

Hardcore Justice – This Actually Wasn't A Total Failure

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Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Tazz, Mike Tenay

This is the second return to PPV for ECW as they try to squeeze the final drop of blood out of the stone that was ECW. I really am not looking forward to this as it was built around two matches and one of those was canceled. It's RVD vs. Sabu tonight which needs to stay under 8 minutes or so. Other than that we know a lot of names and that's about it. Let's get to it.

Tazz is here and says this is going to be EXTREME and that this is going to be awesome no matter what people say. Yeah I'm sure.

FBI vs. Kid Kash/Simon Diamond/Swinger

It's Tony, Tracy and Guido. Yeah because Kash was SO important to ECW. Sal is somehow even fatter if that's possible. Smothers looks AWFUL. It's Tony Luke now instead of Mamaluke. Guido looks about the same. The lights are all dark and there's this weird blue tint to it. Guido and Kash start us off. They point out that they can't say certain names or letters. WOW.

Simon is HUGE and even Tazz suggests different attire. He stops halfway through the match and cuts a promo to which he gets a LOUD Shut the F Up chant. He challenges them to a dance off. It's somehow worse than it sounds. The non-FBI team breaks it up but Sal crushes them. Kash does a big dive to do

something. Keep in mind we're 20 minutes into this.

We get to a normal match now and it's not bad. Seriously, we would have had to pay 45 dollars for this. Mamaluke is getting destroyed here and Diamond does something close to Three Amigos. Guido hits the Kiss of Death (Killswitch) to end it.

Rating: D. Once this got going it wasn't bad but ten minutes of crap to get to the good stuff isn't how this is supposed to go. This didn't work at all for me though as three of these guys meant next to nothing at all in the original ECW. This was watchable I guess but the lighting and the other stuff just isn't doing it so far.

The announcers talk about Sabu being in the main event.

We have a Where Are They Now series tonight. That's not a good sign.

Tod Gordon says goodbye. He's fat.

Pitbull #1 says hi.

Blue Meanie is on a TNA PPV. Literally that's all they're saying.

They do their intros and then they come back. Pitbull says show them hardcore. Meanie says thank you. None of them are here or anything.

AJ liked ECW.

Love liked ECW but only saw the end.

Snow yells at Head for possibly causing legal issues with the show. Richards comes in and this is his night apparently. Nova (Simon Dean) shows up in his BWO apparel. He talks about getting the band back together and this is painful to watch. A fake Blue Meanie comes in and we're told that it doesn't matter if it's not really him. Good night.

Hey look it's a match.

CW Anderson vs. 2 Cold Scorpio

You know, because these two have SUCH a history together. They keep calling it the original era because they can't say ECW, even though they do anyway. Oh this is wrestling. Just to be clear I guess. Amazingly enough, there's next to nothing to talk about here. Scorpio was great in his time, but he was old in 99 and he's very old now. This is kind of back and forth and really isn't bad for the most part. Spinebuster gets two and the Tumbleweed ends it.

Rating: C-. This was actually ok. They had a nice back and forth thing going here with a solid clash of styles going. I liked Anderson to an extent and I always liked Scorpio so this worked well for me. Somehow I have a feeling this is going to be the best match of the night. This wasn't bad at all though and has me in a better mood.

Madison liked ECW too.

Matt Morgan got to go to a bar where ECW guys came to. They have to call it the Philadelphia promotion. This is sad.

Anderson says ECW was doing other stuff.

RVD and Fonzie say they wish they had a chance to fight Lynn again. RVD wants a replacement and picks Sabu. Fonzie says he'll call it right down the middle.

PJ Polaco vs. Stevie Richards

Richards has the BWO with them despite not being Big Stevie Cool here. The fans chant Polaco's name (Justin Credible which I'll be referring to him as) and then Stevie Richards. The fans want blood and an hour (almost) into it we haven't had any. Justin hits a jumping spinning DDT which was one of his signature moves back in the day at least.

The fake Meanie is one of the Phi Delta Slam guys if anyone remembers them. He's a security guard at times too. The matches here aren't completely awful but this comes off as so low rent that it just can't be taken seriously. And remember, this is TNA's PPV offering this month. It's not like the real PPV is next week or anything. This is it for August.

And That's Incredible ends...nothing as Nova jumps up. Stevie Kick ends this in something that would NEVER have happened in the original company. The lights go out and Sandman is here to no music at all. White Russian Leg Sweep and Justin is back up before like a second. Cane shots put him down again.

Rating: D+. Not too bad here but the booking was just bad. I know Justin is crap but he was world champion for five months in the old days while Stevie was billed as a clueless putz. This didn't work that well but it could have been FAR worse. Keep in mind that these grades are on an adjusted scale here as most of these would be fails or worse.

Francine and her daughter are at home. She looks bad. Like really bad. She was hot back in the day and now this.

They pay tribute to the people that have died with a graphic and nothing more. No names, no faces, no anything.

Brother Runt vs. Al Snow vs. Rhyno

Runt is Spike Dudley of course and is nearly bald. This is elimination rules and better not break 8 minutes. Spike hits a dive that is ok after some basic stuff. He plays the role of the pinball of course and I still wonder what Snow has to do with this. Snow hits the trapping headbutts on Rhyno. TNA guys are watching in the back. Why they're here is beyond me because they're not wrestling.

Acid Drop to Rhyno is blocked and this needs to end fast. We're on the floor again and you actually can't see due to the lighting. The referee goes down and Head drills Rhyno. Spike

does the Eddie chair thing by slamming the mat with it and throwing it to Rhino. He and Snow do the same thing so they're all down. Oh my head hurts. Acid Drop ends Snow and then the Gore ends the whole thing.

Rating: D. I like Snow but this was just bad. There's a reason these guys retired: THEY AREN'T THAT GOOD ANYMORE. Rhino is ok at best and he's the biggest star by far in this. At least he won I suppose, but this was just random with no point at all. Well at least it's over and wasn't that long.

Foley is reading Hogan's book and likes being the ref.

More guys talk about the company, including Sabin and Magnus.

Cajones/Axl Rotter vs. ???/???

Cajones is of course Balls Mahoney. He issues an open challenge and it's JOEL GERTNER. Ok this is at least an improvement. I think I smell Team 3D. Yep I'm right and they're in tye-dye. Thankfully Joel does a poem which is funny. He looks...bad. Like even worse than before. It's a South Philadelphia Street Fight in Orlando according to Ray.

They go split screen here for the sake of torturing us even better. Ray shouts at him and calls him Balls because that's ok I guess. We go into the crowd for fun. This is "hardcore" I guess with mainly just punching and random shots with weak weapons. We bring in some more traditional weapons back in the ring. The announcers are of course cracking up over everything here instead of selling it like a hardcore match.

Frying pan to the head of Balls. And Mahoney breaks out a toy lightsaber. And so does Bubba. I hate this show. I truly do. Axl botches a reverse DDT on Bubba and Nutcracker Suite to D-Von gets two. The fans want flaming tables. They get a chair duel instead. The referee tries a double clothesline on the team that isn't the Dudleys. It fails, much like this match.

The Dudleys bring in a table and Gertner has lighter fluid. Balls goes through it, ending this mess.

Rating: D-. Flaming table is all that keeps this from failing. This whole show is a freaking joke and that's being kind.

Team 3D says they're the best in the world and cue The Gangstas. They beat the tar out of each other and then hug.

Raven talks about his past with Dreamer where they were kids together and Dreamer was a jock. Raven slept with a girl Tommy liked and then the girl left Raven for Dreamer. That was Beulah in case you don't know that somehow.

Jesse Neal liked the little that he saw of ECW.

Kaz wanted to be in ECW.

Joey Styles should be here but isn't. Everyone talks about him. This is so stupid. They make it sound like he's dead.

Raven vs. Tommy Dreamer

For no apparent reason, Foley is the referee. Beulah is here and is still hot. The fans chant Uncle Scotty to complete this joke. They do the drop toehold spot and Dreamer gets beaten up in front of his kids. Dreamer might be the first guy to bleed tonight. It's your usual stuff here with the beatdown that isn't that great but the history makes it watchable. Raven is busted.

The signs are brought in as is the ladder. They do some decent stuff with that for two for Raven. Dreamer Driver gets no cover. We finally get to the barbed wire which is wrapped around Raven's face. He taps but the BWO runs in to make sure it doesn't count. This needs a Sandman run-in. Down goes Foley for no apparent reason. Raven Effect gets two. Or is it the Even Flow? Whatever.

Foley and Socko, which they can't say, takes down Raven and

that guy from earlier that we couldn't recognize in the Blue Meanie skit runs down with a top rope leg drop for Dreamer. Allegedly his name is Lupus? Mandible Claw with wire to Raven of course doesn't put him down and he cuffs Dreamer.

Beulah comes in to stop the Rock/Foley ending in the Last Man Standing match which doesn't work. Dreamer manages to DDT Raven while cuffed behind his back for two. Raven hits Dreamer in the knee with the chair and a DDT on it ends this. Yes, Dreamer jobbed to Raven in the final encounter. I am about to give up.

Rating: D. This started out as an ok brawl but just got insane. To be fair it was a pretty brutal match but the ending is just stupid. The problem is that this feud was perfectly finished in ECW and there was no need for this. Dreamer winning was the right way to go here so of course they didn't do that. Not a horrible match, but it's just showing how bad this idea was overall as this feud is one that didn't need to continue.

The Gangstas hit on So Cal Val and make racial jokes. Borash is New Jack's now.

We talk about Heyman and say stuff we've all heard before.

Sabu vs. Rob Van Dam

It's 10:15 so hopefully we're out before half past the hour. Other than that this is going to go WAY too long. Fonzie is in a yellow jacket and RVD comes out first. The fans say this is classic. Sabu is bald. They start out with a feeling out process because they know each other so well. Sabu does his point to the sky and RVD does his pointing. It would be nice if they actually did something.

In an interesting thing Fonzie sends a chair in but does it right down the middle. We hit the crowd for a bit as the chanting is just idiotic. Sabu botches...something and then the

camel clutch is on. The bald guy doesn't look half bad all things considered. With both guys down, Fonzie throws both of them a bottle of water. Both get tables as a result. Oh this isn't going to end well.

Van Dam hits some slingshot legdrops and Fonzie tries to revive Sabu. Sabu hits a rana to send RVD into a chair in the middle of the ring. It looked totally fake but not bad at the same time. Clutch is on again for like 2 seconds. Triple Jump Moonsault is blocked by Van Dam and Sabu is bleeding from somewhere. Van Assassin hits (the one footed dropkick into the chair while the guy is crotched) and Sabu to the floor.

Ok so that lasts like a second and we're back now. Morrison, watch an RVD match to see how you do the split legged moonsault, I beg of you. Rolling Thunder to the chair hits for two. Five Star ends it.

Rating: D+. While a mess, this is what it was supposed to be: a war. They beat each other up and it really isn't as bad as anyone is saying it is. It's bad, but this is what the match was supposed to be. There was no way it was going to be a classic, but this really wasn't horrible. It held my attention for the most part and had some decent spots. For the ending to this show, this was bearable.

The locker room empties and we have a beer bash, which isn't like that other show at all. The crowd chants F YOU VINCE and Dixie gets in the ring. Bubba takes her on a victory lap to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. Let's get the obvious out of the way first: this was bad. The wrestling was awful and there were really only two matches worth much at all. Luckily those were the two main matches and not the stuff no one remembers. This show is being called one of the worst of all time and from the view that this is the TNA offering this month, they're right. From the perspective of using your intelligence, that's not

the case. Something that needs to be remembered here is the audience. This wasn't for the casual wrestling fan. This was for the ECW fan and those people likely loved this. While the wrestling was bad, the booking was smart for the TNA fans as they get their PPV for FREE on Thursday. This was a way to get money out of the people that likely wouldn't pay for a TNA show 90% of the time while still appeasing those that do. It's a brilliant strategy from that perspective, but for casual TNA fans this was dreadful.

Another thing to keep in mind is that this was supposed to be like an ECW show. As great and fun as it was, in retrospect One Night Stand was more like a WWE show than an ECW show. This show had the realism of ECW far more than ONS did. This had the bad comedy and the random interference and the bad wrestling and the random matches. This was FAR more like ECW than the show five years ago was. Now that being said I'd still watch ONS over this a million times, but like I said earlier I'm not the target audience in the slightest. This wasn't a good show, but it will likely be a successful one. It worked from that perspective and will be seen by ECW fans as a success, which is the whole idea. Don't watch it or anything, but it's not as bad as it's made out to be, period.