

Ring of Honor TV – April 13, 2016: If You Build It, The Fans Will Stay Through The Taping

Ring of Honor

Date: April 13, 2016

Location: Sam's Town Hotel and Gambling Hall, Las Vegas, Nevada

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, Mr. Wrestling 3

It's a very big show this week with the Tag Team Titles on the line, a major star from New Japan making an appearance and a Fight Without Honor for the first time ever on ROH TV. I know these staggered shows get annoying but they've actually got a big card here and that's a rare sight on an hour long TV show. Let's get to it.

Tag Team Titles: War Machine vs. Roppangi Vice

Vice (Trent Barreta and Rocky Romero) is challenging and knocks Hansen and Rowe off the apron before the bell. Rowe says ring the bell but gets beaten down in the corner to start. A standing moonsault doesn't have much effect though and it's Hansen back in for rights and lefts of his own. Romero is kicked out to the floor as Wrestling 3 tells stories of "joysting" (not jousting but joysting), whatever that is.

We take a break and come back with Hansen taking Rowe's shotgun knees by mistake, followed by Romero kicking Rowe in the face. A quick Superman punch puts Romero down but Trent dropkicks both champs down to save his partner in a nice spot. Two double knees to the face drops Hansen but War Machine gets tired of these pests and lifts them up for powerbombs, only to slam the challengers into each other. That's a new one. The Path of Resistance is broken up though as Romero hurricanranas Hansen down. A flip dive is countered into an apron bomb though and Fallout puts Romero away at 9:56.

Rating: C+. This was fine despite me not being a big fan of Barreta and Romero. There wasn't much of a surprise here as they had been setting up the Briscoes challenging for the titles over the last few weeks but at least we had something other than a squash to get us there. Nice little match here.

Prince Nana brings out Donovan Dijak, in a Jay Lethal shirt, for something to say. Let's get right to it with the envelopes: you're not going to find out because you don't need to know. Nana talks about how Dijak is enlightened while Donovan talks about being tired of spending the last year guarding Jay Lethal. This brings out Lethal for a brawl that security has to break up.

Dalton Castle says his goal is different again tonight because this time he wants to hurt Silas Young.

ACH vs. Kenny Omega

Omega, whose Intercontinental Title isn't on the line here, is the head of the Bullet Club in New Japan and he has some awesome entrance music. Kenny is called the Cleaner so of course he comes out with a broom, along with the Young Bucks. As expected, the fans are almost entirely behind Omega.

Feeling out process to start with ACH doing all his flips as the announcers explain the latest issues in New Japan. An elbow to the head drops Omega and a dropkick puts him out on the floor. Naturally the numbers become an issue though as Omega distracts the referee, allowing a superkick to put ACH down. In a funny bit, Matt throws out a banana peel to offer an explanation.

We take a break (and get a promo from Adam Cole about how he created the Kingdom, meaning Matt Taven has no right to reform the team) and come back with ACH holding Omega in a headlock, only to be countered into what looked like a one man More Bang For Your Buck. That goes nowhere and ACH gets up a boot in the corner, followed by another kick to the face to put Omega on the floor.

The Jordan dive takes out the Bucks and Omega to a nice reaction as it's

not all Omega fans for a bit of a surprise. Back in and a top rope double stomp to the back gets two on Kenny and a brainbuster is good for the same. A 450 misses though and Omega gets in a hard knee to the ribs to take over. ACH comes back again and gets in a Stunner, giving us a Rock style sell job. The Midnight Star misses though and the One Winged Angel (electric chair into a forward piledriver) puts ACH away at 13:31.

Rating: B. I'm not a fan of ACH but this was pretty easily his best Ring of Honor match to date. I've heard a lot of great things about Omega over the last few months and he was definitely entertaining here but not quite as great as he's been made out to be. I can go for ACH far more easily if he's acting like a wrestler instead of a guy doing scripted out flips.

Dalton Castle vs. Silas Young

Fight Without Honor, basically meaning street fight. Castle has the Boys with him but they go to the back before he hits the ring. That's the right idea for something like this. The fans are behind Castle as he clotheslines Silas to the floor while the streamers are still all over the ring. A suicide dive takes Young out again but Castle misses a running knee on the apron and gets shoved out to the floor. This hasn't gotten violent yet but you can feel a different vibe.

Back up and Castle chops the post by mistake to give Young his first target. Castle tries another chop but fakes Young out and sends him into the barricade for a smart move. We take a break and come back with Young setting up a table on the floor to go with the ladder already in the ring. Neither of those are good enough for him though as he powerbombs Castle onto two open chairs instead.

A slingshot elbow gets two on Dalton and it's time for some simple choking. For some reason Young lets him loose though and tries his slingshot moonsault but only hits ladder. They slug it out from their knees and then their feet with Castle getting the better of it until Young grabs a cutter for two. Misery gets the same so it's time for a trashcan lid and some yelling on the mic.

Silas wishes the Boys were out here to see this beating so here they come, only to have one of them jump on Young's back. That ticks Castle

off all over again but he misses a running knee to send him outside. The Boys take a suicide dive to protect Dalton, who slides into the ring for a hurricanrana to send Young onto the floor again.

Back in and the Bang A Rang is countered so Dalton throws him over the top and down through the table for a YOU JUST KILLED HIM chant. Somehow that only gets two, followed by Silas hitting him low for the same. Not that it matters as the Bang A Rang onto the chairs gives Dalton the pin at 16:42.

Rating: B. This would have been a lot better if it had happened back in say.....December. It was a good brawl and a very strong win for Castle but this story went on WAY too long to have the impact they were going for. I still like the feud and it's a good blowoff match this could have been so much more if they had done it a long time ago.

Overall Rating: A-. A one hour show having two strong matches is about as easy of a layup as you're going to get. This was the first time in a long time that a show felt like something big and a lot of that is due to how much time they spent building up Young vs. Castle. No they didn't have amazing promos that made me want to see it, but just saying "it's in three weeks" made me want to see where the match was going. You don't get that in most promotions and it was a really nice change of pace which wound up working. Well done ROH, which isn't something I've been able to say lately.

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Ring of Honor TV – December 23, 2015: Time To Open Presents

Ring of Honor

Date: December 23, 2015

Location: Tennessee State Fair Grounds, Nashville, Tennessee

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, Prince Nana

Final Battle has come and past but we're not going to get any significant fallout from it for a few weeks now due to the taping schedule.

Therefore, it's time for another stand alone show, which could range anywhere from really fun to nothing of note. I'm to the point where I'll give Ring of Honor the benefit of the doubt though so let's get to it.

Will Ferrara vs. Caprice Coleman

Before the match, Coleman says he and Ferrara have both been getting mail from someone (Prince Nana) lately, but Coleman's mail will always be thicker and always come priority. I'd advise some better insults Coleman. They slug it out to start with Ferrara sending him to the floor for a suicide dive because you're required to have a suicide dive in a match anymore.

Ferrara grabs a chair but gets sent into the barricade instead. A hard running dropkick drives Ferrara head first into the barricade again as this is far more violent than you would expect. Back in and Caprice rolls some northern lights suplexes to send Ferrara into the corner. Will breaks up a few Sky Splitter attempts by slamming Coleman off the top, only to have both guys grab chairs. The quick duel draws a no contest at 3:23.

Rating: D+. I like the idea here but this feels like a really low level

feud that isn't going to mean anything. Ferrara is cool but Nana and the possibly reformed Embassy aren't exactly the most thrilling plans. Coleman doesn't do much for me either, leaving this as a fun enough fast paced brawl and little more.

Jay Lethal and the House of Truth are opening boxes to determine who are on their team in the ten man tag. They think Moose is in a big box but they get Cheeseburger instead. I like the idea here.

Here's the House of Truth with potential new member Ken Phoenix. Martini tells him that if Phoenix impresses him in the following match, he's officially on the team.

Donovan Dijak/Ken Phoenix vs. All Night Express

Titus and Phoenix get things going with Rhett taking him down into a headscissors. Phoenix sends Titus outside where Dijak gets in a few cheap shots, allowing Ken to baseball slide him down. Dijak comes in for the power game but throws in a superkick to keep his modern wrestler card.

It's off to Phoenix for a bit but he doesn't listen when Dijak tells him to tag out. Titus dodges a charge in the corner and King comes in to speed things up. A blind tag brings in Titus, who dives right into a chokeslam for two. Phoenix tags himself back in and Prince Nana is freaking out at the stupidity. Dijak gets knocked to the floor and a backbreaker from Titus sets up a corkscrew splash from King for the pin at 5:15.

Rating: C-. Just like in the opener, this was a simple story that they told well enough to make it work. Dijak seems to have the potential to go somewhere but I'm not sure how far he's going to go as part of the House of Truth. You can tell things are going bad when the heel commentator is getting on you though and Phoenix wasn't anything special.

Post match Martini gives Phoenix the thumbs down, earning him a Feast Your Eyes from Dijak. The House of Truth leaves and Nana gives Dijak another envelope.

Here's Steve Corino in a neck brace to address the crowd. He's down right

now but for twenty one years, this is all he's ever wanted to do. One day though, this neck brace is coming off and BJ Whitmer is going to pay for his sins. Steve Corino will always be an evil man and Whitmer will find that out soon enough.

Jay Lethal/Cheeseburger/Adam Page/Cliff Compton/Jay Briscoe vs. Roderick Strong/Cedric Alexander/Mark Briscoe/Moose/Matt Jackson

These partners were picked at random. Compton is better known as Domino from Deuce N Domino but he's had a much better run in the indies as a serious guy. BJ Whitmer is sitting in on commentary. Jay and Roderick get things going with Jay grabbing a quick backslide for two. Strong can't get a backslide of his own so it's off to Matt vs. Page. Adam shoulders him down but Matt gives him a SUCK IT from the mat. In case you didn't know they think they're DX or the Kliq you see.

Off to Alexander vs. Lethal which seems to be something important. They trade shoulders to start and Jay hits one out of two dropkicks in a very fast paced sequence. Mark and Cliff come in and they agree to go fight on the floor. It's Cliff in early control with a release belly to belly and it's time for a table. Mark tries to grab a chair but the referee tells them to go back inside.

We take a break and come back with Lethal tagging in Cheeseburger to face Alexander, who immediately tags out to Moose. Cheeseburger tries with everything he can until Moose casually launches him into the corner. Matt comes in for some slams before Strong slams everyone onto Cheeseburger in a cool sequence. Nana: "Cheeseburger looks like a broken poodle dog!" Cheeseburger stops some charges in the corner and flips out of two suplexes in a row, allowing the tag to Jay Briscoe.

We get a big power showdown between Moose and Jay Briscoe before Moose tags out to Mark for a showdown that is probably going to headline a pay per view some day if it hasn't already. They trade about eight boots to the face until Jay scores with a discus lariat. A standoff sends us to another double tag with Adam and Matt coming in. It's Page getting the better of it until Moose and Matt double team him. Moose plays Nick for a double superkick and we take a second break.

Back again with Matt's 450 getting two on Page. Strong's team surrounds Cheeseburger and he actually fights them all off with palm strikes. Moose takes him down with a weaker spear than you would expect but the Lethal Injection drops Moose and it's time for the parade of secondary finishers. Compton gets superkicked off the top and through a table at ringside, leaving Page to eat a suplex backbreaker and the Froggy Bow from Mark for the pin at 21:20.

Rating: B-. This was exactly what it was supposed to be with everyone working hard and giving the fans something fun to end the meaningless show. Those showdowns with Briscoe vs. Briscoe and Briscoe vs. Moose were interesting and made things feel more special than they should have otherwise. Fun match here and it did everything it was supposed to do.

The winners praise Cheeseburger to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This felt like a special episode and that's all it needed to be. I like this kind of show more than the New Japan episodes as you have some storyline advancement, even if it's something in a low level story like Nana's envelopes. Anyway, nice little fun show here and that's all I was hoping for.

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