

# NWA Into The Fire: A Hot Enough Show



IMG Credit: National Wrestling Alliance

## Into The Fire

Date: December 14, 2019

Location: GPB Studios, Atlanta, Georgia

Commentators: Joe Galli, Stu Bennett

This is another one that has been sitting on my list for a good while now and it's time to knock it off. What we have here is the NWA pay per view and the big culmination of the first season of Powerrr. The show has been good leading up to this event and now we need to see what the NWA can do on a big stage. The main event is Nick Aldis defending the World Title against James Storm in a 2/3 falls match with guest referees involved. Let's get to it.

The opening video features Stu Bennett reading a poem, which is capped off with the line Into The Fire. Makes sense, just like the words being read over clips of the wrestlers on the card.

The commentators run down the card, which I never understand on a pay per view, but for a cheap show where a lot of people might be getting into the promotion, it makes some more sense.

## Eli Drake vs. Ken Anderson

Everyone has music and an entrance now, making the show feel even more important. This is fallout from a triple threat match for the National Title where James Storm retained. A hard lockup takes them into the corner to start, followed by Anderson grabbing a hammerlock. Drake can't spin off the mat early on so he powers up and hammers away in the corner. Anderson whips him back into the corner though and it's a sliding knee to crush Drake's head.

Back up and Drake grabs a hot shot for two, setting up the chinlock. The big jumping elbow gets two and there's a slingshot shoulder for the same. The chinlock goes on again, followed by a quick neckbreaker so Drake can get another near fall. We hit the reverse chinlock until Anderson fights up again for the Regal Roll. Anderson counters the Gravy Train into a rollup and goes up top. That's fine with Drake, who runs up the corner for a superplex, only to have Anderson counter into a sunset bomb, with Drake sitting down on it for the pin at 9:15.

**Rating:** C. This was a perfectly fine match between two wrestlers who have been in the ring for a long time and done this stuff for a long time. They didn't do a great job of explaining why these two are fighting, but at least they had a watchable enough match. I can go for more of Drake, though he wasn't exactly looking great here.

Here's Nick Aldis to say the NWA went from nothing to something, with forty countries watching live on pay per view. Yeah you can get up and cheer for that and tonight, it's him vs. James Storm as the only men with a chance to live forever. Storm comes out as well and says everyone worked together as a team to get here. Tonight, Aldis is going to learn that he has been through a war with the toughest SOB in the world. At the end of the night though, Aldis is going to hear **AND NEW WORLD HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION.**

We recap Melina debut and forming an alliance with Thunder Rosa and Marti Belle.

Here's Tasha Steelz for her match but first, she says how great she is and makes a weird noise.

## Tasha Steelz vs. Thunder Rosa

Rosa comes down the steps and looks ticked, despite getting a heck of a reception. Rosa grabs her by the hair to start but misses a clothesline. Steelz goes for the wristlock but gets blasted with the second clothesline attempt, allowing Rosa to tie her in the Tree of Woe. A running corner dropkick gets two so Steelz tries an Irish whip, which is cut off with a drop toehold (I've seen that before and it's still sweet). The surfboard goes on but Steelz gets out and hits some running uppercuts. Some running kicks to the face drop Steelz again and a top rope double stomp to the back finishes Steelz at 4:18.

**Rating:** D+. As usual, the women's division doesn't exactly seem like much around here and it hasn't gotten much better. The match was just a few steps above a squash and Steelz is one of multiple women who feel interchangeable around here. Rosa continues to look like a star though and the longer she toils with these matches, the less important she feels.

Post match Rosa beats on her some more, drawing out Ashley Vox for a failed save attempt. Rosa dislocates the elbow for a bonus.

We recap Aron Stevens joining forces with Question Mark over the powers of ka-ra-te.

## Question Mark vs. Trevor Murdoch

Stevens is here with Mark, who he refers to as Sensei Question. Hold on though as Mark needs to sing the Mongrovia National Anthem, with Stevens unrolling the flag. They stare each other down for a good bit after the bell until Murdoch starts slugging away. A slam puts Mark down again but it's too early to go for the mask. Mark strikes away with chops to the head and chest, followed by a middle rope dropkick for two. Back up and Murdoch grabs a spinebuster before going up top...WHERE HE GRABS THE FLAG AND THROWS IT DOWN! You don't do that to Mark so Murdoch has to chase Stevens off, allowing Mark to hit the chop to the throat for the pin at 5:58.

**Rating:** C. Mark is one of those guys who the fans have just accepted and

turned into one of the most entertaining acts around here. That's all he needs to be and while it won't last forever, it is something that is rather entertaining for what it is. Murdoch will be fine as the old cowboy as it's a character you can always have around.

We look at the Rock N Roll Express winning the Tag Team Titles from the Wild Cards. Tonight is the rematch.

The Express comes out, flanked by Outlaw Inc., for a chat before their title defense. Outlaw Inc. is here as an insurance policy, which doesn't bode well. Hold out though as here are the Wild Cards, with the Dawsons as their own backup.

### Tag Team Titles: Rock N Roll Express vs. Wild Cards

The Express is defending. Morton and Latimer start things off with the champ sending him into the corner. A double back elbow drops Latimer and Gibson sends the Cards into each other. Naturally Morton is fine enough to hit a suicide dive onto both of them but Isaacs gets in a knee to the back to take him down.

A powerbomb connects but the referee won't count because there was no tag. I guess they really do wrestle in the NWA. Morton avoids a charge in the corner and brings Gibson back in to clean house. A missed clothesline drops Isaacs and Morton busts out a Canadian Destroyer of all things. The other teams get in a fight on the floor and in the confusion, the double dropkick finishes Isaacs to retain the titles at 5:01.

**Rating:** C. This is one of those matches where you have to put it on a sliding scale because the Express are in their sixties and there is only so much that they can do. The match wasn't anything great and I'm not sure why I should think much of the Wild Cards if they can't beat the old Express, but the fans were WAY into the champs here. And they even busted out a dive and Destroyer so it's kind of hard to complain that much.

The NWA will be back on pay per view January 24 and the TV Title is coming back (dig that classic design).

Here's Eli Drake to say he wants a World Title shot. Drake doesn't like

the idea of someone coming out here and trying to pump his gas, so here's Ken Anderson to jump him from behind. Anderson wraps a chair around Drake's neck and crushes it against the post. The Mic Check onto the open chair knocks Drake cold.

### Allysin Kay/??? vs. Melina/Marti Belle

Ashley Vox was supposed to be Kay's partner but she was taken out earlier, meaning we need a replacement. That would be...ODB, because we're just that lucky. Good thing she was here and in gear on about thirty minutes notice too. Melina bails from a charging Kay to start so it's Belle coming in instead. That earns her some forearms into the corner so a running knee can get two.

A hard whip into the corner keeps Belle down and Kay hammers down some right hands for two more. There's a neckbreaker for another two as Kay keeps yelling at Melina. That's enough to draw Melina in without a tag so Kay tries the belly to back piledriver (AK47, which is a different move than the one that originally used the same name), allowing Belle to get in a cheap shot to take over.

Now Melina is willing to come in legally and stomp away, with Belle choking from the corner for a bonus. Belle gets two off a DDT but Melina misses a kick to the head, allowing ODB to come in off the hot tag. House is cleaned, including a fall away slam and Bronco Buster to Belle with Melina making the save. Now the AK47 drops Melina and the Bam (usually a TKO but practically a Samoan drop here) finishes Belle at 7:21.

**Rating:** D. I've never been an ODB fan and this didn't make it any better. The finish looked horrible and I'm still not sure what the point of this feud is. Then again I'm not sure if it's a feud in the first place, as the story just kind of goes on and on. Not every promotion needs a women's division and while Melina may be a star, she's not quite the kind of legendary star that they seem to think she is.

Video on Storm vs. Aldis. Storm has claimed a conspiracy against him so tonight it's 2/3 falls and they both get to pick a referee.

### National Title: Ricky Starks vs. Aron Stevens vs. Colt Cabana

Cabana is defending, Stevens has Question Mark with him, and it's one fall to a finish. Stevens bails to the floor to start so the chase is on, with Cabana and Starks hitting elbows to his head back inside. A running kick to the head puts Stevens on the floor so he hides behind a Christmas tree at ringside. Starks takes Cabana down in a hammerlock but Cabana is back with one of his own.

As Bennett tries to figure out what a "Stroke Daddy" is, Starks fights up and shoulders Cabana down for two. With the other two down, Stevens runs back in, poses a bit, and gets punched in the ribs for his efforts. Cabana throws Starks outside and takes Stevens into the corner. Starks comes back in so Stevens hits Cabana low and discus clotheslines Starks for two. A fancy elbow hits Starks and it's time to choke in the corner.

Mark takes care of Cabana on the floor and Stevens knees him off the apron as Starks can't get back up. Cabana gets back in and is sent out again just as fast, allowing Starks to run Stevens over. Everyone gets back in and it's time for some atomic drops to Stevens for the sake of comedy. Starks dropkicks Cabana and lands on Stevens with a backsplash for two, followed by an abdominal stretch to Cabana.

That's broken up as well and the Billy Goat's Curse (reverse Boston crab) has Starks crawling over to the rope in a hurry. The pinfall reversal sequence gives us some near falls each until Starks grabs a tornado DDT on Cabana. Back up and Cabana hits the Superman Pin for two as Mark makes the save with a shot to the throat. Stevens is right back in and covers Cabana for the pin and the title at 12:21.

**Rating:** C+. This was a fun match and Stevens is going to be fine as a champion who everyone knows they can beat but can't quite do it for a bit. His association with Mark is going to be rather entertaining and hopefully we get some more wacky shenanigans out of them soon. Starks is going to be fine for a long time to come.

Here's Tim Storm, Nick Aldis' referee for the World Title match, to promise that he'll call everything right down the middle. He'll represent the NWA because he's always Mama Storm's little boy.

We recap the World Title match, which is still centered around Kamille,

who whispered something to Storm. The story doesn't exactly make sense, but the match itself does and that's what matters most here.

#### NWA World Title: James Storm vs. Nick Aldis

Aldis is defending and it's 2/3 falls with Brian Hebner (Storm's pick) and Tim Storm (Aldis' pick) refereeing the first and second falls respectively. If a third fall is needed, a coin flip will determine who gets to referee. They fight over hammerlocks and headlocks to start with Storm having to flip out of a headscissors. Back up and it's a standoff as Kamille comes out to watch. Aldis tells her to get to the back and it's a Last call to give Storm the first fall at 2:17.

James stays on him to start the second fall and hammers away on the floor for a bit, including sending Aldis knees first into the steps. They fight up into the crowd for a bit, followed by a hard suplex onto the floor to keep Aldis down. Tim counts to nine at a fair speed so James throws Aldis right back to the floor. Aldis manages to whip him into the Christmas tree though, meaning it's time to send Aldis into the announcers' table.

Back in and James starts in on the leg, only to go to the middle rope and dive into a belly to belly. James is fine enough to hit the Eye of the Storm for two so it's time for a chair. Believe it or not, he listens to the referee and throws it down, only to get small packaged to tie it up at 11:06.

We get a coin toss with Hebner winning so the third call can start. Aldis grabs a quick Michinoku Driver for two but walks into a Backstabber for the same. Storm gets crotched on top and superplex down for two (with a sloppy cover, causing Gorilla Monsoon to groan from the announcers' booth in the sky). Another superplex attempt is broken up and Storm drops a top rope elbow for two. The Last Call is countered so Storm settles for a Figure Four instead.

Aldis turns it over to escape and hits a Tombstone of all things, setting up the top rope elbow for two. The referee gets bumped though, meaning Tim has to come back out to take over. There's the Last Call to Aldis, who gets knocked into the corner. James grabs an O'Connor roll, with Aldis pulling the turnbuckle pad off with him (it wasn't clear if he

unhooked it or if it broke). The kickout sends James into the exposed buckle and the King's Lynn Cloverleaf finishes the unconscious James at 21:54.

**Rating:** B. This was a main event that felt like it should have been on a major show and that's a good thing. I could see this being a finish in an old school NWA match as you could argue over whether Aldis cheated or not. Aldis continues to carry himself like a champion every time and that's the kind of thing that should keep the title on him for a long time to come. Good main event here and easily the best thing on the show.

Post match Aldis says this win belongs to all of us because we are the NWA. The title is how he tells the world who he is, and he knows no one can take the title from him. The lights go out and MARTY SCURLL IS HERE! Aldis looks scared and leaves to end the show before anything happens.

**Overall Rating:** C+. The thing to remember is where this company was just a few months ago. Until Powerrr started, AEW truly was a punchline. They went from absolutely nothing to something that people were talking about in a good way. Now they're putting on a completely competent, if not downright good, pay per view. There were things here that weren't very good, but there were enough positives to make the whole thing a success. It's an easy two and a half hour show and that's all it needed to be. Nice job and considering how far they've come recently, that's impressive.

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# NWA Powerrr – January 7, 2020: Power(rr) Up



IMG Credit: National Wrestling Alliance

## Powerrr

Date: January 7, 2020

Location: GPB Studios, Atlanta, Georgia

Commentators: Stu Bennett, Joe Galli

We're back to the regular scheduled after the holidays messed things up a few times. This week is again about the title situation, with Tim Storm setting his sights on Nick Aldis, who doesn't seem interested in fighting. This has done wonders for Storm and I want to see where he goes from here. Let's get to it.

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

The opening recap looks at everyone coming at Aldis, who seems more interested in finding every way he can to avoid them all.

Into The Fire. I wish they would update the credits as it was better when you had the people on the show rather than just the big names.

Here's Tim Storm to open things up. Storm explains the tournament (there

will be six members of the Powerrr roster and two open invitational spots, which could come from anywhere) but he isn't happy with Aldis running from him. Cue Kamille to hold up a mic but she doesn't say anything. Storm calls Aldis a coward and gets slapped in the face.

Trevor Murdoch is ready to fight anyone and we get another draw for two TV Title Tournament qualifying matches: Dave Dawson vs. Zane Dawson and Trevor Murdoch vs. Tom Latimer.

#### TV Title Tournament First Round: Zicky Dice vs. Caleb Konley

I'm pretty sure this is the first round and there is no mention of a qualifying match. Konley grabs a few rollups for two and armdrags Dice into the corner for a bonus. Dice avoids a dropkick, only to get knocked outside for a breather. Konley gets sent to the apron so he comes back in with an ankle scissors. A back splash gets two on Dice but he's right back with a bridging northern lights suplex for two. The slugout goes to Konley but he misses a double jump moonsault. Dice's Snake Rattle and Roll is good for the pin at 4:28.

**Rating:** C-. I'm not sure how much there is in Dice but Konley is fine for a match like this. They need to build someone up to be a factor in the tournament and Dice is becoming just that so far. I could still go for a bracket or a list of who all is involved, but I'm not completely sure the NWA knows just yet.

Highspots.com ad.

Earlier today Aron Stevens and the Question Mark promised to win more titles with Stevens owing his success to Mark (in a Stevens robe for a funny visual).

#### ODB vs. Thunder Rosa

Allysin Kay is on commentary. Rosa grabs a front facelock to start but ODB is back with some knees to the ribs. The slugout goes to ODB but Rosa starts with the kicks to the legs. A leg sweep sets up the running crotch attack to the back in the ropes and it turns into a brawl on the mat. The chinlock goes on but ODB is up in a hurry and hitting her in the face

again. A middle rope ax handle misses though and ODB bangs up her knee again. The top rope double stomp to the back finishes ODB at 5:49.

**Rating:** D+. Rosa getting the win is the right move as she has a lot of potential and beating a name like ODB can help her a lot. I'm still not convinced that the women's division needs to exist but that isn't going to change anytime soon. Not a terrible match, but I could go for something a lot stronger in the story department around the whole division.

The Rock N Roll Express have a love hot line.

Here's Nick Aldis for a chat and there is literally a stack of questions for him. Believe it or not, the first question is about Kamille and Aldis knew that was coming. It's true that Kamille isn't the insurance policy anymore but that's because she is now a full fledged member of Strictly Business. Then there's Ricky Morton, who is a great tag team wrestler but needs to stay away from the World Title.

It's like Eli Drake and James Storm trying to jump the line and get to the main event without earning anything. The Wildcards are going to be taking the Tag Team Titles so Storm and Drake can mind their business. As for tonight, he's ready to beat Ricky Starks in less than six minutes because the only place he isn't done in less than six minutes is in the bedroom because he can go all night.

### Nick Aldis vs. Ricky Starks

Non-title with a 6:05 time limit. Aldis shoulders him down and busts out a cartwheel, meaning it's time to lay across the top rope. Starks does the same but adds in a dropkick to set up a rollup for a new fall. A spinning suplex gets Aldis out of trouble and a clothesline is good for two.

The chinlock goes on and we have three minutes left. Starks is up in a hurry and Aldis charges into a boot in the corner for a breather. The middle rope missile dropkick gives Starks two more and the suicide dive to the floor makes it even worse. Back in and Starks misses a moonsault to tweak his knee. That means the King's Lynn Cloverleaf with a minute

left and Starks holds on for the time limit draw at 6:05.

**Rating:** C. This is the kind of thing that the champ can do to put someone over. It's true that Starks was in trouble and would have lost after another minute or so but officially it's a tie and Aldis couldn't beat him. That's how this should have gone and it wound up being an entertaining little match with Aldis giving Starks a lot.

Post match here's Ricky Morton to demand five more minutes. That's not happening, so Morton asks for five minutes of his own. Again, no.

#### Eli Drake/James Storm vs. Wildcards vs. Colt Cabana/Mr. Anderson

Hang on as there are no Wildcards to start so we'll go two on two early on. Cabana headlocks Drake to the mat to start so Drake slips out, only to get caught in a second headlock. A quick flip gives Cabana two and it's off to Anderson to hammer away. Drake's jumping clothesline allows the tag off to Storm, who skins the cat and snaps off a headscissors.

Storm gets caught in the corner for a few moments but is fine enough to enziguri his way to freedom. Drake comes back in for the E-Li-Drake jumping elbow but Cabana trips him into the corner. That doesn't last long either as Drake hits his own middle rope dropkick, only to have Anderson grab the referee. Cabana hits the Superman Pin for two on Storm so Anderson grabs the referee...for the DQ at 6:15.

**Rating:** C+. This had some nice energy and some of that was due to not having the other team included. That's the kind of thing that can drag a match down so it was a good case of addition by subtraction. If nothing else, a triple threat match doesn't seem to fit in the NWA and it was nice to see this get a little more time than the usual matches around here.

Post match Cabana yells at Anderson for costing them the match until they head to the back.

Cue Aldis and Kamille, plus the Wildcards, for one more chat. Aldis pulled the Wildcards from that match because it wasn't in the best interest of Strictly Business. He invites the Rock N Roll Express out

here and has an idea: a six man tag with Team Aldis vs. Team Morton. If Team Morton wins, he gets a show at Sweet Charlotte. Morton goes on a rant about the good old days before accepting the challenge. Hang on though as Aldis and Morton won't be in the match because Aldis wants no excuses. Team Aldis will be the Wildcards and....SCOTT STEINER, because we need to get that required square checked off.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This is starting to feel like a more complete wrestling show and that is the best thing that it could do. You can see the stories (ok so having some different people in them might help) being set up and where they are likely going, but what matters most is they're making me care about what happens to these people. This place is starting to get some life and that's a very good sign. There's more to it than that, but for now they're doing pretty well. Nice show here, with the wrestling not being the focus, as usual.

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## NWA Into The Fire Preview



IMG Credit: National Wrestling Alliance

I would say this falls into the “never say never” category. The NWA used to be all the rage back in the day but now things have changed quite a bit. While it isn’t exactly what it was before, the NWA is still around and has reached a level they have not achieved in a long time. This includes holding a pay per view event and that means it is time to see what they have in store. Let’s get to it.

#### Tasha Steelz vs. Thunder Rosa

This is a last minute addition to the card and it certainly feels like one. Rosa is someone that has been pushed rather hard since Powerrr began and she has been treated as a big deal. Steelz is someone you may remember as not doing very much but she is someone who can be put in there for a quick match. I’m not sure how much I would expect from it, but at least the match exists.

I’ll take Rosa here, as she needs to get her feet back a little bit after they did that rather strange series of videos on her losing in mixed martial arts (yeah it was cool, but it was completely different to what she does in her regular appearances). Steelz is someone who could be a nice star down the road, but Rosa is someone who could be a big star right now and that is what the NWA needs at the moment.

#### Tag Team Titles: Rock N Roll Express(c) vs. Wild Cards

It's a rematch of the big moment from the first season (Are eight shows a season?) of Powerrr with the Express becoming nine time Tag Team Champions. Now they have to defend the titles that they won in a match which wasn't all that great in the first place. I'm almost scared of the idea of the Express putting on some big, epic match, but it was cool to see them win the titles one more time at least.

I'll go with the Wild Cards winning the titles back here, as there isn't much of a future in having champions who are both in their 60s. It was a nice moment and all, but losing to the Express hurt the Wild Cards quite a bit. A win could help them get back on their feet, but it might be a little too late. You have to try and see though, as the Wild Cards need to get the titles back.

National Title: Colt Cabana(c) vs. Aron Stevens vs. Ricky Starks

How out of place does a triple threat match feel in the NWA? Anyway, this is an interesting one as you have the popular Cabana, the incredibly gimmicky Stevens and Starks, who looks like a nice prospect. This really is a match that could go any way and that makes things a lot more interesting. I'm actually not sure how this is going to go and that's a feeling I always like.

That being said, I'll go with Cabana retaining here, as he has the highest profile of all three names. Starks would be able to get something out of winning the title, but I'm not sure if he's ready to go there yet. Stevens is going to be fine with his promos and funny lines alone and Cabana has already lost the title once. Cabana retains here, but it really could go to any of the three.

Trevor Murdoch vs. The Question Mark

Every now and then you find someone who just catches fire in a way beyond all expectations. That is the case with the

Question Mark, who has turned into the cult favorite of all cult favorites in the NWA. I know he isn't going to go anywhere long term, but it's very smart to go with something that is working at the moment. The NWA needs something to get on the map and maybe the Question Mark can do so in a way.

So of course I'll take the Question Mark to win, though probably not through the cleanest means. There is nothing wrong with giving Question Mark a win here, as Murdoch can bounce right back in a hurry due to being one of the better known names around at the moment. Question Mark isn't going to last forever so the NWA is doing the right thing by capitalizing while they can, which includes a win here.

#### Allysin Kay/Ashley Vox vs. Melina/Marti Belle

This is another star power match, but above all else, where in the world do those drum beats come from? Can everyone in the ring hear them? Are they in someone's head? Why do I think about these things so much? Anyway, Melina getting back in the ring is kind of a big deal, though I'm not sure if she has the kind of star power to make that big of a difference around here.

I'll take Melina and Belle to win, likely with Melina pinning Kay to set up a future title match. There is nothing wrong with that in a situation like this so hopefully they get this one right and go with the logical means. Vox is another someone who could be a nice addition to the roster so putting her in there with the biggest name the women's division has is smart. She isn't involved in the finish here though and that makes the most sense.

#### Eli Drake vs. Ken Anderson

Here's your second biggest and likely best match on the card as you can throw two experienced people out there and likely have one of them become the next #1 contender to the World Title. Drake has come off like a star in the NWA with those



promos and status as the devil on your shoulder working very well for him. Anderson is Anderson and therefore acceptable, but he is pretty long removed from being a big deal.

That being said, I'm still going with Anderson to win with some cheating. Drake is someone with more potential and likely more help long term, but Anderson is someone with a certain charisma to him and his former WWE/Impact Wrestling status should be enough to carry him here. It's ok to go with the bigger name at times and that is what they seem to be doing here. Anderson wins.

### NWA World Title: Nick Aldis(c) vs. James Storm

It's the main event with a stipulation of course, as this will be 2/3 falls with both of them getting to pick a referee for each fall. Should it go to a third fall (should...right), a coin toss determines who will referee the third fall. The cuts from the broadcast hurt this one a bit as their reason for fighting isn't all that clear. The videos are out there, but it would be nice to have a little better explanation.

Even with all of the stipulations, I'm taking Aldis to retain here as the NWA really seems to love him. I'm not sure I get the huge star in Aldis, but he does indeed have something there. The promos and look are enough to keep him in or near the main event and it's not like there is anyone else who desperately needs to win the title at the moment. Aldis is as good as they have at the moment, so stick with what works.

### Overall Thoughts

I still can't get my head around the idea that the NWA is running a pay per view and it actually looks good. The promotion is not exactly doing great at the moment with the viewership for Powerrr being pretty weak, but the fact of the matter is they got out there and tried to do something, which is a lot more than so many promotions can do. See if this works and maybe there is a path forward. It's not like this is

going to be any worse than having the promotion sitting around, so maybe it can get them somewhere better, even if it is just a little bit.

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## **Impact Wrestling – December 16, 2015: And You Thought WWE Pre-Shows Were Long**

### **Impact Wrestling**

Date: December 16, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: D'Angelo Dinero, Josh Matthews

This is an interesting show as it's the final episode of Impact to air on Destination America, putting to rest the question of what else they can air after the tournament matches are wrapped up until the debut on Pop. Tonight we're getting a bunch of previews for the semi-finals along with a pair of non-tournament matches, which will be the first since

September. Let's get to it.

We open with a video on the four semi-finalists (Lashley, Matt Hardy, Eric Young and Ethan Carter III) all wanting to be champion.

Recap of how the tournament came to be and Matt Hardy's path back to the title. He introduces his match against Davey Richards from October 14, 2015. The match is clipped here but this is the full version of the review, which will be the case in every match repeated.

#### Group Tag Team Specialists: Matt Hardy vs. Davey Richards

So it's Group Rockers. Davey takes him down to start and works on a leg lock but lets it go just as quickly. We get a chat from the round table discussion where Davey is pretty passive about the whole thing but Matt wants the title back. They head to the apron with Matt grabbing a quick Side Effect to send Davey to the floor.

Back in and Matt hooks a sleeper but Davey fights back with a jawbreaker to knock Matt to the floor, followed by a suicide dive. Josh: "Of course the ending to Bound For Glory has been trending for two weeks." Back in and Davey fires off kicks until Matt grabs the Side Effect for two more. Matt dives into a kick to the ribs but Davey misses a top rope double stomp, setting up the Twist of Fate to give Matt the pin at 9:06.

**Rating:** C+. Nice match here with Matt doing his normal stuff and Davey doing all of his kicks. Matt would have been fine for a token title reign but giving him one in the spot they did it and the quick fallout are going to make it much more infamous than a feel good moment. You almost have to expect Matt to advance into the round of sixteen, likely winding up against Galloway or Carter down the line.

Matt talks about the rest of his matches so far and promises to give Eric Young an unfortunate Twist of Fate.

#### Group X-Division vs. Group Future 4

X-Division: Manik, Tigre Uno, Mandrews, DJZ

Future 4: Crimson, Jesse Godderz, Micah, Eli Drake

This is an "all-stars" match. DJZ and Micah finally start things off after a lot of debate between Future 4. A wristlock has Micah in trouble and it's off to Mandrews as Josh talks about various cities representing in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania at the live show. Jesse comes in for a knee to Mandrews' ribs but X-Division starts taking over with rotating shots to the arm.

Everything breaks down and X-Division suplexes Jesse and Micah down at the same time. Future 4 heads outside and that's just a bad idea against a bunch of high fliers, setting up all the dives. Micah dives as well until Jesse takes Mandrews' head off with a hard clothesline. Jesse teases a dive but stops to pose instead, as you might have expected. Manik dropkicks him to the floor and dives on the pile.

Mandrews gets broken up as well and it's Drake tagging himself in to pound away instead of letting Jesse go for a cover. Future 4 starts taking turns on Mandrews with Crimson hitting a nice chokeslam. Drake tags himself in again and the argument (Josh: "It was like the Mega Powers exploding!") allows Tigre to get the tag.

Crimson flips Drake off when he reaches for a tag and Jesse drops to the floor. Micah, who has history with Drake, walks away, leaving Drake on his own. Eli tries to leave but gets thrown back in by his partners, allowing Manik to kick him in the head. DJZ's tornado DDT sets up Mandrews' shooting star press for the pin at 10:04.

**Rating:** C-. This was a fine enough way to kill off ten minutes and I'm glad to see something aside from a tournament match. Future 4 turning on Drake made sense and it's fine to see the X-Division guys working together. The match was nothing worth seeing but at least it was something different.

We look at Lashley's path to the final four, including this match against Austin Aries on November 25, 2015.

Group Champions: Lashley vs. Austin Aries

Winner advances. Aries bounces off Lashley to start until a missile dropkick staggers Lashley a bit. That's fine with Lashley as he throws

Aries away and starts driving shoulders in the corner. Aries knees his way out of a delayed vertical suplex by knocking Lashley down to a knee but Lashley stands back up and suplexes him anyway. That is SCARY power.

Back from a break with Aries elbowing out of Lashley's grip but getting caught in a belly to belly. The spear hits the post though and Aries follows up with a missile dropkick. Lashley slaps him out of the corner though and dead lifts him into a powerslam. I repeat my scary power line. The Last Chancery doesn't get Aries anywhere so he goes with discus forearms. Lashley again powers out of the brainbuster and throws Aries over his head with a release German.

Aries avoids the spear but Lashley sidesteps the suicide dive. The match comes to a screeching halt as Aries is holding his arm with ninety seconds to go. Lashley finally clotheslines him down again as this thing JUST WON'T END. Aries grabs the Lash Chancery but Lashley makes the rope. Instead of standing around for the last thirty seconds, Aries tries a 450 but eats a spear to send Lashley on at 15:05.

**Rating:** B. At least it went out on a good match, even though Aries got stupid at the end after being smart most of the time. Lashley is the smart choice here since he actually works for TNA, but Aries was a nice surprise. I mean, I'm stupid for realizing he's a surprise according to Josh but he's a lot smarter than me after all.

We get some soundbytes about Lashley being incredibly dominant all year but now it's a must win against Carter.

Now it's time to follow EC3 around as he goes to the gym in Nashville. After seeing him lift a bit, Carter talks about how this whole World Title Series is nonsense as he should have been given the title with no hesitation. His last name hasn't kept him undefeated and he won the Group of Death in the first round.

Bobby Roode vs. Mr. Anderson vs. Eddie Edwards vs. Rockstar Spud

Elimination rules. Roode tags himself in to start against Spud but the Rockstar kicks him to the floor and we take an early break. Back with Spud rolling Edwards up for two before it's off to Anderson. For some

reason Spud mimes the microphone dropping down and gets clotheslined. Edwards comes back and counters the Underdog into a rollup to eliminate Spud.

Eddie goes takes down Anderson and gets two on Roode with a Backpack Stunner. Anderson tags himself in though, meaning Roode's Crossface doesn't count. Thankfully Anderson is smart enough to let Bobby keep the hold on as long as he can. Anderson kicks Roode outside and a Mic Check eliminates Edwards to get us down to two. Roode flips out of the Mic Check and grabs a spinebuster. Back up and Roode escapes another Mic Check, setting up the Crossface. Anderson tries to roll over but gets caught in the middle of the ring, giving us the submission at 13:20.

**Rating:** C. Another match that just kind of happened here with four guys doing moves to each other for no real prize. At least Roode won in the best option and the match had a bit more meaning than the eight man tag earlier. Still not a good match or anything, but at least it was fresh.

Kurt Angle talks about how important this tournament is. He's fought all four of the semi-finalists and could see any of them winning. Angle doesn't really pick anyone but seems to think Lashley is the favorite. Of note, he says that Matt Hardy got so close at Bound For Glory. Does Angle really not know how this whole thing started?

Video on Eric Young's path to the semi-finals.

Here's Young vs. Roode from November 4, 2015.

#### Group TNA Originals: Eric Young vs. Bobby Roode

We start after a break and Young is quickly sent to the floor, only to snap Roode's throat over the top rope. Young stays on the throat with a catapult into the middle rope and we hit the neck crank. A quick neckbreaker gets two on Roode but he comes back with an enziguri for a delayed fall. Roode grabs a spinebuster for two and counters the piledriver into a jackknife cover for two. Back up and Young grabs the referee for a distraction, setting up the piledriver for the pin at 6:50.

**Rating:** C. Decent enough match but these videos designed to make these

regular matches feel like some big showdown between epic rivals really aren't working. Young and Roode are the likely winners of the group as Storm seems to be gone but Abyss is always a possibility. Good enough here as Roode at least stayed on the neck for a story.

Young brags about his success and promises to win the World Title again.

Here's Mr. Anderson vs. Ethan Carter III from November 11, 2015.

#### Group Champions: Ethan Carter III vs. Mr. Anderson

They chop it out to start with Anderson getting the better of it and sending Carter to the floor as we take a break. Back with Anderson firing off more chops and pounding Carter in the head as Carter tries to cover up. A quick baseball slide takes Tyrus out and a boot to the face looks to set up the Mic Check.

Carter drives him to the floor to counter, which Pope refers to as dinosaur land. Anderson gets sent into the apron and Carter bends his fingers back for good measure. We hit the chinlock as Pope and Josh compare Anderson and Carter's upbringings in the business. Anderson fights out with less than five minutes to go and easily wins a slugout.

The Regal roll and a swanton get two on Carter and both guys are tired with two and a half minutes to go. Anderson goes up top and counters a super 1%er into a middle rope Regal roll for two more. Tyrus and Earl Hebner argue on the floor (Tyrus: "YOU'RE TOO OLD!") so Anderson beats Tyrus up with a chair with a minute left. Hebner gets rid of the chair, allowing Carter to kick Anderson low and grab a jackknife rollup for the pin at 16:24 as TNA's clock continues to be off.

**Rating:** C+. Another good match here as Carter can win something when he has to. Anderson losing doesn't mean anything and you knew that Carter was going to be in the final sixteen and probably the final two. This wasn't a classic or anything but it was perfectly fine for a big TV main event.

Clips of Carter at his house exercising, tormenting his pool cleaner and drinking at his bar.

It's time for a big sitdown interview with the semi-finalists. Lashley wants to know if Carter is going to fight on his own or if Tyrus is going to do the fighting for him. Carter says he already beat Lashley so he shouldn't have to do it again by any means. Matt thinks Carter is delusional but he's not looking past Young, who is crazy in his own right. Eric laughs off the idea that Matt swept a tag division because Group Originals was the toughest. Back to Matt who calls Eric the next victim to suffer a Twist of Fate.

Hardy would love to face either Lashley or Carter in the finals but picks Lashley because of his integrity. Lashley thinks he'll face Hardy and he'd love to have his first shot against Matt. Carter simply says Eric Young. Eric goes with Carter because of his history of winning. To fill in more time, we go over who they all think won't advance. Young picks Matt because he isn't making it out of the semi-finals. A lot of violence is promised and Matt promises that Eric won't break him. We wrap things up with a lot of shouting.

One more video for the road ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** D-. What a waste of time this whole thing was. It's basically a big preview of the final three matches but the problem is the semi-finals really aren't that interesting in the first place. We've seen Carter vs. Lashley already and Young vs. Hardy isn't a good match either. This show needs the two weeks off because I can't imagine how bad it was going to go for the next two weeks without the show getting even worse. Just a big waste of time here and I think TNA knew it coming in.

### Results

Group X-Division b. Group Future 4 – Shooting star press to Drake

Bobby Roode b. Mr. Anderson, Eddie Edwards and Rockstar Spud last eliminating Anderson

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# Impact Wrestling – November 11, 2015: Let Go Of That Pattern

## Impact Wrestling

Date: November 11, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, D'Angelo Dinero

We're past the halfway point in the qualifying matches as almost everyone has had two of their three matches. Tonight it's week six and we're going to have some people wrap up their round robin stuff, meaning we can actually see the light at the end of a very long tunnel. Let's get to it.

Opening recap and preview of last week and this week.

The announcers preview things as well.

Before their match, we see Madison Rayne going through some WACKY ninja training to get her ready for Gail Kim. I don't think this needs any more explanation.

## Group Knockouts: Gail Kim vs. Madison Rayne

Winner goes to the round of sixteen. Gail takes her down to the mat to start as Pope makes ninja jokes. A pinfall reversal sequence goes how

most pinfall reversal sequences go. Madison sweeps the leg for two but Gail's cross body gets the same as Josh figures out every possible way to say this is winner take all.

Back from a break with Gail missing her running cross body in the corner and crashing out to the floor to give Madison an opening. For some reason she follows Gail to the floor, only to get sent into the steps to change control. Back in and Gail's dragon sleeper doesn't go anywhere so Madison hits a basement cross body for two. Madison tries the Rayne Drop but a quick small package sends Gail to the round of 16 at 11:21.

**Rating:** C. Raise your hand if you didn't see this coming the second the brackets were announced. Gail Kim is the greatest Knockout of all time and if you don't know that, listen to Josh for all of half a second because he's either sounding like a moron, insulting the fans for paying attention or praising Gail Kim. There's very little in between for him. Gail winning makes the most sense, though I don't see her doing much in the tournament itself. It's a cool idea though.

### Group Knockouts

Gail Kim – 6 points (0 matches remaining)

Brooke – 3 points (1 match remaining)

Madison Rayne – 3 points (1 match remaining)

Awesome Kong – 3 points (0 matches remaining)

We get an interview with Matt Hardy who says it's going to be trendy when he sweeps the whole Series and proves that he's the World Champion once and for all. What better way to prove he's the best than by beating everyone? Both life and a wrestling career are too short to have regrets and it wasn't fair to anyone to have EC3 drag it out for years.

It wouldn't be fair to the fans or TNA ("They might not even be on TV anymore.") so he gave up the title for the sake of the future. He won't be taking tonight off against Eddie Edwards because Eddie is the future, but tonight Eddie is the next victim of the Matt Hardy formula. Of course he wants to face EC3 in the finals because he wants to take away that

undefeated streak.

#### Group Future Four: Jesse Godderz vs. Eli Drake

Jesse says he wants to win the title so he can be on a cereal box. Very slow feeling out process to start with Drake's headlock going nowhere. A test of strength goes to Eli with the help of a knee to the ribs. Jesse's press slam goes nowhere as his knee buckles and Drake starts in on it to show some intelligence.

Some slow kicks to the knee don't seem to bother Jesse as he comes back with a backbreaker and enziguri, though he's nice enough to limp after doing the moves with no issue. They trade rollups with handfuls of trunks for no count each so Drake puts him on the top but gets shoved away. That's fine with Drake as he crotches Jesse down and puts his feet on the ropes for a pin at 6:51.

**Rating:** D. Bleh match here between two guys who deserve better. I really like Drake as he knows how to be a jerk as well as anyone I've seen in a long time. He's not perfect by any stretch and his in ring work isn't anything more than average, but he has a heel charisma that makes you want to see him get punched in the face. That's more than most heels have these days and it makes for entertaining matches.

#### Group Future Four

Eli Drake – 4 points (1 match remaining)

Jesse Godderz – 3 points (1 match remaining)

Micah – 1 point (2 matches remaining)

Crimson – 0 points (2 matches remaining)

Ethan Carter III is at TNA headquarters (which looks like a local pub) to pay the fine in person.

Drake brags about his win.

It's time for the World Title Series awards to fill in even more time. Pope picks Matt Hardy as MVP, Davey Richards vs. Eddie Edwards as Match

of the Series, Shera as Most Improved, James Storm as Most Disappointing and Lashley vs. Aries as the Best Match To Come.

#### Group Tag Team Specialists: Eddie Edwards vs. Matt Hardy

Edwards is eliminated if he loses. Matt takes it to the mat to start before they trade wristlocks. A forearm to the back has Eddie in trouble and we take an early break. Back with Matt being sent to the floor for a suicide dive but Eddie chops the post by mistake. There's no way to fake something like that. Pope: "My lawd it's got me checking my fingers daddy!" A Side Effect on the apron is broken up and Eddie DDT's Matt instead.

Back in and Eddie chops with the bad hand but walks into a double clothesline to put both of them down. Eddie has to break a sleeper by falling back onto Hardy and a Backpack Stunner gets two. The Side Effect and Twist of Fate are countered into rollups for two each and a kick to the head gets the same. Eddie goes up top but gets crotched, setting up a super Twist of Fate (minus the twist) for the pin at 11:05.

**Rating:** C+. This match continues to show me why I like Eddie so much better than Davey. Richards tends to take things way too seriously and comes off as goofy at times while Eddie feels a lot more natural out there. Matt coming into the round of sixteen undefeated is a nice choice but I'm really hoping it doesn't wind up with him or Ethan as champion again. It would feel like such a waste of time, which is why it's likely to happen.

#### Group Tag Team Specialists

Matt Hardy – 9 points (0 matches remaining)

Robbie E. – 3 points (1 match remaining)

Davey Richards – 1 point (1 match remaining)

Eddie Edwards – 1 point (0 matches remaining)

We look at the end of Bound For Glory with Ethan shoving John Gaburick to draw a huge fine.

Ethan comes in to Dixie's office and accuses her of robbing him of the title. Dixie asks what happened to him but Ethan pays the fine and leaves. This was described as a "major confrontation" earlier in the night.

Matt praises Eddie for his toughness.

Pope decides whose bubbles are going to pop soon.

#### Group X-Division: Mandrews vs. DJZ

Mandrews quickly takes him to the floor and moonsaults off the steps, followed by an overshoot flip dive over the top to the floor. Back in and Mandrews' standing moonsault takes WAY too much time to set up, allowing DJZ to kick him away with ease. DJZ cranks on an armbar but walks into a very fast hurricanrana for two. Another hurricanrana out of the corner gets two more and Mandrews gets all ticked off, only to charge into a shot to the face. Mandrews kicks him off the top but a shooting star hits knees, giving DJZ the pin at 5:55.

**Rating:** C-. I really don't like Mandrews. He's the definition of a guy who does a bunch of flips and that doesn't make for interesting wrestling. DJZ at least has a character instead of just having a stupid name to go with his good to decent ability. I'm glad we're done with Mandrews now though as he gets on my nerves every time he's in there.

#### Group X-Division

Manik – 6 points (1 match remaining)

DJZ – 6 points (0 matches remaining)

Tigre Uno – 3 points (1 match remaining)

Mandrews – 0 points (0 matches remaining)

Video of Shera training. If they drop the dancing stuff, he might be interesting eventually.

Preview of next week.

Eric Young wants to break Josh Matthews for saying his bubble is about to burst in the tournament, even though Pope said it. Young is ready for James Storm next week.

Pope changes his pick to Young over Storm.

Clips of Micah pinning Crimson.

#### Group Future Four

Eli Drake – 4 points (1 match remaining)

Micah – 4 points (1 match remaining)

Jesse Godderz – 3 points (1 match remaining)

Crimson – 0 points (1 match remaining)

Ethan Carter III was in India earlier this week and promises to beat Mr. Anderson tonight.

The semi-finals will be in India.

Drew Galloway is in Scotland to prepare for his final match in the group stage.

Another preview of next week.

Video on the history between Mr. Anderson and EC3. As in all those matches where Anderson lost, just like he's done in every match in the Series so far.

#### Group Champions: Ethan Carter III vs. Mr. Anderson

They chop it out to start with Anderson getting the better of it and sending Carter to the floor as we take a break. Back with Anderson firing off more chops and pounding Carter in the head as Carter tries to cover up. A quick baseball slide takes Tyrus out and a boot to the face looks to set up the Mic Check.

Carter drives him to the floor to counter, which Pope refers to as dinosaur land. Anderson gets sent into the apron and Carter bends his

fingers back for good measure. We hit the chinlock as Pope and Josh compare Anderson and Carter's upbringings in the business. Anderson fights out with less than five minutes to go and easily wins a slugout.

The Regal roll and a swanton get two on Carter and both guys are tired with two and a half minutes to go. Anderson goes up top and counters a super 1%er into a middle rope Regal roll for two more. Tyrus and Earl Hebner argue on the floor (Tyrus: "YOU'RE TOO OLD!") so Anderson beats Tyrus up with a chair with a minute left. Hebner gets rid of the chair, allowing Carter to kick Anderson low and grab a jackknife rollup for the pin at 16:24 as TNA's clock continues to be off.

**Rating:** C+. Another good match here as Carter can win something when he has to. Anderson losing doesn't mean anything and you knew that Carter was going to be in the final sixteen and probably the final two. This wasn't a classic or anything but it was perfectly fine for a big TV main event.

### Group Champions

Ethan Carter III – 7 points (0 matches remaining)

Austin Aries – 4 points (1 match remaining)

Lashley – 3 points (1 match remaining)

Mr. Anderson – 0 points (0 matches remaining)

**Overall Rating:** C. Much better episode this week as they're FINALLY getting to the point with some of this stuff. It's amazing how much more interesting things are when there's actually something on the line and we're not just killing time until we get to the big stuff. It also helps that the tournament itself is starting to take shape and we know some of the people in it. That allows you to actually pick some favorites instead of having so many people to go through that you don't know where to start. Better show this week as they actually go somewhere instead of just being in a holding pattern for weeks at a time.

### Results

Gail Kim b. Madison Rayne – Small package

Eli Drake b. Jesse Godderz – Rollup with feet on the ropes

Matt Hardy b. Eddie Edwards – Super Twist of Fate

DJZ b. Mandrews – Pin after a blocked shooting star press

Ethan Carter III b. Mr. Anderson – Jackknife rollup

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# Impact Wrestling – October 21, 2015: Why We're Here

## **Impact Wrestling**

Date: October 21, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, D'Angelo Dinero

It's week three of the World Title Series and that's really all there is to say. These matches don't have stories and it's too early to make many predictions. Tonight we'll probably start seeing some of the second matches for some of the people, but it's going to be a long time before



any of the eight groups start to wrap up. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the events that set up the Series (which seems like a weekly thing) and last week's results.

The announcers recap things up to this point and preview tonight's matches.

Group Champions predict who will go on to the next round. We saw some of this last week so they're already repeating footage. Carter thinks his clone will advance along with him.

#### Group Champions: Austin Aries vs. Mr. Anderson

Feeling out process to start as Josh says that tonight's main event is Lashley vs. Anderson. Now I'm pretty sure he meant Ethan Carter III but I'm just an internet nerd who pays attention to the rules so I'm sure that it's just Ethan's aforementioned clone disguised as Anderson and not Josh not being able to read the sheet in front of him properly. We go split screen to hear more from Aries as he misses a missile dropkick back in the ring.

Anderson goes after the arm with some punches to the shoulder and a quickly broken armbar. Aries comes right back with a slingshot elbow (Pope: "Shades of Austin Starr.") and the announcers discuss Ethan not knowing what independents are. A double cross body puts both guys down and we take a break. Back with Aries flipping over Anderson's back as we hit five minutes left.

Aries sends him to the floor for a suicide dive but Anderson comes back with the Regal Roll for two. Anderson tries another from the middle rope but gets slammed down, setting up the 450 for an even closer near fall. We see Thea getting nervous on the floor. This changes nothing whatsoever but she is in fact there. How very TNA of her.

A spinwheel kick of all things gets a near fall for Anderson and now the middle rope Regal Roll gets the same thing with less than two minutes to go. They fight over finishers for a bit until Aries connects with the discus forearm. The running dropkick staggers Anderson on the top and a

super brainbuster kills Anderson dead for the pin at 14:02, eliminating Anderson from the competition.

**Rating:** C+. This took time to get going but picked way up by the end. That super brainbuster looked great and while Aries has almost no chance of advancing to the next round, at least we're getting some good matches. It's good to see someone eliminated early, but due to the format we still have to sit through his mostly meaningless matches due to the nature of the format. That's going to get old fast.

### Group Champions

Austin Aries – 4 points (1 match remaining)

Lashley – 3 points (2 matches remaining)

Ethan Carter III – 1 point (2 matches remaining)

Mr. Anderson – 0 points (1 match remaining)

We'll see the Bound For Glory main event later. You knew this was coming sooner or later.

Video on the X-Division Title match at Bound For Glory.

### Group X-Division: Tigre Uno vs. Mandrews

Tigre doesn't have the X-Division Title with him. Mandrews rides a skateboard to the ring while wearing his hat backwards. So he's a 90s kind of guy. Tigre quickly takes him down to start but they go to a standoff with Mandrews having to explain a fist bump to Uno. Mandrews takes him down and surfs on the champ's back, followed by a standing moonsault for no cover. Josh talks about how someone in the X-Division basically has no chance to ever be World Champion aside from Option C. Thanks for making it clear that the match I'm watching has almost no chance of mattering.

Tigre kicks him to the floor and scores with a baseball slide as Josh breaks down the math on Group Champions while getting in the phrase "playing spoiler" as many times as he can. Back in and Mandrews knocks

him to the floor for a flip dive of his own but instead of following up he takes a lap around the ring high fiving fans. Back in Mandrews misses a shooting star and gets German suplexed into the corner. A quick corkscrew splash out of the corner (similar to Starship Pain) gives Tigre the pin at 6:42.

**Rating:** C. This was one of the better X-Division matches in a while as they actually had a bit more time than usual. Tigre is clearly a few steps ahead of everyone else in the division and is the best guy they've had there in a long time, but as Josh said: he has no chance of ever moving up the card and that's almost all there is to it.

#### Group X-Division

Tigre Uno – 3 points (2 matches remaining)

DJZ – 0 points (3 matches remaining)

Manik – 0 points (3 matches remaining)

Mandrews – 0 points (2 matches remaining)

Austin Aries says Thea's smile is all the extra motivation he needs.

Pope says you don't want a countout because you want a win. So do countout wins not get you three points? That's never been made clear.

Here's the main event from Bound For Glory 2015.

#### TNA World Title: Matt Hardy vs. Ethan Carter III vs. Drew Galloway

Carter is defending and Jeff Hardy, Carter's former employee, is guest referee. As usual, JB says Drew is standing when he's kneeling. Tyrus tries to cheat thirty seconds in and gets ejected. Matt and Drew take turns punching Ethan in the corner and a clothesline puts the champ on the floor. Drew goes after Matt with some forearms to the back and a big headbutt as Ethan comes back in.

Carter knocks Matt out to the floor and stops to yell at Jeff for no apparent reason. A cravate slows Drew down but they trade cross bodies to drop both guys. Everyone gets back in but Matt and Ethan are quickly on

the floor, allowing Drew to hit a big flip dive and take Hardy out. It's table time but Drew picks Ethan up and hits a White Noise onto the steps for a big thud. Matt makes the save and puts Drew on top of Ethan (there's no count for no apparent reason) for a double stack moonsault.

Ethan runs Jeff over by mistake and walks into the Side Effect but there's no one to count. Carter is up first and puts Drew on the table at ringside, only to suplex Matt from the apron through Galloway in a big crash. Back in and a TKO gets two on Matt but Drew comes back in and tries to pull Matt off the top. Hardy headbutts him into the Tree of Woe but Ethan comes of to make it a superplex, only to have Drew do a sit up to add a German superplex in an impressive spot.

Matt and Drew slug it out so Ethan gives them both the 1%er at the same time for two each. The fans aren't even reacting to these near falls and Jeff has barely been a factor so far. Ethan realizes that Jeff needs to get involved so he shoves the referee and demands a DQ. It's No DQ though so Ethan grabs a chair, only to have Jeff take it away. Ethan slaps him again so Jeff lays Carter out with a Twisting Stunner. Drew adds a running boot and Matt hits the Twist of Fate on Drew for the pin and the title at 20:01.

**Rating:** C-. THEY ACTUALLY DID IT! They took the stupidest possible outcome of the three and actually went with it because TNA really is that stupid. Matt Hardy lost his two title shots, didn't get the pin to get into this match, and then wins the title at 41 years old with help from his more popular brother when you have Drew at 30 and Ethan at 32 right there. Instead though, OLD GUYS RULE!

The Hardy Family celebrates while Ethan goes to the back to yell at Dixie.

Now, that last half hour? None of it matters because the title was vacated less than two days later so forget all this.

Ethan says he's winning the title back for himself and he's going to be lethal against Lashley tonight. It's not over until he wins.

The announcers talk about Group Wild Card.

We get a thirty second clip of Jesse Godderz making Crimson tap out to the Adonis Lock. Yeah they're so strapped for material that they're airing old matches, but to be fair, it's probably better than watching the whole thing.

#### Group Future Four

Jesse Godderz – 3 points (2 matches remaining)

Micah – 0 points (3 matches remaining)

Eli Drake – 0 points (3 matches remaining)

Crimson – 0 points (2 matches remaining)

Jesse gives us a top five list of reasons why he's going to win the World Title Series with #1 being "look at me."

Clips of Micah vs. Eli Drake going to a double countout for 1 point apiece.

#### Group Future Four

Jesse Godderz – 3 points (2 matches remaining)

Micah – 1 point (2 matches remaining)

Eli Drake – 1 point (2 matches remaining)

Crimson – 0 points (2 matches remaining)

The hosts do their swipe right/swipe left game for a few names.

#### Group X-Division: Manik vs. DJZ

The announcers cover the mask being back by saying Manik wants better peripheral vision. Manik works on the arm to start but gets armdragged down a few times. A nice dropkick knocks Manik down again but the announcers would rather talk about Shane Helms (the greatest cruiserweight of all time according to Josh and Pope).

Manik cranks back on the arm again and stomps away before rolling some

suplexes. Josh calls Pope referring to a suplex as a souffle the stupidest thing he's ever heard in wrestling. I'd actually think that was calling your fans a bunch of internet nerds but what do I know. A quick backbreaker gets two for DJZ but he dives into two boots to the ribs. Manik misses a frog splash but comes right back with something like a GTS but with a kick instead of knee for the pin at 6:49.

**Rating:** C-. Nothing much to see here but that's the case for so many X-Division matches these days. Both guys are fine in the ring, which is something I never thought I'd say about DJZ. Manik is a guy who could be something interesting if they would just let him be himself, but that might come too close to a personality in the division and that's not going to happen anytime soon.

#### Group X-Division

Tigre Uno – 3 points (2 matches remaining)

Manik – 3 points (2 matches remaining)

DJZ – 0 points (2 matches remaining)

Mandrews – 0 points (2 matches remaining)

Clip of Carter vs. Lashley from over the summer.

#### Group Champions: Lashley vs. Ethan Carter III

Carter hides in the corner and then on the floor for the first two minutes. Lashley finally gets his hands on him and scores with some running shoulders to the ribs. A clothesline puts Carter on the floor and we take a break. Back with Lashley following Carter to the floor, only to get clubbed in the back and sent into the steps.

Carter dives into a spinebuster on the floor but Tyrus posts Lashley to keep his boss in it. They get back inside but Carter sends Lashley right back to the floor for a slam from Tyrus. We're under five minutes to go as Carter puts on a camel clutch. That goes nowhere and they're both down again. An eye rake gets Carter out of a torture rack so Lashley powerslams him down and grabs a rear naked choke. Tyrus helps out again

for the save and it's a Stinger Splash from Carter.

We've got two minutes to go as Lashley scores with a powerbomb, followed by the spear. Tyrus pulls Lashley to the floor though, giving Ethan time to kick out. This time Tyrus just gets in the ring but gets speared down, allowing Carter to grab a chair (just like he did over the summer). Lashley blocks it but gets kicked low, setting up the 1%er for the pin on Lashley at 15:40.

**Rating:** C+. Another nice match here to close out the show which is always a nice bonus. Carter winning makes sense and is likely letting him move on to the next round. Odds are Lashley beats Aries whenever they finally get around to that match, setting up the two winners for the group. Tyrus got a bit annoying here but that's his job. Well that and being #1 contender for reasons I don't want to understand.

#### Group Champions

Austin Aries – 4 points (1 match remaining)

Ethan Carter III – 4 point (1 match remaining)

Lashley – 3 points (1 match remaining)

Mr. Anderson – 0 points (1 match remaining)

**Overall Rating:** C. The show was again fine but again nothing I needed to see. The big lesson I've gotten from the first three weeks and just over 1/3 of the qualifying matches is that this really needed to be a field of just sixteen. There are so many people in it that are just there to fill in spots and you can tell who is most likely to advance out of each group pretty easily.

I'm glad they're starting to just air clips of some of them though as it's going to make this a lot easier to sit through. The Series has been far better than I was expecting, but it's still not the most interesting thing in the world when this whole thing is a big qualifier for another tournament with no stories going on during the eight to ten weeks of the pool play. This show had some of the bigger names though and it definitely made things more entertaining, at least for a night.

## Results

Austin Aries b. Mr. Anderson – Super brainbuster

Tigre Uno b. Mandrews – Corkscrew splash

Manik b. DJZ – Kick to the head

Ethan Carter III b. Lashley – 1%er

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# **Impact Wrestling – October 7, 2015: It's A Carter Thing**

## **Impact Wrestling**

Date: October 7, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: D'Angelo Dinero, Josh Matthews

Bound For Glory has come and gone and not a lot has changed because the World Title is now vacant. Matt Hardy won the title by pinning Drew Galloway, but Ethan Carter III fired an injunction against him for reasons that aren't entirely clear. Therefore, tonight we're starting a 32 person series to crown a new champion at some point in the future. In



other words, we'll be seeing a lot of matches taped a few months ago cobbled together into a competition. Let's get to it.

We open with a stills package of Sunday's main event, which means nothing now.

Dinero and Matthews are in the studio and throw us into a package of everything that has happened since Sunday. Ethan Carter III has gotten an injunction from a judge to prevent Matt Hardy from appearing on Impact. Why? Not important enough to explain but we'll go with "reasons".

Therefore, since Matt can't appear on TNA TV, we see a video of Matt vacating the title. So yeah, we still don't get any new details and the story is still all muddled and a way to get to the ends they need because just having Carter retain was too complicated. Matt kept talking about a controversy but there's still no explanation of what exactly happened.

Dixie Carter talks about how the 72 hours since Bound For Glory ended have been insane. It really is insane since 72 hours ago (remember that this was recorded earlier today) would have been since Sunday afternoon, not Sunday night but we'll just chalk that up to another reason why Dixie isn't that bright. Dixie and Billy Corgan (who the fans are just supposed to know works for TNA) announce the 32 person series to determine the new champion. Its name: the World Title Series. Dig that creativity!

The men and women will both be involved in the series with eight groups of four each. The groups will compete against each other in round robin style matches with three points for a win, one point for a draw and zero points for a loss. There are fifteen minute time limits and the top two from each group advance to the round of sixteen, which is a single elimination tournament with no time limits.

Here's the first group (Group UK):

Bram

Rockstar Spud

Grado

Drew Galloway

Group #2 (Group Wild Card):

Aiden O'Shea

Crazy Steve

Kenny King

Mahabali Shera

Group #3 (Group Knockouts)

Awesome Kong

Madison Rayne

Brooke

Gail Kim

Group #4 (Group Champions)

Lashley

Austin Aries

Mr. Anderson

Ethan Carter III

Dinero and Josh make their predictions on the first four groups.

Drew Galloway talks about Sunday being the hardest night of his life. He'll be back though.

Group UK: Drew Galloway vs. Bram

Josh says the injunction might be about Jeff Hardy hitting Carter on Sunday. That really should have been mentioned earlier as it almost kind of makes sense, but we're 20 minutes into the show and FINALLY hearing about that theory. As usual, TNA comes off as disorganized and doesn't

bother to explain something that really should be covered earlier, assuming that's what's going on.

They fight into the corner to start and Bram bails to the floor. Back in and Bram bails again as we go split screen to see some clips of a roundtable group discussion from earlier in the day. I can't stand it when this happens as it's very distraction. Just do the audio or something as it's not like they're hard to tell apart.

As Bram talks about being better than the rest of the group, Drew suplexes Bram to the floor again but this time Bram sends him into the steps to take over. Back in and Bram grabs a chinlock until Galloway gets to his feet and wins a slugout. They head outside again so Galloway can send him face first into the steps over and over. Back inside and Drew's running big boot is good for the pin and three points at 7:59.

**Rating:** C. Not bad here but it's clear that we're going to see a lot of decent to average matches with no drama until they get to the single elimination stuff. The match was fine enough and it's a good thing that they didn't push Bram before he went all crazy. I'm hoping we get Galloway as the new champion too, if nothing else so I can laugh at TNA for making this whole tournament when they could have just put the title on him in the first place.

#### Group UK Standings

Drew Galloway – 3 points (2 matches left)

Rockstar Spud – 0 points (3 matches left)

Grado – 0 points (3 matches left)

Bram – 0 points (2 matches left)

Gail Kim is thankful for the chance to be in the tournament.

Drew Galloway says Bram's mistake was going to the floor. They're treating this like a traditional sports event with analysis and the pre and post match interviews.

## Group Knockouts: Brooke vs. Gail Kim

No title with Gail because of the taping schedule which Josh attributes to Gail being focused on the World Title. They keep the split screen stuff to a minimum here and come back to Gail monkey flipping her over, only to get caught in a pinfall reversal sequence for some near falls. Brooke grabs something like a reverse Cattle Mutilation but can't keep the hold on.

Eat Defeat is broken up and they slug it out until Brooke grabs the Butterface Maker (in case you didn't get the theme of Brooke's character). She misses a top rope elbow though and Gail bends Brooke's ribs around the post. Eat Defeat is countered again so Gail tries a leg lock, only to get rolled up for the pin at 6:25.

**Rating:** C. This was fine again but I'm scared of what's going to happen if Brooke advances to the next round and someone who is supposed to be serious has to sell for her. I get what they're going for by putting the Knockouts in but it feels way out of place at the same time. Kong and Kim would be one thing, but the other two feel like complete outliers. Then again they probably aren't making it to the tournament so it's not the worst thing in the world.

## Group Knockouts

Brooke – 3 points (2 matches left)

Awesome Kong – 0 points (3 matches left)

Madison Rayne – 0 points (3 matches left)

Gail Kim – 0 points (2 matches left)

EC3 wants this to be called the Memorial Screwjob Series. He should be the champion because he got ripped off but it's motivated him to win this thing. Carter promises to defeat Austin Aries tonight in record time. This series isn't over until he wins.

The announcers talk about the first two matches.

## Group UK: Rockstar Spud vs. Grado

In the split screen discussion, Grado and Spud argue over who the real underdog is. In the ring, Grado sits on Spud's chest for two and drops a backplash for good measure. A Cannonball misses though and Spud scores with a dropkick in the corner. Grado comes back with a Pedigree (not a good one either) for two. There go the straps but Grado's ankle lock is quickly broken up.

Spud hits an overly complicated Worm for two but Grado tops him with a People's Elbow. The running the ropes (multiple times across the ring) makes him tired though and Pope thinks this is the funniest thing he's ever seen. Spud hits a decent chokeslam and the Undertaker cover gets two. Matthews calls this a slobberknocker as Grado escapes an AA but walks into a Stunner and the Underdog to give Spud the pin at 5:57.

**Rating:** D. Thanks for giving us this six minute ad that made me want to turn this show off and go watch the WWE Network. I get the idea they were going for here but I still don't get the appeal of Grado. As Josh said in the Knockouts match, the idea here is supposed to be everyone is serious about the World Title. Instead though, we had a comedy match which was only funny at times. Pick an idea.

## Group UK

Drew Galloway – 3 points (2 matches left)

Rockstar Spud – 3 points (2 matches left)

Grado – 0 points (2 matches left)

Bram – 0 points (2 matches left)

Pope picks EC3 to lose all of his matches.

Tyrus, with headphones around the side of his head to make him look even angrier, says he's going to sit back and see who wins the Series because he's up next. It would be interesting if EC3 wins.

## Group Champions: Ethan Carter III vs. Austin Aries

Aries has Thea Trinidad with him for no apparent reason. Josh says the internet nerds are asking why Aries is here after he lost a career match. No Josh, actually we're wrestling fans who sit around and listen to your mindless drivel as you try to be the cool announcer while coming off as the biggest tool this side of your local hardware store.

Heaven forbid we listen to the rules and stories your company presents and then expect them to follow their own ideas. No instead we're nerds for trying to make sense of a business that you couldn't even get into because you couldn't beat freaking Maven and then no major company wanted to see you get in the ring so you're stuck with this sinking ship of a company because WWE realized they could get any hack to replace you.

So after the explanation of "HAHA we don't have to explain why Aries is back" we're ready to go. Pope starts talking about Jeff Hardy getting involved on Sunday so I guess that's the official reason for the injunction. Again, not that Ethan ever actually mentioned that but why waste time on something like that? Ethan cranks on a wristlock and then runs Aries over with a shoulder. Aries pops back up and forearm Carter outside, followed by a slingshot hilo to send Carter to the floor again.

Some elbows to the head (am I a nerd for knowing what an elbow is Josh? Or do I need to be a professional like you?) knock Ethan back inside but Aries dives on Tyrus when he gets too close to Thea. We take a break and come back with Aries fighting out of a chinlock until Ethan pulls him back to the mat for the same hold. We've got less than five minutes to go and this was the only match to have the time limit announced during the entrances. Aries fights back and gets a neckbreaker across the middle rope, followed by a suicide dive into the barricade.

Back in and another Tyrus distraction lets Carter get two off a TKO. Carter's superplex is broken up and Aries gets two off the 450 in a surprising kickout. Even Tyrus was freaked out. Aries wins a slugout but Tyrus trips him up, allowing Ethan to grab a sitout powerbomb for another near fall. The Last Chancery goes on with a minute left but since that move never gets a submission, Carter gets to the ropes. Both finishers are countered three times each and Aries can't get the Last Chancery as time runs out at 15:00.

**Rating:** B. I had a really good time with this one and it was cool to see Carter kick out of a big move instead of having to be saved as usual. The ending sequence with the counters was really good, but I had a hard time trying to shake off Josh's lines at the beginning. Aries being back is a good thing, even if he's just filling in a spot.

Aries gives Carter a brainbuster after the match.

### Group Champions

Austin Aries – 1 point (2 matches left)

Ethan Carter III – 1 point (2 matches left)

Mr. Anderson – 0 points (3 matches left)

Lashley – 0 points (3 matches left)

Pope says getting a draw and one point is like getting zero points.

Mr. Anderson is glad that he's in the toughest group. He's all in against Lashley tonight.

Aries says Carter knows what the brainbuster feels like and it's his first loss if he ever feels it again.

### Group Knockouts: Madison Rayne vs. Awesome Kong

An early Implant Buster doesn't work for Kong so she throws Madison across the ring. As the split screen gives us some rare talking from Kong (the seas will boil with her rage it seems), Kong throws Madison in a Torture Rack before just dropping her. Madison comes back with a missile dropkick for two but the Implant Buster ends Rayne at 4:12.

**Rating:** D. Total squash here with Kong looking dominant like she should have. Madison is still good in the ring but it takes a different kind of opponent to give Kong a threat. They were smart to keep this short here and it made Kong look like a real threat, assuming she can stay healthy.

### Group Knockouts

Brooke – 3 points (2 matches left)

Awesome Kong – 3 points (2 matches left)

Madison Rayne – 0 points (2 matches left)

Gail Kim – 0 points (2 matches left)

Lashley is glad to be in a tournament because he's gotten here in tournament style competition. Mr. Anderson is victim #1 tonight.

Matt Hardy talks about what a great moment Sunday night was but now it's all gone. He's entered into the Series and will start competing next week. So....Carter's injunction didn't get rid of Matt and now he has to go through a bunch of people instead of someone he's already beaten twice to get the belt back. Bad business sense is a bad family trait for the Carters.

Group Champions: Mr. Anderson vs. Lashley

Lashley takes him to the mat to start and we're in a break just a few seconds after the bell. Back with Lashley suplexing Anderson with ease but the spear can't connect yet. The split screen has Lashley and Anderson saying that they should both move on and then fight in the round of sixteen. Lashley charges into the post to give Anderson two and it's time to work on the arm.

Anderson dropkicks Lashley's leapfrog out of the air and it's time to go back to the arm. A single arm DDT gets two and it's back to the armbars. Back up and Lashley fires off some clotheslines with the good arm, including a big one in the corner. There's a spinebuster as we have less than five minutes to go. The spear still can't connect though and Anderson hits a pair of Regal Rolls. Anderson tries a third but Lashley rolls out and hits the spear for the win at 12:16.

**Rating:** C+. Not a bad main event style match here and I'm glad to see Lashley get a win for a change. He's been falling further and further down the card in recent weeks and it's nice to see that switch, even for one night. You have to think he and Carter are the two moving on from this group as Anderson is little more than a main event jobber.



## Group Champions

Lashley – 3 points (2 matches left)

Austin Aries – 1 point (2 matches left)

Ethan Carter III – 1 point (2 matches left)

Mr. Anderson – 0 points (2 matches left)

**Overall Rating:** C+. You know I didn't hate this. They've actually got a good idea going here and the presentation worked well. I could go for them jumping back and forth between the two sets of groups from week to week, as there are going to be six matches per group for eight groups or forty eight matches. That should cover them for seven or eight weeks as there won't be a twelve minute intro and a full time limit draw every week.

TNA did a good job of presenting this and it should get a lot better once they get down to the final sixteen and a more traditional tournament. This felt like a bigger version of the Bound For Glory Series but more structured and that's not a bad thing. It could be far worse and I can live with the idea of this getting us to a new champion. Of course that's assuming you ignore all the flaws in Ethan's plan and the fact that TNA got themselves into this trouble in the first place. Good show and a good way to get started on the latest tournament they have to run to fix their latest gaffe.

## Results

Drew Galloway b. Bram – Running boot

Brooke b. Gail Kim – Small package

Rockstar Spud b. Grado – Underdog

Austin Aries vs. Ethan Carter III went to a time limit draw

Awesome Kong b. Madison Rayne – Implant Buster

Lashley b. Mr. Anderson – Spear

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# Impact Wrestling – August 26, 2015: Good Grief This Is Lame

## Impact Wrestling

Date: August 26, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: D'Angelo Dinero, Josh Matthews

It's week three of the GFW era in TNA and there's a chance that Jeff Jarrett is going to take over as the full time boss. There is no way this could go badly for TNA of course. Other than that we have Eric Young vs. Chris Melendez for Chris' leg because they need something to keep the feud going. Let's get to it.

We open with a quick recap of all the GFW stuff so far.

Here are the Hardys to open things up. Jeff says he's glad to be back and talks about the gold they've won everywhere. He knows Matt will be the next World Champion so Matt thanks all of the fans for their support. Matt reiterates that he wants the title so here are Ethan Carter III and Tyrus to respond.

Ethan talks about meeting the men who inspired him to start wrestling in 1999 and being so disappointed. Now he's beaten Matt in Matt's own match and Jeff is just a daredevil who can't stick a landing. Jeff offers to beat him with a chair since he can't wrestle yet, but instead Ethan just grants Matt his rematch request. However, if Ethan retains, Jeff becomes his personal assistant. Do you really want Jeff doing household chores? I could see this ending with a big fire.

We recap Eric Young vs. Chris Melendez, which has seen Young beating him at every turn but Melendez keeps coming. Now he's putting up his prosthetic leg for one more match. Sure why not.

Young says he can't be held responsible for what happens next.

#### Eric Young vs. Chris Melendez

Young quickly takes over to start and tries to rip the leg off early. Instead he settles for a chinlock but Melendez fights up with some clotheslines. A Bubba Bomb (remember he was trained by Team 3D) puts Eric down but he rakes the eyes to keep Chris in trouble. The piledriver is broken up so Young rolls him up and puts his feet on the ropes for the pin at 3:15.

**Rating:** D. Now that's it right? There's no more reason for these two to fight and they're never going to again right? The match was nothing due to the time, but the fact that Chris Melendez was in there didn't do it any favors either. When I'm happier to see Eric Young, you can tell something is bad.

Young demands the leg right now and Melendez hands it over, only after hopping along because Young keeps backing up.

#### X-Division Title: Tigre Uno vs. DJZ vs. Sonjay Dutt

Tigre is defending and of course there's no story here. DJZ dropkicks Tigre to the floor to start but walks into a hurricanrana. Sonjay sends him out to the floor and nails a flip dive off the apron to the fans mild boredom. Back in and Tigre misses a corkscrew moonsault, allowing DJZ to come back with a quick gutbuster to the champ. Dutt comes back in for a

tornado DDT on the champ but the challengers clothesline each other to put all three guys down. DJZ is up first but gets German suplexed into the corner, setting up Tigre's springboard splash to retain at 5:03.

**Rating:** C. Well they had five minutes, no story and some decent spots. Standard X-Division all the way here, but I still have no idea why I'm supposed to care about Tigre. Yeah he's held the title for a few months, but I don't know anything about him. Oh wait he loves his hometown and doesn't like Donald Trump. That's all they've got on him and that's not enough to overcome some mediocre title defenses with no story.

James Storm demands that Manik and Abyss win the Tag Team Titles and no more dancing from Manik.

Recap of the opening segment.

#### Tag Team Titles: Wolves vs. Abyss/Manik

Abyss/Manik are challenging. Davey and Abyss get things going and the monster shoves the champ down with ease. It's off to Eddie to try his luck to little effect as Abyss pounds on him as well. Manik comes in and gets beaten up in the corner. Davey gets dragged into the Revolution's corner though and Abyss comes back in to choke in and splash. Manik gets two off a belly to back and it's time to crank on the arms.

A dropkick stops Davey's comeback as Josh talks about Wolves Nation. How many nations can there possibly be? Davey finally gets over for the tag so Eddie can clean house, only to have Abyss grab both champions by the throat. The Wolves backflip out (that looked cool) and kick Abyss down, setting up a double missile dropkick in the corner. Cue Storm to break up whatever the Wolves had planned but Mahabali Sheera comes out to chase Storm off. The powerbomb into a backstabber is enough to put Manik away and retain the titles at 6:19.

**Rating:** C+. I liked this match better than I was expecting to as you had the challengers actually feeling like more than just a throw together team, even though they've badly had a single match together. Good enough match here though and the Wolves are still fun to see with that precision offense.

Jeff Hardy accepts Ethan's challenge. This could have been tacked on to the first segment to save some time.

We recap Jeff Jarrett's return to the company.

#### Knockouts Title: Velvet Sky vs. Brooke

Brooke is defending in what should be an obvious ending. Feeling out process to start with neither being able to get much of an advantage. A Russian legsweep gets two for the champ and she forearmms Velvet down with a hard shot. Velvet comes back with a running neckbreaker for tow but they clothesline each other down. Brooke knocks her to the floor but doesn't want a countout. Instead she whips Velvet into the steps but here's the Dollhouse for the DQ at 3:54.

**Rating:** D+. Yeah whatever. I would get into the Dollhouse again but with Gail Kim around, it's kind of a waste of time because Gail is going to end the team like a heroine is supposed to do. Another match that didn't have time to go anywhere either, which gets old in a hurry. At least Velvet didn't get the title back in a nothing match.

The beatdown is on but here's Rebel of all people to...join the Dollhouse and help beat Velvet down as Taryn laughs from the back.

Roode says he'll win.

Anderson says he'll win tonight.

Drew Galloway gets bad news on the phone.

#### Mr. Anderson vs. James Storm vs. Bobby Roode vs. Lashley

Winner gets PJ Black for the King of the Mountain Title next week. It's a brawl to start and all four head outside to fight. Roode can't suplex Lashley on the ramp so Lashley and Anderson clean house, only to turn it into a standoff as we take a break. Back with Roode and Storm having an old school standoff to a smattering of applause. Dinero: "They're facing off....again."

Roode gets two off a quick neckbreaker but Anderson breaks it up. Lashley

is back in as well for a superplex to Storm. Anderson misses a swanton bomb and gets clotheslined by Storm but they both head outside. Lashley turns Roode inside out off a clothesline but Roode knees out of a delayed vertical. The Roode Bomb is blocked by a grab of the ropes, only to have Storm come back in with a Codebreaker.

Anderson's swinging neckbreaker puts Storm down and the Mic Check gets two on Roode. Lashley spears Anderson to the floor, only to charge into the Last Call. We're down to Roode vs. Storm again and the Beer Money chant sets up a double suplex on Anderson. They load up the signature taunt but the Roode Bomb plants Storm for the pin at 13:30.

**Rating:** C+. Fun match here but what's it for? A shot at a title that doesn't actually belong to this company? Roode winning is the logical choice and Storm is the perfect one to take the fall since he's on his way out. They kept this moving fast enough to make the match work and that's all you can do here.

Velvet Sky, Gail Kim and Brooke are all on the cover of the calendar. So much for the competition.

Ethan is pleased with the Hardys' decision.

Here's Dixie for the big announcement about Jarrett being in charge going forward. She says the best times in this company's history have been when two people are working together on top. Jeff is invited to the ring and thanks Dixie for that surprise phone call a month or so ago. They have something special going with this partnership and Dixie believes they're unstoppable when they work together. Sweet goodness have you looked into being stopped? This brings out Drew Galloway with news as we go to a break.

Back with Drew going on about the dark cloud of the attacks over TNA. After praising Jeff, Drew thinks it's weird that there are no clues, but he put his criminology degree to use (that's a cool idea for a change) and said there's only one clue: the license plates of the getaway cars. And what do you know: they're both registered to Jeff Jarrett. You know, the guy he was praising a minute ago.

Jeff says no way but here's Karen Jarrett to say she did it for her husband, her family and for GFW. She says one little spark can cause a giant inferno. With that, Jeff kicks Drew low and here are the GFW guys to beat Galloway down. Some TNA midcarders run out for an attempt at a save but get beaten down as well. The Wolves take a beating too and GFW poses to end the show. Good night this felt lame. Like wow, JEFF JARRETT turning his back on someone? Who would have seen that coming? And Chris Masters and Justin Gabriel as top villains? This really is the best they can do too, and that's pathetic.

**Overall Rating:** C-. Yeah fine. The wrestling was watchable here but there's so little here as far as storylines go. Jeff Jarrett as the big bad is supposed to be the major story? Another Matt Hardy vs. Ethan Carter III match? I know their TV is running out, but they're not exactly lighting the world on fire to make me want to see more. The show was decent enough this week, but it's nothing worth seeing, as is almost always the case around here. By the way, that last segment: longer than any match tonight.

### Results

Eric Young b. Chris Melendez – Rollup with feet on the ropes

Tigre Uno b. DJZ and Sonjay Dutt – Springboard splash to DJZ

Wolves b. Manik/Abyss – Powerbomb/backstabber combo to Manik

Brooke b. Velvet Sky via DQ when the Dollhouse interfered

Bobby Roode b. James Storm, Lashley and Mr. Anderson – Roode Bomb to Storm

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# Impact Wrestling – August 5, 2015: One More Time

## Impact Wrestling

Date: August 5, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: D'Angelo Dinero, Josh Matthews

Tonight is No Surrender as TNA presents another major show as a regular TV episode. The main event will see Matt Hardy challenging for the World Title against Ethan Carter III in a Full Metal Mayhem match, along with Austin Aries vs. Rockstar Spud for the Rockstar moniker. Let's get to it.

We open with a quick Roddy Piper tribute. That's nice of them.

## Bram vs. Mr. Anderson

This has been a well built match with Anderson worrying about putting his career on the line against a monster like Bram. Bram has the microphone that he used to bust Anderson open a few weeks back. Anderson goes right after Bram to start and knocks him out to the floor with a clothesline. Back in and Anderson clotheslines him out to the floor again. This time Anderson clotheslines him on the floor to mix things up a bit but Bram is able to get in a few shots and take Anderson to the floor on his own terms.

Anderson gets dropped face first into the apron and Bram ties him up in the ring skirt for good measure. They've done a good job here of having Anderson try to wrestle and Bram sticking with the brawling. A chinlock has Anderson in more trouble but he fights up with right hands and the



Regal Roll for two. Bram gets the same off a superplex as they've now switched their styles. An Edge-0-Matic and spinwheel kick get two each for Bram and now it's his turn to hit some clotheslines. It's microphone time for Bram but Anderson counters into a small package for the pin at 9:29.

**Rating:** C. I liked this one a lot more than I was expecting to but it wasn't the most interesting match in the world. Bram just being violent against midcarders has gotten him about as far as it can and now it's time for him to have a major feud against someone. They told a decent enough story though and that's really all that matters.

Bram nails Anderson with the mic and calls him Mr. Pathetic. That's the best line they can come up with?

The Hardys talk about always defying the odds and promise Matt wins the World Title tonight.

Here's James Storm to rant about his loss last week. There's one man to blame for the loss and that's Khoya. Storm demands that Khoya get out here because Storm got him out of that horrible country and gave him a life. He slaps Khoya in the face and that's enough to make Khoya snap and lay Storm out. Khoya rants about how he's proud of his heritage and is a proud Indian man named Mahabali Shera. Now, DO SOMETHING WITH HIM.

We recap Gail Kim vs. the Dollhouse, which sets up a three on one handicap match tonight.

Storm wants Shera tonight.

### Gail Kim vs. Dollhouse

One fall to a finish and tags are required so Gail rolls away from Marti Belle to start. Taryn sends the lackeys after Gail to start but a glare sends Taryn running back to the apron. A dropkick to Jade's back gets two as Pope starts reading tweets from fans. Jade gets two off a German suplex but heel miscommunication lets Gail take over again. A running tornado DDT plants Marti and Taryn runs off, leaving Gail to beat up both other members. The referee won't count a pin on Jade because she's not

legal, even though all three are in at the same time. Eat Defeat is enough to pin Marti at 5:10.

**Rating:** D+. Hey, did you know that Gail Kim is like, a serious wrestler and doesn't tolerate silly gimmicks? She's basically Lance Storm and that's not something I'm really all that interested in watching, especially not on and off for the better part of ten years. I don't need to see her do the same feud she did with the Beautiful People, but that's how the Knockouts work: someone new gets over and then here's Gail Kim to remind everyone how great a wrestler she is while putting half the audience to sleep.

Drew Galloway talks about Eli Drake and how he didn't build the Rising for one man to tear it down.

#### Drew Galloway vs. Eli Drake

Grudge match after Drake cost Galloway the World Title a few weeks back. It's a brawl on the outside before the bell with Drew in full control and dropping Drake on the floor. A clothesline off the step drops Eli again before they head inside for the opening bell. The threat of a Future Shock sends Drake running up the ramp but Drew is there with another clothesline.

Eli finally gets in some shots of his own to take over, allowing for some choking in the corner back inside. A release German suplex sends Drake flying into the corner. Drew: "STAND UP!" Like a good villain, Eli goes to the eyes and rolls Drew up with a handful of trunks and a hand on the ropes for the pin at 3:50.

**Rating:** C. Nothing special here but Galloway and Drake are clearly stars of the future. The fallout of the Rising is already more interesting than the Rising ever was, which says a lot about how lame of a group they really were. I'm sure we'll see these two fight again before Drew goes on to something bigger.

We recap Aries vs. Spud with Aries shooting his mouth off and putting his career on the line as a result.

Bobby Roode comes in to see Bully Ray (remember him?) and threatens to help Aries win tonight. Ray implies he'll be at ringside to make sure that doesn't happen.

### Rockstar Spud vs. Austin Aries

The winner gets to keep the Rockstar moniker but Aries' career is on the line as well. Aries quickly takes Spud to the mat for the Last Chancery but, as almost always, the move doesn't work. A nice armdrag puts Spud down again and Aries nails a basement dropkick to send Spud into the corner. Aries keeps his full control with an STO, followed by the Pendulum Elbow for two. So are we just not getting Roode and Bully after that segment?

Back up and Aries charges into a boot in the corner, followed by a dropkick to the knee. Spud starts firing off some running forearms but the Underdog is broken up. Aries scores with a belly to back for two and we hit the Last Chancery again. That goes nowhere so it's brainbuster time, only to have Spud small package his way out for two. This is really starting to pick up.

Some discus forearms rock the Rockstar and the brainbuster connects for two. Aries is stunned but Spud makes the big hero comeback. The big wind-up punch takes too long but the second attempt knocks Aries outside. A big flip dive takes Aries down again and a high cross body gives Spud a near fall. The Underdog is broken up but Aries sets him on top, only to be countered into a super Underdog to give Spud the pin at 11:20.

**Rating:** B. This started slowly but got much better as things kept going. Spud is awesome in the underdog role and Aries can make almost any match work. I can't blame him for leaving though as there's nothing left for him to do in TNA, especially since they're not going to put him back in the World Title hunt anytime soon.

Aries raises Spud's hand post match.

Post break, Aries and Roode say goodbye, saying they know they'll both land on their feet.

## Mahabali Shera vs. James Storm

Shera is in jeans. Storm takes him into the corner to start and shouts in his face. Shera will have nothing to do with these right hands to the face and makes his comeback, only to take the cowbell to the head for the DQ at 1:42.

Bully is down in the back.

Post match Jeff Jarrett comes in to see Dixie Carter, who is worried about Bully. Jeff offers to let Global Force help by offering to run the show for one week. Dixie isn't sure but it seems to be a deal for next week. I guess this is where the invasion begins and for some reason I'm expecting this to be disappointing.

Ethan Carter III says he'll retain the title tonight as Tyrus holds up the belt.

## TNA World Title: Matt Hardy vs. Ethan Carter III

Carter is defending in Full Metal Mayhem, which is TNA's version of TLC. The champ takes over early on with a chair to the back before sitting down so he can punch Matt from eye level. That earns him a Side Effect through the chair and it's already ladder time, which goes upside Ethan's face. The ladder is laid across the middle corner so Carter can be rammed face first as Matt is in full control.

It's time to go up but it's WAY too early on, allowing Ethan to chair Matt in the leg. Why would you ever go up that early on? Back from a break with Matt breaking up Carter's attempt at the belt by sending Ethan down into the buckle. Matt isn't done yet as he drives the ladder into Ethan's crotch to prevent another generation of Carter's from populating the earth. That's still not enough for Matt to get the title so he plants Ethan with the Twist of Fate.

A moonsault through the table is broken up with a quick crotching and a powerbomb through the wood but Matt is up again with a powerbomb of his own to break up Carter's climb. They head outside with Matt bridging a ladder between the steps and the ring, only to get slammed head first

onto the ladder. Since we haven't had enough near climbs yet, Matt makes another save and hits a Side Effect onto the apron.

A guillotine legdrop drives Carter through the table on the floor but Matt takes way too long to climb, allowing Ethan to chair him in the leg. They already have to repeat spots for the saves? Carter climbs up, shoves Matt down and pulls the title off the hook to retain at 20:10.

**Rating:** B. Fun enough match but there was no reason for this to involve ladders and weapons other than so TNA could have a match involving ladders and weapons. It's their first match against each other for the title and they used the big gimmick already. Matt became #1 contender for thrown together reasons and that's not how you want to have a major match like this. It was fun, but I have no desire to watch it again. At least Carter won on his own for a change too.

**Overall Rating:** B-. As usual, TNA can do the big shows well enough but they'll likely be back to the same dull stuff in a few weeks. If you believe the reports, none of this really matters as they'll be off TV in less than two months anyway so at least we still had one good show on the way out. Their midcard continues to be lame, but the wrestling was good enough to carry things for a week.

### Results

Mr. Anderson b. Bram – Small package

Gail Kim b. Dollhouse – Eat Defeat to Belle

Eli Drake b. Drew Galloway – Rollup with a handful of trunks

Rockstar Spud b. Austin Aries – Super Underdog

Mahabali Shera b. James Storm via DQ when Storm used a cowbell

Ethan Carter III b. Matt Hardy – Carter pulled down the title

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# Impact Wrestling – July 8, 2015: That Woman Again

## Impact Wrestling

Date: July 8, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: D'Angelo Dinero, Josh Matthews

We're officially in the Ethan Carter III era, which means tonight is going to be a big celebration. It's going to be interesting to see where the company goes with Ethan on top, because he was clearly the next logical choice to take the title. Oh and Dixie is back. Yes, about a year after she left, Dixie Carter makes her big return tonight to either congratulate or help deal with her nephew, because the world just wouldn't be complete without the Duchess of Darlin out there to guide us through life. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the World Title change last week. That really was the only way to go.

Here are Ethan and Tyrus to open things up. Ethan: "DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION YET??? I am the undisputed World Heavyweight Champion and the greatest living wrestler alive." Dixie has given him free reign tonight, meaning he's booked the entire card. Therefore, he'll be defending his title not EC-once, not EC-twice, but EC3 times. This brings out Matt

Hardy, who says he took Angle to the limit before Carter's title shot.

If Ethan is so keen to defend the title tonight, how about Matt Hardy getting a chance? Ethan declines, because Matt may have taken Angle to the limit, but the champ took him over the limit. True actually. Instead, Matt can have a tag match, if he can find someone to replace his idiot brother. Actually Ethan doesn't mean against he and Tyrus though, meaning it's time for the Dirty Heels. You can see the talent departures starting to take effect already.

### Matt Hardy vs. Dirty Heels

Carter is in on commentary and gets in an argument about Twitter to start. The numbers game has Matt in early trouble as you would expect with Roode dropping Matt face first in a gordbuster. Aries argues with the referee so Roode can punch Hardy in the face behind the referee's back. That's quite the dirty heel move.

Ethan's mic stops working as Matt hooks what used to be called the Ice Pick on Roode until Aries makes a quick save. That earns Austin an Ice Pick but he blocks the Twist of Fate. Instead it's a suplex over the ropes but Bobby plays Heenan by tripping the leg so Aries can fall on top for the pin at 5:01. Carter: "THEY'RE SO DIRTY!"

**Rating:** D+. This seems like part of Carter's reign of terror, but at the same time it seems like it might be a way to just throw people into matches because they don't have stories for everyone. The Heels cheating makes sense but it wasn't a good match either way. That's the problem with shows like this: it makes for a long night of heel dominance, which can be a chore to sit through.

Here's the Rising for their big breakup speech. Drew promises to keep standing up for wrestling and Drake says one day he'll show Galloway what it means for Drew getting him in the door. The team leaves Drew alone in the ring and Ethan grabs a mic and starts to cry. It's sad to see Drew like this, but it's even sadder that he has a 3-1 handicap match right now.

### Drew Galloway vs. Khoya/Abyss/Manik

Drew is in jeans and the beatdown is on early. A clothesline and neckbreaker give Galloway a breather but a BIG Sky High powerbomb from Khoya plants him back down. Abyss doesn't like Khoya going for the pin though, allowing Drew to catch Manik in a backbreaker. As the other two argue, a big boot to Manik's jaw (well the mask around his jaw) is enough for the big upset pin at 2:18. Well done on mixing up the heel dominance and hopefully this leads to the official end of the Revolution.

Mr. Anderson congratulates Carter on winning the title but thinks he'd be a great option for one of those three title shots. Carter disagrees and gives Anderson a match next.

#### Mr. Anderson vs. Bram

Bram gets taken to the mat to start and eats a swinging neckbreaker, followed by a Regal Roll. Well the second attempt at one but it's better late than never right? A Swanton gets two but Bram elbows out of the Mic Check. That earns him a clothesline out to the floor, only to have Bram nail Anderson with a chair for the DQ at 2:59. That was kind of pointless.

Bram keeps beating Anderson up after the match and orders the mic to be dropped, which he uses to bash Anderson's head in, drawing some blood in the process.

#### Robbie E. vs. Jesse Godderz

Street fight. Robbie starts fast and takes it outside for a running flip dive off the apron. A running trashcan shot "knocks the Adonis complex out of the Adonis" (ok that was a good line) and it's time to head inside. Robbie blasts him between the legs with a kendo stick, which is somehow a way for Josh to transition to plugging another Destination America show.

The cheap plug apparently ticked Jesse off enough that he's able to send Robbie back first into the post, followed by a buckle bomb. It's nice to see some basic body part work to set up a submission hold. That's often considered too basic today but it still works just fine. Robbie comes back with a White Russian legsweep to make Jesse drop his kendo stick



before sending him into a trashcan in the corner.

A reverse DDT onto the chair gets two for Robbie but Jesse crotches him on top. Jesse powerbombs him through two chairs in what really should have been the finish (Pope sounds more confused than shocked on the kickout) but instead he has to put Robbie in the Adonis Lock with a chair over Robbie's back for the pass out at 8:30.

**Rating:** C+. I had a much better time with this than I was expecting to and both guys are looking great at the moment. They made a very smart move here by not having Robbie tap out. They've done a very good job of making Robbie seem like a potentially serious deal, though I can't imagine Jesse getting very far with a Boston crab finisher.

Lashley wants a title shot but gets Tyrus instead.

Kurt Angle says Ethan's gauntlet has gotten a lot more interesting.

The Jarretts say they can't believe that they're they're back after everything that happened but TNA is one of the many promotions they're partnering with. The King of the Mountain Title is going to be defended in Global Force Wrestling and other promotions around the world. That's not much, but at least we got SOMETHING this week.

TNA World Title: Ethan Carter III vs. ???

First up for Ethan is...Norv Fenum. Pope is of course aghast at these developments. A right hand and the 1%er are enough for the pin in 45 seconds.

Carter sits down in the corner and gets water. "To the body? To the body!"

TNA World Title: Ethan Carter III vs. ???

It's Shark Boy, complete with a quick plug for Shark Week on Discovery Channel. For some reason Pope thinks this one is hilarious. Shark Boy looks about seven months pregnant. Tyrus: "You're going to need a bigger boat." Shark Boy gets in some offense but the 1%er takes him out in 54 seconds.

Carter is ready for the third match and here's Kurt. Contract, rematch clause, tonight.

### Lashley vs. Tyrus

Carter is on commentary again. Lashley runs into Tyrus to start but has a sleeper quickly broken. Instead, Tyrus plants him down with a side slam and drops an elbow for two. It's hard to believe that Tyrus is in his early 40s. The guy made the big time fairly late in his career and it's hard to fathom on occasion. Lashley can't slam him so Tyrus throws him down with a t-bone suplex. That's fine with Lashley who throws Tyrus onto his shoulder for an electric chair (but he couldn't slam him?), followed by a spear to put Tyrus away at 4:46.

**Rating:** D+. Pretty meh match here as Tyrus isn't exactly great in the ring. The match wasn't horrible but it was really just an extended workout for Lashley. That's all well and good though as he'll likely be back in the main event scene soon enough, which is where Lashley belongs.

The end of the Jarretts' interview talks about how his goals for Global Force line up with TNA's and everybody wins. The real history of TNA is in the list of great names they've had over the years (including Don West oddly enough) and that's Jeff's legacy.

### Madison Rayne vs. Velvet Sky

Before the match, Madison tells Velvet that she belongs in the crowd instead of the ring. The brawl is on because this match needed a story I guess. I'll take it over "they were in the Beautiful People!" again though. They quickly head outside with Madison being sent shoulder first into the post. Madison grabs a northern lights suplex but has to clutch her shoulder after the kickout. Velvet shrugs off some offense and kicks Madison in the face, setting up the Stunner for the pin at 3:36.

**Rating:** D+. As usual, Velvet is nothing to see in the ring. Well, her wrestling isn't at least. The division continues to just kind of meander along except for the title feud, and Velvet being near the top again isn't something interesting. The fact that it seems like we're headed for another Gail Kim title reign or at least feud with the Dollhouse makes it

even worse. Velvet just doesn't do it for me anymore after we've seen what the girls are capable of doing and that's not good going forward.

Some TNA wrestlers were at a charity camp. That's always cool to see.

### TNA World Title: Ethan Carter III b. Kurt Angle

Carter, defending, immediately runs to the floor and the stalling begins. Back in and a suplex gets two on the champ and Ethan is back on the floor, demanding a faster count. Kurt goes after him this time and it's time to roll some Germans. Tyrus gets knocked off the apron and there's the ankle lock, but Ethan punches the referee. He taps out and Hebner calls for the bell at 3:26. That's the bell for the DQ of course.

**Rating:** D. Yeah whatever. I don't think this one really warrants a full explanation.

Post break and Ethan is still in the ring, saying he got out of that one. Now for the big cherry on top, here's Dixie! And it's to SILENCE. On a taped show no less. Ethan is ready for his congratulations for winning the World Title and defending the Carter name but Dixie cuts him off and says she doesn't recognize the person she was last year. Now it's Ethan who is out of control and OH MY GOODNESS they're really making this all about Dixie again.

Yes, after all that time of her turning the show into a playground, we're supposed to cheer for her because she's seen the light or whatever. Ethan is taking over so Dixie is ready to announce a matchmaker so he'll have to defend the title against quality competition. It's not Dixie (thank goodness) and darlin (you knew that was coming), we'll find out who that is next week.

**Overall Rating:** C-. The show wasn't terrible but as usual, TNA doesn't know how to let there be more than one major story at once. Above all else though, I do not want to see Dixie Carter on TV. I understand that she is the President of the company and all that jazz, but she is not an interesting character. It feels like the most forced idea in the world and something that the fans do not want to see. HHH was a monster when he left but returned in 2002 to one of the loudest pops of all time. Dixie

returned after a year to crickets. What does that tell you about her?

Other than that though, there was too much packed into this show. We had two handicap matches, a street fight and a match that ended in a DQ. It's too much in one night and that's not something you want to do here. They need to calm this stuff down, even though they're running out of time. Look at the Knockouts match for example. That easily could have been cut out and had its five minutes handed to something else. That's where TNA doesn't get it: they need to stop pushing everything into one show when there's another week coming up.

### Results

Dirty Heels b. Matt Hardy – Aries pinned Hardy with Roode holding his leg

Drew Galloway b. Khoya/Abyss/Manik – Big boot to Manik

Mr. Anderson b. Bram via DQ when Bram used a chair

Jesse Godderz b. Robbie E. – Adonis Lock

Ethan Carter III b. Norv Fenum – 1%er

Ethan Carter III b. Shark Boy – 1%er

Lashley b. Tyrus – Spear

Velvet Sky b. Madison Rayne – Stunner

Kurt Angle b. Ethan Carter III via DQ when Carter punched the referee