

HIDDEN GEM: When Steve Austin Met Rico

It was a special event (and a good one too).

From January 31, 2001 in Ohio Valley Wrestling.

Jim Ross brings out Steve Austin, fresh off winning the Royal Rumble, for a chat. The place (the Louisville Gardens as this is a special show) goes coconuts of course and Austin hits all four buckles as only he can. JR thinks Austin is going to beat whoever is the WWF Champion at Wrestlemania and Austin talks about the Mexican food he has been having today. Austin wants to know if the fans are ready to see him at Wrestlemania and that would be an affirmative.

Beer is consumed and Austin badmouths Vince McMahon a bit. Cue Kenny Bolin and Rico Constantino (his ace) with Austin telling them to get out. Rico gets in Austin's face and Austin isn't impressed. Rico says he's coming to the WWF to go after Austin because he's a role model here in Louisville. Austin thinks that's a threat and goes to have more beer but Rico says "don't you turn your back on me son." Stunning and drinking ensue. I still want to see what Rico could have done with a serious gimmick.

Ohio Valley Wrestling TV – February 11, 2019: I Don't

Remember It This Way



IMG Credit: Ohio Valley Wrestling

Now this is going to be very different. I spent a lot of years watching OVW TV and got to see a bunch of people in the WWE developmental system before they came up to the main roster (hence the old motto: "Tomorrow's Superstars Today!"). However, Lexington stopped getting the TV show years ago so I haven't seen this promotion in probably ten years. Then I heard that Imp

act Wrestling was doing a One Night Only show in Louisville with OVW this Saturday and since that's only about an hour and fifteen minutes away, I'm taking in the show. So I won't be lost, I'll be looking at the three most recent OVW TV's.

I'm not sure what day the TV actually airs so we'll go with their dates on YouTube.

Ohio Valley Wrestling

Date: February 11, 2019

Location: Davis Arena, Louisville, Kentucky

Commentators: Gilbert Corsey, Ted McNaler, Josh Ashcraft

In something that I don't get to say very often, I'm coming into this completely blind. I don't know these wrestlers, I don't know their stories and I don't know what they do. That can be fun though as it lets me see what kind of stuff I'm getting into as an outsider, meaning they need to show me something. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence, featuring a bunch of shots of wrestlers with their names included. That's very helpful indeed.

The announcers (two of whom I recognize from back in the day) recap the recent Saturday Night Special (their big shows) and talk about everything we'll be seeing, including a new OVW Champion and a tag team winning a tournament to get a guaranteed title shot.

Here's OVW owner Al Snow to thank everyone for allowing OVW to exist. He has a big announcement though: on March 2, Impact Wrestling is coming for a super show. Didn't I just say that? Snow wants the best of OVW on the show, which is why champions are guaranteed to be on the card, though there will be some other spots available. This brings out to guys who seem to be named the Entourage and are rather white rappers.

Shiloh Jonze wants in on this show but the other one (unnamed) wants in as well, triggering a fight. A big guy names...well Big Zo actually, comes in to say that they're both stupid. This brings out Melvin Maximus, who says he's a two time TV Champion and a former OVW Champion. On March 3, Snow is going to have to make a choice. Actually not as the show is on March 2, which thankfully Snow points out. Now it's Adam Revolver (another guy I remember) to suck up to Snow as the small entrance way is getting very full.

We're not done yet as Cash Flo comes in to say the grown folks are talking right now. Flo insults them all (rather badly too as he sounds like he's having to think of every show) until Drew Hernandez comes out to say he's proven how worthy he is. He's proven how much better he is than Heavyweight Champion Tony Gunn and Justin Smooth, which brings out Smooth as well.

Snow has had it and says that it's true a champion is guaranteed a spot, including possibly the TV Champion (Smooth). He explains the TV Title,

which is defended every week in a gauntlet match where the title can change hands on a countout or a DQ. Therefore, let's have everyone here in a gauntlet match tonight with the winner being guaranteed to be on the big show.

This was really long and felt like a WWE segment with some people who feel like just slightly above average indy wrestlers. Now that being said, they all want something and their motivations are clear, so at least the segment made sense and wasn't something where you needed an explanation of what was going on. I did however need an explanation of who these people were as even some name graphics would have helped.

Dimes/Eddie Knight vs. The Void

Yes Dimes, who looks to be about sixteen. The Void are Chace Destiny and Nigel Winters, two guys in Void shirts. The audio is really off here as the ring announcer comes in very clearly and sounds great but McNaler sounds like he's about three feet from the microphone and can barely be heard over the entrance music. Dimes and Knight take turns working on Winters' arm as the announcers talk about Destiny being suffocated by a plastic bag last week. It's off to Destiny for his own arm cranking as all four of them are barely above the top rope.

The arm work continues as they're certainly in first gear but it's looking crisp enough and I'll take that over bad execution of more complicated stuff. A legsweep takes Dimes down and a double Japanese armdrag does it again. Dimes manages to get up top but gets dropkicked out of the air as we hear about the Void being the minions of the evil Crazy Steve and Aamon who broke away from their control. That's a fine explanation of a backstory and explains their rather heelish sounding names. Something close to a Demolition Decapitator (with a fist drop instead of an elbow) finishes Dimes at 3:53.

Rating: D. This seemed to be a starter win for the Void, who felt like faces in gear that looked heelish, which actually fit the backstory. In other words, while the wrestling wasn't all that great, the commentary was a nice feature and kept me from having a bunch of questions about what I was watching. The arm work dominated this match and that's not the

most thrilling stuff in the world, but I'll take it over botching everything left and right.

Before the Void can be announced as the winners, Aamon appears in the balcony to say the worms have forgotten where they came from. The sheep wander away from their home but a good shepherd will bring them back to the flock, no matter what they have to go through first. This was effective stuff as Aamon sounded really creepy and came off like a threat to the Void, who aren't the most impressive looking people in the first place.

We get a sitdown interview with new OVW Champion Tony Gunn, though the audio is now just only coming through one ear instead of both for some reason. We see a clip of Gunn defeating Abyss to win the title and Gunn talks about being away from OVW for over a year due to an injury. He's worked hard to get here and is ready to face anyone either from OVW or from outside.

His first title defense will take place at a house show on February 16 against the winner of a Rumble that night. Gunn is cool with that because he's ready for anyone. As for Impact Wrestling, he took the title from their Hall of Famer, so he's ready for anyone else. Gunn isn't a bad promo and I can see his star power, at least on this level.

King's Ransom (the winners of the Nightmare Cup tournament, two guys with a great look) want their Tag Team Title shot against the War Kings RIGHT NOW so here are the champs (Crimson/Jax Dane). However, they want to be defending the titles at the Impact show. After some insults from the champs, Ransom (Leonis Khan and Maximus Khan) jump the two of them and the match is on.

Tag Team Titles: King's Ransom vs. War Kings

The War Kings are defending and wrestling in street clothes. Maximus slips out of Dane's fireman's carry and it's quickly off to Leonis for a splash in the corner. A double hiptoss keeps Crimson in trouble and a rollup gives Leonis two. It's back to the bigger Dane, who shoves both challengers away without much effort. Leonis gets two off a crossbody as everything breaks down. The referee gets crushed by a Stinger Splash and

the King's Landing (a double spinebuster) plants Crimson. Another referee comes in after a fifteen second cover to count two. Dane comes in with a belt shot to the head for the DQ at 4:12.

Rating: C-. Now this was more like it with two teams who looked like professional wrestlers. The War Kings are established names (Dane is a former NWA World Champion) and the King's Ransom have a great look (almost like muscular Usos). I could see the latter team going somewhere with some more polish, and that's exactly the point of a place like this.

Sinn Bodhi (you might remember him as Kizarny) can't wait to be back. This was another creepy visual as his face is inside a floating TV screen which keeps moving around with a windup monkey and another creepy clown in the background. OVW knows how to do the evil stuff well.

We look back at Snow setting up the gauntlet match.

TV Title: Gauntlet Match

Justin Smooth is defending and it's Dave Low (the other rapper from earlier tonight) in first and Zo in second. The huge Zo misses a charge into the corner but shrugs off a kick to the face. David dives off the top but gets caught in a World's Strongest Slam. A Zo Bomb (Vader Bomb) gets rid of David at 39 seconds.

Shiloh Jonze is in third and charges right into a shoulder block. Zo clotheslines him out to the floor and Big D. (the rappers' friend, a big man in a black wig) gets on the apron, only to have Zo take the wig away. That means some hairy dancing, followed by rapid fire elbows in the corner. Low offers a distraction so Big D. can come in...and get knocked outside again. Jonze charges into Zo's hips in the corner and another Zo Bomb gets rid of him at 2:34.

Melvin Maximus is in fourth and has the muscles to match up with Zo. The lockup doesn't go to either of them so Zo spinwheel kicks him down. It's too early for the Zo Bomb though and Melvin electric chairs him down for the elimination at 4:41. Adam Revolver, who has been having issues with Maximus, is in fifth as we take a break. Back with Melvin punching his way out of a Figure Four so Adam's manager Shannon the Dude comes in for

a failed interference attempt. They brawl on the floor where, in a classic booking move, Shannon grabs Melvin's foot from underneath the ring so Adam advances by countout at 8:03.

Smooth is in sixth and hits a quick flapjack to take over in a hurry. Revolver slaps on a sleeper but gets driven into the corner in a hurry. What looked to be a bicycle kick (or maybe a running knee to the chest) gets rid of Revolver at 9:30. Drew Hernandez is in seventh but before anything can start, Colton Cage and Dustin Jackson fight their way to ringside. Jackson's girlfriend Dani comes to the barricade to yell at them to cut it out as Smooth and Hernandez stand around and watch.

Dani comes over the barricade and Colton accidentally knocks her down. Drew FINALLY remembers that he's in a title match and jumps Smooth from behind...with a low blow for the DQ at 12:23. Another low blow connects and it's Cash Flo in eighth to complete the field. Flo chops away on the downed Smooth with a seated senton busting up the ribs. A release German suplex has Smooth in more trouble so Flo goes up and dives (despite Smooth being in the opposite corner) into Street Justice (now clearly a bicycle kick) to retain Smooth's title at 15:18.

Rating: D+. I'm really not sure what the point is in a gauntlet match unless it's a way to get this many people onto the show at once. The wrestling wasn't anything great but some of the people stood out more than others, with Smooth having a great look but clearly in need of a lot of ring time. Smooth retaining is fine, though I'm not sure how many weeks in a row something like this is going to work.

Overall Rating: D+. This was up and down to put it mildly, with some people looking like they have potential to go somewhere with more seasoning and some looking like low level indy talent who have no business being out of a training class. That being said, I had a good time with some of what happened here and kind of want to keep going with the show. There's enough stuff to keep my interest and the stories are certainly easy to follow. Hopefully the next two weeks hold up a bit better, but what we got here was acceptable.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the

paperback edition of KB's Complete 2000 Monday Nitro and Thunder Reviews Part 1 (also available as an e-book) from Amazon. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2019/02/22/new-book-kbs-monday-nitro-thunder-reviews-volume-vii-january-june-2000/>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>