

Impact Wrestling – April 20, 2017: More Tapings, More Problems

Impact Wrestling

Date: April 20, 2017

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Jeremy Borash, D'Angelo Dinero

It's a fresh batch of tapings with this episode being billed as live, even though it was taped a few hours ago. The big story coming into tonight is the lack of Josh Matthews on commentary after his team lost the eight man tag last week. In other news, Lashley will defend the World Title against James Storm after a fan vote. Let's get to it.

In Memory of Rosey.

We look at James Storm winning the title nearly six years ago. Now it's time for him to get the title back though Lashley doesn't think much of it. Lashley: "I'm not good, I'm not bad. I'm me."

Opening sequence.

Tag Team Titles: Joel Coleman/Jake Holmes vs. LAX

LAX is defending. Ortiz takes over on Coleman to start and it's a suplex/high crossbody combination for two. Holmes comes in but is quickly sent into the corner for Poetry in Motion into a cannonball. The Street Sweeper (powerbomb/Blockbuster combo) is enough to put Holmes away at 2:36.

Konnan talks about how awesome the team is and mentions everyone by name. Cue Decay for the brawl and we take a break.

Here's Karen Jarrett for a chat. Karen introduces herself and makes a major announcement: Global Force Wrestling and Impact Wrestling have officially merged. After a very weak "thank you Jarretts" chant, Karen

declares this the Night of Champions with three title matches (not counting the Tag Team Titles).

She's ready to bring someone out but here's Sonjay Dutt to interrupt. He used to be a big deal in the X-Division so let's make the X-Division Title match tonight's main event. Oh and let's throw him in there and make it a three way so he can win the title for the first time. This brings out Andrew Everett (the original challenger) to say it's his shot tonight alone. Now it's Gregory Helms and Trevor Lee interrupting, saying Helms runs the division. As for Dutt, if he never won anything around here, maybe it's because he sucks.

Bruce Prichard comes out and says, on behalf of Karen and Dutch Mantel (So they all officially have power? Got it.) that the main event will be for the X-Division Title. We can also add three more people to the match to make it a six way. A brawl breaks out with Dutt and Everett standing tall but getting into an argument over the belt.

Anthony Mayweather (better known as Crimson) talks about growing up in a single parent household. He's lived recklessly but now he's changing because of his five year old son. He joined the US Army after dropping out of college and that helped bring him here.

Knockouts Title: ODB vs. Rosemary

Rosemary is defending. ODB starts fast with a discus forearm but it's way too early for the Bam. They head outside with Rosemary clotheslining her onto the ramp, only to miss a top rope backplash inside. ODB's rams into almost her crotch sets up a middle rope Thesz press for two but another Bam is broken up. The Bronco Buster doesn't work either and it's the Red Wedding to retain the title at 3:44.

Rating: D+. No time to do anything here but Rosemary winning is probably the best option as they seem to be trying to turn her into something special. She's held the title for six months already and there's a good chance that she'll hold it at least until Slammiversary. ODB isn't the most interesting character in the world so having her lose makes the most sense.

LAX defends against Decay in a street fight next week.

Bruce and Karen say Suicide has been added to the main event. Sienna comes up to Karen and asks where the GFW Women's Champion is. Karen doesn't think Sienna should be that excited to see the champ because she's coming. No name is given.

Long recap of Laurel Van Ness and company vs. Allie/Braxton Sutter.

Chris Silvio vs. Kongo Kong

Kong suplexes him to start and hits the cannonball. A top rope splash ends Silvio at 1:18.

James Storm is ready to leave Lashley flat on his back.

Alberto El Patron is in Arizona and is going to be watching the World Title match.

Magnus says he should be #1 contender because he's the GFW Champion and he got the fall in last week's eight man tag.

Impact Wrestling World Title: James Storm vs. Lashley

Lashley is defending and has Josh Matthews in his corner. Josh sits in on commentary while JB does the ring announcing, much to Borash's dismay. Storm gets backed into the corner to start as we hear about James being here for the first day. Well that's what JB is talking about at least. Josh on the other hand is saying he's the Jim Ross to Lashley's Steve Austin.

Now it's a talk about upcoming house shows (no dates mentioned) as Storm clotheslines Lashley outside. Cue Ethan Carter III so Josh grabs a beer bottle, only to have James hit Lashley from behind. A suplex onto the steps slows Storm down as we take a break. Back with Lashley still in control until Storm fights out of a chinlock. Storm gets in a few clotheslines and a running neckbreaker for two. Lashley heads up top but gets pulled back down, setting up an ugly top rope elbow.

Closing Time looks to set up the Last Call but Storm settles for two off

a powerbomb instead. Lashley's Dominator gets the same and there goes the referee (of course). Two Last Calls get no count so Storm goes outside and grabs the aforementioned beer bottle. Carter gets in as well though and blasts Storm with the bottle. The spear retains Lashley's title at 17:07.

Rating: B. Overbooked (of course) but still good with Carter turning like he needed to and Josh switching over to a managerial role, which is easily the best call for him. I'm assuming we'll now get Magnus vs. Alberto for the #1 contendership and we're likely heading towards a triple threat match at Slammiversary.

Josh is very happy with the result.

Dutch Mantel says Dezmond Xavier is the fifth man in the X-Division match.

We look at Chris Adonis attacking Moose at a Border City Wrestling show.

Moose is all fired up but here's Adonis with his arm in a sling. Davey Richards jumps Moose from behind and will be challenging for the title next week.

Josh is still on commentary.

Quick recap of the main event.

X-Division Title: Trevor Lee vs. Dezmond Xavier vs. Suicide vs. Andrew Everett vs. Sonjay Dutt vs. ???

Lee is defending and this is one fall to a finish. The last entrant is....Low Ki, who hasn't been around here for about two years. Low Ki is in the suit and there are no tags here, as is usually the custom. Dutt grabs a tornado DDT on Xavier while walking across everyone else's chest in something out of the Matrix. A six way standoff sees Lee get dropkicked out to the floor.

Dutt moonsaults onto Suicide and Everett before sending Lee face first into the apron. Xavier avoids a Low Ki charge and moonsaults onto the pile as we take a break. Back with Everett taking the standing chest

stomp from Lee. Trevor throws everyone out as Dutt seems to have an eye injury.

Things slow down a bit as Josh clarifies his status: "I said I'd leave. I left for a week and now I'm back." Lee keeps throwing people out until Everett Pele's him. We get a parade of kicks, including Xavier hitting a 619 around the post to Ki's ribs. Dutt's top rope splash gets two and Suicide does the fall onto everyone else. We're officially in an overrun because we're "LIVE" and you don't know what's going to happen.

Everett dives onto everyone but Xavier breaks up the shooting star. With Xavier on top, Everett tries a springboard reverse hurricanrana but only gets his legs on Xavier's back. Thankfully Xavier lands on his feet instead of actually taking the move. Everett hits the Frankendriver on Lee, only to have Ki kick him to the floor. A top rope double stomp to Trevor gives Ki the title at 19:00.

Rating: C+. That would be annual "See, we care about the X-Division" match. I've never been a Low Ki fan and I'm even less of a fan of these multi-man cluster matches as they're just a bunch of people doing spots until the final spot. On top of that, while it's very nice to see some fresh blood, I'm so glad TNA wasted our time with the Everett vs. Lee story because HERE'S A BIG MULTI-MAN MATCH INSTEAD! The match was fun but it felt like a longer version of something we've seen many times before, which isn't what the X-Division needs.

The announcers bicker again and Pope walks off. JB punches Josh to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This is a really tricky one as they addressed some of the issues (needing fresh blood, better focus on the X-Division, some better matches) but ran into some new issues (the fresh blood isn't interesting/very good, going with the short term over the long term and thinking a big multi-person match is good because it's long and messy).

The big story of the night, the GFW merger, means nothing because GFW means nothing. Coming into tonight they were slightly below the NWA, which at least runs some regular events. GFW and Impact merging doesn't mean anything and is really just a way to add in some new names who

weren't going to be signed by anyone else. It's nice to get rid of the GFW (likely with a bunch of unification matches down the line) but it really didn't need to be treated like a big moment.

All those problems aside, there was a definite energy around here and that's a very welcome addition. Impact has felt stale and dull for a long time now and hopefully this energy keeps up over the taping cycle. It's a better show than they've done in a long time, though I'm not sure I like a lot of the ideas they seem to be going with for the future.

Results

LAX b. Jake Holmes/Joe Coleman – Street Sweeper to Holmes

Rosemary b. ODB – Red Wedding

Kongo Kong b. Chris Silvio – Top rope splash

Lashley b. James Storm – Spear

Low Ki b. Dezmond Xavier, Sonjay Dutt, Trevor Lee, Andrew Everett and Suicide – Top rope double stomp to Lee

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