

# Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania XXIII: Make Your Own Joke

## Wrestlemania XXIII

Date: April 1, 2007

Location: Ford Field, Detroit, Michigan

Attendance: 80,103

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

To say this show was a success is an understatement. Until Rock vs. Cena, this show drew more PPV buys than any show in the history of the company, which says a lot when you consider what came before it. The main event here is Bobby Lashley vs. Umaga, which is the Battle of the Billionaires, as Donald Trump and Vince are backing the two respectively. The losing billionaire gets his head shaved. There's also Cena vs. Shawn in what should be awesome. Let's get to it.

The opening video is a montage of Wrestlemania logos which turns into your usual highlight reel.

We get a clip of the opening of Wrestlemania III before transitioning to Ford Field in the same city. Aretha Franklin is here again twenty years later to sing America the Beautiful again. That's a very nice touch, as are the clips from Tribute to the Troops.

Now we get the video for this year's show, which is the All Grown Up theme. It's a bunch of kids dressed like the stars who then turn into their adult selves.

Mr. Kennedy vs. CM Punk vs. Randy Orton vs. Finlay vs. Matt Hardy vs. King Booker vs. Jeff Hardy vs. Edge

With this match, we start the tradition of having too many people in a single MITB match and overcrowding the thing. Everyone looks up at

the case until Kennedy goes to get a ladder. Orton heads to the floor to stop him as the big brawl begins. Finlay DIVES on everyone not named Edge, allowing the Canadian to make a climb, only to be stopped by Matt. They head to the floor, allowing Orton and Finlay to head up top for a brawl on the ladder.

They topple to the floor so it's Jeff going up, only to be shoved down by Kennedy. Booker goes to pull out a ladder but it's Horny's, meaning it's only about two feet tall. Punk takes it away and pounds on people with it, only to have Edge take over again. This is one of those matches that moves too fast to really keep track of things. Punk is bleeding from the forehead as Edge bridges a ladder between the ring and barricade.

Back inside and Booker takes over with kicks and spinebusters for everyone in sight. Before climbing though, here's a Spinarooni. The distraction lets the Hardys crush Booker with some ladders before Matt and Edge go at it a bit. The Hardys set up a ladder seesaw but Jeff is sent off the top to break up whatever they were going to do to Edge. Instead Edge suplexes Matt onto the ladder, only to be sent to the floor by Kennedy.

Kennedy pounds away on Matt but the Kenton Bomb only hits ladder. Instead it's Jeff with a Swanton to Mr. before the brothers team up to drop everyone in sight with the ladder. Both Hardys go up and start slugging it out on top of the ladder, only to be shoved into the top rope by Finlay. Edge hits the spear on Finlay and one for Orton and Booker as well. Kennedy and Matt take spears too and there's one for Jeff to nearly complete the set. Punk jumps over Edge to send him into the corner and become the only man standing.

Punk puts the ladder around his head and spins around a bit to take everyone out until Edge thinks wisely and DUCKS, allowing him to take out Punk's vulnerable ribs. Edge gets the big ladder and makes a climb, only to gets caught by Orton and shoved down to the floor. Jeff saves that though and climbs up on his own as Matt puts Edge on the ladder between the ring and the barricade. Jeff dives off the ladder THROUGH EDGE AND THROUGH THE LADDER! Needless to say, Edge

and Jeff are DONE.

We're down to six people in the match now and it's Orton's turn to take over with RKOs all around. He picks up a regular sized ladder but Punk knocks him down and sets up a second ladder in the middle of the ring. Apparently Jeff is still on the floor despite Edge being taken out. Orton and Punk both climb up and it's an RKO off the top of the ladder to end Punk. Booker goes up but has to stop an RKO attempt with a Bookend off the ladder.

It's Matt vs. Booker on the ladder but Matt drops down and threatens to give Sharmell the Twist of Fate, drawing Booker down. There's the Twist to the King but Finlay (sporting a NASTY cut on the back of his head) shoves the ladder over. The Celtic Cross (White Noise) crushes Matt against the ladder but hurts Finlay's back in the process. Finlay is barely able to stand so here's Horny to climb for him.

Instead though Kennedy pops up the ladder...and gets smacked in the face by Horny. There's a fireman's carry roll off the ladder for the little guy's efforts. Finlay destroys Kennedy with the ladder but gets knocked off the ladder by Matt. Now it's Punk going up but Kennedy meets him on the ladder for a slugout. Punk shoves him off but Kennedy spears him in the ribs with another ladder, allowing Kennedy to climb up and win the case.

**Rating:** B. This was definitely the weakest of the matches so far as there were too many people in there and no one to have the big spots like Shelton. It's definitely good but this one lacked the pop that most of these matches had over the years. Kennedy would lose the case to Edge a few weeks later.

Video on the premiere of The Condemned so we can clear the ring out. Kennedy warns every champion that he's coming for them and says he's Mr. Money in the Bank. Bank.

Batista is All Grown Up.

Great Khali vs. Kane

This is when Khali is still a decent monster who could move a little

bit. Kane is easily shoved down to start and then shoved to the floor for good measure. Back in and Kane slugs Khali, only to be chopped right back down. Off to the nerve hold before Khali slugs away in the corner. Kane comes back with punches of his own but is easily shoved down and across the ring.

Kane fires back with a right hand and tries the top rope clothesline but it only staggers Khali. Another shot sends Khali into the ropes and Kane has his opening. Kane heads to the floor and grabs a chain with a hook on the end which he used in the horror movie he was in around this time. Khali knocks him back and rips off the turnbuckle pad to distract the referee, allowing Kane to kick him low. In one of the big spots of the show, Kane slams Khali ala Hogan slamming Andre twenty years ago. That only gets two so they both grab chokeslams, but it's Khali hitting the Punjabi Plunge for the one footed pin.

**Rating:** D-. The slam was cool and the rest was completely horrible. Khali was nothing good and somehow he would get even worse. Kane was in that weird period for him where he was just kind of there and doing nothing of note. By period, I mean about a five year stretch of course. Terrible match but the slam was good.

Post match Khali chokes him out with the chain and no one makes the save.

The Divas say they're All Grown Up. The idea of taking them seriously is amusing.

Cryme Tyme tries to cheer up a now bald Eugene with an Extreme Expose dance party. That would be Kelly, Layla and Brooke (now Tessmacher) as a dance troupe. Instead Moolah and Mae Young show up and Eugene wants to dance with them. Cue REVEREND SLICK of all people to show us how it's done. This brings in Dusty Rhodes who says you can't have a dance party without him. The music comes back on and here are Sgt. Slaughter, Jimmy Hart and IRS to join in. Ricky Steamboat in full karate attire shows up until we get the Ron Simmons payoff.

Some Detroit Tigers are here.

## US Title: MVP vs. Chris Benoit

Benoit is defending and MVP is pretty new here. They head to the mat to start with MVP actually in control. Off to a headlock by the challenger but he has to shove Benoit to the floor to avoid the Crossface. Back in and Benoit can't hook the Crossface as MVP keeps it on the mat with the headlocks. Back up and MVP pounds Benoit into the corner but charges into an elbow. A superplex attempt is blocked and Benoit's arm is draped across the top rope to shift momentum again.

Back in and MVP works over the bad arm with some driving shoulder blocks. He misses a spinning kick though and Benoit busts out the Rolling Germans. The Swan Dive is broken up though and MVP goes back to the arm by sending it into the post. Off to an armbar again, followed by a running clothesline for two. Out of nowhere Benoit reverses a slam into a Crossface attempt but the arm is too weak to hook the hold. This time the slam works and there's the Ballin elbow for two. MVP misses a charge into the corner and it's time to roll some Germans. After four of those, Benoit hits the Swan Dive to retain.

**Rating:** C. Yeah that's it. The match really never got off the ground and could have used another four minutes or so. As always the scariest part is thinking that Benoit only had about two months left so he likely wasn't sane during this match. The match itself wasn't bad but as mentioned it never got off the ground. MVP would win the title at Backlash and hold it for almost a year.

Video on Undertaker who is All Grown Up...I think.

Donald Trump is in his dressing room and complaining about the lack of food and drinks backstage. Boogeyman comes in for no apparent reason and Trump doesn't seem impressed. Trump asks him for a sandwich. This uh...happened. Yeah we'll go with that.

Hall of Fame time. Mr. Perfect was one of the headliners here and gets a pretty touching tribute. William Shatner inducted Lawler, which is kind of annoying as Lawler had wanted Lance Russell (announcer of Memphis Wrestling for like forty years) to do it but

WWE said no and picked Shatner because of a forgotten segment on Raw back in like 1995. The other headliner was Dusty Rhodes who asked to be made an honorary Horseman. That's just wrong. No presentation to the crowd here which is weird.

The attendance is over 80,000, which is of course a new record.

Here's the Fink because what would Wrestlemania be without him? Oh ok he's doing the Hall of Fame live presentation to the crowd. JR gets easily the biggest pop of the entire class.

82% of the fans think Undertaker will win the title.

We recap Undertaker vs. Batista but there isn't much to say. Taker won the Rumble and picked Batista for an awesome power match. They had to team up at No Way Out and Batista turned on him to give us a one night only heel, even though that's not really too far out of Batista's normal behavior.

#### Smackdown World Title: Batista vs. Undertaker

Teddy Long does the intros here for some reason. We lso get the druids and the torches, which look AWESOME in the huge stadiums like this. The bell rings and Batista spears Taker down before pounding away in the corner. Undertaker fires off right hands of his own but Batista throws him right back into the corner. The fans are totally behind Undertaker here. They head to the floor with Undertaker being sent knees first into the steps as is his custom.

Back in and Batista hits a top rope shoulder for two. If you're listening to Cole, you would think he had hit a 450. A big clothesline puts Taker down for two but Undertaker comes back with right hands and a running charge in the corner. The Snake Eyes and big boot combo puts Batista down and a legdrop gets two. Old School connects but Big Dave powers out of the chokeslam to huge boeing.

The jumping clothesline puts Batista down again but only for two. Taker puts him on the apron for the elbow and legdrops before busting out the Taker Dive as is his custom at Wrestlemania. Taker pounds away even more but Batista counters to throw him through part of the barricade to take over. With Undertaker dazed, Batista loads

up a powerslam from one announce table through the other, which actually isn't countered.

Back in and that only gets two so the champion pounds away more for good measure. Batista loads up the Bomb but Taker plows him into the corner to counter. Dave comes right back with a belly to belly suplex for two. He pounds on Taker in the corner like a schmuck and of course there's the Last Ride for two. Taker has a breather but walks right into the spinebuster.

Batista doesn't cover though and gets caught in a chokeslam for a VERY close two. The Tombstone is countered and Batista hits the spear and Batista Bomb for an even closer two, shocking the champion. Batista loads up another Bomb but Taker backdrops out of it and avoids a spear, setting up the Tombstone for the title.

**Rating:** A. The idea is that these two were annoyed and decided to have an awesome match to show everyone up. These two would go on to have more great matches on shows where Batista actually had a chance to win. This was the feud of the year and it's hard to argue as they could both work the power game like few others.

Lashley is All Grown Up.

Vince is in the back looking in a mirror when Stephanie comes in with a stroller. Vince goes off on Stephanie before playing with his granddaughter. Naturally there's a camera from inside the stroller looking up at Vince. He promises to fracture Trump's skull.

Joey tries to talk about the ECW Originals vs. the New Breed but we need to get this along.

#### New Breed vs. ECW Originals

It's Elijah Burke/Matt Striker/Kevin Thron/Marcus Cor Van vs. Rob Van Dam/Tommy Dreamer/Sabu and for no reason whatsoever this is a regular eight man tag instead of the Extreme Rules match we would get on ECW a few days later. Striker starts with Sabu and Matt is in early trouble. It's quickly off to Sandman vs. Burke but before Sandy does much he brings in Dreamer. Cor Von hits Dreamer in the back and comes in to pound away a bit.

It's quickly back to Burke (the New Breed's leader and more famous as D'Angelo Dinero) for the running knees to the back for two. Thorn comes in to crush Dreamer into the corner and put on a chinlock. Back up and a sitout powerbomb gets two for Thorn and here's Cor Von again. Burke comes in as well but Dreamer takes them down with a simultaneous neckbreaker/reverse DDT combo. The hot tag brings in Van Dam and there's the top rope kick to Thorn. Rolling Thunder lands on Striker as everything breaks down. With everyone else on the floor, Van Dam Five Stars Striker for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. Seriously, why wasn't this the Extreme Rules match? The whole point of ECW is to be extreme but we got a seven minute tag match which went nowhere at all. The theory was to finally let these guys get on Wrestlemania, but Van Dam had been on it before and won a title here. Nothing to see here at all.

Austin is All Grown Up.

Wrestlemania 24 is in Orlando.

We recap the real main event for tonight's show and the reason why this show was the highest drawing show ever for the next five years. Vince and Donald Trump both agreed to back a guy into a match and the losing billionaire would get their head shaved. This was when Trump was still a big deal and EVERYONE was backing Umaga because they wanted to see Trump bald. Oh except for Rock who actually cut a promo about wanting to see Vince bald.

Trump picked the ECW World Champion Bobby Lashley. Steve Austin was brought in to referee because this is Wrestlemania. The best part of the build was Lashley in a cage with Umaga on the floor. To escape, Lashley shoulder blocked the cage wall, knocking it down to the floor and nearly crushing Umaga in the process.

Bobby Lashley vs. Umaga

The barber's chair gets its own entrance complete with some snappy music. Oh and Umaga is IC Champion. Trump coming out to a song with the only word being MONEY is perfect. Real money rains down from the ceiling, including \$100 bills. To be fair this show brought in like



50 million dollars in PPV alone so they can afford a bit. They collide to start and slug it out with Lashley pounding him into the corner. Austin pulls Lashley off of Umaga since they're in the ropes and Umaga gets in some shots of his own. Lashley goes up to the middle rope for a shoulder for two.

Umaga's manager Armando Estrada is dragged in by Lashley and powerslammed down with ease. Lashley throws him out to the floor and low bridges Umaga to send him to the floor as well. Back in and Lashley misses a spear, sending him out to the floor this time. We head inside again and Umaga chokes away, only to be pulled off at four and a half by Austin. Austin has to do it again, this time by the hair for good measure.

A BIG clothesline puts Lashley down again and Umaga cannonballs down onto his chest for good measure. The Samoan drop puts Lashley down again as does a failed slam attempt. Vince gets up on the apron and gets dropped down by an elbow from Lashley, only to walk into a shot from Umaga to take over again. Umaga goes up and gets slammed down before being clotheslined down. Both guys down and Austin gets to nine before stopping so it doesn't end in a draw.

Shane McMahon comes out to check on Vince as Umaga hits an uppercut to drop Lashley again. Austin has to pull Umaga out of the corner, earning him a Samoan Spike. Shane comes in and pounds away on Lashley until Umaga is back into things. The running hip attack crushes Bobby's face and Vince throws in some trashcans. Shane hits the Coast to Coast to drive the can into Lashley's face. A top rope splash from Umaga crushes Lashley and Shane has a referee's shirt on now.

Austin breaks up the pin and beats up Shane for good measure, only to walk into another Samoan Spike. Trump isn't sure what to do and shows off those great acting skills of his. Vince comes over to taunt him and TRUMP CLOTHESLINES VINCE! Umaga tries another Spike on Austin but gets countered into the Stunner. The spear from Lashley connects and it's time for Vince to be bald.

**Rating:** D. This match sucked for the most part until Austin got

going. The problem at the end of the day was no one on the planet with any idea what was going on here thought Vince was going to win. It also didn't help that no one cared about Lashley because no one had ever given us a reason to. He was just kind of there for the most part and there was nothing more to him than he used to be a college wrestler and he's muscular. Seriously, that's Lashley's story almost in full.

Post match they take FOREVER to Stun Vince and cut his hair. Austin Stuns him because that's what Austin does to Vince. To their credit though, they SHAVE his head, not just trim it. Vince's face during this whole thing is great as he goes from shock to the patented Vince rage in a few seconds. This led to three months of Vince/Shane/Umaga vs. Lashley which didn't work for the most part. Austin, Lashley and Trump share beers and Trump gets Stunned. I'll give the guy this: he has a soft spot for wrestling. He hosted two Wrestlemanias, was in the crowd for two more and did this.

John Cena is All Grown Up.

For no apparent reason other than we have nothing else to talk about, we look at the dark match with Flair/Carlito vs. Gregory Helms/Chavo Guerrero in a lumberjack match.

Womens Title: Melina vs. Ashley

It's a lumberjill match and all of the other Divas are introduced. Melina is defending here because thank goodness Ashley never got the title. Ashley, who isn't a wrestler, takes Melina down and pounds away. The crowd is audibly quiet for this match and can you blame them? Ashley pounds away in the corner and does some bad choking but Melina comes back by SCREAMING. Off to a bow and arrow for a bit as I have no interest in watching this match at all. Ashley misses an elbow and thankfully Melina reverses a rollup into one of her own to retain.

**Rating:** M. As in Mickie James, who was on the floor during this match instead of in the ring. Point blank, Ashley cannot wrestle. She was decent looking, but other than that she had nothing going for her at all. This was a popcorn break match and thankfully it was

barely three minutes long as I couldn't sit through much longer.

Shawn Michaels is All Grown Up.

We recap Michaels vs. Cena. Shawn won a triple threat to set this up and then won the tag titles with Cena. The idea is Shawn has turned on every one of his partners in his career and he'll do it again here. No music video here for some reason.

#### Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Shawn Michaels

Remember that they're tag champions here but neither guy wears the belt. I can't say I blame them of course. Cena's special entrance this year is driving a muscle car from "the parking lot" into the arena due to being in Detroit. They circle each other to start before Shawn slaps him in the face. A quick headlock doesn't do much for Shawn so he uses his speed advantage to pop John with some right hands. Back to the headlock and it works a bit better this time as Shawn takes Cena down to the mat.

Cena has had enough of this defense thing and rings Shawn's bell with a clothesline. Shawn is sent to the apron but he tosses Cena from the ring and out to the floor. A BIG chop staggers Cena but Shawn's Asai Moonsault hits mostly table and Shawn is hurt. Luckily for him though Cena is even more hurt as they head back inside. Shawn chops away in the corner before going after Cena's knee. The leg is wrapped around the post and Cena is in trouble. The referee asks Cena if he can continue and of course Cena says yes.

Shawn keeps kicking at the leg before wrapping it around the ring rope. With Cena down in the corner, Shawn stares straight at him to play even more mind games. Back up and John hits a big right hand to send Shawn flying across the ring. Shawn charges straight back at him with a shoulder into the ribs in the corner to keep control. Michaels charges again but Cena's leg gives out and Shawn goes head first into the post, busting him open.

Cena has had enough of getting beaten up so he punches Shawn down before firing off some mounted right hands. The ProtoBomb and Shuffle hit but Shawn punches his way out of the FU. Cena is sent

into the corner but manages to duck Sweet Chin Music. The referee isn't so lucky though and is knocked senseless. Cena tries the FU but is countered into a DDT to put both guys down.

With no referee in sight, Shawn rolls to the floor and hits a sick piledriver onto the steps. The THUD when Cena's head hit was a little scary. The back of Cena's head is cut open BAD on top of that. Back in and here's a second referee but the count only gets two. There are the forearm and nip-up as the blood flows down Shawn's face. The top rope elbow connects but Cena blocks Chin Music with a big clothesline to put both guys down again.

They slug it out in the middle of the ring but the FU is countered again into a sunset flip for two. Shawn's leap frog is caught in the FU but Cena is too banged up to cover. The very delayed cover gets two and the champ is getting frustrated. With nothing else to do he tries an FU off the top, only to be shoved off by Shawn. Michaels dives at Cena but gets caught in the FU position. He counters that as well though by landing on his feet, only to miss the superkick and have Cena try for the STFU. Cena keeps trying for it but gets small packaged down for two instead.

Shawn misses an enziguri attempt and now the STFU is on. Cena cranks back on it but Shawn is only a few inches away from the rope. As Shawn starts to black out he grabs the rope and Cena has to break. He takes a bit too long though and gets in an argument with the referee, allowing Shawn to kick Cena's head off. Another delayed cover gets two and both guys are down. In a cool spot, both guys have to lean on the other to get up. The FU is countered again but Shawn can't avoid the STFU again. Cena cranks back on it and Shawn has no choice but to tap out.

**Rating:** A-. This was a much better match than the HHH match from the year before for a few reasons. First of all, there was a story behind the match. As simple as it was, Shawn being Cena's partner gave them a bond and seeing them fight was something interesting to see. Second, the drama was better here. Cena felt like he was in real trouble and that the title was in danger, which I never felt

last year. It's a better match overall and they would have even better ones in the future.

A highlight package ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** B+. This is a show where the stuff that is bad is really bad but the stuff that is good is REALLY good. There are only eight matches on the card and three of them are very good to great. The best part about that though is the bad matches (other than one) were all short and pretty easy to get through. The show is completely forgettable other than Trump vs. Vince and maybe Undertaker vs. Batista, but it's worth seeing. I would however recommend fast forwarding through some of the weaker parts.

#### Ratings Comparison

CM Punk vs. Mr. Kennedy vs. Finlay vs. Randy Orton vs. King Booker vs. Jeff Hardy vs. Booker T vs. Edge

Original: B+

Redo: B

Great Khali vs. Kane

Original: D

Redo: D-

Chris Benoit vs. MVP

Original: B

Redo: C

Undertaker vs. Batista

Original: B+

Redo: A

ECW Originals vs. New Breed

Original: D+

Redo: D

Bobby Lashley vs. Umaga

Original: C-

Redo: D

Melina vs. Ashley

Original: F

Redo: M (for Mickie James)

John Cena vs. Shawn Michaels

Original: A

Redo: A-

Overall Rating

Original: B

Redo: B+

Almost everything goes down and the rating goes up. I'm a complex guy sometimes.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/30/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-23-over-80000-people/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the NXT: The Full Sail Years Volumes I and II, now in PAPERBACK. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/03/24/kbs-history-of-nxt-volumes-1-and-2-now-available-in-paperback/>

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# Survivor Series Count-Up – 2005: It Worked Once

## Survivor Series 2005

Date: November 27, 2005

Location: Joe Louis Arena, Detroit, Michigan

Attendance: 15,000

Commentators: Joey Styles, Jerry Lawler, Jonathan Coachman, Michael Cole, Tazz

The main change here is that we've seen the rise of Batista and Cena, with the latter defending against Angle and a crooked referee tonight. On top of that we've got Raw vs. Smackdown in a major Survivor Series match which actually feels kind of big for once. Other than that there's HHH vs. Flair in a Last Man Standing match which should be good. Let's get to it.

The announcers talk about the main event and bragging rights to start things off.

### Booker T vs. Chris Benoit

This is the first match in a best of seven series for the US Title, which would go on until January and saw Randy Orton wrestling four of the matches in Booker's place. Benoit gets in Booker's face in the corner and they tie up for a bit. Booker hits an awkward kind of slam but Benoit pops right back up. Benoit sends him to the floor and that goes absolutely nowhere. Back in and Chris takes him to the mat with a leg hold.

After Booker grabs a rope, it's time for a test of strength with Booker (the heel here) kicking Benoit in the face to take over. When all else fails, kick the guy in the face. A suplex puts Booker down as does an elbow to the face. Booker hits a side slam for two and it's off to an arm hold followed by an abdominal stretch. After Benoit escapes, Booker kicks his head off for two. This is moving somewhat slowly so far but it's not bad.

Booker hits an arm trap neckbreaker (like Sandow's Terminus) for two and it's off to a reverse chinlock. Benoit escapes a vertical suplex and it's time to roll some Germans, but Booker escapes the third and kicks Benoit in the face again. Another attempt at a kick is caught in a legdrag but the Sharpshooter that follows it up doesn't quite work, giving Booker a cradle for two.

A snap suplex gets two for Chris and we roll some more Germans. Benoit loads up the Swan Dive but Sharmell's distraction lets Booker load up a superplex. Benoit goes psycho though and headbutts Booker to the mat, but the Swan Dive misses, allowing Booker to get a rollup with Sharmell holding Booker's feet on the ropes for the pin.

**Rating:** B-. These two are awesome together and both series they had (they did this in WCW for the TV Title) were entertaining stuff. At the end of the day, sometimes there's nothing wrong with throwing two people out there and letting them have a good match. This was a solid choice for an opener too as both guys got to show off and the fans were getting into it near the end.

Vince wishes Bischoff luck tonight and Montreal is referenced. Of course. Eric says he'll screw Cena. Cena pops up and says "so Eric Bischoff screws guys. Good luck with that." Vince then says to Cena, and I 100% quote, "keep it up my nigga." Booker and Sharmell don't seem pleased.

#### Women's Title: Trish Stratus vs. Melina

Trish is defending and Melina has MNM, the Smackdown tag champions, with him. This is interpromotional apparently. Melina and MNM had kidnapped Trish and held her captive until the match was agreed to. Well that's one way to do it. Trish and her psycho fan (the brand new Mickie James) come out fast with Trish sending Melina to the floor and diving on all three members of MNM. Trish is looking great here.

Melina gets thrown around by her hair, sending those furry boots flying. Trish headscissors her down and I think they botch a headscissors out of the corner with Trish kicking Melina in the face instead of getting the ankles around her head. Melina uses her basic



abilities (meaning stretching to freakish angles to choke and kick a lot) before going to the floor for a cat fight with Mickie.

As the brawl is going on, MNM tries the Snapshot (elevated double team DDT) on Trish, only to get caught and ejected. Things calm down a bit and Melina puts on a surfboard, which may or may not be an excuse to have Trish's chest shoved out while wearing tight leather. Trish fights back but Stratusfaction is countered into a face plant for two, drawing the primal screams from Melina.

Stratus comes back with some forearms but runs into a boot in the corner. The Stratusphere puts Melina down and there's a spinebuster of all things for two for Trish. Chick Kick and Stratusfaction miss and Trish is sent to the apron, but Mickie pulls her out of the way of a charging Melina. Trish goes up and misses about 95% of a top rope bulldog but it's good enough for the pin.

**Rating:** C-. This was much better than I was expecting given what level Melina was at here. Trish looked fine (and her wrestling was even good too) but she needed more to work with here. This would lead up to Mickie going totally psycho and evil, setting up an excellent match (other than the ending) at Mania between the two of them.

Watch Jake's DVD! It's full of lies but watch it!

Dmitri Young, a baseball player, is here.

We recap HHH vs. Flair. HHH came back from injury and turned on Flair in their first match together. They fought in a cage match at Taboo Tuesday with Flair somehow pulling out one of the biggest upsets of his career. Tonight it's a rematch in a last man standing match.

### Ric Flair vs. HHH

Last man standing. Oh and Flair is IC Champion but this is non-title. Like HHH would ever actively go after a midcard title. HHH jumps Flair as he comes to the ring and beats on him in the aisle for a bit before we head inside. It's chair time very quickly but Flair pokes HHH in the ribs with a kendo stick to block the shot.

They head into the crowd with Flair chopping HHH through the fans. He swings one time too many though and HHH backdrops him back to ringside.

A suplex puts Flair's back on the concrete and draws some loud swearing. HHH suplexes him back into the ring and Flair is in trouble. Some quick punches don't do much good for Flair and we head back to the outside. Flair gets posted, but if that's not enough to cut him open, HHH carves up his forehead with a freaking SCREWDRIVER. There is blood everywhere in just a matter of seconds, so HHH digs it in even more back in the ring.

HHH takes him down and the knee drop misses by about eight inches. The shot of the second one is even worse and they slug it out in the corner. We head outside again and Flair sends him into the steps to give Flair a breather. Flair pokes HHH in the eye but HHH hits a spinebuster to take him right back down on the concrete. HHH talks trash on the mic and Flair is like "boy Jack Brisco's tights were tougher than you" and he grabs HHH by the balls. Well when there's nothing else I guess that's all you can do. HHH blasts him with the mic to break the grip. I guess that's Stephanie only territory.

Flair is set for a Pedigree through the announce table but he backdrops HHH through the other table, drawing our first count of the match. That gets a nine and HHH grabs another chair. Back in and HHH has Flair dead to rights but instead of swinging the chair, HHH pounds away with punches instead. HHH pounds away in the corner, so Flair kicks him low again, followed by a chair shot for five. Flair is like YUM and bites at the cut on HHH's forehead. Flair is kind of a weird dude sometimes.

Ric wraps HHH's balls around the post and does the same to the leg, which is a smart move in a last man standing match. Then he crushes the balls FOUR MORE TIMES. DUDE FOR THE LOVE OF STEPHANIE GIVE IT A BREAK! Back in and Flair chop blocks HHH, before biting the guy's thigh. Flair is a pretty sick guy at times no? He goes back to the knee (with kicks this time instead of teeth) but the Figure Four is blocked twice, the second time having Flair knocked to the outside.

For the first time, Flair pulls out a weapon of his own and whacks the knee with a chair. Now the Figure Four goes on and Flair is perfectly allowed to grab the ropes. HHH taps but it doesn't mean anything here. That draws an 8 with a shaky call from the referee that HHH was up at one point. A double clothesline puts both guys down and HHH rolls to the floor. The Game throws in some steps and clocks Flair in the face with them. Flair needs to scream less. Sometimes you should just be stunned and dazed you know?

HHH charges with the steps again but Flair hits a drop toehold to send HHH into the steps face first. That only gets a nine so they slug it out. Flair sends him into the ropes but ducks his head like an idiot, allowing HHH to hit the Pedigree.....which only gets eight. HHH Pedigrees him AGAIN, but Flair is up at 8 and flips off HHH. A THIRD Pedigree gets nine, so HHH "hits" (Get better directors already. This is ridiculous) him in the back with the sledgehammer to finally keep Flair down for ten.

**Rating:** B+. Bad direction and cuts aside, this was a very solid brawl. They beat the tar out of each other with Flair trying as hard as he could to have one last great moment, but not being evil enough anymore to hang with the new guy in HHH. This was good stuff and thankfully it more or less ended HHH and Flair's time on camera together.

Flair is taken out on a stretcher.

Buy the Bret Hart DVD! No really, this one is awesome.

Trish and Mickie do an online interview.

Orton gives Team Smackdown a pep talk but talks about Batista as the weak link. Batista shows up and the tune changes. He thinks that since he's world champion, he should be leader. JBL says it should be him. Batista glares at him and JBL stammers a lot.

Here are Edge and Lita with something to say. Edge is Mr. MITB at this point but doesn't have a match tonight. Edge talks about how his own talk show, called The Cutting Edge, is debuting soon. Now that we've got that covered, let's talk to Dmitri Young. Edge makes

fun of the Tigers for not being able to win the World Series and calls everyone here fat. He makes fun of the Detroit sports teams and now they give Dmitri Young ("Come here Mark Henry. Oh wait...") a live mic. Young talks about Edge's balls and lists off all of Detroit's titles before saying Edge has none. This took seven minutes somehow.

We recap Angle vs. Cena. Basically it's "I'm Kurt Angle and therefore better than you. NOW LET ME SHOUT EXACTLY WHAT I JUST SAID AGAIN!" Cena is like bring it man and whatever rhymes with man!

#### Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Kurt Angle

Daivari, Angle's crony, is the guest referee. The YOU SUCKS from the crowd are censored because of some Bischoff ruling. Daivari is rubbing Angle's shoulders during the intros. Oh and Cena is defending. The champ is here...right on the mat with Angle working on the leg. Cena comes back with an armdrag into an armbar and some shoulder blocks to send Kurt to the floor. Daivari won't let Cena go after Angle and Joey is way more excited about it than anyone else. Isn't Daivari doing what a referee is supposed to do anyway?

Back in and Cena hits some elbows and a release fisherman's suplex for no count from Daivari. Cena goes to yell at him and is immediately caught in the ankle lock. Cena finally gets to the rope but Daivari kicks his hand off. The hold is broken and Cena spinebusts Angle before slapping Daivari a few times. Angle won't let Daivari DQ Cena, so Cena knocks them both to the floor.

Kurt gets all fired up and slams Cena into the steps and hits an overhead belly to belly on the outside. A second referee comes out as Daivari is still down. Daivari would be a wrestler one day, so how did he get so much better at being able to take punishment? I've never gotten that. Anyway, Cena puts on a reverse waistlock but Cena comes back with a cross body for two. Angle comes back with a knee lift and Cena is in trouble.

The fans are ALL OVER Cena all of a sudden, with a huge Cena Sucks chant. Off to a chinlock with Angle holding the leg back as well. Cena finally comes back with a jawbreaker and a DDT to put both guys

down. They slug it out with Cena taking over via some clotheslines. Cena initiates his finishing sequence and is set for the FU, but Angle clotheslines the replacement referee.

A low blow puts Cena down and Angle calls in another referee to count two on the Angle Slam. Angle superplexes Cena down for two but the moonsault misses. Cena loads up another FU but Angle grabs the referee to escape. An uppercut puts the referee down AGAIN and Kurt throws Daivari back in, who is apparently STILL out cold after about ten minutes, breaking Davey Boy Smith's record from 1994. A Smackdown referee comes down but Angle yells at him, allowing Cena to DDT Daivari. Kurt comes in and walks into the FU for the pin.

**Rating:** C. This was WAY overbooked and Cena was in over his head with Angle, but it wasn't bad or anything. Angle vs. Cena was supposed to be a huge feud but it never felt like anything all that special. Cena wasn't ready for a real showdown with Angle yet but he would get a lot better over the next year or so though. The referee stuff was kind of stupid though, especially with Daivari being out cold for so long.

#### Eric Bischoff vs. Teddy Long

Yes this is real, yes it's happening on PPV, yes we're supposed to ignore Bischoff being a martial arts expert from WCW and thing Teddy might have a chance in a straight fight, and yes this is going to SUCK. Teddy has some network consultant with him named Palmer Cannon who never lasted long. They're both GM's if that wasn't clear. Teddy poses a lot on the corner and we haven't had any contact after a minute. Teddy dances a bit and Eric misses a kick. There's more dancing and no contact still.

We do the exact same thing AGAIN before Eric chokes Teddy with his sash. There are two referees in there for no apparent reason. Eric chokes away but Teddy takes off his shoe and whacks Eric in the head. Bischoff goes to the throat to stop Teddy again....and here's the Boogeyman. If you've never seen him, picture Darth Maul from the first Star Wars prequel if he ate worms. He sneaks up on Eric and lays him out with a pumphandle slam, giving Teddy the pin.

**Rating:** S. Six minutes. This match took SIX MINUTES. The WWE owes me six minutes of my life back. John Cena vs. Kurt Angle for the WWE Championship can only get thirteen minutes but this gets SIX? Who in the world thought this was a good idea? At least it went by....no actually it didn't go by fast. This won worst match of the year and I can't argue at all.

Team Smackdown is coming to the ring and the Smackdown D-list guys cheer them on.

The Raw guys do the same thing.

We recap Raw vs. Smackdown. At a 3 hour special Raw called WWE Homecoming, there was going to be a Smackdown six man tag but Bischoff turned the lights out on them because he said they were inferior to Raw. This prompted a multiple PPV running feud where they kept invading each others' shows, setting up a battle for supremacy here.

#### Team Raw vs. Team Smackdown

Shawn Michaels, Carlito, Chris Masters, Kane, Big Show, Batista, Randy Orton, Rey Mysterio, Bobby Lashley, John Bradshaw Layfield

Show and Kane are tag champions, Batista is world champion but is injured due to Big Show and Kane attacking him over and over, and Lashley is undefeated at this point. This hasn't been mentioned yet on the commentary for pretty obvious reasons, but Orton is replacing Eddie Guerrero who died about ten days before this. Shawn vs. Randy gets things going and it's a very slow opening with both guys feeling the other out.

Orton gets thing going by slapping Shawn so Shawn literally slaps Orton down to the mat. Three times in about 30 seconds, Shawn takes Orton to the mat with a headlock, Orton grabs a headscissors to counter, and Shawn escapes. Randy charges into a boot in the corner but slams Shawn down to take over again. The match is starting slow but the bickering from the commentators is funny stuff, as they're taking this rivalry personally.

Off to Masters who gets his eyes raked by Orton but the power game of Masters takes over. Lashley comes in to a reaction from the fans and they do the two power guys collide with each other. Bobby takes over with a slam but Masters clotheslines him down. Masters tries the Masterlock but Bobby easily blocks it. Carlito is pulled in and thrown around as well, culminating with a powerslam for two.

Off to Shawn to see what he can do with this monster, but Lashley slams him off the top. A suplex puts Shawn down so Carlito comes in sans tag and takes the Dominator. Shawn is about to take one as well, but Kane breaks it up and chokeslams Lashley to give Shawn the pin. Rey comes in next and Kane hits him in the back as well to give Shawn another advantage. Masters drops some elbows on Rey to keep him on the mat which is the right move.

A gorilla press drop puts Rey down again and here's Kane who misses an elbow. Mysterio starts speeding things up and gets two off a standing moonsault. Kane comes up with a very easy counter by kicking a charging Rey in the face. Off to a bearhug as this is the longest segment of the match so far. Rey fights out of it and slides between Kane's legs to make the tag to Batista.

Big Dave gets in some shots but the bandages all over his arm and chest are a target for Kane. Kane gets in a shot and everything breaks down, allowing Batista to hit a spinebuster on Kane for the elimination. Big Show chokeslams Batista for a very close two but Kane and Big Show double chokeslam Batista to put him out. JBL immediately tries the Clothesline on Show but gets grabbed by the throat. JBL kicks Show low, but gets caught jumping off the middle rope. That's freaking SCARY power by Show. Show superkicks Orton down and LAUNCHES Rey into the corner.

Orton guillotines Show into the Clothesline from JBL who tags...Mysterio? The 619 sets up the RK0 which sets up another Clothesline which sets up a seated senton from Rey for the elimination. Cool sequence here as the team all went after Show to get rid of him. Show would DESTROY Rey on a special Smackdown to get revenge. Shawn goes after JBL on the floor and gets thrown away in a

fallaway slam.

To recap, it's Mysterio, JBL and Orton vs. Shawn, Carlito and Masters. It's Masters vs. Rey now with Masters getting two after sending Mysterio into the corner. Off to Carlito for a legdrop and chinlock for a few moments. Mysterio fights up and makes a blind tag to JBL who ENDS Carlito with a Clothesline to make it 3-2. Masters and JBL slug it out a bit but Rey tags himself in. JBL kicks Chris in the face to give his teammate an advantage, setting up a 619 and the springboard legdrop to take out Masters.

So it's Shawn vs. Rey/Orton/JBL and Shawn is STILL down on the floor from the fallaway slam. Mysterio starts with Shawn and things go faster. Rey hits the 619 to send Shawn across the ring, but the West Coast Pop jumps right into the superkick ala Shelton Benjamin for the elimination. JBL comes in and tries the Clothesline but gets superkicked down AGAIN to make it Orton vs. Shawn. There were about fifteen seconds between the two pins.

The RKO and superkick both miss so Shawn dives on Orton on the floor to take him out. The fans want Taker who was promised to be here tonight. There are the forearm and superkick followed by some clotheslines. The top rope elbow hits Randy but Shawn can't cover. JBL is still at ringside for some reason and he grabs a chair. Shawn loads up the superkick again but JBL shoves down the outside referee and misses a chair shot. The distraction lets Orton hit the RKO for the final pin.

**Rating:** B. This was a direct copy of Team Austin vs. Team Bischoff from two years ago, even down to the final participants, but the results were a bit inverted. Here, the part before the solo Shawn part was better but Shawn's solo part wasn't as good. Also, Batista running in was better than JBL's chair stuff here. It's still probably a better match overall, mainly due to the better opening part.

The low level Smackdown guys come out to put Orton on their shoulders....and there's a gong. We've got lights, we've got chanting, we've got druids carrying a casket, and a Dead Man coming



out of said casket. Taker walks into the ring and beats up some jobbers as the roster bails. Orton is scared to death to end the show. Hell in a Cell for these two next month.

**Overall Rating:** B. This show is pretty much never talked about other than occasionally the main event and that's a shame. This is an entertaining and solid show all around with the only bad match being a battle of the GM's, and even that only runs six minutes. You have a bloodbath in HHH vs. Flair, a fun main event with entertaining commentary and some solid wrestling all around. Nothing is great, but if you've got two hours and forty five minutes to spare, check this out as it's quality stuff.

### Ratings Comparison

Booker T vs. Chris Benoit

Original: B

Redo: B-

Trish Stratus vs. Melina

Original: B

Redo: C-

HHH vs. Ric Flair

Original: B-

Redo: B+

John Cena vs. Kurt Angle

Original: B+

Redo: C

Theodore Long vs. Eric Bischoff

Original: 0 (For Oh I can't think about this anymore)

Redo: S (For Six Minutes)

Team Smackdown vs. Team Raw

Original: B

Redo: B

Overall Rating

Original: B

Redo: B

I'm surprised by how much more I liked the girls and Cena vs. Angle. They're good but they're not that good. Still a solid show though.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/11/14/history-of-survivor-series-count-up-2005-a-forgotten-almost-classic/>

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# Royal Rumble Count-Up – 2007: At Last

## Royal Rumble 2007

Date: January 28, 2007

Location: AT&T Center, San Antonio, Texas

Attendance: 13,500

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

We're back in Texas here and the main question is which Texas guy is winning the Rumble. The main change from last year is that ECW is

around now and get to have seven guys in the Rumble because their roster isn't deep enough to support ten. Other than that we've got Cena vs. Umaga in a last man standing match and Batista vs. Kennedy because Kennedy gets a lot of title shots. Let's get to it.

This is the 20<sup>th</sup> Rumble so you know the theme of the opening video already. The other matches get a little hype as well but the Rumble dominates, as it should.

### MNM vs. Hardys

Mercury had his face shattered at Armageddon in a ladder match and tonight is about revenge. Jeff is IC Champion here and Matt was given a Snapshot (MNM's elevated DDT finisher) on the exposed concrete recently. Matt and Nitro start things off but it's quickly off to Mercury. He goes for Matt's dislocated jaw but lets Nitro back in for some shots to the ribs. Matt comes back with punches of his own to slow Mercury down in the corner.

Jeff comes in and speeds things up before hitting an atomic drop and legdrop to split the legs of Nitro. Back to Matt who is rubbing his face a lot. A neckbreaker gets two on Nitro but he comes back with a shot to Matt's jaw to take him right back down. Mercury comes in and slugs away as Matt is playing Ricky Morton for a bit. Back to Nitro for some choking on the ropes and it's already back to Joey.

Melina does that ear piercing scream of hers and Mercury goes after Matt's jaw again. Off to a chinlock followed by a hair pull to send Matt to the mat again. Mercury goes to the middle rope but misses an elbow, allowing for the tags to Jeff and Nitro. The sitout gordbuster gets two as everything breaks down. A double suplex puts Nitro down and the Hardys go up for a legdrop from Matt and a splash from Jeff, but the latter hits knees on the way down.

Mercury comes in off the tag and gets two off a knee to the ribs. Nitro does exactly the same before sticking on the ribs for a bit more. Jeff grabs a quick rollup on the incoming Mercury but Joey goes right back to the ribs. Nitro comes in and does the same as MNM continues to keep tagging in and out very quickly. We hit a chinlock

with a bodyscissors but Jeff fights out pretty quickly. He still can't make the tag but finally backdrops Nitro down and makes the tag...which isn't seen. I love that spot.

Jeff hits a mule kick to take Mercury down and FINALLY makes the hot tag to Matt. Things speed up a lot and Matt fires off elbows to everyone named M or N. A combination bulldog and clothesline takes MNM down for two followed by the yodeling elbow to the back of Nitro's head. There's Poetry in Motion to Mercury but one to Nitro misses, as Johnny grabs an Oklahoma Roll for two on Matt. The Side Effect puts Nitro down but Mercury spears Matt to the floor. As he went through the ropes though, Jeff made a blind tag and hits the Swanton on Nitro for the pin.

**Rating:** B. This took a long time to get going but it was building up to a nice finish. This was old school tag team stuff and that's hard to screw up. MNM was getting a good rub off the Hardys who were as much of a nostalgia act as you could have at this point. Good stuff here and a hot opener, at least after the tag to Matt.

Coach and Teddy talk trash about brand dominance. Edge comes in to draw and runs into Kelly Kelly, who is an exhibitionist. Edge's condescending talking to Kelly is hilarious stuff. Orton comes in to draw and threatens to throw his tag title partner out if need be. Edge: "I'll show you mine if you show me yours." Booker walks in and comedy ensues.

Wrestlemania promo. I liked that All Grown Up campaign.

#### ECW Title: Bobby Lashley vs. Test

Lashley won the title in December and Test is the warm body that he gets to crush in his first major defense. There's a video package for this which is basically both guys beating up RVD to show how awesome they are. Test powers Lashley back into the corner so the champion comes out with a spear to take over again. Now Test tries to choke, so Lashley suplexes him down. Nice to see them sticking with the same formula. A delayed vertical suplex puts Test on the floor and the champion follows him.

Test sends Lashley into the barricade to take over and we head back in for a chinlock. He shifts into an armbar and hits a Stunner onto the arm for two. Lashley fights out of trouble and backdrops Test before hitting a three point stands shoulder in the corner. He tries a slam but the arm gives out, allowing Test to fire his one big weapon, the big boot, but it only gets two. Lashley pops up with a clothesline to send Test to the floor...and he walks out for the countout.

**Rating:** D. They needed to protect TEST? Seriously? Lashley doesn't get to pin TEST clean? The match was dull stuff in the first place before a stupid ending like that. Lashley did what he could out there but Test was as much of a worthless musclehead as you could possibly ask for at this point.

Lashley pulls Test back in and beats him up, which makes you wonder WHY DID THEY NOT DO THIS BEFORE???

Cena gets his broken ribs looked at when Vince comes in to see if Cena wants to forfeit. Vince says he can't see (get it?) Cena as champion after tonight...and that's it. I don't remember them having an issue at this point but whatever.

We recap Mr. Kennedy (Anderson) vs. Batista, which is just Kennedy winning a Beat the Clock challenge and having a great record against former world champions.

#### Smackdown World Title: Mr. Kennedy vs. Batista

Kennedy slaps Batista to start and takes over as he tries to tie Batista up. Batista slugs him down and gets two off a suplex and we head outside. Kennedy spears/shoves Batista into the steps, injuring Batista's knee in the process. We get into a regular "hurt the big man's knee" match which is the smartest thing they could do here. A reverse Figure Four has Batista in trouble but Kennedy gets caught holding the rope.

A running kick to Batista's face in the corner has the champion in trouble again and a knee to the head gets two. Off to a half crab for a minute or so before Batista fights up and hits a spinebuster

to put both guys down. Kennedy kicks him in the face but Batista Hulks Up. There's a weak slam as the knee is giving out on the champion.

Batista hits a Regal Roll (Kennedy used that a lot) of all things but Kennedy hits the knee to break up the Batista Bomb. The referee gets bumped so there's no one to count after Kennedy's neckbreaker. A DDT gets two and JBL is LOSING IT. The fans chant for Kennedy as he goes to the middle rope, only to jump into a clothesline followed by a Batista Bomb to retain the title.

**Rating:** D+. The psychology was there from Kennedy but Batista didn't really go along with it. I'm not saying he didn't sell, but at the end of the day this was only eleven minutes long which isn't enough time to tell the story they were going for. Also Kennedy didn't have the Mic Check yet so he didn't have anything to finish Batista with and everyone knew it. Not a bad match but they needed more than they had here.

Kevin Thorn draws his number. He and Ariel leave and Hornswoggle comes in to terrorize the tumbler. Apparently he's in the Rumble too and attacks Coach for good measure. Khali comes in and scares Horny off. Kelly makes a stupid joke about holding balls, drawing in Ron Simmons for his usual line.

The Marine is on DVD.

Wrestlemania is coming and Saliva, the band that does the theme song, is in the front row.

We recap Cena vs. Umaga. Cena escaped the last PPV with the title and gave Umaga his first loss so tonight it's last man standing. Cena is coming into this with bad ribs.

Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Umaga

Cena is defending and this is last man standing. Cena pounds away to start but Umaga barely moves. Umaga gets in a shot to the ribs and Cena falls to the outside, clutching his ribs. The champ gets sent into the steps and it's all Umaga in the early going. They slug it out in the aisle and all of a sudden Cena's punches work better. He

tries to ram Umaga face first into the apron but Umaga screams and hits Cena in the ribs again.

Back in and Cena is in even more trouble with Umaga pounding on the ribs. A clothesline puts Cena down and Umaga brings in the steps. Cena knocks him off the apron though and throws the steps down onto Umaga's (hands covering) head. It looked a lot better when Kane did it because you couldn't see the hands but whatever. That draws a six count but more importantly it allows Cena to get a breather.

Umaga superkicks Cena down and it's off to a bearhug. Since there are no submissions, Umaga lets Cena go and brings in some more steps. The steps are set up in the corner but Cena avoids the running hip attack (SEE??? IT WAS UMAGA AND NOT RIKISHI!!! SCREW YOU WWE ANNOUNCERS!!!) and blasts Umaga in the head with the steps. That only gets seven so Cena goes up and jumps into a spinning Rock Bottom, drawing some loud screams from the champ.

The Samoan cannonballs down onto Cena's ribs but Cena finally knees him in the crotch to slow Umaga down. The Protobomb sends Umaga onto the steps but only gets about five as Cena hits the Shuffle to break the count. Cena tries the FU but Umaga's weight causes Cena to fall face first into the steps. John is busted open so the fans tell him that he sucks. Ignore the fact that almost no one else could get a match this good out of Umaga I guess.

Cena gets up at eight and gets punched in the face some more, only to start Hulking Up. He pounds away on Umaga but walks into a Samoan Drop, driving the ribs and Cena's shoulder into the mat. The Samoan Spike is blocked (for the life of me I do not get why they picked a thumb to the neck for Umaga's finisher. The guy is a MONSTER and he pokes you in the neck?) so Umaga headbutts Cena down instead.

Umaga puts him in the Tree of Woe but Cena sits up in the corner to avoid a running headbutt. The top rope Fameasser takes Umaga down and Cena sends him shoulder first into the post. They head to the floor and Cena is covered in blood. With Umaga still laying over the ropes, Cena BLASTS HIM with a monitor to the head to put him down. Back to the floor but Umaga catches a diving Cena and drives him

back first into the post.

Umaga puts Cena on the announce table and runs along the other tables, only to miss a splash and crash onto the ground. That gets nine and Cena has no idea what to do next. Estrada, Umaga's manager, unhooks the top rope and tells Umaga to use the metal pole to blast Cena in the head. Cena catches a charging Umaga with the FU and hits him in the head with the pole. He hooks a kind of STF with the ring rope and Umaga is passing out. Umaga starts fighting up so Cena chokes him even more. FINALLY Umaga is out and Cena retains the title.

**Rating:** B+. This was a FIGHT which is what a last man standing match is supposed to do. I was digging the story they were telling here with Cena fighting a savage but having to become a savage himself to beat him. The fans didn't like him at this point, but screw them as would you really rather have Umaga as champion? This was one of many awesome matches Cena had in this stretch, but OH NO kids like him so he must suck right? Give me a break.

Sandman draws his number and has a beer. Flair comes in to draw and gets hit on by Kelly. We get adult music and Extreme Expose comes in to dance with Flair, complete with club lighting. Not that I'm complaining about Layla, Brooke (Tessmacher) and Kelly dancing in barely there outfits, but WHY DID THAT HAPPEN???

Rumble video. Not much else to say here as I'm sure you get the idea by now. This is more of a history package than a hype video for this year. The theme of this year is how star studded it is. Seven guys are from ECW so I question this premise.

### Royal Rumble

Flair is #1 (second time for that along with drawing #3 one year. He really doesn't have a great record in these things) and Finlay is #2. Finlay drops Flair with a quick shoulder and we have ninety second intervals here. Flair chops away in the corner but gets backdropped down for his efforts. Kenny Dykstra of Spirit Squad fame and currently in a small feud with Flair is #3. Flair chops away at him in the corner and Finlay tries to dump Kenny.



Everyone hits everyone for awhile until Matt Hardy is #4. That's a pretty diverse group of guys to start things off. The young and old guys pair off with Finlay and Kenny taking over. Matt takes over on Finlay and Edge is #5. Hardy avoids a spear and hits a Twist of Fate but gets taken down with a double clothesline with Kenny. Ric throws in a chair but Edge easily throws him out instead. Kenny tries to take credit despite doing nothing, so Edge throws him out too.

Tommy Dreamer is #6 and takes down Edge of all people before getting beaten up in the corner by Finlay. Sabu is #7 and actually doesn't bring any weapons with him. Instead he finds a table under the ring and sets it up at ringside before going in to fight Dreamer. Nothing of note happens for now so here's Gregory Helms at #8. Finlay is sent to the apron but he hangs onto the bottom rope.

The Irishman almost sends Sabu through the table but Sabu hangs on. Now Helms teases going through it but saves himself as well. Shelton Benjamin is #9 and goes for Hardy. Benjamin and Finlay both nearly go out but somehow both survive. They've teased that table being broken about five times already. Kane is #10 and immediately pounds away on everyone. There's a chokeslam to Edge and an elimination for Dreamer and Sabu, the latter being chokeslammed through the table. Law of wrestling #1: you set up the table, you're going through it.

CM Punk is #11 and is immediately called boring by JBL for not smoking and drinking. Finlay sends CM to the apron but can't get him out. There's the running knee to Edge's head in the corner from Punk but again he can't get an elimination. King Booker is #12 and dumps Helms pretty quickly. We've currently got Finlay, Hardy, Edge, Shelton, Kane, Booker and Punk.

Super Crazy is #13 and is knocked down by Kane before he can do much else. JBL mentions that Mil Mascaras owes him money, which he said on Raw a few months ago. I wonder if there's something to that. Booker and Finlay go at it until Jeff Hardy is #14. The Hardys team up on Finlay (smart) before shifting over to Edge. Now they go after Kane for some reason and hit Poetry in Motion. Sandman is #15 and is gone in as many seconds thanks to Booker.

Jeff skins the cat to save himself and Orton is #16. Hopefully he and Edge (tag champions) can clear things out a bit. Yep there goes Super Crazy and Matt takes the backbreaker. Rated-RKO throws out both Hardys and things are a lot clearer now. Benoit is #17 and fires away chops at everyone. Finlay takes a German as Punk is teetering on the apron. Now Benjamin takes a German and RVD is #18. Van Dam fires off kicks all around and Kane throws Booker out. Booker, ever the jerk, goes back in and throws out Kane. He beats on the Big Bald on the floor which didn't set up a Mania match surprisingly enough. Viscera is #19 as things slow down a bit. We've got Finlay, Edge, Benjamin, Punk, Orton, Benoit, Van Dam and Viscera in there at the moment. Nitro is #20 and things are getting too full again.

Punk gets crushed in the corner by Viscera for awhile and Shelton hangs on by inches. That was impressive. Kevin Thorn is #21 and no one is really doing anything at the moment. Hardcore Holly is #22 and that's not going to pick anything up. A bunch of guys go after Viscera and Shawn is #23. He's in DX mode and you know he's the hometown boy here. Shawn hits a Thesz Press on Finlay and clotheslines him out before superkicking Viscera, allowing a huge group of guys to dump him.

Shelton is gone at Shawn's hands too. The ring is FINALLY cleared out a bit now until Masters is #24. Nitro goes up top like a schmuck and gets dumped by Benoit. Chavo Guerrero is #25 and Benoit dumps Thorn in the same fashion that he dumped Big Show in 04. Van Dam goes up, can't find anyone to kick, and hops back down. MVP is #26 as Orton tries to dump Punk.

Nothing happens AGAIN until Carlito is #27. There are way too many people in the ring again. Shawn is sent to the apron but you know he's not going out yet. Great Khali is #28 and swings his arms a lot on the way to the ring. The match stops as Khali gets in and he beats everyone down. Khali dumps Holly as Miz is #29. He lasts a good seven seconds and there's only one man left. Van Dam is thrown out as are Punk and Carlito. Chavo gets dumped as well and Shawn

gets chokebombed. Things look hopeless but heeeeeeeeeere's Taker at #30.

This gives us a final group of Edge, Orton, Michaels, MVP, Khali and Taker. Taker and Khali slug it out with everyone else down. The Dead Man finally puts Khali out with a clothesline and everyone else gets beaten down as well. MVP is eliminated and tries to get a chair but Orton takes it away and cracks Taker in the head with it. Edge tries to spear Orton down but gets scared off by the chair. Instead of going after Edge though, Orton hits the RKO on Shawn to send him down to the floor but not out.

Rated-RKO goes after Taker and we're in a handicap match at this point. Taker fights back but can't hit a double chokeslam. He can however hit a double clothesline while being busted open. Snake Eyes and the big boot drop Edge but as Taker goes to chokeslam Orton, Edge spears Taker down. A BIG chair shot to the head drops Taker again and it's Conchairto time. Shawn comes back in and backdrops Orton out before superkicking Edge out to get us down to two.

The fans are WAY into this all of a sudden as Taker sits up. He looks over at Shawn and there's the nipup. The showdown is on and Shawn pounds away in the corner to no avail. Shawn kicks the chair to the floor and gets launched into the corner so Taker can pound away even more. Shawn is knocked upside down in the corner but punches his way to safety. Shawn does a Flair Flip to the apron but Taker misses a big boot, sending HIM to the apron as well. Shawn charges into an elbow and both guys are back in.

A neckbreaker puts Taker down but Shawn can't follow up. They slug it out and Taker kicks Shawn's head off to take over again. Taker lifts him for a suplex and wisely puts him on the apron instead of down onto the mat. Shawn fights back and goes up, only to get crotched. Taker loads up a superplex but gets knocked down so Shawn can hit the flying elbow. Chin Music is caught and there's a chokeslam but Taker can't follow up. The tombstone is countered into a superkick and both guys are down again. Taker catches another superkick and dumps Shawn to the floor, nearly silencing the fans in

the process.

**Rating:** C+. The ending stuff starting with Khali cleaning house until Taker dumps Shawn out is GREAT, but until then it's pretty dull with way too much laying around and too many people in there. The ending here is pretty questionable too as Shawn is in his hometown and would wind up being in the actual main event of Mania anyway. Taker would beat Batista for the Smackdown Title, which makes you wonder why they didn't have Shawn win for the big hometown win here, as the results literally would have been THE EXACT SAME THING. Not a great Rumble at all but the ending helps it a lot.

**Overall Rating:** C+. There are two long matches here and both of them are solid enough so I can't complain much here. The stuff that is good is good and the stuff that is bad is bad, so while it's not terrible, this definitely isn't a must see show. Shawn and Taker are of course great together and would have some masterpieces at Mania in the coming years, but they couldn't make this a great show on their own.

#### Ratings Comparison

Hardys vs. MNM

Original: B-

Redo: B

Bobby Lashley vs. Test

Original: D-

Redo: D

Batista vs. Mr. Kennedy

Original: B-

Redo: D+

John Cena vs. Umaga

Original: C

Redo: B+

Royal Rumble

Original: B

Redo: C+

Overall Rating

Original: B

Redo: C+

Man I REALLY liked that ending last time. I have no idea what I was thinking on the world title matches though.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/01/26/royal-rumble-count-up-2007-the-best-spot-finally-wins/>

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<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0188BJRGU>

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# Bound For Glory 2015: They Never Let Me Down

## **Bound For Glory 2015**

Date: October 4, 2015

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

Commentators: D'Angelo Dinero, Josh Matthews

It's TNA's biggest show of the year and they've had all of two weeks to set it up. Well save for the main event which was changed with

two minutes to go on the final episode of Impact. It's hard to guess what to expect here but it could range from a fun show to another disaster for the company on what could be their last pay per view ever. Let's get to it.

It's a basic opening video with all of the matches getting a quick recap and a voiceover saying they're all bound for glory.

#### X-Division Title: Tigre Uno vs. Manik vs. DJZ vs. Andrew Everett

Tigre Uno is defending and this is Ultimate X, meaning the title is hung from the structure above the ring and whoever pulls it down wins. It's a big brawl to start as you can see the arena looking mostly dark, likely hiding a small crowd. Everyone is running all over the place with no flow or story to start. DJZ clotheslines Everett down but it's Tigre sending the challengers to the floor, only to have Manik break up a dive.

DJZ comes back in and tries a dive of his own, which the camera misses. They saw him dive, but the crash is lost to the ages. Tigre and Everett's dives are at least seen but Manik breaks up Everett's climb attempt with some rolling suplexes. Manik and DJZ plant Tigre with a double facebuster but neither is able to get the belt down. Tigre comes back in with a reverse suplex into a Stunner on Everett, only to have Manik break up his attempt at the title.

Everett crushes the champ with a 630 for the big spot of the match. Not to be outdone, Tigre kicks DJZ to the floor and busts out a 450 from the top to the floor. Everett climbs on top of the ropes and walks across using the structure for balance but Tigre crawls over to kick him in the ribs for a big crash, allowing Tigre to retain at 9:42.

**Rating:** C+. It was fun and full of big spots but there's nothing we haven't seen before. Tigre winning is a good idea, but can we please get him a story? The only thing he's had since he won the title was the joke with Donald Trump which was at least mildly entertaining as we got to hear something about him. Unfortunately, he's never had anything in the ring to get people interested and it's hurting things.

Post match here's the debuting Gregory Helms to.....raise Tigre's arm. No attack or challenge or anything. One might think Helms vs. Uno could have been a good match for the title here but why have something interesting when you can have a gimmick instead?

The three people in the main event arrived earlier.

Here's Ethan Carter III to complain about the main event being turned into a triple threat by the hands of his great Aunt Dixie. He rips on his opponents with Drew standing up for wrestling and Matt for already losing two title shots. Ethan has Bound for Glory in his blood but he's beyond greatness. This was total and complete filler because they only booked seven matches on the biggest show of the year.

#### Bound For Gold Gauntlet Match

This is your standard gauntlet match, meaning a mini Royal Rumble but the final two will have a one on one match with the winner getting a future World Title shot. Mr. Anderson is in at #1 and his mic doesn't drop. The guy has one aspect to his whole character and TNA managed to screw that up. Jesse Godderz is in at #2. They shake hands to start and Anderson scores with some armdrags. A gorilla press sends him into the corner though so Anderson offers another handshake.

Jesse catches the boot to the ribs but Anderson is waiting with a thumb to the eye. Eli Drake (minus the He-Man chest gear) is in at #3 and the heels double team Anderson. Mr. finally comes back with a double clothesline and it's Al Snow (an unannounced name) in at #4. Al does all of his usual stuff including the trapping headbutts on Godderz. Jesse clotheslines Eli but gets dropkicked by Anderson.

Snow and Anderson clean house but don't eliminate anyone until Aiden O'Shea (formerly known as Jay Bradley) is in at #5. He's billed as a thug and looks like as a Sheamus knockoff. O'Shea hammers away and it's Robbie E. (with no entrance video) in at #6. No eliminations yet. Robbie and Al form an awkward alliance to clean house until Snow punches Robbie in the face. A shot from Head eliminates Drake and it's Mahabali Shera in at #7. Shera cleans house but stops to

dance. As in the whole match stops for a dance party.

O'Shea finally remembers that he's a brawler and starts fighting again, only to get clotheslined out to the floor. Tyrus is in at #8 and house is cleaned again. Everyone tries to slow the monster down and it's Chris Melendez in at #9. Melendez kicks a few people with the combat boot until Tyrus puts out Melendez and Snow with ease. Shera is out as well and it's Tommy Dreamer, in yellow polka dot pants, is in at #10. We currently have Dreamer, Tyrus, Robbie, Anderson and Jesse Godderz.

Dreamer gets in a low blow and cross body to put Tyrus down but Jesse dropkicks him in the face. Abyss is in at #11 and chokeslams Robbie. We get the showdown of the giants but since they haven't ripped off a WWE gag in a long time, Pope jumps off commentary to enter at #12. Pope looks at Abyss and Tyrus, turns around and eliminates himself. Well at least it was funny. Dreamer and Anderson load up superplexes but Abyss and Tyrus turn them into Towers of Doom in a nice spot. Totally scripted looking but nice.

Abyss and Tyrus do another big staredown and it's Tyrus getting the elimination, only to eat a double DDT from Dreamer and Robbie. Jesse and Robbie fight to the apron with Godderz grabbing a headscissors for the elimination. Anderson Mic Checks Dreamer and throws him out so it's Anderson vs. Godderz vs. Tyrus. Another Mic Check lets Anderson eliminate Jesse so it's Anderson vs. Tyrus in a regular match won by pin or submission.

Anderson picks Tyrus up for the Regal roll for two as Josh mentions that the winner of this can challenge for ANY title they want. That's a new rule for the match and Pope immediately asks why you would want to try for any other title. Anderson tries another slam but Tyrus grabs a quick slam and drops a splash for the pin at 24:30.

**Rating:** D. It wasn't horrible but it was clear that they were just filling in as much time as they could. On top of that, I'm supposed to get hyped up (potentially since TNA changes rules with thirty seconds to go in the match) for Brodus Clay vs. Derrick Bateman



playing Diesel vs. Shawn Michaels? That's the best they've got after all this time? I know Shera was stupid but at least he was a fresh name. Their solution is a 42 year old former dancing dinosaur? If that's the best they can do, they're in more trouble than anyone else is going to be able to save.

Post match Ethan comes out to say that he and Tyrus will be the next Tag Team Champions but Tyrus says he won this on his own. Therefore, he's coming for the World Heavyweight Championship of the World.

#### Tag Team Titles: Wolves vs. Brian Meyers/Trevor Lee

The Wolves are defending after taking the belts back from Meyers and Lee, who won with a Feast or Fired briefcase. Meyers and Lee attack to start but the Wolves take over on Brian with their smooth tandem offense. Brian gets Eddie into the corner and the challengers take over again with some hard stomps and a hair pull. Lee, billed as an internet sensation, pulls Eddie back to the corner and it's off to Brian for a chinlock.

Meyers starts grabbing the leg before it's back to Lee for a chinlock of his own. Eddie gets out with a Stunner but Brian breaks up a tag attempt. The chinlockery hour continues as the fans are trying to get into this. Eddie finally breaks free and dives over for the hot tag to Davey.

Everything breaks down and Eddie fights Meyers to the floor, leaving Davey to hit a handspring kick to the face. A t-bone suplex sends Lee outside and the Wolves hit stereo suicide dives in a nice spot. Back inside and Davey's top rope double stomp gets two on Trevor with Meyers making the save. Lee's German suplex gets a very close two on Eddie but it's a hurricanrana to put Lee down, leaving the Wolves to hit something like Chasing the Dragon for the pin on Trevor at 14:03.

**Rating:** B. That's probably the match of the night and I could live with that. The Wolves were never in any real jeopardy here but at least they got a good match here. Lee is definitely the class of the team as Meyers is just a guy in tights. The Wolves REALLY need competition at this point and it's getting repetitive to watch them

destroy everyone.

Drew Galloway says he's in a No DQ match tonight and he's willing to kill himself to be champion.

#### King of the Mountain Title: Bobby Roode vs. Bobby Lashley

Lashley, wearing a sweat band, is challenging after answering an open challenge on Wednesday. Feeling out process to start with Lashley countering Roode's wristlock into a headlock. Lashley's delayed vertical suplex gets two and he easily escapes the Roode Bomb. A German suplex puts Roode down and we hit the chinlock. They seem to have a lot of time to work with here.

Roode comes back with a Blockbuster for two before they trade spinebusters. A running elbow knocks Roode off the apron and he crashes shoulder first into the barricade. Back in and the shoulder acts up, allowing Lashley to score with a powerslam. The spear gets two and a quick Roode Bomb gets the same as we do the completely traditional trading of finishers.

Lashley powers out of the crossface and grabs a Kimura. That goes nowhere either so both guys hit the other's finisher for two each. They're just going through the main event tropes here and it's still not interesting after seeing it for years in WWE. Lashley pops back up and tries another Kimura, only to get countered into another Roode Bomb to retain Roode's title at 14:17.

**Rating:** C+. Good match but nowhere near as good as their stuff from the beginning of the year. To be fair though that's likely due to having no reason to fight each other besides "hey neither of us have a match." It felt like a WWE style main event match and that's fine in theory, but doing it for a midcard title that has more issues remembering what it's called than who is fighting for it holds them back a bit.

Matt Hardy talks about growing up here in North Carolina and says nothing would be sweeter than winning the title in Charlotte. He'll have to settle for the suburbs but Matt has always been a second rate version of a main event star.

Billy Corgan comes out to show us highlights from Earl Hebner being inducted into the TNA Hall of Fame and a package on Earl's career.

#### Knockouts Title: Awesome Kong vs. Gail Kim

Kim is defending and these two have had a long rivalry over the years. Gail gets shoved down to start so she tries a headlock and gets thrown down again. You would think she would learn after the first time but wrestling rarely works that way. Kong nails a big clothesline as JB mentions that no one has had cell phone service in this building all day. Gail's cross body gets two and the announcers start talking about her celebrity chef husband.

Kong hooks a camel clutch before switching over to a cross armbreaker. Gail rolls out and cranks on a front facelock. Back up and Gail tries something like a reverse Black Widow (as in Gail is upside down), only to have Kong Samoan drop her for two. This is technically fine but really not interesting stuff so far. Kong blocks Gail's hurricanrana attempt and a middle rope splash gets two.

They head outside with Kong grabbing a chair but Gail's husband Robert Irvine yells at her to break it up. As Hebner tells Irvine to sit down, Kong gives Gail a release Implant Buster onto the chair. The spinning back fist gets two back inside but Gail gets out of the middle rope Implant Buster with a kick to the head. More kicks set up Eat Defeat to retain Gail's title at 10:05.

**Rating:** C+. Well sure why not. Gail can now head over to the other stories in the division and bore us against all of them for a change. This was their usual good match but I have no idea why Kong didn't get the title back here as there's really nothing left to see Gail do in the division and Kong hasn't held the belt in years.

Jeff Hardy tells the creatures to mount up because nothing can save EC3.

#### Eric Young vs. Kurt Angle

This is a result of Young hurting Angle and Kurt coming back from injury to fight the crazy Eric. With no build, this is announced as

a No DQ match. Young says he has no issue with crippling Kurt and taking away his livelihood but Kurt says this has been made No DQ, which the announcers already said. They head to the floor almost immediately with Angle in control, only to take it back in for a big belly to belly for two.

Young comes back with a piledriver and Angle rolls to the floor holding his head and neck. The match basically stops as medics come out to look at Angle. Kurt starts walking to the back but Young breaks it up and attacks the medics. Young throws Kurt back inside and hits him in the head with a chair. They head outside again and Angle grabs a German suplex to block a piledriver on the exposed concrete.

Back in and Kurt's neck gives out again but he's still able to flip Young off and roll some Germans. The Angle Slam gets two but Young pops up and sends him hard into the post twice in a row. The top rope elbow gets no cover as Young goes up for a second elbow drop to the back. Eric gets really evil and loads up a super piledriver, only to have Angle backdrop him out and grab the ankle lock. For some reason he lets go of the grapevine though and Eric gets the rope, only to have him pull Young back in for the grapevine again, making Young tap at 13:09.

**Rating:** D+. Well so much for Eric's career and ALL HAIL KURT FREAKING ANGLE BECAUSE HE IS THE GREATEST THING EVER. This is TNA's biggest problem in a nutshell: they've built Young up as this killer and then they have Angle come in and beat him despite Angle leaving in three months. All hail the old guys and screw anyone who might get over by getting a big win over them because that's how TNA rolls: it's all about people in their 40s and making sure they look as amazing as they can for one last payday because TNA's future will take care of itself.

The announcers preview the main event a bit.

Video on the main event and of course the audio messes up. These jokes write themselves.

TNA World Title: Matt Hardy vs. Ethan Carter III vs. Drew Galloway

Carter is defending and Jeff Hardy, Carter's former employee, is guest referee. As usual, JB says Drew is standing when he's kneeling. Tyrus tries to cheat thirty seconds in and gets ejected. Matt and Drew take turns punching Ethan in the corner and a clothesline puts the champ on the floor. Drew goes after Matt with some forearms to the back and a big headbutt as Ethan comes back in. Carter knocks Matt out to the floor and stops to yell at Jeff for no apparent reason. A cravate slows Drew down but they trade cross bodies to drop both guys. Everyone gets back in but Matt and Ethan are quickly on the floor, allowing Drew to hit a big flip dive and take Hardy out. It's table time but Drew picks Ethan up and hits a White Noise onto the steps for a big thud. Matt makes the save and puts Drew on top of Ethan (there's no count for no apparent reason) for a double stack moonsault.

Ethan runs Jeff over by mistake and walks into the Side Effect but there's no one to count. Carter is up first and puts Drew on the table at ringside, only to suplex Matt from the apron through Galloway in a big crash. Back in and a TKO gets two on Matt but Drew comes back in and tries to pull Matt off the top. Hardy headbutts him into the Tree of Woe but Ethan comes of to make it a superplex, only to have Drew do a sit up to add a German superplex in an impressive spot.

Matt and Drew slug it out so Ethan gives them both the 1%er at the same time for two each. The fans aren't even reacting to these near falls and Jeff has barely been a factor so far. Ethan realizes that Jeff needs to get involved so he shoves the referee and demands a DQ. It's No DQ though so Ethan grabs a chair, only to have Jeff take it away. Ethan slaps him again so Jeff lays Carter out with a Twisting Stunner. Drew adds a running boot and Matt hits the Twist of Fate on Drew for the pin and the title at 20:01.

**Rating:** C-. THEY ACTUALLY DID IT! They took the stupidest possible outcome of the three and actually went with it because TNA really is that stupid. Matt Hardy lost his two title shots, didn't get the pin to get into this match, and then wins the title at 41 years old with

help from his more popular brother when you have Drew at 30 and Ethan at 32 right there. Instead though, OLD GUYS RULE!

As for the match itself, it's nothing we haven't seen before. This was your standard triple threat match with some decent action but it didn't do anything new. Galloway losing makes my head hurt but at least we had a watchable match instead of the disasters we had to sit through last year.

Ethan freaks out on Dixie in the back (because we NEEDED a Dixie cameo) and says she's dead to him.

Matt's wife and son get in, along with the Hardys' dad (who looks like he would rather be ANYWHERE else) to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D+. To recap, Tyrus is 42, Gail Kim and Bobby Roode are 38, Kurt Angle is 46 and Matt Hardy is 41. These people are the winners and therefore bigger stars of the company. That's your future people. A bunch of people who got famous in WWE (save for Roode) and are probably in the twilights of their careers. Now they're actually setting up what looks like Matt Hardy vs. Tyrus for a title shot. I mean.....yeah I think that speaks for itself actually.

Overall the show was just there. It had its moments and some good matches here and there, but that gauntlet just killed anything they could have gotten going. It was long, dull, and had a lame ending that not a lot of people wanted to see. The main event wasn't bad and the Tag Team Title match worked, but nothing on here felt like a big match. A good chunk of that is due to how little time they had to build, but instead TNA decided their best bet to stay on TV was to have their all-star team beat a bunch of rookies and castoffs.

Matt winning the title was a fun moment but it's really stupid when they're in the position they're in. TNA needs someone that fans can get behind and going off of a "HE FINALLY DID IT" moment isn't going to make that work. This was much more about however many people they could find to accept free tickets tonight and not looking forward to the future, which has always been one of TNA's biggest problems.

This show did nothing to make me think TNA has hope going forward and it was the same bunch of problems they've had for years now. Off

to India like nothing is wrong though, because that's the TNA mindset: shrug it off and pretend there are no problems while you get thrown off of yet another network because fewer and fewer people want to watch this nonsense.

Oh and in case you're wondering: there was no mystery third announcer. Not mentioned, not referenced, not that it matters.

### Results

Tigre Uno b. DJZ, Andrew Everett and Manik – Uno pulled down the title

Tyrus won a gauntlet match last eliminating Mr. Anderson

Wolves b. Brian Meyers/Trevor Lee – Brainbuster to Lee

Bobby Roode b. Bobby Lashley – Roode Bomb

Gail Kim b. Awesome Kong – Eat Defeat

Kurt Angle b. Eric Young – Ankle lock

Matt Hardy b. Drew Galloway and Ethan Carter III – Twist of Fate to Galloway

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# **Impact Wrestling – June 17,**

# 2015: Three For The Price Of One

## Impact Wrestling

Date: June 17, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, D'Angelo Dinero

We've got two weeks to go before Slammiversary and it's time to start building towards the main event of the TV show two weeks from tonight. Yeah the Carter vs. Angle World Title match is going to be held on Impact instead of at the pay per view due to some scheduling issues. That is of course TOTALLY different than TNA being a poorly run company who couldn't figure out that having a pay per view the day after a TV taping was really, really stupid. Let's get to it.

We open with a tribute to Dusty Rhodes, who used to be the authority figure here back in the early days.

It's time for Angle and Carter to sign the contract. In an interesting case, this is coming just after a contract signing closed Ring of Honor. Carter gets to talk first by talking about Angle beating Heartbreak Kids, Texas Rattlesnakes, Dead Men, Immortals, Electrifying Men, Rated R Superstars and some people you can't even see. He's also beaten submission machines, phenomenal ones, icons and charismatic enigmas (the first person mentioned actually still with this company. And shouldn't those all be singular since Angle only beat one each?) but the World Title reigns ends with Carter.

Angle praises Carter, but thinks he's a disrespectful punk. This time around, Kurt is healthy and ready because he's been here before. Once Carter loses, it's going to haunt him for the rest of his life. Both guys sign, but they also get to pick an opponent for each other. Angle gets to go first, and he picks Lashley to face Carter. Not a bad choice. Carter gets to pick next week on a live show.



The X-Division Title will be decided next week. Man just scrap Slammiversary and put on a Barney Miller marathon.

We recap the Tag Team Title series to this point, with the Wolves currently up 2-1.

Here are the Wolves with Davey talking about how they've fought around the world to be the best tag team in the world, and that's what those belts mean. They've beaten the BroMans, the Hardys and Team 3D already and now it's time for the Dirty Heels. Last time the Heels cheated to win, but the Wolves won't get fooled again. Good line but points off for a WOLVES NATION shirt. Stop just putting a word in front of nation and thinking it sounds good.

Edwards wants to do match four right now, so here's Roode sans Aries. Austin isn't here tonight because he's healing up after last week, so there's no match. Eddie thinks a singles match is in order and Roode doesn't think so, but he'll do it if the winner gets to pick the stipulation for next week. The Wolves are fine and it's time to go.

#### Bobby Roode vs. Eddie Edwards

Roode hammers away to start but Eddie kicks him outside for a big suicide dive. Back in and a clothesline gets two for Eddie but he runs into an elbow to the jaw. A Hennig necksnap puts Eddie down again as Roode is a heel this week. It's good to know as it varies so often. Roode's chinlock doesn't go anywhere as Edwards comes back with a leg lariat.

The announcers call last week's Aries vs. Angle match five stars. At least this time they're waiting until after the match happened to praise it. There's a backpack Stunner for two on Roode but he comes back with a spinebuster for the same. Roode tries to bring in a chair but Richards gets on the apron for some reason, earning him a swing from Bobby. The distraction lets Eddie get a rollup pin at 8:22.

**Rating:** C. This brings up the problem with the entire series: the matches are just ok. They're not bad or anything, but I barely

remember them a few minutes after they happened because they're just coming and going as we wait for the big match to come for the titles to exist again. The ending made no sense either as the Wolves wound up cheating instead of the Dirty Heel. This story hasn't been great since it started and it's losing steam every week.

Davey makes match #4 Full Metal Mayhem. So what's #5 going to be? Another regular match?

Joseph Park is back, minus his law firm, money or teeth. He'll face Bram tonight and get to be the guy on top for the first time. So we're just forgetting that he knows he's Abyss I guess? Does that mean we're done with the Revolution too?

We get a ten second video of Drew Galloway talking about how much he loves wrestling.

#### Bram vs. Joseph Park

Park tries to lecture Bram before the match and gets punched in the face. Bram slugs away but misses a chair shot, allowing Park to get in some shots of his own. Now it's table and kendo stick time as I guess this is a hardcore match. It was never announced as one but sure why not. Park comes back with some kendo stick shots and a chokeslam for two. Back up and Park misses a spear through the table, allowing Bram to get the pin at 3:53.

**Rating:** F. A guy as talented as Bram is stuck in the hardcore story because there's nothing else for him to do right now because they've killed off the singles titles other than the World Title and now we're sitting here watching him against Joseph Park. Bad match here and Bram doesn't even get to hit his finisher to win? Horrible stuff.

Taryn has a deal for Brooke and Awesome Kong: if they beat the Dolls tonight, they both get a title shot. If they lose, neither can ever have a shot again.

The world is ready to burn and playtime is over. No idea what that is for.

#### Marti Bell/Jade vs. Brooke/Awesome Kong

Brooke gets jumped in the aisle but here's Kong for the save. The bell rings and Kong runs Jade over before it's off to Brooke, who doesn't have the same luck. Brooke fights off some double teaming but gets thrown right back into the corner as the announcers debate their taste in women. Brooke avoids a charge and spears Jade down, allowing for the tag to Kong. A chokeslam plants Marti and Brooke climbs onto her shoulders for a big elbow and the pin at 6:24.

**Rating:** D. This wasn't the worst in the world but good grief Josh is getting on my nerves. Between talking about the number of days the champions have held their titles and calling Dinero the heel commentator, he becomes more of a combination of Cole and Striker every week. Nothing match here as the finish was obvious, though the story wasn't bad.

We recap the hardcore war which ended with Eric Young choking out Chris Melendez with Chris' prosthetic leg.

Chris Melendez wants to fight Eric Young right now. This brings Young out to praise Melendez for being an American hero, but Young just doesn't care. He cares about no one but himself because there's no reason for Melendez to be in the same ring as Eric Young. Does Chris really want to be here all alone next week? Chris says he's ready. Young was just a jerk here and not crazy, making him FAR more effective as a heel. Melendez is nothing though.

#### DJZ vs. Jesse Godderz

Godderz laid DJZ out last week so DJZ charges right at him to start and nails a jawbreaker and middle rope back elbow (love that move). Back up and Jesse slams him down by the arm, setting up a Boston crab for the submission at 1:43.

Post match Godderz cuts a really, REALLY good promo about how he was the BroMans because he was the only one training while Robbie was on a reality TV show and DJZ was in some bar making funny noises. He rants about how Robbie was nothing until he joined the team and now DJZ is nothing either. Jesse gorilla presses him up but Robbie makes his big return and shows more fire than ever before. I'm actually digging this.

We look back at James Storm possibly murdering Mickie James a few weeks back.

Here's a livid Magnus, two weeks after Mickie was attacked. He isn't letting this show continue until he gets James Storm out here one on one. Here's Storm to call Magnus the crazy jealous one for having Mickie followed by cameras. "What do you think was happening when those cameras weren't there?" Magnus is held back by security but Storm brings out a baby stroller, presumably carrying Mickie and Magnus' son.

James calls it his insurance policy but walks down the aisle without it. He says Mickie is a sorry excuse for a woman and Magnus is a sorry excuse for a man, which is finally enough to get Magnus past security. Storm kicks the baby stroller off the stage and of course it's just a doll.

Video on Ethan Carter III.

#### Ethan Carter III vs. Bobby Lashley

Lashley throws him down to start and nails a hard clothesline before just running Carter over. Tyrus finally grabs Lashley's boot to stop his boss' pain but Lashley easily suplexes Carter over. Another Tyrus distraction lets Carter get in a dropkick off the apron to take over. The match isn't bad so far but I can't take much more of Josh talking about the number of days Carter has been undefeated. Carter slows him down with a chinlock for a bit before having to escape a torture rack.

Lashley scores with a powerslam for two but Tyrus puts a chair in the corner. The spear hits the chair (Earl Hebner has zero issue with this) and Carter gets two off a DDT. The 1%er is countered and the referee goes down (like it matters), right before the spear connects. Cue another referee but Tyrus takes him out and gives Lashley a Big Ending, setting up the third referee to count two, earning him a shot from Tyrus. Lashley spears Tyrus but gets speared down, only to get nailed in the back with a chair, setting up the 1%er to give Carter the pin at 9:26.

**Rating:** D+. This was straight out of the Russo playbook with two chairs, three ref bumps and interference in less than ten minutes. Angle was nowhere in sight to help even the odds because the script didn't say he was supposed to and the whole thing was just way too much. It didn't help that Josh was driving me up the wall with his counting the days of Carter being undefeated. We get it: you're Michael Cole and Carter is Miz. Pick a better role model.

**Overall Rating:** D+. This show is on the verge of flying off the rails and you can see a lot of it coming from here. The problem right now is they're building to three different shows instead of any one in particular. You have next week's live show with Full Metal Mayhem and the X-Division Title match, Slammiversary (which I don't think has anything official yet) and then the bell to bell show in two weeks with the World Title match. It doesn't help that a lot of the midcard just feels like a big waste of time when they could be doing anything else. The show wasn't horrible but they need to focus on something quick.

### Results

Eddie Edwards b. Bobby Roode – Rollup

Bram b. Joseph Park – Pin after a missed spear through a table

Brooke/Awesome Kong b. Jade/Marti Bell – Elbow drop to Bell

Jesse Godderz b. DJZ – Boston crab

Ethan Carter III b. Bobby Lashley – 1%er

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# Slammiversary 2014: Now With Even Less Context!

Since it's Memorial Day weekend, Destination America decided not to air a new episode of Impact (EVERYTHING IS FINE!!!). Instead, they're airing a completely out of context pay per view from last year. That's actually not a horrible idea, but somehow this is the only presentable pay per view they've had in the last year. That's sad.

## Slammiversary 2014

Date: June 15, 2014

Location: College Park Center, Arlington, Texas

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tazz

Time for another TNA pay per view which at least has been good in the last few years. The show has had some decent build, but due to a combination of injuries and TNA's horrific marketing skills, the World Title match has been changed and there was no mention of the X Division Title match on television. The show does look good on paper though and we get the newest Hall of Fame announcement. Let's get to it.

We open with the trio in the back with MVP saying he's here to make sure Dixie doesn't screw things up tonight. MVP can't be out there with them though because of his knee.

Video on the history of TNA up to this point.

X-Division Title: Sanada vs. Tigre Uno vs. Davey Richards vs. Eddie Edwards vs. Crazy Steve vs. Manik

Sanada is defending and this is a ladder match. Also keep in mind that Destination X and Option C are coming up soon.

Manik dives through the ropes to take out Sanada before the bell. The Wolves follow suit with stereo suicide dives and Steve has apparently knocked Tigre Uno down. Steve gets a ladder from under the ring and uses it to climb back to the apron. Tigre dropkicks him down and mostly misses a corkscrew dive to take everyone out.

Sanada and Manik fight over a ladder in the ring with the champion taking over via a springboard chop to the head. Tigre replaces Manik and kicks Sanada in the back of the head but the Wolves double team him into a German suplex onto the ladder in the corner. Edwards throws in a fresh ladder but Manik dropkicks both of them down. Steve (very popular tonight) comes in for the Terry Funk spinning ladder spot, taking down everyone that comes into the ring.

Manik makes a save but Steve shoves the ladder over, only to have Manik land on the top rope and dive out to knock out the Wolves. Steve goes up again and touches the belt but of course loses his hand eye coordination since this is a ladder match, allowing Sanada to make the save. The ladder is busted so Sanada slams Steve onto it to set up the moonsault. The fans think this is awesome as Tigre enziguris Sanada off a better ladder.

Tigre wedges the broken ladder into the standing one to form a bridge, but the Wolves catch him in a powerbomb/top rope Backstabber combo. The Wolves both go after the belt but Sanada makes the save. Edwards Sanada clothesline each other to the floor and Eddie crashes into the barricade, leaving Davey on top. Manik makes the save and powerbombs Davey onto the bridged ladder in a SCARY landing. Sanada climbs up to retain at 9:40 before someone dies.

**Rating:** B-. The match was fun but some of those spots looked too dangerous for my taste. Richards getting powerbombed was way too scary looking and I didn't like how he landed. Hopefully everyone is fine, but I question

having people go through a match like this without even giving the match hype on TV.

The announcers explain the World Title situation. For once this is totally beyond their control.

Here's the trio with MVP on crutches to insult Texas A&M and the fans for booing him. They shouldn't be so angry at him while he's here against doctor's orders. Dixie has gone to the Board of Directors in an estrogen filled moment of insanity, resulting in him being censored. MVP explains the World Title situation to the live crowd and says he won't be involved in either qualifying match. King and Lashley promise to win their matches, unlike Texas A&M.

#### Samoa Joe vs. Bobby Lashley

Winner goes to the title match tonight. Lashley quickly takes Joe into the corner but gets enziguried in the other corner to give Joe control. Bobby leapfrogs over the Samoan and clotheslines him down, only to have Joe pound him down with strikes. The Facewash is loaded up but Bobby rolls to the floor to get a breather. You don't go outside on Joe though and it's the suicide elbow to take Lashley out again.

Joe gets cocky for a split second and Lashley is able to send him into the steps. Back in and Lashley fights out of the corner Rock Bottom with a swinging neckbreaker for two. A snap suplex sets up a nerve hold on Joe and an elbow to the face stops his comeback cold. Another nerve hold is broken up by a kick to the head and the backsplash gets two. Now the release Rock Bottom looks to set up the Clutch but Lashley drives him into the corner. Joe has to stop himself from running into Earl Hebner, allowing Bobby to nail the spear for the pin at 8:50.

**Rating:** C+. This wasn't bad with Lashley getting one of his biggest wins since coming back. Putting Joe in the title match didn't make a ton of sense after Lashley beat Eric on



Thursday so this was the best option all things considered. I'm still not wild on Lashley's in ring work, especially the spear due to so many people using it, but he could be worse.

The Carters have a party suite above the arena. Dixie thinks Ray will see Ethan's vicious side tonight. Dixie won't comment on the meetings she had this week until she's in the middle of the ring. The only hint she'll give is that the karma that got to MVP is nothing compared to what's coming. Spud looks like the Joker.

### Magnus vs. Willow

Bram and Abyss are the seconds here. Magnus stomps away in the corner to start and avoids a baseball slide to send Willow into the steps. Back in and a big clothesline gets the same for the Brit. There's a buckle bomb for good measure and Magnus hammers away on the mask. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Willow fights back with an atomic drop and the legdrop between the legs for two.

The Twist is countered but Magnus runs into two boots in the corner. A middle rope splash gets two for Willow before Magnus avoids the Swanton. Bram tries to interfere but Abyss is right there to hammer away. All four guys start brawling on the floor until Willow goes up top and just jumps backwards onto the Brits.

Now Abyss and Bram fight in the ring with the Monster easily throwing him to the floor. The guys in the match get back in as Bram gets his metal bar, only to be one upped by Janice. They walk up the ramp as Magnus breaks up the Whisper in the Wind, setting up a belly to back suplex into a side slam for the pin on Willow at 10:00.

**Rating:** C-. This was a mess for the most part but not bad. They would have been better off making this a tag match to get everyone in there, but that seems to be where they're headed anyway. The Willow gimmick isn't doing anything for

me either as the announcement that it's Jeff Hardy just killed the whole point of the character.

Here's Kurt Angle to announce the newest Hall of Fame inductee. Angle talks about how being in the Hall of Fame means you've earned respect forever from the boys in the back and the fans. The inductee is.....Team 3D in a bit of a surprise. A loud and long WE WANT TABLES chant goes up and we go to a wide shot of the arena for some reason.

Bully can barely get a full sentence out as the fans are chanting WELCOME BACK. They accept the induction because of every single one of the fans. D-Von says he wasn't going to come back to TNA but if he's going out, he has to be by Bully's side after all their history together. Catchphrases and poses close out the segment.

Ethan Carter cuts a good promo about how he's beaten all the members of the TNA Hall of Fame so tonight he gets to beat the latest. This isn't Von Erich Country anymore because the Carters have taken over.

### Austin Aries vs. Kenny King

Winner goes to the cage match tonight. Aries hits the corner dropkick less than thirty seconds in but King escapes the brainbuster and gets to the floor. The top rope ax handle puts King down again but King crotches him on top to get a breather. A dropkick puts Austin on the floor and King sends him hard into the barricade for good measure.

They head inside again with King hammering away before putting on something like a seated abdominal stretch. Aries fights up and smacks King's ears to put him on the floor, setting up a suicide dive. King is thrown back inside so Aries can ram him over and over into the buckles, setting up a missile dropkick for two.

King comes back with a cradle suplex and a high kick but gets caught with his feet on the ropes. The Last Chancery

can't get the submission so King comes back with a springboard Blockbuster for a close two. Aries gets tired of dealing with King and takes him into the corner for a super brainbuster to send Austin to the cage at 10:04.

**Rating:** C+. This is the logical choice as King hasn't really shown that he can beat a guy of Aries' level in a one on one match. The ending sequence was really cool and it gives us a more intriguing main event than Eric vs. two members of the trip. Aries is a guy that could be brought up the ranks in TNA to fill in their lack of top faces.

JB introduces some Dallas Cowboys to a VERY mixed reaction. After that mention is over, JB brings out the latest Von Erichs: Ross and Marshall, accompanied by an ancient looking Kevin. The Bro Mans interrupt and say that a lot of things in Texas aren't tight, including being a Von Erich. Robbie isn't here for reasons not specified.

#### Bro Mans vs. Ross Von Erich/Marshall Von Erich

Marshall wrestles barefoot like Kevin did. This is DJZ and Jesse for the team tonight. Marshall cleans house on DJZ to start but can't hook the Claw. A powerslam puts DJZ back down and it's off to the older Ross for some dropkicks. Jesse breaks up something off the top rope and DJZ hits a nice flip dive to take Ross down on the ramp.

Back in and Jesse nails a dropkick but Ross avoids a second one and makes the hot tag to Marshall. Everything breaks down and Ross hits a missile dropkick to put both guys down. Jesse brings in a chair but gets it dropkicked into his face, setting up a series of basic double team moves from the brothers. Not that it matters as DJZ brings in the chair for the DQ at 5:07.

**Rating:** D+. Well that was a waste of pay per view time. The Von Erichs looked ok at best but it's clear that they need ring time more than anything else. They didn't know how to finish a match yet and it looked like they needed to get

through a bunch of spots instead of bringing the match to a close. Not terrible, but the ending really didn't work for me.

Post match Kevin comes in to put the Claw on Jesse, drawing the only big pop from the crowd.

Angelina says she'll keep the title tonight. JB asks how many time Angelina has won the title without Velvet's help but Angelina says they're a team.

#### Knockouts Title: Gail Kim vs. Angelina Love

Angelina is defending and Gail won a triple threat on Thursday to set this up. Gail hits a quick running forearm to start but her top rope huricanrana is countered with a powerbomb. A side slam gets two on Kim and Angelina throws her out to the floor. Velvet interference doesn't help as Kim sends Love knees first into the steps. Back in and Gail gets crotched on the top, setting up an ugly looking reverse bulldog for two.

Sky uses the hairspray but referee Stiffler ignores it. The Botox Injection gets two and here's Earl Hebner to eject Sky and make himself referee. Gail speeds things up and gets two off a neckbreaker but gets powerbombed for two more. Kim accidentally dropkicks Earl in the back but nails Eat Defeat. Stiffler ignores the cover to check on Earl and does the same again when Love gets rolled up. Angelina reverses into a rollup of her own and Stiffler counts the pin to retain the title at 6:57.

**Rating:** D+. Egads this story is getting old. Didn't we have Stiffler in love with the Beautiful People like five years ago? Nothing to see here for the most part as Gail vs. Angelina has been done on PPV so many times that they ran out of stuff to do years ago. The match was ridiculously overbooked. Also don't we already have a questionable referee in Brian Hebner?

D-Von has to go back to the hotel for dinner with his kids. Bully cuts a promo on Texas wrestling legends and thinks Ethan is in way over his head. His advice to Ethan: start praying. Ethan gets crucified for the sins of his Aunt Dixie and he'll be baptized in blood.

### Bully Ray vs. Ethan Carter III

Texas Death Match, meaning last man standing. Ray brings out a bullrope ala Stan Hansen for a nice tribute. Carter is thrown to the floor by the rope to start and Ray brings out a pair of tables. They're stacked next to each other on the floor but Carter recovers from the coma he was in to get in a few shots and take over. Ray fights right back and sets up another table in the corner but the fans want cowbell.

Carter avoids the table but gets his chest ripped off by more chops. Time for the cheese grater to rip up Ethan's chest (barely), which isn't something you often see. Carter gets in a few shots to take over and sends Ray face first into a chair on the mat. He goes up top but gets crotched and superplexed onto the chair to put both guys down. Ray grabs a Dallas Cowboys trashcan from under the ring before starting to cut up the mats to expose the wood under the canvas.

Joker Spud comes out with a kendo stick shot to Ray's back for no effect. Ray kicks him low and knocks Spud silly with the stick but Carter hits a quick One Percenter onto the exposed boards for our first count over twelve minutes into the match. Ray is up at eight so Carter pours out the glass in the trashcan. Carter goes up but dives into a Bubba Cutter, sending the injured chest into the glass for a cool spot. He's up at eight though so Ray takes the stick outside to knock Ethan silly again.

Ray puts him on the tables and goes up but here's Dixie for a distraction. Bully goes after her and sends Ethan into

Dixie to knock her out cold. Ethan gets punched down and Ray puts Dixie on the table. He takes too long though, allowing Spud to pull her off and Ethan knocks Ray through the tables with a kendo stick shot for the win at 17:05.

**Rating:** C. It was a nice brawl with some nice spots but NO ONE CARES ABOUT DIXIE. After all this, if she doesn't go through a table in New York, this whole story has been a huge waste of time. Also, never accept an induction to the Hall of Fame unless you want to lose on a last second fluke the same night. At least D-Von didn't join forces with Dixie.

We recap Anderson vs. Storm. This started in a qualifying match for a World Title shot before Anderson cheated to win a drinking contest and made fun of cowboys. Why TNA thinks he's going to be cheered in Texas doing this is beyond me.

#### Mr. Anderson vs. James Storm

Storm grabs a mic even though it's 10:22 and we've got another match after this. He rips on the Cowboys because he's a Titans fan but the booing breaks up his catchphrase. The brawl is on before the bell with Anderson high fiving the Cowboys and spitting beer in Storm's face. They get in the ring for the opening bell and James goes right for the knee. A few shots have Anderson so banged up that he can't run across the ring and a Figure Four has him in even more trouble.

Anderson is quickly in the ropes and Storm misses a charge in the corner to give Mr. a breather. Storm gets crotched on the top and slammed down for two, only to send Anderson face first into the middle buckle. Now it's Anderson going up but getting kicked in the back of the head. He's still able to pick Storm up for the rolling fireman's carry off the middle rope but Storm kicks him out to the floor. Storm spits beer at the Cowboys so they jump the railing for a distraction, allowing Anderson to hit the Mic Check for the

pin at 5:25.

**Rating:** C-. The match was short due to time but it was still entertaining enough. Anderson vs. Storm didn't need the Cowboys for this to work but since it's a midcard match in TNA, I'm sure we'll get 19 rematches to keep things going way after its expiration date. The Cowboys might get them some extra media attention if nothing else.

Austin Aries tells Eric Young that the greatest man should win the match tonight. Eric says they've flown in crazy people to the show tonight.

We recap the main event, which is just an Eric Young video due to the last minute changes.

TNA World Title: Austin Aries vs. Bobby Lashley vs. Eric Young

In a cage with Young defending with wins by pin or submissino, not escape. Lashley takes over to start but gets double teamed down. The smaller guys do a fast paced sequence until Lashley throws Aries into the cage. Young gets the same as well, allowing Lashley to stand tall. Bobby throws both guys around again but misses a charge into the post. Young and Aries go at it again until Eric hammers on Bobby in the corner.

Aries powerbombs the champion down but stops to go after Lashley again, only to be suplexed into the cage for two. We get a bad looking botch as Aries hits a running cross body in the corner but Young just lets him bounce off of him for some reason. Young gets to show off his freakish strength with a double Death Valley Driver but Lashley is up at two. He puts Young on top of the cage as the fans chant please don't die. Aries goes up top as well to take Lashley down with a hurricanrana, but Eric stands up on top of the cage for the huge elbow to Bobby.

Aries punts Eric in the head though and hits the

brainbuster for a very close two. Lashley spears Austin down for two and spinebusters the champion, only to miss the spear and fall out of the cage. Remember that doesn't end the match though as escape doesn't count. Young hits the top rope elbow on Aries for another close near fall. The piledriver is countered with a low dropkick to Young's face and everyone is down. Young and Aries slug it out but both guys miss forearms. Aries hits some discus forearms and the corner dropkick but walks into the piledriver to retain Eric's title at 12:10.

**Rating:** B-. This got better near the end but Eric keeping the title made me roll my eyes. The reign has been far better than I expected it to be but he needs to be the focal point of the company instead of the other guy in the major feuds. To be fair though, I'd assume MVP was supposed to take the title tonight before the injuries.

Young helps Aries up after the match.

**Overall Rating:** B-. As usual, TNA puts on a good show for Slammiversary. I really wish they could get their stuff together on TV because if this was what they were putting out there every week, things would be so much easier to sit through. Instead we're usually stuck with one story dominating a show or 19 Dixie Carter segments with her bad acting talking about whatever war she's having that no one cares about. Good show but not as good as the last few years'. Nothing blew the doors off but most of the matches were solid and nothing was bad so I can't complain much.

### Results

Sanada b. Crazy Steve, Manik, Eddie Edwards, Davey Richards and Tigre Uno – Sanada pulled down the title belt

Bobby Lashley b. Samoa Joe – Spear

Magnus b. Willow – Belly to back suplex into a side slam

Ross Von Erich/Marshall Von Erich b. Bro Mans via DQ when DJZ used a chair



Angelina Love b. Gail Kim – Rollup

Ethan Carter III b. Bully Ray when Ray couldn't answer the ten count

Eric Young b. Austin Aries and Bobby Lashley – Piledriver to Aries

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# **TNA One Night Only – Hardcore Justice 4: That Stupid Crowd**

## **Hardcore Justice 4**

Date: April 10, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Attendance: 1,100

Commentators: Josh Matthews, Jeremy Borash

This is one of the shows that has been the definition of hit and

miss. When you just let people do hardcore violence, it can make for some entertaining matches. However, when you stop caring and just let them be goofy, it turns into a huge mess that makes no sense and is more embarrassing than anything else. Let's get to it.

The opening video is just a quick package of clips of what's coming later. This is extreme you might say.

### Wolves vs. Manik/Geat Sanada

Ladder match. It's a huge brawl to start of course with the Wolves being beaten out to the floor, sending the Revolution off to get the ladders early on. Davey gets back in to kick the ladder into the Revolution's faces but their double suicide dive is countered with a ladder smash. Back up and the Wolves do their toss into a kick to the chest spot followed by a German suplex to send Sanada into the ladder.

Manik throws Edwards into the air to have him crash down onto the boots before finally setting up a ladder. Everyone but Manik goes to the floor so Davey dives back in for the save. Davey can't go up quickly because of his back so Manik pulls out an orange ladder for a change of pace (Matthews: "TAZ IS BEHIND THE LADDERS!") but it winds up bridged in between the ropes and the standing ladder. Manik and Davey fight on the ladder until Eddie pulls Manik down.

That goes badly for Eddie as Manik springboards back up to the ladder before hitting a wicked sunset powerbomb to drive Davey into the ladder. Naturally the TNA fans barely react to a huge spot. A delayed THIS IS AWESOME chant starts up and stops in the span of ten seconds. Sanada hits a standing moonsault on Eddie before they both head up, only to have Sanada bust out the mist.

Davey shoves the ladder over though and actually does something smart by using his wrist tape to clean his partner's eyes. The Revolution gets their heads caught in the ladder so Eddie can hit a top rope double stomp for another spot that deserves a better reaction. The Wolves go up and get the contract, which apparently is for a future Tag Team Title shot.

**Rating:** B-. It's a tag team ladder match with four guys who know how to work this style. Unfortunately they're in front of a bored crowd who doesn't seem interested in cheering and only had about ten minutes to work with here. Good match here and for some reason I have a feeling this show just hit its peak.

Drew Galloway is fired up for his pipe on a pole match against Kenny King. There's no mention of the Rising here because they didn't exist when this was filmed. I like that better though as Drew has more than enough charisma to carry a match.

### Drew Galloway vs. Kenny King

Pipe on a Pole. The fans are fired up for Drew so both guys immediately go for the pipe. Why not let someone get it and nail them on the way down to grab it instead of making the save? Drew gets two off a suplex, making the pipe worthless/optional. King speeds things up and collides with Drew to knock both guys outside in a big crash. It's Galloway taking over with the fans holding King so Drew can throw chops. One of the fans hands Drew a rubber chicken to beat on King, because a STEEL PIPE is too lame.

King no sells the rubber chicken (just go with it and it'll end faster) and jumps to the apron and spins around for a cannonball to drop Drew. They finally remember the whole pipe thing and go after it with Drew hammering King down and nailing a middle rope Russian legsweep. A German suplex drops Kenny again and a middle rope elbow gets two. King gets back up and hits a spin kick to bring Drew down from the corner and a Michinoku Driver gets another near fall. Drew still can't get the pipe as King knocks him into the Tree of Woe. King FINALLY gets the pipe but walks into a running boot to the face for the pin.

**Rating:** F. For a match it was fine but the pipe could have been anything from a fight in the crowd to a good looking woman to A RUBBER CHICKEN BEING SOLD IN A WRESTLING MATCH. It was a distraction instead of anything important and that's one of the most annoying things in all of wrestling, making gimmick matches a huge waste of time. The rubber chicken brings this down even further.

Rockstar Spud gives a great promo about the scar Ethan Carter put on his forehead. Tonight isn't about pinning Carter and that's the way Spud wants it, because tonight is about making Carter bleed.

### Gunner vs. Eric Young

Tables match which is the result of Young issuing an open challenge. JB: "You can see the crazy in his eyes." No, you can't Borash. Gunner punches him to the floor to start and rams Eric into the apron. Young sends him into the barricade and apron like a CRAZY man but Gunner chops him down and hits a headbutt off the steps. Fans:

“USE THE CHICKEN!”

Instead they get a table but Eric fights out of a suplex and actually takes it back inside for more brawling. Gunner suplexes him right back to the floor and IT'S CHICKEN TIME! JB: “He’s choking him with the chicken!” We get another table set up at ringside but Eric blocks the German from the apron. Blast it why can’t we see him knocked senseless? Gunner sets up table #3 but actually puts this one inside for a change.

Eric gets in a shot to put Gunner down though and loads up a whip into the corner. Fans: “YOU STILL SUCK!” I like these people! Gunner is sent throat first into the ropes but is still able to break up the top rope elbow. A superplex plants Eric and Gunner hits something like a middle rope palm strike. They head to the apron, right above a table, but Gunner can’t hit a piledriver. Instead it’s a low blow from Young and a piledriver puts Gunner through the table for the win.

**Rating:** D+. This was still nothing good but it was MILES better than the pipe match. Young still sucks (just listening to the fans you see) and Gunner continues to be a guy just floating around on the roster. This wasn’t much of a tables match, but you get what you pay for on a show like this. Cool finisher though.

Package on Havok destroying Gail Kim over and over, eventually taking the title from her.

#### Gail Kim vs. Havok

Street fight. Gail rolls away from the monster to start and hits a running dropkick in the corner. Havok comes back with a shot of her own before having to block a kendo stick shot. It’s Havok getting in the first shot to Gail’s ribs before tying her in the Tree of Woe for even more ribs shots. Off to a standard choke instead before Havok lifts her up with a full nelson. Gail has to dropkick a trashcan back into Havok’s face and dives off the apron to take her down again.

Back in and Havok throws her into a chair in the corner, followed by a running knee to the face. Gail is fast enough to send her face first into the chair as well before hammering away in the corner. A spinning high cross body gets two for Kim but since it’s just a cross body, Havok kicks the chair into her face for two and loads up the chokeslam. Gail counters into a DDT on the chair for a big

smash, but that's too good of a finish so here's Eat Defeat for the pin instead.

**Rating:** C. Better than I was expecting here with the right ending, even though Havok has just disappeared from the face of the earth since Kong returned. I still find Gail overrated, but she's still more than good enough to carry a match like this. Good stuff here and one of the better matches of the night.

The Wolves may be banged up and half blind, but they're going to Sizzler!

### Abyss vs. Matt Hardy

Monster's Ball of course, but the interesting thing is Christy introducing Abyss as the Swamp Suplex Machine, which has to be a rib of some sort. Matt gets one of the loudest chants of the night but Abyss easily shoves him around to start. They head outside with the fans wanting the chicken but having to settle for right hands from Hardy. It's time for a barbed wire table with Abyss getting the better of it and bridging the table between the ring and the barricade.

A chokeslam is blocked so Matt throws in a trashcan full of weapons and whips out a cheese grater. After Abyss gets done wedging a chair in the corner, he turns around to feel a stepladder to the ribs. The fans actually chant for Abyss as he takes Matt over with a suplex, only to have Matt crotch him with the ladder. Hardy follows it up by using the chair as a golf club to drive the ladder even further in.

Abyss pops up with something made of metal to knock Hardy off the top, driving her into the barbed wire table for the match's big spot. We get the required thumb tacks but Matt uses the cheese grater to the crotch for the save. You don't do that even to a monster so he throws Matt into the chair in the corner.

The tacks are spread out but Matt drives him face first with the Twist of Fate, only to have his own back covered in tacks as well. The busted barbed wire table is brought back in as Matt basically no sells the tacks, only to eat an elbow to the jaw. It's Janice time but of course it misses, allowing Matt to spear him through the barbed wire table. A Twist of Fate onto the chair gives Matt the pin.

**Rating:** C-. STOP HAVING THIS MATCH! They do the exact same spots

with the exact same weapons, usually with the same ending and one of the same people in the match every single time. Just stop doing this match over and over again so many times, as it stopped being interesting a long time ago. Let it build up instead of just doing the same thing over and over and stop adding it in like a side salad. Let it be the main course for a change with a fresh recipe. Did I mention I haven't had dinner yet?

James Storm says he'll win the hardcore battle royal because he has the Revolution behind him.

### Gauntlet Match

What would a One Nigh Only be without one of these? Two minute intervals and everyone has weapons. Robbie E. is in at #1 with a selfie stick and Crazy Steve brings a bag of something. Robbie bails to the floor to start and attacks a distracted Steve from behind. Steve comes back and empties the bag to reveal....Gummy Bears. Oh geez here we go. Robbie eats one and gets sick, setting up a chokeslam onto the Bears.

Jesse Godderz is in at #3 (OH THE SHOCK!) with a baseball bat (Matthews: "Perhaps left over from an icon?") to try and make this serious. Steve avoids being eliminated as JB worries about the sugary goodness of the Gummy Bears. Chris Melendez is in at #4 with a nightstick, which is somehow a very welcome sight. That says a lot as Melendez is a very dull guy, but he's better than the Gummy Bears and selfie stick.

The BroMans take over and it's Samuel Shaw in at #5 with a wire. Nothing happens for now so it's Khoya with a Revolution flag in at #6 as we're still waiting on our first elimination. Khoya cleans house, including with a double clothesline to put the BroMans down. It's rubber chicken time again (ERG!) with Steve getting in a few shots on most of the people until Crimson of all people is in at #7 (to almost no reaction from the announcers) with a trashcan lid.

Crimson and Khoya stare each other down but Shaw chokes Crimson down with the wire. Steve hits Robbie low with the chicken as there are WAY too many people in the ring at the moment. Robbie throws the chicken out but Tyrus is in at #8 with a chain, hopefully to eliminate some people. Robbie and Melendez are quickly tossed and Tyrus hammers away on Jesse in the corner.

Knux is in at #9 with a cane but it's a cross body to put Tyrus

down. Jesse is tossed and the freaking chicken is brought back in. Good grief let the stupid idea die already. James Storm and his noose with cowbell are in at #10 to hopefully make this a bit more serious. Storm is content to sit in a chair at ringside as Shaw chokes Crimson, only to have both guys fall out to the floor for a double elimination. DJZ is in at #11 with his bottle of hairspray because...yeah. Matthews loses his mind when he sees Storm's rope wrapped around the chicken.

Tyrus hammers away in the corner and Mr. Anderson is in at #12, giving us a final group of Steve, Khoya, Tyrus, Knux, Storm, DJZ and Anderson. Mr. actually takes the mic off the cord to bring in as his weapon. That's actually clever, unlike EVERYTHING ELSE IN THIS MATCH. Anderson pounds on Tyrus in the corner and hammers away on everyone with the mic but gets taken down by Steve of all people.

Steve sprays hairspray in DJZ's eyes for an elimination but gets tossed by Khoya. Knux follows him out and we're down to four. Khoya misses a charge and is tossed out, leaving us with Tyrus, Anderson and Storm. The Last Call hits Tyrus by mistake and Anderson throws him over the top. Tyrus actually tries to skin the cat but it goes as well as you would expect. Storm throws a distracted Anderson out a few seconds later for the win.

**Rating:** F. I'd like to remind you that 95% of this match took place with the ring covered in Gummy Bears. Combine that with the chicken gag that WILL NOT JUST FREAKING STOP and I think you get why this was a nightmare to sit through. On top of that, it was a poorly run gauntlet with way too many people in the ring at the same time for the majority of the match.

Anderson Mic Checks Storm post match and eats some Gummy Bears. And puts some of them down Storm's tights. I hate this show. Like, a lot.

Ethan Carter III brags about everything he's put Spud through and says tonight is going to be the same all over again.

Long package on the history of Spud vs. Carter. That's still a great story.

#### Ethan Carter III vs. Rockstar Spud

First blood and now with 100% fewer Gummy Bears. Carter talks about how no one makes him bleed before the match, but gets cut off by a

CHICKEN'S BETTER chant. Spud comes out and has to hear another recap of the feud. Carter offers him a chance to leave but Spud turns to face him and nails Carter in the head with the mic to get things going. They head outside with Spud going after the face but stopping for his chicken pilgrimage.

Thankfully he throws it away and sends Carter into the post instead. Back inside with Carter taking over by sending Spud into the buckle a few times and dropping an elbow to the face. The freaking chicken gets another chant so Carter gives them a big sarcastic thumbs up. With Carter taking a breather, Spud removes the covering from the bolt holding the ring together.

Carter's splash is sidestepped and his head hits the buckle, which Josh says is the actual turnbuckle. He knows this due to building a ring as a kid and having to learn all the terms. I know that sounds like the setup for a joke, but that's actually kind of interesting. Now the fans are asking where's the chicken. Spud gets all fired up and REMOVES THE BOWTIE to start his comeback with a flurry of punches. The Underdog connects and Carter rolls to the floor for a breather.

That sets up a huge flip dive from Spud as Carter is reeling. Cue Tyrus so Spud grabs a chair but Ethan breaks up another Underdog attempt. The referee gets bumped and Carter takes off the brace (fans: "CHICKEN KILLER!"), only to have Spud take it away and nail Carter in the mouth, drawing blood. Tyrus is quickly there with a towel to clean it up and a chain to help cheat and the match ends exactly as you would expect it to.

**Rating:** C-. Someone find whoever brought in that stupid chicken and cover them in batter. That thing stopped being funny about ten seconds after it was brought in and these fans have chanted for it for over an hour and a half. I know you didn't pay to get in, but Heaven forbid you stop acting like idiots for five minutes so people can enjoy the show. And yes, I know how lame that sounds.

Tommy Dreamer says he's bled in cages before but you can ask Raven and the Eliminators how tough he is inside the steel. Or we could ask someone who has actually been in a cage with you in the last, oh, fifteen years or so. I'm fine with Dreamer on a hardcore show. I get annoyed when they wedge hardcore in for the sake of a cheap nostalgia pop. In other words: do it naturally instead of forcing



everything.

### Bram vs. Tommy Dreamer

In a cage of course. The brawl starts on the floor before the bell and Dreamer puts on a rainbow mohawk wig while drinking a Coke. Well at least it's not the chicken. Bram crotches Dreamer on the barricade but Tommy sends him into the cage door and then inside the cage to finally draw the opening bell. To further the stupidity of this show, the announcers don't know how the match is going to end, but they think the match could spill outside the cage.

Bram does just that so he can slam the door on Tommy's head, confusing the crowd even more. Back in and Dreamer is sent into the wall before we hit the chinlock. It is a cage match after all so that's the level of violence you have to expect. Tommy finally comes back with a clothesline and we get a House of Hardcore chant. A bunch of punches set up a Bionic Elbow as the fans tell Dreamer he still has it.

We get a chair brought in because the cage isn't enough and because we need Tommy to take a drop toehold onto a chair for contractual obligations. There's the Tree of Woe/chair/dropkick/ECW chant spot. Matthews: "Tommy is always evolving and changing." In all his years on commentary, Taz never made me laugh as much as that one line did. Dreamer hits the White Russian legsweep as Dreamer is now stealing others' old spots. The Dreamer DDT (further proving my point) gets two so Tommy just kicks him low. Bram returns the low blow and hits the Brighter Side of Suffering onto the chair for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. See, this is the way you use Dreamer: occasionally and only when you have a hardcore show. I'm fine with him coming in for stuff like this (though not for the ECW chants) and putting someone over while getting the crowd going, but keep him off my TV every week.

Bobby Roode is ready for Lashley and can't wait to continue their feud.

Package on the history between Roode and Lashley, who is still heel here.

### Bobby Lashley vs. Bobby Roode

Last man standing. Roode drives him into the corner to start but Lashley powers him to the mat. Back up and Lashley gets kicked in

the face, setting up the Blockbuster for an early six. The Roode Bomb is countered into a very delayed vertical suplex and Lashley pounds away in the corner. We get one of the few (likely unintentional) clever bits from the crowd all night: "LET'S GO BOBBY/BOBBY SUCKS!" Roode gets caught in a dragon sleeper for a nine but the fans start chanting for the chicken again.

Back up and Roode grabs a sleeper for nine. Thankfully it's not a long lasting nine as Lashley gets up and plants Roode with a powerslam. More chicken chants take away from Lashley superplexing Roode for a double eight count. Roode grabs a spinebuster but Lashley hits one of his own for seven. Back up and Roode nails a spear followed by the Roode Bomb. That works as well as you would expect before Lashley spears Roode out to the floor. Roode is up at nine and avoids another spear, sending Lashley into the steps. A Roode Bomb on the floor gives Roode the win.

**Rating:** C. This was fine but totally paint by numbers. Roode and Lashley are capable of having great matches, but there's only so much they can do in an environment like this one. At least Roode won, which would be nice to see today after all the weeks of putting Eric Young over for a story that isn't leading anywhere.

**Overall Rating:** D-. Oh yeah this was awful. It's very clear when they're not trying on these things and it was even clearer than ever here. Making things even worse we had the most annoying crowd I've heard in years as they didn't want to watch the show they were seeing and turned it into a big joke. That got old after about ten seconds so of course they kept going for over an hour. Terrible show that just kept going, though some of the guys were legitimately trying.

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# Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania XXIII: That's A Lot Of People

## Wrestlemania XXIII

Date: April 1, 2007

Location: Ford Field, Detroit, Michigan

Attendance: 80,103

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

To say this show was a success is an understatement. Until Rock vs. Cena, this show drew more PPV buys than any show in the history of the company, which says a lot when you consider what came before it. The main event here is Bobby Lashley vs. Umaga, which is the Battle of the Billionaires, as Donald Trump and Vince are backing the two respectively. The losing billionaire gets his head shaved. There's also Cena vs. Shawn in what should be awesome. Let's get to it.

The opening video is a montage of Wrestlemania logos which turns into your usual highlight reel.

We get a clip of the opening of Wrestlemania III before transitioning to Ford Field in the same city. Aretha Franklin is here again twenty years later to sing America the Beautiful again. That's a very nice touch, as are the clips from Tribute to the Troops.

Now we get the video for this year's show, which is the All Grown Up theme. It's a bunch of kids dressed like the stars who then turn into their adult selves.

Mr. Kennedy vs. CM Punk vs. Randy Orton vs. Finlay vs. Matt Hardy vs. King Booker vs. Jeff Hardy vs. Edge

With this match, we start the tradition of having too many people in a single MITB match and overcrowding the thing. Everyone looks up at the case until Kennedy goes to get a ladder. Orton heads to the floor to stop him as the big brawl begins. Finlay DIVES on everyone not named Edge, allowing the Canadian to make a climb, only to be stopped by Matt. They head to the floor, allowing Orton and Finlay to head up top for a brawl on the ladder.

They topple to the floor so it's Jeff going up, only to be shoved down by Kennedy. Booker goes to pull out a ladder but it's Horny's, meaning it's only about two feet tall. Punk takes it away and pounds on people with it, only to have Edge take over again. This is one of those matches that moves too fast to really keep track of things. Punk is bleeding from the forehead as Edge bridges a ladder between the ring and barricade.

Back inside and Booker takes over with kicks and spinebusters for everyone in sight. Before climbing though, here's a Spinarooni. The distraction lets the Hardys crush Booker with some ladders before Matt and Edge go at it a bit. The Hardys set up a ladder seesaw but Jeff is sent off the top to break up whatever they were going to do to Edge. Instead Edge suplexes Matt onto the ladder, only to be sent to the floor by Kennedy.

Kennedy pounds away on Matt but the Kenton Bomb only hits ladder. Instead it's Jeff with a Swanton to Mr. before the brothers team up to drop everyone in sight with the ladder. Both Hardys go up and start slugging it out on top of the ladder, only to be shoved into the top rope by Finlay. Edge hits the spear on Finlay and one for Orton and Booker as well. Kennedy and Matt take spears too and there's one for Jeff to nearly complete the set. Punk jumps over Edge to send him into the corner and become the only man standing.

Punk puts the ladder around his head and spins around a bit to take everyone out until Edge thinks wisely and DUCKS, allowing him to take out Punk's vulnerable ribs. Edge gets the big ladder and makes a climb, only to get caught by Orton and shoved down to the floor. Jeff saves that though and climbs up on his own as Matt puts Edge on

the ladder between the ring and the barricade. Jeff dives off the ladder THROUGH EDGE AND THROUGH THE LADDER! Needless to say, Edge and Jeff are DONE.

We're down to six people in the match now and it's Orton's turn to take over with RKOs all around. He picks up a regular sized ladder but Punk knocks him down and sets up a second ladder in the middle of the ring. Apparently Jeff is still on the floor despite Edge being taken out. Orton and Punk both climb up and it's an RKO off the top of the ladder to end Punk. Booker goes up but has to stop an RKO attempt with a Bookend off the ladder.

It's Matt vs. Booker on the ladder but Matt drops down and threatens to give Sharmell the Twist of Fate, drawing Booker down. There's the Twist to the King but Finlay (sporting a NASTY cut on the back of his head) shoves the ladder over. The Celtic Cross (White Noise) crushes Matt against the ladder but hurts Finlay's back in the process. Finlay is barely able to stand so here's Horny to climb for him.

Instead though Kennedy pops up the ladder...and gets smacked in the face by Horny. There's a fireman's carry roll off the ladder for the little guy's efforts. Finlay destroys Kennedy with the ladder but gets knocked off the ladder by Matt. Now it's Punk going up but Kennedy meets him on the ladder for a slugout. Punk shoves him off but Kennedy spears him in the ribs with another ladder, allowing Kennedy to climb up and win the case.

**Rating:** B. This was definitely the weakest of the matches so far as there were too many people in there and no one to have the big spots like Shelton. It's definitely good but this one lacked the pop that most of these matches had over the years. Kennedy would lose the case to Edge a few weeks later.

Video on the premiere of The Condemned so we can clear the ring out. Kennedy warns every champion that he's coming for them and says he's Mr. Money in the Bank. Bank.

Batista is All Grown Up.

## Great Khali vs. Kane

This is when Khali is still a decent monster who could move a little bit. Kane is easily shoved down to start and then shoved to the floor for good measure. Back in and Kane slugs Khali, only to be chopped right back down. Off to the nerve hold before Khali slugs away in the corner. Kane comes back with punches of his own but is easily shoved down and across the ring.

Kane fires back with a right hand and tries the top rope clothesline but it only staggers Khali. Another shot sends Khali into the ropes and Kane has his opening. Kane heads to the floor and grabs a chain with a hook on the end which he used in the horror movie he was in around this time. Khali knocks him back and rips off the turnbuckle pad to distract the referee, allowing Kane to kick him low. In one of the big spots of the show, Kane slams Khali ala Hogan slamming Andre twenty years ago. That only gets two so they both grab chokeslams, but it's Khali hitting the Punjabi Plunge for the one footed pin.

**Rating:** D-. The slam was cool and the rest was completely horrible. Khali was nothing good and somehow he would get even worse. Kane was in that weird period for him where he was just kind of there and doing nothing of note. By period, I mean about a five year stretch of course. Terrible match but the slam was good.

Post match Khali chokes him out with the chain and no one makes the save.

The Divas say they're All Grown Up. The idea of taking them seriously is amusing.

Cryme Tyme tries to cheer up a now bald Eugene with an Extreme Expose dance party. That would be Kelly, Layla and Brooke (now Tessmacher) as a dance troupe. Instead Moolah and Mae Young show up and Eugene wants to dance with them. Cue REVEREND SLICK of all people to show us how it's done. This brings in Dusty Rhodes who says you can't have a dance party without him. The music comes back on and here are Sgt. Slaughter, Jimmy Hart and IRS to join in. Ricky Steamboat in full karate attire shows up until we get the Ron

Simmons payoff.

Some Detroit Tigers are here.

### US Title: MVP vs. Chris Benoit

Benoit is defending and MVP is pretty new here. They head to the mat to start with MVP actually in control. Off to a headlock by the challenger but he has to shove Benoit to the floor to avoid the Crossface. Back in and Benoit can't hook the Crossface as MVP keeps it on the mat with the headlocks. Back up and MVP pounds Benoit into the corner but charges into an elbow. A superplex attempt is blocked and Benoit's arm is draped across the top rope to shift momentum again.

Back in and MVP works over the bad arm with some driving shoulder blocks. He misses a spinning kick though and Benoit busts out the Rolling Germans. The Swan Dive is broken up though and MVP goes back to the arm by sending it into the post. Off to an armbar again, followed by a running clothesline for two. Out of nowhere Benoit reverses a slam into a Crossface attempt but the arm is too weak to hook the hold. This time the slam works and there's the Ballin elbow for two. MVP misses a charge into the corner and it's time to roll some Germans. After four of those, Benoit hits the Swan Dive to retain.

**Rating:** C. Yeah that's it. The match really never got off the ground and could have used another four minutes or so. As always the scariest part is thinking that Benoit only had about two months left so he likely wasn't sane during this match. The match itself wasn't bad but as mentioned it never got off the ground. MVP would win the title at Backlash and hold it for almost a year.

Video on Undertaker who is All Grown Up...I think.

Donald Trump is in his dressing room and complaining about the lack of food and drinks backstage. Boogeyman comes in for no apparent reason and Trump doesn't seem impressed. Trump asks him for a sandwich. This uh....happened. Yeah we'll go with that.

Hall of Fame time. Mr. Perfect was one of the headliners here and

gets a pretty touching tribute. William Shatner inducted Lawler, which is kind of annoying as Lawler had wanted Lance Russell (announcer of Memphis Wrestling for like forty years) to do it but WWE said no and picked Shatner because of a forgotten segment on Raw back in like 1995. The other headliner was Dusty Rhodes who asked to be made an honorary Horseman. That's just wrong. No presentation to the crowd here which is weird.

The attendance is over 80,000, which is of course a new record.

Here's the Fink because what would Wrestlemania be without him? Oh ok he's doing the Hall of Fame live presentation to the crowd. JR gets easily the biggest pop of the entire class.

82% of the fans think Undertaker will win the title.

We recap Undertaker vs. Batista but there isn't much to say. Taker won the Rumble and picked Batista for an awesome power match. They had to team up at No Way Out and Batista turned on him to give us a one night only heel, even though that's not really too far out of Batista's normal behavior.

#### Smackdown World Title: Batista vs. Undertaker

Teddy Long does the intros here for some reason. We also get the druids and the torches, which look AWESOME in the huge stadiums like this. The bell rings and Batista spears Taker down before pounding away in the corner. Undertaker fires off right hands of his own but Batista throws him right back into the corner. The fans are totally behind Undertaker here. They head to the floor with Undertaker being sent knees first into the steps as is his custom.

Back in and Batista hits a top rope shoulder for two. If you're listening to Cole, you would think he had hit a 450. A big clothesline puts Taker down for two but Undertaker comes back with right hands and a running charge in the corner. The Snake Eyes and big boot combo puts Batista down and a legdrop gets two. Old School connects but Big Dave powers out of the chokeslam to huge boeing.

The jumping clothesline puts Batista down again but only for two. Taker puts him on the apron for the elbow and legdrops before



busting out the Taker Dive as is his custom at Wrestlemania. Taker pounds away even more but Batista counters to throw him through part of the barricade to take over. With Undertaker dazed, Batista loads up a powerslam from one announce table through the other, which actually isn't countered.

Back in and that only gets two so the champion pounds away more for good measure. Batista loads up the Bomb but Taker plows him into the corner to counter. Dave comes right back with a belly to belly suplex for two. He pounds on Taker in the corner like a schmuck and of course there's the Last Ride for two. Taker has a breather but walks right into the spinebuster.

Batista doesn't cover though and gets caught in a chokeslam for a VERY close two. The Tombstone is countered and Batista hits the spear and Batista Bomb for an even closer two, shocking the champion. Batista loads up another Bomb but Taker backdrops out of it and avoids a spear, setting up the Tombstone for the title.

**Rating:** A. The idea is that these two were annoyed and decided to have an awesome match to show everyone up. These two would go on to have more great matches on shows where Batista actually had a chance to win. This was the feud of the year and it's hard to argue as they could both work the power game like few others.

Lashley is All Grown Up.

Vince is in the back looking in a mirror when Stephanie comes in with a stroller. Vince goes off on Stephanie before playing with his granddaughter. Naturally there's a camera from inside the stroller looking up at Vince. He promises to fracture Trump's skull.

Joey tries to talk about the ECW Originals vs. the New Breed but we need to get this along.

#### New Breed vs. ECW Originals

It's Elijah Burke/Matt Striker/Kevin Thron/Marcus Cor Van vs. Rob Van Dam/Tommy Dreamer/Sabu and for no reason whatsoever this is a regular eight man tag instead of the Extreme Rules match we would get on ECW a few days later. Striker starts with Sabu and Matt is in

early trouble. It's quickly off to Sandman vs. Burke but before Sandy does much he brings in Dreamer. Cor Von hits Dreamer in the back and comes in to pound away a bit.

It's quickly back to Burke (the New Breed's leader and more famous as D'Angelo Dinero) for the running knees to the back for two. Thorn comes in to crush Dreamer into the corner and put on a chinlock. Back up and a sitout powerbomb gets two for Thorn and here's Cor Von again. Burke comes in as well but Dreamer takes them down with a simultaneous neckbreaker/reverse DDT combo. The hot tag brings in Van Dam and there's the top rope kick to Thorn. Rolling Thunder lands on Striker as everything breaks down. With everyone else on the floor, Van Dam Five Stars Striker for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. Seriously, why wasn't this the Extreme Rules match? The whole point of ECW is to be extreme but we got a seven minute tag match which went nowhere at all. The theory was to finally let these guys get on Wrestlemania, but Van Dam had been on it before and won a title here. Nothing to see here at all.

Austin is All Grown Up.

Wrestlemania 24 is in Orlando.

We recap the real main event for tonight's show and the reason why this show was the highest drawing show ever for the next five years. Vince and Donald Trump both agreed to back a guy into a match and the losing billionaire would get their head shaved. This was when Trump was still a big deal and EVERYONE was backing Umaga because they wanted to see Trump bald. Oh except for Rock who actually cut a promo about wanting to see Vince bald.

Trump picked the ECW World Champion Bobby Lashley. Steve Austin was brought in to referee because this is Wrestlemania. The best part of the build was Lashley in a cage with Umaga on the floor. To escape, Lashley shoulder blocked the cage wall, knocking it down to the floor and nearly crushing Umaga in the process.

Bobby Lashley vs. Umaga

The barber's chair gets its own entrance complete with some snappy

music. Oh and Umaga is IC Champion. Trump coming out to a song with the only word being MONEY is perfect. Real money rains down from the ceiling, including \$100 bills. To be fair this show brought in like 50 million dollars in PPV alone so they can afford a bit. They collide to start and slug it out with Lashley pounding him into the corner. Austin pulls Lashley off of Umaga since they're in the ropes and Umaga gets in some shots of his own. Lashley goes up to the middle rope for a shoulder for two.

Umaga's manager Armando Estrada is dragged in by Lashley and powerslammed down with ease. Lashley throws him out to the floor and low bridges Umaga to send him to the floor as well. Back in and Lashley misses a spear, sending him out to the floor this time. We head inside again and Umaga chokes away, only to be pulled off at four and a half by Austin. Austin has to do it again, this time by the hair for good measure.

A BIG clothesline puts Lashley down again and Umaga cannonballs down onto his chest for good measure. The Samoan drop puts Lashley down again as does a failed slam attempt. Vince gets up on the apron and gets dropped down by an elbow from Lashley, only to walk into a shot from Umaga to take over again. Umaga goes up and gets slammed down before being clotheslined down. Both guys down and Austin gets to nine before stopping so it doesn't end in a draw.

Shane McMahon comes out to check on Vince as Umaga hits an uppercut to drop Lashley again. Austin has to pull Umaga out of the corner, earning him a Samoan Spike. Shane comes in and pounds away on Lashley until Umaga is back into things. The running hip attack crushes Bobby's face and Vince throws in some trashcans. Shane hits the Coast to Coast to drive the can into Lashley's face. A top rope splash from Umaga crushes Lashley and Shane has a referee's shirt on now.

Austin breaks up the pin and beats up Shane for good measure, only to walk into another Samoan Spike. Trump isn't sure what to do and shows off those great acting skills of his. Vince comes over to taunt him and TRUMP CLOTHESLINES VINCE! Umaga tries another Spike on

Austin but gets countered into the Stunner. The spear from Lashley connects and it's time for Vince to be bald.

**Rating:** D. This match sucked for the most part until Austin got going. The problem at the end of the day was no one on the planet with any idea what was going on here thought Vince was going to win. It also didn't help that no one cared about Lashley because no one had ever given us a reason to. He was just kind of there for the most part and there was nothing more to him than he used to be a college wrestler and he's muscular. Seriously, that's Lashley's story almost in full.

Post match they take FOREVER to Stun Vince and cut his hair. Austin Stuns him because that's what Austin does to Vince. To their credit though, they SHAVE his head, not just trim it. Vince's face during this whole thing is great as he goes from shock to the patented Vince rage in a few seconds. This led to three months of Vince/Shane/Umaga vs. Lashley which didn't work for the most part. Austin, Lashley and Trump share beers and Trump gets Stunned. I'll give the guy this: he has a soft spot for wrestling. He hosted two Wrestlemanias, was in the crowd for two more and did this.

John Cena is All Grown Up.

For no apparent reason other than we have nothing else to talk about, we look at the dark match with Flair/Carlito vs. Gregory Helms/Chavo Guerrero in a lumberjack match.

Womens Title: Melina vs. Ashley

It's a lumberjill match and all of the other Divas are introduced. Melina is defending here because thank goodness Ashley never got the title. Ashley, who isn't a wrestler, takes Melina down and pounds away. The crowd is audibly quiet for this match and can you blame them? Ashley pounds away in the corner and does some bad choking but Melina comes back by SCREAMING. Off to a bow and arrow for a bit as I have no interest in watching this match at all. Ashley misses an elbow and thankfully Melina reverses a rollup into one of her own to retain.

**Rating:** M. As in Mickie James, who was on the floor during this match instead of in the ring. Point blank, Ashley cannot wrestle. She was decent looking, but other than that she had nothing going for her at all. This was a popcorn break match and thankfully it was barely three minutes long as I couldn't sit through much longer.

Shawn Michaels is All Grown Up.

We recap Michaels vs. Cena. Shawn won a triple threat to set this up and then won the tag titles with Cena. The idea is Shawn has turned on every one of his partners in his career and he'll do it again here. No music video here for some reason.

#### Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Shawn Michaels

Remember that they're tag champions here but neither guy wears the belt. I can't say I blame them of course. Cena's special entrance this year is driving a muscle car from "the parking lot" into the arena due to being in Detroit. They circle each other to start before Shawn slaps him in the face. A quick headlock doesn't do much for Shawn so he uses his speed advantage to pop John with some right hands. Back to the headlock and it works a bit better this time as Shawn takes Cena down to the mat.

Cena has had enough of this defense thing and rings Shawn's bell with a clothesline. Shawn is sent to the apron but he tosses Cena from the ring and out to the floor. A BIG chop staggers Cena but Shawn's Asai Moonsault hits mostly table and Shawn is hurt. Luckily for him though Cena is even more hurt as they head back inside. Shawn chops away in the corner before going after Cena's knee. The leg is wrapped around the post and Cena is in trouble. The referee asks Cena if he can continue and of course Cena says yes.

Shawn keeps kicking at the leg before wrapping it around the ring rope. With Cena down in the corner, Shawn stares straight at him to play even more mind games. Back up and John hits a big right hand to send Shawn flying across the ring. Shawn charges straight back at him with a shoulder into the ribs in the corner to keep control. Michaels charges again but Cena's leg gives out and Shawn goes head first into the post, busting him open.

Cena has had enough of getting beaten up so he punches Shawn down before firing off some mounted right hands. The ProtoBomb and Shuffle hit but Shawn punches his way out of the FU. Cena is sent into the corner but manages to duck Sweet Chin Music. The referee isn't so lucky though and is knocked senseless. Cena tries the FU but is countered into a DDT to put both guys down.

With no referee in sight, Shawn rolls to the floor and hits a sick piledriver onto the steps. The THUD when Cena's head hit was a little scary. The back of Cena's head is cut open BAD on top of that. Back in and here's a second referee but the count only gets two. There are the forearm and nip-up as the blood flows down Shawn's face. The top rope elbow connects but Cena blocks Chin Music with a big clothesline to put both guys down again.

They slug it out in the middle of the ring but the FU is countered again into a sunset flip for two. Shawn's leap frog is caught in the FU but Cena is too banged up to cover. The very delayed cover gets two and the champ is getting frustrated. With nothing else to do he tries an FU off the top, only to be shoved off by Shawn. Michaels dives at Cena but gets caught in the FU position. He counters that as well though by landing on his feet, only to miss the superkick and have Cena try for the STFU. Cena keeps trying for it but gets small packaged down for two instead.

Shawn misses an enziguri attempt and now the STFU is on. Cena cranks back on it but Shawn is only a few inches away from the rope. As Shawn starts to black out he grabs the rope and Cena has to break. He takes a bit too long though and gets in an argument with the referee, allowing Shawn to kick Cena's head off. Another delayed cover gets two and both guys are down. In a cool spot, both guys have to lean on the other to get up. The FU is countered again but Shawn can't avoid the STFU again. Cena cranks back on it and Shawn has no choice but to tap out.

**Rating:** A-. This was a much better match than the HHH match from the year before for a few reasons. First of all, there was a story behind the match. As simple as it was, Shawn being Cena's partner

gave them a bond and seeing them fight was something interesting to see. Second, the drama was better here. Cena felt like he was in real trouble and that the title was in danger, which I never felt last year. It's a better match overall and they would have even better ones in the future.

A highlight package ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** B+. This is a show where the stuff that is bad is really bad but the stuff that is good is REALLY good. There are only eight matches on the card and three of them are very good to great. The best part about that though is the bad matches (other than one) were all short and pretty easy to get through. The show is completely forgettable other than Trump vs. Vince and maybe Undertaker vs. Batista, but it's worth seeing. I would however recommend fast forwarding through some of the weaker parts.

#### Ratings Comparison

CM Punk vs. Mr. Kennedy vs. Finlay vs. Randy Orton vs. King Booker vs. Jeff Hardy vs. Booker T vs. Edge

Original: B+

Redo: B

Great Khali vs. Kane

Original: D

Redo: D-

Chris Benoit vs. MVP

Original: B

Redo: C

Undertaker vs. Batista

Original: B+

Redo: A

ECW Originals vs. New Breed

Original: D+

Redo: D

Bobby Lashley vs. Umaga

Original: C-

Redo: D

Melina vs. Ashley

Original: F

Redo: M (for Mickie James)

John Cena vs. Shawn Michaels

Original: A

Redo: A-

Overall Rating

Original: B

Redo: B+

Almost everything goes down and the rating goes up. I'm a complex guy sometimes.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/30/history-of-wrestlemania-with-kb-wrestlemania-23-over-80000-people/>

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# New Column: TNA Is Good

Seriously they are.

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-tna-good/34492/>

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## Impact Wrestling – February 13, 2015: Heaven Help Me

### Impact Wrestling

Date: February 13, 2015

Location: SSE Hydro, Glasgow, Scotland

Attendance: 1,500

Commentators: Josh Matthews, Taz

We're back in the UK this week for the first of several taped shows. This tour usually results in some very high energy shows with the crowd eating up whatever TNA gives them. For once that seems more deserved as these recent shows have been a lot more entertaining and well put together than some of the last ones on Spike. Tonight is about the fallout from Lockdown so let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Lashley saying he wouldn't team with Angle until he changed his mind a week later and helped his team win Lethal Lockdown.

The BDC arrived earlier, now in matching gear. MVP tells them to forget what happened last week because it's time to show everyone what they do. Eric Young is here and I'm just going to start calling him a member of the team. The only reason he isn't at this point is TNA said he wasn't, but it's close enough so yeah he's a member of the team.

Here's Angle to open the show. He's usually been on his own, but he has to thank Gunner and Aries for helping him last week. The BDC wants to say they control the World Title, but the best wrestler in the world controls that title. Angle invites Lashley out here right now and they shake hands. Lashley says he was there to get his hands on MVP, not to help Angle. That's fine with Angle, because he wants to be World Champion again. It actually has been a very long time.

Before the champ can say anything, here's the BDC to interrupt. MVP says last week's pin in Lethal Lockdown is stripped from the record books for some reason so now and it's time for one of those two to get a beat down. Lashley cuts MVP off and issues a challenge to either two of them for a tag match against himself and Angle. This was a totally acceptable opening segment, but more importantly it was done in about ten minutes. Take notes WWE.

Austin Aries stops Bobby Roode in the back and goes over their history together. Roode of course respects Aries and agrees to give the fans something special. Unlike the opening segment, I have no idea why this was necessary.

We look back at Jeremy Borash preventing EC3 from cutting Spud's hair last week.

Carter says he's wealthy so he gets whatever he wants, and that would be to shave Spud's head. Tonight it's Carter/Tyrus vs. Mandrews/Spud/Borash.

#### Austin Aries vs. Bobby Roode

So they're actually trying to make this Top 5 concept mean something. Next week there will be a 20 man gauntlet. The first fifteen entrants will be at random but the last five will be determined by the top five. Aries comes into this match at #3 and Roode is #1, basically making this match for the last spot in the gauntlet. The prize is of course a World Title shot the following week.

They trade arm holds to start with Aries going to a headstand but getting caught in an early Crossface. That goes nowhere but neither

does Aries' early Last Chancery. Both of their other finishers miss as well and Aries is sent to the apron but he shoulders Roode in the ribs and hits the slingshot hilo for two. Fast start here. Aries follows him to the floor with a huge top rope ax handle but gets dropped with a gordbuster back inside.

The spinebuster sets up the Blockbuster for two but Aries fights out of the Roode Bomb. Maybe Bobby should have stuck to busting. Austin knocks him off the top rope and hits the missile dropkick, followed by a discus forearm to send him outside. The suicide dive hits the barricade though and Roode takes over. Back in and Aries gets caught in the Crossface for the tap out at 8:21.

**Rating:** B-. The match was entertaining but the ending was kind of surprising. It does fit the idea of Aries hitting the barricade, but it's rare to see someone with a top ranking cleanly defending it like this. By saying "this is for the #1 spot in something", you're almost guaranteeing that it's going to change. The surprise isn't a bad thing though and it worked quite well.

Roode says this is pro wrestling. I'd call that a pretty big stretch. Aries leaves and Roode says it's time to get his title back. Roode vs. Lashley III never happened and he deserves a rematch. Cue Eric Young to jump Roode from behind and plant him with a piledriver. Of course he does, because where would we be without Eric freaking Young to take the focus off a good match and a logical story progression to keep up a feud where Roode won the big gimmick match? Oh that would be because we can have a TRILOGY, and that's the magic word in wrestling for some reason, even when there was no desire to see a second match.

After a break, Roode is being helped out and Young piledrives him on the stage. In case you didn't know, Eric Young is CRAZY.

Here's Al Snow, looking ancient. He's been having issues with one of the students on British Boot Camp, which I'd assume has been seen by about 18 American fans. The fans in the arena certainly seem to know it though as they start chanting for Grado, one of the contestants on the most recent season. In Grado, Snow found someone else who

thought he could do what Snow does but Grado was just another failure.

Snow gives Grado one more chance to come out here and quit before he has to give the student a beating next week. Grado comes out and looks like a cleaned up Louis Spicolli. Snow rips into him for a lack of respect and heart. He's the heel here if that wasn't clear. Grado takes the mic away and says Snow doesn't realize where he is. They're in Glasgow and the people here won't take this from Snow. Grado's mom is in the front row so Snow yells at her, causing Grado to nail him in the face. The fight is made for next week.

After the segment is over, I still have the same two questions I had before it started: who is Grado and why am I supposed to care about this feud? We first heard about Grado maybe two minutes before he appeared and were given a very basic backstory about him. I get that the fans live are going to like him, but if you don't or can't watch British Boot Camp, there's a good chance you don't know who this guy is. Show us some stuff from the show and give us a reason to care, because otherwise it's the same as bringing in the ECW guys for shows in the northeast. If you didn't care for ECW, you don't care about that.

I don't care about British Boot Camp, but it's more because I haven't been exposed to it. I'm not a fan of just expecting the fans to know what you're talking about, especially when you can clear it up with a quick package or by giving us some information more than two minutes before the whole thing starts. It's going to get some loud pops in the arena, but there are a lot more fans on the other side of the camera. I will give them this though: Snow did a great job at riling up a crowd like an old school talker can.

#### Craazy Steve vs. Bram

Bram pulls him out of the corner to start, sending Steve's head into the buckle. He grabs the mic and says he wants Magnus, stomping at Steve's head more every time. Steve's comeback lasts as long as you would expect and an impaler DDT gives Bram the pin at 2:20.

JB says he can't wrestle but Spud says they're men and they're going

to be fine.

Gunner asks Angle if he's sure about teaming with Lashley. Kurt knows he and Lashley are fighting one day and he wants the champ at his best.

### Ethan Carter III/Tyrus vs. Rockstar Spud/Mandrews/Jeremy Borash

Carter, sporting a huge brace on his arm due to a recent surgery, is thinking this week and has cordless clippers to shave some hair. Spud gets right in Carter's face but Tyrus comes in instead. That goes badly for Spud and Mandrews is thrown down as well so it's time for JB vs. Carter. Ethan easily pounds Jeremy into the corner and it's off to Mandrews to take the real beating. Tyrus plants him with the t-bone and now Carter comes in to pick the bones.

The announcers get off topic to talk about the main event tag as carter sends Mandrews face first into the mat. Mandrews fights out of a chinlock and hits an enziguri, allowing for the tag to Spud. Tyrus breaks up the Spud offense with a claw hold but accidentally splashes his boss. A Dudley Dog sends Tyrus to the floor and.....Borash goes up top for a dive onto Tyrus! Borash looks dead after landing but still it looked good at the time. Back in and the 1%er is enough to pin Spud at 6:06.

**Rating:** C. Spud is rapidly growing on me as he keeps getting better and better in the ring and is nailing the Spike Dudley mold of fighting beyond his size. The dive from Borash was more cool than anything else and gave me a little smile. This story continues to live WAY beyond its means and is far more entertaining than it has any right to be. I know Spud is going to lose in the end, but man alive they're making it fun along the way.

Carter and Tyrus go for the hair but the lights go out and Mr. Anderson appears to take out the heels.

Gunner says he's ready for the gauntlet but gets beaten down by the BDC.

Here's Madison to talk about something. Before she can really get going, she keeps getting interrupted by what sounds like a

microphone being dropped and stepped on. She says she's one title reign away from the all time record and no one can beat her. I think you know what's coming.

### Awesome Kong vs. Madison Rayne

Kong splashes her in the corner but misses one in the middle of the ring. That's the extent of Madison's luck as the Implant Buster ends her at 1:24.

Aries is in Angle's locker room and says he tapped out because he has his eyes on the World Title. Angle doesn't seem to care and again this seemed a bit worthless.

We look back at Jeff Hardy's injury last week to keep him off the UK tour.

Cue Matt Hardy to give us an update on his brother's condition. Jeff has taken a lot of risks over the years and given us memories that will last forever. Every time he's been hurt before, Jeff has always been able to give Matt a little sign that he's ok and will be back. Last week though, there was nothing from Jeff. This brings out the Revolution so Storm can say that Matt is right.

Storm did what Edge and Christian and Team 3D couldn't do. Sting, Kurt Angle, Roode, Aries, Lashley or even the Undertaker couldn't do what he did. He put Jeff Hardy down because heroes only exist because of villains. Matt has two options: join the Revolution or join his brother in the hospital. Matt says Jeff's hospital bed is pretty nice and the beating is on. Manik puts him in a cross armbreaker and they go for the noose but the Wolves run out for the save.

Aries won't say when he's cashing in and gets attacked by the BDC. They even throw him out the door but are nice enough to throw him his briefcase. We actually get a replay of it not thirty seconds later. Apparently throwing him the briefcase is a way for the BDC to attack Lashley as much as they want without worrying about Aries. If they're beating him down, wouldn't they be able to see Aries coming? Or they could just, keep the briefcase if its presence is required.

## Kurt Angle/Bobby Lashley vs. MVP/Samoa Joe

Ki and King are of course at ringside. Angle and Joe get things going after a break and they trade arm control to start. It's quickly off to Lashley for a running shoulder to Joe's ample gut and a hard clothesline. MVP bails from contact and Joe gets in some cheap shots to take over. It's off to MVP for a running basement dropkick and that's about it for the leader. Joe runs him over again and King gets in some choking from the floor. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Lashley throws Joe down, allowing for the tag off to Angle. It's Germans time but the Angle Slam only gets two on Joe. Everything breaks down and MVP sends Kurt shoulder first into the post for two. We settle down to MVP working over Angle before it's back to Joe for a weak crossface chicken wing. Angle fights out and makes hot tag the sequel to Lashley. The big delayed vertical suplex drops MVP and a spinebuster gets two. Everything breaks down again and Lashley loads up the spear to Joe but Angle grabs the ankle lock. The distraction lets MVP roll up Lashley with a handful of trunks for the pin at 10:08.

**Rating:** B-. Nice main event style tag here and it's clear that MVP is the next major challenger to the title before we get to Angle vs. Lashley in their big showdown. This feels a lot like Reigns vs. Bryan and it's being done a bit better. It's a nice three way feud, but MVP really doesn't need a stable behind him to do this. Just have them all be guys instead of MVP running a group and let them have a feud. Still though, good enough.

**Overall Rating:** B. TNA is rolling right now and this was another good wrestling show. They're setting up stories and seem to be paying them off. No it's not perfect and there are some tweaks that need to be made, but I'm very pleased with what I'm getting at the moment. If nothing else, they're not cramming 19 segments on one story into a show and are spreading things around a good bit. That being said, I've thought this before and TNA has managed to screw it up like no other. Hopefully it lasts a good while though as this has been very entertaining lately.

## Results

Bobby Roode b. Austin Aries – Crossface

Bram b. Crazy Steve – Impaler DDT

Tyrus/Ethan Carter III b. Rockstar Spud/Mandrews/Jeremy Borash –  
1%er to Spud

Awesome Kong b. Madison Rayne – Implant Buster

MVP/Samoa Joe b. Lashley/Kurt Angle – Rollup with a handful of  
trunks

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