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady b. Corey Hollis/John Skyler – Rocket Launcher to Hollis

Asuka b. Deonna Purrazzo via knockout – Kick to the face

Hype Bros b. Blake and Murphy – Hype Ryder to Blake

Bayley b. Peyton Royce – Bayley to belly

Samoa Joe/Baron Corbin b. Finn Balor/Apollo Crews – Koquina Clutch to Balor

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The WWE Network Categories Are A Mess

I went to watch the Legends With JBL interviews about Undertaker and was stupid enough to think they would be in the Legends With JBL section. No no, they're in the Undertaker 25 Years section, meaning the only thing in the JBL section is the Bischoff interviews. This is like where Raw 1999 isn't in the Raw section, but rather the Attitude Era section.

Right now in the Originals section, there are twenty seven categories, some of which haven't been updated in over a year. I'm not sure how you go about doing it, but there has to be a way to make this easier to navigate. I shouldn't have to go on a hunt every time I want to see a special that they keep touting as great.