

Impact Wrestling – May 10, 2018: Get A Louder Bell



IMG Credit: Impact Wrestling

Impact Wrestling

Date: May 10, 2018

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentator: Josh Matthews

We're still dealing with the Redemption fallout while also starting the build towards Slammiversary. Tonight's big deal is Eli Drake cashing in his Feast or Fired briefcase for the World Title shot against Pentagon Jr. You also have Austin Aries roaming around near the title and some other people aren't far behind. Let's get to it.

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

We open with Josh Matthews in the studio talking about Sami Callihan wrecking a recent ceremony in Don Callis' honor. Apparently Sami is livid at Callis for throwing in the towel to save Eddie Edwards at the WrestleCon show and wanted revenge.

There's currently a meeting going on regarding Sami's future. We'll cut into whatever to let you know the outcome.

It's off to the ceremony in Toronto with Anthony Carelli (Santino Marella) giving Callis an award. Cue Sami to attack Callis and beat him

down while busting him open. Fine angle, but Callis has been on camera around here for less than a month. That's quite a lot of faith to bet on fans caring about something like this.

The regular opening video talks about Drake vs. Pentagon.

Opening sequence.

Andrew Everett/DJZ vs. LAX

Santana and DJZ start things off with a rather speedy exchange until Ortiz comes in for some double teaming to take over. It's off to Everett for a failed fireman's carry gutbuster as Santana is keeping his eyes open for anyone trying to interfere. Santana's cutter gives Everett two and Josh gives us updates on the meeting: it's still going on. I'll take nothing new Josh over nitwit/stupid/self praising Josh. Everett rolls over into a kick to Santana before rolling over to DJZ for the tag.

DJZ sends them together so Ortiz DDTs Santana in that spot that is still so stupidly contrived. A double kick takes DJZ down but a double kick takes LAX down. Everything breaks down and DJZ tornado DDTs Ortiz, only to walk into a Santana superkick. Everett hits a very good looking top rope Asai moonsault to drop Ortiz but Ortiz is up a few moments later for a suicide flip dive. The Street Sweeper is broken up and DJZ rolls Ortiz up for the pin at 8:28.

Rating: B-. This is a good idea as there's only so much you can do with a two or three team tag division. Everett and DJZ aren't breaking the mold or anything we haven't seen before but the division needs bodies right now and there's nothing wrong with that. LAX's downward spiral is interesting and I'm kind of curious to see what's behind the whole thing. Nice match too.

Grado is still waiting on his girlfriend but Joseph Park says he smells a rat. Cue Katie Lea Burchill/Winter (now known as Katarina) name she's going by now to hug Grado and say she'll see "James" (Park) later.

Austin Aries wants Eli Drake to win tonight because he knows he can beat him.

Rohit Raju vs. Grado

Before Josh can say it: WHO IS THE DESI HIT SQUAD AND WHY SHOULD I CARE? Raju jumps Grado while he gives Katarina his hat but can't suplex the rather rotund one. Some running boots to the face in the corner give Raju two and we hit the chinlock. Grado is back with a side slam and a falling splash, which Josh calls unique. That would be true, if Ortiz didn't do the same thing in the previous match.

We go split screen for a second to show that the meeting is still going. Grado takes too much time with his dancing punches and gets kned in the face. A swinging fisherman's neckbreaker gets two but Grado is right back with an elbow to the head and the Cannonball for the pin at 5:39.

Rating: D. I never cared for Grado in the first place and now I'm not sure if he's supposed to be a heel or a face. By nature he's a face but if you put a hot manager with anyone, it's going to make them a heel almost by default. Unless Katarina is with him to stay in the country or just using him or something, I'm not sure I get this.

Joseph Park is the latest X victim. Given that one of his finishers is called Weapon X, Cage is a possible suspect.

Video on Tessa Blanchard, who has wrestling in her blood and has to be the best.

Eli Drake and Scott Steiner are in the back with Drake saying tonight, he becomes the new belt collector. Steiner doesn't like the idea of Drake saying he'll do this himself.

Drago vs. Aerostar vs. Taiji Ishimori vs. El Hijo Del Fantasma

Lucha rules and the winner gets a future X-Division Title shot. Now that's all I ask. Ishimori and Fantasma are sent to the floor in about thirty seconds, leaving Drago and Aerostar to trade covers. The other two replace them in a hurry and a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gets two on Ishimori. A good looking middle rope moonsault to the floor drops Drago and we take a break.

Back with Drago kicking Fantasma in the mask and hitting an ankle

scissors to take Fantasma down again. Ishimori comes back in with a Regal roll for two on Drago. All four get back in and Fantasma superkicks Drago down. Ishimori drops Fantasma as well and all four are down for a bit. Drago is sent outside for a dive from Ishimori, followed by a dive each from Fantasma and Aerostar. Back in and Aerostar powerbombs Ishimori into the corner for two but the Thrill of the Kill gives Fantasma the pin on Aerostar for the pin at 16:43.

Rating: C+. This didn't have the energy or the pace as last week's six man but thank goodness they did something about giving us a new #1 contender. You can't have these guys out there doing all kinds of crazy stuff and popping the crowd and not move them up, at least a little bit. Good match here, as you probably expected.

Eddie Edwards goes into the meeting and demands that Callihan not be fired. Management tells him to do what he has to do away from the Impact Zone.

From House of Hardcore in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Moose vs. Kongo Kong

Joined in progress with Moose hitting a dropkick but getting thrown to the floor. Kong follows him out and whips Moose into the barricade as Josh talks about Callihan and Edwards over and over. Kong's waistlock doesn't get him very far so he sends Moose shoulder first into the post. Moose switches to a more simplistic offense by shouldering him down but Jimmy Jacobs comes in with a chair for the DQ at 6:08.

Rating: D. Leave it to Kong to pull the good match streak to a grinding halt. I still don't care for these matches from outside promotions but at least they have something here where it's continuing a storyline with people we know. Unfortunately one of those people is Kong and I still have no clue why he's getting so much time, unless he works for dirt cheap.

KM wants Fallah Bahh to become the best man that he can and we get shots of them screaming into the camera.

Montage of KM training Bahh to make him lose weight while eating various bad food. Bahh passes out.

From Pro Wrestling Noah and if what I can find is correct, this is from June 4, 2017.

Brian Cage vs. Takashi Sugiura

Joined in progress with Cage hitting a delayed vertical suplex, followed by a standing moonsault for two. Josh: "If the Avengers ever needed a new member, and they do after Infinity War, they should get Brian Cage." That's getting rather close to a spoiler. Cage hits the apron suplex for two more but Sugiura knees him down and hits some running knees in the corner.

A superplex attempt is broken up but Sugiura snaps off a top rope hurricanrana to put both guys down. There's a buckle bomb to drop Sugiura and an F5 gets two. A German suplex and running knee give Sugiura the same but Cage blasts him with the Tornado Claw for two more. The Drill Claw is good for the pin on Sugiura at 7:49.

Rating: C. They really couldn't find another match from within the last ten months and had to go this far back? The World Tour idea is fine but come up with something a little more recent. The match was watchable, though telling me who Sugiura was would have been nice, albeit completely beyond Josh's capabilities. As someone who doesn't watch Noah, I have no idea if that was a big, middle of the road or meaningless win for Cage, because I don't know if Sugiura is an all time great, a midcarder, or a jobber. I'm sure I could find it, but Josh and Impact need to be telling us these things. Why that's so much to ask, I'm not sure.

From Destination X 2009, Suicide wins the X-Division Title.

Allie is looking in a mirror and has flashbacks to last week. She finds a doll with a note pinned to it and opens it up. While we don't see what it says, Allie looks a little disturbing when she looks in the mirror, almost like something is trying to take control of her.

Impact Wrestling World Title: Eli Drake vs. Pentagon Jr.

Pentagon is defending and Steiner isn't here with Drake. They trade catchphrases to start and Drake sends him into the corner to stand on his head. Back to back Sling Blades give Pentagon two as Aries is watching in the back, banana in hand. A powerslam cuts Pentagon off as we're told that next week, House of Hardcore will present Edwards vs. Callihan in a street fight. At least there's a storyline reason for going to another promotion this time.

We hit the chinlock for a bit before Pentagon headscissors Drake out to the floor. A superkick to the ribs knocks Drake out of the air and the Codebreaker out of the corner gets two. The Gravy Train doesn't work and Drake misses a top rope Lionsault, allowing Pentagon to hit the Pentagon Driver for the pin at 7:09.

Rating: D+. Uh, where's the rest of this match? Pentagon defends against a guy who was World Champion about three months ago and it's barely hyped up and seven minutes long with a clean finish? We didn't deserve a little more than that for a match like this? Anyway at least the briefcases are already done instead of having them hanging over our heads like the Money in the Bank briefcases so score one for Impact.

Overall Rating: C+. This show was on a roll in the first hour and then rolled off a cliff in the second with some bad matches and lame ideas that didn't go anywhere. They're doing a better job of setting up the other promotions' matches as they seem to have a point now, at least some of the time. The show was watchable but they need to put it together in a better order to really make things work. That and get a louder bell. Seriously I had to rewind four matches tonight to hear where they started. Get something louder.

Results

Andrew Everett/DJZ b. LAX – Victory roll to Ortiz

Grado b. Rohit Raju – Cannonball

El Hijo Del Fantasma b. Aerostar, Taiji Ishimori and Drago – Thrill of the Kill to Aerostar

Moose b. Kongo Kong via DQ when Jimmy Jacobs interfered

Brian Cage b. Takashi Sugiura – Drill Claw

Pentagon Jr. b. Eli Drake – Pentagon Driver

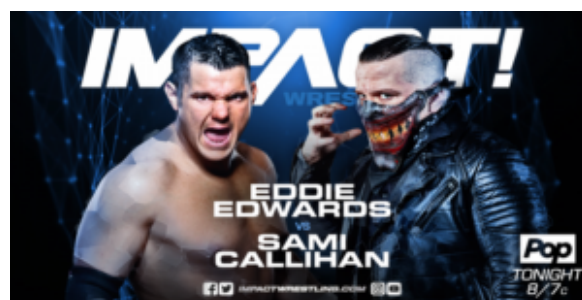
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Impact Wrestling – March 1, 2018: If You Can't Figure This Out...



IMG Credit: Impact Wrestling

Impact Wrestling

Date: March 1, 2018

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, Sonjay Dutt

It's the week before the big Crossroads show and that means it's time to build things up a bit. Next week's main event will see Austin Aries defending the World Title against Johnny Impact in what could be an awesome match. Other than that though we're likely in for more build towards Abyss vs. Kongo Kong, because that's what we need to see. Let's get to it.

[Need a recap? Here's last week's review.](#)

The opening video looks at Ethan Carter III and Tyrus reuniting and then splitting up in very short order. That's the smart move considering Carter is leaving.

Opening sequence.

Ethan Carter III vs. Tyrus

Carter runs his mouth (as is his custom) and is promptly shoved out to the floor. Back in and Carter gets shoved outside again as Josh talks about all the other companies they'll be visiting soon. Carter stalls a lot, including messing with a fan's phone, before going back in to have his arm cranked.

Chops and running clotheslines have no effect on Tyrus and it's Carter being crushed in the corner. A charge misses though and Carter gets in a few shots to the back. Carter's middle rope ax handle drops Tyrus and we hit the cravate. Tyrus shrugs it off and hits a corner splash before hitting his own 1%er. The Tongan Death Grip slam is enough to end Carter at 8:13.

Rating: D+. Assuming this is it for Carter, I'll give this one a break with him leaving the company for blacker and yellower pastures. It's certainly a better way to have him go out than having Dixie Carter grab his foot and beg him to stay. I'm not sure on Tyrus being the one to get

the rub but it's better than having Carter just leave.

Joseph Park is going to fight Kongo Kong tonight on his own, but neither he nor his family seems to give him much of a chance.

OVE and Sami Callihan say this is no longer fun and games. Violence takes place tonight.

Josh and Sonjay are in a studio to preview the rest of the show. Better than them saying they're ringside every week.

El Hijo de Fantasma vs. Braxton Sutter

Hijo's Latin American Championship isn't on the line and there's no entrance for Sutter. Hijo shoulders him down to start as Josh plugs the network, featuring a bunch of names that aren't around anymore. Some clotheslines put Fantasma down for two but the chinlock doesn't last very long. A backbreaker gives Fantasma two and a jumping superkick puts Sutter on the floor for the hard suicide dive. Back in and Sutter powerbombs him for two with his feet on the ropes. Not that it matters as Fantasma's Thrill of the Hunt (Samoan Driver) is good for the pin at 5:14.

Rating: C-. This felt like angle advancement more than anything else as Fantasma is now a big deal around here because he's a big deal in AAA. Sutter on the other hand...what happened? He and Allie should have been moved up several notches last year off the wedding angle but instead we're here, seeing him losing in five minutes. I'm sure this was the best possible use for him though.

Post match Sutter yells about how Allie isn't here because she ruins lives. He's the biggest star in the company...and cue Brian Cage to wreck Sutter in short order.

Matt Sydal wants to share his spiritual adviser with the world.

Sydal is ready to win the X-Division Title next week but Taiji Ishimori comes in with his own scroll, asking if Sydal will make it title for title. No answer is given.

Kongo Kong vs. Joseph Park

Park goes after him but gets dropped with a single shot to the chest. Kong hammers away in the corner and Park's headbutt knocks himself down. The top rope splash puts Park away at 2:14.

Post match Jimmy Jacobs gets in while Kong chokes Park. They still want Abyss and this is just getting started.

The Cult of Lee is having a party when the Mumbai Cats come in. After making fun of the masked men and not letting them have a drink, Konnan comes in to wonder why the Cult of Lee isn't doing cartwheels in Wonder Woman bikinis. They say Konnan is here before and if you don't know what's coming, you haven't been watching wrestling long. LAX throws Lee and Konley into the pool.

Alberto El Patron should be #1 contender. Well to be fair he hasn't had a World Title match in like two weeks at this point.

Rosemary vs. Hania

Rosemary wastes no time in hammering away at the chest and gets two off a clothesline. A very early Red Wedding attempt is broken up but Rosemary is right back up with her figure four neck lock over the ropes. Hania gets dropped with a dropkick and a t-bone suplex for two. A spear into the Red Wedding is good for the pin on Hania at 3:13. Total squash.

Rating: D. Odds are that's it for Hania and other than a look, I'm not sure what else she had to offer. This was complete destruction with Hania getting in absolutely nothing, which should tell you that she's either done or not exactly thought of in the first place. Rosemary getting back towards the title is a good idea though and she should be going after the title in short order.

Post match Rosemary says Hania was just a puppy and now it's time to bring the Knockouts Title back to the shadow. Rosemary dubs herself the Alpha B**** but here's the returning Taya Valkyrie to disagree. Taya says the only truth in that is the B**** part but it should be Taya's, not Alpha. They both go to the apron but Taya jumps her from behind. The Road

to Valhalla on the ramp drops Rosemary.

This week's classic clip: Eddie Edwards wins the World Title from Bobby Lashley.

We get a somewhat creepy video on Laurel Van Ness' rocky road, including her near wedding to Braxton Sutter, going crazy, nearly marrying Grado, and now her commitment ceremony to the Knockouts Title.

KM, the minister for the ceremony, brings the title, with a bow tie, to the ring. Laurel comes out in a dress with the lipstick being all over the place as usual. She wants him to get to the good part, meaning the objections. Cue Braxton, now in a neck brace, to interrupt. He was dropped on his head earlier and Laurel flashed before his eyes. A year ago, he made a huge mistake when he left her at the altar. He proposes, but she screams NO over and over. KM: "EPIC FAIL BRO!" Laurel asks for more objections and even shouts a request for them. Cue Allie, in a black body suit which isn't really necessary as she's sneaking in, to jump Laurel and ruin the ceremony.

The announcers preview next week's show.

Video on Austin Aries vs. Johnny Impact for the World Title next week.

Sami Callihan vs. Eddie Edwards

Eddie sends him outside for the suicide dive five seconds in but Sami rolls back in to hit one of his own eleven seconds in. Eddie hits another though and we get to thirty seconds on the replays. Some chops rock Sami and OVE is ejected for a distraction. Sami gets in an apron kick to the face though and we take a break. Back with Eddie fighting out of a chinlock and chopping away, but getting caught in a piledriver on the apron. Since this is a regular TV match though, Sami doesn't even bother to cover.

Eddie fights out of something like a standing Crossface and kicks Sami in the face to catch him on top. A superplex brings Sami back down for no cover as Eddie can't follow up. The Backpack Stunner gets two but Sami is right back with the running knee in the corner. A slingshot suplex

neckbreaker gives Sami two and an exchange of kicks to the head puts both guys down. Sami loads up a powerbomb but Eddie backdrops into a cradle for the pin at 15:04.

Rating: C+. I liked this better than most Sami matches as it actually felt like a match. I'm still not sure why Sami and OVE are going after Lashley and Eddie but I'm guessing it's something to do with the team being insane. Eddie winning makes sense as it's not like a member of the team losing a singles match to a former World Champion is a huge blow.

Callihan gives him a double underhook shoulder breaker and we cut to the back where OVE beats up Lashley. Back in the arena, Sami puts a chair on Eddie's chest and hits it with a baseball bat...but the bat keeps going and HITS EDDIE IN THE FACE (with a sickening sound) to end the show. That shot to the face wasn't planned, mainly because it's about as dangerous of a thing as you could have done.

Overall Rating: C. You can see where they're going with a lot of stuff and they set up next week's show well enough. The World Title match didn't need a ton of hype as that's big enough on its own standing. The wrestling wasn't anything great here but at least we're getting towards the big show. If that works, then this doesn't matter nearly as much. Pretty standard buildup show here and I can settle for that.

Results

Tyrus b. Ethan Carter III – Tongan Death Grip slam

El Hijo de Fantasma b. Braxton Sutter – The Thrill of the Hunt

Kongo Kong b. Joseph Park – Top rope splash

Rosemary b. Hania – Red Wedding

Eddie Edwards b. Sami Callihan – Rollup

Remember to check out my new forum at steelcageforums.com and pick up the 2018 Updated Version of the History of the WWE Championship in e-book or paperback. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2018/01/26/new-book-kbs-history-of-the-wwe-championship-2018-updated-version/>

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Wrestler of the Day – January 23: Nigel McGuinness

We'll head over to England today for a guy I wish got a longer mainstream exposure than he received: Nigel McGuinness.

We'll start in Nigel's first stop in America: the Heartland Wrestling Association out of Cincinnati, which used to be a WWF developmental territory. You might recognize Nigel's opponent, but the opponent's second is even more famous at the moment: HWA Champion Jon Moxley, currently known as Dean Ambrose. I'm not sure when the match took place, but it's either between May 9, 2006 – September 12, 2006, December 30, 2006 – January 2, 2007, or January 6, 2010 – July 14, 2010. My goodness I need to do better research on this stuff.

Nigel McGuinness vs. Sami Callihan

Callihan is rather rotund here and goes after a fan at ringside with a sign he doesn't like. He also has Pepper Parks in his corner who joins commentary with Moxley. I'm thinking this is in Moxley's first reign, putting this in 2006. Nigel is definitely a face here. Moxley starts doing an imitation of an old school commentator in a funny bit while giving Callihan a 99.9% chance of winning. He even describes Sami as

Vader at 14 years old. They fight over a wristlock to start with Nigel taking over with an armbar.

Back up and Callihan grabs a headlock but Nigel flips forward over his back into a headlock of his own. Moxley's advice on how to get out of the hold: "PUNCH HIM IN THE FACE!" Nigel no sells a lot of Sami's fat man offense and knocks him to the floor in a big crash. Back in and they trade some slaps before Callihan hits a running boot to the face to take over. We hit the chinlock as Moxley espouses the merits of the Crew faction.

Callihan sits on Nigel's chest for two (Moxley: "Straight off the Best of Earthquake!") but McGuinness comes back with a knee for two as frustration is beginning to set in. A slight miscue sets up a HARD clothesline for two on Sami as the Crew is getting nervous on commentary. They're nervous enough that they get up for a distraction, allowing Sami to slam Nigel off the top and drop a big elbow for two.

Now it's Sami going up but he gets caught in the Tower of London (hanging Diamond Cutter) for two as Moxley makes the save. Another distraction lets Parks take Nigel down but Sami only gets two. The referee gets bumped and Moxley comes in with a Boss Man Slam to Nigel, giving Sami a VERY close two. Parks throws in a chain and that's finally enough to pin McGuinness.

Rating: C+. I liked this far better than I was expecting though that's mainly due to Moxley. It's clear that he's going to be a big star in the future and the commentary was absolutely hilarious. Callihan was more of a comedy act here and given his size there's nothing surprising about that. Parks was just kind of there but a three man team is better than two.

Nigel would move on to ROH around 2003 and since video of that era is hard to find, this is as good as I can find from around that time. From Joe vs. Punk II.

Chad Collyer/Nigel McGuinness vs. BJ Whitmer/Dan Maff

Collyer/Nigel have Ricky Steamboat with them while

Whitmer/Maff have Mick Foley. It's the whole wrestling vs. hardcore jazz. Steamboat and Foley started to hook up in WCW but I guess they figured that one of the best heels vs. one of the best faces would make too much sense and therefore money so they bailed on it immediately. Steamboat asks the four wrestlers to get on the floor because he wants to talk to Foley.

The audio here is AWFUL and I had no idea what Steamboat was talking about for part of it. Ok now I can a bit. The fans are saying speak up. Last night Foley issued a challenge for this tag match and Steamboat says it's not about skill but it's about the style the guys use. Steamboat calls it garbage wrestling because you use things like garbage cans in it. "In fact Mick I got an e-mail today from the Chicago sanitation department that says when your next novel fails they have a job for you cleaning up the garbage." BURN.

Foley gets on the mic and makes fun of Steamboat for being too serious and not an entertaining talker. Foley talks about Steamboat winning the title in 1989 right here in Chicago from Ric Flair (Chi-Town Rumble, well worth checking out). Steamboat may be the greatest pure wrestler of all time. I'm not sure "may be" is needed here. However, saying someone is the greatest pure wrestler of all time "is like saying someone is the greatest softcore adult actor of all time."

Foley defends hardcore wrestling because it's about toughness and giving it all you have. He wants to know how long Steamboat plans to ride Flair's coattails (even though Flair is a washed up loser). The fans are split here. Steamboat comes back with I know Flair, I've worked with Flair and you Mick Foley are no Ric Flair. Foley blasts Flair, saying he has

a banana nose, orange teeth and looks like Barbara Bush in drag.

Steamboat says those were funny when Funk said them 20 years ago. Foley comes up with some new ones, like Flair says the same things time after time and carries Batista's bags and sucked up to HHH. Oh and Flair has botox. This is HILARIOUS. Here's the real burn: "I'm no Ric Flair because I knew when my time was done, I stepped aside for the sake of younger guys." Bear in mind that about three and a half years later Foley won the TNA World Title, although TNA was still pretty awesome at this point.

Oh hey we have a match to get to. Everyone shakes hands pre match. Ok so it's Nigel vs. Whitmer to get us going. We go over who has the best trainer in this and Maff is kind of left out in the cold. This is under pure rules, which is an overly complicated system that means you have a limited amount of rope breaks and no punches. Off to Maff as the pure guys are dominating with a lot of arm drags in a nice touch. And here are the Carnage Crew to jump Foley and a brawl breaks out. Not long enough to grade but it was pretty basic up to this point.

Steamboat goes off on the Carnage Crew for ruining the match and even calls them a bunch of dickheads. Announcer: "STEAMBOAT SAID DICKHEADS!!!!!" Ok so now the match is starting again but it's under hardcore rules. Well sure why not? It's a bit brawl to start and once they're on the floor Foley drills McGuinness with the mic. They're into the crowd already. The Crew is gone.

Maff cracks a water bottle over the head of Collyer and McGuinness gets taken down by a chair. Ok so now we're into the ring and there are a few chairs involved. This is a total brawl and Steamboat is back now. Ok he wants it to be pure wrestling again. McGuinness gets all technical and such and gets a slick rollup on Whitmer for the pin.

Rating: C+. That's for the whole thing. Steamboat and Foley were by far the best things about this but I don't think that surprises anyone. The idea of mixing both styles was interesting but it needed more than it had here. The main conclusion I can draw from this though: MAN WCW was stupid for not following up on Steamboat vs. Foley in 92.

Next up we'll take a look at a match from ROH Final Battle 2006 against Jimmy Rave, which was the result of an open challenge by Rave.

Jimmy Rave vs. Nigel McGuinness

Well that didn't take long to sanction and sign did it? It's weird seeing Wolfe with spiked hair. He's ridiculously popular though, just like in TNA so of course he can't be pushed right? They shake left hands for some odd reason. That's different. This isn't much but to be fair they have a feud going so this works.

I still don't get the appeal of Rave though. Nigel does an insane submission hold where he locks Rave's arm around his leg and traps the other arm behind Nigel's back and bends backwards which looked like it was going to rip it off. The crowd goes oooooo at that. Nigel is apparently a big deal here. Nigel takes his head off with a clothesline but it gets two. Oh I'm sorry: it was a lariat.

Tower of London hits and Nigel isn't sure what to do. Rave hits a Pedigree for one. Rave counters a Hulking Up Nigel into a Crippler Crossface. As impressive as Rave has been, I still just don't care about him. Nigel hits a Tower of London (Diamond Cutter) onto the apron, which would be about the same as the mat wouldn't it? It gets two either way so it doesn't really matter.

And then after getting destroyed for about five minutes, Rave gets the heel hook and Nigel taps despite never having his leg worked on at all. I HATE moves like that. If that's the case, why in the world would he wait almost fifteen minutes before going for it? At least with a strike like Sweet Chin Music it's a knockout move. This is just a submission which makes a part of the body hurt. Why go for the Crossface earlier? That makes NO SENSE. It's completely anti-psychology and that's just irritating. Plus it's Jimmy Rave so it's even more annoying. Rave wants a world title shot.

Rating: B-. Totally annoying ending aside, this was a pretty solid match I guess. There were a ton of near falls but you could see the ending coming a mile away with about three minutes to go. Nigel looks dominant but let's push Rave because...well just because! Didn't like the ending at all but the rest was good.

Nigel would become the ROH Pure Champion in 2005 before losing it to Bryan Danielson who unified it with the world title. Here's a rematch between the two at the Sixth Anniversary Show from February 23, 2008 with Nigel defending his world title. To date, he's the only two time world champion in company history.

ROH World Title: Bryan Danielson vs. Nigel McGuinness

The fans are split here and it's a feeling out process to start with

Nigel grabbing a wristlock, only to have Danielson dropkick the knee out to put him down. Back up and they fight over a test of strength until Bryan takes him down by the legs. There's a bow and arrow hold to the champion before pinning Nigel's arms down to the mat for two. Back up and Danielson avoids Nigel's big lariat before calling on the crowd's xenophobia by starting a USA chant.

Nigel takes him down with a headlock takeover but Bryan easily counters into a headscissors. McGuinness fights to the ropes but is very frustrated at not being able to slow down the challenger. Danielson is taken into the corner for some chops but does a headstand in the corner and catches Nigel with a dropkick. Nigel is sent to the floor and taken out with the FLYING GOAT as things speed up.

Back in and Bryan hits a missile dropkick before suplexing Nigel down with ease. McGuinness rolls to the apron for a breather before shoving the referee down for the lame DQ. He grabs the mic and says that the wankers in the crowd got the title match that they wanted and goes to leave, only to run into Austin Aries, Delirious, and I believe Kevin Steen and Roderick Strong. Aries says get back in the ring or go through all of them. McGuinness gets back inside and we're at it again.

Danielson chops away in the corner but Nigel gets in a shot to the shoulder and sends it into the buckle and post. The fans shout SCREW YOU NIGEL and he tells them to chant louder. Off to an arm scissors before Nigel slaps Bryan in the face, making the fans beg Bryan to mess him up. The champion wraps Bryan's arm around the rope and then the post while mocking the USA chant. Back in and Nigel traps the arm down and cranks on the neck but Bryan comes back with a big kick to the head and a knee to the ribs.

Bryan is starting to feel it and sends Nigel to the apron where a running kick to the back sends the Brit to the floor. Nigel isn't done yet though and backdrops Danielson over the top to the floor and the fans quiet down again. Bryan reverses a whip into the barricade before dumping Nigel into the crowd, setting up a HUGE springboard dive over the steel and into the crowd. Back in and McGuinness blocks another missile dropkick but gets caught in a triangle choke.

Nigel's big lariat puts Danielson down and the fans complain that it's the same move McGuinness always uses. Note that they're complaining about this in a BRYAN DANIELSON match. Danielson sits on the top rope and catapults Nigel out to the floor again. McGuinness blocks another FLYING GOAT with an uppercut (thankfully Bryan was clearly stopping before he reached the ropes), setting up the Tower of London on the floor. The champion is busted open a bit as well.

Back in again and Nigel puts Danielson in Cattle Mutilation (Bryan's hold) but Bryan rolls around into a cover for two. Danielson ducks a big lariat but crotches himself on the ropes, setting up a middle rope clothesline and another Tower of London for two. There's a seated armbar as Nigel remembers the arm work from earlier. Danielson raises his arm and waves to the crowd as he makes it into the ropes for the break. Back up and Danielson hits a Rolling Chaos Theory out of the corner to put both guys down.

They strike it out until McGuinness is sat on top for a belly to back superplex for two. There's the real Cattle Mutilation but Nigel rolls over, only to be caught in a tiger suplex for two. Danielson fires off a bunch of elbows to the ribs and puts on an armbar followed by a triangle choke. McGuinness gets his arm up at two drops and finally gets his feet in the ropes. Bryan pounds on him in the corner and asks for a ten count but Nigel headbutts him down, injuring Danielson's bad eye from a recent injury. The big running lariat sets up a bunch of seated elbows to the head. Bryan is out as Nigel puts on the seated armbar to win.

Rating: B-. It's a good match but I wasn't feeling it all that well. The biggest problem here was there was some deal with Danielson not attacking the head and having a bad eye but the announcers expected us to know what those stories were about. That's one thing WWE commentary is great at: you're always going to hear the story of a match very quickly and leave very little confusion. The action here was solid but it felt like they were trying to have a long match rather than a good one. Also if you're going to do the false DQ finish, do it after six minutes into the match.

Nigel would hold the world title for more than a year after this, eventually dropping it to Jerry Lynn. His next and last major stop was in

TNA, where he had the awesome ring name of Desmond Wolfe. Nigel's first feud was with Kurt Angle, leading to a 2/3 falls match at Final Resolution 2009. The first fall was pin only, the second was submission only, and the third was inside of a cage with escape only.

Desmond Wolfe vs. Kurt Angle

Angle is still in a Mafia shirt even though that's long since dead. They have a ton of time here so they start slowly with ground work. Angle grabs the leg and down to the mat we go. Off to a cobra clutch by Wolfe. Lots of technical stuff here which is pretty solid of course given who is in there. Hammerlock by Angle and we look at some guy and his kid in the crowd for no apparent reason at all.

Multiple covers get nothing for Wolfe. A knee drop misses for Wolfe so Angle goes after the leg. Headlock takedown and it's Wolfe in control. They're in first gear here or maybe a mild second one but it's still entertaining. The dueling chants have already started. Angle fights up and gets a buckle bomb for our first big high impact move. We've been at this almost 8 minutes now so you can tell this is going slowly.

Wolfe in control again with Wolfe working on the arm a bit more. Modified cobra clutch goes on for a bit but Kurt fights back. Overhead belly to belly but Kurt can't get the Angle Slam. A single arm DDT hits but Wolfe misses a big clothesline misses. Rolling Germans go on in a set of about five or six.

Angle goes up and gets caught in the Tower of London for two. It's a Diamond Cutter off the top if you're wondering. The lariat misses again and it's another attempt at the Tower of London but Kurt escapes and the Angle Slam gets two. Angle tries the moonsault and, say it with me, it misses by a mile. Clothesline hits this time and the Tower of London gets the first fall for Wolfe. Really should have been after the

clothesline.

Wolfe goes straight for the arm and Kurt is in big trouble already. The crank that Wolfe has it on there is INSANE. Kurt rolls out of it though and it's time for a figure four out of nowhere. The rope is grabbed and we're back to the arm again. Wolfe puts on a ton of arm holds and they're all at least somewhat different. Kurt reverses one of them into the ankle lock and Wolfe is in trouble.

Wolfe reverses into the LeBell Lock minus the crossface. That gets rolled through and it's back to the ankle lock. This is a technical masterpiece so far. Angle reverses ANOTHER arm hold into the ankle lock which Wolfe reverses into an ankle lock of his own. Angle grabs something like a triangle choke which gets reversed into an arm lock again. Triangle choke goes on but Kurt runs through it into an ankle lock again and it's the grapevine added that ends fall 2.

Ok so it's now escape to win it. Oh that guy they showed earlier is Jason Williams of the Orlando Magic. WWE is in town tonight so they're making fun of it somehow. Angle puts Wolfe down and goes up so they fight on the ropes a bit. Wolfe rams the arm into the cage which is rather smart and basic. Wolfe goes up so Kurt does the same thing to Wolfe's leg. I like that as it's nice storytelling.

Wolfe knocks him off the ropes so Kurt pops up and throws him off in the running suplex. Desmond is busted BAD. Kurt goes up but Wolfe gets a boot up which might have hit Angle's bad arm. It was Wolfe's bad leg though so everyone is down. Desmond calls for the door to be open but Kurt makes the save again. Wolfe taps forever but Kurt won't let go. Desmond passes out and Kurt climbs out. Wolfe almost made it but couldn't quite do it.

Rating: A. Great match here with some incredible back and forth stuff in the submission round. I don't tend to like

matches like these but this was very fun to see. Wolfe being left laying like that at the end was great but I would have had him stay there until Kurt had won. Either way, great match and the whole thing worked incredibly well. Brutal match with a clear winner, which is the point of matches like these.

We'll wrap this up with a match from IPW out of England with Desmond Wolfe facing British wrestler Lionheart from The New Divide on May 29, 2010.

Desmond Wolfe vs. Lionheart

Lionheart is a smaller guy with little hair and a lot of tattoos. Wolfe seems to be the favorite and definitely gets a bigger reaction. This is a rematch from a three way from about a year and a half ago for the ROH Title. They shake hands to start and there's no commentary so I'm not clear on the backstory. Feeling out process to start with both guys working on the arm but spinning up to applause.

Back up and they run the ropes for a bit until Lionheart scores with a dropkick. Wolfe avoids another dropkick and it's a stalemate. Desmond takes him into the corner to start and scores with an elbow but Lionheart shoves him down and hits a middle rope missile dropkick, only to have Desmond punch him in the face and throw Lionheart outside. Lionheart is holding his arm and takes a walk around the ring for a breather.

Back in and Wolfe grabs a front facelock before cranking on the arm like a smart wrestler should. Lionheart is getting annoyed at Wolfe for not trying as hard as he could so they slug it out with Lionheart taking over and getting two off a corner clothesline. Wolfe goes right back to the arm and suplexes him down by said arm for two. More shots to the arm get the same followed by Wolfe countering a sunset flip by slamming Lionheart's arm into the mat.

Lionheart spins out of an armbar but is kicked in the face to stop any comeback attempt. Some European uppercuts have Lionheart staggered but he

gets a boot up in the corner and hits a nice Blockbuster for two. A few slams and a legdrop get two on Wolfe as the fans are getting into this. Wolfe avoids a charge into the corner and hits a quick forearm to the chest for two. A hard running European uppercut in the corner sets up the Tower of London but Lionheart holds onto the ropes. Another uppercut is blocked with a boot to the face but Wolfe stops him on the top and superplexes Lionheart down for two.

Off to that seated armbar and the fans are really into things now, even though it's not that great. Lionheart uses the free arm to break the hold and comes back with a Rock Bottom, only to miss a frog splash. Back to the armbar but Lionheart sweeps the leg and gets two off a rollup. They slug it out again with the fans entirely behind Desmond.

Lionheart takes over and gets two off a high cross body, followed by a superkick and frog splash for two. Another frog splash is broken up by Wolfe shoving the referee into the ropes and the Tower of London connects for two. The running lariat is countered into a rollup but Wolfe counters the rollup into a rollup of his own for the bridging pin.

Rating: B-. It wasn't a bad way to spend fifteen minutes but I never got invested in the match. Neither guy was playing a heel here and I really know nothing about Lionheart so this was hard to care about. Wolfe was very popular here and it was a good showcase for him, but Lionheart wasn't the best choice of an opponent.

Wolfe puts Lionheart over after the match.

Nigel McGuinness is a guy that had every tool you need to be a big star but injuries and having Hepatitis B brought his career to an end. He could go in the ring and easily hung in there with Kurt Angle and Bryan Danielson. I have no idea what more you need from a guy than what he had and he was on the verge of breaking through in TNA, only to have everything fall apart under Bischoff and Hogan. I'm shocked too.

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