

Jay Briscoe: A Celebration Of Life: He Deserved It

Jay Briscoe: A Celebration Of Life

Date: January 26, 2023

Location: Save Mart Center, Fresno, California

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Carpice Coleman

As you might have guessed, this is a special show honoring the life of Jay Briscoe, who passed away last week. The show was filmed after last week's AEW taping and features special matches, plus presumably tributes and maybe classic matches from Briscoe's career. That should be more than enough so let's get to it.

We get the tribute video from this week's Dynamite. Still works.

Ring Of Honor Pure Rules Title: Hagane Shinno vs. Wheeler Yuta

Yuta is defending under Pure Rules (of course) and Shinno is from Big Japan. They go with the grappling to start with Yuta working on a head/wristlock. Shinno shrugs that off and strikes away but gets caught with an Angle Slam for two. Yuta starts in on the leg and the cranking sends Shinno to the ropes for the first break. That's fine with Yuta, who grabs a Gory Stretch to work on...well quite a bit really.

Something like the Octopus sends Shinno to the ropes for the second time but he's able to knock Yuta to the floor. Back up and Yuta hits a springboard moonsault, followed by a German suplex back inside. Shinno is back with an enziguri into a Michinoku Driver for two. Yuta kicks him in the head and hits a top rope splash, setting up a crossface armbar to retain at 9:28.

Rating: C+. Shinno was more or less a designated victim here

as Yuta took him apart and was only in trouble for a short stretch. The Pure Rules Title is a unique enough title that almost anyone can challenge for it, but Yuta wrestles a style that fits it so well that it takes someone special to beat him for it. Good opener here and it didn't go too long.

Samoa Joe, fighting back tears, talks about how rare it is to meet authentic people who love unconditionally. That is what Jay Briscoe was and the people who knew the Briscoes knew them as brothers. He watched them grow up and he still loves his brother.

Adam Cole talks about meeting the Briscoes in 2010 when he started with Ring Of Honor. That was the company he wanted to work for and then he got to share a locker room with the Briscoes. Jay believed in him and taught him a lot, but he also vouched for him and helped get Cole's World Title reign extended. Jay never complained or talked trash about anyone because he wanted to boost people up. Cole would be at the Briscoes' house every year on the opening day of football season and he knows Jay is telling everyone to man up.

We recap Jay Briscoe vs. Adam Cole in the main event of Final Battle 2014 for Jay's Ring Of Honor World Title. This is the culmination of their feud in a Fight Without Honor.

From Final Battle 2014.

Ring Of Honor World Title: Adam Cole vs. Jay Briscoe

Jay is defending in a Fight Without Honor (anything goes) and Cole has reserved two seats for Jay's parents (after attacking Papa Briscoe). They slug it out to start and Jay grabs the Jay Driller for two less than a minute in. The fight heads to the floor with Briscoe hammering away and putting Cole on a table. A double stomp from the apron puts Cole through that table and it's staple gun time.

Cole comes back with the Papa Briscoe chair to Jay's head and

then staples the labels to the same head. Back in and Cole sits in the chair and rips at Jay's face, only to have Jay slip out and kick him in the face. The chair is wedged in the corner so Cole can go face first into it and it's time for another table. The table is put up in the corner but Cole grabs the brainbuster onto the knee to take over. Cole sets up the two chairs, only to have Jay Falcon Arrow him onto those chairs.

Back up and Cole kendo sticks him in the face for two. The Figure Four around the post is broken up with a pull into the post and Cole is busted open bad. Cue the athletic commission (great) but Jay breaks that up and beats on Cole some more. Jay pulls out another table and sets it up on the floor before going up top. That takes too long as well, allowing Cole to superkick him down and through the table in a big crash.

A belt shot gives Cole two more and the Florida Key (arm cross German suplex) gets the same. The Panama Sunrise takes too long though and it's a Death Valley Driver through the table in the corner. It's thumbtacks time (of course), with Cole putting some in Briscoe's mouth for a superkick and another near fall. Jay is back with one heck of a backdrop onto the tacks, setting up the Jay Driller for two. Another Jay Driller onto the belt retains the title at 21:24.

Rating: B. This was the kind of brawl that felt like one of the biggest fights of the year. You could feel the hatred between the two of them and it came off like the big culmination of a feud. Jay getting his big win over Cole makes him look like the undisputed star of the company and he got his revenge as well, though I was kind of expecting Papa Briscoe to make a cameo.

Here is Adam Cole in the arena for a chat. Cole talks about his rivalry with Jay and everything that he learned from the Briscoes. Over the years, he learned all kinds of things from the two of them and has all kinds of memories from knowing

them. Jay's entire heart and soul was his family and everyone is here for that family. If Jay was here, he would slap Cole in the head and say MAN UP because they have a show to put on. Cole: "Jay, I love you, I miss you and you made the world a better place."

Matt Hardy calls what happened a tragedy as 38 is way too young (amen). A lot of people misunderstand the Briscoes because they see the character but don't know the man behind the scenes. Once he came through the curtain, he would turn that off and be a bashful soul. Matt was going through the texts they had sent each other over the years and they always talked about being fathers. It is devastating to Matt that Jay won't get to see his kinds grow up. Matt thinks of the Briscoes when he thinks of Ring Of Honor and he is sad that they can't text each other anymore.

Marina Shafir vs. Mighty Mayra

Mayra doesn't get an entrance but does get judo thrown down to start. A chop in the corner has Mayra in more trouble and Shafir kicks her in the chest. An armbar makes Mayra tap at 2:11.

Christopher Daniels talks about how many times he came and went from Ring Of Honor and the Briscoes were the constants in the company. The Briscoes knew they were never leaving and Jay deserves to be at the top of the list of great Ring Of Honor stars. They wrestled a lot over the years and Daniels would come out bruised, but he was always in there with someone who had passion for what he did. Everything about Jay was real and the only thing he did better than wrestle was be a father. Daniels is glad he could consider himself a friend and thanks the Briscoe family for sharing Jay with them.

From Survival Of The Fittest 2016.

Jay Briscoe vs. Christopher Daniels

Frankie Kazarian is here with Daniels. They go with the grappling to start as Jay reverses a headlock into a headscissors on the mat. Back up and Jay drives him into the corner but Daniels' second headlock goes a bit better. Briscoe breaks that up as well and slams him down before snapping off a hurricanrana for two.

A Kazarian distraction lets Daniels backdrop him to the floor though, setting up the Arabian moonsault. Daniels pulls him against the post and adds a slingshot elbow for two back inside. The waistlock goes on to keep Briscoe down and a knee to the ribs makes it worse. Another Arabian moonsault gives Daniels two and he walks over Briscoe's chest to mess with the mind a bit.

Briscoe fights out of another waistlock with some elbows to the head and a superkick gets two. A middle rope crossbody misses though and Briscoe bangs up the ribs again. Daniels is right back on the ribs but Jay shrugs it off and hits the Jay Driller out of nowhere for the pin at 14:58.

Rating: B-. Pretty good stuff here but the ending kind of came out of nowhere. Daniels working over the ribs worked well enough and Briscoe looked good fighting out of it. They were just kind of done all of a sudden though and it didn't help the rest of the match. Briscoe getting a nice win is a good thing though and it made sense to have him go over.

Respect is shown after the match.

Eddie Kingston doesn't have any inspirational words to say because this doesn't seem real. He is going to miss the good times with Jay and this isn't fair. Jay is going to be missed by a lot of people because he was a good family man. Kingston thought he had more to say and the only thing he can think of is that he misses Jay. Kingston: "Tell Brodie I said hello."

Eddie Kingston vs. QT Marshall

Marshall offers the handshake and misses the cheap shot, allowing Kingston to chop away. A backdrop sends Marshall rolling to the floor and Kingston chops him against the barricade, with two fans holding Marshall's arms. Back in and Marshall manages a cheap shot to take over, allowing him to send Kingston's throat into the bottom rope. Marshall keeps striking away and Kingston tells him to keep bringing it before hitting the machine gun chops in the corner. The Spinning Backfist To The Future sets up the Stretch Plum to finish Marshall at 5:11.

Rating: C. This wasn't quite a squash but Marshall isn't going to beat someone of Kingston's caliber. Kingston's tribute to Jay felt emotional and it would have been weird to have him not be on this show. Marshall is a good hand to have around as he is enough of a jerk to make you want to see him get beaten up, which is what we got here. Perfectly fine match.

Post match Eddie holds up a Jay sign.

Austin Gunn talks about getting to Ring Of Honor in 2018 and seeing Jay get injured. The paramedics wouldn't help Jay because they were off the clock so Austin gets a care package to clean him up. Jay said no because he had a flight in two hours but Austin butterfly stitched a huge cut on his back. That was the first time he met Jay and they talked about family for two hours.

Ryan Nemeth talks about wanting to be in a tag team with his brother. Then he met the Briscoes, who welcomed him to the locker room. He wasn't close to the team but he knew they were what he wanted to be.

Stokely Hathaway talks about how great the Briscoes are and how it is our job to make sure his legacy lives on.

Madison Rayne vs. Athena

Ring Of Honor Women's Title Eliminator match and Skye Blue is

here with Rayne. Rayne hammers away to start and snaps off a headscissors. Athena is sent outside but what looks to be a diving DDT is countered into something like a gordbuster on the floor. Back in and we hit the surfboard on Rayne, followed by a backbreaker to keep her in trouble.

We hit the cross arm choke into a Backstabber but Rayne manages to send her outside. The whip into the barricade rocks Athena again and a high crossbody hits Athena for two back inside. Athena is fine enough to hit a belly to back suplex onto the apron but Rayne's crucifix bomb gets two more. Rayne gets sent into the buckle but still manages to cutter a diving Athena out of the air. Back up and Athena grabs a Big Ending onto the knees, setting up a Crossface to make Rayne tap at 8:27.

Rating: C. This show certainly loves its arm submission finishes. Rayne continues to be a good enough hand in the ring and she was able to make Athena look dominant enough by the end. The match was just competitive enough to stay interesting but it was hard to believe that Rayne was going to beat the champ in a spot like this.

Post match Athena drops Blue with a belt shot.

BJ Whitmer talks about his history with the Briscoes and sounds like he is fighting back tears. He thanks Jay for being a friend and a brother.

Zane Decker, a former Ring Of Honor producer, talks about how Jay always listened to him and never brushed him off. Jay understood how much Decker was putting in and treated him nicely. Decker can't wait to be with him again in Heaven.

Brandon Cutler vs. Juice Robinson

Robinson armdrags him down a few times but Cutler snaps off some slams to take over. A running clothesline sends Robinson outside but Robinson steals the cold spray to blind Cutler.

Caprice: "That's cold." We hit the chinlock for a bit before Cutler fights up and slugs away, setting up a ripcord lariat for two. An airplane spin leaves them both dizzy until Cutler right hands him down for two more. Robinson fights up but gets cold sprayed down for another near fall. Robinson finally sends him into the corner and hits the running Cannonball. A forward DDT finishes Cutler at 7:34.

Rating: C. This felt like it should have been on something like Dark as Cutler's comeback came off as little more than comedy. Robinson has been around AEW for a bit now and has yet to take off in any real way. Beating Cutler isn't likely to change that, but at least he got to do something positive for a change.

Prince Nana talks about Jay being a realist and all of the years they have spent together.

Yuka Sakazaki vs. Sandra Moone

Sakazaki takes her down without much trouble to start but Moone hits a running elbow to the back of the head. Some forearms to the face give Moone two more but Sakazaki grabs a twisting brainbuster. A spinning hammerlock faceplant sets up the Magical Girl Splash for the pin on Moone at 2:59.

From Final Battle 2006.

Briscoes vs. Kings Of Wrestling

This is the Kings Of Wrestling's (Chris Hero/Claudio Castagnoli, with Larry Sweeney) final ROH appearance. It's a huge brawl to start and the Briscoes take over on the floor. Back inside and a springboard crossbody hits Hero for two and Mark moonsaults onto Castagnoli on the floor. Castagnoli comes in and gets northern lights suplexed for two before Jay's snap suplex gets the same.

The fans are split as Hero comes back in and rolling into a

moonsault for two on Jay. A double big boot drops Jay for two and a delayed suplex gets the same. Castagnoli stomps away in the corner and then Hero comes in to crank on the arms. Jay manages a double DDT though and it's back to Mark to clean house.

A Rock Bottom suplex gets two on Hero but a springboard splash only hits raised knees. Mark hits a gordbuster for two on Castagnoli and Hero kicks him in the face for two. The Kings use a PowerPlex for two but Jay catches Castagnoli on top with a super hurricanrana. The frog splash gives Mark two and the yet to be named Redneck Boogie gets the same.

Everything breaks down and Castagnoli spins both Briscoes (with their legs around his neck) because he can do something like that. An exchange of strikes leaves Hero as the only one standing but Jay is up with the Jay Driller, leaving everyone down. With Castagnoli sent outside thanks to a botched Sweeney interference, a shooting star press/guillotine legdrop combination finishes Hero at 17:15.

Rating: B. This is another case where the talent involved is going to guarantee that it worked, though you could tell that the Briscoes were still trying to find themselves as a team. The talent was there and they were starting to put it together, but they weren't to the point where they felt like THE team just yet. Beating the Kings was good as they felt like huge deals, which is a nice way for them to go out.

Claudio Castagnoli doesn't know what to say and the locker room found out on their way to the show. You always say "see you next time" but that wasn't the case here. Castagnoli hadn't seen Jay in over ten years until recently but he was the same Jay he had seen the last time. He remembers Final Battle 2010 and will miss Jay's voice and laugh.

Ring Of Honor World Title: Claudio Castagnoli vs. Christopher Daniels

Castagnoli is defending and grabs a headlock to start. Daniels fights up but gets pulled into an armbar to slow him right back down. Back up again and Castagnoli knocks him to the floor before sitting on the ropes to let Daniels back in. Daniels uses another way and drops Castagnoli throat first across the top and we hit the chinlock.

Back up and Castagnoli hits a clothesline, only to get pulled into the Koji Clutch. With that broken up, Daniels chokes on the rope before slapping on a guillotine choke to keep Castagnoli in trouble. Castagnoli reverses into a suplex for a breather and fires off the uppercuts to take over.

Daniels manages to pull him out of the air for a spinning Downward Spiral and a Best Moonsault Ever press gets two. The Angel's Wings is countered though and there's the pop up uppercut for two on Daniels. The Swing sets up the Jay Driller (after loading up the Neutralizer but changing his mind) to retain the title at 13:35.

Rating: B-. Unless Mark Briscoe was available, there wasn't much of a better way to close the show. Jay was a two time champion and having that title defended in the main event worked well. They had a good match too, even if it was much more about honoring someone than teasing a title change. This worked well and you could feel the emotion from both of them.

A handshake and REACH FOR THE SKY BOY wraps up the show.

Overall Rating: A-. I never know how to rate these things but this was a heck of a nice show with a balance of classic matches, new material and people talking about Jay. It felt like a lot of the people were still numb (as they probably should have been) but they put on an entertaining show in his honor anyway. The wrestling isn't the point here, though opening up the vault is always a fun idea. Excellent show here and Jay deserved it.

Results

Wheeler Yuta b. Hagane Shinno – Crossface armbar
Marina Shafir b. Mighty Mayra – Armbar
Eddie Kingston b. QT Marshall – Stretch Plum
Athena b. Madison Rayne – Crossface
Juice Robinson b. Brandon Cutler – Forward DDT
Yuka Sakazaki b. Sandra Moonse – Magical Girl Splash
Claudio Castagnoli b. Christopher Daniels – Angel's Wings

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