

Ring of Honor TV – October 28, 2015: Even Better Than Bullwinkle

Ring of Honor

Date: October 29, 2015

Location: Shrine Auditorium, San Antonio, Texas

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, Nigel McGuinness

Last week was a good show for ROH as they addressed several stories while also giving us some good action. Tonight we have some fallout from last week with the Kingdom facing ReDRagon/Michael Elgin in a six man which has some potential. We're also getting the return of Dalton Castle for the first time since he lost the Boys. Let's get to it.

Just like last week the announcers' audio is really low and I can barely understand them to start. They talk about King Corino facing repercussions for their actions last week.

Donovan Dijak vs. Moose

Dijak's shoulder blocks don't work early on so Stokely Hathaway tells Moose to go for it, meaning it's a big dropkick to put Dijak on the floor. That's fine with Dijak who chokeslams Moose onto the apron and follows with an Asai moonsault of all things (ok so he hit Moose's shoulder but it still looked cool).

Back in and Moose headbutts him in the chest and dropkicks Dijak to the floor, followed by a suicide dive. Men this size should not be able to do these kind of things so easily. Moose scores with a bicycle kick but walks into a chokebreaker for two. Feast Your Eyes is broken up so Moose casually runs up the corner and comes off with a spinning kick to the face. The spear ends Dijak at 4:42.

Rating: C+. Well that worked. Yeah it was a spot fest but guys this young being able to do this kind of stuff isn't normal. Moose looked like an

athletic freak out there and Dijak showed why he's considered such a top prospect. This was really fun stuff and I was impressed by a lot of what Moose did, even if it didn't look as crisp as it could have.

Dalton Castle vs. Cedric Alexander

Castle is just in a t-shirt and trunks and Alexander is banged up from All-Star Extravaganza. Alexander pokes him in the chest to start but Dalton grabs him with a t-bone suplex. He deadlifts Cedric off the mat and then throws him right back down in a surprising display of strength. Veda Scott has to intervene by grabbing Dalton's leg and Alexander gets in a kick to the face to take over. Chops just seem to tick Castle off and he catches a springboard in midair. Alexander gets kicked in the face and the Bat-A-Rang puts him away at 3:35.

Rating: D+. This is the kind of character evolution that works best in wrestling. Castle has a reason to be all angry and aggressive and it gets him away from the over the top style while still letting him showcase his charisma. That opens more doors for Castle going forward and was a very necessary adjustment for his career.

Post match Veda yells at Nigel for putting Alexander in an unsafe working environment and caused her unfair distress. Lawsuits are promised.

Here are Truth Martini and Jay Lethal with something to say. The fans chant for AJ Styles but Martini says that's not his name. Cue Roderick Strong and please for all things good and holy don't let him talk. Roderick congratulates Lethal on beating him the last time they "faced" but he shakes Martini's hand because he's the only reason Lethal has those titles. Lethal is livid so Strong gets right to the point: he wants one more match. They yell at each other a lot and you can hear the Flair in Lethal's voice.

Lethal tells Nigel (remember that he's the boss) to get in the ring and explain this to Strong. McGuinness says it's true that AJ Styles is already the #1 contender to the World Title.....but there currently isn't a #1 contender to the TV Title. The match is quickly made for some point in the future and both guys react as you would expect. This worked far better than I was expecting as Strong seems to work better live instead

of on tape.

We look back at the first four matches in the best of five series between ACH and Matt Sydal. The final match will be at Survival of the Fittest.

Kingdom vs. Michael Elgin/ReDRagon

It's the brawl you would expect to start with Fish diving onto Bennett and Cole, leaving Kyle to grab an armbreaker on Taven over the top rope. Elgin dives on Bennett and Cole as well as McGuinness swoons over Maria (yep). Back in and Elgin Germans Taven into an armbreaker from Kyle as we take a break. It's back to Elgin holding Taven in a delayed vertical suplex with Bennett's kicks having no effect. Fish comes in but goes after Cole, allowing Bennett to superkick him into Taven's enziguri for two.

The Kingdom starts their triple teaming, complete with a fake tag for bad measure. Bennett catapults Fish into a forearm from Cole, followed by a top rope elbow from Taven for two. Taven: "This is why we're tag champs. Because we're really good." A high cross body gets two more but the fans chant for the Young Bucks. Off to Cole for a chinlock and we take a second break. Back with Fish avoiding a triple superkick and suplexing Taven into the corner. The hot tag brings in Elgin for a BIG MIKE chant.

Taven breaks up a superplex attempt so Elgin powerslams both he and Bennett at the same time for two. Bennett's kicks to the face have no effect on Elgin (gah) so it's off to Kyle for a top rope double missile dropkick. Everything breaks down and Fish drives Taven into the barricade. Taven is thrown inside for the rapid fire ReDRagon offense, followed by a wheelbarrow suplex for two on Bennett. Elgin takes a double superkick but Fish breaks up the spike piledriver. A buckle bomb sends Bennett into Taven in the corner and Chasing the Dragon puts Bennett away at 15:49.

Rating: B-. This was your fun ROH style main event with a lot of insanity but just enough coherence to keep track of what was going on. The ending is fine and keeps ReDRagon on the Kingdom's trail while also keeping Cole vs. Kyle fresh for later. Elgin is an interesting addition as he doesn't really have anyone in the Kingdom to feud with but maybe he and Cole

fight later. Or he's just there to fill in a spot.

Cole lays out ReDRagon post match and the Kingdom goes to leave. Kyle wants Cole next week but Cole is already busy with AJ Styles. Not a problem according to Nigel, who makes it a triple threat.

Overall Rating: C+. I had a good time with this show as they've definitely found a groove and know how to keep me entertained for an hour without getting bored. This show doesn't feel like it goes by as fast as NXT but it's still an easy hour to sit through with some fun action and tolerable promos. Good show this week and we should be hitting Glory By Honor soon.

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Ring of Honor TV – October 21, 2015: Well Done ROH

Ring of Honor

Date: October 21, 2015

Location: Shrine Auditorium, San Antonio, Texas

Commentators: King Corino, Kevin Kelly

We're in the middle of the regular taping cycle before we move on to the Glory By Honor tapings which are bigger than the regular shows, which could make for some entertaining TV in the coming weeks. Tonight's big attraction is a statement from the Kingdom after they won the Tag Team Titles at All-Star Extravaganza. Let's get to it.

Addiction vs. All Night Express

The Express claims that they're the rightful Tag Team Champions as they never actually lost them a few years ago. Sabin is at ringside, throwing pieces of paper at Titus during the handshake. Kazarian and King get things going with Kenny backdropping him over the top and out onto Sabin. For some reason this earns him an ejection and the distraction lets the Express double team Kazarian and then Daniels as well. Some heroes.

Daniels gets punched in the face a few times before Daniels adds a nice spinwheel kick to the face. Kazarian rakes Titus' eyes from the apron and we take a break. During the break we get a promo from Jay Briscoe for his No DQ match against Adam Page tonight. Jay is sorry that Page has hit the biggest bump there is in the road but Page is going to be a better man for it. Back with Daniels suplexing Kazarian onto Titus and covering with a boot on the chest.

We hit a front facelock for a bit until Titus dropkicks King into the corner and dives over for the tag off to King as the pace goes way up. Everything breaks down and a High/Low drops King. A springboard spinning legdrop gets two on Titus but he collides with Daniels to put all four down. King throws Kazarian with a suplex but Titus walks into a release Rock Bottom. Cue a guy in a red mask to distract Daniels from making the pin though, allowing the Express to catch Daniels in a powerbomb/Blockbuster combo for the pin at 10:10.

Rating: C+. This was a nice way to establish that the Express is back and another player in the tag division. The tag teams have been one of the strongest points around here in recent months and another talented team isn't going to hurt that a bit. The Kingdom is the kind of act that doesn't need to win most of the time and they're still going to be over, though the red mask thing isn't working for me.

Here's the Kingdom in full with something to say. Bennett tells a story about a farmer and a snake. One day the snake asked the farmer to keep him warm, so the farmer put the snake close to his chest. Then the snake bit the farmer because he's a snake and that's what he does. Maria says she's the manager of the greatest wrestling faction in history and even though she has to work in a male dominated industry, she doesn't have to play by a man's rules.

Taven talks about a vision the four of them had of them all standing next to each other with gold around their waists. That means the Kingdom will not rest until Adam Cole is World Heavyweight Champion once again. Cole turned his back on Kyle O'Reilly because Kyle doesn't belong anywhere near the World Title.

It was clear that Cole was always a step better and not hearing his name listed among the top contenders for the World Title made him sick. He was behind people like Michael Elgin who had to go all the way to Japan to become relevant again. Cue ReDRagon but security holds them back. Fish says it's a matter of time before they're the Tag Team Champions again but first of all they're coming for Cole. Adam laughs it off because of the numbers advantage but here's Elgin to clean house on his own. The six man is set for some point in the future.

The Kingdom looked good here but it's clear that there are a lot of weak promos in ROH right now. Cole and maybe Maria were the only ones to sound competent on the mic here as the rest sounded like a bunch of amateurs. The feud is fine though and Kingdom is a pretty solid stable, even though ROH has too many of them at any given time.

Inside ROH focuses on Silas Young vs. Dalton Castle and the Boys being turned into men by Young, much to Castle's dismay. We see most of the Boys getting squashed last week as this is getting a lot more time than it needs.

Adam Cole is ready for AJ Styles in two weeks because it's a different Cole than the one that Styles has beaten twice already.

The Kingdom vs. Elgin/ReDRagon will be next week.

Jay Briscoe vs. Adam Page

No holds barred. Whitmer joins commentary to drive Corino even crazier than usual. Page comes in with a banged up shoulder. Adam makes the mistake of slapping him in the face during the handshake so Jay kicks him in the jaw and clotheslines him out to the floor. Jay loads up a suicide dive but goes head first into a chair instead, giving Adam an unexpected advantage. It's table time but Briscoe pelts a chair at Adam's head to put him down again.

They head inside and Whitmer tries to slip Page the crutch but Mark Briscoe takes it away and leaves. Page DDT's Jay through an open chair for two and we take a break. Back with Page choking in the corner and telling Jay to say his name (remember that Briscoe said he had no idea who Page was a few weeks back). Jay sidesteps a charge and the bad shoulder goes into the post, knocking Page right onto the table for a double stomp from the apron.

The arguing announcers wish that they would lose their voices as Jay slowly destroys Page. Back inside and the chair is wrapped around Page's throat for a neckbreaker. Normally that would end things but Jay would rather get another table (which he has to rid of the stupid streamers). The fans want Jay to save the tables because, as usual, ROH wants to be different from WWE but goes along with all its good stuff. Adam grabs a pumphandle slam to send Jay through the table in an act of survival.

We take another break and come back with Jay not being able to hit the Jay Driller off the apron and through a table. Adam sets up yet another table but flips into a discus forearm to the head. Neither guy can hit their finisher off the apron through a table (because it would probably kill them) so Jay crowns him with a chair before actually hitting the Driller through the table (fans: "YOU JUST KILLED HIM!") for.....TW0??? That actually made my eyes pop open. Page slaps him in the face and scores with a kick to the jaw as Whitmer and Corino argue again. Another Jay Driller gives Briscoe the pin at 16:26.

Rating: B+. It takes a lot to surprise me in wrestling but they actually got me on that near fall. That's going to go a long way for Page who

doesn't have a lot going for him but that's one of those moments that people can talk about for a long time with him. Briscoe should have won here and the match can end this mini feud for him with both guys looking good, especially considering this was a squash on paper.

Post match Whitmer beats on Briscoe with the crutch. Corino gets in the ring, takes off his jacket, and punches out Whitmer with a roll of quarters. Steve hugs Kevin Kelly and leaves, likely without his job due to getting physical.

Overall Rating: B-. This was a solid show and a good use of an hour as several stories were covered and some matches were set up for the future. It's a rare thing to see this show use its time so well but it worked well here and the result was an entertaining hour of wrestling TV. Check out the main event if you have time as it's quite the brawl.

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Ring of Honor TV – September 16, 2015: You Might Want To

Check Those Blueprints

Ring of Honor

Date: September 16, 2015

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: King Corino, Kevin Kelly

It's the go home show for All-Star Extravaganza but that means a few different things in Ring of Honor due to their taping schedule. We'll hear about the upcoming show, but it's not clear how much of the show is going to be spent hyping Friday's show. These shows have settled into a nice groove lately and hopefully it continues tonight. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

House of Truth vs. ReDRagon

Dijak/Diesel for the House of Truth with Lethal and Martini at ringside. Lethal is defending both his titles against Fish and O'Reilly on Friday so this makes sense. The champ is even sitting in on commentary for a not very rare treat. We actually get handshakes to start before Kyle and Diesel get things going. They slug it out to start and Diesel, a Golden Gloves boxer, is throwing forearms. So much for common sense.

A big slap to the face puts Diesel down and Kyle grabs a cross armbreaker. It's way too early for that to work though so it's off to Fish for some kicks to Diesel's chest. A double kick to the chest gets two on Diesel as Dijak is totally content to stay on the apron for all of this. He finally adds a knee to Kyle's back to take over, only to chase Kyle to the floor where Fish gets in some shots to the ribs.

Back in and Dijak catches Kyle's cross body and throws him over the top like a doll. We come back from a break with Dijak throwing Kyle across the ring with a big release suplex. There's something to be said about a big strong guy throwing small opponents around. You don't see it very often in ROH, which makes it even better. A springboard elbow gets two for Donovan but Kyle flips out of a belly to back suplex and fires off his strikes.

Fish comes in to strike away on Diesel and everything breaks down. ReDRagon take turns kicking Dijak's knees until he goes down and Kyle puts Diesel in an ankle lock. Dijak comes back in and slugs away but the hold isn't broken. I rather like that idea for a change. With Fish throwing Dijak in a sleeper, Kyle adds a grapevine to the ankle lock and Diesel taps at 8:43.

Rating: C+. This was better than I was expecting with the story making the match work better. Lethal has reason to be scared of ReDRagon already and now he can see what they're capable of. Dijak is a beast though and has a ton of potential. I get a kind of Dino Bravo vibe out of Diesel and that's a very good role for someone to play.

The Briscoes are ready for any mystery team on Friday, including Godzilla and King Kong. That's not much of a team though as they would wind up fighting each other. Mark really needs to think this through better.

Dalton Castle vs. Cedric Alexander

Silas Young is on commentary before his match with Castle on Friday. Cedric celebrates an early armdrag, sending the Boys over to fan Castle off. Back up and Dalton can't get an O'Connor roll but he lands on his feet to freak Cedric out for some reason. That wasn't really surprising but wrestling heels are often stupid. Castle crotches himself in the corner and a big kick to the head knocks him silly.

Back from a break with Cedric still in control until he charges into a boot in the corner. Everything heads outside with Castle not being able to send him into the post. Instead it's something like a 619 under the apron into a hurricanrana to take Cedric down. Nice spot. Back in and a belly to belly gets two for Castle but Cedric kicks him in the head. That's fine with Dalton as he powers Cedric up into a German suplex for two. Silas goes after the Boys though, allowing Cedric to grab a rollup for the pin at 12:24.

Rating: C-. This was all story again but the entertainment level wasn't as high as it was in the opener. Castle vs. Young is a simple story and that's all it needs to be. Both guys play their roles very well and either ending having a lot of possibilities. The match was nothing great

here but it did its job.

Moose comes out to spear Cedric.

Kingdom vs. War Machine

As usual, I tend to forget anything else going on when Maria shows up. Just....good night. Bennett and Taven for the Kingdom here. Their early superkicks have no effect on Hanson and Rowe and the power guys start by double teaming Taven. We settle down to Hanson side slamming Taven before Rowe comes in for a double slam. Bennett gets in and is immediately planted with a double release belly to back.

Maria comes in and grabs Hanson's hair but gets placed on top of Bennett in the corner. Taven saves her from getting forearmed and hits a Disaster kick off the barricade to drop Hanson as we take a break. Back with the Kingdom keeping Hanson in trouble in the corner. That lasts as long as two guys can keep a monster like Hanson in trouble though as he comes back with a reverse powerslam and makes the tag to Rowe. A massive release Boss Man Slam plants Taven and everything breaks down.

War Machine easily catches both dives to the floor and powerbombs Bennett onto Taven. That looked good. Back in and Hanson and Taven trade cartwheels in a pretty stupid bit. Taven enziguris Hanson down and gets two off a Lionsault. How Jerichoish of him. Rowe comes back in for the Path of Resistance but Maria grabs Hanson's leg. Cue the Young Bucks to pull her off the apron, leaving Bennett to take a double chokeslam. Fallout is enough to put Taven away at 14:38.

Rating: C-. More storytelling but at least Hanson and Rowe were there to throw the Kingdom all over the place. Maria continues to be the star of the team and that's exactly what she's supposed to be. I'm sure we'll have some post match stuff with the Addiction because that's how wrestling works.

The Bucks superkick Bennett down but the KRD (Addiction/Chris Sabin) come in with belt shots. Makes sense.

A long All-Star Extravaganza video takes us out.

Overall Rating: C. This show was different from most go home shows as they talked about the matches, but it went from the World Title to the midcard matches to the Tag Team Title match. Other than that the rest of Friday's card was basically ignored, but there's only so much you can do in an hour of TV a week. It's entertaining enough though and the wrestling was fine, but I'm a bit less interested in seeing the pay per view than I was coming in.

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Ring of Honor TV – September 9, 2015: Where They Shine

Ring of Honor

Date: September 9, 2015

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: King Corino, Kevin Kelly

This is a special show as we have a pair of title matches with the Young Bucks challenging the Addiction for the Tag Team Titles and World Champion Jay Lethal defending against Roderick Strong in a rematch from their pay per view draw. This is where Ring of Honor is supposed to shine so let's see how good they can be. Let's get to it.

Truth Martini and Jay Lethal say Strong has already had his shot so this is his final chance for the title.

Strong says he's Mr. Ring of Honor because he wrestles as hard as he can every time he's out there. There will be a winner tonight and he'll be the new World Champion. Good night please get this guy a mouthpiece.

Opening sequence.

Tag Team Titles: Young Bucks vs. Addiction

The Addiction is defending. Sabin is at ringside with Kazarian and Daniels. The Bucks double superkick Daniels during the big match intros and the champs are in early trouble. Matt tosses Nick into a dropkick to put Daniels down again but Sabin pulls Kaz to the floor for a save. That goes badly as well with Sabin superkicking Daniels by mistake, earning him an early ejection. He tries to run back in but gets a double superkick for his efforts.

Kazarian gets kicked off the apron again as we're still waiting on this to get down to a regular tag match. There's a superkick to Daniels but Kazarian shoves Nick off the top to finally take over. Back from a break with Daniels pounding on Matt and dropping him with a gutbuster. We hit the waistlock on Matt to stay on the ribs and Daniels throws his feet on the ropes because he knows how to be a heel.

Matt comes back with a top rope flip into a Stunner (so much for the ribs) and makes the tag off to Nick. The slingshot X Factor gets two on Kaz and a Cannonball sets up the Swanton Bomb as Kaz is draped over the ropes for two. Daniels comes back in for the save for a release Rock Bottom but the BME hits knees. Kaz slingshots Nick into a cutter but Matt kicks his head off to put everyone down. It's Addiction up first and a downward spiral puts Matt down, followed by a choke but here's the Kingdom to go after Nick.

That goes nowhere as the Bucks get back up for a buckle bomb into an enziguri. The Meltzer Driver plants Kaz but Daniels makes the save, only to blame it on the Kingdom. The referee goes after the Kingdom, allowing Daniels to hit Nick with the title. Matt takes it away and cleans house

with the belt until Maria takes it away. The distraction lets Kaz grab a quick rollup for the pin to retain at 13:50.

Rating: B. This was fun but could have been great had there not been quite as much interference. Still though, the Bucks are tailor made for this kind of a promotion and the Addiction are able to back up their antics in the ring. Either way, this was a very fun match and some of the Bucks' stuff defies physics. I wouldn't call this a well done match, but it was incredibly entertaining and that's very good as well.

Wait a second though as cue Nigel McGuinness who says that's not happening on his watch. Since the Bucks just got ripped off, let's add them to All-Star Extravaganza on September 18 in San Antonio.

ROH World Title: Jay Lethal vs. Roderick Strong

Lethal is defending and has the entire House of Truth with him. The fans are split as the guys shake hands because being a heel means nothing in this company. They slug it out to start until Lethal kicks Strong out to the floor. The champ scores with a suicide dive but Strong runs back in for a great looking dropkick as we take a break.

Back with Strong sending Jay into the barricade but Roderick has to fight off the House of Truth, allowing Jay to get in a superkick. We hit the chinlock back inside before Lethal's fireman's carry into Snake Eyes staggers Strong again. It's back to the chinlock as Roderick is bleeding a bit from the forehead.

Jay finally mixes things up a bit by sending Strong to the floor so the House of Truth can get in some cheap shots as we take another break. Back again with Strong hitting a quick backbreaker, followed by a string of chops in the corner. Lethal blocks another backbreaker out of the corner but Strong starts running the ropes and hitting a quick elbow to the face every time.

Strong misses a jumping knee to the face and the Lethal Combination gets two. The champ's superplex is broken up and Roderick drops a top rope elbow for two of his own. The announcers start talking about Bill Belichick for some point that takes far too long to get to as the guys

chop it out again. There's the jumping knee to the head and Lethal is staggered.

Strong's superplex connects but Jay grabs a small package out of nowhere for two. The jumping knee to the face is no sold (oh here we go) and Lethal loads up the Lethal Injection but gets countered by the Sick Kick for two and we take a third break. Back one more time with the referee taking the Book of Truth out of the ring, allowing Strong to hit another pair of knees to the face. Lethal comes back with two more superkicks and a belt shot. The Lethal Injection gets two and the fans are WAY into this. I believe the seventh superkick of the match sets up a second Lethal Injection to retain Jay's title at 25:12.

Rating: B. This is an interesting case as it's a more exciting and better match than the Tag Team Title match but my goodness the repetitiveness of the superkicks and jumping knees really held this back. There's other stuff you can do and it makes the match feel like a video game where you find a single move that works and keep doing it over and over. The drama was solid, but mix that stuff up again. Also, stop no selling a jumping knee to the face, especially when the same move knocked you silly thirty seconds earlier. Not only are you not Hulk Hogan, you're a heel. No selling is a face idea, not for the guy you're booing.

ReDRagon comes out to stare Lethal down to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. Like I said, this was supposed to be where Ring of Honor shined and they did that here. This felt like a big preview for All-Star Extravaganza and it's a good idea to set up the bigger matches here and give the fans a preview. There are still some things on here that get on my nerves but it could be a lot worse. Fun hour of wrestling here which really did feel like something different than WWE and TNA, which could be seen as a major compliment.

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Ring of Honor TV Results – August 26, 2015: I Think I Get It

Ring of Honor

Date: August 26, 2015

Location: William J. Myers Pavilion, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Steve Corino, Kevin Kelly

This is a good time for ROH as their shows have been getting better over time with the focus shifting to the Tag Team Titles, which is a nice change of pace after Jay Lethal receiving so much of the focus due to having both titles. I'm hoping things stay on the mini roll they've had for the last few weeks so let's get to it.

Steve Corino is back and says his issues with BJ Whitmer are over.

Bloodbound Warriors vs. Briscoes

The Warriors, Gray Wolf and Red Scorpion, look like the Legion of Doom crossed with the Ascension. Jay and Wolf get things going and this is one of the most bizarre looking matches you'll ever see. A shoulder doesn't do much to Gray and Jay likes this challenge a little bit more. Wolf gets smart by grabbing the beard but eats a boot to the face. It only knocks him into the corner though so it's off to Mark vs. Red.

Scorpion slams Mark over the top, sending him head first into the top rope and onto the apron to make things even worse. Wolf throws Mark hard into the barricade as this has been one sided so far. Back in and a double flapjack gets two on Mark but he flips over to Jay to pick things up. Everything quickly breaks down and Jay dives on Wolf, leaving Mark to strut around, only to get flipped over the top and outside as well. Back inside and a Death Valley Driver gets two on Scorpion, followed by the Froggy Bow from Mark and a wicked lariat from Jay for the pin at 4:24

Rating: C+. I liked this a lot more than I was expecting to as the Warriors got to show off for a bit against the best team in the history of the promotion. That's something I like to see out of matches at this level: letting the team who is way out of their league look good for a bit instead of just beating them in a few minutes. Not bad.

Post match here's the Decade to call out Jay Briscoe in person. Jay says he doesn't know who Page is but they can do this right now. Whitmer says not so fast because they can do it next week. Jay says it's on.

Jay Lethal and Truth Martini are ready for Hanson next week. Martini: "Next week you'll be gone in an mmmboop."

Donovan Dijak vs. Roderick Strong

This is a way for the House of Truth to soften Strong up before his impending World Title shot. Dijak shoves Strong down to start and chops the skin off his chest, which actually doesn't get a WOO. That's such a nice change of pace. Strong comes back with a dropkick but a fireman's carry doesn't work on the huge Dijak. A kick to the head staggers Donovan but Strong has to avoid a shot from the Book of Truth, allowing Dijak to knock him to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Dijak throwing Strong down for two before catching him in mid air and tossing him to the mat ala Titus O'Neil. Strong finally scores with a loud dropkick for two but he still can't lift Dijak. Why bother trying if you couldn't earlier on? I mean, you're not exactly Hulk Hogan dude. Strong fights out of a torture rack and manages an Angle Slam to get a breather. Dijak is sat on the top and eventually superplexed for two. A huge boot to the face gets the same on Strong but he comes back

with the fireman's carry into the gutbuster, followed by a Sick Kick for the pin at 10:48.

Rating: B-. I liked this well enough but they never could quite break through to the next level. Dijak has the potential to be something good but needs some more experience, which is the case for so many people in this company. Good enough match, but I'm not wild on Strong's offense a lot of the time. It's not bad, but it doesn't seem like something that would ever blow me away.

The House of Truth comes in for the beatdown until War Machine makes the save. I smell a six man.

Tag Team Titles: Future Shock vs. Addiction

Addiction is defending and Corino freaks out over the Future Shock reunion. Chris Sabin is on commentary and Daniels is in a military uniform. Cole and Daniels get things going as Sabin talks about having mutant healing powers. Adam headlocks Daniels on the mat but gets stomped down on the mat and then in the corner for a change of pace. Kyle gets the tag and some slick double teaming gets two on Daniels as we take a break.

Back with O'Reilly kicking Kazarian in the face for two before tagging Cole back in. A big superkick puts Daniels on the floor and Cole loads up his signature shout, but Kyle stops him to turn it into a FUTURE SHOCK instead. Kazarian kicks Cole off the top so Daniels can send him into the barricade a few times to really take over. A slingshot legdrop gets two for Kazarian but Cole finally scores with an enziguri to break the momentum. Corino: "YOU CAN DO IT! I BELIEVE IN YOU!"

Ever the veteran though, Daniels runs around and pulls Kyle to the floor to break up the tag attempt. Cole slaps on the figure four (after a few failed attempts) until Kazarian turns it over. Kyle comes in and puts Kazarian in an armbar but Daniels comes in as well to throw O'Reilly in a Koji Clutch. Why any of these people would think the submissions would count is beyond me but wrestlers are dumb sometimes.

We take another break and come back with Kyle dropkicking the Addiction

down and firing off a series of strikes to Daniels. There's a cross armbreaker to Kazarian and a knee bar to Daniels as he tries to make a save. Future Shock mostly misses a clothesline/legsweep combo to Daniels, who kicks Cole low behind the referee's back. Kyle gets two off a tornado DDT into a brainbuster.

Kyle puts Kazarian in a cross armbreaker for the tap out but the Kingdom comes out for a distraction. Matt Taven superkicks Kyle to give Kazarian two but Cole sees Maria interfere, finally realizing what's going on. Cole goes after the Kingdom, leaving Kyle alone to take Celebrity Rehab for the pin at 14:33.

Rating: B-. More good tag wrestling around here and any match where I get to look at Maria is a good thing. The tag division is the best thing going in ROH right now and it's nice to see one of those teams actually getting a shot instead of just having the contenders fighting each other all the time.

Bobby Fish and the Young Bucks run in for the save but the Kingdom comes back in to make it a huge brawl. The Bucks hit stereo dives and soak in the cheers to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This was pretty easily the best show since they debuted on Destination America with an hour of solid wrestling, but they also advanced the stories as well as they have yet. The one thing I'd like them to work on though is doing a better job of explaining when these matches are taking place. I know there's Death Before Dishonor, All-Star Extravaganza and some TV matches coming up, but I've completely lost track of when each is taking place. Settle those things down a bit and the show gets better. Good stuff this week though.

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Ring of Honor TV – August 12, 2015: I'm Getting There

Ring of Honor

Date: August 12, 2015

Location: William J. Myers Pavilion, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: King Corino, Kevin Kelly

It's FINALLY a new batch of tapings as the show has moved from New York to Baltimore. The big story coming out of last week is the Tag Team Title situation as Future Shock reformed to take down the Addiction in a non-title match. This isn't cool with Future Shock member Adam Cole's stable the Kingdom, who will likely have something to say about this tonight. Let's get to it.

Watanabe vs. ACH

Hey, it's the guy that I still don't get but keeps getting matches on TV because he's Japanese and therefore must be awesome. They chop it out to start and Watanabe kneels down, telling ACH to chop him again. ACH obliges before kneeling down, only to have Watanabe's chops work a bit better. Back up and ACH backflips to set up a dropkick as Corino runs down the Field of Honor card. Watanabe gets kicked to the floor and a running kick to the chest from the apron puts him down again.

We take a break and come back with ACH working on the arm but getting caught in a gordbuster. A backsplash (which is becoming too common of a move these days) sets up a chinlock on ACH. That goes as far as a

chinlock can take you so ACH kicks him to the floor and hits a great looking flip dive over the top.

Back in and Watanabe's fisherman's buster is countered with a small package for two. They head outside again with ACH running up the pole to flip over, but he's stupid enough to stand there and pose, allowing Watanabe to hit a wicked overhead German suplex on the floor. A fisherman's buster gets two for Watanabe but ACH hits a brainbuster of his own, setting up the Midnight Star (450) for the pin at 9:42.

Rating: C. Well that happened. Seriously this had no impact on me whatsoever and was just nine minutes of wrestling with a commercial in the middle. Watanabe is as generic of a Japanese wrestler as I've ever seen and ACH can do flips. That doesn't make me want to see either guy again as they feel like archetypes instead of characters.

ReDRagon is ready for the Kingdom tonight but imply they drink their own urine. Very simple, old school promo here, minus the last part that is.

From earlier in the day, ROH boss Nigel McGuinness was here to make some announcements. He heard the FIVE MORE MINUTES chants at Death Before Dishonor when Roderick Strong vs. Jay Lethal went to a sixth minute draw, but the only thing that would happen in five more minutes was a serious injury.

However, it's clear that the people want to see more of these two, which means we'll see it again at the August 21 TV tapings. The winner there will take the title to All-Star Extravaganza on September 18 to defend against Kyle O'Reilly. Also at All-Star Extravaganza, Bobby Fish will face the TV Champion, whoever that may be at that time.

Dalton Castle and the Boys (as opposed to Dem Boys) pitch merchandise. This guy just breathes charisma.

House of Truth vs. War Machine

It's Diesel/Dijak for the House of Truth here with Lethal on commentary. The heels jump War Machine at the call for the Code of Honor but Hanson easily puts both of them on the top rope for some sledges to the corner.

Lethal: "TRUTH! TELL HIM TO SLOW DOWN!" Some good old fashioned double team cheating lets Dijak kick Hanson in the face and Lethal is downright giddy.

Hanson stays down as long as a monster is going to against someone like Diesel and it's quickly off to Rowe to clean house. Dijak throws Hanson down with a release suplex and Diesel adds a spear for two. War Machine's Path of Resistance crushes Dijak and Hanson's top rope splash makes it even worse. Lethal: "SLOW DOWN!!!" Fallout (a belly to back suplex/top rope guillotine legdrop) ends Diesel at 4:52. Oh and Hanson is facing Lethal for the TV Title in a few weeks. This match makes so much more sense all of a sudden.

Rating: C. I had fun with this as there's always room for a Legion of Doom style team to destroy various people, especially someone as pesky as Diesel. Lethal was more entertaining on commentary than he was for years imitating people and I can kind of see the massive appeal he carries. Granted that's likely to end as soon as I really don't care for his matches.

Tim Hughes vs. Adam Page

This is the only match I can ever find listed for Hughes. Fans: "LET'S GO JOBBER!" The Rite of Passage ends Hughes in 24 seconds.

BJ Whitmer yells at ROH for giving Page such an easy opponent. Page calls out Jay Briscoe, much to Kelly's shock. As luck would have it, Briscoe isn't here. With that going nowhere, Whitmer yells at King Corino but Nigel comes out to say cut it out. The fans, ever bloodthirsty, say LET THEM FIGHT.

Back from a break with King Corino off commentary and Kelly going solo. We see a clip of Corino nearly killing Whitmer last week to show where this came from. I always appreciate stuff like that as not everyone saw the previous show, so let us know what's going on.

Kingdom vs. ReDRagon

Kingdom has finally lost their IWGP Tag Team Titles. Adam Cole comes out

to do commentary to a huge face reaction and Maria is freaked out. O'Reilly and Taven get things going with Kyle grabbing a headlock until Taven comes back with a great sunset flip for two. It's off to Bennett vs. Fish as we have the standard double tag. Fish kicks Bennett in the chest before it's back to Kyle for a nice double suplex. A slingshot hilo gets two for Fish and we take a break with Bennett getting low bridged to the floor.

Back with Kyle diving off the apron to take Bennett down and Fish swiveling his hips for reasons that aren't clear. Maria offers a distraction (I wonder how she pulled that off) and Taven gets in a kick to the head to take over. Cole reiterates that he's the only member of the Kingdom ready to hold the World Title as Bennett puts Kyle in a chinlock. Bennett's Thesz press with punches and a middle finger elbow are a rather bizarre including so it's off to Taven for some choking in the corner.

Kyle somehow grabs a leg bar for a breather and leg trips Taven down, setting up the hot tag to Bobby. Fish cleans house but Taven blocks the exploder suplex into the corner. The second attempt works a bit better though and Fish keeps cleaning house. Everything breaks down but Taven is able to escape Chasing the Dragon. There's a choke to Bennett instead but he spins around for a running boot from Taven.

Matt's high angle Swanton gets two on Fish and the wheelbarrow suplex gets the same for Kyle. O'Reilly eats a superkick and it's time for everyone to kick with Taven kicking Kyle into the ropes for a superkick from Bennett. Hail Mary (spike piledriver) on the floor crushes Kyle again and Cole isn't happy. Back in and Fish tries to go it alone but Taven kicks him in the face, setting up another Hail Mary for the pin at 14:04.

Rating: C+. This got a bit too insane for my tastes but they're nailing the story at this point and I'm digging this more than almost anything else in ROH right now. Though to be fair, Maria has a lot to do with that. Good match here and you can see Cole's full on face turn (he's like 90% there already) on the horizon.

Post match the Kingdom loads up another Hail Mary but Cole comes in and says cool it, which Maria agrees with to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. I'm starting to get into the stories around here, though I'm still not wild on a lot of the wrestling stuff. The tag team situation is getting better every week as you can see where they're going with things, which as usual is a positive. The Jay Lethal stuff can work for awhile but they can only carry this on so long before the midcard starts to suffer. Good show this week though and I'm hopeful going forward.

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Ring of Honor – August 5, 2015: Taped Shows Can Work

Ring of Honor

Date: August 5, 2015

Location: Terminal 5, New York City, New York

Commentators: King Corino, Kevin Kelly

These marathon TV tapings are starting to become an issue as they're still in the same venue, even after a pay per view elsewhere and as we're

coming up on the next pay per view where the cycle starts all over again. Last week's show really didn't work for me but maybe things can pick up again in another stand alone show. Let's get to it.

Roderick Strong is in the back and talks about proving himself against Jay Lethal at Death Before Dishonor in their hour long draw. They went toe to toe for sixty minutes but Lethal couldn't beat him. Nighel McGuinness needs to understand that Lethal's next defense is a rematch with Strong. What Strong needs to understand is that he needs a mouthpiece because he just can't talk.

Opening sequence.

War Machine vs. Young Bucks

Oh joy, another match of hearing SUPERKICK over and over. It's a brawl to start with Hanson and Rowe destroying the Bucks with ease. An old Harris Twins H Bomb drops Nick and Rowe launches him over the top and onto his partner. The Bucks' stereo apron moonsaults are easily caught in midair and War Machine throws them into each other for a cool crash.

Superkicks (what else?) break up a chokeslam off the apron but Hanson shrugs off the Bucks' flippy splashes and takes them down with a double clothesline. That earns him a double superkick to the floor and Nick follows with a flip dive, only to come up lame. Back from a break with Hanson throwing Matt Jackson back inside as Nick is still down on the floor. War Machine has Matt two on one but here's AJ Styles to check on his Bullet Club teammate.

This also presents another problem with the taping schedule as Styles is still announced as the IWGP Heavyweight Champion but he lost the belt over a month ago. Matt's rollup is countered with a wicked clothesline from Hanson, but he's able to roll away when Rowe tries to powerbomb Hanson onto him. Cue Styles onto the apron as the new partner to help clean house, only to clothesline the referee down by mistake. It's superkick time with Nick Jackson running in, totally fine of course, to help out. The Styles Clash puts Rowe away at 14:12.

Rating: C. So the Young Bucks. I'm still not sure what I think of them as

the idea of being cool heels is played out but well done, but at the same time, I really don't like the huge wink at the camera and breaking of the fourth wall as they're as close to flat out saying "yeah we're faces but saying we're cool heels and cheating to make the whole face/heel dynamic worthless." I really can't stand that kind of character but it's something you have to deal with in Ring of Honor and other similar companies as they have to try to be smarter than the fans who want "real" wrestling.

Adam Cole knows where he is in Ring of Honor after his surgery. As far as he can tell, his handshake with Kyle O'Reilly a few weeks back didn't cause any problems in the Kingdom, because he and Kyle have been friends for years. Tonight's match is about respect.

Cedric Alexander vs. The Romantic Touch

Touch is a masked man and an over the top, stereotypical, uh, romantic, I believe played by Rhett Titus. Alexander dropkicks him in the corner during the entrances as Cedric's former partner Caprice Coleman is on commentary, taking issue with Cedric's recent heel turn. A big right hand drops Touch but he sends Cedric to the floor for a flip dive and pelvic thrusting. Veda Scott grabs Touch's leg though, allowing Alexander to kick the middle rope for some crotching. A belly to back suplex into a backbreaker (Lumbar Check) puts Touch away at 2:45.

Post match Veda says Cedric should be tired of waiting on his time to come. She would never lie to him and Alexander knows what she needs to him: to rip off the Touch's mask and expose him as Rhett Titus. This brings Coleman to the ring for the save but here's Moose for the real save as Cedric runs off.

Jay Lethal and Truth Martini admit that Strong took Lethal to the limit at Death Before Dishonor but now he's going back to the end of the line.

Kyle O'Reilly vs. Adam Cole

These two used to be partners in a team called Future Shock and Christopher Daniels is on commentary. They wrestle around to start and tease a superkick, because that's the one move you always get in Ring of

Honor. Kyle grabs a headlock on the mat (fans: "HEADLOCK CITY!") and takes Adam over with another one for good measure as we take a break. Back with Kyle headlocking Adam down a third time.

Cole flips to the apron but Kyle grabs him by the head and drags him back inside. Adam's belly to back suplex still can't break the headlock so Cole bails to the floor. That earns him another headlock with Kyle DIVING off the apron to grab the hold again. Well at least they're trying something different. Cole goes after Daniels for no apparent reason, drawing Daniels in for the no contest at 8:24.

Rating: D+. The headlock thing was an idea and was actually getting entertaining by the end but then they cut the match short to set up the post match stuff. That's fine in this case as they were talking about respect so not really going after each other makes sense. These two probably could have a good match with time and an ending but they got cut off here.

Kazarian comes down to help Daniels but Kyle gets back in and Future Shock clears the ring. Cole says they're tired of this nonsense from the Addiction, so why not settle it right now?

Addiction vs. Future Shock

Non-title. Cole grabs a neckbreaker on Kazarian to start before backdropping Daniels (in street clothes). It's off to Kyle for some chops and kicks to the chest as Future Shock is already rolling with their tandem offense. We take a break and come back with Daniels begging off from Kyle and getting hit in the face for his efforts. Addiction finally takes over and gets to double team for a change with Kazarian suplexing O'Reilly down for no cover.

A running flip neckbreaker drops Kyle again as we're into an old school tag formula here, which is probably why I'm enjoying this as much as I am. Kyle manages to crotch Daniels, allowing the hot(ish) tag to Cole. A Shining Wizard gets two on Daniels and it's time for a Figure Four but Kazarian makes the save with a springboard legdrop. For those days when a regular legdrop just doesn't do it you see. Addiction's powerbomb/neckbreaker combo puts Kyle down but Cole rolls Daniels up for

the surprise pin at 8:37.

Rating: C+. I liked the ending here as the wrestlers beat the cocky team when the cocky team started showboating a bit too much. Cole as a face has potential but I'm hoping they keep ReDragon together for a bit longer as I don't see O'Reilly as a solo act. I'm sure this sets up a title shot, which likely sets up Cole's split from the Kingdom. Nice little match here.

Chris Sabin and Bobby Fish run in to keep up the brawling with ReDragon and Cole cleaning house. The Kingdom comes out to stare down the three of them as the show ends.

Overall Rating: C+. This was a better stand alone show than last week as the stories felt like they were advanced better, with the promos from Strong and Lethal making a big difference. Sure they were just basic speeches but it made you feel like you were watching something a bit more important. The matches were all decent at worst and the talking worked well. Good enough show here as we get close to some fresh shows soon enough.

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Ring of Honor TV – July 29, 2015: The Pay Per View Problem

Ring of Honor

Date: July 29, 2015

Location: Terminal 5, New York City, New York

Commentators: King Corino, Kevin Kelly

We're now past Death Before Dishonor but TV has yet to catch up with the results. Last week was a special historical show as Ring of Honor hit two hundred episodes, leaving only an eight person tag for new wrestling. It should be interesting to see where things go tonight as we get closer to All Star Extravaganza. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Matt Taven/Michael Bennett vs. Corey Hollis/Jonathan Gresham

Taven and Bennett's IWGP Tag Team Titles aren't on the line. The jobbers (as named by the fans) get superkicked to start and Maria jumps in on commentary. Taven and Bennett destroy the guys on the floor with Bennett getting in a fan's face as he chants LET'S GO JOBBERS. They settle down in the ring with Gresham getting in a few shots until Taven kicks him in the ribs, with Maria's "see, I told you so" attitude being so perfect.

Gresham dives through the legs for a tag to Hollis, who comes in off a double missile dropkick. It doesn't last long though as a superkick sends Hollis into a spear from Taven for two with Gresham making the save. Bennett is thrown into the ropes for a snap German suplex, only to have Taven springboard in with a kick to the face. They're doing a good job here at the false hope spots. Hail Mary (Maria's real name and a spike piledriver) ends Hollis at 4:27.

Rating: C-. Maria gets better every time she's out there. The attitude of knowing she looks incredible and talking down to everyone with the bonus

of believing she's right while not sounding insulting is what Stephanie fails to be more often than not. It was also nice to let this have a few minutes instead of just having the champs crush them. Good little squash here.

Caprice Coleman vs. Bob Evans vs. Silas Young vs. Cheeseburger vs. Moose vs. Dalton Castle

Heel manager Prince Nana comes out for commentary to watch Moose, his protege, which hasn't been mentioned since they debuted on Destination America. This is one fall to a finish and going to the floor is as good as a tag. The fans favor Castle before things get going. Castle and Moose start but Evans and Cheeseburger tag in before anything can happen.

Evans tags out to Silas out of the fear of Cheeseburger (a manly vegetarian perhaps?) as we're still waiting on contact. Silas easily wins a test of strength on the tiny Cheeseburger but he rolls away and elbows Silas in the ribs to take over. As Kelly explains the Cheeseburger name (he needed to put on weight so he was told to eat cheeseburgers. That's not a very good story), Silas throws Cheeseburger to the floor, meaning Coleman can come in legally and take a shoulder block.

We take a break and come back with Moose splashing Young in the corner. Coleman hurricanranas Young off the top but Evans shoves him out to the floor. More people are shoved out until it's Castle and Silas left alone, only to have Castle take too much time strutting and get nailed in the back of the head (there's no way I can say nailed from behind and not get a bunch of jokes).

Castle slaps on a chinlock (that's a rare sight in ROH) but Dalton's boys wave him back to his feet. A quick suplex puts Young down but Evans tags himself in, only to walk into a backdrop from Dalton. Off to Moose to clean house, including throwing Cheeseburger onto Evans, allowing Coleman to hit a flip dive onto both of them. Young breaks up a Moose dive (that could be awesome to see) but we do get Moose dropkicking Young off the top.

Now we get a flip dive from Moose (not a bad one either) and I'm really seeing the potential this guy has. Dalton breaks up a spear to

Cheeseburger and it's time for the parade of secondary finishers. Castle muscles Moose over in a delayed German suplex to freak out Prince Nana. Evans rolls up Moose and puts his feet on the ropes until Cheeseburger makes the save, leaving Moose to spear Evans down for the pin at 13:10.

Rating: C-. I wasn't really feeling this one as it was just kind of a big mess with everyone fighting everyone for the sake of fighting everyone. Moose winning is the right idea as he could be a good monster down the line but the fans wanted to see Castle here. Unfortunately there was too much going on to really make sense of the match and it was too much at once. At least one of the right guys won though.

Here's the Decade with something to say. BJ Whitmer talks about Colby Corino becoming a man right in front of the fans' eyes, which means he has more heart than anyone in the locker room or even at ringside (with a sneer at King Corino). Whitmer praises Colby for how close he came to beating Moose and War Machine (he was squashed both times) and now sees him as his own son. BJ hopes that Colby sees him like the father he never had and tonight, Colby is getting a gift. Tonight, Colby gets to have a gauntlet match against four guys from the last tryout camp.

Colby's four opponents combine to weigh over 1,800 pounds and that's too much for King Corino. King gets in the ring and takes off his tie but Whitmer says this isn't going to make up for abandoning his son. He abandoned Colby, so how long will it be before he abandons his wife and baby son? Nigel McGuinness has to come out and break up the fight as we go to another break.

I'm digging this feud as it's built up very well, even though ROH hasn't felt the need to say why Whitmer and Corino hate each other in the first place. Again: stop assuming we watch all of your shows and give us a thirty second recap. You know you've been on this new channel for like two months now, so a quick recap won't kill you.

Back from a break with Nigel McGuinness on commentary in Corino's place.

ACH vs. Bobby Fish

The fans are split here and Fish takes ACH down to the mat to start. ACH

isn't exactly on top of his game on the ground so he grabs a headlock to try to get back to his feet. An unnecessary cartwheel into a moonsault sets up a dropkick to put Fish down in the corner as we're definitely seeing a contrast of styles. Bad News Barrett's jump from the middle rope and swing around into a suplex gets two and Fish is sent to the floor where he avoids a dive as we take a break.

Back with ACH firing off some chops (for some lame W00s) and it's time to hit the kickoff, because what would ROH be without kicking at each other like it's a kickboxing fight. ACH can't follow up because of the work Fish did to his ribs during the break (nothing wrong with some basic psychology) and Fish drops him with a fall away slam. Kelly: "We invite you to order the replay of Death Before Dishonor on ROHwrestling.com! Well, order it after this match!" That was good for a chuckle.

Fish goes back to the ribs but ACH Matrixes back to avoid a cross body. That's always a cool looking counter. Fish bails to the floor, allowing ACH to hit a sweet looking shooting star plancha. ACH hurts his knee coming back in off the top but is still able to kick Fish with the good leg for two. The 450 hits knees to bang up the ribs again and Fish goes to the two injured body parts. The Fish Hook knee bar has ACH in trouble but he bridges back into a rollup to make Fish break the hold. ACH gets kicked down on top though and a top rope falcon's arrow gives Fish the pin at 12:55.

Rating: C+. I liked the match but it went on a bit too long. Also I would have liked the Fish Hook to make Fish tap as they spent the whole match building up the leg injury and then the submission hold is just another spot. ACH is good in the Kofi Kingston's role of the high flier with almost no personality to speak of but you kind of knew he was going to lose here.

Overall Rating: C-. This could have been a lot worse but it's one of those shows that ROH has to deal with: they're after a pay per view but can't spoil anything so we get these matches which could take place on any given night. It's not bad, but it's a total stand alone show with no long term consequences. Watchable enough, but nothing great.

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Ring of Honor – July 8, 2015: How Do You Solve A Problem Like Maria's Kingdom?

Ring of Honor

Date: July 8, 2015

Location: Terminal 5, New York City, New York

Commentators: King Corino, Kevin Kelly

This should be an interesting show as it's FINALLY just a new ROH show instead of a co-promoted show with New Japan. The main story is the fallout of Jay Lethal winning the World Title at Best in the World to go with his TV Title. Now it's time to get ready for Death Before Dishonor in a few weeks so let's get to it.

After a quick opening sequence, we get a stills package on Lethal vs. Briscoe at Best in the World with Jay walking out with the titles. That was a pretty safe bet all around.

Regular opening.

Dalton Castle vs. Watanabe

The fans are almost entirely behind Castle here. Castle dances around to start but gets dropped by a shoulder. I still don't get Watanabe. He's really just a guy in tights who does moves, which actually would get him way over in Ring of Honor so maybe I just don't get the point. Castle gets knocked into the corner so his guys fan him off, only to have Watanabe get knocked into the corner where Dalton's guys fan him off too. Ok point for a funny spot.

We take a break and come back with an exchange of small packages without many counts in between. A backsplash gets two for Watanabe but Dalton grabs a suplex to get a breather. Castle follows up with a German and we get a cool, Lucha Underground style overhead shot to show Watanabe sprawled on the mat. Watanabe pops up (a Japanese wrestler not selling that much?) and hooks a Cloverleaf...into a catapult? That's a new one on me. Watanabe spends a bit too much time posing though and gets caught in a reverse sitout powerbomb for the pin at 10:10.

Rating: D+. Castle isn't bad but again, I have no idea why I'm supposed to care about Watanabe. Something about Watanabe being on a training mission which I know is a real thing in Japan, but I see no reason to care about him training to go and become a bigger deal in Japan.

Castle says there are a lot of boys out here tonight, but after Best in the World (at this point he lays back on his guys' bent over chests), he's the only real man in Ring of Honor. Cue Silas Young as we go to a quick break.

Nigel McGuinness brings out Jay Lethal for his first chat as champion. The fans tell the heel champion that he deserves it because smark fans don't understand the difference between faces and heels. Truth Martini says the fans aren't Lethal's people, because the House of Truth are his people. Jay is clearly the best in the world because he is the undisputed World Champion. Fans: "TIE YOUR SHOES!"

Lethal is about to leave but Nigel asks him which of those titles is he going to be vacating. That's fine with Nigel, but it's a bit more complicated than that. See, Lethal may see the titles as the same thing,

but Ring of Honor sees them as two different things. Therefore, Lethal will be defending the World Title against Roderick Strong at Death Before Dishonor, but he'll be defending the TV Title next week against Mark Briscoe. Jay rants about how he knows he's the greatest and if he has to wrestle twice in a night, so be it.

This brings out Roderick Strong to a better reaction than Lethal. Strong tells Lethal to look him right in the face like a man. On July 24, Lethal is walking in as champion but Strong is walking out with the belt. That was one of the most generic, lame face promos I've heard in a very long time, but at least Strong can usually back it up in the ring.

Kingdom vs. Michael Elgin/Red Dragon

That would be Matt Taven/Adam Cole/Michael Bennett with Maria, who is as gorgeous as ever. Before the match, Maria tells Cole not to worry about what happened at Best in the World (not important enough to specify) because tonight they'll prove that this Kingdom shall never fall. After a break and they shake hands for the Code of Honor and therefore we don't miss any action. That's a good ROH.

Bennett vs. Elgin to get things going with Mike's (Bennett) shoulder having no effect. Elgin's shoulder on the other hand works a bit better and he loads up a suplex. Taven and Cole come in to kick him in the ribs but he won't go down, so Red Dragon slaps on a pair of submission holds as this is one sided so far. The rest of the Kingdom finally gets together to take Elgin to the floor so Bennett can hit a flip dive.

Back in and a high cross body gets two on Elgin as Taven takes over. We take a break and come back with Elgin diving over for a tag, only to have Cole and Taven pull his partners down to the floor. Elgin finally takes the Kingdom down and makes the hot tag as everything breaks down. Taven eats a DDT into a wheelbarrow suplex for two but pops up and dives onto O'Reilly and Fish.

Back in and a hot tag brings in Elgin to clean house with suplexes, followed by a fireman's carry to Taven and Bennett at the same time. Cole's kick to the ribs doesn't break it up again so Elgin swings their legs around to hit Adam in the face. The Kingdom takes them down again

and Bennett loads up a Backpack Stunner with Taven adding a running boot to the face for two.

Red Dragon dives on Cole and Bennett, leaving Elgin to powerbomb Taven onto all four of them. Back in and a superbomb gets two on Taven with Cole diving in for a save. Cole plants Elgin with the Canadian Destroyer and a big spike piledriver gets two so Kyle actually tags out to Kyle. Yeah tagging still exists in this thing. A guillotine choke has Cole in trouble but he has to settle for a Dean Ambrose rebound lariat, followed by Chasing the Dragon for the pin on Cole at 17:16.

Rating: C+. I had fun with this but I'm really not a fan of the big messy tag matches. These are basically ECW tag matches without the weapons, which isn't something that's really appealing for me. It's certainly entertaining, but it's nothing that I'm ever going to want to watch again. Well other than Maria of course.

Cole walks out on his partners to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. I liked this show more than the previous few weeks because now I'm going to have a chance to get to know the Ring of Honor roster instead of some all star team they have. It's good that there's a continuing relationship with New Japan, but I'm glad that it's limited instead of dominating the shows anymore. Fun episode this week and another shot that flew by.

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Ring of Honor – June 10, 2015: Thy Kingdom Come Home

Ring of Honor

Date: June 10, 2015

Location: Ted Reeve Arena, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Attendance: 1,500

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, King Corino

It's still Global Wars Night 2 here with more matches taped back in May. We've still got two weeks before we get to any shows that have been taped after the Destination America deal was announced. Also, Best in the World 2015 is coming soon, which means the Battle of the Belts with Jay Briscoe's World Title vs. Jay Lethal's TV Title. Let's get to it.

We open with the Addiction saying Red Dragon is finally getting their shot after all their whining and complaining, but tonight they get what they ask for, even though they're right where the champions want them. Red Dragon has seen what they'll do to win these titles, so what would they do to keep them?

Opening sequence.

Bobby Fish of Red Dragon has been attacked outside the arena. Not that we get to see it or anything but at least it was mentioned.

Here's Addiction to open things up in the arena, even though they're scheduled in the main event. Since Fish is out, there's no title shot because the contract says against Kyle O'Reilly and Bobby Fish. Daniels offers a shot right now and here's O'Reilly to fight on his own.

Tag Team Titles: Kyle O'Reilly vs. Addiction

Kyle slugs away on Daniels and Kazarian to start and chops Daniels in the corner before ducking a clothesline from Kazarian, sending him into his

partner instead. The numbers finally catch up to him though and a High/Low gives the champions control. I've always liked that move. It's Kazarian starting for the team but it's quickly back to more double teaming as the champions cheat like heels should be doing.

Kyle sends Daniels to the apron for more miscommunication and everyone heads to the floor with Daniels being sat in a chair. Kazarian is sent head first between Daniels' legs, setting up a running dropkick off the apron to knock both champions out of the chair. The fans are way into this as you would expect. Back in and Kyle rolls some butterfly suplexes into a cross armbreaker but Daniels comes in with the title belt for the DQ at 4:16.

Rating: C+. I was digging this way more than I was expecting as Kyle kept it going as fast as he could, which is why a four minute match was the best thing they could have done. This felt like an angle instead of a match and there's nothing wrong with that. This was the kind of energetic opener that was a good option to kick the show off and much better than the Kushida match last week.

Addiction beats Kyle down post match but Matt Sydal and ACH come out for the save.

We recap the ending to last week's show and see Donovan Dijak hitting the reverse AA into a GTS on Mark Briscoe. That's a cool move, but it shouldn't take three tries for us to see it connect.

Mark says he's going to initiate Dijak into this company and give him a beating. There's something about ostriches vs. chickens in there too.

Dalton Castle vs. Jushin Thunder Liger

I've seen Castle wrestle before and really didn't think he was as great as people say he is. His entrance is good but there's almost nothing in the ring to back it up. I'm going to assume you know who Liger is. Castle offers a handshake to start and Liger isn't sure how to respond. I think we're in for a comedy match here. Both guys give us clean breaks against the ropes and the ROH fans are already calling this awesome. No, not really no.

The surfboard has Castle in early trouble but since it can only last a few seconds, Castle is able to throw Liger to the floor. Liger ducks what was going to be a dive but Dalton struts around the ring instead. They head outside with Castle being whipped into the apron for a 619 under the bottom rope and back out for a hurricanrana (ok that was sweet) as we take a break. Back with Liger backdropping him to the floor and baseball sliding him into the barricade, setting up a flip dive off the apron.

Liger asks for Castle's peacock men to come in the ring to steal Castle's pose, which actually was awesome. An annoyed Dalton comes back in to suplex Liger down and strut into a falling splash. We hit a front facelock and chinlock on Liger for a bit as things slow down as they should. Back up and it's a double clothesline to give us another tried and true spot. Liger's top rope hurricanrana gets two but his top rope splash hits knees. The Liger Bomb gets two more and the brainbuster is enough to pin Castle.

Rating: B-. Now that was actually entertaining from Castle. To be fair the other match I saw had him in TNA so maybe I can just blame them for screwing up someone else as is their custom. Castle is a good comedy guy and could go somewhere in the midcard if they build him up in the right way. Liger is always worth a quick look.

They shake hands post match and it's still cool to hear Liger's music.

Liger wishes Cheeseburger luck in his match and gives him a quick palm strike (Liger's signature) demonstration.

Bob Evans vs. Cheeseburger

This is a grudge match between former partners. Evans is an older guy who wears trunks way too small for him and laid out Cheeseburger after a loss. Cheeseburger is a tiny guy who is treated as a huge underdog. We start fast with Cheeseburger kicking him out to the floor but eating a right hand to put the small guy down in a hurry. Cheeseburger dives off the apron to take him down and avoids a charge into the barricade.

Something resembling a swanton off the barricade doesn't quite crush Bob (Cheeseburger couldn't crush a sandcastle. Or a Dalton Castle) and he

runs Cheeseburger over back inside. A tornado DDT across the top rope gives Cheeseburger an opening and the Seth Rollins springboard knee to the head sends Bob to the apron. That's fine with Evans as he picks Cheeseburger out of the air and side slams him through a table on the floor for a HUGE crash and a no contest at 2:55. Fans: "REST IN PEACE!" They packed a lot of stuff into a short amount of time here and that's the right idea with something like this.

Jay Lethal is ready for his contract signing next week and wants Jay Briscoe to bring his pen.

Jay Briscoe tells Lethal to just sign his name next week.

Addiction vs. Red Dragon in a No DQ match at Best in the World.

Kingdom vs. Bullet Club

The Bullet Club is the top heel stable in New Japan but they're insanely popular anywhere else. This is ROH vs. New Japan again with Matt Taven/Michael Bennett (with Maria Kanellis, who is absolutely gorgeous and looks even better in person) vs. Doc (Luke) Gallows/Karl Anderson. The Kingdom's IWGP Tag Team Titles aren't on the line because this isn't a New Japan show and those belts should be meaningless but they're from Japan so they're cool right? Gallows' face paint, which looks like a black and white stripe prison uniform, looks awesome.

Anderson, who has issues with Maria, goes after her to start but gets cut off by Maria's husband Bennett. Taven is left alone in the ring and dives onto Bullet Club, who are referred to as the internet darlings. Bennett adds a flip dive off the apron as the ROH contingent is in full control early on. Taven tries to dive off the middle rope but gets caught in a cutter from Anderson, followed by Gallows dropping Bennett on the apron as we take a break.

Back with Bennett in trouble and taking a Brogue Kick from Anderson. A running boot to the face drops him again as this is one sided. Taven crawls back to the apron as a reverse 3D plants Bennett, only to have Taven come off the top with a splash on Anderson to get a breather. The Kingdom fights back with a double dropkick to Gallows and a

superkick/spear combo to Gallows. Taven misses a high cross body though and everything breaks down with Anderson and Bennett shoving the referee for the double DQ at 9:38.

Rating: C. Fun match here to set up the six man between the teams and a partner each at Best in the World. There's a story involved with Anderson having a thing for Maria but it never really went anywhere here. Anytime she's out there it's a good thing though as she looks great but is also awesome at being a heel valet.

Post match Bennett is about to be slammed onto chairs but Maria offers a distraction, only to have Bennett eat a cutter and Taven to take the slam through the chairs instead.

Overall Rating: C+. I had a good time with this show and found it much more entertaining than the previous week's episode. It was more about the in ring action, which has always been one of ROH's selling points. Instead of just having a bunch of Japanese guys, it focused more on the homegrown talent, which is a better way of getting fans used to the product rather than just talking about guys who aren't going to be around in a few weeks.

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