

Ring Of Honor TV – May 11, 2023: Nope.

Ring Of Honor

Date: May 11, 2023

Location: Universal Studios, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Caprice Coleman, Nigel McGuinness

We're back in the studio again rather than in front of the fans who paid to see Dynamite, meaning Tony Khan can cram in even more stuff this week. There is at least a big main event this week as Athena defends the Women's Title against Skye Blue. That should be quite the showdown and Blue has been built up as a challenger. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Shane Taylor vs. Mark Briscoe

Briscoe should get the fans fired up pretty well. Mark knocks him down to start so Shane threatens to beat him worse than he used to beat up Jay. Taylor sends him to the apron and a slingshot is countered into a hanging Stunner to take over. The rapid fire shots to the face put Taylor on the floor though and there's the running flip dive to drop Taylor again.

Briscoe loads up the chair for the launchpad but Taylor is right there to cut him off again. More trash talk sets up the chops, plus a heck of a forearm to knock Briscoe silly. Back up and Briscoe strikes his way out of the corner, including a running boot to put him down. Taylor misses a running knee and gets Pele'd to the floor, setting up Briscoe's running shot, including the launchpad chair.

Back in and Briscoe manages a Death Valley Driver, only to

miss the Froggy Bow. Troubled Land gives Taylor two of his own but he misses a middle rope splash. Taylor is way too big for the Jay Driller so he runs Briscoe over and hits a splash for two. They slug it out until Briscoe manages to drop him with a running lariat. A not exactly smooth (fair enough) Jay Driller finishes Taylor at 9:46.

Rating: B-. These two beat the heck out of each other and I was getting into it pretty quickly. What made this more interesting was that while Briscoe was a star, I could picture Taylor scoring an upset. That's a hard thing to pull off but they made it work here, and it was a heck of a match as a result.

Claudio Castagnoli/Wheeler Yuta vs. Tracy Williams/Rhett Titus

Yuta and Williams grapple off to start until Williams gets him into a kneebar. That's broken up by Castagnoli, who comes in to crank away on Williams for a change. An elbow hits the now legal Titus, who is fine enough to clothesline Yuta down. Castagnoli has had it with this and stomps away on Williams in the corner as things get more aggressive.

Williams tries to fight back but gets elbowed in the corner for his efforts. A DDT onto the top turnbuckle drops Yuta though and the hot tag brings in Titus to clean house. Everything breaks down and Castagnoli gets knocked outside, setting up a knee from the apron. Yuta pokes Williams in the eye though and it's a Rocket Launcher to give Yuta the pin at 8:06.

Rating: C+. This felt like a way to set up Castagnoli and Yuta for a Tag Team Title match against the Lucha Bros as Castagnoli earned on Dynamite. Other than that, Williams and Titus continue to be little more than punching bags around here. You would think there would be a better use for them in a tag division that isn't exactly strong, yet here they are instead.

Television Title: Samoa Joe vs. Blake Christian

Joe is defending and Christian bails to the floor to start. Back in and Christian gets in a few shots to take over, including going after Joe's knee. That's not cool with Joe though, as he takes Christian down and stomps away to take over. The neck crank goes on but Christian slips out of a powerbomb. Joe powerslams him for two instead but Christian jawbreaks his way out of the Koquina Clutch. Not that it matters as Joe finishes with the MuscleBuster at 4:01.

Rating: C. They didn't have time to do anything here and Christian's offense didn't exactly get him anywhere. This felt like a way to get Joe on the show, which doesn't have quite the same impact when he was on the show just last week. Joe is a monster, but he needs a serious challenger sooner rather than later.

Mark Sterling and the Trustbusters/Varsity Athletes don't like the Dark Order and are ready to crush them.

Infantry vs. Righteous

Dean armdrags Vincent down a few times but gets run over with a hard shoulder. Bravo comes in and some rapid fire double teaming has Vincent down as Stu Grayson comes out to watch. Vincent comes back with a running basement Downward Spiral to Dean but it's right back to Bravo to pick up the pace. Everything breaks down and Dutch gets to wreck people, setting up the assisted Autumn Sunshine to finish Bravo at 4:29.

Rating: C. We're pretty much where we were at the Supercard of Honor pre-show: the Righteous are weird and stalk Grayson for some reason. That being said, it's nice to have the Righteous getting in there to build themselves up a bit, as they haven't exactly gotten to do much since they have been back. They could be something if given the chance, but they have to get somewhere with the Grayson stuff first.

Video on the Kingdom vs. Darius Martin/Action Andretti in a Fight Without Honor.

Robyn Renegade vs. Vert Vixen

Charlotte Renegade is here with Robyn. Vixen starts fast but a Charlotte distraction lets Robyn knock her into the corner. A rolling Stunner cuts Robyn off again but something like an Octopus on the mat finishes Vixen out of nowhere at 2:55. I like the Renegades, so giving them a quick win like this helps.

The Mogul Embassy (apparently the new name for the Gates of Agony, as they somehow get a worse name) is ready to face the Boys....but Dalton Castle comes in to accuse them of taking out one such Boy.

Ninja Mack vs. Willie Mack

Willie wrestles him to the mat as we get a Kung Fu Fighting reference to really screw things up. They trade flips and misses until it's a standoff as we get various pop culture references from commentary. Willie sends him outside for the big flip dive, plus a whip into the steps. Back in and Ninja kicks away, setting up a running uppercut. A twisting splash gets two on Willie, who is right back with the Samoan drop into the standing moonsault for two. They trade more rollups for two each until Willie hits a sitout powerbomb for the pin at 6:12.

Rating: B-. Good action throughout, but it's a little hard to get excited about another guy who does a bunch of flips after seeing El Hijo del Vikingo and Kommander on a semi regular basis around the various shows in recent weeks. Willie was his usual good self and it was a fun match, as you might have expected it to be.

Mogul Embassy vs. Adam Priest/Lucky Ali/Victor Benjamin

Non-title and Prince Nana is here with the Embassy. Kaun runs Priest over to start before it's off to Cage to elbow him in the face. Ali comes in with a bunch of hype from Coleman and is promptly superkicked into the corner. It's off to Toa to run Benjamin over and everything breaks down in a hurry. The Gates' double clothesline to Priest allows them to drop Benjamin onto him for a double pin at 3:22.

Rating: C-. I continue to be amazed by the idea that someone thinks Ring Of Honor needs six man titles. AEW doesn't need them either but the minor league promotion gets their own set? There is no division and challengers have to be set up to get mauled by Cage and the most generic power team imaginable. This was every squash the Embassy (who have been officially called three different names on this show: the Embassy, the Mogul Embassy and Brian Cage/the Gates of Agony) you have seen and there is no reason to see another one.

Kyle Fletcher vs. Tony Deppen

This would be the build up for Fletcher before he loses to Orange Cassidy next week and Mark Davis is here with Fletcher. Commentary spends the entrances listing off a bunch of teams Fletcher and Davis have beaten, none of whom work here. They go with the grappling to start and Fletcher gets the better of things on the mat. Back up and Deppen's shoulder bounces off of him before Fletcher runs him down without much trouble.

Something close to a Codebreaker gives Deppen two and he slaps Fletcher in the corner. Fletcher isn't having that and strikes him down for two, only to get caught in a slingshot Stunner to the floor. Deppen's sliding forearm to the back of the head gets two and they forearm it out again. Deppen German suplexes him into the corner and hits a running knee for two. Fletcher is right back up with a Michinoku Driver for the pin at 9:04.

Rating: B-. Well, I think a lot more of Deppen after that match. With Fletcher getting a title shot next week, this

should have been a lot more dominant performance from a tag wrestler getting into the singles scene, but instead they went back and forth, leaving me with even less reason to believe Fletcher will beat Cassidy. I'm sure their match will work well, but this was a bad result for helping to build the drama.

Anthony Henry vs. AR Fox

JD Drake is here with Henry. An early Drake distraction lets Henry take Fox down but Fox sends him outside for his efforts. The suicide dive connects and the big flip dive takes out Drake and Henry at the same time. Back in and a twisting suplex gives Fox two but Henry grabs a piledriver on the apron to knock...oh of course it doesn't knock Fox silly, because it's just a piledriver on the apron.

Fox is back to his feet less than 40 seconds later so Henry gives him a regular piledriver for two. This time Fox is back up even faster so Henry rolls some brainbusters, only to have Fox reverse into one of his own. Fox hits a Swanton for two but gets caught in a slingshot brainbuster for two more. Henry grabs a choke but Fox slips out and catches him on top, setting up a cutter for another near fall. Fox takes out an interfering Drake, hits him with a big running flip dive, and grabs Lo Mein Pain. The 450 finishes Henry at 9:39.

Rating: D. Nope. Say I'm old and out of touch, say I don't know good wrestling or whatever you want. This was stupid, made it clear that nothing they are doing is real, and was a huge waste of time on a show that is already crammed full of stuff that doesn't need to be on here. All Fox showed me here was that he's a video game superhero come to life in a wrestling ring and that modern wrestling is a stunt show rather than about putting on a compelling match. I've seen Fox do very well before, but this was either an off night or terrible agenting, because it was little more than Fox showing off and not selling much of anything.

Post match Henry and Drake beat on Fox with Shane Taylor coming in to help with the beating. FTR makes the save as I wonder why I should believe anything is going to hurt Fox after dropping him on his head four times in a row didn't really slow him down. Just to show how awesome he is, Fox is fine enough to hit a Swanton on Henry after FTR drops him. Henry tries to leave but Eddie Kingston cuts him off, allowing FTR to hit the Shatter Machine.

Varsity Athletes/Trustbusters vs. Dark Order

Mark Sterling and Ari Daivari here with the non-Dark Order. Uno chops Woods down to start and it's quickly off to Reynolds, with Uno seemingly avoiding Grayson. Sterling gets on the apron and is quickly pulled off, only to have Silver taken into the wrong corner for some cheating. Silver wheelbarrow suplexes Kay for a breather and dives over to Grayson for the hot tag.

The big flipping dive takes out some villains on the floor and a Lionsault gets two on Slim J back inside. Slim J sends Uno into Grayson as everything breaks down. A string of strikes rocks Slim J, setting up the Fatality to give Reynolds the pin (with Grayson being knocked outside in the melee) at 6:05.

Rating: C+. At least they're keeping the Dark Order around here instead of on Dynamite. I still have no idea why the Varsity Athletes and the Trustbusters need to be featured so often but the match wasn't all that long and they didn't talk, both of which do help a bit. The tension between Uno and Grayson lasted for all of 14 seconds, though I'd assume the Righteous being around will help with that a good bit.

Post match Grayson is on the floor and doesn't look happy.

Skye Blue isn't impressed with Athena and is ready for the title shot tonight.

Ring Of Honor Women's Title: Athena vs. Skye Blue

Athena is defending and drops Blue with an early forearm. They trade flips out of headscissors but Athena kicks her in the face to take over again. A lot of yelling at the referee leaves Athena distracted enough to get rolled up for two so she knocks Blue outside. The steps are loaded up but Athena gets sent into them instead.

They fight to the stage with Blue snapping off a headscissors but Athena saves herself from falling. Instead Athena superkicks her off the stage before they head inside for a bow and arrow. Some rollups give Blue a bunch of near falls as commentary says that's pretty much the only way she can win (what a vote of confidence). A kick to the head and a high crossbody give Blue two but Athena kicks her down again.

The O Face is broken up and a super hurricanrana brings Athena back down. There's a standing Sliced Bread for two on the champ but Skyfall is broken up. Athena hits a Wasteland backbreaker but Blue slaps her in the face from the mat. They slug it out until Athena hits her own Skyfall for two. Blue is right back with a top rope Stunner into Skyfall for two of her own.

They fight to the apron with Blue dropping her face first, only to get powerbombed from the middle rope onto the steps (on their side). Back in and Blue kicks out at one, only to have Athena grab a Crossface. With Blue too close to the ropes, Athena reverses into a reverse chinlock to retain at 14:43.

Rating: B. This got going at the end and once they got around the idea of "Blue can only win off a rollup". Blue was the first serious competition Athena has faced in a long time and it wound up being a rather good match. Athena really is at the best level of his career, though I have no idea who is supposed to be a threat to her unless someone comes over from AEW.

Post match Athena shows respect...and then beats up Blue, including sending her face first into the title to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This was everything that frustrates me about Ring Of Honor in one show: there is good stuff included, but instead of just sticking with that, they just adding more and more stuff in and I stopped caring a long time before the ending. There were multiple matches were I was wondering why in the world this needed to be on here, other than just making the show go longer and longer. I'm sure that's great for the people who are getting on the show and getting a check for it, but it doesn't make for an entertaining show.

I get that you need to boost people up and get them ready for later, but with no major show even hinted at for the moment (I'm sure the Anniversary Show is coming up this summer but it hasn't been talked about yet), why do they need to cram in so much every week? It's the definition of subtraction by addition, as the matches that keep piling up drag down the good stuff (which is certainly there). Throw in a Fox match that had me almost yelling at my laptop and this was an annoying show that could have been a rather good one given what else was there.

Results

Mark Briscoe b. Shane Taylor – Jay Driller

Claudio Castagnoli/Wheeler Yuta b. Tracy Williams/Rhett Titus – Rocket Launcher to Williams

Samoa Joe b. Blake Christian – MuscleBuster

Righteous b. Infantry – Assisted Autumn Sunshine to Bravo

Robyn Renegade b. Vert Vixen – Octopus

Mogul Embassy b. Adam Priest/Lucky Ali/Victor Benjamin – Double pin

Willie Mack b. Ninja Mack – Sitout powerbomb

Kyle Fletcher b. Tony Deppen – Michinoku Driver

AR Fox b. Anthony Henry – 450

Dark Order b. Varsity Athletes/Trustbusters – Fatality to Slim

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Athena b. Skye Blue – Reverse chinlock

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