

Ring Of Honor – December 21, 2023: Here We Go Again

Ring Of Honor

Date: December 21, 2023

Location: Curtis Cullwell Center, Arlington, Texas

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Caprice Coleman

We're done with Final Battle and that means it's time to start the build towards I'd assume Supercard Of Honor over Wrestlemania Weekend. Granted that means we have a few months before that comes into play, so odds are we'll be looking at some run of the mill shows for a long time. Let's get to it.

[Here is Final Battle if you need a recap.](#)

We open with a recap of Athena retaining the Women's Title over Billie Starkz in the Final Battle main event.

Athena is with Lexi Nair, who took a long time to bring her title in at Final Battle. Tonight, Athena is taking out some frustrations.

Opening sequence.

Commentary runs down some of the card.

Workhorsesmen vs. Von Erichs

Kevin Von Erich is here with the Von Erichs. Before the match, the Workhorsesmen promise to prove that they're great while the former World Class stars were trash. Drake shoulders Ross down to start but Ross is up with a dropkick. Henry comes in and gets armdragged, setting up Marshall's dropkick to keep him in trouble.

Since that worked so well, a double dropkick drops Henry again but Drake gets in a cheap shot to put Ross down. Drake comes

back in and mocks the Claw, only to miss a middle rope headbutt. It's back to Marshall to clean house but Henry breaks up the Claw. The Cannonball crushes Marshall but Drake misses a moonsault, allowing Marshall to hit one of his own for the pin at 6:15.

Rating: C+. Having the Von Erichs wrestle around Dallas last week at Final Battle was the biggest layup imaginable, as it made all the sense in the world. Then they've done it twice more in the last week and it just kind of shows that the team isn't very good. They're not terrible, but they're the definition of a generic team who rely on one thing to get their reactions. Do this once or twice and it can work, but the third time was going too far with it and my first reaction was "oh, these guys again, how interesting". Granted the same thing could be said about the Workhorsesmen.

Post match Henry goes after Kevin and gets the Claw. Where have I seen this before?

We look at Kyle Fletcher winning Survival Of The Fittest to become the new TV Champion.

Athena vs. Mona World

Proving Ground, meaning non-title but if World lasts the ten minutes or wins, she gets a future title shot. World elbows her down to start and rolls over Athena, who catches her with a quick powerbomb. Athena sends her hard into the corner and hits a knee to the chest for two. World is back up with a Sling Blade and a hurricanrana, followed by a Falcon Arrow for two more. The split legged moonsault misses though and the 0 Face finishes for Athena at 5:17.

Rating: C. Of all the Proving Ground matches where the champ never feels like they're in any real danger and then wins in the end without the match coming close to the time limit, this was the most recent. What is anyone supposed to get out of these things? The champ has never lost and it's very rare to

see anyone get close to an upset. Do something with the concept already because otherwise, what's the point of the gimmick?

Post match Athena shows respect and then attacks World.

Here is Tony Khan for an announcement: the Women's TV Title. Details to come, including how they crown a Seth Rollins to Athena's Roman Reigns.

Lee Johnson vs. Dante Martin

Johnson wrestles him to the mat to start but has to flip out of a wristlock. Some armdrags into an armbar have Martin down but he does the same thing to Johnson for some gamesmanship. Martin's snap suplex gets two and we're off to the hammerlock. Johnson is back up with a suplex of his own.

We hit the chinlock for a bit before Johnson sends him out outside in a heap. After the big dive, Johnson counters a springboard into a quick powerbomb for two more. A Death Valley Driver and standing moonsault give Martin two but Martin's spinning full nelson slam is good for the pin at 9:02.

Rating: C+. That was a Ring Of Honor match all right, as you have two young stars having a match without much in the way of stakes. I'm sure the answer will be a possible TV Title shot, but forgive me given the history of title matches around here. Other than that, it's great to see Martin back in the ring and it's smart to have him use something other than the double springboard moonsault.

Ethan Page, with Scorpio Sky, is happy with his win and can feel the fear from everyone in the locker room. Sky has seen Page lose more than once but now he's here to make Page fulfill his promises to be a champion.

Blake Christian/Willie Mack vs. Gates Of Agony

Christian dropkicks Kaun down to start but makes the mistake of following him outside. That means a ram into the announcers' table, followed by a whip into the barricade. Back in and Christian slips away so Mack can come in and clean house. The swinging slam gets two on Kaun but he's back up to dropkick a charging Mack. Christian comes back in to send Kaun outside, setting up the dive to drop him again. Back in and Toa pulls Christian out of the air for a swinging release Rock Bottom. Toa Pounces Mack and the double lifting slam finishes Christian at 6:45.

Rating: C. Again I ask why the Mogul Embassy have the Six Man Tag Team Titles when the Gates wrestle as a two man team so often. Other than that, this was another one off match against a makeshift team. The Gates continue to be the resident power team who aren't going anywhere, which continues to be a waste of what they could do.

Tony Nese rants about what it took to make him say I Quit. Mark Sterling wants to start stacking the deck against Ring Of Honor.

Lance Archer/Righteous vs. Iron Savages/Jacked Jameson

Vincent takes over on Bronson to start and chokes him on the ropes. Dutch comes in to send Bronson into the corner before it's off to Archer for a Pounce. Bronson fights out of the corner and brings in Boulder to clean house, only to have Dutch catch him with a swinging Boss Man Slam. The Black Out into Autumn Sunshine finishes Jameson at 4:55.

Rating: C. As has been the case through a good chunk of this show, this was the same thing we've seen before. It's a group getting a win over a lower level group with little drama and little more than a squash to get there. I have no idea why we need to see some of these guys almost every week but at least their boxes are checked off again.

Maria Kanellis-Bennett credits her music for last week's win.

This week, Griff Garrison and Cole Karter are ready to team in an eight man tag...with the Spanish Announce Project. Maria assures her guys that it's fine.

Taya Valkyrie vs. Vertvixen

Johnny TV is here with Taya, who gets knocked to the floor to start. Taya drops her face first onto the apron and choking ensues back inside. Running knees in the corner give Taya two and we hit some posing. An STF sends Vertvixen over to the ropes and she hits a springboard kick to the face to cut Taya down. Taya isn't having that and hits a curb stomp for the pin at 5:45.

Rating: C. I'm running out of ways to say "we've seen this kind of thing already" but here we are again and again. At least Taya is relatively new, but we've now seen her have three such matches in eight days. You can stretch some of these things out occasionally instead of just repeating stuff but that's not the Ring Of Honor way.

Lee Moriarty and Shane Taylor are motivated by their losses and EVERYONE IS ON NOTICE.

Charlette Renegade vs. Rachael Ellering

Robyn Renegade is here with Charlette while Ellering has Maria Kanellis-Bennett and Leyla Hirsch. Ellering takes her to the mat to start but can't tie up the limbs. Charlette fights up and they fight to the floor, where a cheap shot puts Ellering in trouble. Back in and Charlette stomps away, setting up a Muta Lock to keep up the pain. Ellering fights up and hits a Sling Blade into a backsplash, followed by a fall away slam for two. Hirsch and Robyn get into it on the floor...and Maria grabs Ellering's leg. Then Ellering hits the Boss Woman Slam for the pin at 6:28.

Rating: C. Hey look: they're still making Maria, one of the better managers they have available, do the same stuff that

hasn't been interesting for months. I'm sure this will lead to some big turning point in the story which will in no way be reversed a few weeks later. Other than that, a decent power match here, but the story has been moving in slow motion for months now and this didn't help things.

Taya Valkyrie is happy with her win and Johnny TV calls Dalton Castle a pigeon instead of a peacock.

We look at Johnny TV costing Dalton Castle his chance at the TV Title at Final Battle.

Castle is crushed at his loss and blames Johnny TV. Vengeance is sworn as this is one of the few moving stories around here right now.

Outrunners vs. Action Andretti/Darius Martin vs. Infantry

Bravo, Andretti and Magnum start things off with a bit of posing. Some rapid tags give us Floyd vs. Andretti as apparently we're going one on one here. Everything breaks down and the Outrunners are taken down, with Floyd being sent into Magnum in the corner. Dean misses a top rope splash though and the Outrunners get to stomp away.

A double slam gets two on Dean but Floyd gets crotched on top. That's enough for Bravo to come in and clean house as everything breaks down. Boot Camp is broken up and Floyd gives Bravo a side slam. Floyd kicks Magnum low by mistake though, allowing Andretti to hit a running shooting star press for the pin at 8:22.

Rating: C+. As has been the case or weeks, this was a multi team match with one team managing to scramble and get a pin. As has been the case for nearly four months now, the Tag Team Titles are nowhere in sight, meaning these wins don't really mean much. They can keep dangling the carrot of a Tag Team Title shot in front of all of these teams but it doesn't matter if that carrot never actually comes to pass.

Maria Kanellis-Bennett is excited about the Women's TV Title but Leyla Hirsch and Rachael Ellering come in to yell at her about what happened. Hirsch doesn't want any part of this so Maria tells her to see how it goes without her help. Ellering and Hirsch both want the new title.

Spanish Announce Project/Griff Garrison/Cole Karter vs. Dalton Castle/The Boys/Gravity

Gravity and Serpenticos start things off with Gravity working on the arm. The Boys come in for a double arm takedown but it's off to Garrison to take over on Brent's arm. Garrison gets slammed down though and the diving tag brings in Castle to clean house. A Serpenticos cheap shot takes Castle down by the leg and the triple teaming is on. Castle is back up with a broken up Bang A Rang attempt, leaving Gravity and the Boys to hit stereo dives. The Bang A Rang finishes Garrison at 7:02.

Rating: C+. Another fun match as the show is at least picking up a bit near the end. Castle gets a win back after his loss at Final Battle, with the Johnny TV showdown on the way. Other than that, Garrison and Karter continue their up and down run as I continue to try to find out why they're supposed to be interesting in the slightest.

Jack Cartwheel/Gringo Loco vs. El Hijo de Vikingo/Komander

Loco and Vikingo start things off with Vikingo flipping to his feet off a headscissors. The standoff means it's off to Komander vs. Cartwheel, with neither being able to get anywhere. Komander sends Cartwheel to the floor but it's too early for the dive. Instead they kick each other in the face for a double knockdown, meaning the others can come over. Back in and Cartwheel hits a slingshot splash for two, followed by a sliding dropkick into a reverse sitout powerbomb.

Cartwheel's standing moonsault gets two but Komander is over for the tag off to Vikingo. Everything breaks down down and Vikingo hits the dive to the floor, only to miss a frog splash

back inside. Vikingo is right back with a top rope legdrop to knock Cartwheel out of the ropes. Loco is back in with a torture rack faceplant to Vikingo but Komander is back in with a super poisonrana. Cielito Lindo finishes Loco at 9:22.

Rating: B-. They did save the best for last as this was another popcorn match with everyone going 80 miles per hour. Nothing else on the show was going to follow this and it gave the fans a big boost to wrap things up. Vikingo continues to be incredibly entertaining and Komander is good for some big spots while Loco and Cartwheel were fine opponents. Not a memorable match, but nice after the rather dull card leading up to it.

Overall Rating: C-. You might have heard me say this but it was the same stuff we always get. If not for the recaps, there would be no reason to believe that this was the follow up to the biggest show of the year. It was the same bunch of wrestlers trading opponents with most of the matches going longer than they needed to. The problem with this Ring Of Honor is still the same thing that it has been for the better part of ever: there is zero reason for the show to be this long with this many people included.

There were multiple matches that could have been dropped without any significant value being lost. These wrestlers' careers are not going to fall apart if they're not here eight out of nine weeks and just having them around again and again doesn't make them more interesting. This was a very Ring Of Honor show and I mean that about as negatively as I can.

Results

Von Erichs b. Workhorsemen – Moonsault to Drake

Athena b. Mona World – 0 Face

Dante Martin b. Lee Johnson – Spinning full nelson slam

Lance Archer/Righteous b. Iron Savages/Jacked Jameson – Autumn Sunshine to Jameson

Taya Valkyrie b. Vertvixen – Curb stomp

Rachael Ellering b. Charlette Renegade – Boss Woman Slam
Action Andretti/Darius Martin b. Outrunners and Infantry –
Running shooting star press to Floyd
Dalton Castle/The Boys/Gravity b. Spanish Announce Team/Griff
Garrison/Cole Karter – Bang A Rang to Garrison
Komander/El Hijo de Vikingo b. Jack Cartwheel/Gringo Loco –
Cielito Lindo to Loco

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