

# Ring of Honor – January 31, 2018: And Border to Border

## Ring of Honor

Date: January 31, 2018

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana

Ring of Honor is on a roll right now and that's not something I get to say all that often. The wrestling has been good and the storytelling has been better, especially around the top of the card. There are several places they could go at the moment and that makes for some entertaining television. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of So Cal Uncensored attacking the Bullet Club last week, thanks to a distraction at the hands of Shane Taylor.

Opening sequence.

### Punishment Martinez vs. Dobbs

Yes Dobbs. Martinez knocks him into the corner to start as we hear about Martinez's accomplishments last year. Cabana: "And Dobbs is here too." For some reason Dobbs hits him in the face and tries a dropkick, earning himself a glare from Martinez. The spinning kick to the face seems to have a bit better effect and the South of Heaven chokeslam ends Dobbs at 1:49. The squash it should have been.

Post match here's Dalton Castle to suplex Punishment down. Martinez pops up but walks away instead. Castle looked like a star here and that's what he should have done.

Coast to Coast is ready to put their career on the line.

### War Machine vs. Coast to Coast

If Coast to Coast loses, they have to split up, though this weekend's NXT show kind of gives away the ending. Caprice Coleman is on commentary. Ali dives onto War Machine during the entrances and a double dropkick puts Hanson down. Rowe is thrown onto Hanson but War Machine pops up without much damage done. Ali is taken into the corner so the beating can begin, including Hanson slamming Rowe onto Ali for good measure.

Ali finally avoids a charge and makes the hot tag to LSG so things

can speed way up. A 450 gets two on Rowe and LSG manages a suplex on Hanson in a rather shocking power display. Ali's spinning layout Rock Bottom drops Rowe but Hanson is back up with a handspring elbow as we take a break.

Back with Hanson slamming LSG into a backbreaker, followed by a gutwrench backbreaker from Rowe. A powerbomb into a frog splash gets two more on LSG and Rowe isn't sure what to do. LSG rolls over to bring Ali in with the hot tag, which is rather nice of him considering War Machine has been in the ring at the same time for a long while now. Hanson charges into a boot, followed by a side kick to put him on the floor.

A Stroke/Downward Spiral combination plants Rowe for one and it's the pop up powerslam to crush Ali. Somehow that's only two as well and Rowe is TICKED at the kickout. Coast to Coast puts Rowe in the corner for some splashes and Rowe is actually in trouble. The Coast to Coast double Van Terminator gets two on Rowe but Hanson is back in. Fallout gets two on Ali as the kickouts are getting ridiculous now. They load up Fallout again but Ali reverses into a rollup to pin Rowe (ignore the shoulder off the mat) for the pin at 13:28.

**Rating:** B-. I dug the story here but they went one move too far with the kickouts to the point where it stopped keeping my interest. Coast to Coast is a nice high flying team and this win should help them (especially with War Machine on their way out), but of course they need to do this more often. A better finisher might help too. Say do the dropkick with someone in the middle of the ring, assuming they can get the timing right.

We recap Brian Milonas joining forces with Beer City Bruiser to go after the Tag Team Titles.

Bruiser calls Milonas a diamond in the haystack and a needle in the rough.

Here's Bully Ray for a chat. Final Battle was his final battle and he's retired. After he lost, his entire career flashed before his eyes. As the fans give him a standing ovation, Ray holds up his boots and says he was born in New York City, but as a wrestler, he was born in Philadelphia. He talks about being born in this building in 1995 and knew that this was the city, the building and the ring to leave his boots in.

Ray says it was his honor and sits them in the ring as the locker

room comes out and the fans chant THANK YOU BUBBA. Jay Lethal gets in the ring and talks about how he wasn't sure what to think when Ray came here. There are some rumors about Ray out there and some of them are really not that good.

Then Lethal saw Ray at every show, opening up the learning tree for everyone from the top of the card to the guys just starting out. Ray came here because he wanted to and that's what Ring of Honor is all about. Lethal calls him a legend and says the door is always open if he wants to come back. A big hug wraps up a very nice segment as Ray gets a strong sendoff despite not being around Ring of Honor for very long. Nice job indeed.

We recap the start of the Women's Title tournament. At some point they actually need to have the tournament and stop just talking about it. We see a bunch of names competing in the tournament but no brackets are revealed. Four Stardom women will be competing and the matches start airing in two weeks.

#### So Cal Uncensored vs. Cody/Marty Scurll/Adam Page

Marty Scull is on commentary. Sky and Scurll start things off with Scorpio getting in a double stomp to the back on a leapfrog in a nice touch. Scurll stomps on the fingers though and it's off to Daniels vs. Cody, the latter of whom only after some coaxing from Daniels. Cody's tiger bomb is countered into a hurricanrana as Taven makes Harry Potter references. Page and Kazarian come in to continue their rather violent rivalry with Page Cactus Clotheslining him out to the floor.

Everyone brawls at ringside until Cody can hit a dive over the top to take them down. Back in and the Club loads up a clothesline train in the corner, though Scurll keeps charging into boots. Cody and Adam finally pick him up and ram the boots into Daniels' face to send us to a break. Back with a bloody Cody snapping off a powerslam on Kazarian and the hot tag bringing in Page to clean house.

Page takes Daniels outside for a suicide dive and a bunch of whips into the barricade. Everything breaks down again and they head outside for the bit series of dives, even with Page's top rope moonsault hitting the barricade. He's fine enough for the slingshot lariat but Kazarian catches him in a Backstabber. Sky's jumping knee to the head is good for the pin on Page at 10:50.

**Rating:** C+. Nice fun brawl here to continue the issues between the

groups...whatever those may be. I'm not entirely sure why So Cal Uncensored wants to destroy the Bullet Club but that's not the worst sounding idea I've ever heard of. Daniels and company are a good act and if it helps push Sky, so be it.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This was a good show in a different way as the wrestling was solid enough but the real highlight was the Bully Ray segment. They treated him like a star, which isn't the kind of sendoff he's going to get in WWE. He deserves this kind of treatment though and a smaller company like Ring of Honor is where it fits best. Nice show here with the wrestling working and moving stories forward.

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# Ring of Honor TV – November 8, 2017: Where Mentioning NXT Is An Act Of War

## Ring of Honor

Date: November 8, 2017

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana

The big match this week is Mark Briscoe challenging Kenny King for

the TV Title. Now this brings up a few issues, starting with Briscoe's elbow injury. Other than that though, there's the question of Jay Briscoe, who doesn't seem to like the idea of his brother going after singles gold, meaning he may be a factor here. Let's get to it.

We open with a video on War Machine wanting their Tag Team Titles back and getting more aggressive a few weeks ago.

Opening sequence.

Briscoe vs. King is off for tonight due to the elbow injury. So much for that.

#### The Dawgs vs. Coast to Coast vs. The Kingdom

Matt Taven joins commentary. O'Ryan and LSG start things off with a slap sending TK into the corner for a tag to Ferrara. Coast to Coast hit a double flapjack for two on Ferrara and Ali adds a flip dive over the top. Titus comes in and throws Ferrara over the top onto the pile, followed by Marseglia hitting a springboard flip dive.

LSG adds his own corkscrew dive and everyone is down. Back from a break with Ali dropkicking the Dawgs down but having no one to tag thanks to the Kingdom. The hot tag brings in LSG a few moments later as everything breaks down. The Dawgs take care of the Kingdom, leaving Ali alone to get double teamed.

Ferrara gets lifted up for a dropkick but the Dawgs starts shoving each other. A catapult into a splash gives Ferrara two with LSG making a save. Coast to Coast hits Coast to Coast on Titus as Taven won't shut up about some conspiracy against the Kingdom. Speaking of the Kingdom, they come back in and throw LSG out, followed by Marseglia hitting a Regal Roll on Ali while O'Ryan gives Marseglia an AA (kind of complicated) for the pin at 8:45.

**Rating:** C-. I like Coast to Coast more every time I see them but the Dawgs are neither funny nor entertaining. Throw in Taven as a horribly annoying commentator and there was a lot of bad stuff here with the action barely being able to overcome it. There was some good stuff here, but my goodness Taven should never be allowed near a microphone.

The Dawgs get in another argument while the Kingdom laughs and says they want the Tag Team Titles or the Six Man Tag Team Titles because there's a conspiracy against them.

We look at Cody making a fan kiss the ring at one of the 18 Global Wars shows but it wound up being Dalton Castle, who laid the champ out.

Flip Gordon wants to fight the Bullet Club and shows why he shouldn't be allowed to talk.

Here's Cody who wants to issue an open challenge. He asks Ian to come up to the ring to see who should get the shot. Ian, along with the crowd, thinks Castle should get the shot but Castle isn't here tonight. Cody has an idea though.

#### ROH World Title: Cody vs. Ryan Nova

Cody is defending and Nova has only been training for eight months. The champ offers Nova the ring...and Nova eats it. That's not cool with Cody so he turns his head, only to get rolled up for two. Nova rolls over into a kick to the head...and walks into Cross Rhodes. The American Deathlock retains the title at 1:13.

Post match here's Castle (Why didn't he come out when his name was mentioned?) to ask if that's it. Dalton thinks Cody is a good...no, great...no, good wrestler, but his performances as champion have been lackluster. Castle wants the title shot, but Cody has a better idea: he can make a phone call to Paul and get Dalton a developmental deal.

Cody walks past him but Dalton drops him with a forearm and the Bang-a-Rang. He loves it here and he's taking the title. Really good stuff here and I want to see the match, especially with Castle in a far more normal look (sport coat, t-shirt with tinted sunglasses and a peacock pin) and being more serious.

We look back at Bully Ray announcing what sounds like his retirement.

Jay Lethal wants the World Title back because he's the one everyone looks to and that's what people expect. I wasn't a Lethal fan for a long time but he's turned into the top ROH star, which is a hard role to fill. Honestly it might be the shaved head too, as his hair was a bit hard to take seriously.

We look back at Mark Briscoe's elbow injury (thankfully with a cutaway when it's dislocated. Unfortunately we do see it out of joint and EGADS that's disturbing looking.

Mark wants his title shot next week, injury or no injury. Jay

Briscoe comes in to say forget about the singles stuff because they're a team. Mark points out that Jay is a two time World Champion but Jay doesn't seem to care.

#### Tag Team Titles: War Machine vs. Motor City Machine Guns

The Guns are defending. Shelley gets sent outside and Fallout hits Sabin for two in the first fifteen seconds. Well they're certainly starting in a hurry. Rowe's shotgun knees have Shelley rocked in the corner and War Machine is dominant early. It's Shelley in trouble with Rowe blasting him with a forearm to the jaw.

The Guns finally get in a dropkick for a breather but War Machine is ready for the double dives. That's fine with the champs as they low bridge Hanson to the floor for a suicide dive from Sabin. Things slow down a bit, which actually favors the champs here. Shelley takes out Rowe's knee and we take a break. Back with Rowe throwing the Guns into each other, allowing the hot tag off to Hanson.

The running corner clotheslines have the champs in more trouble as everything breaks down. Hanson hits a handspring elbow to REALLY pop the crowd (not sure if it's because he's 300+ pounds or because he did an ECW move) but the Guns are right back with the Dream Sequence. That just earns Sabin a pop up powerslam...and here's the Addiction to spray silly string at War Machine at Hanson. Kazarian: "GENERIC WRESTLING COMMENT!" Hanson goes after Daniels, leaving Sabin to roll Rowe up to retain at 10:58.

**Rating:** C+. I was digging the match but, assuming they're not using this to further a War Machine heel turn (which seems possible), there was no reason to have them take a fall there. The match should have been thrown out with Addiction coming in and the pin makes War Machine look stupid. A heel turn would be good for them, but I'm not sure they can wrestle this high impact fast paced style and still expect to get booed.

**Overall Rating:** B-. I'm curious as to where they're going with Final Battle and this show started setting some stuff up. The Castle vs. Cody stuff was good and has the potential to be an emotional main event, though Castle as a World Title contender is a bit of a stretch. Other than that, it's still not entirely clear what's coming at the pay per view, which could make the next few weeks a lot of fun. Unfortunately it could also make them annoying if they waste a lot of time, which ROH has a bad habit of doing.

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# Ring of Honor TV – October 4, 2017: Bad Business As Usual

## Ring of Honor

Date: October 4, 2017

Location: Center Stage, Atlanta, Georgia

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, BJ Whitmer

It's World Title week here as Frankie Kazarian is getting a shot at Cody after winning last week's Honor Rumble. That's quite the turnaround but you can't expect them to give him the shot on a pay per view as a spot like that is reserved for people from real promotions like New Japan. Let's get to it.

We recap last week's Honor Rumble with the Addiction cheating to give Kazarian the win.

War Machine vs. Coast to Coast vs. Tempura Boyz

One fall to a finish and War Machine's IWGP Tag Team Titles aren't on the line. There are no tags either so this is going to be a heck of a mess. War Machine cleans house to start and Rowe throws both Boyz at the same time just because he can. Hanson throws Rowe at LSG



and it's pure dominance to start.

Coast to Coast gets their faces punched in on the floor but the Boyz are up with double dives to the floor as we take a break. Back with War Machine down for a bit, only to come back in with Rowe slamming Sho onto Yo. The monsters are sent outside though and it's Yo hitting a cutter on LSG. Rowe is back in though and a knee to the head sends Yo outside. Most of the participants wind up on the floor so LSG hits a flip dive, only to have Hanson hit a flip dive onto EVERYONE, leaving Sho to take a clothesline/German suplex combination.

Ali dives in for the save and it's Yo getting put into the Tree of Woe but War Machine breaks up the Coast to Coast. The Boyz grab a spike piledriver for two on Rowe, who pops up and powerbombs both Boyz at the same time. A pop up powerslam plants Yo and a series of backbreakers sets up a top rope splash from Hanson for the pin at 11:24.

**Rating:** B. Everyone was working here and my general indifference to the Boyz was made up for by the awesomeness that is War Machine. They're just big monsters who can do cool moves and that's really all you need most of the time. Really solid match here as Coast to Coast continues to impress as well.

Post match, War Machine complains about Ring of Honor treating them badly and not giving them a title shot in over a year. They were supposed to have a shot at the Young Bucks but another team was added to the match to keep War Machine from getting a fair shot. They're tired of playing nice and you won't like this version. This didn't sound like a heel turn but more like them just being aggressive.

Video on Flip Gordon.

#### Corey Hollis vs. Flip Gordon

Flip, uh, flips out of a wristlock to start and nips up off a shoulder block. The handstand walk gets Flip out of trouble and a dive to the floor takes Hollis out. A flip dive misses though and Gordon gets dropped ribs first onto the top. Back from a break with Hollis working on an armbar. Gordon fights up and hits a flip Sling Blade followed by a running shooting star press for two more. Hollis catches him in the corner again but Flip is right back up with a springboard kick to the face. A springboard 450 (with the knees

landing on Hollis' chest) gives Flip the pin at 9:30.

**Rating:** D. Gordon is a one note character and there's really nothing wrong with that. He's not hiding what he's doing out there and that's kind of refreshing. Unfortunately he's also really sloppy with that ending looking terrible. Reign him in a bit and have him do things a bit more slowly and accurately instead of throwing in everything he can and he'll look a lot better in a hurry.

Kazarian says he wants to win the title to tick off the fans and ROH.

Long video recapping the Women of Honor. I'm going to put this as politely as I can: no one cares. Like really, no one cares. There are great women's divisions around the world but Ring of Honor's is just not on that list. It never gets any kind of attention and the handful of specials they've had aren't enough to make me care about a four or five woman division. If ROH cared about them like they said they did, these people would be on the regular shows and not stuck on YouTube.

Kelly Klein says she's ready to beat anyone put in front of her.

ROH World Title: Frankie Kazarian vs. Cody

Cody is defending and wins the early feeling out process. A release gordbuster drops Kazarian and it's back to the standoff. Cody trips him down again and we hit the Figure Four but Kazarian is right next to the ropes. They're certainly not wasting time early on. A dragon screw legwhip over the middle rope looks to set up a dive to the floor but Kazarian is back up with a slingshot hurricanrana.

Back in and Cody gets backdropped to the apron, setting up a kick to the head to drop him again. Kazarian scores with a spinning springboard Fameasser and we take a break. Back with Cody armdragging him off the top for a heck of a crash to put both guys down. The Beautiful Disaster connects but Kazarian grabs the slingshot cutter for another near fall. Cody is right back with a snap powerslam (well to be fair Goldust and Randy Orton both use it) and a YES Lock of all things. I'm not sold on Bryan coming back to ROH but they're teasing the heck out of it.

Cue Daniels for a distraction but Marty Scurll comes out to even things up. Not that it matters as Scurll gets posted, allowing Kazarian to miss a belt shot. Now it's a ref bump because ROH loves

to overbook. Daniels gets in the belt shot to set up the Unprettier for a VERY close two.

Marty is back up to shove Kazarian off the top though and Daniels is thrown inside. Somehow the now conscious referee doesn't think any of this is a DQ, including Daniels taking Cody down. Scurll superkicks Daniels to take him out, leaving Cody to grab Cross Rhodes to retain at 11:43.

**Rating:** C-. This match wasn't even twelve minutes and had two people interfering, a belt shot and a ref bump. There's no reason whatsoever that a match should do so much nonsense, nor should it need to. They were having a perfectly good match until the screwiness started up and then it was a completely different everything. If you just have to do something like that, do ONE THING and nothing more. Why is that so hard to understand?

**Overall Rating:** C. I've seen worse shows but it felt like they were cramming in as much stuff as they could into a single show. I believe this is the last episode of the taping cycle, meaning there's almost no way of knowing what we'll be seeing next week. Maybe we can even talk about the pay per view for a change. It would be nice to actually be caught up for once.

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# Ring of Honor TV – August 30, 2017: With an Anchor and Without a Map

## Ring of Honor

Date: August 30, 2017

Location: Cabarrus Arena and Events Center, Concord, North Carolina

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana

I don't think we're up to the newest batch of TV tapings just yet and that means it's hard to say what to expect from this show. Last week was basically a throw away episode with the focus on the Six Man Tag Team Titles. That means this one could be anywhere really, which isn't exactly the best thing in the world. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

### Jonathan Gresham/Jay White vs. War Machine

Non-title. Gresham and White jump them during the entrances in a somewhat heelish move. That lasts all of ten seconds though as War Machine slams both guys down, followed by Rowe slamming Hanson onto the pile. Gresham is back up with a dropkick to Hanson as White sends Rowe into the barricade. For some reason Gresham thinks a chop off with Hanson is a good idea, earning himself a battered chest.

White comes in for some more effective chops but Hanson runs him over and brings in Rowe. Everything breaks down and Gresham is LAUNCHED off a t-bone suplex. Rowe misses a dive to the floor and gets taken down with a suicide dive as we head to a break. Back with Rowe firing off running clotheslines in the corner. After he hits about twenty in a row, it's a double splash to crush both Gresham and White.

Fallout is broken up so Gresham has to take a springboard clothesline into a German suplex instead. Another Fallout attempt is broken up so Rowe fireman's carries both of them at once. That goes

nowhere though and it's Gresham enziguring him into a Downward Spiral for a rare near fall.

White's German suplex gets the same but Rowe comes out of the corner with a seated senton to crush Gresham. Rowe headbutts everyone in sight (save for his partner and the referee of course) until Gresham moonsaults onto Hanson. A 450 is good for two on Hanson but it's a pop up powerslam (Thor's Hammer) to put Gresham away at 13:31.

**Rating:** B. That was a heck of a back and forth match as I don't think I remember a bad White match. He does his thing very well and makes for some entertaining action. War Machine is better than your average power tag team and while it would be nice to see them get the ROH titles back. Then again that might suggest the Young Bucks aren't the most amazing things ever and we just can't have that. Really fun match here though.

Post match Punishment Martinez runs in and chokeslams White as War Machine leaves him to do so.

Caprice Coleman wants to know where his stuff is. He seems to think he's a preacher and yells at the production staff. We get a nice rant about how he wasn't respected when he was in the Rebellion and he's tired of it. They have a week to get this stuff set up.

QT Marshall is out for commentary. Oh yeah he's a person that exists.

We look back at the Kingdom destroying Jay Briscoe last week.

#### Shane Taylor vs. Josh Woods

Taylor attacked Woods a few weeks ago and this is as soon as we can get around to a follow up. Woods goes right after him to start with a flying knee and a kick to the head to put Shane outside. That's fine with Josh who keeps slugging away, only to be thrown through the barricade to send us to a break.

Back with Woods stopping a corner charge with a raised boot. Taylor switches tactics and kicks him face first into the middle buckle before hitting a running Umaga attack for one. Woods fights up again with another running knee, only to get flattened with a clothesline.

For some reason Shane goes after him on the mat and gets pulled into a cross armbreaker. That's broken up as well so it's off to an ankle lock and a German suplex for a nice power display. Shane runs him over again but goes outside to grab a chair instead of following up. The referee takes it away though, allowing Woods to roll Taylor up for the pin at 8:14.

**Rating:** C. Taylor still doesn't do much for me as he's just another big guy who can do some athletic stuff but nothing that really blows me away. Woods is starting to grow on me though, which is a lot more than I was expecting to after dreading the Top Prospect Tournament for so many weeks. I have a feeling the feud is going to continue though and that's not the best thing in the world.

Post match Marshall comes to ringside to tell Taylor to beat down Woods. After Josh is destroyed, Marshall pays Taylor off. Oh yeah it's continuing.

The Young Bucks are ready to defend against the Motor City Machine Guns because it's not 2009 anymore. Superkicks are promised.

Minoru Suzuki will answer Cody's challenge for Death Before Dishonor. Yep: another import with no connection to ROH getting the shot because he's Japanese and therefore awesome. Screw the stories, screw the talent who has worked to get ROH over and screw everything else. Suzuki is a Japanese legend and that's what Ring of Honor exists for anymore: giving New Japan guys another place to perform and be revered at ROH's expense. I'm so freaking thrilled.

Cody is livid.

Kenny King talks about being on the Bachelorette and getting his rematch with Kushida at Death Before Dishonor in his hometown of Las Vegas. King was a lot more serious here and it worked a lot better. The Bachelorette could have been cut out though.

Tag Team Titles: Young Bucks vs. Motor City Machine Guns

The Bucks are defending and get straight in the Guns' faces during the Big Match Intros. Back from a break with the opening bell, meaning Nick can tell Shelley to suck it, which of course makes him

the biggest face in the building. The Guns send the champs outside for a suicide dive to both of them as things pick up. Back in and Nick is put on Matt's shoulders for a Downward Spiral from Sabin and a missile dropkick to the back from Shelley.

That's a great example of the way too choreographed style that rubs me the wrong way in most Guns matches. There comes a point where I can't buy that something is natural and the Guns blow past it every match. Shelly dives into a kick to the head though and the Bucks clean house while making sure to soak in some cheers. A flip dive takes out the Guns again and it's time for Matt to say SUCK IT over and over.

It's off to a double Sharpshooter with the Bucks throwing in some TOO SWEET's at the same time. Back from a break with some miscommunication from the champs as everything breaks down. Sabin kicks Matt in the face and dives onto Nick as the Bucks are in some rare trouble. The champs are sent into the corner with Shelley suplexing Matt into Nick. Skull and Bones is broken up and the wheelbarrow facebuster plants Sabin.

Nick comes in off the hot tag to speed things up with the kicks in the corner. The slingshot X-Factor drops Shelley and the moonsault from the apron does the same to Sabin. Shelley is back up with a high crossbody to a seated Nick and the Guns fire off their running dropkick sequence to Matt. It's superkick time with the Bucks firing off about ten in a row until Shelley takes them down with a double clothesline. And never mind as here's Addiction for the no contest at 14:27.

**Rating:** C+. I'm still not much of a Guns fan. I loved their TNA stuff but now it feels so much more forced, which really does hold them back. The ending doesn't help either as we're pretty clearly setting up ANOTHER three way title match because we haven't had anything like that in...oh at least a month or two.

Daniels and Kazarian clean house post match, including shoving a referee and a plant in a Bullet Club shirt (not acknowledge by commentary, who is likely reading their cards instead of paying

attention).

**Overall Rating:** B-. This show was entertaining but it felt really, really long. I'm still not a fan of the tag division (to put it mildly) but Woods is growing on me and the opener was a lot of fun. Basically just keep me away from the Bucks, the Guns and the worship of all things New Japan and I'm a lot better with the show. Good effort this week though as usual, it feels like they're running with an anchor and without a map.

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## 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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# 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 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 backplash 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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<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/05/19/history-of-saturday-nights-main-event-and-clash-of-the-champions-now-in-paperback-plus-price-drops/>

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# Ring of Honor 15th Anniversary Show: You Can't Rely on This Forever

## 15th Anniversary Show

Date: March 10, 2017

Location: Sam's Town Live Casino, Sunrise Manor, Nevada

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Kevin Kelly, Colt Cabana

This was a recent request and for once I'm actually trying to get some of those knocked off. Ring of Honor has been around for a long time and the fact that they've made it this far is really quite impressive. Since it's a major milestone show, the main event is an ROH legend in Christopher Daniels trying to win the ROH World Title for the first time. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at some of the bigger names in the company's history (the only logical way to go) before switching up to Daniels talking about starting wrestling in 1993 and getting here. Champion Adam Cole says 1993 was important for him too as he learned to color. This is your classic young punk vs. veteran and there's nothing wrong with that. It worked for Raven vs. Terry Funk and it can work well here. As a final note, Daniels' best friend Kazarian joined the Bullet Club, which sounds rather swervish.

## Jay White vs. Caprice Coleman

Great. We're starting with a bonus match and a bonus REBELLION match on top of that. This show isn't looking very promising. Ian: "Collar and elbow tieup to start here." Colt: "Great call Ian!" They fight over wristlocks and armdrags to start with King getting the better of it and driving some knees into the back.

White gets in a few Tomoaki Honma spots to pop the crowd (Honma was badly injured and out of action at this point). Since it's just a headbutt, King knocks him to the floor for a flip dive. A chinlock goes nowhere so White gets up and dives on fellow Rebellion member

Caprice Coleman.

This proves to be a bad idea (as is almost always the case) as King hits a running dropkick, followed by a bridging capture suplex for two. White comes back with a Downward Spiral but charges into a spinebuster for no cover. Jay gets dropkicked on the top but shoves King away for a high crossbody. That's rolled through as well with King trying the Royal Flush, only to have White small package him for the pin at 9:52.

**Rating:** C+. Nice match here with both guys looking good, or at least as the Rebellion is capable of looking. White is one of the many talented people in ROH who can wrestle a solid match but doesn't really have a character, meaning he has a bit of a firm ceiling to how far he can go. The match was a good opener and the ending was exactly what it should have been.

We recap the dissolution of the Addiction with Kazarian joining the Bullet Club.

The Club welcomes their newest member.

Kazarian vs. Hangman Paige vs. Chris Sabin vs. Punisher Martinez vs. Cheeseburger vs. Silas Young

One fall to a finish, tags required, lucha rules and the winner gets a future TV Title shot. We start with Kazarian and Sabin trading probably a dozen one counts off a rollup. They're on the floor in a hurry and that means we hit the parade of dives with the 6'7 Martinez hitting a step up dive of his own to really freak the crowd out (I'm not sure if that's really easy or really hard to do around here).

Kazarian and Page take Martinez down, leaving us with a short lived Bullet Club showdown. Cheeseburger comes in to break it up but gets beaten up by Young, leaving the announcers to make food jokes. Martinez chokes Cheeseburger (Colt: "What a pickle!") but everyone comes back in, allowing Sabin to hit a springboard tornado DDT on Young. Page loads Cheeseburger up for the Rite of Passage on the apron but Martinez breaks it up for no apparent reasons.

Adam spits at him for reasons of general stupidity, earning himself a chokeslam onto the apron. Back inside, Sabin German superplexes Kazarian but gets caught in Young's Misery for two. Cheeseburger escapes the same thing and kicks Silas from the apron. The palm

strike drops Young but Kazarian grabs the Ace of Spades (twisting Stunner) for the pin on Cheeseburger at 10:19.

**Rating:** B-. It was fun but this is one of Ring of Honor's major problem areas: throwing a bunch of people into a match and thinking that's good enough for a story. Kazarian was the only one in the match that had a real chance of winning (based on the story) so why did four others need to be there? Let Kazarian fight any of them (build someone up so they seem like a real threat to beat him) and tell a better story. Just throwing a bunch of people together feels like the easy way out and while the match was fun, it could have been better.

Jay Lethal and Bobby Fish both say they need to win the match so they can go after the World Title.

#### Bobby Fish vs. Jay Lethal

The match is billed as a top contenders match which may or may not mean a #1 contenders match. It's pretty early in the show for something that big so I'll assume it's just another one of ROH's ideas that might mean someone gets a title shot on some house show. They hit the mat to start before Fish starts in with the kicks. One big kick puts Lethal on the floor for a second thought on his strategy.

Back in and Lethal scores with a dropkick to send Fish outside. Another dropkick sends him into the barricade but Jay misses the suicide dive and hits the barricade as well. That means a bad arm but Jay gets in a third dropkick to keep control. Fish kicks him hard in the chest a few times though, shrugs off a European uppercut (why yes, we are watching an indy wrestling match) and hits another kick to the chest to drop Lethal.

Jay comes right back with a superkick (make your own jokes) and this time the suicide dive works. They get back inside for the big serious exchange of forearms with Fish driving him into the corner for an ankle lock. That's not the brightest idea so Lethal grabs a cutter but Hail to the King is countered into the heel hook. A quick Lethal Combination sets up Hail to the King, only to have Fish grab another heel hook. Jay reverses into a rollup for the break, followed by the Lethal Injection for the pin at 15:12.

**Rating:** B. The matches are getting better and this one told a good story with the submission grappler against the natural all around

performer who comes up biggest on the grand stages. I had a good time with this match, which isn't the most surprising thing in the world given that I like both guys. Fish is a very solid hand but I think he's pretty much resigned to the position of making the stars look good. Not the most horrible thing in the world to be sure.

We recap the Six Man Tag Team Title match. The Kingdom have the titles and since Dalton Castle and the Boys are a three man combination, they get a title shot. These belts continue to be one of the worst ideas possible for a company like this but hey, New Japan has them right? Both teams have a quick promo, saying they'll win for the obvious reasons.

#### Six Man Tag Team Titles: The Kingdom vs. Dalton Castle/The Boys

The Kingdom is defending and Castle is just crazy over, being accompanied to the ring by an army of Boys. Thankfully Cabana is there to insult Castle and the Boys after their long feud. It's a brawl to start and I don't remember hearing a bell. The Boys start fast with double suplexes and the Kingdom bails to the floor for a meeting.

Castle and Marseglia start things off with Dalton wrestling him down and slamming the Boys onto him. Cabana actually knows how to tell the Boys apart and it's #1 being taken to the floor for a beating. Colt: "THE BOYS ARE BACK IN TOWN!" #1 gets slammed back first onto the apron and Marseglia follows up with some running forearms to the head. Since he's a good boss, Castle offers a distraction so the Boys can switch.

Colt is losing his mind as he tries to get the referee's attention but the hot tag brings in Castle anyway. The Bang-a-Rang plants O'Ryan for two so the Boys come in for a double dropkick on Vinny. O'Ryan sends the Boys outside and tries an Asai moonsault....which hits the barricade, giving him a legitimate broken leg. Taven and Marseglia throw #1 back inside for a double powerbomb (Rockstar Supernova, an awesome name) to retain at 7:54. You can tell they were home REALLY fast and that's completely understandable.

**Rating:** D+. This wasn't any good and would have been boring on a regular TV show, let alone a major pay per view. I can't imagine it would have been much to see even with the regular ending but you can't fault them for ending the match soon because of a broken leg. The titles need to go away in a hurry though because they're just

not working.

We recap Marty Scurll vs. Lio Rush for the TV Title. Scurll has been a dominant champion and Rush is his latest challenger, having beaten him in a non-title 2/3 falls match. Assuming Scurll was champion then, why in the world was a 2/3 falls match non-title?

#### TV Title: Lio Rush vs. Marty Scurll

Rush is challenging and they're quickly on the mat with a series of headlocks into headscissors. Things speed up a bit with Rush tripping him to the floor for a hurricanrana off the apron. That's fine with the arm flapping Scurll who superkicks him from the apron. Back in and Scurll starts in on the arm, including a stomp to the hand. Rush blocks the finger break though and hits a Tajiri handspring into a body block to take over.

Something like Sister Abigail into a DDT instead of a Downward Spiral gets two on the champ but he sends Rush shoulder first into the post. Rush speeds things up again and sends him outside for a double stomp to the back. Back in and Marty kicks at the legs for a change of pace (with the announcers explaining that he's trying to break Rush down piece by piece and that he can always go back to the arm later).

One heck of a forearm puts Rush outside but he storms back in for a rapid fire exchange of forearms. Rush's Tajiri handspring is pulled into the chickenwing but Rush makes the ropes. Scurll gets two off a piledriver but Rush comes right back with a running C4 (Rush Hour) for the same. With nothing else working, Rush heads outside and grabs the belt (Colt: "You have to win that first.").

Not that it matters as he throws it right back outside and kicks Marty in the head for two. With nothing else working, Rush loads up a chair on the floor. A super Rush Hour is broken up though and Scurll takes him down with a Tower of London (hanging cutter out of the corner). The finger is snapped and Marty chickenwings him to retain at 18:38.

**Rating:** B. Really solid stuff here as Rush continues to grow on me in ways I never would have expected. Scurll is so much fun to watch though I could go for him doing more villainous things than just saying he's a villain. To be fair though, when the setup for your finisher is breaking a finger, you're quite evil in the first place. Good match here and probably the best thing all night so far.



We look at Bully Ray helping the Briscoes in Manhattan, which is all you're getting for a recap.

#### Briscoe Brothers/Bully Ray vs. War Machine/Davey Boy Smith Jr.

This was supposed to be Smith/Lance Archer vs. the Briscoes but Archer is injured so this is a replacement match. War Machine and Smith don't get along though so this might not be the most competitive match. It's a brawl to start (of course) with Bully sending Davey into the corner a few times. The Briscoes come in and get suplexed at the same time in quite the power display.

Smith gets slammed down for What's Up with Mark hitting an elbow instead of the headbutt. That means it's time for some tables but War Machine makes a save and takes over on Mark. Kelly tries to explain the backstory with all the New Japan stables and as usual, I need a good sized chart to make sense of all this (please don't explain it to me). A series of stomping sets up Smith's camel clutch and a delayed vertical suplex.

Hansen tries one too many right hands and gets caught in a suplex, allowing the hot tag off to Jay. House is cleaned for a few moments until a pop up powerslam plants Jay for two but a clothesline allows the real hot tag to Bully as everything breaks down. Bully actually goes up top for a high crossbody (!) to take out everyone at once. The Jay Driller into the Froggy Bow sets up a three man 3D to finish Rowe at 11:45.

**Rating:** C+. This was the kind of fun match that you would expect. They beat each other up for a bit and didn't bother wasting time on anything more than they needed to. Bully is best used as a featured attraction like this as he's a legend who can just come in, do his signature stuff, and go to the finish. The match was fine and entertaining, which is all it needed to be.

Smith and War Machine fight on the floor which I'd assume will be resolved in another promotion in Japan.

We recap the Tag Team Title match. The Young Bucks were the champions and successfully defended at Manhattan Mayhem. Post match the Broken Hardys appeared and won the titles in an impromptu match. Roppongi Vice was already scheduled to challenge in a street fight so we'll just make it a three way.

#### Tag Team Titles: Roppongi Vice vs. Young Bucks vs. Broken Hardys

Matt and Jeff are defending in a street fight. This is just after the TNA lawsuit, meaning the Hardys can only be kind of Broken because TNA is annoying and petty because they seem to think they can just throw the Broken gimmick on anyone and it'll work (it won't work because no one else can play the characters like Matt and Jeff). But hey, TNA gets to stand by its principles and if they just happen to look like penny pinching imbeciles, so be it.

Vice is knocked to the floor to start so they bring in some weapons to put the bigger teams down. A springboard dropkick drives a trashcan lid into Jeff's back. The Bucks can't hit a Meltzer Driver but the Hardys come back in to beat up Vice instead. Vice breaks up another Bucks vs. Hardys showdown so Nick powerbombs Romero off the apron and onto the ramp. The Bucks and the Hardys start brawling...and let's hit the replay!

The champs get dropped with superkicks but the Bucks miss the stolen Hardys' top rope shots. It's time for the first ladder because I'm not sure the Hardys know how to work a long match without one. Jeff brings in a trashcan but gets superkicked with Matt taking one as well. A third superkick knocks Jeff off the ropes and into a big pile, only to have Nick get shoved off the ladder into a springboard flip dive onto the same pile.

Nick is right back in with a springboard 450 onto a trashcan onto Trent for two. More Bang for Your Buck is broken up and Jeff's Swanton hits raised knees. With everyone down, Romero grabs a sleeve (as in from a shirt) covered in thumbtacks for a string of clotheslines in the corner. Strong Zero gets two on Nick with Matt making the save. Beretta pours out another bag of tacks but due to wrestling law #1, that means he's sent face first into them, this time via something like a Steiner Bulldog.

The Five Star Driver (or maybe it's the Meltzer Driver or whatever their insider name is for it that the fans cheer for because it makes them feel smart) sends Trent into the tacks, setting up another slugout with the Hardys. The champs get the better of it and bring out a table and a second ladder for various hardcore reasons. Matt and Jeff send the Bucks to the floor and a flip dive (not exactly a Swanton through Trent through the table is enough for the pin to retain at 17:14.

**Rating:** B+. These matches, along with most Bucks matches, are like

junk food: there's no quality to them but they're a lot of fun to watch. I'd rather watch them just do their stuff with the superkicks and flips than try to have people tell me how great a match it is because they know how to put together better matches than any other team. The match was a fun, violent brawl and that's all it needed to be. It was designed to pop the crowd and I got into a lot of those big spots, though the ending felt a bit flat. Also, well done on putting this together so quickly with the surprise addition of the Hardys.

The Hardys take the Young Bucks' Superkick Titles too.

We recap the World Title match. Christopher Daniels won a tournament designed for older competitors to earn his shot. The idea is Daniels has given his all to the business but has never actually won the World Title. He's put in everything he's had for twenty four years and absolutely cannot lose.

This includes another outstanding promo from Daniels where he breaks into tears, talking about how he just has to win. Daniels has been on fire with the promos lately and I actually want to see him win after really not being a fan for years on end. The other detail is Daniels' best friend Kazarian turning on him to join the Bullet Club to side with champion Adam Cole.

#### ROH World Title: Adam Cole vs. Christopher Daniels

There are no seconds here. Daniels is challenging and we're ready to go after some Big Match Intros. We actually get a Code of Honor as the announcers talk about Daniels being 0-8-1 in World Title matches. Cole takes him down and makes a face before doing it again and slapping Daniels in the back of the head. The feeling out process/mind games continue as Cole sends him into the ropes for an ADAM COLE BAY BAY!

That earns him a right hand to the jaw so Adam stomps away in the corner. A backdrop sends Cole outside to give Daniels his first major offense nearly five minutes in. That's quickly wrapped up though as a superkick knocks Daniels' head into the post to draw some blood. Thankfully Adam is smart enough to stay on the cut and we hit a chinlock, which should squeeze more blood out of his head.

More kicks to the head have Daniels reeling but one too many poses allows Daniels to get in a Koji Clutch for a big hope spot. Daniels can't follow up though so Cole talks trash about Daniels' wife,

which gives us the expected result. We hit the slugout with Daniels getting in an STO and a Blue Thunder Bomb for two.

The BME misses though and Adam scores with a superkick for two more. A Shining Wizard sets up the Last Shot for a near fall but Daniels hits him in the face again. Angel's Wings is countered and it's a double clothesline to put both guys down. Cole's Canadian Destroyer is countered but he grabs Angel's Wings on Daniels for two.

As you might expect, Daniels hits a Last Shot of his own for the same, followed by a Styles Clash of all things for a very near fall. Back up and the referee gets superkicked so heeeeere's Kazarian. We nearly get some heel miscommunication but instead Kazarian rips off the Bullet Club shirt to reveal a Daniels shirt. A Rock Bottom into three straight BME's give us a new champion at 21:47.

**Rating:** B. I liked this more than I was expecting to with a great story as Daniels survived until he got one shot, just like he had done for his entire career. The Kazarian stuff was really well done (a bit predictable but still good) and Daniels did everything himself (Kazarian never touched Cole). They nailed the big moment and that's all that mattered here with a good match to make it work even better.

The long celebration with a lot of the locker room coming out ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** A-. This really was a great show with the worst thing being the Six Man Tag Team Titles and even that was far from bad. They nailed the big ending which is all almost anyone is going to remember from this show and that's the most important thing. However, it also brings up one of ROH's major problems.

Aside from the main event and the Tag Team Titles to a lesser degree, almost nothing on here feels like it has a story that has either been thoroughly explained or even exists at all. I watch every episode of ROH TV and I couldn't begin to tell you where a lot of these matches came from. Yeah Rush beat Scurll in a 2/3 falls match. Not only do I have no idea when/where he did that but I don't remember it being mentioned on TV unless it was in passing.

This comes back to ROH's TV being all screwed up. The go-home show for this (dated March 8) featured Kazarian turning, the Kingdom defending against the Rebellion with Dalton Castle on commentary and a Top Prospect Tournament match. Before that it was Addiction having

issues, another Top Prospect Tournament match and the setup for Rush vs. Scurll, which involved about six more people. Finally, the last show of February featured Colt Cabana (on commentary here) squashing the Boys (title contenders here), an unrelated match and Daniels becoming #1 contender.

In the three weeks of build to this show, three out of the eight matches (World Title, TV Title, Six Man Tag Team Titles) got any kind of significant mention on TV. Maybe the other five matches were mentioned on the ROH website or something but I really should have a better idea of a pay per view by watching the last three weeks of TV. Run down the card or give us some promos (maybe you could get rid of the horrible Top Prospect Tournament matches or move them to a later date or something) or do SOMETHING to help build these matches up.

The formula worked here but you're not going to be able to rely on the wrestlers knocking it out of the park every time. So much of this show worked because the main event (which was well built and told a great story) rocked and the ladder match had people who know how to work that match to near perfection. You can't rely on that every single time and a big solution to that problem is to fix their freaking TV. I mean, they haven't in years and it's not going to get better anytime soon but it need to get better. Anyway, really strong show here and one of ROH's best in a long time.

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# Ring of Honor TV – March 15, 2017: Tournament Are NOT Always Awesome

## Ring of Honor

Date: March 15, 2017

Location: Stage AE, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Commentator: Ian Riccabani

The 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show has come and gone and...it's not clear when we'll hear about it on TV. Unfortunately that's the way this place works and there's really not a lot that can be done about it. It's hard to say what we'll get on this show, aside from the Top Prospect Tournament of course. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Alex Shelley is the first guest commentator.

## Young Bucks vs. Coast to Coast

Non-title. So we're not even up to Manhattan Mayhem on this one? Sweet goodness they take their sweet time around here. Nick and St. Giovanni get things going with a fight over a wristlock, only to have Nick drop down for a SUCK IT. Some rapid fire kicks have Coast to Coast on the floor, setting up the double dives but Ali pulls them to the floor. Of course the fans eat things up because they want to be cheering cool heels despite being smart fans. Leon hits a Downward Spiral on Matt and we take a break.

Back with Nick hitting a springboard SUCK IT crossbody on Leon. Coast to Coast (the double springboard dropkick to the Tree of Woe) gets two on Nick but that means a superkick. Nick starts firing off more kicks, plus a running Sliced Bread #2. Ali gets superkicked in the back of the leg and the springboard 450 is good for the pin at 7:04.

**Rating:** C-. This was a decent rub for Coast to Coast though as usual, the ROH fans continue to be some of the most irritating in the world. Then again the Bucks are a big part of that problem for reasons I've covered far too many times already. This could have

been much worse though and Coast to Coast got a rub, which is more than you can expect most of the time.

Post match Leon takes a Twist of Fate and a Swanton Bomb.

We look at Lio Rush teasing joining the Rebellion before costing them a match last week.

Rush says he's sick of the Rebellion and they don't know what they're dealing with. Cue Kenny King to say this is serious and a challenge is set for next week.

Brutal Bob Evans joins Ian and Alex.

#### Top Prospect Tournament First Round: Curt Stallion vs. Preston Quinn

Stallion looks like Andrew Everett. Quinn has been wrestling for 23 years and has a Jim Cornette knockoff in his corner. Curt has to shake the manager's hand and gets punched in his head as a result. Some forearms set up a double stomp for two on Quinn but the manager (Andy Vineberg) trips him up.

A sitdown brainbuster (exactly what it sounds like) gets two on Curt, followed by Abyss' Shock Treatment. Something like White Noise onto the knee (Okada does it) is good for two on Quinn but he grabs a good looking piledriver. Stallion avoids a middle rope elbow though and catches Quinn with a running headbutt for the pin at 7:09.

**Rating:** D. This tournament needs to end REALLY soon because no one has impressed me even in the slightest and someone is going to get a contract and a title shot out of this mess. The wrestling has been nothing of note and the characters have been even worse. You might want to make sure you have the talent to pull something like this off because it's been a real problem in recent weeks.

Here's Cody to ask where Jay Lethal has been. One fan says he's seen him and Cody calls the fan a liar. Ever since Final Battle, Lethal has disappeared like the coward he really is. That's not what Cody wants to talk about tonight though because he'd rather talk about Adam Page. Cue Page with his noose around his neck so Cody talks about bullrope matches with a cowbell included. The DUSTY chant starts up and Cody says the rope is going to become a Texas bullrope. The official challenge is laid out for Supercard of Honor. Jay Briscoe is ready for his rematch with Jay White next week.

### Jonathon Gresham vs. Dalton Castle

Gresham's first name is spelled differently on his video graphic and his name graphic. Jonathon sits on the mat to avoid an Irish whip and grabs a rope to block an O'Connor roll. Some arm work doesn't do much on Castle so he holds up a fist to say bring it. A nice technical exchange ends with Castle's chest thrust, followed by a running knee in the corner.

Gresham grabs both arms for a freaky rollup and a springboard hurricanrana to the floor. A running knee from the apron sets up a chest thrust from Gresham and the gimmick infringement doesn't set well with Castle. Neither does Jonathan diving off the top so Dalton catches him in the Bang-a-Rang for the pin at 4:41.

**Rating:** C. This was fine and a good way to warm Castle up for his World Title match at Supercard of Honor. Castle is an interesting choice for that spot as I don't think anyone believes he's going to win the title but he'll certainly get a great reaction when he's out there. Gresham is still a solid hand but he's not going anywhere.

Marty Scurll is ready for his TV Title defense at Supercard of Honor.

Mark Briscoe joins commentary.

### War Machine vs. BJ Whitmer/Punishment Martinez

No DQ. War Machine jumps them from behind during the entrance and the fight starts in a hurry at ringside. Rowe takes Martinez inside for a Superman Punch, followed by another one on Whitmer for good measure. Running charges crush Martinez and Whitmer before BJ and Hanson head back inside. BJ pelts a chair at Hanson's head to take over and we take a break.

Back with Rowe hitting running clotheslines to both opponents, followed by a hard knee to Martinez's face for no cover. Instead BJ grabs a great looking release German suplex to send Rowe flying. Rowe and Whitmer trade running forearms until Whitmer's exploder suplex gets two. Hanson comes back in with a pop up powerslam for two and it's time for a table. Whitmer has to escape Fallout and all three head to the floor for Martinez's Taker Dive for a BIG pop. Back in again and Hanson takes a bit too long loading up something on top, allowing Punishment to chokeslam him through the table for the pin at 10:25.



**Rating:** C+. This worked well enough and Martinez continues to be one of the more entertaining people to watch on the whole roster. Just let him be something like the Undertaker and put on a bunch of flashy performances. I'm sure that's not the idea though because we can have the boring Top Prospect Tournament matches instead.

Post match Martinez chokeslams Whitmer to break up the team, which doesn't seem to be anything interesting to the announcers.

**Overall Rating:** C-. I've seen worse shows from ROH and oddly enough almost all of them seem to take place right after a pay per view. These are more or less filler shows and that doesn't make for the most interesting stuff in the world. At least we had a fun main event and Martinez leaving the worthless BJ. Watchable show here but nothing you need to see.

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## Ring of Honor TV – February 8, 2017: Ring of Ho-Hum

### Ring of Honor

Date: February 8, 2017

Location: Center Stage Theater, Atlanta, Georgia

Commentators: Kevin Kelly, Colt Cabana

We're getting closer to the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show and tonight it's about the minor titles. First up we'll have the Young Bucks defending the ROH Tag Team Titles against the Tempura Boyz. After that though we have a six way match to crown a new #1 contender to Marty Scurll's TV Title. Let's get to it.

#### BJ Whitmer/Punishment Martinez vs. War Machine

It's a brawl to start as Cabana is in full on heel mode, talking about how awesome he is at everything in life. Rowe takes over on Martinez to start but misses the shotgun knees in the corner, allowing Whitmer to get in a cheap shot from the apron. We take a way too early break and come back with Hanson cleaning house with back and forth corner clotheslines to Whitmer and Martinez.

To make things even worse, Hanson puts Martinez on the top rope and rams Whitmer's head into Punishment's ribs over and over. An overhead belly to belly makes things worse for Whitmer as everything breaks down. Whitmer gets in his exploder suplex but grabs a table instead of covering. Cabana doesn't care for the lack of disqualifications but settles for a double countout at 9:43.

**Rating:** C+. This is what the match should have been as War Machine is a great power brawling team. Whitmer is fine once they cut off the Kevin Sullivan nonsense and Martinez is capable of doing some very horrible looking things to jobbers if given the chance. I had fun with this one and the ending was one of the only logical ways to go.

They brawl to another break after the match.

#### Kingdom vs. John Skyler/Corey Hollis/Joe A'Gau

Non-title. The Kingdom doesn't waste time as they take Joe to the floor for a triple bomb. Hollis gets sent into the post and it's Skyler alone against all three champions. That means a triple teaming but a double underhook backbreaker only gets two. A superkick into an enziguri gets the same as we hear about T.K. O'Ryan being a sassy horse. Skyler finally slips out and of a pumphandle and dives over for the hot tag to Hollis. Everything

breaks down and the Triple Bomb ends Hollis at 5:03.

**Rating:** C. Better than I was expecting here with the jobbers getting to put in a little more offense than you would have thought. The Kingdom is still not all that interesting because it's just Matt Taven (who wasn't that interesting in the first place) plus two guys who just debuted as part of the team. Give us a little more and maybe I'll care but that isn't the case yet.

Post match the Kingdom says they'll never lose the titles but here are Dalton Castle and the Boys to interrupt. Taven isn't impressed and says bring it on, which shows how short the aisle really is in this arena. Dalton gets in but Cabana shoves the Boys down.

We look back at the Young Bucks agreeing to defend against the Tempura Boyz.

Colt Cabana leaves commentary due to a zero tolerance policy.

Tag Team Titles: Young Bucks vs. Tempura Boyz

The Bucks are defending and it's Nick cleaning house on Sho to start, including an assisted superkick to send him outside. Back from an early break with the Bucks in full control (duh) and a big highlight reel from the champs. Matt kicks Nick by mistake though and we get stereo deadlift German suplexes on the floor.

Things settle down again with the Bucks actually in a bit of trouble...which of course lasts all of ten seconds before some kicks and dives get them out of trouble. That means a SUCK IT/DELETE chant from Matt but Nick gets caught in a Boston crab. Cue the superkick for the save and the corner enziguri sets up the 450 to retain the titles at 9:27.

**Rating:** C-. Not much to see here but that's so often the case with Young Bucks matches. I'm not entirely sure on the idea of the Bucks vs. the Hardys but it's one of the biggest indy matches you can do at this point. If nothing else it gives me a great chuckle at the idea of the Bucks never showing up in TNA, making them look even worse by comparison, which is always a good thing.

Post match Hangman Page comes out to help the Bucks lay the Boyz

out.

Marty Scurll loves the idea of six people fighting for a shot at his title.

Lio Rush vs. Chris Sabin vs. Alex Shelley vs. Donovan Dijak vs. Jonathan Gresham vs. Jay White

One fall to a finish and all six hug before the match. Scurll, on commentary, wants to gag at the sight. Thankfully there are tags here so it's not quite as insane, though it's under Lucha Rules, meaning going to the floor counts as a tag. Speaking of which, that exact rules quickly gives us Rush vs. Dijak with Marty saying he can do everything Lio can do. I'm already liking Scurll and I've heard him talk for all of a minute and a half.

Everything breaks down and we wind up with Shelley calling a spot to Rush, who can't quite fight his way out of the corner. With Scurll, who is holding an umbrella, talking about the Power Rangers, Sabin and Shelley argue for a bit, only to quickly hug us to a break. Back with Sabin knocking Shelley to the floor but getting Stunned by Gresham. White and Rush get into a very fast paced exchange with Jay getting the better of it as Rush is knocked out to the floor.

Dijak gets Rock Bottomed (Scurll: "I would kick out of this.") for two and it's time to hit the dives. Scurll: "THEY'RE ALL GONNA DIE! I could do that!" Dijak adds a springboard corkscrew dive so Gresham and Rush double team the big guy down. Gresham goes up top but the freaking Rebellion comes out to get in a big brawl. Back in and Rush kicks Dijak in the head but his top rope dive is caught by the throat. Feast Your Eyes gives Dijak the shot at 9:45.

**Rating:** C+. This was the usual over done match with too many people involved. The action was good though and that's what matters most here, along with Dijak getting the title shot. I mean, he's not going to win the thing because he's leaving but it's a nice bone to throw him on the way out.

Scurll stares him down.

War Machine is brawling with Whitmer/Martinez in the back to end the

show.

**Overall Rating:** C. Just a show really as they're still setting up the pay per view with a long time to go. I'm not sure how interesting that show is going to be with all the names that are rumored to be leaving the promotion but it's nice to have a show focused on the ROH names instead of everyone else possible for a change.

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