

# Ring of Honor TV – July 12, 2017: Best in the Month at Least

## Ring of Honor

Date: July 12, 2017

Location: Lowell Memorial Auditorium, Lowell, Massachusetts

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana

Unless I'm missing it, there isn't exactly anything huge set up for this show. Part of the problem with Ring of Honor is how little anything sticks out and that's really being showcased here. So many shows feel like they stand alone instead of leading anywhere else, which isn't the most interesting thing in the world. Let's get to it.

Cody reminds us that he and Christopher Daniels brawled last week. Next week though, we have the rematch from Best in the World.

This is from Lowell, which would be after Best in the World. So did we see stuff from these tapings mixed with the Chicago tapings? It wouldn't be the first time but it's a bit confusing.

Opening sequence.

### Dalton Castle/The Boys vs. Flip Gordon/Coast to Coast

Non-title. Castle freaks Flip out a bit with the chest thrust before stopping for some exercise. Everything breaks down for a big brawl and the announcers actually try to tell the Boys apart. The Boys both hit dives but Castle walks across the ring instead of diving, as Cabana knew would be the case.

Gordon kicks the Boys outside again, only to have Boy #2 cut him off with a hurricanrana. Now it's Coast to Coast with their own dives until everyone but Gordon is on the floor, setting up a run up the corner into a springboard 450 to put everyone down. Back from a break with Boy #1 getting stomped in the corner and kicked in the

head to give LSG (Leo St. Giovanni) two.

Gordon gets the same off a standing moonsault, followed by a Stroke/Flatliner combo. For no logical reason, Gordon and Coast to Coast yell at the crowd, allowing the Boys to switch places. The hot tag brings in Castle to clean house and catch Gordon in a German suplex. Everything breaks down and something like an F5 gets two on #1. LSG dives onto all three champs but gets suplexes for his efforts back inside. Bang a Rang puts LSG away at 11:18.

**Rating:** B-. This was a lot better than I was expecting with both teams looking great. The Boys have greatly improved and are actual wrestlers instead of just people who are there to fill in spots. Fun match here with the flips making sense and Castle being miles ahead of everyone else, which is exactly what he should have been.

We look back at Beer City Bruiser and Silas Young injuring Jay Lethal's ribs.

Young is at the hospital Lethal spent the night at and promises that the war is far from over.

#### Ultimo Guerrero vs. Matt Taven

Feeling out process to start with Guerrero being sent into the corner and thankfully the announcers explain why these two started feuding in the first place. During the entrances they mentioned that it started in Mexico and they dropped the whole thing. Guerrero takes him to the mat but stops to yell at the Kingdom.

That means nothing as Taven gets clotheslined down for two but avoids a baseball slide. The Kingdom offers a distraction so Taven can take over but TK O'Ryan's chop has no effect. Guerrero knocks Taven into the crowd and there's a running dive for good measure. Back from a break with Guerrero down and Taven doing that smile of his.

Not that it matters as Guerrero comes right back with the slingshot Bronco Buster. A second attempt is countered into a Sharpshooter which doesn't last all that long. Guerrero is right back up with a super gordbuster for two, only to have his reverse superplex broken

up. Taven's frog splash gets two but he grabs the referee and gets in a low blow. The Climax (arm trap bulldog driver) gives Taven the pin at 13:03.

**Rating:** C+. I still don't care about the Kingdom or any of its members and I'm not wild on bringing in these legends and telling us to care about them because they're famous elsewhere (which Guerrero certainly is). That being said, they did have a good match here and that's what helps quite a bit, but not having Taven around would help even more.

The Young Bucks and Adam Page blame Bully Ray and the Briscoes for losing the Six Man Tag Team Titles before they had a chance to win them.

Silas Young says it's been fifteen days without an accident but Lethal will never be safe no matter what. Did we really need to do this twice in one show?

#### Motor City Machine Guns vs. War Machine

Hanson and Sabin start things up with Chris' modified Octopus Hold having as minimal effect as possible. Sabin gets thrown away and we have an early standoff. A double tag allows Rowe to Superman Punch Shelley as everything breaks down in a hurry. War Machine takes over and we take an early break. Back with Shelley in trouble in the corner as War Machine seems to be the de facto heels.

Hanson slams Rowe onto Shelley for two but Alex pops up and brings in Sabin as everything breaks down again. The Guns take over with the rapid fire offense, including double dives called Crossing the Streams. Back in and Rowe gets choked in the corner and more precision offense. Shelley misses a charge though and it's back to Hanson for the running clotheslines in the corner.

Back from another break with Rowe throwing Hanson onto both Guns. A springboard clothesline into a German suplex gets two on Sabin but Fallout is broken up. Hanson suplexes both Guns down without much effort but an assisted standing Sliced Bread takes him down. Skull and Bones is broken up but Hanson misses a suicide dive and it's

time for the Guns to fire off the kicks. Sabin dives through Shelley's legs to take Hanson down again and it's Made in Detroit (powerbomb/Sliced Bread #2 combo) to put Rowe away at 14:13.

**Rating:** B. That's the best Guns match I've seen in a long time as it felt like they were having a match instead of just doing all of their choreographed looking spots. War Machine is great as the power team which you don't get around here too often. Good match here and that's the kind of thing you can always go for.

**Overall Rating:** B. That's one of the best episodes they've put together in a long time, despite me having issues caring about almost anyone on the show. They put on solid matches with the lower half of the roster and that makes for a pretty easy hour of wrestling to sit through.

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## Ring of Honor TV – July 5,

# 2017: Back on Track

## Ring of Honor

Date: July 5, 2017

Location: Frontier Fieldhouse, Chicago Ridge, Illinois

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana

We're still in Chicago and still getting ready to deal with the fallout from Best in the World, which should start in another two weeks if we're lucky. I'm really running out of ways to complain about how messed up the schedule is and I still don't understand why we have to wait so long. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's new World Champion Cody in the ring so apparently we're already on the new taping cycle. THEN WHY DIDN'T WE HAVE THIS LAST WEEK??? Anyway before he can say much of anything, Christopher Daniels shows up and beats the heck out of the new champ. A referee gets tossed and the brawl continues with Cody hitting a Disaster Kick. Daniels gets in a moonsault to the floor though and security breaks it up. The fans want to see them fight and didn't seem to favor one over the other. Good opener here and I have no idea why this didn't follow the pay per view last week if it was already filmed.

Jay Briscoe says this is different than the Top Prospect Tournament and Josh Woods is in way over his head.

### Jay Briscoe vs. Josh Woods

They adhere to the Code of Honor in a bit of a surprise. Feeling out process to start with Josh tripping him to the mat and chuckling a bit. A cross armbreaker doesn't last long so it's another trip to take Briscoe down. Josh knees him in the head and this is one sided in the first few minutes.

Jay comes right back with a big boot to knock Josh outside and there's a suicide dive. Well done there with having Josh get the better of it when there are rules and structure but Briscoe takes

over when things get a little more violent and intense. Back with Jay throwing him outside for a whip into the barricade as the brawling continues to go Briscoe's way.

There's a ton of room on the floor too, which makes me think they could have easily fit another row or even two of fans in there. I can't imagine sales were that weak in Chicago of all places. Back in and Josh blocks a suplex for one of his own, followed by the TKO into a knee to the face. A springboard spinning knee/kick to the face gets two on Jay, who shrugs it off and lariats Woods for the pin at 10:50.

**Rating:** B-. I had a good time with this match as Briscoe continues to give the younger guys a rub, just like he did with Jay White. It's not like he has anything else going on right now so give these guys something that they're not going to be able to get from anyone else. Good match too with Woods showing off because he found out he was in over his head.

We look at Will Ferrara splitting with Cheeseburger because he's sick of dealing with a charity case like Cheeseburger. Haven't these guys split like three times now?

#### Tempura Boyz vs. Coast to Coast

Actually hang on as here are the Young Bucks who offer to add themselves to the match with the titles on the line under tornado rules.

#### Tag Team Titles: Young Bucks vs. Tempura Boyz vs. Coast to Coast

The Bucks are defending under tornado rules and the champs waste no time cleaning house. It's immediately time to fire off the kicks to send all four challengers outside, followed by the Rise of the Terminators. The double dives are broken up though with the Boyz hitting stereo German suplexes on the floor.

Coast to Coast dives on everyone and we take a break. Back with Nick firing off running knees in the corner to both Boyz, only to get caught in something like a 3D with a Flatliner instead of a cutter. There's the big flip dive to the floor to take out Coast to Coast

but the Meltzer Diver is broken up.

Coast to Coast comes back in and breaks up the Superkick Party (Colt: "Everybody knows they're just going to do superkicks so it's not that hard to figure out."). A double Indytaker sets up double superkicks to retain the titles at 8:27. That's the EXACT same ending as the match in Long Beach.

**Rating:** C+. I can't believe I'm saying this but thank goodness for the Bucks here. Coast to Coast and the Tempura Boyz are completely worthless tag teams so throw the Bucks in there and turn it into a glorified squashed. The match wasn't great but this could have been very boring so the Bucks really did help things out.

Highlights of Adam Cole vs. Marty Scurll in an anything goes match.

Mark Briscoe vs. Beer City Bruiser vs. Kenny King vs. Chris Sabin

One fall to a finish and the winner gets a TV Title shot. Mark says he has to win because he has four kids. I wonder if he has an above ground pool. Mark and Kenny start things off and apparently this is under lucha rules, meaning Bruiser can come in and toss people to the floor.

Sabin dives into a side slam and for some reason Bruiser tags out. Why would you do that in a one fall match where you have to be legal to win? King's Muta Lock is broken up and it's Mark coming in to clean house. A moonsault to the floor takes out Bruiser and King, followed by Sabin firing off the kicks from the apron.

We take a break and come back with Bruiser running Mark over as the tags have been completely abandoned, as is the custom in these matches. Mark gets crushed against Sabin in the corner for a good looking crash, followed by a running flip dive to the floor to take out Mark and Chris. Kenny dives onto everyone but Mark is smart enough to walk away. Back in and Mark hits the brainbuster on Kenny, setting up the Froggy Bow at the same time the Bruiser splashes Chris. Both guys get up to avoid leaving it as a three way but King actually manages a Royal Flush on the Bruiser for the pin and the title shot at 10:59.

**Rating:** C. Pretty standard chaos match here with everyone flying all over the place and little in the way of storytelling, though that's kind of the point to something like this. King winning is an interesting way to go as the Rebellion was such a waste of time but King's natural athleticism should be more than enough to give him a good match with Kushida.

**Overall Rating:** C+. I had a good time with this show as there were three solid matches and a strong angle to open things up. They should be fine head into the next few weeks but above all else I'm VERY happy that we're already on the pay per view fallout and don't have to sit around waiting through weeks of one off filler shows. Good show this week and one of the more entertaining editions in a long time.

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## Ring of Honor TV – June 28, 2017: It's Filler Tim

**Ring of Honor**

Date: June 28, 2017

Location: Frontier Fieldhouse, Chicago Ridge, Illinois

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana, Alex Shelley

It's the first show after Best in the World and that means absolutely nothing as we're starting the taping cycle before the show. I'd put it at probably four weeks of TV before we're caught up, which should put us close to getting ready for the next pay per view, which I believe is Death Before Dishonor. Let's get to it.

One quick note: apparently some markets got a different episode so there's a chance this is a completely different show than you saw.

Opening sequence.

#### Flip Gordon vs. Jonathan Gresham

An amateur exchange doesn't go anywhere so Flip does a series of nips, earning himself a headscissors on the mat. Gordon handstands out of that so Jonathan dropkicks him down. Back up and Flip backflips away and scores with a dropkick, followed by a handspring elbow in the corner.

We take a break and come back with Gordon fighting up but charging into boots in the corner. That's fine with Flip as he climbs the ropes for something like a superkick to put Gresham outside. Of course that means a running dive, followed by a top rope spinning splash for two. An enziguri and snap German suplex drop Gordon but he kicks Gresham in the head for two more. Flip misses a 450 (you knew that was coming) and it's off to the Octopus Hold to make Flip tap at 10:53.

**Rating:** C-. This one is going to depend very heavily on your taste and that's going to determine if you found this entertaining or ridiculous. Gordon is almost every stereotype about indy wrestling rolled together but the fact that he basically presents himself as that is a bit refreshing. On the other hand, just naming yourself flip and then doing a bunch of flips isn't the most interesting thing in the world. I wasn't huge on this but it was far from awful.

Post match Gresham and Shelley praise Gordon's performance.

We recap Punishment Martinez vs. Jay White.

Video on Josh Woods.

Woods is in the arena and wants to face Jay Briscoe to give himself

a real challenge. No matter how tough Jay is, he can be knocked out or tapped out.

### Silas Young vs. Bobby Fish

Given that Fish has already debuted for NXT, this isn't likely going well for the finned one. Bobby takes him down into a knee bar less than five seconds in so Young bails to the floor. That's fine with Fish who sends Young into the barricade to really take over. Back in and Misery doesn't work but Bobby's cross armbreaker doesn't either. Young comes back by dropping Fish and hitting a slingshot double stomp (ow) to send us to a break.

Back with Young charging into a boot and Colt not knowing what the word "literally" means. Silas knees him in the corner and adds a running boot, earning himself a belly to back suplex. Fish's sleeper is broken up by a Stunner over the top rope so Bobby spears him through the ropes for a big crash.

Silas throws him over a table and we take a second break. Back again with both of them on the apron and slugging it out between the ropes in the corner. Fish finally pulls him through the ropes and trapping him over one of the buckles, setting up some hard kicks. Not that it matters as Young pulls him into the corner for a crash, setting up a knee to the ribs and Misery for the pin at 16:25.

**Rating:** C+. This was a bit better than the opener but still felt like nothing more than a way to fill in a show. Young is getting a nice push but, again, Ring of Honor has cut the legs off of him by having him lose the big match at Best in the World. If you're wanting to push the guy then push the guy, but this start and stop booking isn't going to help anyone.

Fish shoves him away post match.

Here's a clip/preview of Adam Cole vs. Marty Scurll in a No DQ match, now available on ROHWrestling.com.

### Punishment Martinez vs. Jay White

Why this wasn't at Best in the World is beyond me, though they did manage to bring in two guys from Mexico with next to no connection to Ring of Honor to put over the Kingdom. Punishment tries to shove him into the corner but misses a big boot, allowing Jay to start in on the leg. A running forearm to the floor has Punishment in even more trouble and a missile dropkick gets two.

That earns White a big spinning kick to the face and something like a curb stomp from the corner. A right hand to the back of the head gives Martinez two and he smiles at White for trying a desperation forearm. White throws more right hands to annoy Martinez and then takes the knee out again. Some rolling German suplexes give Jay two and we take a break.

Back with Jay slipping out of a powerbomb but getting chokeslammed onto the apron. That and a Falcon Arrow give Martinez two because a monster and a CHOKESLAM ONTO THE APRON is only a setup move around here. White is right back with a swinging Rock Bottom for two of his own but walks into a reverse sitout AA. The sitout chokeslam is countered into a rollup to give White the pin at 11:17.

**Rating:** B-. Stupid chokeslam onto the apron for two aside, this was entertaining stuff as I continue to be a fan of both guys. White survived just long enough to survive until the end was a fine story but Martinez losing again isn't the best idea in the world. Now it's fine if he comes back with the win in the big match (because this wasn't the big match) but I don't see that happening.

Martinez isn't done and gives him a Last Ride through a table to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. The in-ring stuff was fine but sweet goodness they weren't even hiding the fact that this was a filler episode. I can live with the idea of filling in time between a pay per view show and the next big episode but I have a feeling we're a few weeks away from anything important. At least the wrestling was good though, which you never can guarantee around here.

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# ROH Best in the World 2017: The Same Good and the Same Bad

## Best in the World 2017

Date: June 23, 2017

Location: Lowell Memorial Auditorium, Lowell, Massachusetts

Attendance: 2,500

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, BJ Whitmer

I do the TV shows so it would make sense for me to do the pay per views too. This isn't the biggest show the company does but anytime they get on pay per view it feels like a big deal for them. The main event sees Christopher Daniels defending the ROH World Title against Cody, who is about as big of a favorite while still being a challenger that you can be. Let's get to it.

The opening video is everyone saying they're the best (the Young Bucks say SUPERKICK of course) until Cody says he's the worst nightmare. Now he wants to be the best in the world and end a title reign that started fifteen years too late. The idea is that he's not under contract and therefore an outsider. That being said, he's still on almost every show and has been given a World Title shot before this so the lack of a contract hasn't really hurt him that much.

The announcers preview the card that we already paid for.

## Kingdom vs. Ultimo Guerrero/El Terrible

Matt Taven is on a throne, Vinny Marseglia is dressed like Jason Vorhees and the injured TK O'Ryan is a viking. Yeah they're still

not interesting. Ultimo Guerrero and Terrible are from CMLL and this is under lucha rules, meaning going to the floor counts as a tag. Terrible and Marseglia start things off with some good old fashioned stalling because that's how you want to open a pay per view.

Vinny looks insane as usual but can't get anywhere with a front facelock. A loud shot to the face drops Marseglia and it's time for the strikes in the corner. Taven comes in and dropkicks Terrible to the floor, meaning it's off to Guerrero, who apparently has a history with Matt. It's not important enough to actually explain or anything so we'll go to Guerrero dropkicking Taven to the floor.

Vinny saves O'Ryan from Guerrero so Ultimo takes Vinny inside for a headstand into a slingshot Bronco Buster (cool looking crash). A second version is broken up with a superkick (add Taven to the list of people better it at than the Bucks as this one actually puts Guerrero down) but it's Terrible taking the Kingdom out with a suicide dive.

Guerrero comes off the top with a dive of his own but the Kingdom pops up for two more dives. Ultimo fights them off back inside though and hits his reverse superplex, only to take a Swanton from Marseglia. The Kingdom loads up the Supernova but Guerrero grabs a rollup out of nowhere for the pin at 11:09.

**Rating:** C. This was a fast paced enough match and I'm sure the live crowd liked the luchadors but that's not the most thrilling thing for the live crowd. The Kingdom continues to be one of the least interesting groups in a LONG time because they tried to reform the team without Maria, who was what makes the whole thing work in the first place. Couple that with not great matches and it's no shock that the team is this worthless.

We recap Frankie Kazarian vs. Adam Page. After Kazarian infiltrated Bullet Club to help Daniels in the World Title, Adam beat him at War of the Worlds. Then Page kept things personal by attacking him with a strap as part of the Daniels vs. Cody feud. Therefore, it's time for a strap match.

Frankie Kazarian vs. Adam Page

This is the pin/submission version as both guys have their own straps but they aren't connected. Feeling out process to start until Kazarian trips Page up and grabs a rollup for two. A hard shot to the back sends Page to the floor and a hurricanrana makes things worse. Page will have none of that and starts whipping Kazarian into the barricade a few times. He takes too long peeling back the floor mats though and gets suplexed onto the ramp steps (freaking OW MAN) for a very painful crash.

Back up and Page gets tied to the ropes but comes right back with the front flip clothesline. Page is smart enough to take Kazarian's strap away so they trade hard forearms/clotheslines with Page getting the better of it. With Kazarian down, Paige pulls out a rope and ties him to the ropes to really turn up the violence. Since he's just that crazy, Page pulls out a belt with nails and tacks in it.

To avoid a bad case of death, Kazarian gets out and catches Page in a cutter, followed by a Backstabber. An Unprettier gives Kazarian two but he walks into the Rite of Passage for two. The nail belt is whipped over Kazarian's back but Page stops to spit on him, earning himself a nail belt to the back. Kazarian chokes him over the ropes for the tap out at 11:58.

**Rating:** C+. The violence was nice here and it actually felt like they were wanting to hurt each other instead of just doing a match with weapons in their hands. The nail belt actually being used was a surprise but you knew it wasn't going to be the big bloodbath. It was entertaining too but Kazarian winning a big match is kind of odd, especially with Page getting treated as a big deal lately.

Quick recap of Rebellion vs. Search and Destroy. They're both stables and they don't like each other so the losing team has to disband.

#### Search and Destroy vs. Rebellion

That would be the Motor City Machine Guns/Jonathan Gresham/Jay White vs. Caprice Coleman/Shane Taylor/Kenny King/Rhett Titus. It's a big brawl to start (of course) until it's Coleman in the ring against the entire four man team. His oh so loyal partners just let this

happen until Titus FINALLY kicks Gresham into the Rebellion corner to take over. That lasts all of a few seconds before everything breaks down again with Search and Destroy hitting a series of dives. Back in and the huge Taylor crushes Gresham with a splash and Coleman makes things worse by rolling some northern lights suplexes. Titus hits Coleman by mistake though and a headscissors allows the hot tag to White to pick the pace up again. Jay hits a bunch of running elbows in the corner and everything breaks down. The Guns come in for the fast paced precision offense but White gets tossed into the corner.

Coleman's Sky Splitter and Titus' frog splash combine for two with the Guns making the save. Gresham is fine enough for a botched Lionsault press and a suicide dive, followed by a shooting star headbutt (to the thigh) as part of Skull and Bones. Search and Destroy has had it with the match and grab a quadruple submission with Gresham making Titus tap to the Octopus Hold at 12:27.

**Rating:** C+. Another perfectly acceptable match here with Search and Destroy, who aren't the most interesting team in the world, winning like they should have. The Rebellion has been stale since the day they debuted and I don't know of anyone who thought they should stick around. This is ANOTHER hit to the trios division, which hopefully will lead to its demise sooner rather than later as it sets new standards for worthlessness every day.

Post match Punishment Martinez comes in to lay White out.

We recap Silas Young vs. Jay Lethal. Young doesn't like Jay getting all the attention and media appearances and endorsement deals so he took out Lethal's knee. I guess that means knee or back pain has Lethal down for the count. Silas beat him in a recent match too and says he has Lethal's number.

### Jay Lethal vs. Silas Young

Young has Beer City Bruiser with him...and Lethal comes through the crowd to knock Bruiser silly with a chair. The slugout is on as the bell rings in a hurry as Bruiser is taken to the back. Good, as I

still can't stand that big tub of goo. Lethal rains down right hands in the corner but it's back to the floor for another slugout.

A suplex off the barricade drops Young again but Jay misses a slingshot dropkick back inside. That means a slingshot double stomp (I still don't get how something like that doesn't break a rib) and we hit an abdominal stretch. That goes nowhere so Lethal chops away and gets two off a basement dropkick.

Silas catches him on top though and clotheslines him out to the floor to take over for all of five seconds before eating a suicide dive. They're going back and forth with control here and it's helping a lot. Lethal hits another suicide dive but the third attempt hits a quickly raised chair.

Back in and neither finisher can hit so Lethal settles for a superkick and the top rope elbow. Young gets in a Saito suplex and a knee to the face, followed by his bouncing moonsault out of the corner. With that not working, Silas grabs his keg but, as you might expect, the referee says not so fast. Instead Silas tries Misery but gets rolled up for the pin at 16:23.

**Rating:** B. The more I see of Lethal, the more I like him. He's rapidly becoming Ring of Honor's ace and that's a position they haven't had filled in too long. He also comes off as a good talker and someone who knows what he's doing in every aspect of wrestling. That's a rare thing and having him in such a featured role is a good idea. Young has been on a roll as of late too and while I'm not big on him losing here, it's good to have him in this spot in the first place. Then again, they need to do something with him as he's an older guy and if he's not pushed hard in the relatively near future, it's not likely to happen.

Post match Young clotheslines Lethal down. The Bruiser comes back out and sets up the keg so Young can hit Misery, sending Jay's ribs into the steel. With Lethal's ribs on the keg, Bruiser adds some splashes. Bruiser still isn't done and splashes Lethal through a table on the floor. The announcers hype this up as a way to take away Lethal's chance at the New Japan United States Title.

We recap the Six Man Tag Team Title match. Dalton Castle's Boys accidentally caused Jay Briscoe to get misted in the face, which cost him a match. Jay wants revenge while Castle and the Boys want the titles.

### Six Man Tag Team Titles: Dalton Castle/The Boys vs. Bully Ray/Briscoe Brothers

Bully and the Briscoes are defending. Before the bell, Bully and Dalton have the exact staredown you would expect them to have. Dalton and Jay get things going but the latter stops to chase after the Boys. Mark finally calms things down and comes in as Castle takes him down with some nice looking amateur style. Mark gets him into a headlock and it's Red Neck Kung Fu time.

The Boys protect Dalton in the corner (Give them some extra....I really don't want to know how he pays them do I?) and he throws one of them at Mark for a good visual. Castle wants Bully, who rushes him into the corner where Dalton hits the least sold chops I've ever seen. Bully does the snap jabs but misses the Bionic Elbow, earning himself a Peacock pose. Ian: "BULLY RAY JUST GOT SERVED!"

Bully....starts dancing for some reason and strikes his own Peacock pose, freaking the fans out as you might expect.

Castle has to be fanned up so Bully chops him down with a single shot. It's time for Boy #1 and Boy #2 to be dragged in and that means it's off to Jay for some fun. #2 kicks him low and hammers away to as much avail as you would expect before it's back to Castle who might be able to survive. Dalton's running knee in the corner sets up a front facelock to keep Jay in trouble. A top rope superplex is countered into a super gordbuster though and it's off to Mark for the fast paced strikes in the corner.

The Boys get beaten up as well because they're just boys and not worth much. Everything breaks down and Boy #1 takes What's Up. Jay takes out the Boys with a suicide dive and just unloads on #2 as you can tell he's losing focus. Boy #1 runs away from a thrown chair so Bully goes out to calm Jay down, leaving Mark to get cradled for the pin and the titles at 13:03.

**Rating:** C-. This was a comedy match and unfortunately, that might be an upgrade for these titles. I haven't cared for these things since they were introduced back in December and they haven't been worth anything since. Castle and the Boys have lost over and over but now they win one match and happen to be champions. When your resume is weaker than Jinder Mahal's, you might not be the best choice to hold a title. There was a story here with Jay losing his cool (not that surprising) but that doesn't make up for the weak booking with the titles in general.

The former champs are livid as Ian wants to know what the celebration is going to be like in the hotel room.

We recap Marty Scurll vs. Kushida in a rematch for the TV Title that Kushida recently took from Scurll. Marty is even angrier than usual and has promised to break a lot of fingers.

#### TV Title: Marty Scurll vs. Kushida

Kushida is defending. They trade some snazzy wristlock counters to start until Marty does his wings flapping thing. Scurll gets armdragged down and dropkicked in the face but it's too early for a cross armbreaker. It's also too early for the chickenwing so Kushida ties him in the ropes for a rolling kick to the head. A pumphandle neckbreaker gives Marty two and it's time to hit those wings again.

Marty stays on the arm until Kushida sends him head first into the buckle. They're playing a nice back and forth style battle here and it's working so far. Another double heel kick staggers Marty and he gets pulled off the ropes into the Hoverboard Lock. The hold doesn't last long so Marty knees him in the head and gets two off a piledriver. It's back to the arm (the other arm this time) before a backslide is good for two on Kushida.

The chickenwing is countered into a rollup which is countered into another chickenwing which is countered into the Hoverboard Lock which is countered AGAIN, only to have Kushida kick him in the head to get a breather. Marty flips him off for reasons of general villainy so Kushida stomps him in the face. Somehow that doesn't know Marty cold so he puts on a wicked looking arm hold with both of

Kushida's arms being bent behind his back at the same time.

The foot gets to the rope though and Marty looks even more annoyed. It's time to go after the fingers but Kushida is smart enough to grab Marty's fingers and snap them instead. A super Back to the Future (small package driver) followed by a regular version retains the title at 15:02.

**Rating:** B+. I had a good time with this but that tends to be the case with all of Kushida's matches anymore. The had a perfectly natural heel vs. face story going here and that's something that is going to work every time because it's what wrestling is built on. It's easy to see which of these guys is good and which is evil, which makes it easier to cheer for them. Unless you're a modern wrestling fan who cheers for the villain by default more often than not of course.

We look back at the Women of Honor dark match, which may not have been much but it's an excuse for me to look at Mandy Leon. This whole division is such a waste of time/a mess though and there's not much of a way to fix it at this point.

Tag Team Titles: War Machine vs. Young Bucks

War Machine is challenging. Actually hang on a second here because cue the Best Friends to say they beat the Young Bucks back in Philadelphia so they should be added to this match. Sure why not.

Tag Team Titles: War Machine vs. Young Bucks vs. Best Friends

The Bucks are defending and this is under tornado rules. It's a brawl to start with the Best Friends cleaning house on the Bucks. Naturally we get a hug but War Machine is right there to crush both Berreta and Taylor. Double shotgun knees and a double bronco buster bring the Bucks back in for some kicks and the Rise of the Terminator pose because the Bucks are very glorified spot monkeys.

The Bucks' dives are caught but the Best Friends are there to hit their own dives. We get the first superkick to slow Berreta down but it's War Machine coming back in to take over. Nick hits a moonsault to the floor to take out a bunch of people, only to have Chuck dive

from the stage to take out even more of them. Naturally Hanson goes to the top to dive onto all five of them but I think you know what's coming. If you thought selling or something original, you haven't been paying enough attention.

Of course it's a superkick and a bunch of flippy dives until all six are down in the ring. Everyone gets back up, there are eight superkicks, and everyone is down again. War Machine is up first and starts cleaning house with a German suplex/clothesline combination to take Berreta out, followed by a pop up powerslam for two. Fallout gets the same with Chuck making the save.

The Bucks are back in with superkicks and a flip dive but the Meltzer Driver is broken up and Chuck hits the Awful Waffle (spinning piledriver) for two on Matt. Rowe gets kneed in the face and both Friends roll him up at the same time for two. Superkicks continue to abound and a double Indytaker, followed by MORE superkicks retain the titles at 12:27.

**Rating:** B. You know, I watched the NJPW Dominion show and called the Bucks match their best ever. I also pointed out that they used by far the least amount of superkicks I ever saw from them. Here, I stopped counting at around twenty and I lost a lot of interest about halfway through the match. It really does get tiring, as does adding teams with no build for the sake of adding them in. True there was a story, but did we really need them there when you had a perfectly good title match already?

We recap the World Title match. Cody was supposed to win the title at War of the Worlds but got screwed over when a third man was added and cost him the fall. Now it's his chance to win the title as a free agent. Daniels says the title means the world to him but for Cody it's just another thing to add to his suitcase while he's traveling from company to company. That's a better version of the story they've been telling but it would be nice to have it announced more than five minutes before the opening bell.

ROH World Title: Christopher Daniels vs. Cody

Cody is challenging and of course we get Big Match Intros (as we

should). The fans, as in the Ring of Honor fans, chant Too Sweet for Bullet Club's Cody, because paying attention to the story is so beneath them. He's supposed to be here to ruin the company that they all love so let's cheer him. You know, the pure wrestling fans that ROH brags about having. Those guys who boo heels because the idea of heels and faces (you know, the pure wrestling that they all claim to love) is just passe at this point. I never got that but I'm often told to shut up and have fun so it probably isn't worth asking about.

Cody works a headlock to start but a run of the ropes goes to Daniels, who puts his boot on Cody's back as Cody drops down. Speaking of dropping down, Cody heads to the floor with a bloody lip. Back in and Angel's Wings don't work as Cody bails right back to the floor. This time he even goes into the crowd for a longer breather. Back in (again) and Daniels slugs away, sending Cody and his bloody lip outside for the third time.

Daniels finally follows him out with a baseball slide but Cody beats him up against the barricade to take over for a very short while. They head inside again with Daniels going up top, allowing Cody to armdrag him right back down in a good looking sequence. Cody grabs a short arm scissors but stops to go outside and yell at former ROH owner Carey Silkin. Back in and Daniels drives him into the corner for a ref bump, allowing Cody to kick him low. BJ: "RIGHT IN THE DING DING!" After how forgettable he's been tonight, even ripping off Steve Corino is a bit of an improvement for him.

Daniels gets in a small package for no count and here's Scurll to throw Cody a chair. Of course the referee wakes up as Daniels picks up the chair, meaning it's an Eddie Guerrero moment as he throws it to Cody and drops down. Cody grabs a cutter on the chair for no cover, but he does get a CODY chant. Kazarian comes out to get rid of Scurll and it's table time.

The champ is right back with a Flatliner on the apron and an STO for two more. Angel's Wings through the table is broken up and Cody busts out a Rainmaker (Thankfully not for a near fall BECAUSE IT'S

JUST A CLOTHESLINE!). The Beautiful Disaster staggers Daniels but he's still able to suplex Cody through the table in a big crash.

They both barely beat the count and Daniels grabs the Koji Clutch, sending Cody over to the ropes. Cody spits water (Where did he get that?) in Daniels' face and gets two off Cross Rhodes. Angel's Wings are countered again and Cody rolls him into another Cross Rhodes for the pin and the title at 19:18 to a huge face pop.

**Rating:** B. The crowd took me out of this one but that's not on the wrestlers. Cody was trying to cheat in every possible way out there and they only cheered for him more. Simply put, if ROH doesn't go for a BIG face turn for Cody (or perhaps even a double turn), they're flat out wasting their time. The wrestling part here was fine and I liked the fact that the interference didn't play a role in the win. Daniels lost the title at the right time as he was never going to be the next huge champion. Just giving him a feel good win and a few months as champion was all he ever needed to be.

Bullet Club comes out to celebrate to end the show as the announcers try to treat this as horrible while the fans can't cheer Cody hard enough.

**Overall Rating:** B+. As is usually the case with Ring of Honor, I liked the show well enough but you're only going to get so far with so little connection to a lot of the characters and stories. If the fans are going to cheer almost every heel, how exactly are they heels and therefore, why should I care about the people I'm supposed to care about? The wrestling is still good enough (flippy issues aside, though you expect that going into this one) and I liked most of the matches so I can easily say the show is good, though you have to really like this kind of wrestling to get behind the show, as is often the case around here.

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# Ring of Honor TV – June 21, 2017: They STILL Don't Get It!

## Ring of Honor

Date: June 21, 2017

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana

This is the go home show for Best in the World which means...well I have no idea what it means actually. We've actually had a good build to the main event with Christopher Daniels defending the World Title against Cody but the rest of the show is a combination of a mystery or really poorly built. Let's get to it.

Jay Lethal welcomes us to the 300<sup>th</sup> episode. It feels like just yesterday that he was winning the TV Title on the second episode yet here we are. He's ready for 300 more episodes.

Opening sequence.

Silas Young/Beer City Bruiser vs. Jay Lethal/Bobby Fish

Fish and Bruiser get things going with the big man easily running him over. Bobby is smart enough to make Bruiser run the ropes over and over, eventually leaving Bruiser bent over sucking wind. Fans:

"HE'S BLOWN UP!" Well at least they know the lingo. It's off to Lethal to do the same thing with Bruiser taking a knee next to the ropes. Young offers him a beer, so Young and Fish make him run the ropes again, causing the beer to be spat through the ropes.

Back from a break with Young taking a beating for a change until Bruiser clotheslines Jay down. Bruiser takes a Samoan drop from Fish as everything breaks down. Young gets double teamed but Bruiser makes a diving save. A wheelbarrow suplex of all things drops Fish and it's Misery to put Lethal away at 9:12.

**Rating:** C-. I can appreciate them mixing the formula up a bit (Coming back from the break with the faces in control?) and Lethal vs. Young has potential. The problem continues to be Bruiser, who still feels like a glorified comedy character. Throw in Fish seemingly still finishing up with the company and it's hard to get into a good chunk of this match.

Daniels is ready to retain his title and carry ROH into the future. Jay Briscoe is STILL livid about losing that eight man tag (dude get a therapist) so Bully Ray and Mark Briscoe calm him down. They couldn't have done this weeks ago?

### Kingdom vs. The Boys

Kingdom jumps the Boys in the aisle and beat the heck out of them with the beatdown being on in full. They pull back a ringside mat so Matt Taven can load up a piledriver on the concrete but Dalton Castle comes out for the save. The Boys recover and grab a rollup just after the bell, followed by a double dropkick on Vinny. Things settle down with Taven getting in a cheap shot from behind to really take over. A reverse superplex drops Boy #1 and Marseglia's Swanton gives him the pin at 1:34.

To recap: Kingdom is having a challenge match against two guys from CMLL while the Boys are challenging for Ring of Honor Titles. The match was a complete squash, including the pre-match beatdown to make the Kingdom look great while the Boys look like the jobbiest jobbers this side of Brooklyn Brawler and Barry Horowitz. I don't

know if they think the CMLL team is more important or what but this was really, REALLY stupid.

Post match Jay Briscoe comes out to yell at Dalton but Mark and Bully break it up.

Video on Punishment Martinez.

#### Punishment Martinez vs. Joey Daddiego

Daddiego is easily shoved away and a clothesline takes him down again. A springboard flip splash crushes Daddiego again and the sitout chokeslam is good for the pin at 1:58.

Post match Daddiego's buddies Cheeseburger and Will Ferrara come out for the save but get beaten down as well. Jay White comes out to brawl with Martinez and clotheslines him to the floor. Good angle, though it does nothing for the pay per view as neither is on the card.

The Briscoes are fired up about 300 episodes.

Kevin Kelly and Cody have replaced Riccaboni on commentary.

#### Will Ospreay/Gedo/Hirooki Goto vs. Addiction/Hiroshi Tanahashi

Well...two of them are on the pay per view. Neither of their opponents are but NEW JAPAN right? Ospreay and Kazarian start things off and fight over a wristlock as we take a break less than a minute in. Dang it Ring of Honor that's not something you do! Back with Daniels cleaning house but Ospreay breaks up his springboard moonsault.

Ospreay and company take over on the floor and it's Goto chopping at Daniels in the corner. Something like a cutter into the middle buckle drops Goto though and the hot tag brings in Tanahashi. Ospreay and Gedo take stereo elbow drops but Goto is right there with a clothesline to break it up. Ospreay comes in with a Phenomenal Forearm and a standing shooting star gets two.

Tanahashi Sling Blades him though and we take a break. Back again with Ospreay diving onto Kazarian and Tanahashi, leaving Gedo to take a Blue Thunder Bomb. Everyone gets back inside again and the

Oscutter hits Goto by mistake. A Rock Bottom to Gedo sets up the High Fly Flow and the Best Moonsault Ever for the pin at 11:12.

**Rating:** B-. Well that happened. It does nothing for the pay per view, it wasn't exactly a memorable match and the biggest star in the match won't be doing anything more than special appearances for the company. The wrestling was good enough but, as usual, this felt like it was there for the live crowd instead of the TV audience, which is quite further up the food chain.

Post match Hangman Page comes in to jump Kazarian while Cody comes in to hit Daniels with Angel's Wings. Cody holds up the World Title.

We get some quick promos for the pay per view.

Marty Scurll is ready to take back the TV Title.

Jay Lethal needs to beat Silas Young.

Dalton Castle is outraged by the lack of Six Man Tag Team Titles.

Hangman Page promises to hurt Kazarian.

The Kingdom calls the CMLL guys Melvins.

The Young Bucks promise to superkick War Machine.

Christopher Daniels is ready to find out who is the Best in the World.

**Overall Rating:** D. So let's see: four matches, one of which actually built to the pay per view, two title challenges getting destroyed in the second, one that has nothing to do with the pay per view, and a showcase of New Japan wrestlers. Throw in a good chunk of the build taking place in the last two minutes thanks to some twenty second promos and you would almost never know that this was supposed to get you to want to pay \$34.99 for a pay per view where I can barely tell you three matches. As usual, Ring of Honor doesn't seem to have any idea how this stuff works, which really is hard to believe after so many years.

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# Ring of Honor TV – June 14, 2017: The Latest Invasion

## Ring of Honor

Date: June 14, 2017

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Colt Cabana, Ian Riccaboni

Best in the World is rapidly approaching and it would be nice to actually know something about the card other than just the main event. I know I've liked the fact that we know that match so far in advance but a little more than that would be nice. Hopefully it's not just throwing a bunch of names together and hoping for the best. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

### Young Bucks/Hangman Page vs. Roppongi Vice/Chuck Taylor

Taylor is Trent Barretta's other partner so this is kind of a mixture of two teams. It's a brawl to start with the Bullet Club being sent outside for a big flip dive. That earns Chuck a chant, followed by the BEST FRIENDS chant (Trent/Chuck's team name). Trent does a big run up and down the apron before slingshotting in for a stomp to the face.

Chuck adds a slow motion hilo and we get a big hug. Romero isn't

happy so he grabs Trent's leg as the announcers talk about either team being possible challengers for the Six Man Tag Team Titles, again showing how TOTALLY WORTHLESS those belts are. These teams are working together for possibly the first time ever in this promotion and they might be in line for a title shot? Vice and Chuckie have some communication issues but Romero clotheslines the Bucks down anyway. That means the Bucks might have to sell something so they start cleaning house with kicks and a flip dive as we take a break. Back with Romero being pulled off the apron so Chuckie can get the hot tag. A middle rope dropkick puts Page on the floor and Nick is suplexed into Matt. Everything breaks down again and Matt gets reverse Razor's Edged into a cutter for two. Romero suicide dives onto Nick and Adam, leaving Matt to eat a cradle piledriver for two more. Strong Zero is broken up but Chuck takes Romero's place to keep the wedge going. Nick Swantons onto Trent for the save and it's time for a bunch of kicks to the face.

The slingshot X Factor drops Trent again and a DDT on the apron makes things worse for Chuckie. More Bang for Your Buck gets two with Romero making the save for Chuckie, meaning it's time for the Superkick Party. Romero even shields Chuckie but he takes his sixth superkick anyway. The Meltzer Driver is broken up and a quick rotating piledriver is enough for the pin on Matt at 13:31.

**Rating:** B-. That was a lot of fun, assuming you can ignore the lack of the tagging and the Bucks in general, though I've ranted enough about them as of late. Chuck being wedged into the team is interesting, though that's a story that could have taken three months and they did it in a single night here. If nothing else it's nice to have someone from Kentucky who isn't a hillbilly or Eugene.

The winners celebrate.

The Kingdom is ready to beat up the Boys next week. This team is still stupid.

Video on Jay White, who is so glad to be here after working so hard. The New Japan Dojo is awesome if you didn't know that. He had a great match with Will Ospreay at War of the Worlds and now it's time to face Punishment Martinez, who interrupted after. The Martinez stuff was a simple promo style and I liked it more than what you usually get around here.

Rebellion vs. Jay White/Jonathan Gresham

Shane Taylor/Rhett Titus for Rebellion here. The Rebellion jumps White and Gresham in the aisle to start as Alex Shelley joins commentary. Double dives take the Rebellion down as a Jay White chant starts up. White throws Gresham at Titus and we hear Shelley talking about how awesome Search and Destroy is. I still don't quite know who is actually on that team at this point and I still don't know why it's supposed to be interesting.

The opening bell finally rings with the massive Taylor hammering on the tiny Gresham. Titus adds a gutwrench powerbomb and a splash for two. There's no White to tag so it's back to Taylor as we take a break. Back with Gresham still in trouble until Titus Bronco Busts Taylor by mistake.

White comes in to clean house as everything breaks down. Jay actually slams Taylor and a two man backsplash gets two. Caprice Coleman comes in with a spinebuster on Gresham so Shelley and Chris Sabin come in to take Coleman down. Jay dives onto the Rebellion and the match is thrown out (because SOMEONE INTERFERING IN FRONT OF THE REFEREE isn't a DQ anymore) at 8:30.

**Rating:** C. This has been my least favorite story in Ring of Honor for months now as these teams really aren't interesting. They're just kind of there for the sake of having a feud, which isn't enough to keep my interest most of the time. It doesn't help that there's nothing for these teams to do other than fight for a potential shot at the worthless Six Man Titles, which isn't enough to keep my interest.

Shelley issues a challenge for Best in the World: Search and Destroy vs. Rebellion with the losing team having to disband. Well that helps a lot.

Kazarian has a belt and wants to use it on Hangman Page.

Jay Briscoe isn't happy with the Boys costing him a tag match last week. Therefore, he wants to eat the Boys.

TV Title: Kushida vs. Marty Scurll

Scurll is defending and has to spin out of a wristlock to start. The fans decide that THIS is wrestling as the announcers talk about wrestlers debating what the top title is around here. Eh probably something from New Japan. Marty can't spin out of a front facelock so Kushida spins around on his back and mocks the bird pose.

Back from a break with Kushida kicking him in the head and adding a springboard chop. The champ quickly breaks a cross armbreaker but Kushida grabs a DDT into a failed fisherman's buster. Kushida misses a flip dive but is still able to reverse a chickenwing attempt into a cradle for two. They start trading the kicks until Kushida handsprings into the chickenwing.

The Hoverboard Lock goes on but Scurll spins out and snaps the finger. A hard clothesline turns Kushida inside out and both guys are down. Back up and Scurll calls for the chickenwing but the lights go out. They come back up in a hurry and someone is on the apron, wearing Scurll's villain costume. Of course it's Adam Cole and the distraction sets up a fisherman's buster into a small package to give Kushida the title at 11:32.

**Rating:** B. I was ready to be annoyed at the title change but the interference and advancement of Cole vs. the Bullet Club helps a lot. I'm never wild on throwing a title on a New Japan guy if they're not going to be around full time (which isn't happening here) but you have to get used to it at this point.

**Overall Rating:** B. This was easily the best TV show they've done in several weeks as they advance stories, change a title and help get ready for a pay per view. I had a good time with the show and it flew by, which really isn't the norm around here. Keep this stuff up and don't take major detours before a pay per view and things will be fine.

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# Ring of Honor TV – June 7, 2017: We Can Only Hope to Be Double Cheeseburgers

## Ring of Honor

Date: June 7, 2017

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Colt Cabana, Ian Riccaboni

We're continuing on the road to Best in the World and it's pretty clear that we're getting Cody vs. Christopher Daniels one on one for the ROH World Title. That makes sense after what we saw at War of the Worlds and they actually have some time to build this show up for a change. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

## Cheeseburger/Will Ferrara vs. War Machine

War Machine's IWGP Tag Team Titles aren't on the line. Cheeseburger forearms Rowe to start for no effect. That means it's off to Ferrara, who has exactly the same result. Rowe snaps off rapid fire headbutts to both guys before belly to belly suplexing them both at once. It's off to Hanson for a spinwheel kick, followed by easily blocking a bulldog from Cheeseburger.

Ferrara's hurricanrana sends Rowe into Hanson for a breather but that's about it for the offense at the moment. Cheeseburger gets planted but Ferrara eats something like a springboard spinning Hart Attack. One heck of a powerbomb drops Cheeseburger.....FOR TWO? That was a heck of a kickout and the fans went nuts as a result.

I can't say I blame them as my head snapped back on the kickout. That's quite impressive when I already knew it was coming and was surprised anyway. Cheeseburger comes back with the palm strikes (see, it's from Japan so it's a lot more effective) but gets tossed into one heck of a powerslam for the pin at 4:16.

**Rating:** C+. That's for the kickout alone, which was enough to actually surprise me. War Machine is a great choice for two power guys, which you don't see very often around this place. You can only have so many fast paced flippy guys so going the opposite direction makes for a nice change of pace. Not bad here and one of the more entertaining squashed I've seen in a good while.

War Machine talks about their history in Philadelphia and this building in particular. They won the ROH Tag Team Titles here for the first time and now they want them back. That means a call out to the Young Bucks, which could be an entertaining match.

We look back at the end of War of the Worlds, along with Cody's promo from last week to continue his issues with Daniels.

The title match is official.

Daniels says he's ready.

#### Los Ingobernables de Japon vs. Bully Ray/Briscoe Brothers/Dalton Castle

Castle is the only one here without a title as Sanada/Bushi/Evil are the IWGP Never Openweight Six Man Tag Team Champions and Naito is the Intercontinental Champion while Ray and the Briscoes are the ROH Six Man Champions, which certainly aren't knockoffs of the New Japan versions. Naito and Mark Briscoe get things going and it's already time for Naito to fake the dive and pose, naturally turning him into an even bigger face.

Now things get interesting as it's off to Bully vs. Naito and remember we're in the former ECW Arena. Bully runs the ropes and rolls into the Naito pose, followed by Naito running the ropes and then tagging out. The fans applaud the lack of wrestling and it's off to the smaller Bushi, who gets his shirt ripped open for a chop to the chest.

The rest of Los Ingobernables get the same, save for Naito who chills on the floor. Everything breaks down as Los Ingobernables tie Castle up ala Jack Gallagher. We settle down to Castle punching Evil in the face and getting his eyes raked for his efforts. Evil drops a backsplash for two and we take a break. Back with the hot tag bringing Mark in to clean house.

Everything breaks down again with Mark mostly missing a Blockbuster to Evil and Jay CRUSHING Naito with a suicide dive. Mark and Dalton

hit stereo What's Ups on Evil and Sanada but now it's time for tables. Bushi loads up some mist so the Boys come in to save Castle (who would have had his hair covered in mist), leaving Jay to take it instead. Naito grabs a rollup for the pin at 9:57.

**Rating:** C-. Well that was....interesting. This was much more about the performance than the match and I'm rarely a fan of that style. To be fair though, ROH would be crazy to not get Bully Ray out in front of an old ECW crowd in any way they could. There wasn't exactly a lot of wrestling here but that's about what you have to expect for the most part. Not bad but more of a performance than a match.

Jay yells at Castle and the Boys scam.

Adam Page is ready to end Adam Cole.

Punishment Martinez video. It's amazing how much better he's been since the Kevin Sullivan/BJ Whitmer garbage was dropped.

Jay Lethal is ready to team with Bobby Fish to face Beer City Bruiser/Silas Young in two weeks. Lethal didn't have to look far for Fish to help him but wants Bobby to leave Young for himself.

The announcers, now joined by Kevin Kelly, talk about the Young Bucks vs. Roppongi Vice coming up in Japan.

Roppongi Vice is ready for the Bucks and say it's illegal for the Bucks to attack them backstage like they've been doing. A six man is teased but when they open the door, SUPERKICKS! As usual, the Bucks are treated as the smartest, most amazing people in the promotion. Also ignore that this is far more about a match in JAPAN and not here.

#### Hangman Page vs. Adam Cole

They slug it out to start with Page being sent outside for a quick suicide dive. Back from a very early break with Page hitting his own dive and shouting "ADAM PAGE BAY BAY!" Cole misses an enziguri and a tabletop suplex (bridging fall away slam) gets two. Back up and Cole tells him to swing away and spits in Page's face, triggering the forearm exchange.

The fireman's carry neckbreaker gets two and Cole superkicks the knee. Cole grabs a Figure Four for a bit but Page is right next to the ropes. Page tries the slingshot lariat, only to walk into a superkick, followed by a Shining Wizard for a rather hot two. I mean

not Cheeseburger level but everyone strives to reach that level. Maybe one day they could even, dare I say, double Cheeseburger? Page takes his head off with a clothesline and we take another break.

Back again with Cole getting two off a sunset flip and hitting another superkick. That's no sold (of course) and Page gets two off a piledriver. Cole is right back up with three more superkicks and another Shining Wizard, only to have Page hit his own Last Shot for two. Starting with the piledriver, that whole sequence took less than eighty seconds. And people wonder why old school wrestlers criticize new stuff.

Page takes him to the apron for the Rite of Passage but eats a loud superkick. That's not enough though as Cole hits a CANADIAN DESTROYER FROM THE APRON TO THE FLOOR to pretty much kill Page dead. Back in and Cole tries a regular version but gets countered into the Rite of Passage (less than seventy five seconds between the Destroyer and the Rite of Passage connecting). A hard lariat sets up a second Rite of Passage for the pin at 13:29.

**Rating:** C+. The match was entertaining but GOOD GRIEF the rapid fire selling was making me long for an old cruiserweight match. A guy takes a piledriver, pops up and hits three superkicks and a Shining Wizard before taking his own finisher in about a minute and twenty seconds? Followed by a flipping piledriver ONTO THE FLOOR not even keeping someone down for a minute?

That Destroyer probably should have not only ended the match but kept someone off TV for two weeks selling it. The problem is simple: if that barely has any effect, it's a bit hard to buy any of this as being realistic. If the wrestling isn't realistic, why should I believe the stories are either? This isn't complicated: either don't do the big spots or stop trying to cram so much stuff into a match that isn't even fifteen minutes long. Let the stuff breathe and it's going to be a lot more memorable than the fact that you did ten superkicks.

Post match Page whips Cole with the belt until Kazarian makes the save to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. Just a run of the mill show here with the build to Best in the World continuing. Daniels vs. Cody officially being announced is a good thing as they actually have time to set things up now instead of cramming it all into one week. Now if only they

can keep up this trend instead of turning the show into some big New Japan showcase, everything should be fine.

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# Ring of Honor TV – May 31, 2017: Timing is Everything

## Ring of Honor

Date: May 31, 2017

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana

We're back to the regular shows this week after a quick trip to Japan (and back in time about three months). That means it's time to deal with the War of the Worlds fallout along with starting the build towards Best in the World on June 23. Christopher Daniels is still World Champion but it's hard to say who challenges him next. Let's get to it.

We look back at War of the Worlds where Adam Cole seemingly finished up with the promotion with a Bullet Club sendoff. Bullet Club leader

Kenny Omega came on screen and said this was the end of Cole's fairy tale because there was a new member of the team. This brought out Marty Scurll for the big beatdown to a very strong reaction.

Opening sequence.

Here's Bullet Club to open things up. The Young Bucks brag about what happened and say no one saw that coming, unless you watch their YouTube series. They bring out Scurll to talk about how it's time for a new era in the Bullet Club because they needed some villainy. Instead of a Superkick Party, let's have a tea party. Scurll: "Bring out the crumpets!"

Actually it's Adam Cole to a huge reaction. Cole thinks we should have story time instead of a tea party. He lists off his resume and talks about what a mistake it was for Bullet Club to make an enemy. Hangman Page says he's going to run Cole out of this company and a match is made for some point.

Clip of David Starr laying out Josh Woods. Who is Starr you ask? Eh not important as you're just supposed to know that coming in.

#### David Starr vs. Josh Woods

Despite being the heel, Starr is the hometown boy and has a bunch of monikers, including "Your Favorite Wrestler's Favorite Wrestler." Woods takes him into the corner and strikes away, earning quite a few boos. A springboard clothesline sends Woods outside but he grabs a fall away slam on the floor.

They head back in with Starr grabbing a DDT on the apron, followed by a hard clothesline. Starr's superkick gets two but Woods reverses into a LeBell Lock. Back up and they slug it out with Starr kneeing him in the face but getting pulled down into a heel hook. Woods takes him into the corner and grabs a kneebar for the tap at 4:35.

**Rating:** C. As I've asked every time he's been mentioned: WHO IS DAVID STARR??? I've seen him twice now and still have no idea who he is, why he attacked Woods or anything else, other than he's from Philadelphia. Maybe this was explained elsewhere but would it be asking too much to have the announcers tell us about that?

Video on Punishment Martinez.

Cole vs. Page next week.

Here are Silas Young and Beer City Bruiser for a chat. Young is coming off a victory over Jay Lethal (not mentioned until now) who he also attacked backstage after the loss. We saw the attack but not the win, which is why this company is so hard to follow at times. Young brags about his victory over Lethal and says he has Jay's number. Cue Lethal to say let's fight so Silas bails, setting up this.

### Beer City Bruiser vs. Jay Lethal

Bruiser punches away in the corner to start as Young is on commentary. Lethal dropkicks him outside and chops Bruiser up against the barricade for a running Cannonball. Back from a break with Bruiser hitting a running right hand in the corner as the fans think Bruiser still sucks. It's off to some shots to Lethal's knee but Jay is quickly out and kicking Bruiser in the face. Lethal can't hit the top rope elbow but can hit a dive to the floor, only to have Young start a brawl for the DQ at 10:13.

**Rating:** D+. I'm still not buying into the idea of Young as a star as they've teased pushing him multiple times not but haven't gone anywhere. Having him beat Lethal is fine but is there a reason that we only saw/heard about his win now, after they did the angle with the knee injury. The match was just a way to set up a rematch and that's fine.

Bobby Fish comes out to save Lethal.

We look back at the end of the War of the Worlds Main event with Daniels pinning Cody, who had Lethal in a Figure Four.

### Cody vs. Frankie Kazarian

Before the match, Cody says he wants a rematch with Daniels because, as Cabana said on the pay per view's commentary, the Figure Four should have had Lethal pinned. Kazarian goes right after him to start and we head outside for a Frankie dive. A swinging neckbreaker takes us to a break but we come back with Kazarian in trouble on the

floor.

Cody gets two off a delayed gordbuster and an Alabama Slam as the fans are split on their favorite. A butterfly arm crank keeps Kazarian down for a bit before it's time to stomp on the ankle. The Beautiful Disaster sends Kazarian outside, only to have him catch Cody with a crossbody as we take a second break.

Back again with Cody's kick to the ribs and another Beautiful Disaster for two. Kazarian grabs an Unprettier for two, followed by a cutter for the same. Not that it matters as Kazarian kicks him in the face and tries a neckbreaker but gets caught in Cross Rhodes for the pin at 17:35.

**Rating:** C+. This was an easy way to keep Cody looking strong before what is likely a one on one rematch for the title against Daniels at Best in the World. Beating the best friend is a classic idea, even if it's basically the same story they did in the previous match. You can't expect them to come up with another idea so soon though.

Hangman Page comes in to beat on Kazarian but Daniels runs in for the save to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. I think I could go for more of this building to the pay per view several weeks in advance. I've never understood how their taping schedule works but at this rate they'll have three weeks to build to a pay per view, which actually feels like something that could work for a change. Good show this week with stories being advanced and the build towards what is likely the World Title match being started.

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# Ring of Honor TV – May 24, 2017: Here We Go Again

## Ring of Honor

Date: May 24, 2017

Location: Korakuen Hall, Tokyo, Japan

Attendance: 1,636/1,271

Commentators: Rocky Romero, Kevin Kelly

We're less than ten days removed from the War of the Worlds pay per view and last week was a stand alone episode. Therefore, this week it's...a series of matches from the Honor Rising event back in February. In other words, these matches have nothing to do with anything going on at the moment, other than featuring New Japan stars. Let's get to it.

Ian Riccaboni welcomes us to the show via voiceover.

Never Openweight Six Man Tag Team Titles: Delirious/Tiger Mask/Jushin Thunder Liger vs. Los Ingobernables de Japon

Los Ingobernables (Bushi/Evil/Sanada) are defending as we start with five New Japan wrestlers and the ROH booker who hasn't been seen on TV for probably over a year. We're joined in progress with Tiger Mask coming in and taking over on Bushi via some choking with a shirt (despite Tiger being a face).

It's off to Jushin to face Sanada as the announcers continue to treat everyone as people we should know without offering much of an explanation. The villains start ripping as Liger's mask with Evil getting two off a backplash. Sanada misses a charge and gets sent

outside, allowing the hot tag to Tiger Mask for a dropkick.

We take a break and come back with Bushi neckbreaking Tiger for two, only to have Delirious get the tag a few seconds later.

Everything breaks down in a hurry and Delirious gets Sanada in a cobra clutch. The champs start triple teaming him for the save though and it's a Backstabber into a belly to back for two.

Delirious grabs some rollups for two each on Sanada but Evil chairs Delirious in the face, setting up a dragon sleeper to retain the titles at 10:34 (total match time).

**Rating:** C. This was good enough for most of a ten minute match with people we're just supposed to know because they're in New Japan and if we watch Ring of Honor, we clearly watch New Japan. These titles have caused Ring of Honor to create their own version and the waste of time that came with them so I'm not too fond of the originals in the first place.

#### Never Openweight Title: Hirooki Goto vs. Punishment Martinez

Martinez is challenging and we start from the beginning for a change. Goto gets run over to start but avoids a big stomp to give us a standoff. A quick trip to the floor goes badly for Goto as Martinez hits a good looking spin kick back inside. Goto hits one of his own in the corner though, followed by a kick to the chest to drop Martinez again.

It's time for the forearm exchange/slow down/second forearm exchange until Goto hits the fireman's carry flip onto the knee (the move that Mauro Ranallo always told us that Goto invented during AJ Styles matches). Back from a break with Martinez getting two off a clothesline and going up top. Goto bails to the floor to take the over the top dive, followed by a spinwheel kick from the top. A suplex is broken up with a headbutt and Martinez is stunned but not badly enough to get kicked in the chest. The chokeslam is countered though and Goto hits the GTR (Eye of the Hurricane onto the knee) to retain at 10:49.

**Rating:** C+. Good power match here with the same complaint I had earlier. Martinez looked like a player here, even if there was no

reason to believe he was going to win the title. This is basically the tough man title so Martinez was a very good choice for the challenger here.

### Chaos vs. Bullet Club

Chaos: Briscoe Brothers/Will Ospreay/Kazuchika Okada

Bullet Club: Cody/Young Bucks/Kenny Omega

Since we're coming up on Supercard of Honor, the Bucks keep chanting DELETE. We get the big Okada vs. Omega showdown to start but, of course, there's no contact made and it's off to Mark vs. Cody. Mark is quickly annoyed with Cody's antics so it's off to Jay, who takes an elevated dropkick from Matt. A few right hands get Jay out of trouble and Ospreay gets a chance, only to have to deal with the Young Bucks, who you know aren't going to take much offense.

Ospreay sends them outside and does the backflip into the pose, only to load up a very early Meltzer Driver. That's broken up just as quickly though and Ospreay sends the brothers outside again. A kick to the head sends Ospreay outside and we take a break. Back with Ospreay being thrown into three boots in the corner but avoiding a superkick. That's it for his good luck though as four straight superkicks set up a springboard 450/moonsault combination for two.

Omega comes in and grabs a chinlock for two arm drops (you don't see that every day) as Ospreay is in trouble. A suplex is countered into a Stunner and a tornado DDT allows the hot tag off to Okada. The Bucks aren't impressed (of course) so Okada punches them outside, followed by an over the shoulder backbreaker to Cody. Everything breaks down and the Briscoes come in to clean house as we take a break.

Back with Mark hitting a suicide dive, followed by a Cactus Jack elbow off the apron. Cody is right back up though and superplexes Ospreay onto the big pile. That leaves Omega vs. Okada (who looks like he just got out of the shower and doesn't even appear to be sweating) for the huge strike off with Omega getting the better of it. Both finishers miss though and it's the Bucks superkicking Okada

down.

Omega and the Bucks get into a Three Stooges eye poke sequence on each other before a triple superkick drops Okada again. Cue Ospreay to kick Omega in the head, only to get powerslammed down by Cody. The Briscoes come back in to clean house with a superplex into the Froggy Bow on Omega.

The Rainmaker is broken up but Ospreay is right back in there to catch Kenny with the one man Spanish Fly. Will gives Cody a Falcon Arrow for two but misses the shooting star. The spinning kick to the head connects for Ospreay, only to have the Ocutter countered into Cross Rhodes for the pin at 20:16.

**Rating:** B+. That certainly worked. You knew what they were going to do here as soon as you saw who was in here and that's all that mattered. Omega vs. Okada was a very fresh match at this point and it's one of the few things that's actually well timed here as we're less than a month away from their rematch. Anyway, really good stuff here, which isn't exactly a surprise.

We're off the air with two minutes left in the hour.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This one ENTIRELY depends on what kind of wrestling show you were looking for here. If you're looking for an hour of no frills and good action, you're going to like this. If you're looking for Ring of Honor, just wait until next week. In other words, the taping cycle curse strikes again because, for whatever reason that I've never heard, we can't just move the new shows a bit closer to the pay per view. No instead we NEEDED to see a New Japan showcase. I still don't get why this company works this was and I don't see it changing anytime soon.

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# Ring of Honor TV – May 17, 2017: Back in Five Minutes

## Ring of Honor

Date: May 17, 2017

Location: William J. Myers Pavilion, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Colt Cabana, Ian Riccaboni

And now for something completely different because we have a post-pay per view show. We'll likely get to the next batch of TV tapings in three more weeks but for now we have a one off show with the Six Man Tag Team Titles on the line in the main event. While that might sound entertaining, the Rebellion is getting the shot. Now that your interest has been crushed, let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

### Will Ferrara/Cheeseburger vs. Chris Sabin/Jonathan Gresham

Didn't Ferrara and Cheeseburger split like three times now? Before the match, Alex Shelley tells us that he's injured thanks to the Rebellion so Gresham is his replacement at the moment. Shelley puts Gresham over as a great talent who deserves a chance to get over. Gresham and Ferrara go to the mat to start with an early standoff so it's off to Sabin vs. Cheeseburger, the latter of whom has to tag himself in.

The threat of the palm strike scares Sabin a bit so Cheeseburger hits him in the face a few more times. Sabin and Gresham both get kicked out to the floor but Cheeseburger's dive is pulled out of the

air. Gresham dives onto all three though and we take a break. Back with Sabin cranking on an abdominal stretch/Octopus Hold hybrid to make Ferrara scream.

Everything breaks down with Sabin giving Ferrara a hanging neckbreaker off the apron to the floor. Back inside, Sabin enziguris Cheeseburger into a German suplex from Gresham, only to have Cheeseburger come back with the palm strikes. Not that it matters as Gresham grabs an Octopus Hold to make Cheeseburger tap at 9:38 with Ferrara watching from the floor.

**Rating:** C-. Just a match to further the split between Cheeseburger and Ferrara, though as usual most of these characters seem to be there for the sake of filling in both time and roster spots instead of being interesting. The matches are fine enough but they're nothing I ever look forward to seeing and I rarely get excited over them.

Ferrara walks out on Cheeseburger.

Jay Lethal was getting ready for a commercial but Silas Young came in and beat him down, especially focusing on his leg. I'm not sure if this is a major downgrade for Lethal or a major upgrade for Young.

#### Silas Young vs. Bobby Fish

Speaking of downgrades, what the heck has happened to Fish? He looked like a World Title contender and now I barely remember his last important match. Young says he won't make any excuses for his failures, unlike Fish, who will be a huge failure in this match. Feeling out process to start with Fish's headlock not working as Young hits a good looking dropkick. A very quick kneebar sends Silas outside and we take a break.

Back with Young hitting a slingshot double stomp and laying in the trash talking. A springboard clothesline drops Fish again as this has been almost one sided. Back in and they trade some running shots with Fish getting the better of it, only to have a double clothesline drop them both.

Silas grabs a cutter for two as Colt talks about Fish going after the knee but not sticking with it like the old Bobby would do. Hokey smoke: an actual analysis. Silas shrugs off some more shots to the head and grabs a hanging neckbreaker for two. More kicks to the knee give Fish a breather but the Beer City Bruiser offers a distraction. Silas takes off his knee brace and knocks Fish cold for the pin at 13:39.

**Rating:** C+. Not bad here as Young continues to get better and better every single week. I can't believe it but I'm starting to get into the Young/Bruiser team as they actually work well together. Fish continues to fall through the floor though, which really does seem to be setting up something (possibly a heel turn, as almost always seems to be the answer). Nice match here.

Dalton Castle lost once but he's ready to become World Champion.

Six Man Tag Team Titles: Rebellion vs. Briscoe Brothers/Bully Ray

The Briscoes and Ray are defending and Alex Shelley is on commentary. It's Rhett Titus/Caprice Coleman/Shane Taylor for the Rebellion here with King nowhere in sight. Mark headlocks Titus to start but one heck of a left hand puts Briscoe down. A brawl breaks out in a hurry though and we take a break with the champs in control.

Back with Titus still in trouble but he's still able to save Coleman from What's Up. Taylor and those terrifying thighs come in to take over for all of two seconds and it's Jay getting beaten down in the heel corner. Taylor's hard clothesline gets two as Coleman dances on the apron.

We hit the big man standard in the form of a bearhug and take a break. Back with Shane missing a charge in the corner and getting hit in the face, allowing the hot tag to Bully. That means a string of clotheslines before it's back to Mark to really clean house. Jay adds the big suicide dive but the Froggy Bow hits knees. Not that it matters as 3D ends Titus at 17:01.

**Rating:** D+. Hey, did you know the Rebellion sucks? I didn't know if

we had made that clear enough yet but they certainly do. There's no reason to believe that they're going to win anything and it doesn't help that they're just another team now. It completely defeats the point of the characters but that's never stopped ROH before.

Coleman gets powerbombed through a table to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C-. Just a run of the mill post-pay per view show here which is all that you can expect. They put in whatever they can find to fill in the time here, which makes for some rather skippable shows. I'm sure we'll have a few more of these and then we'll get to the important stuff, which means the next few weeks really don't mean too much. I'm really not a fan of these shows but at least they're quick.

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