

Rampage – September 1, 2023: There Are Worse Choices

Rampage

Date: September 1, 2023

Location: Now Arena, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Excalibur, Tony Schiavone, Chris Jericho

It's the go home Rampage before All Out and since this is AEW, it's time for a tag team battle royal because they love those things around here. In this case we need to crown new #1 contenders for the Ring Of Honor Tag Team Titles as MJF and Adam Cole need first challengers. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Tag Team Battle Royal

Aussie Open, Butcher and the Blade, Outrunners, Best Friends, The Righteous, Dark Order, Gates Of Agony, Hardys, Wingmen, Darius Martin/Action Andretti

Both members have to be eliminated and the winners get an ROH Tag Team Title shot at All Out. The Aussies chill on the floor to start and Butcher double clotheslines the Outrunners. Said Outrunners are out in a hurry and we get the hoss fight between Butcher and the Blade and the Gates. Andretti is sent outside (doesn't seem to be out) and gets sent into the barricade by the Aussies. Kaun (not out either) gets the same treatment and Chuck Taylor tosses Ryan Nemeth.

Peter Avalon gets beaten up by a bunch of people and then tossed to eliminated the Wingmen as well. The Friends get into a Hug/DELETE off with the Hardys and the rest of the battle royal stops to watch. Thankfully they go after all four of them as people go to the floor to keep up the fight outside. The Aussies get inside and toss Kaun but Toa gets Blade out.

Fletcher kicks Toa out to eliminate the Gates and we take a break.

Back with Butcher firing of shots to the Righteous but getting kicked in the head but Andretti. The Righteous double team Butcher out as another team is gone. Jeff dives at Vincent for an elimination but Vincent helps get rid of Matt. The Dark Order toss Jeff (that's an upset) and the Hardys are gone. Dutch gets kicked out to eliminate the Righteous as the ring is clearing out.

We're down to the Best Friends, the Order, the Aussies and Andretti/Martin. The Aussies knock Andretti off the top for a NASTY crash into the barricade to get rid of him and Reynolds is tossed too (and comes up holding his knee). Taylor is tossed as well, leaving us with Silver, Beretta, and the Aussies. Silver is fine with standing back and letting Beretta go after both of them before adding a superkick to put Beretta down as well.

Beretta breaks up the Aussie Arrow though and low bridges Fletcher out to get us down to three (as Reynolds is still at ringside, holding his knee). Silver is sent to the apron and Reynolds makes a save (knee seems fine), leaving Beretta to pull Reynolds out. That leaves Silver to run in and knock Beretta out for the win at 11:39.

Rating: C. This was kind of a weird match as the Order came out of nowhere to win, with only the Aussies (and maybe the Best Friends) feeling like viable options at the end. The Kingdom feels like the next real opponents for MJF and Cole so not having them in here makes a bit more sense, especially if they weren't getting the All Out title shot. Not a terrible match, but the final options weren't the most inspiring choices.

Post break commentary talks about the match but here are the Aussies to get in a fight with Jericho. Sammy Guevara (with

baseball bat) comes out for the save.

We get a video on Mike Santana, starting back with his debut along with Ortiz years ago. Shortly after his debut, his father passed away and everything started crashing down in front of him. Two and a half years later, he got into the Blood And Guts match and wrecked his knee, putting him on the shelf for over a year. Now he has a story to tell. No significant reference to Ortiz here so the team might be over again.

Nick Wayne/El Hijo del Vikingo vs. Kip Sabian/Gringo Loco

Penelope Ford is here with Sabian and Loco. Vikingo and Loco go to the mat to start before coming to their senses and popping up for the flips. Vikingo kicks him in the ribs and popping up for an ankle scissors. Loco sticks the landing so Vikingo kicks him in the back of the knee and hands it off to Wayne. Sabian is in as well and gets caught with a jumping elbow but Ford offers a quick distraction. That lets Sabian take Wayne outside for an Arabian moonsault as we take a break.

Back with Loco's springboard moonsault hitting raised knees, allowing Vikingo to come back in and clean house. With Loco in the corner, Vikingo jumps from an opposite post to the rope in between them into a dropkick to the back (geez). Vikingo pulls Loco up top for a springboard poisonrana and Wayne's World hits Sabian. That leaves Vikingo to hit the 630 on Loco for the pin at 8:25.

Rating: B-. This was a way to get Vikingo out there to do his flips while giving Wayne a win. That worked out just fine, even if it was against one of the most random teams you're going to find. Wayne knows how to do the gymnastics and the flips, but if that's all he can do, he's going to get lost in the shuffle around here very quickly.

QTV is now minus QT Marshall, who is defending the AAA Latin

American Title but has let Johnny TV in charge. We see Marshall with the title before they talk various All In related news. Then TV throws his coffee at Harley Cameron by mistake before promising big changes around here. QTV minus QT could be a lot better.

Hangman Page vs. Bryan Keith

Keith is a bounty hunter, though I wasn't aware there was a bounty on Page's head. Page starts fast and knocks him into the corner, setting up a running elbow. Keith gets in an elbow of his own but Page blasts him with a clothesline. Back up and Keith hits a suplex but Page drops him again with the fall away slam. Page takes a bit too long to throw out his elbow pad so Keith gets in a shot to the face. Not that it matters as the Buckshot Lariat finishes for Page at 3:41.

Rating: C. Just a step above a squash here but it's nice to see Page doing something. Even though he was at All In with a pretty prominent match, he doesn't feel like someone who has been doing much of anything special recently. Beating Keith isn't going to turn everything around, but it's better than sitting around doing nothing.

Angelo Parker, Matt Menard and Daniel Garcia are fired up about their Trios Titles shot and Garcia starts dancing at Renee Paquette, who absolutely cannot keep a straight face.

We get a sitdown interview with Roderick Strong who won't explain what Adam Cole did to start all of this. He'll tell his own story on his own time on his own day. Then he walks out, with the Kingdom joining him.

Here's what's coming on various shows.

Skye Blue/Willow Nightingale vs. Anna Jay/Taya Valkyrie

The hometown Blue is in Chicago flag inspired gear. Anna ducks Nightingale to start but gets kicked in the face and chopped

in the chest. That's enough to bring Taya in, with Nightingale quickly grabbing a suplex. Blue comes in for a double snapmare and a double kick to the head for two. A Backstabber cuts Nightingale off though and we take a break.

Back with Nightingale and Taya trading kicks to the head, allowing the double tag. Blue hits a running knee against the ropes to drop Jay and a kick to the head makes it worse. Taya spears Blue down but gets Pounced by Nightingale. A superkick sends Nightingale to the floor but Anna superkicks Taya by mistake. Code Blue finishes Anna at 8:32.

Rating: C+. This match actually got a bit of time, even if some of it was spent in the break, as usual. Putting Blue out there looking like the Chicago flag is about as good of a way to get the crowd cheering her as there is and it was a fine way to have a main event. Nightingale not losing again makes things even better.

Post match Taya jumps Blue but Nightingale chases her off to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This show continues to be watchable at worst and mostly unnecessary viewing more often than not. The Dark Order earning a title shot at the secondary titles is the big drawing card of this show and that's not exactly enough to make me want to see it most weeks. Collision has made this show a lot less important, but for an hour of wrestling television, there are worse options you could choose.

Results

Dark Order won a tag team battle royal last eliminating the Best Friends

El Hijo del Vikingo/Nick Wayne b. Kip Sabian/Gringo Loco – 630 to Loco

Hangman Page b. Brian Keith – Buckshot Lariat

Willow Nightingale/Skye Blue b. Anna Jay/Taya Valkyrie – Code Blue to Jay

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Ring Of Honor – August 31, 2023: How I Like It

Ring Of Honor

Date: August 31, 2023

Location: Bridgestone Arena, Nashville, Tennessee/Rupp Arena, Lexington, Kentucky

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Caprice Coleman

We're still doing the split shows here, which should mean that things are a bit shorter again this week. It's probably going to be the last time that is the case for the time being but I'll take it while I can. The best story continues to be Athena/Billie Starkz and that should be fun again this week. Let's get to it.

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

I was in the arena for the Lexington portions of the show,

about ten rows back in the first section off the floor with the stage on my right.

Opening sequence.

New Japan Pro Wrestling TV Title: Zack Sabre Jr. vs. Metalik

Metalik is challenging. They go to the mat to start with Sabre easily flipping out of a wristlock and taking him to the mat for the arm cranking. A surfboard doesn't work for Sabre as Metalik flips over and we get a standoff. Metalik pops up for a springboard spinning crossbody into a rope walk hurricanrana. Sabre isn't having that and stays on the arm, including a stomp ala Shayna Baszler.

With that broken up, Metalik hits the reverse Sling Blade to send Sabre outside, meaning the big running flip dive can connect. A rope walk high crossbody gives Metalik two back inside but Sabre quickly pulls him into the octopus. Metalik makes the rope and snaps off a tornado DDT before they trade rollups for two each. Back up and the rope walk elbow is pulled into a double arm crank to retain Sabre's title at 8:28.

Rating: B-. Sometimes you need to have two talented people out there doing their thing and that is what we got here. Metalik was doing his high flying stuff while Sabre was getting to pull people into his holds, which are always going to work. When Sabre is on his game, he is still one of the most entertaining people you will see in wrestling and he was feeling it well enough here.

Cole Karter isn't overly pleased with Griff Garrison getting a match but gets Maria Kanellis-Bennett to come to the ring with him.

Josh Woods vs. John Walters

Woods has Mark Sterling with him and he takes Walters down to

the mat without much effort. Walters reverses into an armdrag but Woods pulls him out of the air and starts forearming away at the chest. Some rollups give Walters three combined but Woods pulls him into the Gorilla Lock for the win at 2:32.

Workhorsesmen/Lee Moriarty vs. Invictus Khash/Lord Crewe/Beef

Yes Beef and yes the fans are rather into him. Invictus gets kneed in the back to start so it's off to Crewe. A rollup doesn't work for Crewe as Drake comes in to run him over. Moriarty suplexes him for two but Crewe kicks his way to freedom. Beef comes in but misses a top rope splash, allowing Drake to hit a moonsault for the pin at 4:21.

Rating: C. Nothing much to see here, other than the incredibly strange visual of the Workhorsesmen actually winning a match for a change. I'm not sure how far the team is going to go around here, but they have to get a win somewhere to start. If that has to involve pounding Beef and having him for dinner (I had to) so be it.

Cole Karter vs. Dustin Jackson

Maria Kanellis-Bennett is here with Karter. Jackson hits a charge into the corner to start but Karter hits a dropkick to easily take over. A clothesline out of the corner drops Jackson again and Eye Of The Beholder finishes Jackson at 1:24.

Emi Sakura vs. Alice Crowley

Sakura avoids a right hand to start but gets caught with a running dropkick. Crowley gets knocked down but she avoids a Vader Bomb. A fisherman's suplex gives Crowley two, only to get pulled down with a faceplant. Sakura hits a running crossbody in the corner and a rather delayed butterfly backbreaker finishes Crowley off at 3:13.

Rating: C. Sakura is someone who has been around AEW for a

long time now but she has never really broken through to the top of the division. I'm not sure if this is going to be a step in that direction but she is talented enough to be worth a look at whatever she is doing. Just a squash here, though Crowley got in some offense.

Josh Woods is happy with the challengers that Mark Sterling has been getting him and they are going to prove he is the face of the Pure division.

Outrunners vs. Spanish Announce Project

Magnum takes Serpentico into the corner for a slap but Serpentico cranks on the arm to take over. The Project starts taking over on said arm and Serpentico hits a basement superkick. Floyd comes in for a running knee, complete with a bit of a spin first. Serpentico headscissors his way out of the corner and the hot tag brings in Angelico to clean house. Everything breaks down and Serpentico dives onto Floyd. That leaves Angelico to tie up Magnum in an arm trap half crab for the tap at 4:50.

Rating: C+. As weird as it is to see the Project actually getting a win, there is something to the Outrunners that is so entertaining. The team embraces the goofiness and that makes them stand off. They know exactly what they're doing and while they're just a joke team, it works well enough and that's all it needs to do.

Marina Shafir vs. Angelica Risk

Risk tries some grappling to start and is quickly planted down. A choke keeps Risk in trouble and Shafir kicks her down. Some judo throws keep Risk in trouble but she's back up with some rights and lefts. Shafir plants her with a slam and grabs a triangle choke for the win at 2:34.

Six Man Tag Team Titles: Mogul Embassy vs. Action Andretti/Lee Johnson/Darius Martin

The Embassy, with Prince Nana, is defending and jump the challengers to start fast. Martin hurricanranas his way out of Cage's powerbomb though and a tornado DDT is enough for the tag off to Johnson. Kaun offers a distraction though and Cage grabs a neckbreaker out of the corner. The Gates unload on Johnson in the corner and some whips into various other corners make it even worse. The nerve hold goes on for a bit until Johnson gets smart with a stomp to the foot.

Toa misses a charge into the corner though and the hot tag brings in Andretti to pick up the pace. The Spanish Fly gets two on Kaun, followed by Andretti and Martin hitting stereo dives. A split legged moonsault gives Andretti two but Toa runs Johnson over with a crossbody. Everything breaks down and Johnson hits a frog splash for two before a triple superkick drops Nana. Not that it matters as Johnson is tossed into a sitout powerbomb to give Cage the pin to retain at 9:34.

Rating: B-. Power vs. speed is something that has worked forever in wrestling and it worked again here, with the two teams working together well enough for a good main event. That being said, the Embassy is so far beyond the point where they need to drop the titles that the already limited value the titles had is almost long gone.

Overall Rating: C+. This show was under an hour and oh how much better than made things. It didn't feel like anything was there to pad out the show and while there wasn't much in the way of storyline advancement, I also wasn't an hour in and wondering how much more there could possibly be. Not a great show, but it's what Ring Of Honor should be, which is why it's likely going to be completely different next week.

Results

Zack Sabre Jr. b. Metalik – Double arm crank

Josh Woods b. John Walters – Gorilla Lock

Workhorsemen/Lee Moriarty b. Invictus Khash/Lord Crewe/Bee – Moonsault to Beef

Cole Karter b. Dustin Jackson – Eye Of The Beholder
Emi Sakura b. Alice Crowley – Butterfly backbreaker
Spanish Announce Project b. Outrunners – Arm trap half crab to
Magnum
Marina Shafir b. Angelic Risk – Triangle choke
Mogul Embassy b. Lee Johnson/Action Andretti/Darius Martin –
Sitout powerbomb to Johnson

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Rampage – August 11, 2023: Fight Darby Fight

Rampage

Date: August 11, 2023

Location: Nationwide Arena, Columbus, Ohio

Commentators: Excalibur, Chris Jericho, Tony Schiavone

All In is almost just around the corner and thankfully things
have started to come together. With so much left to be set up,

there are still a few things that need to be done. That isn't likely going to be the case here but at least we should be in for a bit of push towards some announced matches. Let's get to it.

[Here is Dynamite if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Brian Cage vs. Darby Allin

Prince Nana is here with Cage. Allin dropkicks him into the corner to start and hits the suicide dive on the floor. Cage is right back with a hard toss into the barricade and lifts him up in a suplex...while walking up the steps to toss Allin inside. Allin gets sent hard into the corner and then does it again for a bonus.

They go back to the floor, where Allin misses a charge into the steps. Allin grabs a choke but gets sent crashing through the ringside table for a nasty landing. Back in and Allin gets sent into the corner again as we take a break. We come back with Allin hits a reverse tornado DDT for two and the flipping Stunner rocks Cage again. A powerbomb into a sitout powerbomb gives Cage two but Allin puts him down on the apron.

The Coffin Drop onto Cage on the apron leaves both of them down on the floor, followed by a Code Red for two back inside. Cage knocks him off the top though and the F10 gives us an insane spinning crash from Allin. They go up top where Allin turns a super Samoan drop into a super crucifix bomb for two. Cage tries another F10 but Allin reverses into a small package for the pin at 10:46.

Rating: B. I was getting into this one at the end, with the best thing here being that Cage didn't do a bunch of flying stuff. Instead Cage stuck with his power game, which worked well against an opponent like Allin. Rather good opener here, as Allin's battle against the Mogul Embassy continues.

Post match Luchasaurus comes in to go after Allin with a reverse chokeslam (I miss Eli Cottonwood).

Britt Baker is ready to face Bunny next week, even though they're friends. She wants the title back more though and it's time to be a bully next week.

Eddie Kingston is still in the G1 Climax Tournament and the wrestlers involved are on a different level. He wants to defend his NJPW Strong Openweight Title in AEW. Why he would be allowed back after saying "yeah New Japan is better than AEW" isn't clear.

International Title: Johnny TV vs. Orange Cassidy

TV is challenging and Harley Cameron sings him to the ring, along with the rest of QTV. Cassidy starts with an armdrag (with hands in pockets) and a dropkick out to the floor, leaving TV rather annoyed. Cameron offers a distraction but the referee catches the rest of QTV trying to interfere. That means they're all gone (even Cassidy approves) but here is Wheeler Yuta for a distraction. TV scores with the Flying Chuck for two and we take a break.

Back with Yuta on commentary (who thankfully points out that Cassidy mentored Yuta) as TV hits a knee to tie Cassidy up in the ropes. A neckbreaker takes Cassidy down but TV misses the Superstation (Starship Pain) so they go up top, with a super Spanish Fly broken up. Cassidy hits the tornado DDT into the Orange Punch. The Beach Break retains the title at 9:34.

Rating: C+. This was a better title win for Cassidy, as he felt like he beat someone with more value. Beating a bunch of challengers is fine, but at some point you need to beat a more established name. TV might not be what he was before, but he's a bigger star than some (not all) of the people Cassidy has retained against. Good match too and I liked it more than I was expecting.

Post match Yuta teases coming to the ring and Cassidy tells him to do it faster. Cue the Blackpool Combat Club to surround the ring, but Yuta says hold on. Yuta wants the International Title next week instead.

Video on the Ring Of Honor Tag Team Titles.

Aussie Open vs. Outrunners

The Aussies' Ring Of Honor Tag Team Titles aren't on the line. House is cleaned before the bell and the Aussies ram them together on the floor. Back in and the double standing clothesline sets up Coriolis to finish Floyd at 2:11. Well that worked.

Post match the Aussies say they don't like England but they're in for the Zero Hour title defense against MJF/Adam Cole at All In.

Jeff Jarrett announces a cross promotional match on Dynamite between Jeff Jarrett and Jeff Hardy...in a Texas Chainsaw Massacre deathmatch? I get that it's a video game tie in, but that's a weird pairing to choose.

Video on the Women's Title four way at All In which is being set up with this rather unnecessary tournament.

Here's what's coming on various shows.

Women's Title #1 Tournament First Round: Saraya vs. Skye Blue

The Outcasts are here with Saraya. They trade rollups to start until Blue hits a crossbody for two. Blue sends her outside and kicks Toni Storm in the chest but gets pulled down by Saraya. We take a break and come back with Blue trying to fight out of a chinlock and getting pulled back down by the hair.

Skyfall is broken up so Blue settles for a rollup for two. A superkick gives Saraya two and then ties up the legs. Blue

finally makes the rope and grabs Code Blue but Storm has the referee. Ruby Soho gets in the spray paint and Saraya hits whatever she used to call the Rampaige (sounded like Excalibur called it Goodnight) for the pin at 9:22.

Rating: C. Not too bad here but the spray paint finish is getting old fast. Saraya going on to All In in England makes perfect sense but it was nice to have her facing Blue, who is someone you could see moving on as well. That's a smart bonus to have and it worked well enough here. Just find a different way for Saraya, or any of the Outcasts, to win.

The beatdown on Blue ends the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The opener was good but the rest of the show didn't exactly scream interesting. Cassidy vs. Yuta being set up is a good thing but other than that, it was just supplementing things that were already there. That being said, it's an hour long show that absolutely flew by so it's hard to get too mad. There is enough going on with AEW at the moment so not dragging it down with this show is a good thing.

Results

Darby Allin b. Brain Cage – Small package

Orange Cassidy b. Johnny TV – Beach Break

Aussie Open b. Outrunners – Coriolis to Floyd

Saraya b. Skye Blue – Goodnight

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