

All Out 2023 Preview

Well we're back on pay per view about a week after the last one and that might not be the best idea. The build to All Out, the full week that we've had for it, has been a bit lacking, as AEW does not seem to have the most steam coming out of All In. Some of that can be attributed to the CM Punk debacle, but I'm not sure if that is going to be enough to make the show work. There is some potential in the card though and that is a good sign. Let's get to it.

Zero Hour: Athena/Mercedes Martinez/Diamante vs. Hikaru Shida/Willow Nightingale/Skye Blue

This is some weird ROH vs. AEW style match and that is kind of indicative of how the women's division has been going as of late. Thankfully the Outcasts are not involved in this one and we should be able to get some focus on some stars who could use the attention. Athena has been on fire in ROH and Martinez can work well with anyone. Throw in Shida and Nightingale and this has some potential.

I'll go with Blue and company though, as she feels like the definition of someone in this match for the hometown pop. Blue can handle herself well enough in the ring, but the fact that she was in Chicago themed gear on Rampage told me all I needed to know about this one. We should be in for a fun opener, but odds are it gets about eight minutes, like so many women's matches these days.

Zero Hour: Trios Titles: Acclaimed/Billy Gunn(c) vs. Jeff Jarrett/Jay Lethal/Satnam Singh

Normally the titles would be enough to drive the interest here but this is almost all about Dennis Rodman being in the champs' corner. That's another one pretty much entirely for the Chicago crowd and again, that isn't a terrible idea. Rodman is going to stand in the corner for most of the match,

put a cigar in his mouth, and probably punch Sonjay Dutt. Other than that though, we do have some titles on the line.

In what might be the easiest pick of the night, there is almost no chance of the titles changing hands here so we'll go with the champs retaining. They just won the titles a week ago and there is no reason to believe that they are going to lose here. Just let the champs get another title victory and move on to whomever is next, though without Rodman after this one time.

Zero Hour: Over The Budget Battle Royal

This is a battle royal with no announced entrants, but the winner gets to make a \$50,000 donation to the charity of their choice. That is the kind of thing that could make for quite the mess behind the scenes as AEW gets to pick a charity. Either that or we have the wrestlers all pick the same charity without letting it be known in advance. Now that being said, this is going to be a tricky one to pull off, as we don't know who is actually in the ting.

Since the other two matches on Zero Hour have Chicago connections, and given the situation that took place this year, I'll go with Colt Cabana to win the thing, both as a friendly Chicago deal and a big farewell to CM Punk. This is a match that pretty much can't be previewed due to the whole WE DON'T KNOW WHO IS IN IT, but at least the charity stuff is a nice prize for a change.

TNT Title: Kris Statlander(c) vs. Ruby Soho

Here we have a match that isn't likely to get much time but could do well for a match that gives the show a chance to breathe. Statlander has been built up rather well since winning the title and has been racking up wins, but that is going to have to end at some point. At the same time, Soho has to actually win something at some point, though I'm not sure if that is going to take place here.

I'll go with Statlander retaining the title here, though after a rather good match. Soho is someone who can work with just about anyone and should be able to have a solid back and forth match with Statlander. At the end of the day though, the Outcasts having both titles doesn't seem like the best idea so we'll go with Statlander retaining, with the champ getting another nice win.

Eddie Kingston/Katsuyori Shibata vs. Claudio Castagnoli/Wheeler Yuta

This is a match that was added to the card without much fanfare and I'm not sure how good of a situation that is going to be. Kingston vs. Castagnoli has been going on for most of the last five months and at some point, Kingston almost has to win the Ring Of Honor World Title. For now though, we're stuck here with another tag match, which is likely to help set up Yuta for another Pure Rules Title shot. That's not the most interesting thing, but here we are anyway.

I'll take Kingston/Shibata for the win here, as there is really not much of a reason for them to lose. Since the Pure Rules Title shots are pretty much handed out, Kingston getting a pin, likely over Yuta, will keep the feud going. At the very least, we should be on the way to Final Battle for Kingston vs. Castagnoli, but since ROH takes it sweet time, we have to get through something like this on the way there. Kingston and Shibata win here.

Ring Of Honor TV Title: Samoa Joe(c) vs. Shane Taylor

So this is taking place on the AEW pay per view for reasons I do not fathom whatsoever. Taylor has wrestled two matches ever in AEW (both on Dark) and is basically a stranger unless you watch ROH. That doesn't make for the most thrilling match, though Taylor did win a tournament to get the title shot. We have the potential for a heck of a hoss fight here, and if that is the case, we'll be good to go.

There is no reason or Taylor to get the title back here so I'll take Joe to retain. Joe has held the title for over a year at this point and could drop it at any time without losing any status, but I don't think I can picture Taylor being the one to take the title from him. These guys are going to beat the fire out of each other and that should be a lot of fun, but Taylor doesn't get the title.

Bryan Danielson vs. Ricky Starks

This is a strap match as the American Dragon is stepping in for Ricky The Dragon Steamboat after a slightly clever tricky contract signing. In this case, Danielson's return feels like something of a way to calm the fans down after Punk was fired and he might be about as good of an option as there was. The strap thing has kind of been Starks' thing in recent weeks, so at least there is an idea here.

This one could go either way, but I think I'll go with Danielson winning, as he might become the face of Collision in a hurry. With nothing Blackpool Combat Club related during his Collision return, there is a chance that he is going to be doing something else. For now though, at least he is getting to be in a big match and while Starks needs the win (and I'm not convinced Big Bill won't help him get it), losing to a returning Danielson is hardly some terrible result.

Ring Of Honor Tag Team Titles: Adam Cole/MJF(c) vs. Dark Order

Yes the Dark Order is getting a title shot on pay per view and I'm still not entirely sure why. In theory this is going to be followed by a Cole/MJF vs. the Kingdom showdown, though it wouldn't have to be for the titles. The Dark Order has been needing some kind of a big win seemingly for years now and they at least have a chance at one here, though that might be a long shot at best.

I don't see a reason for the champs to drop the titles here so I'll go with MJF and Cole retaining. They already have

something set up with the Kingdom and taking the titles from them here would take away a big aspect of their story. Also, at the end of the day, it's hard to imagine the Dark Order actually winning anything that mattered, so we'll go with the titles being retained.

Miro vs. Powerhouse Hobbs

This is one of the matches where what you see is what you get. You know what you are going to see from these two monsters hitting each other rather hard and that should make for a fun match. They've been out there brawling already and just the taste was fun, so letting us get the full version should be even more fun as it can go even longer than the first previews.

I could see either of them going over here, but Miro seems like he would be hurt more by a loss than Hobbs so I'll take the former. While Hobbs has lost multiple times already and doesn't need to again, a loss from Miro would seem to be quite the blow. What matters here is just having two monsters slugging away at each other and that should work out well. Miro wins though, but it's a coin flip.

Bullet Club Gold vs. FTR/Young Bucks

This isn't exactly a strong follow up to FTR vs. The Bucks at All In but if we're not getting a title match, I guess this is about as good as we can have. There is a history between the Club and FTR and I could go for another title showdown between them, but I'm not sure if that is enough to carry an eight man tag. It could go either way, though the Bucks and FTR's relationship is rocky at best and that could be a problem.

I'll go with the Club winning here, as they should be in for another Tag Team Title shot to complete the trilogy. White and Robinson are a heck of a team and the Gunns are fine enough on their own. That should be enough to overcome FTR and the Bucks, who don't really have anywhere to go if they win. The

Club wins here, after things break down and everyone gets to go nuts.

TNT Title: Luchasaurus(c) vs. Darby Allin

This has been one of the most entertaining stories in AEW in recent months, as Christian Cage has been tearing it up as the delusional mastermind who thinks he is the real champion. Luchasaurus has barely been a factor as Cage's disdain for all things dead fathers is rather entertaining. Allin just wants the title back because he had it before, and now we get quite the showdown.

As much as I could see Allin winning the title, I want Cage to keep up his delusions of grandeur and those can't happen as well without the title. At some point Luchasaurus is going to snap and destroy Cage, but for now, Luchasaurus manages to retain the title, perhaps with Allin's friend Nick Wayne turning on him. This could go either way, but hopefully it ends with Cage holding the title again.

Kenny Omega vs. Konosuke Takeshita

The more I see of Takeshita, the more talent he clearly has. He needs a big win over a top name and Omega would fit that description, but I'm not sure I can imagine him actually beating someone as big as Omega. Takeshita already pinned him last weekend in a tag match, but there is a fine line between that and actually pinning him in a singles match, clean or not.

I'll go with Takeshita winning here, as I don't think we're far enough into the story for Omega to get his big win. With Don Callis out there, Takeshita can get the win off some straight up cheating or maybe just a distraction. Either way, we should be in for one of the bigger matches on the show here and there is even a chance that this headlines the show, despite Callis taking the life out of anything he touches.

International Title: Orange Cassidy(c) vs. Jon Moxley

This has been treated as the biggest match on the show and it has the best chance of headlining the event. Cassidy has held the title for a LONG time now and it is time to either have him lose the thing or get the biggest win of his career over one of the biggest stars AEW has ever seen. This could go either way and they have been treating it as something serious, so some doors are certainly open here.

I'm torn on this one but I'll go with Cassidy winning. While there is a grand total of no reason for him to keep the title, it would do a lot of damage to him if he loses the belt in his first match against a top challenger. Cassidy feels like someone AEW wants to move up to the next level, but that takes a big hit if he loses here. I could be entirely wrong and Moxley winning would make sense, but if AEW wants Cassidy to go a lot higher, he has to win here.

Overall Thoughts

This show does not feel like the best in the world and I'm not sure how much of a spark it is going to have. Now the good thing about that is the talent is there to make it work, even if a thirteen match card is still rather long. If the big matches can deliver and nothing is too bad, we could be in for a show that gets by its lackluster build. That is where AEW tends to shine, and maybe they can make it work again.

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