

TNA One Night Only – Live: Maybe They Should Stick With Taped

Live

Date: January 8, 2016

Location: Sands Bethlehem Events Center, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Josh Matthews, D'Angelo Dinero

So due to the cancellations of the India and Gulf Coast tours (due to “issues”), we get a special live edition of One Night Only. The only good that comes out of this is I don't have to search for the show for months before I can get it done so two people can read it. At least in this case the stories are current so there might be something important here. Let's get to it.

We open with a quick preview of the show, which only has a few matches announced due to the really short turnaround. The big story tonight is the return of Beer Money, who will be facing Bram/Eric Young in a very quickly put together feud.

X-Division Title: DJZ vs. Mandrews vs. Crazy Steve vs. Tigre Uno

Elimination rules. Tigre Uno is defending against the same people he's fought for months now. Mandrews is now a full on Dynamic Dude with a skateboard and backwards hat. Uno is in a big shoulder wrap after his injury at Bound For Glory. It's a brawl to start as this is under tornado rules. Just what we needed. DJZ is quickly sent outside so everyone else can brawl, including Tigre suplexing Steve for two.

Back in and DJZ gets a good looking dropkick to knock Mandrews outside. Good. Stay out there. Mandrews comes back in for two off a hard hurricanrana to DJZ, leaving Tigre to spinwheel kick Steve in the face. A Tower of Doom is broken up with some kicks, leaving Mandrews to dropkick Tigre out to the floor. The fans are behind Steve here for reasons I don't want to understand.

Mandrews flips out onto Tigre and swings his legs back inside to trip DJZ. That means it's time to skateboard down the ramp into a headscissors to send DJZ into Steve. Tigre dives onto all three of them before dropping a top rope seated senton for two on Crazy. Back up and Steve grabs a crossface chicken wing on Tigre's bad arm in the middle of the ring. Ever the schnook, Mandrews drops a shooting star on both of them to break the hold and pin Steve.

After the elimination, Steve snaps and puts Tigre in the hold again. So I guess that's a heel turn? Mandrews misses another shooting star but grabs a rollup to get rid of DJZ. We're down to one on one and Mandrews goes after Tigre's bad arm. A belly to back gets two on the champ but Tigre breaks up another shooting star (good), setting up a C4 to retain the title at 10:21.

Rating: C. This was more fun than their usual matches but can we please get some fresh faces in this division? Tigre is turning into a special X-Division Champion with a long reign but there's no way he holds the thing until Destination X when people remember the title exists. On the other hand, I have no idea what people see in Mandrews. He's a skateboard and a ton of shooting star presses. How is that entertaining?

Post match here's Gregory Helms to stare down Tigre again. Helms implies that time is running out on Tigre's reign. Fans: "3 COUNT!" Josh: "Gregory Shane Helms is, in my opinion, coming for the X-Division Title!"

Eric Young, now with fresh arm tattoos, says he and Bram are the only news anyone is going to be talking about in the very near future. Beer Money being back makes people happy but Young and Bram are never happy. Young rants about Matt Hardy costing him the World Title.

Aiden O'Shea vs. Rockstar Spud

Spud does the old Chris Jericho pose by laying against the barricade. After the bell (at least I hope after), Aiden offers Spud a chance to walk out and take the countout instead of a beating. O'Shea keeps calling Spud a mutt as Spud teases leaving, only to come back and flip the big guy off. Aiden pounds him down and keeps talking trash on the mic, shouting that this is a heavyweight division.

The announcers don't think this is a match because they can't remember a bell ringing three minutes ago. Spud drives him into the corner but O'Shea shoves him down again. Unfortunately he finds the mic again and talks more trash before pounding in some forearms. Josh throws in a line about Spud being a replacement for Mahabali Shera, whose tires were deflated earlier in the day. Wait it was earlier in the day and he couldn't get a taxi here? I mean, open a case and do the Shera Shuffle (or is it the Shake?) because IT'S SWEEPING THE NATION!

A backbreaker stuns Spud and Aiden is still talking about how stupid Spud really is. Spud comes back with a baseball slide to knock O'Shea to the floor, followed by a nice dive. O'Shea sends him hard into the barricade and then the announcers' table, drawing some VERY loud swearing from Spud. Josh: "I guess this was a match." The referee counting didn't seem to give Josh the hint. Back in and Spud starts getting fired up, including a double bird and another F bomb. An enziguri and some forearms have O'Shea in trouble, followed by the Underdog for the pin at 9:33.

Rating: D. I'm really not sure what to make of this one. It's easy to make fun of Josh for not knowing that it was a match because it really wasn't like a match for a long stretch. Instead it was much more like Aiden cutting a promo and yelling at Spud until we got a quick match. I'll give them credit for trying something but this mostly missed.

Kurt Angle and Drew Galloway are ready when the Wolves come in. The Wolves came in and said they want a match with the two of them. Eli Drake and Jesse Godderz come in to add themselves. This might have been from Tuesday.

We look at Carter winning the title on Tuesday and see his post match victory speech where he basically says he told us so. He's called himself several things since arriving in TNA including the new game. With this title, he may not be the new game anymore but he's certainly going to change it.

Robbie E. vs. Mike Bennett

Before the match, Maria comes out and asks if we believe in the Miracle. Robbie goes right after him to start and fires off some right hands to

knock Mike out to the floor. A nice dive takes Bennett down, meaning Mike has already taken more offense than he should have already. Robbie tries a hurricanrana on the floor but Mike pulls him up and swings him head first into the barricade to take over.

Back in and a big boot gets two on Robbie before we hit the chinlock. Robbie fights up again but can't hit the Boom Drop. He can't hit a high cross body either but the second Boom Drop connects to knock Mike out to the apron. The delay gives me time to realize that Robbie E. wears the same style shorts that Alexa Bliss wears. Back in and Mike hits a quick cutter, followed by a fireman's carry into a Michinoku driver for the pin at 7:33.

Rating: D-. What the heck was that? Keep in mind that this was a debut for someone who was supposed to be a top star. Robbie is a solid midcard act but this should have been just a step above a squash. Instead it was a back and forth match with Robbie hitting his finisher. Who in the world thought this was a good way to book someone's debut? Horrible booking here and it showed very badly.

Post match the finisher is named Divine Intervention. Bennett promises to build a kingdom of miracles.

Gail Kim is happy for the gauntlet match because she won the first Knockouts Title in the same kind of match. Whoever wins is in for a fight. JB goes over some of the people in the match, actually trying to pretend that Kong isn't going to win. That's adorable.

Video on the Knockouts, basically giving a quick profile on each. This should have been on Impact.

Gauntlet Match

This is a mini Royal Rumble but it turns into a regular match when we're down to two with the winner becoming #1 contender. Madison Rayne is in at #1 and Jade is in at #2. They botch a headscissors to start with Jade going down anyway, only to send Madison over the top and out to the apron. It's way too early for an elimination though and Madison gets back in but misses an enziguri.

Jade gets kicked out of the corner and slapped in the ribs a few times until it's Rebel in at #3. A quick spinning kick to the head (drawing the second Holly Holm reference of the night) drops Madison as we get a weak NXT chant. Rayne has to try to fight both of them off until it's Chelsea (unfortunately not the gorgeous one that hung out with Desmond Wolfe but rather Daniel Bryan's version of Claire Lynch) in at #4.

Chelsea can't quite eliminate Rebel but does give Madison a breather. The pairs fight against the ropes until it's Marti Bell in at #5 to give the Dollhouse yet another advantage. Rebel does her splits choke in the corner to keep Chelsea in trouble and the Dollhouse dominates. We still have no eliminations until it's Deonna (recently of NXT) in at #6. Deonna takes down Rebel and Marti with a bad looking double clothesline as the ring is getting too full. A triple spear puts the Dollhouse down and Rebel is knocked out.

Awesome Kong is in at #7 and it's time to clear some room. Kong starts cleaning house and uses the other Dollhouse members as projectiles in a smart move. Chelsea and Deonna try to double team the monster and get chokeslammed at the same time. Both are quickly eliminated and it's Velvet Sky in at #8 to give us a final grouping of Sky, Rayne, Kong, Jade and Bell. Velvet starts knocking the Dollhouse around and the Beautiful People actually knock Kong down.

Marti gets low bridged to the apron but Velvet doesn't bother to eliminate her. Rayne takes care of Marti for her partner but Velvet is eliminated a few seconds later, leaving us with Madison, Kong and Jade. Kong stands on Rayne's hand as Pope talks about being in this kind of match before. Josh: "You've been in a #1 contenders gauntlet match for the Knockouts Title?"

That's why Josh Matthews is a horrible commentator in one sentence. Pope is trying to sound like a professional and apply some of his experience to what we're watching but Josh has to try and make himself sound smart instead. I'm so glad to see Josh getting himself over instead of doing his job. Kong puts Jade on her shoulders and swings her at Madison, only to have Jade get knocked out to the floor and get us down to one on one.

Rayne is quickly taken down to the mat and put in a leg lock which doesn't go anywhere. Some clotheslines have little effect on Kong but a missile dropkick actually puts her down for two. The shocked look on Kong's face is great, only to have her grab the Implant Buster to put Rayne away at 16:08.

Rating: D. These things just don't work. They just don't. I know TNA has tried this match for years now and I can only think of one or two that wasn't a borderline disaster. I don't know if it's the way they're booked or how much time they take but these things are almost always bad. Granted in this case it was the lack of any doubt about Kong winning because who else was going to get the title shot here?

The Wolves are glad to have Beer Money back, even though Beer Money is the past. They'd love to face Beer Money any time but here are Eli Drake and Jesse Godderz to interrupt. A lot of bragging leads to a pull apart.

Trevor Lee vs. Pepper Parks

Parks is an indy regular. Trevor jumps him at the bell and stomps Pepper down in the corner, allowing Pope to get in a "salt in pepper's wounds" line. Pepper sends Trevor to the floor for a flip dive and stops to play to the crowd a bit. It seems to work this time so points for trying something so many people forget to do. Trevor comes back with a knee to the face as Josh actually brings up Trevor being part of the GFW invasion. Lee puts a knee in Parks' back and pulls back on the arm for a painful looking hold before actually getting a near fall.

Back up and Lee does his cool belly to belly suplex to counter a cross body and we hit the chinlock. Parks simplifies things a bit by kicking Trevor in the face and gets two off a backslide. A fisherman's neckbreaker gets the same and Parks cuts off a comeback with a Sky High. Trevor gets creative though with what looks like a dropkick but turns it into a stomp to the chest. That and a fisherman's buster into a small package are enough to pin Parks at 8:05.

Rating: C+. Is there a reason Parks doesn't have a job somewhere? He's a name you hear about all over the place but he's only been brought in to job here and there. Lee continues to be entertaining and could have a

future in TNA if they don't manage to screw him up like they do almost everyone else.

The Dollhouse celebrates in the back and Kong ACTUALLY TALKS, telling Kim to clean that title up before she comes for it. Has she ever talked before? If so I'd hope it was something more than this. She's actually not a bad talker and sounded a lot more confident than you would have expected.

Pope is in the ring for some reason. He's been insulting someone on commentary lately and would like to talk to him face to face. This brings Grado dancing out to the ring, much to Pope's disgust. Pope talks about how they're not exactly friends and Grado says something I can barely understand, talking about meeting Pope in 2011. They took a picture together and Grado got TWENTY SIX LIKES on Facebook!

Pope gets annoyed all over again and calls Grado a joke for dancing all over the place instead of taking this ring seriously. Grado offers to speak in an American accent (and not a terrible one actually) so Pope can understand him. He says he'd fight anyone in the back to prove himself to Pope and that means it's time for a match.

Before we get to the match though, a quick question: why has TNA not had Pope work a match? He's not exactly a great commentator and he's still active on the indy circuit, even holding a title in OVW. He was a total heel here though and I have no idea why as he's normally a face commentator. This was really weird and Pope was doing everything differently than he's been doing in recent months.

Grado vs. Abyss

Monster's Ball of course with Abyss setting up the rules by telling Grado he likes to dance too. Grado actually dances before kicking Abyss low for an early advantage before the bell. It's time for some early weapons but Grado knocks the cheese grater away from the monster. Some trashcan shots have little effect on Abyss and he knocks it right into Grado's face to take over.

We get a table bridged between the apron and the barricade plus the bag

of tacks poured out on the floor. Grado is smart enough to use the time to get the cheese grater and blast Abyss low, followed by some kendo stick shots to drop the monster. Abyss is getting up as Grado heads up top, only to have a trashcan pelted at his head, knocking him down through the table for a huge crash.

Instead of just ending it though, here's the barbed wire board to make it even worse. It's also Janice time and of course it gets stuck in the turnbuckle. Grado kicks him onto the barbed wire board and now Pope is on Grado's side. Another board is put on top of Abyss to make a sandwich, followed by a top rope splash to crush him even worse. Grado grabs Janice but gets chokeslammed onto the tacks to give Abyss the pin at 9:23.

Rating: D. What was the point of this? Grado is called a goofy loser, then does goofy stuff in the match and then gets beaten? I'm not a Grado fan but this felt like a way to make him look horrible instead of treating him like someone they might want to capitalize on. The match was your usual Monster's Ball, which you can almost paint by numbers anymore.

Drew thanks Kurt for the chance and promises to bring it on Tuesday.

Tag Team Titles: Eli Drake/Jesse Godderz vs. Kurt Angle/Drew McIntyre vs. Wolves

Wolves are defending. Jesse headlocks Davey to start but Richards tags in Eddie as Pope almost calls this a WWE Tag Team Title match. Drake comes in and suplexes Edwards for two, only to get a WE WANT ANGLE chant. Instead they get Jesse kicking Eddie in the head but getting suplexed down a few seconds later. Drake is smart enough to pull Davey off the apron to break up the tag, leaving Eddie to tag in Angle.

It's time to bust out the Germans, including one to both Wolves at the same time. Drew comes in and helps his partner clean house Eddie finally crotches Drew on top to put him in the Tree of Woe, allowing Richards to add a top rope headbutt for two. Nice sequence there. Eddie and Drew get in a chopping contest in opposite corners before deciding to chop each other for a bit.

Drake finally breaks it up with clotheslines but Angle comes back in with

an Angle Slam to Jesse. It's Drew nailing Eddie with the Claymore to put all six down. Drake and Jesse bail to the floor, leaving the other teams to slug it out. That's fine with the Wolves who both hit the ropes to take out the cowards on the floor.

Drew flips over the top to take out all four and throws Drake back in for an Angle Slam, only to have Davey slide in for a save. The referee gets distracted, allowing Drake to nail Drew with a title for another near fall. Jesse kicks Kurt low but gets sent to the floor, leaving Eli to take the Wolves' Chasing the Dragon knockoff for two. Not that it matters as Eddie grabs a leg bar to make Eli tap at 10:13.

Rating: B-. This is the standard tag team formula these days and I'm still not a fan. The matches rarely last very long before the whole thing breaks down into pure chaos. It's still entertaining enough to work but I could go for a more traditional style of tag match with two teams instead of three once in awhile. Still though, match of the night so far.

The good guys all pose together post match.

Lashley is sick of Tyrus costing him the World Title and wants some revenge.

Lashley vs. Tyrus

This has potential, though Lashley's orange headband kind of ruins the image. Some running shoulders to the ribs in the corner have Tyrus in trouble as the announcers unfortunately remember that Tyrus has a World Title shot coming to him in the near future. Lashley can't get the legs so he goes with a standing armbars instead. Josh actually talks some strategy by pointing out that Lashley likes to fight in close quarters.

That's accurate but completely forgotten when Lashley jumps onto Tyrus' shoulders for a standing cross armbreaker. Well that was awesome. The annoying TNA fans want Shera as Tyrus drops down to break the hold before suplexing him over the top and out to the floor. With the referee checking on Lashley, Tyrus pulls the top turnbuckle off, which I'm sure won't come back to haunt him.

A headbutt to the chest puts Lashley down again for two and we hit the nerve hold. Thankfully it doesn't last long as Tyrus throws him over with a t-bone suplex before sending him hard into the exposed buckle. Lashley shrugs it off but misses a charge (mostly) into the post, allowing Tyrus to get two off a cross body. They go over to the exposed buckle but the referee gets bumped. For some reason this fires Lashley up and he goes totally insane, sending Tyrus into the exposed buckle TEN TIMES IN A ROW! Ok so they were really gentle shots but still it's a cool idea. The spear puts Tyrus away at 9:35.

Rating: D+. This could have been a lot better if they just beat each other up for ten minutes but instead it was Tyrus laying around and doing his slow offense because he's not that interesting. At least Lashley didn't lose again as I'm really getting tired of seeing him lose every important match he ever has. Not horrible here and the ten buckle spot was a new idea but Lashley needs someone else to throw around.

The announcers recap the show.

Beer Money video.

Roode and Storm are ready.

Beer Money vs. Bram/Eric Young

Storm headlocks Young down to start and drops him with a Russian legsweep, followed by a knee drop from Roode. With the wrestling not working, Young bites Roode on the shoulder and makes the tag off to Bram. Everything breaks down and Bram gets double hiptossed. Young is rammed into his partner to send both guys out to the floor. That's fine with Roode who backdrops Storm onto both guys for a crash.

There's the double suplex but Bram breaks up SHOUTING THEIR NAMES, which must be considered the big spot. Things settle down with Storm getting beaten down in the wrong corner until he grabs a running neckbreaker on Young. It's not enough for the hot tag though as Bram keeps Storm down and grabs a chinlock.

Roode and Young yell at each other on the apron, allowing Young to take

Bram's place with no tag. Those horrible villains. Storm fights up and catches Bram in a double clothesline, only to have Young pull Roode off the apron. Not that it matters as Storm gets in another clothesline a few moments later and makes the hot tag.

Everything breaks down and Storm busts out a hurricanrana from the top, setting up a top rope splash from Roode for two. The villains come back with a Hart Attack for the same but Storm breaks up the piledriver with a Last Call. Now Beer Money gets to SHOUT THEIR NAMES and it's the DWI (Drinking While Investing, a suplex into a powerbomb) for the pin on Bram at 15:05.

Rating: B-. I liked this one more than the three way tag as it had more structure (and time to be fair) before everything broke down. Beer Money is still a good team though I'm not sure what they're going to do after they have the dream match against the Wolves. That's good for a one off match or maybe two but after that, the division is still horribly dry.

A big celebration ends the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This was WAY better than most One Night Only shows but it felt like a long episode of Impact instead of something special. It's not a bad show and the two tag matches are both entertaining, but as usual this felt like a contractual obligation instead of something they needed to air. Unless you absolutely loved Impact earlier this week, don't waste your time with this.

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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 backslash 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 do, 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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