

Ring of Honor TV – September 30, 2015: Like A Rolling Stone

Ring of Honor

Date: September 30, 2015

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: King Corino, Kevin Kelly

It's another stand alone episode with the New Japan guys coming in to help bridge the gap between the pay per view and the start of the new taping cycle. Tonight we have a dream match with Adam Cole facing Shinsuke Nakamura, who is one of the best in the world right now. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Matt Sydal vs. Kushida

Kushida's IWGP Junior Heavyweight Title isn't on the line. I'm not a fan of Kushida's in ring work but the Back to the Future theme is awesome. The fans start the THIS IS AWESOME chants at the bell which always gets on my nerves. Feeling out process to start with Kushida taking him down off a headlock and floating around Sydal's back until it's a standoff.

They trade armdrags until Kushida no sells a hurricanrana and blasts him with a dropkick. Sydal gets smart and goes after the knee with some kicks and a bridging Indian deathlock as we take a break. Oddly enough WCW would always go to a commercial whenever anyone else put on those holds. Back with Kushida diving into a spinwheel kick but he comes back with a front flip into a kick to the head. So much for selling the knee of course but that's such a common problem in wrestling and Japanese wrestling in particular.

Back in and a moonsault gets two on Sydal but Matt kicks the knee out. His standing moonsault is countered into the Hoverboard Lock (sweet name

for a Kimura) but Sydal makes the ropes. They trade big strikes to the head and both guys are down. Sydal is up first with a reverse hurricanrana for two but the Hoverboard Lock goes on again. Matt rolls out of it and kicks Kushida in the head, setting up the Shooting Star (which still takes forever) for the pin at 12:14.

Rating: C. I'm not a fan of either guy and this really felt like a very stereotypical ROH match. The knee work went nowhere because Kushida wouldn't sell the thing. Sydal is better than just a single finisher but I'm still not a fan of his since he left WWE. This wasn't a bad match or anything but it's not my style.

Watanabe vs. Will Ferrara vs. Moose vs. Adam Page

One fall to a finish. Before the match, BJ Whitmer says Page should get some better competition because he beats everyone he fights. Page goes right after Watanabe to start and the fans aren't pleased because Watanabe is Japanese and therefore the ROH fans worship him. Ferrara comes in and knocks Page around the ring like he stole something. Off to Moose who throws Ferrara around but Page tags himself in to pick the bones. A belly to belly gets two on Ferrara but it's quickly back to Watanabe for a backsplash.

Moose breaks up a cover and backdrops the much smaller Ferrara over the top and out onto Watanabe. Colby gets on the apron and is promptly kicked back to the floor. Page comes back in and gets speared in half, only to have Ferrara tornado DDT Moose. Back to Watanabe for a German suplex to Moose and an STO to pin Ferrara at 5:45.

Rating: C+. This would have been better with more time and I like Watanabe a little bit better than Kushida so this didn't get to me as much. Moose is kind of in a free fall at this point and could use a big win but as usual Watanabe needs another win that doesn't seem to get him anywhere. Ferrara continues to be spunky which is about as good as you can get for someone his size.

Bushwacker Luke marches around the ring. This is a semi-regular thing in ROH.

We see Cheeseburger getting beaten down by Brutal Bob Evans earlier in the night because these two are destined to be fighting forever. Luke came in for the save with a Stunner (yes a Stunner) and used Cheeseburger for a Battering Ram.

Back in the arena and Luke says Corino looks like a bucket of sardines (a compliment) and licks his face. As someone who has experienced that as well, I don't know why Corino is wincing.

Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Adam Cole

Nigel McGuinness is in on commentary. Cole is full on heel here and thankfully the commentary knows it for a change. Unfortunately they can't say what he did but that's the danger of a taped show. I still get a Mick Jagger vibe from Nakamura. Cole works on a wristlock to start but they stop to take in some crowd reactions. Nakamura does Cole's pose in a funny bit but Cole kicks him in the leg and does an awkward little dance as we take a break.

Back with Nakamura driving Cole into the barricade but Adam scores with a superkick. Corino misses it though and sounds downright depressed. He's really starting to grow on me and I'm not sure if I like that. Back in and Cole sends him hard into the corner before going into that evil smile of his. Nakamura starts driving the hard knees into the head and gets two off a gordbuster. We could all use a bit more Arn Anderson in our lives so I heartily approve.

Cole comes back with a superkick to both knees and a low one to the jaw for two. More kicks to the knee take us to a break and we come back with Cole slapping on the Figure Four. Nakamura gets the ropes so Cole busts out some dragon screw leg whips, only to get caught in a cross armbreaker. That goes nowhere so Nakamura comes back with knee strikes (gah) and an overhead belly to back suplex. The knee gives out though, allowing Cole to come back with a running knee to the face.

A Shining Wizard gets two for Adam and a superkick to the back of the head into a cross arm German suplex for two. Cole freaks out and goes after the referee but charges into a knee in the corner. Nakamura's middle rope knee drops Cole but he can't cover. An ax kick sets up the

running knee to the side of Cole's head for a close two. Cole spits in Nakamura's face so Shinsuke comes back with the Landslide (sitout Death Valley Driver) and another running knee for the pin at 22:50.

Rating: B. Good but not great match here which felt like a major showdown as it was supposed to. Nakamura has more personality than anyone else in New Japan and it's always fun to see him in the ring. Cole has that it factor and the smile when he had Shinsuke in trouble was great. The match was certainly good and well worthy of the spot they were going for here though I've seen better. The constant knee strikes from Nakamura after Cole spent the time working over the knee got annoying in a hurry but at least Shinsuke sold the knee a bit in between. That's a lot better than some people would do.

Overall Rating: B. This was a solid, wrestling heavy TV show. When one match takes up nearly half the show it's going to dominate the rating and that's exactly what happened here. That being said, I could go for some more stories as I had them built up for weeks and now I have to wait more weeks to see where they go. I'd really like them to fix this problem because it gets on my nerves every single time. Still though, fun show here with a lot of solid to good wrestling.

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Ring of Honor – August 19, 2015: More Bang For Your Witty Jokes

Ring of Honor

Date: August 19, 2015

Location: William J. Myers Pavilion, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Kevin Kelly

We're getting closer to All-Star Extravaganza and the big story continues to be the tag team division. Last week saw several teams fighting each other for the belts, which could lead to some very good matches for the titles in the future. On top of that we have Jay Lethal getting ready to defend both his titles so expect to see quite a bit of him in the near future. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

McGuinness is in King Corino's place due to Corino going nuts over BJ Whitmer last week.

Silas Young vs. Dalton Castle

This feud continues and that's not a bad thing. Castle does his posing but runs straight at Young in the corner for some forearms to the face. He rams Young's face into the mat as you can feel the charisma melting off of Castle. Fans: "FAN UP!" A rollup gets two for Dalton and he muscles Young over for a suplex. The boys fan Young on the floor and that's just not cool with him. Castle uses the distraction to go after him again but gets sent hard into the barricade as we go to a break.

Back with Silas getting the better of a slugout (shocking I know) but the boys get on the apron to fan things off again. The distraction doesn't work so well this time as Young comes back with a middle rope clothesline. Dalton shows off some surprising power by lifting him up like a spinebuster and charging to the ropes, dropping both guys out to

the floor. A hurricanrana drops Young again and a spinout Rock Bottom gets two. Young grabs the Killer Combo (a backbreaker into a mat slam) but the boys offer yet another distraction, allowing Castle to catch Young in the Bang A Rang (reverse helicopter bomb) for the pin at 10:40.

Rating: C+. I liked this better than I was expecting to as Castle's charisma actually has some wrestling skills behind it. Young is good as a midcard heel and Castle is a perfect foil for him, so the chemistry and idea here worked quite well. Good stuff here, but I'm not sure how far Castle can go up the card.

Post match Young rants about Castle's lifestyle with the boys (who are adult men) and how he's corrupting them. Silas wants one more match but with the boys on the line so he can turn them into men.

Bobby Fish thinks he can win the TV Title. Jay Lethal comes in and says Fish has no chance, meaning some shouting ensues.

Will Ferrara vs. Moose

Prince Nana is on commentary. Ferrara looks tiny compared to the giant Moose. Moose shows off some agility by dropkicking Ferrara off the top and out to the floor. Now we go with the power as Moose picks Ferrara up and slings him from one side of the barricade to the other. Well that's one way to hurt somebody.

Back in and Will grabs a DDT to send Moose outside. Ferrara loads up a suicide dive but gets caught in midair, only to keep moving and DDT Moose onto the floor for a pretty sweet counter. They head inside again with Moose running up the corner, stumbling a bit, and superplexing Will down. The spear gives Moose the pin at 3:25.

Rating: C. This was another match that surprised me as they had what looked one sided and managed to turn it into something good. Ferrara is better than his size would suggest and he had some good stuff here, while Moose looks like the complete (yet still mostly green) package. Another nice surprise here.

Adam Cole can't believe that Future Shock is getting a Tag Team Title

match next week, but he also can't believe that his friends in the Kingdom don't believe in him anymore. It's not what he brings to the table because he brings the entire table. So he's the lost Dudley?

Roppongi Vice vs. Young Bucks

Baretta and Rocky Romero (Vice) are the only ones willing to shake hands and it's with each other. Nick and Baretta get things going but the threat of a superkick puts Baretta into the corner for some safety. It's off to Matt vs. Rocky as their partners fight on the floor. The Bucks try the Meltzer Driver but Rocky breaks it up, only to have Nick hit a big flip dive to take out everyone on the floor.

Back from a break with Matt hitting a running neckbreaker on Rocky but the cover doesn't count because he's not legal. Baretta breaks up a cartwheel splash into the corner to take out his partner and everything heads outside. The crowd is oddly silent for this part. Back in and Romero mocks the cartwheel and rapid fire superkicks before Vice settles in for some double teaming on Matt. Baretta takes too long posing though and eats a superkick from Nick.

Rocky gets one as well and the tag brings Nick in to dropkick Baretta off the apron. The Bucks speed things up and hit their stereo dives to the floor. The double superkick misses though and Rocky hurricanranas both down at the same time. Back from a second break with Baretta throwing Nick's foot into Matt's face and tornado DDTing Matt for no cover. The Bucks fire off their kicks but Rocky scores with some hard clotheslines to put everyone down in a very fast sequence.

Matt is taken to the floor for a Doomsday knee to the face before a Shining Wizard gets two on Nick. A double knee puts Nick down again but Matt comes back in with a superkick, allowing Nick to come back with something like a Canadian Destroyer. Nick's springboard 450 gets two on Romero and it's time for all the superkicks. Baretta is taken out on the floor and More Bang For Your Buck ends Rocky at 20:10.

Rating: B-. Fun match but again, I'm not a fan of the Bucks' video game style. I'm not going to bother ranting about it again here, but there's just not much in there I'm going to care about with them. On top of that,

I'm not interested in what's going on in New Japan. I know these two are in warring stables over there, but this is Ring of Honor, not New Japan. Save that stuff for the big shows, not a regular TV show. And yes, I'm aware I'll likely be told I don't get something.

Post match the Addiction and Chris Sabin clean house. I know they're another stable, because Heaven forbid there aren't a half dozen of them in a promotion that has an hour of TV a week. Nick gets hit with a spike tombstone, called the Indytaker. My how clever. The Addiction and Sabin stand tall to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. I had a good time for this show, various overly smarky and flippy based main event match and story aside. The stories are making more sense now and their pacing is mostly fine, but I wouldn't have twenty minute main events on a show that only runs an hour. Still though, good enough show this week which could still use some adjustments.

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Ring of Honor – July 15, 2015: Rednecks And Real Men

Ring of Honor

Date: July 15, 2015

Location: Terminal 5, New York City, New York

Commentators: King Corino, Kevin Kelly

It's time for more build towards Death Before Dishonor, where Roderick Strong will be challenging Jay Lethal for the World Title. However, Lethal is still the TV Champion, meaning it's time for a title defense against Mark Briscoe. This show has been solid so far and hopefully it keeps going in that direction. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Adam Page vs. Matt Sydal

This continues to be part of the King Corino vs. BJ Whitmer feud over Colby Corino being Page's young boy. Matt takes Adam into the corner to start before dropping him with a hurricanrana. A spinwheel kick puts Page on the floor but a baseball slide takes Colby out by mistake. You would think Papa Corino would be more upset over this but it sounds like more of an annoyance than anything else.

We take a break and come back with Sydal getting a close two off a rollup but a pumphandle fall away slam (that's a new one) gets the same on Matt. With nothing else working, Sydal just kicks Adam in the face but can't hit the shooting star. Instead it's a fireman's carry into a backbreaker for two for Page, followed by a front flip from the apron into a clothesline. Matt comes back with a kick and the shooting star for the pin at 9:15.

Rating: D+. Why am I supposed to care about Adam Page? He's a generic guy

in the ring with nothing interesting going on other than an association with BJ Whitmer, who seems to be the one with the issues with King Corino. The match was really lacking too as they were just doing moves until Sydal hit his big move to win. Boring match with a boring heel.

Post match Whitmer comes in for the beatdown but ACH tries to make a save. This goes very badly as Colby throws in a bunch of chairs to help with the beatdown, capped off by the reverse piledriver on Sydal onto the chairs. King Corino freaks out and tells his kid to stop.

We run down the Death Before Dishonor card.

Here's the gorgeous Veda Scott to mock Moose's loss to Cedric Alexander. At Death Before Dishonor, Alexander will prove that you win with skills instead of potential. Alexander is going to take what Moose never deserved. This was a good way to build a match in about a minute and that's exactly what it was supposed to be.

Silas Young vs. Will Ferrara

Silas knees him in the ribs to start and drops him with a release gordbuster. I'm digging the old school style he's using and it's working well for him. Back up though and Ferrara grabs the arm to slow things down and take over for a bit, only to get dropped on his back in a kind of powerslam. Silas cranks on both arms at once before Ferrara stops a charge with two raised boots. A tornado DDT gets two but Silas one ups him (in a way) with a DDT into the corner. Cue Dalton Castle's boys for a distraction, allowing Ferrara to roll him up for the pin at 5:47.

Rating: D+. Just a quick match here with Ferrara being a decent enough worker for his experience level, but this was more about Castle vs. Young. It's interesting that Castle is really a glorified comedy character but is getting a pretty high profile feud. What's even more interesting though is how well he's handling it so far. That's a good sign going forward and Young is a great choice for him to feud against. Not much of a match but it served its purpose.

The Briscoes are fired up for next week's 200th episode.

TV Title: Mark Briscoe vs. Jay Lethal

Lethal, also the World Champion, is defending. They slug it out to start with Jay knocking him to the floor for a baseball slide. Truth Martini loads up the Book of Truth but ODB (the Briscoes' friend) breaks it up to let Mark take over with a string of rams into the barricades. Back in and Mark gets two off a top rope chop to the head and we take a break.

We come back with Roderick Strong on commentary to bore everyone to death. Mark suplexes the champ down and kicks him in the chest, only to have the House of Truth come in for a distraction so Lethal can take over. We hit the chinlock followed by a front facelock until Mark nails a running clothesline. Jay superkicks him in the jaw to stop the comeback but the Lethal Injection is countered with a German suplex to send him outside. A Cactus Jack elbow takes us to our second break of the match.

Back again with ODB and Martini getting into it again and Jay Briscoe taking out Jay (PICK A NEW FIRST NAME) Diesel, allowing the Froggy Bow (frog splash elbow) to get two on the champ. ODB gets wiped out and Diesel hits Mark low, setting up the Lethal Injection (that stupid handspring RK0) to retain the title at 16:45.

Rating: B-. I liked this more than I was expecting as they managed to have all the people running in but still kept the whole thing from falling apart. I'm not wild on Mark's promos but at least his in ring style matches his insane persona. Lethal still doesn't do much for me and I don't like one guy holding two titles, but it's not bad so far.

Roderick Strong comes in to break up the post match beatdown, possibly setting up a six man next week. I'm mostly right as it's going to be an eight person tag with ODB and Martini thrown in for good measure.

Overall Rating: C-. This wasn't their best show but the main event helped a bit. Instead, they were basically spending the entire show hyping up the next pay per view, which is a very nice change of pace. Lethal still isn't the most interesting guy in the world though and I'm not wild on him as a champion. That could be fixed through some more time though and it's a problem with being thrown into a series instead of allowing it to

be built up. The 200th episode should be fun though.

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