

Ring of Honor TV – November 25, 2015: Destination Awesome

Ring of Honor

Date: November 25, 2015

Location: Wings Stadium Annex, Kalamazoo, Michigan

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Kevin Kelly

This is a big show with a big main event as we have Roderick Strong challenging Jay Lethal for the TV Title to continue their long and rather entertaining feud over the last year or so. We're getting closer and close to Final Battle and it's about time to have a build between AJ Styles and Lethal for the World Title so maybe they can tie it in here. Let's get to it.

As a side note, this is the final episode on Destination America, though the show will still air in syndication as it has for years now.

Opening sequence.

Moose vs. Dominic Carter

Spear ends Carter in five seconds.

Post match Moose's manager Stokely Carmichael says Jay Lethal will only be World Champion until Moose gets his hands on him. Carmichael thinks he heard this last week from Michael Elgin, who isn't as big or strong or talented as Moose. Therefore, Elgin needs to go to the back of the line where he belongs.

Instead Elgin comes out here to say that Moose did win his match faster than Elgin did last week, but there's a bit of a size difference. Big Mike is ready to give Moose some real competition any time he's ready. Moose says we can do it right now but here's the House of Truth (minus Jay Lethal but including Taeler Hendrix (good lord)) to laugh all this off and call them out for using Lethal's name to get over. Elgin says he'll be in a hotel with Hendrix later. Those are fighting words and a

tag match is on.

J. Diesel/Donovan Dijak vs. Michael Elgin/Moose

It's a big brawl to start until we take a break. Back with Elgin taking Dijak down with an enziguri and a dropkick for good measure. Moose comes in for his own dropkick and then a suplex, challenging Elgin to best that. Elgin's suplex is in fact longer but he stops to argue with Moose, allowing the House of Truth to make a comeback. Everything breaks down and Hendrix grabs Elgin for a distraction. Dijak grabs a good looking chokebreaker on Elgin as Kelly talks about Diesel wanting to go by Joey Diesel Daddiago or however that is spelled.

Moose makes his comeback on Diesel but Dijak jumps him from behind. Without a tag, Elgin sends both of them to the floor for an apron cannonball before teasing a kiss on Hendrix. That sexual assault goes nowhere so it's a German suplex for two on Diesel instead. Everything breaks down again and Elgin buckle bombs Diesel, followed by a spear from Moose after a blind tag for the pin at 11:33.

Rating: C. This was all storytelling instead of a good match and there's nothing wrong with that. Moose vs. Elgin has the potential to be two guys beating the heck out of each other for fifteen minutes at Final Battle and that's all it needs to be. Lethal vs. either one could be a fun match on a big stage so everyone wins. Well save for whichever of them loses.

Moose and Elgin stare each other down as Elgin didn't like that blind tag.

Long video on Strong wanting one more match to prove he can beat Lethal. It's not about either title but rather Strong's pride. They were smart to keep this taped as Strong live can be a disaster. He's downright listenable taped though.

Story Time with Adam Cole focuses on the Kingdom being great Tag Team Champions. War Machine will get their hopeless title shot at Final Battle and Cole will beat up Dalton Castle next week. Simple, to the point and natural here.

Here's the Decade so BJ Whitmer can rip on Steve Corino for lying about his neck surgery. Whitmer can't believe that Nigel McGuinness bought it because McGuinness lied about being hurt a few years back. Nigel isn't going to take this and gets in the ring to....say the Decade can't be at Final Battle either.

TV Title: Roderick Strong vs. Jay Lethal

Lethal is defending and this is their third match of the year with Lethal holding a 1-0-1 lead. There's no Truth Martini here but there are two referees to make sure it's a fair fight. They go to the mat to start with Lethal bailing outside when he can't keep up. An armbar frustrates the champion even more and he teases leaving, only to get dragged back in and chopped as a punishment.

We take a break with Roderick in control and come back with Jay firing off chops on the floor. Roderick tastes the barricade (needs some honey mustard) but is thrown back in at a thirteen count. Back in and they chop each other some more until Lethal takes over with a headlock. Well it's better than the standard chinlock. A quick enziguri gives Strong a breather and he fires off his running strikes before picking Jay up for a backbreaker.

Back from another break with Lethal missing a dropkick but grabbing the Lethal Combination for two. There's a Koji Clutch (which just looks cool) until Strong crawls over to the ropes and bails outside for a breather. Two straight suicide dives have Strong in trouble but he avoids a third. Well yeah he should after Lethal does the same thing three times. Back in and Lethal gets caught on the top for a kind of reverse belly to back suplex.

The Strong Hold is broken up and a Lethal Injection gets two. Strong comes right back with three straight knees to the face but a superplex is countered into a top rope bulldog. That only gets two more so Strong pops up for another knee to the head. The Sick Kick and a suplex into a backbreaker set up the Strong Hold to FINALLY end Lethal's eighteen month reign at 21:48.

Rating: B+. They really didn't have any other choice here and that's

often the best thing that can happen. Lethal had held the title for so long that it didn't mean anything anymore and now it's freed up for others to have their run with it instead. I've never been a fan of having one person as a double champion so it's a good move to let Lethal just be World Champion. The match itself was really solid stuff too with the ending being the best part as Strong just threw everything he had at Lethal until Jay couldn't stand up any longer.

The House of Truth pulls Lethal out as Strong poses to end the show.

Overall Rating: A-. When a third of your show is one really solid match and the other major story is building up to what should be a fun match at Final Battle, everyone wins here. Everyone is on point right now and it's making the build for Final Battle all the better. Good stuff here with another solid show, as it's been for a long time now.

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Ring of Honor TV – November 18, 2015: Hokey Smoke They

Can Do It

Ring of Honor

Date: November 18, 2015

Location: Wings Stadium Annex, Kalamazoo, Michigan

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Kevin Kelly

The Glory By Honor tapings continue as we're gearing up for Final Battle in the next few weeks. Roderick Strong vs. Jay Lethal for the TV Title is on the horizon, along with AJ Styles vs. Lethal for the World Title. The Tag Team Title scene is still hot too with several teams fighting for the belts. Let's get to it.

We open with Silas Young telling the Boys it's time to become men, starting by changing his tire. They keep losing the tire and then stop to clean the grease off themselves. Silas tells them to clean their hands with spit (his spit that is) and gets annoyed when they can't drive a stick shift. These are the kinds of vignettes they should have been doing for weeks now.

Opening sequence.

War Machine vs. Beer City Bruiser/Silas Young

The Boys are carrying Bruiser's keg with some great difficulty. The fans chant FREE THE BOYS and of course it's already a hashtag. Hanson and Bruiser start but no one goes anywhere off a collision. They try it again with Hanson getting the better of it and Rowe comes in for running knees in the corner. Everything breaks down and the Boys try as hard as they can to get Bruiser back to his feet.

Young comes in and takes a bunch of gutwrench gutbusters, only to have the Bruiser run Rowe down. Control changes for the first time and Rowe's comeback is easily stopped and Bruiser, who must weigh at least 300lbs, drops a frog splash for two. Back from a break with Rowe making the hot tag so Hanson can clean house again. The Boys try to grab Hanson's legs (they certainly are loyal) but get dragged in and put on the top rope.

Silas gets annoyed at someone hitting his Boys so Hanson stacks him on top of the Boys and pounds away with forearms to all three chests. Rowe suplexes Bruiser but Young is back up with a kick to Rowe's face. Bruiser takes out the Boys with an apron flip dive by mistake and Young is dropped off camera, leaving the Bruiser to take Fallout (4 I'm assuming) for the pin at 9:25.

Rating: C+. I liked this one more than I was expecting to with all four guys beating on each other with big power moves. Bruiser is a big guy and totally out of shape but he can do enough fat man offense to make his matches entertaining. I'm still digging this Boys story as Dalton is going to come back soon enough and get a huge reaction for attempting the save.

Recap of BJ Whitmer vs. Steve Corino, which we haven't gotten in the months this feud has been going on. They keep it simple with the more recent stuff this time though, which might be better given how long these two have been after each other. Corino finally snapped and punched Whitmer out, costing him his commentary job.

Here's Corino for his first comments since snapping. Nigel McGuinness recaps the whole thing again and says he can't condone what Corino did due to his no tolerance policy. Therefore, Nigel can't reinstate him as a color commentator. Instead, he can reinstate Corino as a wrestler. Therefore, at Final Battle, it's Whitmer vs. Corino in a Fight Without Honor (street fight).

Corino felt the rush of being a wrestler all over again in San Antonio and it's all he's ever wanted to do. He never would have guessed that he would still be here at 42 years old. The tours of Japan have taken a toll on his body and now it turns out he needs to have neck surgery. That means his in ring career is over but like any pro wrestler, he won't retire until his last breath.

If this is goodbye though, he wants to thank Ring of Honor for keeping him around when he didn't have to. Corino thanks a lot of people who have been there for him in ROH, including all of the boys in the back who have busted their backs, necks and heads for the fans. Finally he thanks the

fans and says that he will always be an evil man. Really, really good stuff here as Corino sounded like he was speaking from the heart which always makes for a better speech. That might be it for him and if so, this was a great promo to go out on.

The Boys don't know how to use a urinal. Seriously?

Story Time With Adam Cole is about how he isn't on the list of World Title contenders. Kyle O'Reilly is though, even after he beat Kyle a few weeks back. Maybe he just needs to whine like Roderick Strong did to get his World TV Title shot. After a clip of Strong being granted his title shot and Cole plugging next week's title match, he promises to take Kyle out of ROH forever. Again, Cole is one of the best talkers in the company.

Silas leaves the bathroom and hands the Boys a plunger.

Michael Elgin vs. Kevin Lee Davidson

Davidson is a big guy....who gets pinned off a clothesline in nine seconds? There was an edit in there so either something horrible happened or it was cut for time. You really don't see that in ROH too often so I'm curious to know what happened there.

Elgin, breathing heavily to really imply that something was cut there, talks about competing in the G1 Climax tournament in Japan. It made him realize that he wanted the ROH World Title back so now he wants to face Jay Lethal sometime soon.

We look back at the Kingdom stealing the World Tag Team Titles at All-Star Extravaganza.

Tag Team Titles: Kingdom vs. Addiction

Heels vs. heels here. Side note: it's interesting how much catchier some of these songs are than any of the TNA ones. TNA has a few good ones but so many of them are forgettable. I'm already singing Kingdom's song with them as they come out after hearing it maybe three times.

The Addiction is challenging and have Chris Sabin in their corner.

Daniels is in a military uniform which makes him look quite different from his partner Kazarian. The Kingdom still has pink on because these tapings are from October when people still care about breast cancer. As usual, Nigel is far too happy to see Maria, though at least he has great taste.

Taven and Daniels start things off and Kazarian starts cheating early with a knee to the back. Bennett and Kazarian both try to come in but both guys catch each others kicks. They make a truce and both punch each other in the jaw because they're all villains. A standoff takes us to an early break and we come back to Daniels stomping Taven down in the corner. Kazarian gets driven across the ring though and it's off to Bennett for the first time. You just can't buy good help these days.

Daniels comes in again and takes over but makes the mistake of insulting Maria, causing Bennett to get all fired up. That's fine with Daniels as it turns into a slugout on the floor, leaving Taven and Kazarian to both bring in belts. That's another standoff so they both do the Eddie Guerrero fall. Kazarian sits up and yells at Maria before collapsing again when the referee comes in. Maria: "OH MY GOD ARE YOU KIDDING???"

They run the ropes but Sabin and Maria both trip them up, earning them a double ejection as we take another break. Back with Bennett cleaning house and saying he saw this on TV before diving on Daniels. Everyone else hits a dive of their own and the fans are way too excited for an all heels match. Back in and Kazarian runs Taven over for two but gets caught in a backpack Stunner/running boot combo for two more.

Daniels is still down as Bennett loads up a spear (Bennett: "On this day, I see clearly!" I like this guy.) which takes out the referee by mistake. Cue Maria again as everything breaks down but Daniels grabs her by the hair. That's enough for a low blow and superkick (not bad either) from Maria, followed by a Disaster Kick to take Kazarian down. Cue the guy in the red mask to superkick Kazarian again, setting up a spear from Bennett to retain at 17:05.

Rating: B-. Another match where I had a lot more fun than I was expecting to. The heel vs. heel stuff actually worked and I laughed at Bennett

singing Edge's music. Fun match here, though I'm hoping they wrap up this red mask thing pretty soon. It's been done long enough now and they need to go somewhere with it.

War Machine comes out to stare the champs down to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. This is pretty easily the best ROH on Destination America show to date, which comes right before they're leaving the network. The wrestling was all good tonight and we had a solid promo to back it up, plus setting the stage for Final Battle. Everything had a point tonight and I want to see where some of this is going, making the show a success on its own. Really good show this week which flew by as it always does.

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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.....TWO??? 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 23, 2015: Japanese For Good

Filler

Ring of Honor

Date: September 23, 2015

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: King Corino, Kevin Kelly

This is one of those weird shows where the pay per view has taken place but there's almost no way to talk about it because this episode was taped a month prior. Therefore, expect a lot of odd commentary where nothing is really revealed because the announcers don't know the details yet. Let's get to it.

Michael Elgin vs. Silas Young

We get right to it as the announcers say Young is dealing with the fallout from All-Star Extravaganza, despite a lack of any sort of details of what happened at the show. Young's shoulders have no effect as the announcers talk about Elgin's success in the G-1 Climax tournament in Japan. A big gorilla press puts Silas down and Elgin shows off with a long delayed vertical suplex for two.

Young gets creative with a DDT onto the apron and a slingshot double stomp (ow), sending us to a break. Back with Elgin missing a charge and something like an Irish Curse getting two for Silas. Michael comes back with big right hands (why overcomplicate things?) and a sitout Rock Bottom for two of his own. Elgin wins a slugout until Young kicks him in the face and hits his headstand into a springboard moonsault for two. That's really not a very heelish move.

Michael kicks him in the face as well and scores with a discus lariat, followed by an apron superplex into a falcon's arrow for two. Cool looking move there. Misery (TKO) puts Elgin on the floor and Silas pulls the padding back, only to get powerbombed into the barricade. Elgin is all ticked off and the Elgin Bomb is good for the pin at 11:28.

Rating: B-. This was a way to say that Elgin is back after his trip to Japan and it worked quite well in that regard. Young shouldn't have lost

after winning such a big match at All-Star Extravaganza but that's part of the danger of taping shows this far in advance. Good opener here though and a fun match.

Adam Cole says his match with Shinsuke Nakamura is one of the best wrestlers in the world, but Cole is THE best in the world, which he'll prove next week in Philadelphia. Simple, yet effective.

ACH vs. Caprice Coleman

Feeling out process to start as they fight over a wristlock and trade flips, capped off by Coleman getting no count off a dropkick. The announcers sell the idea that ACH is this generation's Coleman as Caprice trips ACH and drops a leg for two. ACH comes back with a running kick to the face from the apron but his bottom rope clothesline is blocked.

Coleman grabs three rolling northern lights suplexes and we get a pretty awkward striking sequence, including a one inch punch from Coleman. It actually stops ACH from hitting his big dive and Caprice nails the Sky Splitter (top rope Rough Ryder) for two. ACH is still screwed up from the punch (Corino: "Holy Ox Baker!") but he comes back with a quick brainbuster and the Midnight Star (450) for the pin at 6:52.

Rating: C. The one inch punch was a little awkward but at least ACH finally won something. They could make him something like the Kofi Kingston of this company but he needs to quit losing so much. Coleman is a good veteran who can make anyone look good and there's some amazing value in that kind of a role player.

Post match Corino asks Coleman about the envelope that Prince Nana gave him a few weeks ago. There was money and a letter inside. Coleman took the money and read the letter over and over. At first it didn't make sense but now he knows that Nana was right. Nothing more is explained.

Roppongi Vice/Kazuchika Okada vs. Briscoe Brothers/Hiroki Goto

Okada, part of Chaos with Vice, is IWGP Heavyweight Champions and Goto is the IWGP Intercontinental Champion. Well as of this taping at least. Jay and Okada get things going for what ROH would consider a dream match.

They slug it out with Okada kicking Jay in the face to take over. Off to Rocky Romero (of Rocky Romero/Trent Baretta) who doesn't do as well so here are Goto and Trent.

Hiroki scores with some shoulders before it's off to Mark for shoulders of his own. Mark is fascinated by Trent's headband and puts it on, setting up redneck kung fu and a dropkick. Vice starts some double teaming on Mark and Okada adds a slingshot hilo for two. All three members of Chaos rake Mark's eyes until Mark grabs a Death Valley Driver on Okada. Goto comes in to fight Okada like he wants but he gets kicked in the face, setting up Okada's top rope elbow.

The Rainmaker is countered into a backbreaker and we take a break. Back with Jay cleaning house before it's off to Mark, who gets clotheslined in the corner to change control again. Jay comes back in with a powerbomb into a neckbreaker as everything breaks down. Mark counters the Rainmaker into a suplex but Romero kicks him in the face. Trent makes a blind tag but gets caught in a Doomsday Device from the apron to the floor.

Back in and the Froggy Bow gets a VERY close two on Trent but Okada comes back in with a tombstone. Goto breaks up the Rainmaker with a headbutt and everyone is down again. That's enough for Jay as he blasts Trent in the face and scores with the Jay Driller for the pin at 14:05.

Rating: B. This was your usual fun six man New Japan match which is a great option to fill in the gaps on shows like this one. The Briscoes continue to look awesome as a team and would be a great addition to the already stacked tag division at this point. Okada vs. Goto was treated like a side story here, which is probably best considering they don't work for this company.

Overall Rating: B+. This is one of the better shows the company has had on Destination America as everyone was on point and rolling this week with three good matches that served no real purpose other than filling in time. I'm not sure when we get to the next story driven shows but at least we had an entertaining show this week, which is all you can ask for here.

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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 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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Ring of Honor – June 24, 2015: Quality Meets Entertainment

Ring of Honor

Date: June 24, 2015

Location: Ted Reeve Arena, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Attendance: 1,500

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, King Corino, Nigel McGuinness

It's the final week of the Global Wars cycle, meaning next week it's back to the full on Ring of Honor crew for the first time in this series.

Tonight we're getting appearances from some major New Japan stars, which should lead to some interesting pairings with the Ring of Honor guys.

Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Roderick Strong vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

Strong is on a roll at the moment and is known as Mr. ROH. Nakamura is a huge star in New Japan and has amazing charisma. I've always been a Strong fan and Nakamura is one of the few New Japan guys who lives up to the hype he receives. Nakamura takes him down by the arm to start but Strong reverses into a key lock of his own. Back up and Strong nails some dropkicks but can't put on a bow and arrow hold.

An Angle Slam gets two on Nakamura but he kicks Strong in the head and starts with his signature knee strikes. Another knee puts Strong over the barricade and we take a break. Back with Strong winning a slugout but falling to the mat. Strong is back up with a torture rack into a backbreaker though (he's been called the Messiah of the Backbreaker), sending Nakamura to the ropes before the Strong Hold (Boston crab) can be

locked in.

Instead it's Nakamura slamming him down but missing the running knee (Bryan took it from him) and taking a jumping knee to the face. A backbreaker onto the top turnbuckle gets two as I'm digging the psychology in this one. His move is a back hold so work on the back. Why is that so complicated? A big forearm drops Strong and a jumping knee from the middle rope knocks him silly.

Strong is up first and grabs the Strong Hold, sending Nakamura into the ropes for a break. They slug it out again with Strong taking Nakamura's head off with a running boot (Sick Kick) but a suplex backbreaker (I told you he knew a lot of them) only gets two. The running knee gets one on Strong and Nakamura can't believe it. Granted he usually gyrates around like that so it's hard to tell how mad he is. Strong hits another knee but Nakamura just blasts him with a knee/kick to the face for the pin at 17:05.

Rating: B+. This was a hard hitting wrestling match here and that's the kind of stuff that Ring of Honor is shooting for. Strong is a big star in ROH but Nakamura comes off like a natural performer, which makes him stand out anywhere he performs. This was a fun match that again lived up to its hype, which is what Nakamura does best.

Michael Elgin vs. Gedo

Gedo is a smaller guy who also books New Japan. Elgin is a big power guy who can do other things to back it up. Gedo goes to the eyes to start but walks into a fall away slam for two. Things are going slowly due to Elgin's eye but he's still easily able to suplex him back in, complete with a count of thirty from the fans. They weren't second of course but wrestling fans aren't the most patient people in the world.

Elgin's spinning Swanton misses and Gedo kicks him in the face for two. There's always something to be said about keeping it simple. Elgin gets tired of this defense stuff though and buckle bombs Gedo, followed by a helicopter bomb (Elgin Bomb, one of my favorites) for the pin at 4:48.

Rating: D+. Yeah this wasn't clicking. Elgin needs someone with more

speed to get a decent match out of him and Gedo is more of a cheater than anything else. It doesn't help that Gedo is pushing 50 and is really there more for his name than anything else. Not horrible, but it's good that they kept this short.

Roppongi Vice/Kazuchika Okada vs. AJ Styles/Young Bucks

This is Chaos vs. Bullet Club with Vice being a tag team of (Trent) Baretta (with its 19,000 spellings) and Rocky Romero. The Bucks (Nick and Matt Jackson) are the IWGP Junior Heavyweight Tag Team Champions and Styles is IWGP Heavyweight Champion, making this champions vs. challengers. Styles and Okada get things going with AJ snapping off some armdrags before they trade victory rolls for two each. An early attempt at both finishers fails as well and it's a standoff after a very fast start.

Off to Baretta vs. Nick for some missed superkicks before Matt and Rocky come in. The Bullet Club gets tired of waiting and cleans house with a single superkick. Yeah the Bucks REALLY like throwing superkicks. Baretta gets triple teamed but Romero comes in to break up a cover. The Bucks start their pretty slick double teaming before it's off to Styles for a suplex into the corner. I like it when wrestlers do normal moves into different places. It's simple yet still seems fresh, which is hard to do these days.

Back from a break with AJ taking Romero and Okada off the apron to prevent a tag, so Trent whips out a tornado DDT for the tag to Romero. Rocky cleans house by dropkicking AJ off the apron and hurricanranaing both Bucks at the same time. Matt nails a superkick to slow him down but Rocky pops off the ropes and hits a clothesline to put both guys down. Okada and Styles come in off another double tag with Okada taking over in a hurry. AJ comes back with his moonsault into a reverse DDT but Okada reverses into something like White Noise into a backbreaker.

Nick gets double teamed by Vice as everything breaks down. A Doomsday Device but with a running knee and on the floor, plants Nick but AJ plants Okada with Sunday Bloody Sunday (Prince Devitt's old move, basically a one arm DDT brainbuster). Like so many Japanese stars, Okada

isn't interested in selling though and pops up with a tombstone. The Rainmaker (maybe the most overrated finisher I've ever seen. It's a standing clothesline with theatrics) misses and Nick takes Okada to the floor with a tornado DDT which clearly didn't connect.

Romero gets hung over the ropes for a swanton and More Bang For Your Buck (a quick series of dives) is broken up and Okada drops a top rope elbow on Nick. AJ's springboard forearm (I love that move) takes Okada out again but Matt starts firing off even more superkicks, only to have Okada dropkick Styles down to break up the Clash on Romero.

All six slug it out and a triple superkick staggers Chaos. Okada again pops up and a double superkick/Pele combo and a spike piledriver into a flipping spike tombstone (the Meltzer Driver. Yes that Meltzer) puts him right back down, followed by a double superkick into a Styles Clash on Baretta for the pin at 17:25.

Rating: B. Here's the thing: this match was not a very well done match. It was sloppy at times, the "fighting spirit" thing still comes off as a way to not have to sell, the flips are borderline meta, the move is actually called the Meltzer Driver, Kelly has to shout SUPERKICK every single time one connects, the tagging part was forgotten halfway through (and no that's not an ROH thing. It annoys me when every company does it) and the fans cheering for the heels is always annoying because they're cool heels instead of trying to do, like, heel stuff.

However, that doesn't mean it wasn't an incredibly entertaining match. This was fun throughout with everyone moving all over the place and having a great time out there. Yeah it's a spot fest, but that normally means it's entertaining. Styles continues to be on another planet since going to Japan and this was no exception. Really fun main event here, albeit with issues I'll likely be insulted for pointing out.

Overall Rating: A-. This show was a really good example of balancing good wrestling and entertainment, but again, they have the problem of New Japan leaving next week. However, this was a good way to get the fans in the tent, which is going to keep them coming back later. In theory at least. This was definitely the best show they've put on so far, which is

a very good sign after just a few weeks. Really fun hour here with all wrestling and no story, which can work every now and then.

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ROH Best in the World 2014: I Can't Think Of A Title But It's A Good Show

Best in the World 2014

Date: June 22, 2014

Location: Tennessee State Fairground Sports Arena, Nashville, Tennessee

Attendance: 1000

Commentators: Steve Corino, Kevin Kelly

This company's fans are loyal if nothing else. I get a lot of requests for ROH shows and this is the latest one that people have been asking for. This was their debut on regular PPV and the show has gotten some rave reviews. I do tend to like ROH when I sit down and watch it and I had a great time at Supercard of Honor. Hopefully this is just as good, though I'm worried it's going to have issues living up to its praise.

Let's get to it.

We open with a video of various ROH stars and a voiceover talking about how great you have to be in Ring of Honor. Everyone says it's about being the best and World Champion Adam Cole says "in the world". Not bad.

Kelly and Corino welcome us to the show.

ACH vs. Tommaso Ciampa vs. Caprice Coleman vs. BJ Whitmer vs. TaDarius Thomas vs. Watanabe

This is a Six Man Mayhem match, meaning two men in the ring and one at every corner with lucha rules, where someone going to the floor allows someone else to replace him just like a tag. The winner gets a future TV Title shot. Whitmer and Thomas are both part of the Decade stable and have ring boy Adam Page in their corner. Ciampa and ACH get things going with Ciampa getting annoyed at ACH's nipups. ACH misses a kick to the head but has to avoid a big knee to the head, drawing some applause.

Watanabe comes in without a tag but shoves Ciampa to the floor to make it legal. ACH sends Watanabe outside so Coleman comes in, only to have Thomas tag himself in. Both guys miss kicks until Thomas kicks ACH in the head, earning himself a dropkick to the floor. Whitmer comes in to jump ACH and chop away but ACH heads outside to give us Ciampa vs. Thomas. Tommaso suplexes him to the floor but follows him out, leaving us with Watanabe vs. ACH. This is moving too fast and nothing is having time to build.

Everyone heads outside and ACH loads up a dive but Whitmer breaks it up. The fans are ALL OVER him for stopping their fun. The Decade takes over as things finally slow down a bit. Watanabe pushes the referee for trying to stop him in the corner before going to a claw on ACH. Back to Whitmer who runs into a kick to the face, allowing ACH to tag in Coleman. Thomas comes in with a hurricanrana to Ciampa as everything

breaks down.

Coleman hooks a double northern lights suplex on Watanabe and Thomas but Ciampa breaks up the pin. Watanabe and Ciampa do the forearm slugout before Ciampa hits something like White Noise for two. Whitmer breaks it up but ACH nails a double stomp to his back. ACH kicks some people to the floor but Whitmer powerslams him to break up another big dive. Watanabe suplexes Whitmer for two with Coleman making a save. Project Ciampa (powerbomb into a backstabber) plants Coleman and gets two on ACH as the Decade makes another save.

Whitmer and Thomas are legal and BJ is fine with suplexing his stablemate. Coleman comes in off the top with a top rope Rough Ryder, only to have Watanabe nail him with a running clothesline. Ciampa hits a running knee to Watanabe in the corner before diving on everyone not named ACH and Coleman. Now Coleman dives on all of them, leaving ACH to hit a HUGE springboard swanton onto the pile. He pops up and throws former partner Thomas back in for a 450 and the pin.

Rating: C. It's fun and the big spots at the end were good but there was WAY too much stuff going on here and it was just a huge mess for the sake of having a spotfest. That being said it was entertaining and the kind of fun match it was supposed to be. ACH seems to be a solid in ring guy and more than just flips so there may be some potential there.

We recap Jay Lethal vs. Matt Taven. This is mainly about Lethal's manager Truth Martini, who took Taven to the TV Title before they split. Martini sided with Lethal and tried to ruin Taven's career, so Taven did the old "put on a mask and beat the other guy to prove your worth" deal, though the mask came off during the match. Martini will be handcuffed to the post tonight.

TV Title: Matt Taven vs. Jay Lethal

Lethal is defending of course and has some chick named

Seleziya Sparx in his corner. It takes forever to get Truth handcuffed. We finally get going with Taven nailing some chops to put the champion down. Taven tries to go after Martini but Lethal makes a quick save. Back in and Lethal totally misses an enziguri but Matt goes outside anyway. They chop it out on the floor before heading back inside for something resembling a Blue Thunder Bomb from Taven.

Matt goes after Martini again, allowing Lethal to nail him with a baseball slide for two. The champion puts on the chinlock until Taven comes back with an enziguri (actually connecting) of his own. A backbreaker gets two more for Matt but his bulldog driver is countered into the Lethal Combination.

Lethal follows up with a Macho Elbow for two but Taven escapes the Lethal Injection and nails another enziguri. A brainbuster gets two and Lethal hits the floor for three straight suicide dives. Taven picks up a chair and goes after Martini but Truth hands the head of security a wad of cash. That earns the security guy a superkick but Sparx breaks Martini's handcuffs, allowing him to escape. Back in and the Lethal Injection retains Jay's title.

Rating: C-. This was more about the manager than anything else but we didn't get the payoff just yet. I still don't care for Lethal all that much and the Injection is one of the dumbest looking moves I've seen in years. Taven isn't much either but the match was exciting enough, mainly due to keeping things moving like they did.

We recap Cedric Alexander vs. Roderick Strong. This is a feud over respect with the Decade not caring for Alexander standing up to them. They've beaten him down time after time but Alexander won't quit. Therefore, tonight we have a submission match. Cedric is very weak on the mic and made me feel like he was scared of Strong.

Cedric Alexander vs. Roderick Strong

Submission match. Strong, with Page and Thomas from earlier, is aggressive to start but Cedric is able to keep up with him on the mat, sending us to a standoff. Alexander nails a hard dropkick, only to have Strong put a knee in his ribs. A clothesline puts Strong on the floor and Cedric mostly misses a suicide dive. Cedric hammers away but gets backdropped onto the apron in a sick looking landing.

Back in and Strong puts on a reverse chinlock to stay on the spine. That goes nowhere because it's a reverse chinlock so Strong plants him with a suplex. Alexander gets all fired up and puts Strong in a fireman's carry before throwing him into the air for a kick to the head. A series of headbutts and a dropkick send Strong outside and Cedric follows with a dive but only hits the ring boys.

Back in and a springboard DDT sets up a guillotine choke on Roderick but he makes a rope. They trade enziguris with Alexander getting the better of it. He hits a few running dropkicks in the corner to set up a dragon sleeper and Strong is in trouble. Page has the towel ready but Strong saves himself with knees to the head. A superplex plants Alexander again and Strong goes nuts with forearms to the head. He loads up his fireman's carry backbreaker but Alexander counters into a double underhook neck crank.

Cedric has him in big trouble...so he lets go of the hold for some reason. Both guys go up and fall out to the floor and it's Strong up first. Alexander kicks away from the Strong Hold (Boston crab) so Strong tries a top rope Pedigree. Cedric counters that into a backbreaker onto the top turnbuckle and a quick Strong Hold makes Roderick tap.

Rating: C+. This was a hard hitting brawl with both guys playing their rolls well enough. The story works with Strong being cocky by going with the same stuff he's always used and

Alexander never giving up and using Strong's own move against him. Solid stuff here and probably the best match of the night so far.

Strong still won't shake Alexander's hand.

We recap Matt Hardy/Mike Bennett vs. the Briscoe Brothers. Hardy and Bennett cost Jay Briscoe the World Title at Supercard of Honor, so Cole gave Hardy Briscoe's custom title. Matt put his picture on the belt and named it the Iconic Title. Tonight is the showdown with Jay's brother Mark helping his family.

Briscoes vs. Mike Bennett/Matt Hardy

Maria, basically wearing a swimsuit, is with Bennett and Hardy. For some reason, actor Nick Searcy comes out with Hardy as well. Corino is a HUGE Hardy fan, almost to the point of being an MF'er. Mark and Mike get things going and the brothers quickly stomp Bennett down in the corner. Mike finally comes back with a dropkick and tags in Matt. The heels start working on Mark's arm and a double suplex gets two. Mark dives over to make the tag off to Jay. He finally gets his hands on Hardy and everything breaks down.

Jay hammers on Matt outside but Searcy gets in a cheap shot on Briscoe from behind. Unfortunately Searcy isn't the biggest guy in the world but it's enough to get Matt a breather. Back in and Jay pounds in right hands to Hardy's head before nailing a few neckbreakers. With Matt in trouble, Bennett comes in with the Iconic Title to Jay's head for the lame DQ.

No rating yet as the Briscoes listen to the fans and want to restart the match. Matchmaker Nigel McGuinness comes out and says let's keep this going with No DQ. The Briscoes couldn't be happier and the chairs start coming into the ring. McGuinness comes in on commentary as the brothers are cleaning house. Mark drop toeholds Bennett face first into a chair but Maria trips Mark up, allowing Mike to hit him in the head with

a chair.

Bennett pelts the chair at Mark's head and collapses from exhaustion. Matt brings out a ladder and the fans think this is awesome. Bennett hits a Side Effect on Mark on the floor as Jay hits an AA on Matt, driving him through two chairs in the ring. A suplex sends Matt into the ladder against the ropes to put him on the floor. Mark drops the Cactus Jack elbow and everyone is down. The Briscoes are up first and hit a Doomsday Device to Bennett on the floor. Nice twist on the move there.

Back in and Matt hits Jay with Searcy's Peabody Award for two. Mark goes after Searcy and ends him with a Froggy Bow (frog splash elbow). The Briscoes aren't done yet and load up the Doomsday Device, only to have Maria make a save. Matt hits the Twist of Fate for two on Jay before setting up a table and ladder in the ring. Mark takes Bennett to the floor and drives him through a table with another Froggy Bow. Back in the ring Matt is climbing the ladder but Mark sprays him with a fire extinguisher, allowing Jay to superplex him through a table. The Jay Driller is enough to pin the unconscious Hardy.

Rating: B-. This was basically a TLC match minus the title to pull down. They did the big spots well enough and the crowd was WAY into it. The superplex was a good spot, but there wasn't anything in there that hasn't been topped before. It was entertaining, but not a masterpiece of any sort.

Maria takes the Iconic Title when Jay isn't looking.

We look at Adam Cole and the Kingdom (Cole, Maria, Hardy and Bennett) cutting Elgin's hair at a recent show. Elgin's wife, wrestler Mschif, came out to beg for her husband, earning her a figure four from Cole.

I'm assuming we're at intermission now as an interviewer talks to an NFL player that has signed to ROH. The player, now known as Moose, willing to work hard but Veda Scott interrupts and says she'll handle the interviewer. See, they should have been

talking about RD Evans' New Streak, now at 122-0. Evans is in Osaka, Japan to collect more wins tonight but Scott is here to recruit Moose. He says they can talk about this later.

We recap Silas Young vs. Kevin Steen. Silas isn't happy with Steen for "stepping away" (read as going to WWE) because Silas is a REAL MAN and he doesn't like Steen leaving like a coward.

Kevin Steen vs. Silas Young

Steen hits him at the bell but Young bails outside before Steen can try his Cannonball in the corner. He sends Young hard into the barricade a few times but Silas comes back with forearms to the jaw. Back in and a big chop sends Young to the floor again but he counters an apron powerbomb. Steen gets kicked into the barricade and Young takes over with a clothesline to the back of his head.

We hit the chinlock on Steen for a bit before a neckbreaker gets two for Silas. Kevin fights up and hits a powerbomb out of nowhere to put both guys down. Silas comes back with a hard clothesline but ducks his head. Steen's package piledriver attempt is countered with a good crotching for two. Something out of a fireman's carry (WAY too popular of a move) is countered and Steen sends him into the buckle for the Cannonball. Even with a bad neck, Steen connects with a Swanton Bomb for two.

Young kicks him in the head and hits a rolling fireman's carry but Steen avoids a springboard elbow drop. Another shot to the head has Steen in the corner for some quality trash talking, followed by another knee shot. Steen is in big trouble in the corner but he counters a superplex into something like a spinning superplex of his own. Silas is done but Steen Package Piledrives him anyway for the pin.

Rating: D+. This didn't do it for me actually as we've done the physical stuff already. I get that it's Steen's style, but it's coming right after the No DQ tag match and this was

nowhere near as violent. The head injury stuff was fine but it only became a big issue for a few moments at the end. Not bad but it wasn't the best.

Post match Steen praises Young and says he doesn't have many matches left in this company. He's looking forward to every minute he gets to spend here in the next month and a half, but he's very happy that he got to wrestle Young on this stage. Young shakes his hand and leaves peacefully. Fans: "Please don't go!" Steen: "He has to go. I'm not done yet!" Steen thanks the fans but Young comes in and decks him like a true villain should.

We go to the Fish Tank where Tag Team Champions Red Dragon talk about how much they love Appletinis and don't like ROH bringing in old people to take their titles from them. Fish talks about his great great granddaddy fighting a war with a musket because he's kind of out there.

Tag Team Titles: Christopher Daniels/Frankie Kazarian vs. Red Dragon

The champions are Bobby Fish and Kyle O'Reilly. Kyle and Daniels get things going with the fans behind the Fallen Angel. They start on the mat with neither guy able to sustain an advantage. Kyle nails him in the back of the head but Daniels smacks him in the face to come back. A leg lariat puts O'Reilly down and brings in Kazarian for a double stomp and a near fall. Frankie armdrags Fish a few times and puts on an armbars to slow things back down.

Kaz drops a legdrop to the back of the head and brings Daniels back in for a gorgeous Lionsault. Fish finally gets in a right hand for a breather but Kyle walks right into a front facelock from Kaz. The champions finally get a breather though as Kazarian misses a charge into the post. Kyle immediately puts on an armbars before it's back to Fish for the forearm exchange.

Back to the armbar for a bit before Kyle misses a knee drop. Fish's distraction lets Kyle hook a standing guillotine, only to have Kazarian drop him down into a spinebuster. Bobby sprints around the ring to pull Daniels down to the floor to keep the champions in control. Fish stays on the arm but doesn't stay on it well enough to prevent a tag to Daniels. Christopher cleans part of the house and everything breaks down.

A middle rope stomp to the chest puts Kyle down on the floor, setting up a big suicide dive. Daniels hits a slingshot Diamond Cutter on Fish but Bobby avoids the BME. There's a Samoan drop to Daniels but he avoids a BME from Fish. Kaz comes back in with the slingshot DDT on Bobby but Kyle sweeps his legs out. Daniels hits a quick Blue Thunder Bomb on Kyle and Angel's Wings on Fish but O'Reilly makes a last second save.

The champions send Daniels to the floor and into a chair next to the barricade, setting up back to back dropkicks from the apron in a brutal looking spot. Back in and Kazarian kicks Kyle in the head and nails the Flux Capacitor (top rope C4) but he lands on the arm. Fish pulls the referee out at the delayed two and the fans aren't pleased. Chasing the Dragon (brainbuster with a kick to the head) gets two on Kazarian but a cross armbreaker makes Kaz tap.

Rating: B. This was a good but not great match. I still don't get the massive appeal of Red Dragon though I do like their promos. Bad Influence wasn't Bad Influence here and it brought things down a little bit. They went with a different style here and it worked, though not at the level people were hoping they would hit.

We recap Cole vs. Elgin. They met in the finals of the World Title tournament last September where Elgin had him pinned but the referee was down. Cole then turned heel and feuded with Jay Brisco for awhile before we could get back to this big

showdown. Elgin wants to be remembered as one of the greatest ever and he has to win the title to do that.

ROH World Title: Michael Elgin vs. Adam Cole

Cole hasn't done much for me yet but he's growing on me. He charges at Elgin to start but gets taken down and hammered on the mat. The champ bails to the floor to make Michael chase him, allowing Cole to send him back to the floor. Adam loads up a dive but Elgin does the Samoa Joe step to the side. I love that. Michael blocks a chair shot and pops Cole with a right hand. He follows up with a running release powerslam on the ramp before taking the champion back inside.

Cole comes back with a jumping reverse neckbreaker (think an RKO with Elgin's back to Cole) but takes too time going up. Elgin is slammed off the middle rope for two and we hit the chinlock. It doesn't last long so Cole goes to the middle rope for a headscissors, only to get caught in a gutbuster for a nice counter. Elgin tries a string of power moves but can only hit a tiger suplex for two. A few kicks to the head get two for Adam but Elgin is able to lift him up from the mat into a suplex. Cole knees out of that in a great counter and suplexes Elgin onto his knee for two.

Elgin comes right back with a Crossface but Cole rolls him over for a cover to escape. The Cesaro dead lift superplex into a falcon's arrow gets two on the champion. Cole counters the Elgin Bomb and tries a hurricanrana but has to counter a super Elgin Bomb to get it. The Florida Keys (arm tap German suplex) get a very close two for Cole. Michael is in trouble so he just kicks Cole in the face. Adam comes back with a superkick but it nails the referee instead.

A buckle bomb followed by the Elgin Bomb should have Cole beaten but there's no referee. The Kingdom hits the ring for a beatdown but Michael picks them up for a Samoan drop/fall away slam at the same time. The smile on Elgin's face made that

even better. Elgin powerbombs Cole onto the Kingdom in a cool visual, sending Maria's eyes bugging out of her head.

Maria slaps Elgin in the face, allowing Cole to try a Canadian Destroyer from the apron. Elgin counters that but Bennett hits him with the belt, allowing Cole to hit a German suplex on the floor. The tag team War Machine comes out to fight the Kingdom to the back and Michael barely beats the count back in. Maria throws the belt in, earning her some green mist from Elgin's wife MsChif. The buckle and Elgin Bombs give us a near fall so close that the streamers come flying into the ring. Fans: "WE F'D UP!"

Cole comes back with a missile dropkick to the knee and wraps it around the post. There's a Hart Breaker on the leg and Elgin is in trouble. Back in and Elgin rolls through a rollup into the Crossface but Cole hits him in the leg. Elgin's leg is so banged up that he can't charge for a clothesline. The middle rope Canadian Destroyer only gets two and the look on Cole's face is great. He loads up another Destroyer but tries a sunset flip for a surprise. Elgin is ready for it though and counters into a triple powerbomb for the pin and the title.

Rating: B+. This was the kind of match they needed to make the show feel like a big deal, even though the ending was pretty clear about halfway through. They were following a classic formula here of throwing EVERYTHING at Elgin but having him hang through it all. I wasn't wild about his knee being strong enough for three powerbombs at the end but I can live with it. Cole looked good too as he's got a higher flying Bobby Roode style working for him right now. Really good match here.

Elgin celebrates to take us out.

Overall Rating: B-. I liked the show but it wasn't the best I've ever seen from ROH. The main event is worth checking out but nothing else was really a blowaway match. There was good stuff on the show though, if nothing else due to the absence

of a lot of ROH's bad habits. The no selling and forearms were almost nowhere to be seen on this show and it made the show far less annoying. It's a good show and a good first effort on PPV.

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ROH Supercard of Honor VIII: Man Up And Go Away

Supercard of Honor VIII

Date: April 4, 2014

Location: Alario Center, Westwego, Louisiana

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, Nigel McGuinness, Steve Corino

I'm not the biggest ROH fan in the world but I was in New Orleans for Wrestlemania weekend and saw ROH was having a pay per view the night I got into town. The general admission ticket was cheap so I grabbed a seat and took in my first Ring of Honor show ever. I didn't know a lot of the people on the card so it's going to be interesting to hear the commentary to fill in some details. The main event is Adam Cole defending the World Title against Jay Briscoe in Ladder War V, which is their version of a TLC match. Let's get to it.

The opening video shows last year's Supercard of Honor where Jay Briscoe won the title in the first place. He was injured last summer and had to vacate the title, but held onto the belt and said he was never defeated for the title. Therefore, there are two titles but only Adam Cole is

champion, setting up the main event tonight. The idea here is Briscoe is nuts but Cole is classy. Adam gives off a Bobby Roode vibe in his promos.

We start with a YES chant as the announcers run down the card.

Cedric Alexander vs. Roderick Strong

Strong is part of the Decade (Strong, Jimmy Jacobs and BJ Whitmer with their assistant Adam Page), which represents the old days of ROH and doesn't like a lot of the disrespectful young punks around anymore. They threw Cedric's bag out of the locker room to show their displeasure after Cedric used Strong's backbreaker. The Decade also has their Young Boy Adam Page here to towel them off and hand them water, which isn't the worst gimmick in the world.

They trade wristlocks to start with Strong getting the better of it until Cedric quickly flips out of it and sends Roderick into the corner. The Decade is quickly on the apron to check on Strong as the match slows down already. A dropkick puts Strong down though and he's bleeding from the hand. Alexander goes to the corner but gets tripped up, sending the back of his head into the top turnbuckle to give Strong control.

Adam Page runs back down to the ring with a bandage for Strong as he hits a backbreaker for two on Cedric. We stop to get the thumb taped up which I thought was putting on a foreign object live. Some knees to the back are good for two and we hit a rear waistlock. Back up and Roderick misses a dropkick as the announcers talk about RD Evans' streak. Strong loses the tape off his hand and gets caught with a slingshot DDT for two.

A half nelson facebuster gets the same but he gets caught by a running knee to the ribs and an Angle Slam for two. Some running knees in the corner look to set up a Rock Bottom but Cedric crucifixes him down for two. Strong comes right back with a backbreaker for two more and they chop it out. A running knee to Cedric's face sets up a fireman's carry into a double knee gutbuster for a VERY close two and the fans think this is awesome. That's a stretch at this point.

Alexander comes back with a spinning kick to the face out of the corner (remember that for later) but has to go after Adam Page. A fireman's

carry into another kick to the head drops Strong and another kick knocks Jimmy Jacobs to the floor as well. Cedric dives onto the Decade but springboards into a dropkick which mostly misses. Strong lifts him into the air for a suplex but drops him onto his knees (ankles but whatever) for the pin.

Rating: C+. The match was going well but the camera showing the misses at the end really brought it down for me. You could see that the dropkick missed live but the cameras made the finish look a lot worse. Still though, I liked the idea they were going for here and it was a fast paced opener which got the crowd going.

Post match Jimmy Jacobs agrees that that was wrestling (another stretch) and says you can learn exactly what NOT to do by watching Cedric Alexander. You can learn how to get started in this company by watching Adam Page however. Alexander almost comes back into the ring but Jacobs orders him out of their building. Jacobs advises Adrenaline Rush and Andrew Everett to take a lesson from Alexander in what NOT to do.

Decade vs. Adrenaline Rush/Andrew Everett

This is a scramble match, which I believe means lucha rules, meaning that if you leave the ring, it's as good as a tag. Adrenaline Rush is ACH and Tadarius Thomas. Steve Corino says ROH popularized this kind of match, which is just flat out wrong as WCW was having these almost weekly back in their heyday. ACH makes sure to get as many handshakes as he can get when the Decade won't give him one. Jacobs pulls out his spike to go after ACH but the referee won't let it happen.

ACH wants to start with Jacobs but Jimmy tags in Page after swearing a bit. They start fast with ACH nailing some fast armdrags into a nipup for a standoff. Off to the powerful BJ Whitmer who knocks ACH into the corner. Some dropkicks have little effect on BJ so ACH actually points into the air to distract him before dropkicking the knee out. Whitmer bails to the floor, allowing Jacobs to come in and knocks ACH to the floor.

Thomas comes in for a rollup to Jimmy followed by Richie Steamboat's Sling Blade. The high flier Everett comes in and speeds things up with a

moonsault over Jacobs followed by a big dropkick. Two backflips set up a hurricanrana to Whitmer but BJ pulls Andrew to the floor. Thomas hammers on Jacobs but charges into the corner and moonsaults down onto Whitmer and Page. Jacobs sends ACH to the apron where BJ pulls him onto his shoulders, setting up a Jimmy spear through the ropes to crush ACH. Cool spot. I'm sorry for all the play by play here but we're in total spot fest mode.

Back in and ACH gets beaten up as Corino says one of the photographers looks like he's from Jamaican. Kelly: "HE'S FROM ARKANSAS!" The guy they're talking about was all over ringside and did more than any crew member I've ever seen. The Decade triple teams ACH to give Page a two count followed by a chinlock. A nice spinwheel kick gets the same on ACH and it's back to BJ for some kicks in the face. ACH comes back with a running clothesline to send BJ onto the floor, setting up a HUGE flip dive to take him down again.

That allows Thomas to come in legally and kick Jacobs in the face (that's at least two tonight) for two before throwing him down with a suplex. Page comes in for a fireman's carry backbreaker but Everett comes in as Thomas rolls to the floor. Everett charges too fast into the corner and slips onto the ropes, and we get something I really liked: Page is right on him. Instead of waiting around like an idiot for Everett to get back into position, Page goes over and starts pounding on a fallen opponent, like a wrestler should be doing. It MAKES SENSE for him to be doing that but you hardly ever see that in WWE.

Anyway Andrew comes out of the corner with a nice moonsault press and Page rolls to the floor. BJ comes in but gets caught by a springboard kick to the face (you may be noticing a pattern here). Everett hits a gorgeous springboard shooting star to take out Jacobs and Page followed by a springboard shooting star press for two on Whitmer. A big backdrop sends Everett over the top and to the floor, followed by a wicked clothesline to Thomas. The All Seeing Eye (gutwrench mat slam from Whitmer with a sliding neckbreaker from Jacobs. I've seen that somewhere before and I think it was in TNA) is good for the pin on Tadarius.

Rating: C. Total spot fest here and there's nothing wrong with that. ACH

looked polished out there and I can see why he was given a WWE tryout a few months back. That being said, the opening two matches should have been combined into one or had the opener cut. The show starts to drag at the end and neither of these matches really did much differently from the other.

Jacobs gets his spike post match and goes after Thomas until an injured ACH makes the save.

We recap Truth Martini vs. Matt Taven. Martini is a heel manager who led Taven to the TV Title, but after losing the belt they parted ways with Taven firing Truth. Tonight Martini is back with a mystery wrestler to take care of Taven.

Martini says he's alone tonight but that doesn't bother him. He won't be alone for long and promises a big surprise.

Matt Taven vs. ???

Martini comes out alone and says Taven is nothing without him. He calls Kevin Kelly into the ring (Corino: "YOU'RE THE MYSTERY GUY???") as he reads the end of the Book of Truth. Matt says no one wants to see this and opens the book, only to get kicked low by Martini. Truth says surprise and walks out. No match.

Silas Young vs. RD Evans

Time for a comedy match! Evans is back and on a made up win streak but it's played totally for laughs. He called himself a real man and that's not cool with Wrestling's Last Real Man in Silas Young. However, the interesting part here is Evans' manager Veda Scott, who is absolutely GORGEOUS. I had heard her name before but I had never seen her in person. She's a redhead with a kind of sexy nerd thing going on here in a short green skirt. Evans' other dude Ramon comes out with an 82-0 sign which will come into play later.

Evans kicks Young in the face to start but gets driven hard into the corner to give Silas control. We get a Flair Flip in the corner but Scott trips Silas up for two. Young chases her around the ring but she SPRINTS

away and loses her shoes in the process. Ramon offers a distraction and Evans takes over. Scott jumps in on commentary as Evans is slammed off the top. Apparently she's an attorney along with Evans who is a wrestler on the side. I've heard worse gimmicks.

Young puts on a bodyscissors as the announcers talk about Evans winning a match in what sounded like Romania. Back up and a dropkick nails Evans but Young runs into a boot in the corner. A top rope shoulder block puts Young down again and a powerslam gets two. Evans misses a top rope splash though and a backbreaker into a lariat is good for a near fall on RD.

Fans: "YOU CAN'T BEAT HIM!"

They head to the apron where Young can't hit a German suplex to the floor but does hit an electric chair drop onto the apron. Evans DIVES back in at 19 (ROH goes to 20, which I forgot until the referee got to 11) and gets a near fall off a small package. Scott gets on the apron for a distraction as Ramon gets on the apron.

Silas takes the belt and claps his hands before grabbing his back. It's not enough for the DQ so Evans gets a VERY close near fall off a rollup. The referee takes a belt shot to the head and goes down as Evans hits a running neckbreaker. Young gets up and hits a rolling fireman's carry into a slingshot moonsault for the pin by another referee to break the streak.

BUT WAIT! The original referee says Young hit him in the head so THAT'S A DQ AND THE STREAK LIVES! Ramon sprints to the back and comes back with an 83-0 sign as Scott goes nuts.

Rating: C. This was so over the top and completely goofy but I totally loved it. There's something awesome about a character that is played totally for laughs like this and Veda Scott made it all the better. The fact that the skirt was barely there helped a lot but she's also hilarious on commentary. I dug this one a lot and the fans did too.

Mike Bennett and Maria promise to make Mark Briscoe feel pain tonight. He promises a new submission to put Chicken Briscoe down.

Mark Briscoe is all fired up and sounds completely insane, talking about

a shark and a female dog being in a jungle before tearing Bennett's face off like a gorilla.

Mike Bennett vs. Mark Briscoe

No DQ. Maria is with Mike here and somehow blows Veda Scott away by wearing basically a bikini. Briscoe takes him down with a flip dive off the apron to get things going. Maria rants at the commentary table about how she didn't want Mike to do this in the first place. Back in and a hard clothesline drops Bennett again but he comes back by whipping Mark into the barricade.

They head into the crowd with Briscoe backdropping him onto the stands and landing a big dive off a railing. Back to ringside where Bennett is able to pelt a chair at Mark's head a few times to take over. Inside again with a low blow with a chair before Bennett wedges the chair in the corner. In a funny bit he sings Edge's theme song but misses a charge into the chair, knocking him back to the floor. Mark hits a running elbow off the apron for two and they fight up to the entrance.

The fans and announcers say they can't see anything as Briscoe is knocked off the stags and through a table as the cameraman goes down. They head back to the ring with Maria acting as a shield for Bennett. To his credit he shoves her out of the way to take the kendo stick shots for her. Maria gets in a cheap shot from the floor and a Side Effect onto a chair sets up a series of chair shots to the back. Bennett Pillmanizes the neck (it's not a Conchairto if it's wrapped around a body part people) and puts on an Anaconda Vice for the easy win.

Rating: C. This was a wild brawl which made sense given the story they were telling here. That was quite the ending spot with the Pillmanizing and it was nice to see the match again as I spent most of the first viewing staring at Maria. Seriously, she's just hard to take your eyes off at any time but barely dressed makes it even better. She's also great at messing with the crowd as she stands there in terror when Bennett is in trouble but then poses and shakes her hips when Mike wins.

Matt Taven is looking for Truth Martini and gets beaten down in the bathroom by Truth's new guy who we don't see. This didn't air for the

live crowd.

Intermission, during which Nigel McGuinness was working the merchandise stand. This ran about twenty minutes but they cut it out here for obvious reasons.

Speaking of Nigel, he replaced Corino on commentary for the second half of the show.

A small guy named Cheeseburger is in the ring and asks who wants free t-shirts. He's interrupted by Matt Hardy who tells Cheeseburger to get out of the ring before something bad happens to him. Matt says he's back in Ring of Honor and it's on to its biggest year ever. ROH's ratings, attendance and merchandising are setting records and it's all because Matt Hardy is here again. He's giving ROH the rub and has picked Adam Cole as the Holy Spirit of Wrestling.

Matt says the internet smark fans just don't get it. Cole and himself are like the Holy Trinity you hear about in church because they're one in the same. Hardy: "Go ahead and boo. It's just part of my \$15,000 payday." Matt says he and Cole run this company along with Michael Bennett and Maria Kanellis instead of the fans or announcers. Tonight Cole will cement himself as the greatest ROH World Champion in history, including CM Punk. Cheeseburger gets in the ring like an idiot and takes a Twist of Fate. "You're not on my menu anymore." The heat was great, but this didn't need nine minutes.

Forever Hooligans vs. ReDragon vs. Hanson/Raymond Rowe

The Hooligans are Alex Kozlov (fake Russian but a small guy) and Rocky Romero. ReDragon is Bobby Fish and Kyle O'Reilly. Fish is very energetic and tries to fire Kyle up before we get things going. Hanson and Rowe are two big power guys that you don't often see in ROH. The winner of this gets a Tag Team Title match against the Young Bucks at some point in the future.

Rowe and O'Reilly get things going by circling each other for a bit. Kyle knocks Hanson to the floor but makes the mistake of heading outside for a breather. Hanson plants him with a slam so it's off to Fish who walks

into an overhead belly to belly. Hanson gets the tag and nails a clothesline to the back of the head for two. Bobby heads outside again and we get a chase, resulting in Fish sliding back in and tagging out to Romero.

Two fingers to the eyes slow Hanson down and a hurricanrana puts him on the mat. Off to Kozlov for some double teaming, including a springboard cross body for two. O'Reilly tags Hanson after the big man drops Alex with a clothesline but Romero gets in a cheap shot from the apron to give the Hooligans control. Now we get to the stupid comedy portion of the match with Kozlov putting on one of those Russian hats and hitting some dancing kicks to the head. Thankfully it doesn't last long.

Romero starts firing off running clotheslines to Kyle in the corner and won't let Alex hit one of his own. They nearly come to blows but hug it out to a big reaction. Rowe comes in to blame Romero with something resembling a release Rock Bottom but Fish tags himself in to work over Rocky. ReDragon hits a backbreaker/middle rope knee combo for two on Romero before things settle back down.

Kyle works over Rocky's arm before it's back to Fish for some shots of his own. Kyle comes in again for a hammerlock slam and a chinlock but Rocky fights back with a spinning kick to the face. Alex gets the tag and hits a springboard cross body on Kyle, despite Rowe clearly touching O'Reilly's back in plain view of the referee. Kozlov nails a bunch of kicks to the head and takes out most of the people in the match with a big flip dive.

A springboard missile dropkick gets two on Kyle but Hanson comes in and cleans house. Everything breaks down even more and everyone is knocked to the mat or floor. Kozlov and O'Reilly are the only ones left in the ring and they slug it out until Rowe trips Kyle to the floor. Rowe is driven into the barricade by Kyle and hit with a running dropkick off the apron from Fish. Hanson catches a diving Fish in a powerslam but Kozlov sends him to the floor. Alex hits a shooting star for two but Fish makes the save. Forever Hooligans loads up some kind of a double team move on Fish but he slips off Alex's back and gets a rollup for the pin.

Rating: B-. This was an insane tag match but it went on a bit too long. It was entertaining enough but I would have gone with the title match here instead of the #1 contenders match. Still though, this was another fun spot fest with some power added in to balance things out in a nice addition.

Replays show that Fish had a handful of trunks.

We recap Tommaso Ciampa vs. Jay Lethal which started about two years ago when Ciampa injured his knee in a match against Lethal and was put out for a year. Lethal has had Ciampa beaten twice but various issues has cost him the TV Title. Tonight it's 2/3 falls again.

TV Title: Tommaso Ciampa vs. Jay Lethal

Ciampa is defending and this is 2/3 falls. This is where the fans were getting restless as you could see a lot of them looking at their phones and the chants started to die a bit. Ciampa takes off his knee brace for the first time since his injury in a symbolic move. Feeling out process to start as they trade headlocks and rollups for two each. A hiptoss puts the champion down and Lethal cartwheels over to a standoff.

They chop it out in the corner but Lethal misses a springboard dropkick. Jay kicks him into the barricade and nails a suicide dive followed by a second one for good measure. A third puts Ciampa into the crowd and the fans chant for ROH. Why they don't chant for Lethal is beyond me, but it's happened since the ECW days. Lethal is whipped into the barricade and Ciampa hits a running knee so fast that he falls right back into the crowd. The referee restarts the count for no apparent reason before Ciampa throws Jay back inside.

Jay comes back with some kicks to the head and a dropkick in the corner for two until Ciampa bites Jay's hand to escape. Lethal tries a Tajiri handspring elbow but gets caught in what was supposed to be a Backstabber. They fight over a suplex until they both go over the top in a big crash. Neither guy gets the better of a slugout and they both slide back inside at the 19 count, which didn't please the fans in my section. Another Tajiri handspring is countered but Lethal grabs a German suplex for the pin and the first fall.

There's no rest period so gets in a quick shot to the head and they trade near falls. Lethal Combination (backbreaker into a Downward Spiral) sets up a Koji Clutch on the champion but he counters into a Rings of Saturn Crossface. Jay gets his feet into the ropes though and it's time for another slugout. Again neither guy can get the better of it so Jay tries another Tajiri handspring but gets caught in a Diamond Cutter, which apparently is the finish to the handspring.

Lethal busts out Ciampa's finisher (powerbomb into double knees to the back) for two but ANOTHER Tajiri handspring hits the referee. Ciampa rolls some Germans and hits a discus lariat to put both guys down. This brings out Truth Martini who throws Jay the knee brace. He nails Ciampa in the face for two before nailing the top rope elbow, only to have Ciampa Hulk Up. Some superkicks have no effect but Lethal FINALLY hits the handspring into the cutter for the pin and the title.

Rating: C-. This was longer than it needed to be as the second fall could have been cut out to the same result. The ending really didn't work for me either as Lethal knocked Ciampa out but they did another minute or so, making the entire knee brace thing seem completely worthless. Just too long here, but I've never been a Jay Lethal fan in the first place.

Post match Lethal says there's a new house in New Orleans and it's the House of Truth.

Michael Elgin vs. Kevin Steen

Winner gets an IWGP Title shot at Global Wars in May. Elgin is one of the few ROH guys I really like but Steen is pretty much the top star in ROH. Steen immediately tries the Package Piledriver but Elgin fights out, only to get caught by a Cannonball in the corner for two. You can tell this is going to be a power brawl. They head to the floor with Elgin being thrown into the barricade which is knocked into the crowd.

Michael is sent into the barricade again around the ring as the fans chant OVER HERE. Elgin reverses and "hits" a running big boot to the...chest I think? Steen teases getting back in but would rather load up a piledriver on the floor. Thankfully Elgin backdrops him down to prevent the whole broken neck thing and lands a delayed vertical suplex on the

floor. They head back inside but Elgin's sunset flip attempt is countered by some running knees to the head for two.

A senton backplash gets two on Michael but he muscles Steen up into a German suplex to put both guys down. The Sharpshooter from Steen is quickly countered into a suplex for two but Steen misses a moonsault into a flip to give Steen a breather. A knee to the back of Elgin's head gets two but a second Cannonball is countered into a powerbomb. Steen comes right back with the F-Cinc (French for 5) for another two count.

Elgin wins a slugout and Steen almost falls out to the floor. Michael tries the Cesaro superplex but Kevin headbutts him down, only to get enziguried (again with the head kicks!) to the floor. Kevin powerbombs him onto the apron but Elgin gets up and powerbombs him against the post. That's only good for two as well so Michael tombstones him down for another near fall. They slug it out until Steen throws him into the air for a powerbomb and gets two off the Package Piledriver.

Steen is STUNNED and takes too long going up top, allowing Elgin to block a Cannonball with knees. A sitout powerbomb gets Elgin another near fall so he loads up a superplex. Steen fights back AGAIN and hits a top rope brainbuster. The kickout shocks everyone again but Elgin is able to counter a Package Piledriver into a triple bomb. Another powerbomb and a lariat set up a buckle bomb on Steen, followed by a Package Piledriver to FINALLY pin Steen.

Rating: B+. This is the kind of match the show was needing for awhile now. It's totally different from the rest of the show and that was the big problem. The show had become repetitive so mixing things up like this made a good match feel like a very good match. Elgin gets a big win as well which can only help him.

Steen takes awhile to get up and receives a THANK YOU BOTH chant.

The main event took awhile to set up so a bit was cut out here.

ROH World Title: Jay Briscoe vs. Adam Cole

Cole is defending. There are two belts above the ring and three ladders

at ringside, first person to pull down the belts wins. Corino is on commentary as well. Jay wins a fight to start and nails a quick backdrop to stagger the champion. He heads outside but comes up with a chair to the head to stop a suicide dive. Back inside and the chair bounces off Briscoe's head before Adam slams him down onto the steel.

An AA breaks the chair and it's time for the smallest ladder, only to have Jay baseball slide it into Cole's face. Some more chair shots put Cole down before Jay pelts the chair at his head to even the score. Adam comes back with a suplex onto the ladder and Briscoe's head is busted open BAD. The first attempt at the belts is easily cut off as the referee brings in a towel to wipe Jay's face. He refuses the help of course and brings in the medium sized ladder.

Cole is sent up the ramp but Jay goes after him instead of climbing for the titles. There's another LOUD chair shot to Cole's head and Jay bridges the small ladder between two chairs. A big splash knocks Cole off the ladder and now it's time to climb. Scratch that actually as Jay shoves the medium ladder over and gets a table. Cole is able to get off before Jay can dive off the big ladder though and Adam gets in another cheap shot to take over.

The big ladder is laid against the ropes but both guys head back inside. Briscoe is knocked down by a hard clothesline and the small ladder is thrown into the ring again. Jay pops right back up though and powerbombs Adam onto the small ladder in the corner. Adam fights off a superplex through the ladder (fans: "PLEASE DON'T DIE!") and superkicks Jay onto it instead for a HUGE crash.

Adam climbs the medium ladder but Jay is right back up and throwing Cole through the small ladder in the corner, badly bending it in the process. Briscoe is now bleeding from the back as well but is still able to put the champion down with a neckbreaker. Jay sets up another ladder bridge but the ladder is badly broken so it collapses as soon as Adam lays down on it. That's fine with Jay as he tries a splash onto the mostly broken ladder but Cole moves, sending Jay crashing down.

The medium ladder is set up in the middle of the ring but Jay pelts

another chair off the champion's head to put him back down. They both climb up to fight on top but Jay knocks him off for a big crash. Cole is able to talk enough trash from the mat though that Jay drops down and hits the Jay Driller piledriver. He still won't climb though and loads up a Conchairto onto the ladder, only to have Matt Hardy run in and hit a Twist of Fate to Jay on the floor.

Matt helps Cole climb but Mark Briscoe runs out, completely crippling a lot of the momentum this show had going for it. His neck was Pillmanized but here he is an hour and a half later? I don't care how tough he is. Mark Briscoe shouldn't be seen for AT LEAST two months after a spot like that. He puts Matt on the table but Mike Bennett comes out to shove the ladder over, sending Mark through the table.

Jay and Cole are alone in the ring and the Jay Driller puts Cole down again. A Jay Driller puts Bennett down as well and there's a third to take out Matt Hardy. Cole and Jay climb at the same time but the champion wins a slugout and shoves him down. Jay tries one last climb but Cole pulls down the belts to retain.

Rating: B. This was a solid fight but the Mark Briscoe stuff really took me out of things. To be fair though I got to look at Maria a bit more when she came down with Bennett so I can't complain too much. Jay looked like a soldier out there which is the right idea and Cole holding onto the title is the right choice at the end of the day. Good stuff here.

The heels pose to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This is a show where the parts don't add up to the final total. As mentioned, the show just went on forever and it really started to drag around the TV Title match. It's certainly entertaining and the last two matches brought things back up, but it didn't really fire me up and make me want to see more ROH.

At the end of the day, it's about the same take on ROH that I've always had: there's good stuff here, but it's not enough to make me want to keep coming back. Thankfully they cut WAY down on the no selling stuff (Mark Briscoe aside) but unfortunately they cranked up on the repetitive moves. From Jay Lethal trying Lethal Injection four times to seemingly EVERYONE

using a spin kick to the head, I felt like I saw the same match several times tonight. If ROH was near me again and relatively cheap I'd go, but it's not something I'm going out of my way to see.

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Went To Ring Of Honor Supercard of Honor VIII

I didn't take notes so my memory isn't going to be perfect. These are the mental notes I took and I'll save the full breakdown for later. Also I took about 20 pictures but the cord for the camera is about 750 miles away so you'll have to wait on those. I got to the event about 40 minutes early and saw a VERY long line. Thankfully it didn't take long to get through. I had general admission seating and could sit anywhere in the endzone of the arena. The seats were looking straight at the entrance so I had a great view all night. Not bad for about \$32. The arena was mostly full but the bigger side did have some empty seats at the top.

Almost as soon as I got through the door, I could see Jay Lethal standing at an autograph table. There were I believe twelve people at the row of tables and autographs were \$10 each. Being the eternal cheap guy that I am, I opted for some quick handshakes with Kevin Steen, the Briscoes, Matt Hardy, and Maria Kanellis, who was rocking a little black dress.

She's somehow even more gorgeous in person and seemed like a very nice person with a stunning smile.

I went inside and caught a few moments of the dark match which was a fourway won by Luke Hawx. The other name I recognized was Mike Posey who used to be a referee. There was also a masked man named Romantic Touch, who Wikipedia says is Rhett Titus under a mask. I went to the concession stand before this was over and only saw about a minute of it.

Roderick Strong beat Cedric Alexander to open the show. Strong is a guy I like to a degree so it was a nice touch. The Decade (Strong's heel stable, led by Jimmy Jacobs) is fine for an idea (We were here first and like the old ways better) and Jacobs isn't bad as the boss.

The Decade called out Adrenaline Rush and Andrew Everett for a six man that saw ACH hit some awesome high spots. The guy reminds me of Shelton Benjamin from the start of his singles push, which is a very big compliment. Everett hit some great looking springboard shooting stars for two but Coleman got caught in a slam/neckbreaker combo from Decade for the pin. ACH seemed to have hurt his knee.

Truth Martini (heel manager) vs. Matt Taven (former client) didn't happen as Martini kicked him low and left. Kevin Kelly was brought into the ring for this for no apparent reason.

Next up was RD Evans (Archibald Peck for you Chikara fans), a guy you might vaguely remember Ryback beating up on Smackdown a few months back. Dude is freakishly tall. Anyway he's doing a Goldberg Streak gimmick but totally for laughs and the fans are way into him. He got Silas Young to hit the referee with a belt before getting pinned, only to get the Dusty Finish for the DQ. Not much to the match, but Evans' valet Veda Scott is GORGEOUS.

And then no one remembered her because Maria came out with Mike Bennett for his match against Mark Brisco wearing a blue

bikini. Seriously there's not much else to say about it and it stole most of my attention during the match (I have a thing for redheads. What can I say?). She knows how to be evil too as she was all scared and timid when Mike was in trouble but after the match when he was standing tall she was shaking her hips and had this awesome evil smile. When she was on the apron and leaning into the ring you could see a cameraman filming her from behind which made me chuckle. The match was a solid brawl with Mark looking insane. Bennett wound up Pillmanizing MARK's neck with another chair, setting up an Anaconda Vice for the win. Remember that, because it becomes important later.

Intermission came, so I went outside and look to my left to see none other than Nigel McGuinness talking to fans. Again just a handshake, though he was working the merchandise stand and offering his documentary autographed for \$25. I've heard it's good in case you're a fan of his. Nigel seemed like a nice guy from what I could tell as he was handling money but still had time to shake my hand and smile. Everyone seemed nice all night, though I only said hi to most people.

After the break a guy named Cheeseburger (seriously? No actually because there's nothing serious about a guy with that name) came out to throw t-shirts to the crowd but was interrupted by Matt Hardy. Matt put over ROH (literally using those words) and praised Adam Cole (the Holy Spirit of wrestling, to go with Matt Hardy as the Jesus of wrestling. Seriously). This went on WAY longer than it needed to and of course ended with Cheeseburger taking the Twist of Fate.

ReDragon beat Forever Hooligans and two muscle guys with beards named Hanson and Raymond Rowe. This is one of those matches that is going to be praised by ROH fans but it was a glorified comedy match at times. It wasn't bad, but it highlighted a lot of the problems I have with ROH, which I'll get into in the full review. Match was energetic and fun at times but not a very high quality.

Next up was Jay Lethal vs. Tomasso Ciampa in a 2/3 falls match for Ciampa's TV Title. The crowd was starting to get restless at this point and you could see a lot of people messing with their phones. I can't say I blame them as the show was already running long and a 2/3 falls match sounded like death. Not much to talk about here as Lethal used the Tajiri handspring into an elbow or cutter far too often and it got boring fast. Lethal won the first fall and then the referee got bumped. Truth Martini came out and threw Jay a knee brace which I think is part of Ciampa's history. A shot with that got two and after Ciampa Hulked Up, Lethal kicked him a lot and hit the Tajiri handspring into a cutter to win the title. He joined the House of Truth after.

Kevin Steen and Michael Elgin (one of the few ROH guys I actually like) had a big old fight for a shot at the IWGP Title in May. This was the old school heavyweight slugfest with both guys beating the tar out of each other. It's probably the best match of the night and a really solid brawl. Elgin won by hitting Steen with Steen's package piledriver. They hugged after the match and Steen had to be helped out.

The main event was a ladder war (TLC) for the World Title. Adam Cole was champion but Jay Briscoe has his own title since he was never defeated for the belt. It was a very violent and brutal match with Jay getting busted open hardway and Matt Hardy, Mike Bennett and Mark Briscoe interfering. Yeah remember earlier when MARK had his neck crushed by a chair? He was fine 90 minutes later. That's the kind of thing that gets on my nerves in wrestling. Why am I supposed to buy a big injury spot if it doesn't even last two hours? Back in the day that would be six months of TV but here it doesn't even go until the end of the show. That's just not smart. Anyway Jay fought very hard but the numbers were too much for him and Cole retained the title. Most of the fans including myself bolted the second he got the belts down.

Overall the show was fun, but overstayed its welcome. They needed to cut one of the matches (the opener would have been a great choice) and get this a little shorter. Also one of the major problem with ROH showed through tonight: too many of the wrestlers have the same style and it gets really repetitive. I lost count of the number of spin kicks to the face I saw tonight and it gets old after awhile. That's partially why Steen vs. Elgin was so well received: it was completely different from anything else all night and the fans were interested in seeing something different.

I liked the show, but it's the same reaction I always get out of watching ROH: good stuff here and there, but not enough to make me watch more than a show here or there.

Full review coming later as I'm sure this is going to be online in like an hour. If you find it on Dailymotion or something, let me know.

On This Day: October 15, 2011 – Ring of Honor TV: How Did I Make It This Long?

Ring of Honor

Date: October 15, 2011

Location: Frontier Fieldhouse, Chicago Ridge, Illinois

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, Nigel McGuinness

It's week four of this show and I believe the final episode in this batch of TV tapings. After this the show will be out of the Davis Arena in Louisville for a few weeks which is the home arena of OVW. I'm curious to see how they change things

at the next batch of tapings but we have to go through with the original here still. Let's get to it.

We open with a highlight package of last week's world title match.

Here's another video because this is a highlight show right? It's about the Briscoes and how awesome they are and how much better they are than the All Night Express.

The All Night Express talk about how they've fought the Briscoes time after time and get closer to beating them every time.

Briscoe Brothers vs. All Night Express

This is for the #1 contendership. I have no idea which Briscoe is which but it's Jay according to the announcers. Kenny King and Rhett Titus are the Express. King is the guy from Tough Enough 2. Kenny is sent to the floor quickly and it's double beatdown time until Titus runs over for the save. This is a big feud with a bunch of hard hitting matches in it. Off to Titus who is getting double teamed now.

We're into the heat segment here I guess as Titus gets beaten down for awhile. The Tweet of the Week talks about how this is wrestling, not sports entertainment. They head up to the corner where Titus is set for a superplex. He manages to counter into a Snake Eyes onto the buckle and it's double hot tag. King cleans house with some decent flipping style moves. The Express hits a double team plancha, sending Titus over the top to take out the Briscoes.

A spinebuster by King sets up a double kneedrop off the top for two. A Briscoe hits a falcon arrow on King and the other hits a frog elbow for two. Titus and Mark fight over the announce table as Kenny gets kicked low and a small package by Jay is enough for the pin at 8:07.

Rating: C+. Decent match here but with the weeks of buildup I was expecting a little more than an eight minute match. The match was decent and the Briscoes are flashy enough to have something good going on, but their promos and gimmick gets annoying fast. Not bad here and a pretty entertaining match, but it needed more drama.

Post match the referee asks if Jay kicked him low and he says no. Titus gets up and is beaten down again as we go to a break.

After a break we establish that yes indeed, the clear low blow earlier was in fact a low blow.

Here's a package on Wrestling's Greatest Tag Team because why have them wrestle a match when you can talk about how great they are? Both of them list off their amateur accomplishments and it takes up WAY too much time.

After a break, Jim Cornette says neither team is the #1 contenders, making that match totally pointless.

Time for Inside ROH which is about the House of Truth and the possibility of Edwards vs. Richards II. The idea here is that Martini is a manipulator and everyone other than his boys think that. Michael Elgin, the power guy of Martini's House of Truth Martini says Martini is awesome.

Richards and Edwards say they're hunters and beating the other will be that next achievement.

Michael Elgin vs. Eddie Edwards

They grapple for a bit and then it's time to strike each other a lot and no sell all of it! Elgin gets knocked down and then gets a delayed vertical suplex for two. Kelly said it felt like an eternity. It was really more like about 9 seconds but that's an eternity of selling in this company so I guess that's acceptable. Edwards snaps off a rana and goes to a half

crab which is an Achilles hold according to him.

Lionsault gets two. And there goes the selling as Elgin grabs a spinebuster out of the corner for two as we take a break. Back with, and brace yourself for this, Edwards hammering away with forearms which don't work as Elgin gets a side slam for two. Edwards fires off two superkicks and a suplex kind of move to put both guys down. Missile dropkick gets two.

Edwards hits a dive on the floor into the barricade and Kelly is overselling this way too strong. They start slugging it out and Kelly starts talking about the website. They actually CUT AWAY TO A GRAPHIC OF A WEB BROWSER TYPING THE WEBSITE'S NAME. I mean, we missed part of the match so we could see how to spell ROHwrestling. WOW. Elgin takes over and they go to the apron. Edwards hits his fourth superkick out there and a double stomp to take over.

Edwards tries his leg trap suplex but gets caught in a buckle bomb. That doesn't work so well though. Not because it's not a devastating move, which it was. However, Edwards was up and fine a few seconds later and hitting superkick #5. That lets him hit the Diehard (leg trap suplex which would be a lot more effective if it made sense as Elgin had to work with him to make it work) for the pin at 14:04.

Rating: C-. Not the worst match they've ever had but Edwards is more or less a Davey Richards clone with all of the strikes and the no selling and stuff like that. I don't want to imagine a match between them but I think it's been booked for the main event of the Final Battle show. Not much to see here.

Post match Roderick Strong comes out and gets in Edwards' face. McGuinness gets in to make the save from the non-attack.

Overall Rating: C. Well it was a little better but at the same time there was nothing interesting here for the most part. It's nice to see them actually having some stories, but we don't need to have the 15 minutes of videos to establish these

feuds through talking. A third match per show would do wonders for these guys to put it mildly. Not a horrible show but it's the same uninspired stuff they've done for a month now.

Results

Briscoe Brothers b. All Night Express – Small Package

Eddie Edwards b. Michael Elgin – Diehard

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