



Cubed Circle Newsletter – WrestleMania Weekend Part II

The WrestleMania weekend of 2013 with more shows than you could ever possibly know what to do with, is officially over, and we have conjured up the biggest newsletter of the year as a result of that. I would be lying if I said that I watched more wrestling during this week than any other in the past, because when I look back to when I was a child I used to watch tape after tape, or later on DVD after DVD for hours on end non-stop – however, I can say with complete certainty that I have never watched this much wrestling in one week since I have been publishing this newsletter. Every major pro-wrestling company on planet Earth had their time last weekend, and hopefully we will be able to bring, at least a large portion of those shows to you this week. These shows include EVOLVE, CZW, Shimmer, ROH Supercard of Honor, DGUSA Open the Ultimate Gate, New Japan Invasion Attack, DGUSA Mercury Rising and of course WrestleMania 29. So while we wait for our callused fingers to heal, eyes to regain moisture, and minds to once again function at the level of a regular human being – here is the WrestleMania issue part II – the largest issue of the year.

News

WrestleMania Weekend 2013 – Torn Muscles, Adrenaline, Disappointment & Five Star Classics

It was over one week ago at this time that we were looking to the seemingly insurmountable weekend, which was WrestleMania weekend 2013, a weekend that turned out to really capture what this business is all about. One week and over thirty two and a half hours of pro-wrestling later, after all of the injuries, great moments, adrenaline rushes, technical difficulties, crazy stories, unbelievable matches, disappointments, and surprises, after all of these things and more, here we sit, at a point where it seems awfully appropriate to take a look back at honestly one of the busiest weeks I have witnessed as a pro-wrestling fan.

To accurately describe the amount of pro-wrestling that needed to be covered this week you need to look no further than a simply numerical indicator – you see the clock reads 02:13, meaning that we are already two hours into Sunday and I am still attempting to finish the final few main pieces for the newsletter.

If you consider yourself a fan of professional wrestling, whether you are disheartened with the current

direction of the WWE or simply the business as a whole, or are a relatively active fan, and did not find something to enjoy over this weekend, I simply don't know what to tell you. In the past, and by past I mean every single WrestleMania weekend apart from this one, there really were only four main shows apart from WrestleMania, which were the two Dragon Gate and two Ring of Honor shows. And that did provide a wide degree of variety in some ways, because you could pick and chose between a handful of different styles. This year the situation has been escalated to an outrageous degree – not only was every single major indie running a show this weekend, but arguably every major company on the planet. North America was obviously represented with the top three companies all running shows on the weekend, indies big and small were out in full force too, but this year's festivities (in many ways due to coincidence) featured a big show from the largest pro-wrestling promotion in Japan as well as the largest CMLL show that they have been able to put on for a very long time.

Probably one of the most fitting and true expression to think of when it comes to successful business is that you can proverbially “die from over exposure”. It is a statement that rings true whether it comes to promoting or wrestling; however, this was of course the one time of year where that was not the case. It seemed as though there were two or more shows running concurrently at any time of the day, but even with that being the case for the majority of the companies involved in the weekend did their best business of the year. In fact, I have read that if many of the companies don't even profit from the rest of the year all they really have to do is hold out until Mania weekend. This was also the case for the multitude of merchandise vendors and retailers in New York over the weekend – of course the couple of idiotic vendors selling boot-leg WWE merchandise at Wrestlecon were the exception.

That isn't to say that everything went according to plan either, as the weekend was also plagued with technical difficulties from start to finish, and this isn't just exclusively an indie problem either. On the first night of the weekend, Friday, the WWNLive team experienced serious technical difficulties during the EVOLVE show. They had spent over \$2000 setting up a sufficient connection at the Meadowlands Expo Center; however, they had no time to test the connection due to circumstances out of their control, and hence the EVOLVE internet-pay-per-view that ran late as a consequence became the test for the connection. The technical difficulties for WWNLive were for all intents and purposes limited to that show apart from the occasional dropped frame or stutter – of course that doesn't mean that my set up was impervious to fault.

The technical issues did not stop there as ROH, a company that has certainly seen its fair share of technical issues in the past, suffered yet another technical set back this time around with its Supercard of Honor VII show from the Hammerstein Ballroom in New York City. The vast majority of the show streamed perfectly fine and they were experiencing no problems when in the mainevent, where Jay Briscoe pinned Kevin Steen to win the ROH World Title, the feed cut out leaving people watching at home completely in the dark. It was a big problem as the title change was akin to the 2011 title change when Eddie Edwards defeated Roderick Strong for the World Title; very few people expected a title change going in.

There were reports that the VOD that was put up by ROH lacked the finish as well, but I was one of the people who didn't stay up to watch the show live, and experienced no problems. I actually haven't experienced a major problem with Ring of Honor's pay-per-views since they switched over to the new carrier, as everything works really well with my slow connection. ROH also sent everyone who purchased the show a \$5 voucher for their next purchase as a make good.

It wasn't just the smaller companies who had issues over the weekend as the biggest company of them all, WWE, was not impervious to issues this time around. For starters they experienced many of the similar internet-pay-per-view issues as the other companies, with their feed being rendered unwatchable for the first two hours only to return from the same position that it had left off on a two hour tape delay. There was apparently a similar situation on traditional pay-per-view with some providers, although it didn't affect enough homes to become a major story of any kind. What made matters even worse was the fact that they didn't just have technical issues, but seating issues as well in the building.

The biggest concern in regard to the building set-up heading into WrestleMania was the New York/New Jersey weather at this time of the year in an open arena; and while some portions of the stadium were cold, with the higher seats getting quite cold apparently, the real issue, at least in the building was the obstruction of many people's view points due to the colossal set that WWE had put in place. The problem that the WWE faces with using open air stadia is that the set has to be suspended above the ring with the aid of giant pillars and the like. This of course leads to the obstruction of the lines of site of some of the people in the building, this year the problem was of course further exasperated by the fact that they had set up such a large and extravagant set. Some people paid hundreds of dollars for seats only to find out that their entire view of the actual ring was obstructed by either the pillars, or by the enormous set. Some people who made a big deal out of their predicament were moved, but the majority of people were simply forced to watch the matches on the screens set up across the arena.

In terms of mishaps apart from technical difficulties, there were many in the form of the numerous major injuries that were suffered during the week. From the second degree burns that Triple H suffered due to the dry-ice machine during his entrance, all the way to Rock being put out of action tearing his abductor muscle straight off of his pelvis, or as far as Mike Quakenbush went, removing himself from the Chikara roster page. Injuries are a major part of wrestling and they were also a major part of this weekend.

The first major injury of the show wasn't necessarily an injury as such, but there was a rather scary moment where LuFisto was never caught off of a moonsault to the floor and landed face-first on the concrete – luckily she seems to be fine once she got to the back. On the Chikara show the same day Mike Quakenbush, who was returning early from back surgery to team with one of his biggest idols in wrestling Jushin Thunder Liger. He suffered a multitude of injuries as a result, including a cracked tibia off of an springboard moonsault to the floor where his right leg struck the guard rail. He is still recovering from broken ribs and a wrist injury, and as a result he quietly removed himself from the Chikara roster page – hopefully things work out for him.

There was also a big injury in the New Japan Invasion Attack show, when Kazushi Sakuraba landed on his arm off of a backdrop and dislocated his elbow, which led to a referee stoppage. As luck would have it that was one of the key points to one of Sakuraba's most famous Gracie fights, so it did in fact play into the match quite well. Of course, this is leading up to a set of singles matches down the line, so it will be interesting to see how Sakuraba's arm heals and if he is healthy in time.

All three of the big matches on the WrestleMania show resulted in injuries of some sort, with Punk hurting his already injured leg, and elbow off of an announce table spot in the Undertaker match where he landed a top rope elbow, but the table did not break. Then in the Triple H match as noted Triple H suffered burns on the way down to the ring, then a couple of minutes in he knocked Lesnar out cold on

his feet and they had to improvise until Lesnar came to his senses, then later on in the match Triple H landed badly on his one arm and feared that he had broken it, but x-rays backstage revealed no damage. The most major injuries occurred in the mainevent, when Rock once again injured himself in the mainevent of WrestleMania against Cena. Rock first injured himself when he took the first AA, delivered by Cena who came in with a broken thumb, where he tore his abductor muscle. Later on he tore his abdominal muscles and suffered a hernia. During the match the muscle continued to tear as a result of all the big nearfalls and eventually tore straight off of his pelvis. As a result Rock was not on RAW, which was a big deal since he was a major part of the show.

Despite all of these problems WrestleMania weekend of 2013 was still one of the best times to be a wrestling fan, there was so much to see and so much to participate in, even if you weren't in the New York/New Jersey area. Not every show was a blow-away show, but every show that I personally saw was at the very least fun and at times great. There was one clear-cut match of the weekend that stole the show, and a couple of others will probably make the top twenty of many people's end of the year lists.

When I look back at WrestleMania weekend years from now, even if this show did not take place as part of the massive conglomerate of promotions in New Jersey, the show that I will remember most will probably be the New Japan show from WrestleMania Sunday. It wasn't on the level of say the Tokyo Dome show from earlier this year or even in the King of Pro-Wrestling show that took place in the October of 2012, but it was still a very good show, and produced what will almost certainly be the match of the year for 2013.

Kazuchika Okada, as expected won the IWGP Heavyweight championship from Hiroshi Tanahashi in the match that was by far the biggest spectacle and most smartly worked match of the entire weekend . The story was simple, Okada has the rainmaker as his finisher, a move that requires the arm, and therefore Tanahashi worked over the arm of Okada in a way that very few people in the business today can do, which combined with Okada's selling resulted in a classic.

It wasn't the only show on the card that turned heads either, as the Intercontinental Championship match with Nakamura defending the championship against Davey Boy Smith Jr. and the Masato Tanaka tag were both excellent. During the show, and even a week or so before the show took place people said that WrestleMania would have to do something to top it, and while it is the stereotypical internet fan statement, the WWE did not beat this show, and frankly didn't come anywhere close.

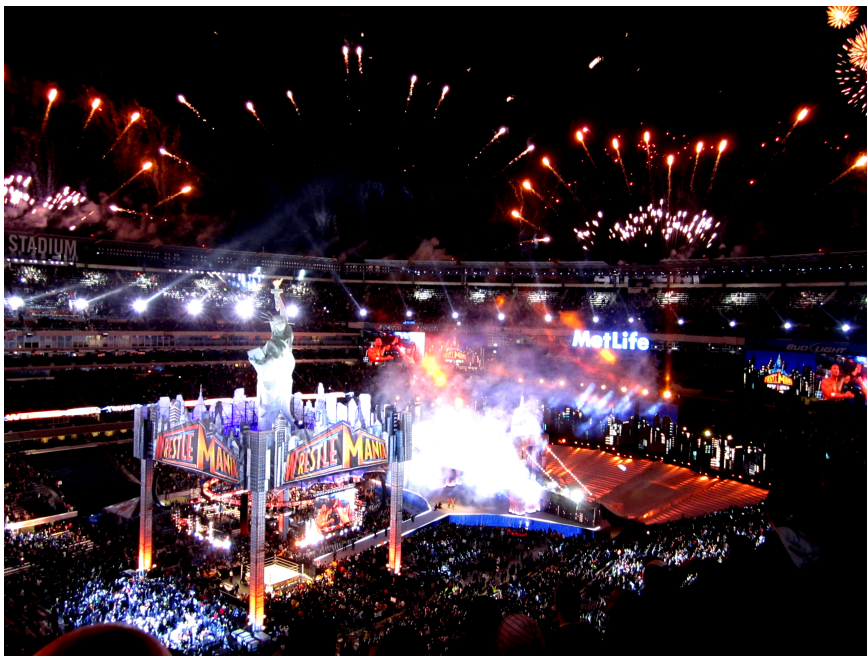
The ROH show on Friday was also able to contribute to a large portion of the overall star tally for the weekend with a great match between reDragon and the American Wolves in the semi-main and the kind of match that you would expect out of Jay Lethal and Michael Elgin. It also produced one of the largest surprises of the weekend when Jay Briscoe defeated Kevin Steen to become the new ROH World Champion.

Despite all of the things that I say about DGUSA, things related to the style not being for me (which I still feel is a very true statement), they also managed to put on some breathtaking matches last weekend. When simply thinking of the DGUSA shows the first match that really comes to my mind is the mainevent of the second night, Shingo versus Akira Tozawa, which was probably my third or fourth favourite match of the entire weekend. Next was the Akira Tozawa/Ricochet match from the first night and finally Shingo/Gargano from the first night, which had the opportunity to not only be a show stealer, but a weekend stealer, but due to the Gargano heel turn, which was certainly placed on the right

show, that did not in fact happen.

None of the matches on the WrestleMania card were truly captivating, apart from the CM Punk/Undertaker match, which was a match that was able to match up to Undertaker's classics of the last five to six years. The Brock Lesnar/Triple H match had the opportunity to do so, but ultimately fell flat at the end.

Apart from the matches of course came the memorable moments, and many of those were separate from any particular match. The Devitt heel turn was obviously a great moment from the New Japan show, and there were certainly others throughout the weekend such as the debut of Jessica Havok in Shimmer and the like, but the show that provided the most memorable moments by far was the post-WrestleMania edition of Monday Night RAW, which had one of the hottest and most vocal crowds on WWE TV of recent memory.



The thing with WrestleMania is that it attracts the hardcore audience, a large portion of the crowd are foreign fans that travel from all over the world to attend WrestleMania, others come from out of state, and in general the high ticket prices keep casual fans to a bear minimum. This of course results in a very hardcore crowd at WrestleMania, but the crowd that attends the RAW following WrestleMania is even more so. The people who decide to stay another day simply to attend RAW have to be hardcore, and it is for that reason that the fans on the post-Mania edition of RAW are always

so vocal, so ruckus and quite frankly so gosh darn great.

In terms of events and happenings on the show it was originally scheduled to be a very big night for the company, as they had the Lesnar/Rock angle planned to set up next year's WrestleMania mainevent, but that was not to be on this night as Rock was already back in Miami to consult his surgeon on the multitude of injuries he suffered at WrestleMania – plus even if he was there, it isn't like Lesnar has the lightest touch, and Rock was in no-condition to do anything physical. Punk wasn't on the show either, but that was simply due to the fact that they didn't want he and Heyman to get a monster reaction, which would have most certainly been the case had they been brought out during the show.

In spite of there being no Rock, Lesnar, Triple H or Punk on the show it was still a very big night, and the crowd made it a big night. From Dolf Ziggler's cash-in of the Money in the Bank contract to the crowd, believe it or not, singing Fandango's music (an instrumental by the way) and destroying the Orton/Sheamus match with ridiculous chants, they made the show eventful. It is for these reasons that I look forward to the post-Mania addition of RAW every year, because when we have the regular build

on the Road the WrestleMania, which was not the case this year, it is very difficult to watch RAW turn back into what it usually is for the rest of the year – there is nothing to look forward to. The post-WrestleMania crowds really do provide hope – even if it is in fact false.

It doesn't really matter what your opinion was of WrestleMania, whether it was positive or negative, the fact of the matter is that for almost everyone WrestleMania weekend 2013 was a tremendous time. Whether you are into strong style, lucha, Toryumon style, WWE style, comedy , giant monster battles (no not Mark Henry versus Ryback) or anything in between, chances are that there was something here for you. It really is only possible to do this kind of thing once a year – neither my brain nor my eyes nor my fingers could handle much else – however, that's what makes WrestleMania weekend, a time that encapsulates what pro-wrestling is to many people, so very special.

Reports

EVOLVE 19 April 5th 2013 Meadowlands Convention Centre Secaucus, NJ

To say WrestleCon got off to an auspicious start would be the polite way of describing the events surrounding EVOLVE 19, however a more accurate description would be: An insurgent fiasco so mishandled, it boarded on farcical comedy. Let me tell you, the comments from paying customers during the live chat provided me with endless entertainment while the live stream did its best to sabotage the weekend's inaugural show. Yes, as I am sure you are all aware by now, the feed for this show was more temperamental than Shawn Michaels circa 97 after he had been asked to put over Davey Boy Smith; or anyone for that matter. I don't think it would be an exaggeration to call this show the biggest and most important in the short history of EVOLVE; Gabe Sapolsky sent out this tweet a mere 4 hours before the live stream was scheduled to begin: "It looks like today's EVOLVE card will be most watched on iPPV and biggest attendance. Thank you." But it is not just EVOLVE and DGUSA that are set to profit from this insane 3 days of non-stop pro wrestling shows, every Indy group running is likely to have their most lucrative weekend of all time. So what could possibly go wrong? Surely all checks with the building and the feed were made well in advance; well, apparently that was not the case, as the show was delayed for half an hour in the arena while Gabe and his team of monkeys were frantically scrambling for a solution to the sporadic feed. When the stream finally came to life, we got the final 3 minutes of the opening four-way, however the issues did not end there; throughout the show, the stream would pause intermittently for anywhere up to 20 seconds. This was irritating, yet tolerable, but the final straw for many was broken when the feed cut out completely during Super Smash Bros vs. Young Bucks, which was turning into the best match on the show; we didn't get to see the finish and the live chat, plus Gabe's twitter were inundated with irate/disappointed fans.

I suppose I should get into the card now; luckily I purchased the VOD option and caught the end of SSB vs. The Bucks, however even with the VOD, only the closing stages of the opener was available. So due to circumstances beyond my control, this report will differ slightly from my weekly TV rundowns.

Round 1 of the EVOLVE Championship Tournament: Rich Swann vs. Samuray del Sol vs.

Jigsaw vs. Sami Callihan

Sami tapped-out del Sol for the victory. From what I saw, this was a pretty fun match with tons of fast paced action and was one of the rare matches on the show that the live crowd got into. del Sol wiped out everyone with a corkscrew springboard plancha to the floor, all the guys traded reversals and hit some big moves. Swann and Jigsaw did some dives of their own; the finish saw del Sol hit Sami with a reverse hurricanrana then he attempted to follow up with a second springboard rana. Sami countered into a powerbomb and applied the stretch muffler to get the tap out. ** ¾.

Anthony Nese came out for an interview. Lenny Leonard welcomed him to the WWN family and Nese claimed he could beat anybody in the business then said he was putting together a “support group”.

Round 1 of the EVOLVE Championship Tournemnet: AR Fox vs. Jon Davis

Fox won via DQ. This was not a good encounter; Fox used his speed early, but Davis cut him off and got some early heat. Then in an act of Indymania, Fox was hiptossed onto the ring apron and took a nasty spill to the floor below, however was on his feet within seconds of the devastating highspot, rendering the stunt meaningless. Davis worked over the back a little, but not nearly enough considering the apron spot; Fox came back to hit Lo Mein Rain then after a few near falls, Davis set up a table on the outside and went for a powerbomb. Fox escaped then ducked a clothesline from Davis, however the referee was obliterated by the lariat which got a bigger pop than anything else during the match. Since this is EVOLVE, the bell rang and Davis was disqualified. *

After the match, Davis asked the crowd if he should “kill” the ref and the people cheered, but Davis told them he wasn’t that stupid and instead claimed he would wreak havoc for the rest of the weekend.

Brian Kendrick & Johnny Gargano vs. The Gentlemen’s Club: Drew Gulak & Orange Cassidy w/ Swamp Monster and The Colonel

Kendrick & Gargano went over via pinfall. Another lacklustre affair and the crowd were dead as could be for this one; Cassidy did his sleepy routine at the start then Swamp Monster came in while the ref was distracted to hit Kendrick with a bronco buster. The Gentlemen’s Club got the heat on Gargano and Kendrick ran wild after the hot tag; Gargano took both guys down with an inverted STO/DDT combo, but the Gentlemen’s Club came back with a wheelbarrow/DDT combination. The finish came when Swamp Monster grabbed Kendrick from the apron and was sent back to the floor by a Gargano dropkick. Cassidy got dumped into the waiting arms of Swampy on the outside then Gargano took them out with a cannonball off the apron; Kendrick nailed Gulak with sliced bread to get the three. * ½

EVOLVE Championship Tournament Semi-Finals: Chuck Taylor vs. Sami Callihan

Sami advanced to the finals via submission. This was an average match which could have been so much better, as they had a perfect chance to tell a good story. Sami “injured” his knee when entering the ring; it’s never a good idea to have a top guy injure himself and look like a clumsy buffoon, surely the injury could have taken place during the opener. Nevertheless, Chuck immediately went after the knee, however on occasion the Kentucky Gentleman forgot which leg it was he was supposed to be working on. Luckily, Sami’s selling pointed him in the right direction and logic was restored to the match. Later on, Chuck applied a spinning toehold to, you guessed it, the wrong leg then went for a

figure four; Sami got to the ropes and got in 4 overhead belly-to-belly suplexes as a hope spot, before Chuck locked on a single-leg crab, thankfully on the correct leg. Sami started his comeback and unloaded some stomps, but got caught in another half-crab; Chuck hit a urinagi, but Sami cut him off on the top rope and landed a sit-out powerbomb into the stretch muffler to get the tap. The crowd was not into this either, possibly because of the show being delayed or for the same reason I was not enamoured with this match: Chuck's inability to focus on the correct body part. The finish was nicely done though, as Sami's victory came out of nowhere and he didn't make a big comeback on his injured leg. **

EVOLVE Championship Tournament Semi-Finals: AR Fox vs. Ricochet

Fox over by pinfall. Another disappointing effort here; these guys could have put on one hell of a spectacle, however since Fox had already wrestled earlier, Ricochet controlled right from the bell. You might ask yourself, well surely that is the logical thing to do and you would be correct; the thing is, this didn't last for long and the match soon became a back and forth contest. Fox was sporadically selling his neck from the apron spot in his match with Davis, however Ricochet didn't go after it nearly enough and missed the chance to get the sympathy on AR. I get both these guys are babyfaces, hence the back and forth action, but it felt like they tried to tell two different stories in one match: Fox being injured from before and battling a healthy opponent and two babyfaces trying to one-up each other with their big spots. Sadly, neither narrative became clear enough to hook in the crowd; while the finish was intended to appear as if Ricochet was caught by a quick pin, it didn't do him any favours by losing to a weakened guy that had already wrestled. Ricochet hit a reverse cradle suplex, but missed the 630 and Fox hooked a crucifix for the pin. **

No DQ match: Arik Cannon vs. Scott Reed w/ The Scene.

Arik got the pinfall in what was a glorified angle. Caleb Konley got in the ring almost immediately and The Scene beat down Cannon. Arik fought off both heels for a while, but Larry Dallas took him down with a chop block. All three heels stomped Arik, until Uhaa Nation made his return and cleaned house; Uhaa hit his standing shooting star on Reed and Konley, then Arik hit a brianbuster to get the three count.

After the match, Arik offered Uhaa a beer, but Uhaa refused and for some reason hit him with a German suplex. ½ *

Super Smash Brothers vs. The Young Bucks

SSB went over via pin in what was match of the night by a country mile. Although as noted before, during the live stream the feed cut out and we missed the finish. The Bucks played the obnoxious heels from the moment they stepped through the curtain. Things were fairly even at the start, but Uno came in and started the shine for SSB; Nick came in off a blind tag to hit an enziguri to kick off the heat. The Bucks hit some double team moves; Dos showed some fight, but was cut off by a spear. Uno finally got the hot tag and ran wild on both heels, only to be shut down by a superkick from Nick, who then planted Dos with his springboard X-factor. Uno caught Nick with a spear on the apron and Dos took him out with a topé as Uno drilled Matt with a piledriver. The finish saw The Bucks go for More Bang, but Dos countered with a reverse rana and SSB hit the Fatality for the pin. ***

Finals of the EVOLVE Championship Tournament: AR Fox vs. Sami Callihan

Fox got the victory via pinfall to become the first EVOLVE champion; this was a decent match, but in sticking with the theme for the entire show, was anti-climactic; to be fair, this way the third of fourth matches for both guys, as they were both booked for the CZW show. Fox went after the knee, but Sami scored with a right hand and worked on AR's neck; Fox hit a plancha over the top then the two brawled around ringside. AR tried for his horrendously Indyriffic triple layer tope spot, but crashed and burned right on his head in an ugly looking spill. Sami gave AR a bodyslam on the apron then another on the floor before taking it back inside. Fox fought out of a superplex and hit his cannonball in the corner to start his comeback. After some more back and forth action, Fox landed a 450 for a two count then went for Lo Mein Pain. Sami countered into a powerbomb and locked in the stretch muffler, but AR made it to the ropes. Sami went to the top, however Fox cut him off with Lo Mein Pain and made the cover for the victory. ** ¾

After the match, Sami handed the belt to Fox, who sarcastically dedicated his victory to Ricochet. AR said he would defend the strap against anyone at any time; The Young Bucks came out and Matt said tomorrow (Saturday 6th) would be their night. Fox told them he would do the same thing to The Bucks that he had done to Sami, Ricochet and Davis.

Overall, this show was a big let-down; feed issues aside, the matches struggled to get above ** and the live crowd were positively anemic; to be fair it cannot have helped having to delay proceedings for 30 minutes while the streaming difficulties were taking place.

**CZW at WrestleCon.
April 5th 2013
Meadowlands Convention Centre Secaucus, NJ.**

Following the frustration and disappointment endured with the EVOLVE show, my expectations going into the CZW iPPV were, to say the least considerably low. I'm not the biggest CZW fan in the world, but ever since the old Fight Network (formerly The Wrestling Channel) began showing indy promotions from around the world back in 2003, I have tried through the years to stay at least somewhat up to date with the Combat Zone product. As with all promotions, CZW has had some good and horrible shows over that period, however the company's recent iPPV's (COD 14, Ascension, 14th Anniversary, Wanted) certainly left a lot to be desired in my opinion. So with the anticipation level struggling to build in the (roughly) 40 minute break after EVOLVE, I could only see this show going the same way as its predecessor. Luckily the stream provided by RF Video was flawless throughout, which already puts this iPPV ahead of most others this weekend and I can honestly say for the first time I can remember with a CZW show, not one of the matches felt tortuously boring.

DJ Hyde came out to get things going with a rousing promo; it didn't have the same effect as when Paul E. would come out at the start of ECW shows and verbally take on the world, but that's what the owner was trying to accomplish. DJ put over the fans for actually turning up to the show, himself (of course) and the other workers then hyped Best of the Best and Tournament of Death. Ron Mathis hit the ring and told DJ he was sick of waiting for him to call then said he wanted a spot in the Ariel Assault match. DJ refused, but booked Mathis in a match at Best of the Best against an unnamed opponent; DJ told Mathis, if he survived that then he could earn a spot in the TOD.

Larry Legend got a big pop as always then made the introductions for the opening contest.

Ariel Assault: AR Fox (CZW Wired TV Champion) vs. Andrew Everett (Chiva Kid) vs. Shane Hollister vs. Shane Strickland vs. Rich Swann vs. Lucky 13

Fox got the victory via pinfall in a stirring opener. You don't need to have seen a previous Ariel Assault matches to know what to expect here; this certainly delivered in terms of excitement and big highspots. Lucky came off the Assault Box early with a corkscrew moonsault then pulled out a ladder and utilized it to hit a tornado DDT on Fox. Strickland took out everyone with another corkscrew off the box then Everett landed a springboard shooting star to the guys on the floor. Strickland caught Swann with a tornado-style piledriver then with easily the most dangerous move of the match, Hollister gave Everett an El Generico brianbuster onto the box. The finish saw Fox hit Lucky with the Lo Mein Pain for the three count. ** ¾

Ultraviolet Rules Match: Matt Tremont vs. Joe Gacy

Gacy won via referee stoppage. Again, this was exactly what you expect from these two guys: a bloody fight. They brawled around ringside at the start; once in the ring Tremont pulled out a large BBQ fork, but Gacy landed a boot and stabbed Tremont in the head for the juice spot. Gacy worked the fork some more then Tremont made a brief comeback after hitting a spear, however Gacy took him down with a somewhat out-of-place drop toehold and tried for a lionsault. Tremont moved, but took a low-blow then Gacy stole another one of Jericho's moves and applied the lion tamer. Tremont tried to fight out but "passed out" from the pain and the ref called for the bell. This was fine for what it was, however recreating the Austin/Bret finish didn't do anybody any favours; Tremont and Gacy are already well established in their roles as babyface and heel, as a result the climax came off as a rinky-dink knockoff. * ¾

Eight-Man Tag-Team Falls Count Anywhere Match: The Gulak Campaign vs. The Front

Gulak Campaign over via submission. This was a pretty wild stunt filled brawl and I fully expect this feud to continue considering how the match played out. Gulak and Sozio circled each other in the ring, while their respective factions fought around ringside, but Biff Busick soon broke up the leaders' face-off. Kimber Lee had a brief exchange with Sozio while Gulak and Biff brawled through the people; Alexander James saved Kimber Lee from taking a Sozio powerbomb then planed Nicholas Kaye with a sidewalk slam onto a chair. Eric Corvis got some colour and everybody brawled on the outside some more; Tofiga had Sozio alone in the ring, but Biff and Kaye saved their leader then Corvis took out the big man with a chair. Kimber Lee fired up on Ace Delic, before she wiped out Sozio and Delic with a cannonball off the apron. For the finish, Biff hit Gulak with a German superplex and Sozio broke up the fall, because he wanted to pin Gulak. Sozio landed a big boot for a two count then Gulak hooked an O'Connor roll and applied the Gu-lock to get the tap. It was nice how the leaders of both stables started and ended in the ring; this thing has got to be heading towards Gulak vs. Sozio somewhere down the line. *** On a side note, Bully Ray had nothing on Niles Sozio when it came to heeling on the fans in an inappropriate manner, but this is CZW so nobody will be up in arms like after that TNA house show.

CZW Tag Team Championship Match: BlkOut w/ Robbie Mireno: Ruckus & Blk Jeez vs. The Catalyst: Dustin Rayz & Eric Ryan (Champions)

BlkOut downed The Catalyst to capture the straps in a somewhat dull outing. BlkOut hit the dream sequence and got the heat on Ryan, but nobody in the crowd cared at all. Rayz came in off the hot tag and ran wild then planted Jeez with a brainbuster. Ruckus broke up the pin and BlkOut nailed an assisted shiranui then Jeez came off the top with a frogsplash. The finish lacked any impact, as Mireno pulled Ryan out of the ring and Ruckus hit Rayz with a Tag belt behind the referee's back to get the fall. * ½ A good move putting the belts on BlkOut since they are far more over than the painfully ordinary Catalyst, although on this night in Secaucus, the crowd didn't react to Ruckus & Jeez in nearly the same fashion that the Skate Zone fans usually do.

Greg Excellent w/ Mama Excellent vs. Colt Cabana

Greg pinned Cabana in an all-out comedy performance that wouldn't have been out of place on a Chikara show. Both guys "blew up" early on after running the ropes then traded some kicks to the shin; the referee took one also, which resulted in all three guys in the ring doing the prolonged Peter Griffin selling spot. Cabana planted Greg with a chokeslam and yelled "F' your streak", but Greg did the Deadman sit-up then called for the GTS; Cabana countered and applied a Boston crab. Mama Excellent got in the ring and revealed an "I Star of David Colt" shirt she had on under her hoodie. Some Barry White music played and Cabana made out with Greg's mother then Greg caught Cabana with a Rock Bottom which earned a two count. Cabana made a full on Hogan comeback, but fell victim to Greg's hairy man-chest and a motorboat. The finish was the old Bret/Owen deal from Mania X, with Greg countering a victory roll out of the corner to get the three. * ¾

My favourite act in the entire company was out next for their traditional promo; Pepper Parks and Cherry Bomb came out to deliver on the "big surprise" they had promised for the WrestleCon weekend. Parks did the Rick Rude "What I'd like to have right now..." shtick and Cherry Bomb said since the fans didn't go to the gym they would bring the gym to the fans. Cherry performed some push ups and sit ups with her legs wrapped around Pepper's body then she told the fans, if they treated their bodies like a temple, they would be able to treat somebody else's like a playground. This was a pretty weak payoff to the "big surprise" and wasn't as entertaining as some of their previous in-ring angles, however Parks and Cherry are still one of the best things CZW has and they have endless material to work with in regard to the fat internet marks.

Ultraviolet Rules Match: Drake Younger vs. Danny Havoc w/ Lucky 13

Match ended in No Contest; yes, an Ultraviolet match was thrown out due to outside interference. Since the main event was always going to be a heavily gimmicked Deathmatch, this like the previous two out of control brawls could only involve certain weapons, in order for the perennial Kasai bloodletting to mean anything. The match revolved around both guys hitting big moves onto chairs: Drake delivered a sunset bomb; Danny hit an exploder then a falcon arrow, all onto a pile of chairs. Danny took a piledriver through a table, which caused Lucky to jump on the apron and spit beer into Drake's face. Apparently this was totally unacceptable and the ref called for the bell; Drake fought with Lucky until some security came out to break up the fray. Up until the finish, this was a fun little scrap; I guess there is a rematch coming, but the non-finish defiantly hurt the match. Both these guys are so over with the CZW audience that one of them lying down wouldn't have done any harm. *

International Tag Team Challenge: OI4K: Dave & Jake Crist vs. The Sumerian Death Squad:

Tommy End & Michael Donte

OI4K over by pinfall in the best outing of the night. The styles of each team meshed tremendously, plus the story and pacing of the match were very good. The Death Squad worked like the big stiff heels and got the heat on Jake with frequent tags; Dave got the hot tag and hit a plancha as Jake landed an Asai moonsault. Donte cut off the comeback and powerbombed Dave onto the knees of Tommy End then End came off the top with a double knee strike and followed up with a German suplex for a two count. They went into a nice sequence of near falls and the finish saw OI4K hit the double-stomp tombstone on Tommy End for the three count. This really was a solid performance from all 4 guys and just shows that the Crist brothers can put on a great match with the right opponents; I had not seen much of The Sumerian Death Squad, only some clips here and there, but I will certainly be paying more attention to the big rugged team based out of Amsterdam. *** ¼

Sami Callihan vs. Brian Kendrick

Sami tapped out Kendrick in an uninspiring affair. Callihan sold his injury from the EVOLVE show and had his knee taped up; they traded chops early then Kendrick took a belly-to-back on the apron. Kendrick soon took over and went for the heat, but for some reason didn't go after the injured leg as much as you would have thought. Sami made a comeback and hit his triple face wash and locked in the stretch muffler; Kendrick rolled through for a near fall then hit the sliced bread on the apron. Sami beat the count, but took a second sliced bread for a two count. The finish came when Sami hit a Saito suplex and Kendrick fired back with a big boot; Sami hooked the leg and applied the muffler for the submission. ** I was expecting a 20 minute back and forth encounter from these two, although to be fair, this was Sami's fourth match of the night and Kendrick also worked the EVOLVE show.

Glass, Barbed-Wire and Gusset Plate Board Deathmatch for the CZW World Championship: MASADA vs. Jun Kasai

MASADA pinned The Crazy Monkey to retain the CWZ World Title. This is a contender for bloodiest match (on American soil) of the year and would almost certainly earn that moniker if not for the excessive TOD coming up in June. Like all MASADA/Kasai matches, they started out trading holds which didn't last long then all the gimmicks came into play. Kasai dropkicked MASADA through a glass plate then took three unprotected chair shots to the head for some colour. Kasai did his Dynamite Kid snapsuplex and diving headbutt spot for a two count then the most horrifying sequence of the match occurred: MASADA delivered a powerbomb on to a gusset plate board that had been set up against the ropes, however Kasai no-sold the bump and MASADA took him face first into another gusset board with a drop toehold; the sound of Kasai's head connecting with the plate was quite disturbing and provided some equally sickening juice. Kasai came off the top with the Pearl Harbour splash onto a glass plate which MASADA was underneath for a two, before getting another two count off the limit break. Kasai went for another Pearl Harbour, but Christina Von Eerie came out and crotched Jun on the top rope then tried to stick the quite frankly idiotic BBQ skewers into his head. She failed, but MASADA showed her how it was supposed to be done and jammed the skewers into Kasai's already blood covered forehead. MASADA landed a Regalplex, but Kasai kicked out then the finish was a botched powerbomb; MASADA lost his grip and Kasai luckily avoided serious injury, by rotating just enough not to break his neck. ** ½ If you are into Deathmatches then I imagine you would enjoy this immensely; it was a bloody, violent spectacle and if you are into that sort of thing, this match delivered exactly what you would expect. In terms of a sheer exhibition of brutality, their match

from the FREEDOMS Pain Limit Finals last year remains the benchmark for these two.

After the match, in the payoff to the long running angle, Von Eerie and MASADA made out. Nobody in the crowd seemed to be aware of the storyline and as a result the payoff was flat.

Overall this was a good show; there was a little bit of everything: comedy, great wrestling, wild brawls and a super bloody main event. Sometimes CZW doesn't get the credit or coverage it deserves after a good show and I have a feeling the numbers for this iPPV may have been hurt going head-to-head with ROH's Supercard of Honor VII. But if you have a bit of spare cash laying around after all the shows this past weekend, I would recommend checking out this one.

ROH Supercard of Honor April 5th 2013 Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan, New York

Overall Thoughts

Luckily for me I did not in fact decide to wake up at 2:00 for this show, not because it wasn't a good show because that I can assure you it was, but rather due to the fact that ROH, the company synonymous with technical issues (pot and kettle indeed), once again was subject to large technical problems. These problems were mainly in the realm of intermittent connections, and to make matters worse the feed cut out before the end of the Steen/Briscoe World Title match for everyone viewing the pay-per-view line. There were reports on the internet that the problem persisted on the VOD, but I experienced none of those issues. ROH did however, provide all of the people that purchased the pay-per-view with a five dollar discount off of their next purchase from the site. As far as the show itself goes it delivered on all fronts, providing one of the best and most entertaining shows from start to finish of the entire weekend. Everyone was out there working really hard, and it showed with ****+ matches strewed throughout the show in-front of one of the largest crowds in the company's history. The finish to the show came as a very large surprise, as Jay Briscoe won the ROH World Title from Kevin Steen in a title change very reminiscent of when Eddie Edwards won the title in 2011 from Roderick Strong in the the same building. It was a great moment, but you have to wonder what the future holds for Elgin now that Briscoe has the title and he is the number one contender. All in all this was a very good show, and one of the best shows that ROH has put out in a long time – a show that is very much worth checking out.

1. ACH & TaDarius Thomas vs. QT Marshall & RD Evans

Marshall came out with Evans to reveal the partner of Marshall. Evans teased Tanahashi, which got crickets. He made some teases one of which was Lacy Von Erich. He teased Quakenbush and finally revealed himself as the partner of QT Marshall. The fans were not into this at all. Evans abandoned Marshall, who was subjected some double teams. Evans then tagged himself in, and Thomas and ACH had the advantage until ACH was dropped off of the apron by Marshall. Thomas grabbed a leaping high kick and made the tag to ACH who ran wild. ACH grabbed a giant swing into a cloverleaf. ACH landed a crazy dive onto Marshall. Evans landed a sloppy dive to set up a 360 degree topé con giro from Thomas. Evans landed the inverted Styles clash on ACH who kicked out. ACH and Thomas landed a pair of high kicks and ACH landed his big bang attack for the win. Once again ACH really impressed together with Thomas; they have an opportunity to be something. After the match Evans blamed Marshall and the crowd chanted for them to "hug it out" and Evans helped Marshall to the back.

*** 1/4

Kelly briefly addressed the Haas situation, as they started running down the card when Benjamin made his way out. He said that he didn't have a match and he called a member of the ring crew, 'Cheeseburger' into the ring. This led to "we want wrestling" chants just like in the opening segment. Benjamin said that he earned his respect for standing up to Haas. Out came Mike Bennett, Bob Evans and Maria to interrupt returning after months off due to WWE tryouts. He cut a promo saying how he was the hottest commodity in entertainment. Bennett was going to announce where he was going, but Cheeseburger grabbed the mic and called Bob his father and Maria "a "c*m guzzling gutter s**t". Bennett then clocked Cheeseburger, which set up a match between Benjamin and Bennett

2. Shelton Benjamin vs. Mike Bennett w/ Brutal Bob Evans & Maria

Benjamin went after Bennett on the floor, Bennett hid behind Maria, but Benjamin chased him back into the ring. They exchanged strikes with Bennett getting the better of the exchange. They exchange strikes and worked their way back up to the feet. Benjamin landed a big T-Bone suplex after a kip-up. Bennett landed the Box Office smash for two. Bennett went for the GTS due to the "sloppy seconds" chants. Benjamin reversed into a single leg Boston crab. Maria distracted the referee and Bob Evans ran in with a shoulder tackle and Bennett landed a leg drop. However, he never made the cover and rather kissed Maria, which made no sense. Maria thought she was touching Bennett, but she was touching Benjamin and she was super kicked off the apron inadvertently. Benjamin grabbed a cover for two, Bennett then grabbed an assisted rollup with Bob's leverage for the win. Petty much the same Bennett match that we normally see, and that's fine

3. Number One Contender's Match

Jay Lethal vs. Michael Elgin

They opened up with a good exchange; the fans were very happy that they finally got their wrestling. After catching Lethal Elgin proceeded to land a big delayed vertical suplex that he held for half a minute. Elgin grabbed the cross face, which led to Chris Benoit chants - and well I don't know if that was a good or bad thing. Lethal landed a topé sand a springboard drop kick followed by a fourth topé, which seemed like a little too much. Lethal landed a death valley driver, and went to the top rope to Randy Savage chants. Elgin managed to land a dropkick on Lethal who was on the top rope. Elgin hit his big dead lift superplex, which is a move that never fails to impress me. They traded strikes, which Elgin got the better of with believable and very impactful strikes. Elgin landed a black hole slam for two, Elgin landed a German into the top turnbuckle and went for the corkscrew moonsault, but Lethal got the knees up. Elgin landed the double knee backbreaker, but Lethal kicked out and locked in the Koji clutch. Elgin went for the chaos theory German, but Lethal reversed, but was caught with a backfist. Elgin landed a buckle bomb, Lethal responded with a super kick, Elgin landed one of his own and a lariat for two. Lethal landed a reverse hurricanrana driver, Lethal Injection, Elgin no sold, but Lethal landed the elbow for two - great nearfall. Lethal went for a frankensteiner, but Elgin landed a super Elgin bomb, backfist and another Elgin bomb for the win. They didn't have to do so much at the end, but this was a phenomenal match that made the title seem like a prize worth fighting for.

After the match SCUM hopped the guardrail and commenced a beatdown, but team ROH made it out

for the save. This bled into the ten man tag match.

4. ROH (Mark Briscoe, Caprice Coleman, Cedric Alexander, BJ Whitmer & Mike Mondo) vs. SCUM (Cliff Compton, Rhett Titus, Rhino, Jimmy Rave & Jimmy Jacobs) w/ Steve Corino

The opening portion of the match was obviously an all out brawl, but it eventually settled down into a ten-man tag. Corino was on commentary, and he was as great as ever. Everyone on the face team landed their dive. They did the spot where everyone hit their finish. Whitmer landed a topé on Rave, not so effective since we saw close to a half dozen in the previous match. Corino laid Coleman out and got into the ring. Compton threw powder into the eyes of Mondo. Alexander was hit with the gore for the win. This was at times a chaotic blur, and that's fine for what they wanted to do. Corino cut a promo saying that SCUM would take over.

** 3/4

Clips were shown from Jay Briscoe's first ROH title match against Xavier in 2002, a match against Joe from 2003, the cage match that is often shown, Morishima in 2007, McGuinness from the same year, Lynn from 2009, the awesome match with Strong from 2011; so basically every title match he has had with the company. It was fine and all, but they could have worked on the production a bit more. I was so unbelievably happy that Nigel McGuinness was brought out to do commentary for the second half of the show.

5. Roderick Strong vs. Karl Anderson

Anderson went after the leg of Strong. Anderson went for the gun stun over the barricade, but Strong countered and front suplexed Anderson onto the barricade. Anderson missed a forearm and was caught with a back suplex for two. They had a chop exchange, Strong landed a big knee, but Anderson responded with a spine buster for the win, Anderson landed a huge kick on the apron, which knocked Roddy down to the mat. Anderson landed the gun stun from the top rope and a powerbomb for two. Strong landed the sick kick for two and landed the double knee buster and another sick kick for two. Both men exchanged knees, and Anderson landed the Bernard driver for two. Stronger countered the gun stun and was caught with a flurry, but Anderson responded with the gun stun for the win. It looks like ROH are going to be bringing Anderson back as a semi-regular, so it makes sense to have him get the win. Strong and Anderson embraced after the match.

*** 1/2

6. ROH TV Title Match

Matt Taven w/ Truth Martini vs. Adam Cole vs. Matt Hardy w/ Steve Corino

Taven and Martini ripped off the Scene's entrance gimmick. Corino did Hardy's heel ring announcement. Cole landed the umpteenth topé of the night on Hardy. They had Scarlet, the lady that accompanied Taven to the ring, flirted with Nigel on commentary. Hardy landed his leg drop on Cole for two. Cole locked on a figure four on Hardy, Taven made it to the top landing a splash on Cole and covered him for two. Cole ran in for a neckbreaker on Taven for a chain neckbreaker/DDT. Cole and Hardy fought on the top rope for a spider suplex tower spot, which was really cool. Hardy landed the twist of fate on Taven, Martini was distracting the referee, and the crowd chanted "same old s**t" and Hardy was small packaged for a huge reaction. Corino made his way into the ring offering Cole a deal, Cole grabbed him by the neck. Cole had a rollup, Sinclair was distracted with Corino and Taven landed

a modified DDT for the win. This was exactly what you would have expected, Hardy worked the match that he normally works, the crowd hated it and there were a lot of distractions, but then again that is what was expected going in.

7. ROH Tag Team Title Match reDragon vs. The American Wolves

Richards and Edwards were in control of both 'O Reilly and Fish. The Wolves actually did a couple of heel spots since they executed some double teams behind the referee's back. 'O Reilly finally got the advantage landing knee after knee on Richards. Richards grabbed an inverted surfboard, Richards landed a handspring enzuigiri. Wolves set up for topé two hundred and fifty one against the barricades. Fish landed a big topé con giro over the top rope and 'O Reilly his big chair kick on Richards. Edwards hit a big backbreaker on 'O Reilly. 'O Reilly made the tag to Fish. Richards took on both Fish and 'O Reilly. 'O Reilly landed a flurry of strikes on both of the Wolves and followed it with a double dragon whip. Richards grabbed a double ankle lock on both men at the same time. Richards landed some stiff kicks on 'O Reilly, he attempted a counter, but Richards and Edwards was set up for the alarm clock. Fish and 'O Reilly landed an alarm clock and a fisherman's buster bridge for two. Edwards came in for a springboard frankensteiner on Fish and Richards landed a superplex into reDragon's finisher for two. Richards landed a footstomp on 'O Reilly for two. 'O Reilly landed the reverse hurricanrana and grabbed a rollup on Davey for the win. A very good match that finished at its peak.

**** 1/4

8. ROH World Title Match Kevin Steen vs. Jay Briscoe



Briscoe backdropped Steen on the outside and was in control for the early portion of the match. Steen went after the injured shoulder of Jay and tore off the tape that was on his arm, throwing it into the crowd. The crowd chanted “man up” and Steen responded with an over the knee shoulderbreaker and locked in an armbar. Jay landed a big flip neckbreaker, Jacobs ran out, but Mark Briscoe ran out to neutralize the distraction. Steen landed a cannonball and went to the top rope missing a senton. Matt Hardy and Compton ran out, but Veda Scott held onto the leg of Hardy. The ROH roster came out to urge Briscoe on. Steen landed the f-clique for two. Briscoe kicked out of the package pile driver, which led to Nigel

making death sound. A brawl broke out between SCUM and ROH on the floor. Hardy ran for the twist or fate, but he was thrown out and Briscoe landed the Jay driller for two. Steen locked in the cross face. Briscoe landed a lariat and then killed Steen with the Jay driller for the win. Papa Briscoe, Cary Silken and Nigel then made their way into the ring to congratulate Jay Briscoe together with everyone from the #DEMBBoys videos. Steen then shook Briscoe's hand. Briscoe then cut a promo calling for his old

theme music at which point the feed cut off.

Shimmer 53 April 6th 2013 Meadowlands Expo Center, Secaucus, New Jersey

Overall Thoughts:

The was the show that I watched on Saturday evening to officially kick off WrestleMania Weekend and it is for that reason (and of course that the show was very fun) that I had an extremely enjoyable time watching the show. In my country more than many other places it is a real treat to witness wrestling live, not necessarily in person (although that is obviously even better), but to watch a show free of tape delays and other such restrictions. Time differences and other invasive factors have stopped me from viewing events live in the past for the most part, so this was certainly a real treat. I watched the show with my best friend who was over for the majority of the WrestleMania weekend, and while he is neither a fan of indie wrestling nor joshi, I believe that we both had a very fun time throughout this show. There were no blow-away matches, and that's a shame, because the seventh match on the show, the Shimmer tag team title four-way, had the opportunity to be something special, and it was headed in that direction; however, LuFisto was unfortunately the victim of a ill timed moonsault spot to the floor and went crashing to the concrete below landing what appeared to be face first. This of course led to the whole match, together with the planned finish falling apart. The mainevent was about what you would have expected with it not being a four star match or anything, but certainly delivering when it came to big match feel and ambience with the gargantuan cage that they set up really helping the match out. The only match that I could truly say was very good was the Hamada/Athena match, with both women working one heck of a match. Although there may not have been any four star plus matches or classics on the show, it was a very fun three and a bit hours spent with a promotion that I really enjoy donating by time and my money too – all in all a fun time.

1. Awesome Kong vs. Mia Yim

They started off with a lot of big women/small women stuff with Yim going for strikes on Kong, but Kong responded with chops and kicks to the head, roughing Yim up. Kong missed a splash, which allowed Yim to landed a spinning backfist in the corner and a big missile drop kick. Kong responded with a huge clothesline, and missed a splash. Yim landed a German suplex, but Kong kicked out. Yim missed a couple of splashes and landed the backfist, but Yim got her foot on he rope. Kong landed a sit out powerbomb for the win. This was a fun opener with both women telling the story that they needed to. I wasn't a fan of some of Yim's offense, but the final couple of minutes were good.

*** 1/4

Serena Deeb was brought out to a huge ovation from the live crowd. This was her return after an 18 month hiatus from Shimmer. Jessica Havok, Nevaeh and Sassy Stephanie (none of whom are Shimmer wrestlers) then hopped the guardrail for the show's big angle and the Deeb beatdown. Regeneration X (Leva Bates & Allison Danger) made it out for the save and challenged them to a match later on in the night. A good angle with Havok being a big surprise.

2. Shazza McKenzie & Veda Scott. Cherry Bomb & Kimber Lee

Cherry Bomb and Lee attacked McKenzie and Scott right after the bell. McKenzie landed a kick or two, but Bomb responded by choking McKenzie and tagging in Lee. The hot tag was made to Scott and she ran wild. Scott then pinned Lee with what was apparently with Daizee Haze Haze's finish, but the camera missed the finish. The match couldn't have gone more than seven minutes and was fine for what it was.

** 1/2

3. Kalamity vs. Yuu Yamagata vs. Evie vs. Christina Von Eerie vs. Rhia 'O Reilly

The rules of the match were basically that only two women were allowed in the ring and tags had to be made. 'O Reilly slipped into a back senton. Evie broke up the pin by falling knee first on 'O Reilly and Kalamity, in what looked like a really painful spot. Kalamity landed a fisherman's buster, but Yamagata was in there to break it up. Von Eerie landed a big boot on Yamagata. Von Eerie then pinned Reilly with a neck breaker. This was a really fun match, but it could have gone longer.



4. Ayumi Kurihara vs. Mercedes Martinez

Ayoko Hamada and Nakagawa held the ropes open for Kurihara who is on her retirement tour and this was Kurihara's Shimmer retirement match. Martinez used a chair, so I guess this is New Japan relaxed rules. They had a fiery elbow exchange with Martinez being dropped to the floor. Kurihara landed a big splash to the floor for a big pop. Kurihara landed a pair of missile dropkicks for two. They had another strike exchange after Martinez was dropped hard on her surgically repaired shoulder. Martinez landed a huge boot, but Kurihara kicked out at one! Martinez powered up with a flurry of strikes and landed the fisherman's buster for the win in a very good match.

*** 1/2

5. Jessica Havok, Nevaeh & Sassy Stephanie vs. Serena Deeb, Leva Bates & Allison Danger w/ Daffney

Deeb, Bates and Danger made it out with Daffney as their manager, which was a very nice surprise. Deeb was in there for a good few minutes with Nevaeh.

Regeneration X were dressed as Silent Bob and Jay, which was a little weird. Havok and Deeb were clearly the stars of the match and they built the match as such. Daffney pulled Havok off of the apron and they had Daffney elbow their manager out on the floor. Deeb won with a spear on Nevaeh, which meant that there was no major interaction between her and Havok – and that made sense given that they are going with Deeb/Havok in a week or so. They had Havok attack Deeb after the match laying her out with a sitout powerbomb to set up the match on the next set of tapings.

*** 1/4

6. Madison Eagles vs. Jessie McKay

Eagles is also returning from a knee injury. They both went for a cheap shot before the bell, but both kicks were telegraphed. Eagles played the definite heel being worked on McKay at the start of the match, and both women had a great heel/face dynamic. McKay landed a Thesz press from the top rope and grabbed a rollup for two. Eagles landed two big high kicks and McKay grabbed an abdominal stretch. Eagles pinned McKay moments later with the hell bound. I really liked the fact that they set up so many big stars for future shows on the biggest show of the year.

*** 1/2

7. Shimmer Four Way Tag Title Match

Portia Perez & Nicole Matthews vs. Kana & LuFisto vs. Taylor Made & Allysin Kay vs. Tomoka Nakagawa & Kellie Skater

Made and Kay went after LuFisto after being tagged in by Perez. Nakagawa and Kana went at it for a while. Perez was tagged in. Perez and Kana had a face off, but Matthews tagged herself in and her and Perez wrestled each other so that they didn't need to wrestle anyone else, that was until Skater tagged herself in. Made spat at LuFisto setting up an exchange later on. Matthews and Perez tagged in and out with the heels Kay and Made. Skater tagged Kana in and she went at it with slaps on Made and Kay, again they continued with Kay landing a light kick on LuFisto. Finally LuFisto was tagged in and went after Made and landed a cannonball of Kay followed by a face wash. There was a brawl to set up a LuFisto moonsault, she slipped, and then missed a moonsault, which stopped all the momentum that the match had dead in its tracks, because everyone checked on her to see if she was okay – it seems as though she is, which is a relief, because this was a real scare. LuFisto pinned Kay with a neckbreaker, LuFisto was unable to run the ropes and Matthews countered a burning hammer for the elimination on LuFisto. This left the champions with Nakagawa and Skater. Perez grabbed a rollup for the win. Really good match with an unfortunate slip up that really killed the momentum that the match had.

*** 1/2

8. Ayako Hamada vs. Athena

They did some really fast exchanges at the start of the match, Athena lifted Hamada's hand, but Hamada responded with a kick to the gut. Athena countered a kick and landed a big kick to the side of the head for two. Hamada caught Athena in midair with a dropkick. Hamada landed a big moonsault on the floor. Hamada landed some big kicks and Athena responded with a big springboard DDT. Athena then landed a top rope cutter for the win in a great match. The finish got a big pop.

*** 3/4

9. Steel Cage Match for the Shimmer Title

Saraya Knight vs. Cheerleader Melissa



They did a little comedy skit before the match announcing an attendance of 70,000 a building record. It was in fact the largest crowd in Shimmer history drawing 700 fans. Knight had a scuffle with some fans in the crowd.

Prazak did a great job going through the history between these two women. They battled on the top rope, but Melissa was knocked off. Melissa locked in an Indian death lock. Melissa then landed the super dragon stomp for two. Knight went after the legs. Melissa fought back with a flurry of shots in the corner and landed a belly to back over the shoulder backbreaker for two. Melissa started to climb the cage and Melissa countered a powerbomb into a frankensteiner. Melissa landed a missile drop kick and second belly to back over the shoulder backbreaker to become the new Shimmer Champion.

*** 1/2

After the match Knight hit a fan (presumably a plant) to end the show.

DGUSA Open the Ultimate Gate April 6th 2013 Meadowlands Expo Center, Secaucus, New Jersey

Overall Thoughts:

I actually had to watch the DGUSA shows in the wrong order due to only purchasing the second night on the cheaper package, and also because the first show was on at around 2:00 and I simply wasn't up when I woke up the next day. Looking at wrestling quality this was definitely one of the best shows of the weekend, and certainly the better of the two DGUSA shows. As I have made clear before I am not as big of a Dragon Gate fan as many other people, but that doesn't change the fact that Shingo, Gargano, Tozawa, Ricochet, SSB, EITA and Tomohawk TT all put on a great show for the biggest crowd in the history of the promotion up until this point. Despite the fact that Dragon Gate, and the style that they wrestle isn't for everyone, this was a good show, and it should be one of the shows that you check out from the weekend.

The show opened with Rich Swann performing a psychotic performance of 'All Night Long'.

1. Rich Swann vs. Brian Kendrick

The fans dual chanted as both men did some good matwork before Kendrick rolled out to the floor. Kendrick was knocked to the floor numerous times selling the speed and pace at which Swann works. Swann landed a big leaping highkick and jumping hurricanrana. Swann followed it up with a senton off of the apron to the floor. Swann went for a top rope brain buster. Kendrick locked in a full Nelson, but Swann made his way out before landing a highkick and standing shooting star press. Swann got out of the sliced bread with a hand stand and landed an enzuigiri for the win to cap off a very fun opener.

After the match the crowd chanted for Kendrick and out came Chuck Taylor, Kendrick's opponent for the next night. He picked apart Kendrick's promo hyping up the show saying how Kendrick threw everything he had in wrestling away. They wouldn't make the same mistakes as Kendrick, because they were better than he had ever been. Kendrick said that they would find out the next day and he threw the mic into Taylor's face. Kendrick walked off and Taylor said that they would have another Taylor invitational.

2. Chuck Taylor vs. Shane Strickland vs. Fire Ant vs. Anthony Nese vs. Jigsaw vs. Arik Cannon

The gimmick is basically that the match is a six-man freestyle with the first man to gain a fall winning

the match. The thing that I always find rather strange with this kind of match is that it is never specified that tags need to be made, tags are never made towards the end, yet four of the six men remain on the apron during the early portions of the match - why? Everyone hit their dive on everybody else on the outside. Strickland went for some type of tight rope dive, but lost his balance, he then went for a cannonball through the middle rope next, and suffice to say that didn't work out with Strickland getting his feet caught in the ropes, things could have gone a lot worse. Taylor and Cannon drank some beer. Everyone landed big moves on everyone else with Cannon busting out a spider suplex and Ant landing a big DDT. Nese landed a buckle bomb on Jigsaw following a brain buster that Jigsaw delivered on Fire Ant. Strickland did a Moonsault from the top for seemingly no reason before landing a hurricanrana Canadian destroyer and Nese landed a 450 splash for the win. This was a really fun match, although a little too spotty for my tastes. Nese came off looking really good and Strickland clearly showed that he was the most green of the six by far.

*** 1/4

3. Scott Reed w/ Larry Dallas vs. Derek Ryze

Dallas got on the mic and said that Konley wasn't there and told Reed to kill Ryze. Ryze landed some sloppy kicks and a rollup for two after being caught with a flurry of moves from Reed. Reed then landed "smash mouth" for the win. After the match Konley got on the mic, and Dallas's said that he gave Konley the night off. Konley told Dallas's to "shut the [expletive] up". He attempted to tell Reed that they were better than the Scene, but Reed turned on Konley. Konley made his comeback and knocked Reed to the floor. He went after Dallas, Marty Bell made it out beating him up, and Konley laid Dallas out.

**

4. Jon Davis vs. Trent?

Davis got chants of "boring" on his way towards the ring. Trent is in fact Trent Barreta of WWE fame. From all of the interviews that I have heard and from what I have read Davis is a very nice guy, and I like him as a performer, but it wouldn't hurt anyone if he got into slightly better shape - he worked as a member of the Dark City Fight Club and he wasn't necessarily ripped to the gills, but he was in good shape, and it showed in the reactions that he got. Of course, the way that fans reacted to him on this show was due to the heel turn, but a lot of the heat that he got wasn't good heel heat and rather "we don't want to see you, or respect you as a performer" heat. Is that right? Probably not, although I am not the one to make that call; however, Davis has the opportunity to be so much more, because he does have something. Almost the entire match was built off of Davis working over the back of Trent leaving to Trent landing a corkscrew press on Davis. Davis got himself disqualified with a flurry of headbutts, which has become his gimmick and it simply isn't working. This went far longer than it had to, and it really showed. Davis landed a lariat on the referee and landed his finish on Barreta.

** 1/2

After the match Davis cut a promo saying that he had nothing left to lose and that would mean that everyone else had to be miserable. He challenged the fans "favorite wrestler" to come down to the ring and fight him. He asked for the fans to chant for their favorites, and do you want to know who the fans choose? Super Dragon and Hogan! Suffice to say they got neither, in fact they didn't get a second Jon Davis match for that matter.

5. EITA & Tomohawk T T vs. Super Smash Brothers

EITA landed a stiff chop on Dos, which brought in Uno and Tomohawk. Dos was brought down by Tomohawk's chops, so they were really selling the chops hard, which made sense given that both men placed highly in the Dragon Gate King of Chop tournament. Uno landed some chops feeling very proud of himself, but Tomohawk responded with a chop of his own. Dos was chopped on the outside and found himself stuck in a guardrail. Dos landed a corkscrew topé onto Tomohawk on the floor landing knee first against the face of Tomohawk. Uno locked on the sharpshooter on Tomohawk, but Dos was sent onto Uno by EATA for the break. Tomohawk dropped Dos down in free fall for a code breaker from Tomohawk, which was crazy. Dos landed a 450 on Tomohawk and Uno a cannonball on EATA for two. UNO and Dos called for the fatality, but EATA landed a tightrope hurricanrana and Moonsault to Uno on the floor allowing for Tomohawk to land the night right on Dos for the win.

*** 3/4

6. Akira Tozawa w/ Christina Von Eerie vs. Ricochet

Some of the fans started chanting "this is awesome" before the bell even rang. Tozawa went after the arm of Ricochet early on as they exchanged holds on the mat. Ricochet landed a springboard shooting star press to the floor. Ricochet landed a standing Moonsault for two and continued work over Tozawa stretching him back to back and ramming his head into the turnbuckle. Tozawa knocked Ricochet to the floor landing everyone's new favorite spot in wrestling, the flurry of topé suicidas to the floor. Von Eerie went after Ricochet on the outside and landed a suplex behind the referee's back. Tozawa landed a flurry of chops on Ricochet in the corner, and caught him with a strike knocking him down to the mat. This led to a big strike exchange, but once again Tozawa got the better of the exchange, Ricochet landed a springboard lariat as both men fell to the mat. Ricochet landed a standing shooting star press for two. Ricochet landed a Regalplex for two, Tozawa rolled out of the way of a Phoenix splash and landed a Saito suplex, but Ricochet shot straight back up with a scissors kick before falling to the mat. A forearm exchange ensued with Tozawa getting the better of the exchange. Both men battled on the apron before Tozawa landed an insane German suplex on the apron. Tozawa landed a release German suplex back in the ring followed by a dead-lift German suplex for two on a great nearfall. Tozawa was caught with a huge enzuigiri from Ricochet and sold it as if he was dead on his feet. Ricochet landed a backslide driver and 630 splash for the win in a very good match despite its flaws.

**** 1/4

7. Uhaa Nation vs. Sami Callihan

Callihan spat into the face of Nation and landed, yes you guessed it, a topé suicida. Nation garnered the advantage and went to work on the back of Callihan. Callihan went to work over the freshly healed leg of Uhaa Nation. Callihan has a similar attribute as Dean Ambrose, in that when you look at him you could honestly believe that he is completely insane, which is obviously really useful. Callihan grabbed the stretch muffler, but Nation grabbed a small package for two. Nation landed three German suplexes. Nation went to the top rope, but was superkicked in the back of the leg by Callihan. Nation perched Callihan on the top rope, Callihan went for a hurricanrana, but Uhaa landed a Ricochet sitout powerbomb. Uhaa then landed his dual standing shooting star presses for the win. I admire Uhaa nation so much for the style that he works and the talent that he possess, but you have to wonder what working this style at his size is doing to his body.

*** 1/4

8. Open the United Gated Tag Team Championship Match CIMA & AR Fox vs. The Young Bucks

The Bucks were in control early on working over Fox and later CIMA. Fox landed a lackluster topé and of course had to race to the other side of the ring to land another followed by a topé con giro - absolute idiocy. Fox missed an Asai Moonsault and landed on his feet only to be superkicked. The Bucks isolated Fox and worked him over. Fox finally made the tag to CIMA who ran wild with a suplex still with a toe hold locked on on Nick Jackson. Fox landed a topé con giro over the barricade onto Matt Jackson. In the ring, Nick Jackson was caught with a couple of knees followed by a swanton double team from Fox and CIMA. Fox then landed a 450 splash onto Matt Jackson over the knees of Nick. Matt Jackson landed a powerbomb after powerbomb on Fox to set up for a spike tombstone, but CIMA ran in for the save. Fox landed a Spanish Fly and CIMA the Meteora on Matt, but still Nick made the save. Fox was caught with a double superkick and more bang for you buck for the win. After the match Ricochet made his way out to antagonize Fox and CIMA.

*** 1/2

9. Open the Freedom Gate Championship Match Johnny Gargano vs. Shingo

The first big spot came when Gargano landed chop after chop to Shingo who of course was completely unimpressed and knocked Gargano down with one chop of his own. Shingo overpowered Gargano. Gargano went for the Gargano escape, but Shingo countered into an anaconda vice; a grip that he was forced to break moments later when Gargano placed his foot on the ropes. Gargano grabbed a slingshot spear, which placed him back in control. It was at this point where Gargano began to play the subtle heel, who wasn't necessarily breaking the rules outright, but was definitely stretching them, and even if he wasn't doing that he still had the aggression and attitude of a guy like Thesz or Tanahashi in a title defense. Gargano grabbed the Gargano escape, but was able to make his way out and brutalize Gargano on the floor. Shingo took Gargano into the crowd for some strike work against the guardrail. Shingo went for a lariat with Gargano seated in a chair, but Gargano was able to shoot out and land topé number one hundred of the night. Gargano mimicked Shingo's strikes with Shingo in the chair and landed topé suicida one hundred and one. Gargano landed kick after kick to Shingo in the chair with the gimmick being that he couldn't knock Shingo out of it. This led to the biggest spot of the match thus far with Shingo picking Gargano up into a dead valley driver onto the chair and floor. Gargano went for a spear, but was caught with a draping DDT. Gargano landed a big kick to the side of the head after Shingo went for a roll. Shingo landed a huge lariat and landed a crucifix driver, Gargano shot up, but was dropped with a death valley driver sending both men to the mat. Shingo attempted to take Gargano off his feet with lariat after lariat, Gargano refused to go down locking in the Gargano escape and Shingo got his foot on the rope. Shingo went to the top rope, was followed by Gargano who went for a frankensteiner, Shingo attempted to counter into a powerbomb, but Gargano landed the frankensteiner regardless. Shingo and Gargano traded strikes from the kneeling position exhausted. Shingo landed a barrage of strikes, but Gargano responded with some of his own. Gargano no sold a Saito suplex, but Shingo landed a lariat and both men were down. Shingo took Gargano to the top on a fireman's carry and landed the Last Falconry from the top for two in an insane nearfall. Gargano grabbed an inverted face buster and grabbed the Gargano escape right in the middle of the ring. Shingo made his way out with a foot on the ropes, and landed the Made in Japan for two! Shingo landed another lariat for two, The referee was hit when Shingo landed yet another Made in Japan, but there was a slight delay on the

pin. There was yet another ref bump, and Gargano landed a low blow followed by a superkick. He locked in the Gargano escape with a piece of rope for the victory via pass out. This match was on its way to being a candidate for match of the year, but the finish, while mandatory, did take it down a notch or two.

**** 1/4

Gargano got on the mic and did CIMA's gimmick of asking the fans if they enjoyed the show. He then proceeded to cut a babyface promo; so the gimmick is that he is a heel but cuts babyface promos, which seems to work with him.

New Japan Pro Wrestling Invasion Attack April 7th 2013 Ryogoku Kokugikan, Tokyo, Japan

Overall Thoughts:



In all honesty, out of all the shows that I watched over WrestleMania weekend, two DGUSA shows, ROH, Shimmer, and of course WrestleMania, my favourite show of the entire weekend didn't even take place in New York/New Jersey, in fact it didn't even take place on the same continent. My favourite show of the weekend was of course the New Japan Invasion

Attack internet-pay-per-view from the Ryogoku Kokugikan in Tokyo Japan. Not only did it feature the best wrestling out of any show of the weekend, but it was also the show that had the most diverse range of matches. You had the junior style tag team opener with the Devitt heel turn, you had the pseudo-MMA in the Goto/Nagata versus Sakuraba/Shibata match, the heavy strong style in the Tanaka tag match, a good lucha tag match, a North American influenced match in the NWA World Title match with Rob Conway, the unique style of Nakamura in the semi-main and of course the classic mainevent match between Kazuchika Okada and Hiroshi Tanahashi. What is even more amazing than that is the fact that just about every match on the show, regardless of style, was good with many of them being great – something that has become a hallmark of New Japan since its first internet-pay-per-view. It would have been a challenge for WrestleMania to have beaten this show on a good night, but with WrestleMania performing the way that it did it was simply a no contest. This wasn't a show of the caliber of the Tokyo Dome show from January, or the King of Pro-Wrestling show from October, but it will probably rank with some of the top shows of the year. The mainevent match with Hiroshi Tanahashi going up against Kazuchika Okada for the fourth time was an absolute classic, with limb work very reminiscent of the Suzuki/Tanahashi match from October. It is phenomenal to think about just how much Okada has improved over this time, and even more scary to ponder over how good he

will be in say five years time. Long story short if you haven't seen this show yet, watch it now!

1. IWGP Junior Tag Team Championship Match

Alex Shelly & KUSHIDA vs. Prince Devitt and Ryusuke Taguchi



Devitt and Taguchi worked on Shelley throughout the middle portion of the match. Shelley made the hot tag to Devitt following a DDT and he ran wild. Taguchi landed the three amigos and a dropkick on KUSHIDA. Taguchi landed an enzuigiri on Shelley, but the Time Splitters responded with some great double teams, Devitt telegraphed a dive from Shelley to the floor and Devitt broke up a pin with a foot stomp on KUSHIDA. Time

Splitters set up for the doomsday on Taguchi but reversed and grabbed a big lariat on KUSHIDA. KUSHIDA pinned Taguchi with a cradle bridge to retain in 10:42. The big angle was that Devitt got angry with Taguchi at the end of the match and began to argue with him, they made up, but Devitt clocked Taguchi with a lariat and King Fale made his big return laying out Taguchi and setting up for a foot stomp. Devitt then proceeded to unmask New Japan and was put atop the shoulders of Fale. This angle certainly has promise. Devitt then cut a promo saying how real he was.

*** 1/2

Okada was backstage for an interview with Gedo and Okada.

2. Tomohiro Ishii, Bob Sapp, Takashi Iizuka & YOSHI-HASHI vs. Manabu Nakanishi, Super Strong Machine, Hiroyoshi Tenzan & Akebono

Nakanishi saved Nogami after he took a beating at the hands of Iizuka and HASHI. Ishii and Tenzan started the match off with a very fun exchange. Machine was in there with Iizuka he unmasked himself to reveal another mask. This led to the standard CHAOS brawl on the outside, Iizuka attempted to unmask Strong Machine, but failed. Akebono and Sapp had their big exchange before Akebono landed a splash on Iizuka. Everyone went at it before everyone landed their move on HASHI with Nakanishi landing a top rope overhand chop for the win in 10:00. Exactly what you would have expected here.

**

3. CMLL World Tag Team Title Match

Tama Tonga & Terrible vs. Valiente & La Mascara

Toga and Terrible were working as the clear rudos, which I assume is their role in CMLL. Valiente landed a huge quebrada following a topé con giro from La Mascara. Valiente was worked on after the dive by Terrible and Tonga. However, Mascara enzuigiried Valiente out of a Boston crab. Mascara landed a topé, but Valiente was caught with a powerbomb in the ring to end a very fun lucha match in 08:57. I am not a lucha fan by any means, but I enjoyed this.

*** 1/4

4. Tomoaki Honma & Togi Makabe vs. Yujiro Takahashi & Masato Tanaka

Tanaka and Honma started off with a stiff chop battle. Tanaka landed a cane shot to the head of Honma from the floor. Tanaka caught Honma with a big running forearm out of the corner and proceeded to wear him down along with Takahashi. Honma made his comeback on Tanaka. Honma landed a big missile drop kick on Tanaka, and the crowd got really into the match. Tanaka killed Honma with a lariat for two. Tanaka set up for the sliding D, Honma was up, but Takahashi slid in with a lariat for two. Honma and Tanaka had a huge strike exchange, Tanaka took Honma down to the mat and landed the sliding D for the win 10:41. This really was a match that defied expectations - great work from everyone involved.

There was a Tanahashi interview backstage.

5. Minoru Suzuki w/ Taichi vs. Toru Yano

Yano kicked Taichi off of his crutches, which got Suzuki fired up. Suzuki was tied to the guardrail and was almost counted out, but made it back in at 18. They did the usual limb work in the guard rail and the like. Suzuki grabbed an armar after working over Yano's arm, but Yano got his foot on the rope. Yano pulled Suzuki down by the hair and landed a big powerbomb Suzuki grabbed a sleeper, Yano made it out and pushed Suzuki into Taichi for two. Suzuki landed the Gotch piledriver seconds later for the win on 10:09. After the match Suzuki beat Yano down and locked in the sleeper, landed a shot with the belt and some ground and pound furthering the CHAOS/Suzuki-gun angle.

There was a great little segment with the Olympic medalists from last year's Olympics together with Manabu Nakanishi made a plea for people to save Olympic wrestling. They then unraveled a banner to support Olympic wrestling.



6. Kazushi Sakuraba & Katsuyori Shibata vs. Yuji Nagata & Hirooki Goto

Goto and Shibata, now generational rivals of sorts, started it off. They went to an elbow exchange. Nagata landed a shot on a grounded Sakuraba and Sakuraba sold it like he was slightly intimidated. Shibata was tagged in on Nagata and he landed a belly to belly

suplex before Goto was tagged in running wild. Shibata locked in a figure four, which in a way is quite contrary to his gimmick. They had a vicious slap exchange inside of the hold, but Goto made it to the ropes. Nagata attempted to make it in for the save, but Shibata landed a defiant slap. Goto landed his over the knee fireman's neckbreaker Sakuraba had an awesome exchange with Nagata attempting a kimura - the better kimura attempt of the weekend for sure. Nagata shot in with a release suplex, but Sakuraba grabbed an armbar; however, Nagata grabbed the demon armbar; Shibata broke it with a slap, but Goto took him out to the floor. Nagata landed a big backdrop, which dropped Sakuraba on his arm dislocating it, the match was stopped by the referee at this point. Despite the fact that this match ended with an unplanned injury, the injury just so happened to play well into the match and Shibata/Sakuraba angle – only serving to further the angle. After the match Nagata and Sakuraba did a pinky swear.

*** 3/4

They aired one of the crazy Bruce Tharpe videos and proceeded to air a video package for the match - Conway is a really impressive promo.

7.NWA World Heavyweight Championship Match

Rob Conway w/ Bruce Tharpe vs. Satoshi Kojima w/ Hiroyoshi Tenzan



I don't know if they used Conway's old WWE music, but it would have been a real shame if they did and muted the audio. Say what you want about the NWA title, but boy did they manage to get a negative reaction from the New Japan crowd when Conway and Tharpe did their heel spots (in the case of Tharpe, waving). Conway's bodyguard threw Kojima into the barricade, which got far more heat than when say a Iizuka or Yano would, which only really tells you

that they view him above a prelim level talent. Kojima landed a big DDT after minutes of work from Conway. He made a comeback landed his machine gun chops and went to the top rope. Conway landed a big spear followed by a backdrop. Kojima signaled for his finishing lariat, but was pulled to the floor by Conway's bodyguard. He was caught with a Conway lariat for two, Kojima blocked a second and landed one to the back of the head. Kojima landed his big lariat, but Conway's bodyguard pulled the referee to the floor. Tenzan went after him, but was pushed down to the floor. Kojima caught him with an elbow and lariat, which allowed Conway to land his rope assisted spiral neckbreaker for the win in 14:24. This was most certainly a match that went beyond expectations and was quite fun, especially towards the end; however, I still maintain that New Japan are doing to many ref bumps as of late.

*** 1/4

8. Intercontinental Championship Match

Shinsuke Nakamura w/ Tomohiro Ishii vs. Davey Boy Smith Jr. w/ Taka Michinoku & Lance Archer



Smith started off by working over the arm of Nakamura, and do they did some really smooth exchanges.

Nakamura landed some big knees, but was belly to belly suplexed to the floor, which led to Nogami screaming at the absolute top of his lungs. It also led to a small brawl between Tomohiro Ishii and Lance Archer at ringside.

Smith landed a big northern lights suplex and locked in a camel clutch. Smith landed a delayed body slam to boos, but missed a leg drop, which allowed for Nakamura to

begin his comeback, Nakamura landed his big running knee on Smith in the corner and landed big knees on a grounded Smith. Smith landed a big jumping knee for two and followed it up with a big backdrop for another count of two. Nakamura landed his inverted power slam, but missed the Boma Ye. Smith caught his dive and landed a jackknife for two in a great nearfall. Smith locked in the sharpshooter, but Nakamura made it to the ropes. Smith went for the jumping powerbomb, but Nakamura countered landing a Liger kick and landed a bit fireman's carry over the shoulder neckbreaker. They battled to an elbow exchange, but Smith got the better of it with a huge lariat. Smith landed a powerbomb, but still Nakamura kicked out! Smith landed the tiger suplex, but no, Nakamura would not give in. He gave the crowd the middle finger and went for the the jumping powerbomb, but Nakamura made it out in spectacular fashion landing a leaping knee, springboard knee and Boma Ye for the win in 18:04. This was, at least from what I have seen of his career, and certainly in Japan, Smith's best match. He looked like a legitimate single's star from start to finish and came out looking better in losing than when he came in - a great job from Smith and of course from Nakamura as always.

**** 1/4

9. IWGP Heavyweight Championship Match

Hiroshi Tanahashi vs. Kazuchika Okada w/ Gedo

Okada Yen rained from the ceiling as Okada made his way out. Even though this was the fourth match in the series and it lacked the colossal build that the match at the Dome had, it still felt like a momentous occasion when both men were announced and the match got underway. Tanahashi went for a clean break, which led to Okada forcefully powering out, shoving Tanahashi into the corner and executing a clean break of his own. Okada ducked an attempted rainmaker from Tanahashi and Tanahashi did the rainmaker pose, which was a great subtle heel move, something that really makes Tanahashi a great champion. Okada responded with a slap and a fiery flurry culminating in a big

shoulder tackle. Okada landed a few shots to the leg, but in a similar vein to Tanahashi's match with Suzuki from October, only with opposite limb work, Tanahashi went after the arm of Okada; a really smart move given the fact that Okada's move of doom is the rainmaker. Tanahashi was slow to break when Okada had his foot on the bottom rope, which got noticeable boos, furthering the story. Okada made somewhat of a comeback with a DDT on the apron. Okada had some trouble locking in a blizzard move, which was basically a cattle mutilation, only Tanahashi was in the seated position - obviously posing logistical issues. Tanahashi missed a splash, which allowed Okada to lock in his 'Deep in Debt' hold, which is basically an inverted three quarter face lock. Okada hit a big dragon screw and followed it up with a basement dropkick sending Tanahashi to the floor. Okada did some work on Tanahashi in the guardrail and went for a tombstone out on the floor - a move that helped him win the title the first



time around. However, Tanahashi made his way out and rammed Okada's arm against the ring post. Tanahashi then hit his signature big match move, a highfly flow to the floor. Tanahashi began to make a comeback back in the ring, and continued his work over the arm. Okada landed an elbow, but crumbled due to the damage inflicted to his arm. Tanahashi capitalized with some vicious strikes to the arm, Okada however, was able to land a flapjack. Okada then

landed his belly to back over the shoulder over the knee backbreaker for two. Okada landed his big elbows drop and sold the arm heavily, He did a one armed rainmaker pose, Tanahashi countered a tombstone, but Okada landed his huge dropkick and went for Red Ink. He was unable to lock it in however, and Tanahashi managed to grab hold of the ropes. Tanahashi landed a sling blade out of the torture rack position from Okada. Tanahashi landed the straight jacket German suplex, but Okada would not give in. Tanahashi went to the top rope and was caught with Okada's über impressive drop kick to the top rope. Okada followed it up by booting Tanahashi over the guardrail and landed a guardrail assisted draping DDT. Tanahashi made it in at 19 and was immediately caught with a brain buster. Tanahashi went straight back to work. Tanahashi blocked the rainmaker with his forearms Okada landed the rainmaker, but for the first time could not make the cover due to the work done on his arm, and Tanahashi kicked out. Okada went for the tombstone, Tanahashi grabbed a rollup, Okada countered, and then locked in Red Ink. He had the hold in for a very long time, but was finally forced to relinquish the hold; unfortunately not due to arm work. Okada perched Tanahashi on the top rope for the dropkick, but was caught with a kick to the arm and a dragon screw on the arm followed. Tanahashi landed his standing highfly flow, sling blade and full-nelson suplex for two. Tanahashi landed a high fly flow to the back, but Okada got his knees up off of the one that counts, the one to the gut. Okada landed a dropping to the back and set up for the tombstone, but Tanahashi made it out with yet more arm work. Tanahashi wrenched the arm preventing the rainmaker, but Okada managed to land a

tombstone and the rainmaker for the win in 31:34 to become the new IWGP Heavyweight Champion in what was the best match of the weekend, and a complete classic.

After the match Suzuki made his way out to challenge Okada following a promo from Gedo. Suzuki proceeded to slap both Okada and Gedo before chocking Gedo out and leaving - a great angle to set up their match.

DGUSA Mercury Rising April 7th 2013 Meadowlands Expo Center, Secaucus, New Jersey

Overall Thoughts:

This was another fun show, not as fun as the first DGUSA show, but definitely fun. The show much like the Shimmer show was streamed live at an acceptable hour in my neck of the woods, so that was a big plus; however I wasn't into a lot of the matches, such as the high flyers fray, which was way too much of a cluttered spotfest for my liking. That isn't to say that there wasn't good on the show as the mainevent match between Shingo and Tozawa was one of the best matches on the show, and the semi-main was also very good, although my connection cut out during the finish so it is hard to say just how good the match was. Everything else on the show was rather missable, although there was nothing bad on the show. As a whole this show was the final two matches.

1. Soldier Ant w/Fire Ant vs. Anthony Nese w/Mr. A

Soldier Ant went for a dive, but was cut off by Nese who landed a tumbling plancha to he floor. Nese landed a high kick and quebrada for two. He continued to wear Ant down for the next few moments. Soldier Ant made his comeback landing a big forearm, but Nese landed a one armed buckle bomb. Nese then landed a 450 splash in a perfectly acceptable opening match. Nese cut a promo explaining who his bodyguard, Mr. A, was. This huge man proceeded to kill Fire Ant landing a huge splash from the top.

** 1/2

2. Scott Reed w/ Trina Michaels & Larry Dallas vs. Caleb Konley

This was obviously the follow-up to the previous night's angle, which saw the Scene implode. Dallas's distracted Konley but Konley responded with two topés one on Dallas and one on Reed. Konley landed a big German with a bridge for two. Reed landed a springboard hurricanrana, Reed responded with a moonsault from the top for two. Dallas's got into the ring, Konley went for the finish, but Michaels distracted the referee and Reed landed a chairs shot for the win. It would have been ridiculous to have a clean finish for this match since they just started the program, so this was a fine match, even though as a pair, in the ring and one on one, Reed and Konley are nothing special.

** 3/4

3. Sami Callihan &Arik Cannon vs. The Super Smash Brothers

Uno and Cannon exchanged strikes, it was not pretty. Callihan and Fox then both decided to land topés to the floor. There was some miscommunication when the SSB went for a backcracker double team.

Callihan grabbed the muffler on Dos, but he and Uno countered and landed a splash double team for the win.

** 3/4

4. Chuck Taylor vs. Brian Kendrick

Let's be honest with each other, this was without a doubt the real mainevent, forget Shingo/Tozawa I paid for this. Believe it or not Brian "Sun is cold" Kendrick was out there with a swamp monster on the outside - then again Kendrick is a cryptozoologist, right? Kendrick caught the swamp monster with a baseball slide to boos. This led to Chuck Taylor, sadly with shoes on this time, strangling and working over Kendrick. Taylor landed some stiff chops and continued to wear Kendrick down. Taylor landed soul food to the delight of Mr. Swamp Monster. Unfortunately his glee was not long lasting, as he was put in the kernel's wheel hair driving him into Kendrick. Kendrick then landed the sliced bread after a few minutes of work for the win

5. High Flyers Fray

AR Fox vs. Christina Von Eerie vs. Matt Jackson vs. Nick Jackson vs. Uhaa Nation vs. Samuray Del Sol vs. Facade

Basically the gimmick was that two men would start and that ladders would be legal once all of the men/women had entered the match. Fox and Del Sol started off with Matt Jackson making it out next. Von Eerie made it out after Jackson wrestling at full speed. Nick Jackson made it out, and they were able to double team gaining the advantage. They then super kicked Von Eerie three times getting a huge pop for the elimination. Uhaa made it out as the sixth participant and Fox landed a huge springboard reverse 450 onto everyone on the floor. Matt landed an Asai Moonsault and Facade came in with a huge dive onto everyone. Facade then grabbed a huge ladder. Fox eliminated Del Sol soon after. Fox climbed a ladder and shot in for the other side, but the ladder broke on the one side and Fox landed his double knees to the chest for the Facade elimination. Fox and Uhaa Nation with the Bucks had some great exchanges. Matt Jackson did the same spot that he did at Threemendous spring boarding off the ladder into a swanton. Ricochet ran down for his 630 on Fox for the elimination. Yes, in fact there were many, many spots. Uhaa eliminated Matt Jackson and then landed a standing shooting star press for the win. This in every sense of the word was a spotfest. Some moments were good, but I never felt like they were having a contest, and more like they were working together to put on some impressive acrobatic moves in the context of a ring.

***1/4

6. Jon Davis vs. Orange Cassidy w/ Swamp Monster & Chuck Taylor

Cassidy was completely apathetic, which is his gimmick basically. Davis landed a lariat on Cassidy and then one on the referee for no apparent reason for the DQ. Davis proceeded to kill Cassidy's team including poor swamp monster. Lenny Leonard thanked the crowd for purchasing the event. They also announced that they would be in New Orleans next year.

*

7. Rich Swann, Ricochet & Johnny Gargano vs. CIMA, Tomohawk T T & EITA

Note: I did in fact miss the finish to this match, so this is a partial review.

Team Cima went after Ricochet landing some big moves. Cima set up for the low blow spot on Swann, but they didn't do it. Gargano landed a dive on Tomohawk. Tomohawk landed a moonsault for two. Tomohawk looked like he was going for a double team but landed a top rope moonsault to the floor. Gargano and Cima exchanged slaps, Gargano grabbed the CIMA escape, but Tomohawk broke it up. My feed unfortunately died at this point, and with no replay available I have not scene the finish.

~*** 3/4

CIMA asked if they wanted to see a double title match, but Davis came out laying everyone out. Gargano proceeded to turn (more?) heel.

8. Akira Tozawa vs. Shingo

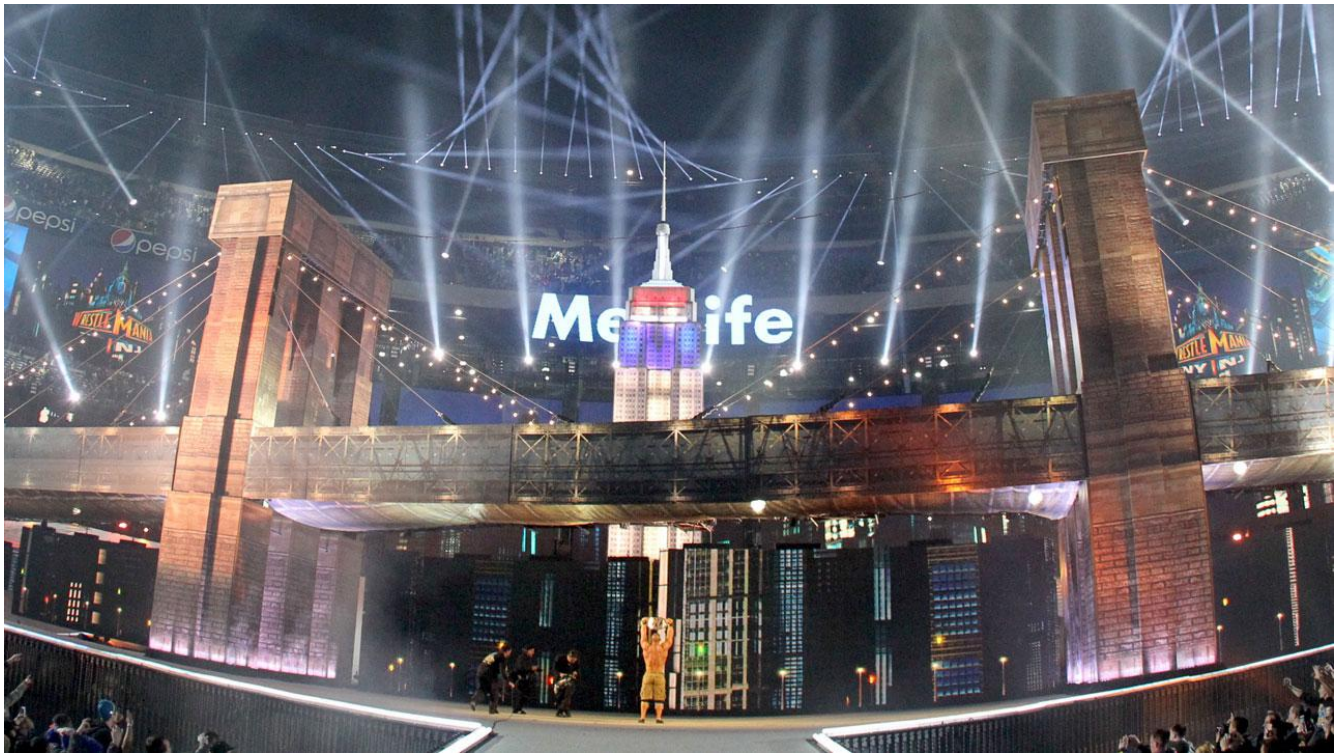
Tozawa spat in the face of Shingo, which led to a heated exchange. Tozawa fired off with rapid fire chops on the corner. Tozawa was dropped to the floor by Shingo following a chop battle. Tozawa walked all over the chest of Tozawa following up with a jackknife suplex. Tozawa was able to land a shining wizard, which led directly to an elbow exchange, which Tozawa got the better of. Tozawa landed two topés and a senton - people need to calm down with these dives. Shingo fired off with shots on Tozawa. Shingo landed a sliding D over dual chants. Tozawa landed a bicycle kick and a big superplex. Tozawa landed a big hurricanrana, which sent Shingo to the floor ready for another topé, but Tozawa was caught mid topé for a powerbomb on the apron. Shingo landed a German and Tozawa no sold. both men were down, Tozawa landed a German suplex, this time Shingo no sold. Tozawa landed double knees and a kick for two. Tozawa landed another German suplex. They exchanged strikes, and Shingo finally landed Made in Japan for two. Tozawa kicked out of a second, Shingo then landed a huge lariat for the win in a great mainevent, and a great end to Wrestlecon.

**** 1/4

WrestleMania 29 April 7th 2013 MetLife Stadium, East Rutherford, New Jersey

Overall Thoughts

This year's WrestleMania was a very unique show, not only due to the fact that the build to the show was far weaker than any other year in recent memory, but also due to how fans perceived the show going out. If you were the kind of person who was simply interested in viewing a fun show on pay-per-view then it probably delivered, likewise if you were one of the people who could actually see what was happening in MetLife Stadium, and you were simply there for the WrestleMania experience, the show probably did suffice. If you were pretty much anyone else with higher expectations the show was a bit of a let down. I know that fans on the internet weren't the only ones upset with the show, as I have mentioned before I had a friend staying over for this show, and he was really excited, specifically for the Brock match, but landed up being quite disappointed with that match and the show as a whole. There is no question that the Lesnar/Triple H match was underwhelming, as almost everyone that I had talked to going in had higher hopes for that match than what was delivered. Whether you want to blame the crowd, who weren't into a lot of things on the show, or Triple H and Lesnar, the fact of the matter is that the match didn't deliver. The biggest problem with the show for me personally, apart from there



only being one Mania level match, was the fact that there were no real WrestleMania level moments outside of the Punk match. I don't know if that was a bi-product of the crowd, or the fact that it felt at points like they were just going from match to match with little fanfare. Another problem that I had with the actual ambiance of the show, was the fact that there was very little in the way of WrestleMania level production. Cena and Rock didn't have special entrances, nor did Lesnar, and all of the video packages that people complained so much about were ones that we have seen a thousand times. Looking at this show as a whole, it would probably be most comparable, at least among recent WrestleManias to WrestleMania 25 or 27, in that it had one blow-away match, but the rest of the card didn't really deliver. However, even then the comparison doesn't translate completely, as both of those shows had some extra selling point, or another match that delivered something special – that was not the case here. It was missing a lot of the WrestleMania flavor from past years, and that was also due to the apparent time constraints, something that shouldn't be an issue when you have five hours between the pre-show and the main show. From my perspective as a fan, I enjoyed WrestleMania this year, and I do pretty much every year regardless. I had a friend over, we sat around with the TV on very loud watching all of the matches and had a fun time regardless of most of the matches. If I was forced to pay for this show, if I lived in another country would I be upset? Sure. Was I disappointed that a lot of the matches didn't deliver? Yes. However, it was still WrestleMania, with all of its flaws, and I had at least some degree of fun watching the show.

Pre-Show

The first thing that you saw on the pre-show was Vince revealing the set in an empty arena, which featured a gigantic Statue of Liberty light rig and the Brooklyn Bridge over the entrance way. Josh Matthews and Matt Striker cut to Scott Stanford who was standing by with JR, Kofi Kingston and Rhodes who obviously hyped the show as the most anticipated Mania in history. There was a Colter and Swagger video package, promo and retrospective. They then cut to Del Rio who was staring at the

statue of liberty putting America over; they tried to make it seem like a big deal, suffice to say it did not. The men in the booth made their predictions. They showed clips of fans around the world and America with signs reading just how far away they were from MetLife. There was a video package hyping up the Lesnar/Triple H match. I was in a room with a casual fan, and boy oh boy was he excited for this thing - far more than any other match on the show. There were light "we want Ryder!" when they were discussing Triple/Lesnar in the booth. They cut to Tony Dawson outside of the arena with a crowd going crazy. Snookie was approached by Miz backstage and he called her a MILF "mother I would like to friend"; a terrible joke. Barrett came by, Barrett attempted to act serious, but it was really hard with Miz and Snookie in there. There was a recap of the weight lifting from SmackDown. Henry was interviewed backstage and he said that he would induct Ryback into the Hall of Pain. Clips were shown from the WWE press conference. They showed clips of the Undertaker/Punk angle - slightly better in the promo, but still lame. There was a weird video package for WWEshop. They cut to Dawson once again, and he said that there were so many "storylines" to look forward to - what? They showed some tOuts. There was a really good Shield video package that followed.

1. Intercontinental Championship Match Wade Barrett vs. The Miz

The crowd that was there at the time was heavily into Barrett, although they did cheer for Miz and got progressively more into him. Miz submitted Barrett with the figure four, and believe it or not people were jumping up and down for this, so there was definitely a split there. They discussed Cena/Rock back in the booth. They aired the awesome Rock/Cena video package for a third time. Said casual fan called the Rock and Cena's promo work "cheesy".

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Main Show

They open with a Super Storm Sandy memorial video package. They then had the usual package and no anthem, which was rather weird.

1. The Shield vs. Randy Orton, Sheamus & The Big Show



Unfortunately the Shield only came threw the very opening portion of the crowd, which makes sense logistically. Sheamus was stopped in the corner of the Shield, but managed to land a power slam on Ambrose and made the tag to Show, not Orton. Show opened Ambrose' jacket landing slap after slap to the chest, which must have been no fun in the cold. Ambrose clipped the knee of the Big Show, tore off his shirt and

began the Shield heat on Show. There would have been some really clever story telling here if they were setting up for a heel turn with Show making the tag to Sheamus and not Orton. Sheamus proceeded to club each member of the Shield on the apron. Sheamus hit the rolling clubbing blows on Rollins and Reigns. Sheamus fell from the top hitting his knee on the apron and leading to a brawl on the floor. Rollins landed a huge topé on Orton, but went shooting head first not the barricade. They went for the triple powerbomb, but Show shot in with a spear to break it up. Sheamus crawled towards the Big Show, but Orton tagged himself in for boos. Orton landed an RKO on Rollins out of midair, but Reigns landed a spear on Orton with Ambrose getting the pin. This was a very fun match, although it didn't have as much crowd heat as one would have expected.

After the match as expected Show and Orton had an altercation, Show knocked out Sheamus and then Orton, which made little sense given that they were setting up for an Orton turn. There was the Rock/Cena video package for what is now the fifth time counting RAW, SmackDown and the pre-show. Snookie was shown in the crowd.

2. Mark Henry vs. Ryback



They started off with a strike exchange with Henry obviously getting the cheers and Ryback the boos. There was a "sexual chocolate" chant. Henry attempted to win via count out, but Ryback made it back in. Henry locked in a bearhug and the crowd chanted "boring". The crowd woke up when it was time to chant "feed me more". He got Henry up for the shell shocked, but Henry came down with a splash for he win, which I

was more than legit shocked for. So I guess the reign of Ryback is officially over – I originally assumed that the role of an undercard monster would be in his future, but since he seems to be the next opponent for Cena this made absolutely no sense. What was even more baffling was that Henry went after Ryback again, but Ryback landed the shell shock - why didn't they just end the match like that? This match made no sense.

3/4*

Lawler and Cole were playing around with the Brawlin action figures when JBL smashed the Mysterio figure. WWE announced their sponsorship of the Special Olympics USA games.

3. WWE Tag Team Title Match

Daniel Bryan & Kane vs. Dolf Ziggler & Big E. Langston w/ AJ

There were incredibly loud yes chants. They teased the 18 seconds spot with Ziggler kissing AJ and Bryan landing a high kick. Bryan shot in with a topé and unloaded with kicks until Langston was

tagged in. Langston overpowered Kane playing up the angle from RAW. Ziggler was tagged in for further work on Kane as the crowd chanted Yes. Kane proceeded to make a comeback, but there was no Bryan on the apron. Ziggler landed a DDT, but Bryan made it in to break it up. Langston in turn broke up a Kane pin attempt and was thrown to the floor for a running knee from Bryan. Ziggler landed the Zig Zag on Kane for an awesome nearfall. AJ distracted the referee for a briefcase shot, but Kane landed a chokeslam and Bryan the headbutt for the win. This match was slightly above expectations with the crowd being extremely into it, too bad that Ziggler had to take the fall, especially considering that he became World Champion the next night.

There was a conveniently placed Cena video package for Make A Wish.

4. Chris Jericho vs. Fandango



Fandango had a Mania sized entrance with a troop of dancers. All the lights went off for Jericho's light jacket gimmick, which was really cool. In a way I felt sorry for Fandango given that he had to debut to the majority of people, at Mania, in front of 70,000 plus. Jericho landed the majority of the

offense early on with a splash on the floor. Fandango caught Jericho with an impressive leaping highkick. Jericho had been busted open hardway slightly above the eyebrow. Jericho landed a bodypress for two. Jericho was thrown into the post and Fandango followed if with a DDT. Fandango went to the top and landed his top rope elbow for a count of two in a very good nearfall. The crowd was super into Jericho at this point. Fandango went back up following a lariat, but was dropped by Jericho. Fandango missed a third attempt, but Fandango got his knees up off the lionsault and got a rollup for the win. I would consider this match a success for Fandango with him having a fun match with Jericho on the biggest show of the year.

There was a very wacky commercial for WWeshop with Miz bursting out of a birthday box. There was a video of Miz winning the IC title. There was a new video package for Rock/Cena highlighting Rock's connection with the fans. With millions of people saying that they were "one of the millions". P. Diddy came out for a concert to Mania moment videos. They really tried really hard, but it was every other concert you have ever seen on a wrestling show.

5. World Heavyweight Title Match

Alberto Del Rio w/ Ricardo Rodriguez vs. Jack Swagger w/ Zeb Colter

They aired the exact same video package from the pre-show. Coulter was out there to cut a promo, and nobody cared. He purposely got heat on the foreign fans by targeting people speaking all languages from Greek to Yiddish. Del Rio made it out in a robe as fireworks in the colors of the Mexican flag went off. Swagger pulled the leg out from under the rope leaving his head to slam against the turnbuckle. Swagger worked over the leg for a minute or two, but was caught with a backbreaker. Swagger was caught with a big enzuigiri. Swagger landed the gut wrench powerbomb for two. Swagger grabbed an ankle lock, but Del Rio transitioned to the armbar, Swagger reversed into the ankle lock, but Del Rio made it to the ropes. Del Rio landed the step-up enzuigiri and went for the pin, but Coulter landed a shot with the crutch on Ricardo. Del Rio confronted Zeb, but was thrown into the barricade by Swagger. Del Rio then locked in an armbar with Swagger landing on his neck for the win in a perfectly fine match.

They thanked the US marines and aired the same Undertaker/Punk promo as the pre-show.

6. Undertaker vs. CM Punk w/ Paul Heyman



Living Color performed the Cult of Personality for Punk - they were awesome and got a much bigger reaction than Diddy. Undertaker had an awesome entrance with silhouettes clawing at his legs like he was rising from hell or the grave. Punk slapped Taker and slid out to the floor. Punk unloaded with shots and landed another slap. Undertaker sent Punk to the floor and took apart the table ramming Punk back first into the post. There were huge dueling chants at this

point. Punk countered the old-school with an arm drag. Punk then landed an old-school on Taker to huge Punk chants. Undertaker was busted open ever so slightly on his forehead. Taker went knee first into the turnbuckle and Punk dropped Taker out to the floor where he landed an axe handle. Punk landed a neckbreaker for two. Punk was hung up attempting the old school, he was dropped to the floor, Undertaker went for his dive, but Heyman served to obstruct Taker's trajectory, Punk landed an elbow for two. Undertaker landed a choke slam for the count of two. They exchanged strikes to mixed chants with Taker teeing off. Punk landed a leaping highkick for two. Massive dulling chants and heat for the match at this point. Undertaker was dropped to the floor where he cleared a table, Taker got him up for the last ride, but Punk countered and highkicked Taker onto the table. Punk then landed an elbow with the table not breaking – he reinjured his knee and hurt his wrist here. Taker made it back in at nine, Punk went for the cover, but Taker attempted a gogoplata. Punk transitioned into a anaconda vice, but Taker sat up in the vice! Taker grabbed a chokeslam, but Punk countered for the GTS landed it, but Taker landed the tombstone for two while on his feet. They exchanged strikes on their knees to huge

mixed chants. The referee took a bump and Heyman yelled "hay you son of a b***h". Punk landed a running knee, Taker went for a last ride, but Punk landed an urn shot and tombstone cover for two! Huge dueling chants. Punk did Taker's taunt and went for the GTS. Taker countered and they battled for their finishers, but Taker landed the tombstone for the win. An awesome match. Undertaker had tears in his eyes after the match because of what I assume was Paul Bearer. Taker did his arm raising gimmick after the match urn in hand. Honestly if it wasn't for this match I would have been negative on the show



as a whole, but this was the match to save the show. Undertaker if there was any doubt before, is certainly the new Mr. WrestleMania in the place of Shawn Michaels, as this marked the sixth match where he has gone out there to steal the show in. Of course, that isn't to take anything away from Punk, who certainly was responsible for this match being so great as

well. Regardless of what you want to say about the build to the match, this was a WrestleMania caliber, match of the year contender, level match.

**** 1/2

There was a WWE Slim Jim commercial. There was a John Cena one more chance video - honestly a Rocky style video that should have been on RAW. There was then the video package for Triple H/Lesnar.

7. No Holds Barred Match If Triple H Loses He Must Retire Triple H w/ Shawn Michaels vs. Brock Lesnar w/ Paul Heyman

Triple H came out through a giant skull looking gimmick that gave him second degree dry-ice burns. Triple H took Lesnar out to the floor throwing him into the barricade and announce table. Lesnar grabbed a chair, but Heyman grabbed it and dropped it to the floor when Triple H went to use it. Lesnar



was actually knocked out in the first couple of minutes by a knee, so Triple H was leading him through all of this at this point. Lesnar front suplexed Triple H through the

announce table, and yelled like an absolute wild man. Lesnar then landed a belly to belly suplex on the table. Lesnar posed and got the first real pop of the match. Lesnar was caught with a knee from Triple H and Lesnar responded with another belly to belly suplex. Lesnar went for cover after cover, but Triple H kicked out. Lesnar stared Michaels down, which allowed for Triple H to clothesline Lesnar and landed shots with a chair. Michaels was knocked off the apron by orders of Heyman. Lesnar landed a spine buster, Triple H went for the pedigree, Michaels ran in for the super kick, but Lesnar landed an F5. Triple H hit the pedigree for two. Triple H grabbed a sledge hammer, but Lesnar got Triple H with an F5 for two. The heat level for the Punk/Taker match was multiple times louder at this point. Lesnar killed Triple H on the floor and threw the steps into the ring. He signaled for the kill and landed a huge shot with the steps for two, really putting Lesnar over as the indestructible heel. Lesnar screamed for Hunter to retire, which led to a slap. Triple H went for a pedigree, but Lesnar grabbed the kimura. Triple H spine blustered his way out of the kimura. Triple H gave Lesnar the suck it gesture and landed a low blow. Triple H went after the arm of Lesnar with a chair. Triple H then locked in a kimura, Heyman went for a chair shot, but was caught with a sweet chin music. They really got the crowd into that spots Lesnar landed a spine buster on the steps, but Triple H grabbed a second kimura, once again Lesnar grabbed a spine buster. Triple H locked it in again for another spine buster, but Triple H landed a DDT. Triple H grabbed the hammer and landed a hammer shot and did his taunt. Triple H then landed the pedigree on the steps for the win. This could have been a four plus star match if the crowd was into the match, and it felt as though the altercation between the two men was a big deal – unfortunately neither of those prerequisites were fulfilled. The crowd was dead for large portions of the match, and the arm and kimura work simply didn't work as well as it did on paper. That isn't to say that both men didn't try hard, but I don't think that they put on the match that the majority of fans were hoping for. From talking to people it seems as though a lot of fans were expecting and anticipating an out of control fight, which wasn't what they got here.

There was a trailer for Extreme Rules and Rock's new movie. There was a Hall of Fame video highlights package. The Hall of Famers were brought out, Trump was booed and Sammartino got a good reaction. There was a WrestleMania XXX video package. they announced an attendance of 80,676 - lies!

8. WWE Championship Match The Rock vs. Cena



Cena made his way out to very little fanfare - no special entrance no nothing. It was all a little weird. They started off with many of the same exchanges as they did last year. They exchanged headlocks and Cena landed a

fisherman's buster for two. Rock went for the sharpshooter, Cena sold the leg and went for the five knuckle shuffle to loud boos. Rock landed a DDT. Cena grabbed a wacky cross face and called some spots openly. Rock landed a spine buster, he went for the people's elbow, but Cena grabbed an STF. Rock powered out, which led to decent dueling chants, Rock hit the Rock Bottom for two. Cena landed the AA also for two. Cena went for the leg drop, but Rock countered landing the spine buster. Rock landed the rock bottom for two. Cena and Rock exchanged strikes, Cena got a cross body and went for the AA, Cena kicked out of a Rock Bottom. Rock went for another people's elbow, went for the five knuckle shuffle, but Cena landed the AA in a nearfall that really made sense. They exchanged strikes dual chanting. Cena hit the Rock Bottom in another believable nearfall. Cena went for the people's elbow the same move that he almost beat himself with last year, but Rock sprung up face to face, Cena had him up for the AA when Rock attempted to draw him in, Rock landed the Rock Bottom for two. Cena went for AA, Rock went for the Rock Bottom, Cena countered, but Rock landed the Rock bottom. Cena then landed the AA for the win to win the WWE title. Much like the Triple H/Brock Lesnar match, if you haven't seen the show you would have probably expected this to have been a classic match simply by how it read; however, that was unfortunately not the case as they really rushed to the nearfalls, and it felt as if the crowd simply wasn't buying all of the big moves. This isn't just limited to the kind of person who would read this newsletter either, as the person that I mentioned that I was watching the show with also bought into none of the nearfalls – in fact the most exciting portion of the match, at least from my perspective, was when it felt as if Cena was going to turn heel, or at least do something surprising. This isn't to say that the match was bad, because it was probably on the same level if not better than last year's match. With that being said Rock was injured during the match, and the nearfalls didn't seem to flow in a natural manner where you could honestly think that any of them would be the finish.

*** 1/4

Cena told Rock something after the match and they had a conversation and they shook hands. Then Rock was left in the ring to close out the show thanking the fans with no mic. Rock and Cena then saluted each other and lifted each others arm to close off the show. This was supposed to be the “passing of the torch” moment, but I don't feel that anyone really bought into it that anyway.

WWE Monday Night RAW April 8th 2013 Izod Center, East Rutherford, New Jersey

Overall Thoughts

Despite the fact that the big names of Rock, Lesnar, Triple H and Punk were not on the show, and the big angle that involved Rock and Lesnar was cut from the show, the April 8th edition of Monday Night RAW from the Izod Center in East Rutherford, New Jersey was one of the most memorable editions of Monday Night RAW in recent memory. While the show itself was good, what really tipped the show over the edge as a phenomenal spectacle was the crowd, who were white hot throughout the show. Of course, the heat displayed from start to finish was not for the product completely, as many times throughout the night the fans would break into chants simply to entertain themselves, something that worked in this context, but you wouldn't want on every other show. Post-WrestleMania shows have become one of the highlights of the weekend with the hardest of the hardcore fans staying in town for the show. It was a heavily European crowd, which was why there was so much singing and chanting involved. There was of course the great moment of Ziggler cashing in the Money in the Bank briefcase on Alberto Del Rio, which made Ziggler look like an absolute star. As a whole this show was one of the

best of the last few years, and is highly recommended.

They opened the show up with pictures from the WrestleMania 29 mainevent. Cena came out with the title and a 'Champ is Here' t-shirt to boos. Cena did some comedy saying that when you become champion you get to look forward to the cheers, the adulation etc. with the crowd booing. He said that that they were upset because Mania was over, but it was like the day after Christmas - this led to loud boring chants. The thing is that only the hardest of the hardcore stay after for the RAW after Mania, so you always get a really interesting crowd. Cena said that he could do a dance, a kick or a heel turn, which got cheers and was a cute line, but really that shouldn't have been part of the promo. The crowd chanted "same old s**t". He wanted to start the night off with a title defense he named Punk, Ziggler and Orton who got cheers in descending order, Henry made it out to interrupt. Of course there were very loud "sexual chocolate" chants. Cena responded by asking if the fans wanted to "have sex with chocolate" to yes chants. They chanted "feed me more", which was very perplexing. Cena accepted the challenge and out came Booker T and he killed the hopes of the match, further escalating his eventual heel turn. He said that Rock had a rematch clause. Rock was legit injured and wasn't there, which garnered chants of "bull**t". Booker said that he would give Henry the shot, but only if he could beat John Cena in the mainevent. Henry then told Cena to bring his A game and left. Having Cena doing the same exact comedy as every single week really didn't help his plight in the eyes of the fans here. Henry was very good like he has been for the last few weeks, but really the only thing entertaining about he segment was the crowd. They showed some random pictures from WrestleMania.

Bryan and Kane made their way out. It was last year this time that Bryan got his recognition by the Miami crowd after being defeated by Sheamus in 18 seconds. Langston made it out for his first single's match on RAW against Bryan. Langston started off with an explosive yuranagi. Bryan landed furious yes kicks, but AJ made it up for a distraction to stop the diving headbutt. Kane grabbed Ziggler on the floor, but Bryan was thrown onto Kane and Langston landed the body check for the win. Next on RAW is Trailers was Josh Matthews in the crowd with Kurt Warner. We once again had the pleasure of witnessing Barrett versus Miz for the intercontinental championship. An interesting note was that the crowd was heavily into Barrett. Barrett landed a big neckbreaker on Miz on the apron. They had what was far and away their best match with both men going back and forth with Barrett killing Miz with the bull hammer for the win. This begs the question of why you would change the title in the first place, which is another story, but Barrett getting the win and the big pop was worth the meaningless title change for the title that means nothing. Sheamus came by Vickie and Maddox. He wanted a match with Big Show, Maddox wanted Sheamus to remember that he owed them, and Vickie said that she would give Sheamus a match, it sounded like a but was coming along at some point, but it never did. There were more still pictures of WrestleMania set to music.

Booker was approached by Orton backstage and congratulated on being inducted into the Hall of Fame. Orton wanted Big Show, wanting to "right a wrong" in a manner very close to the Bully Ray fake babyface, he played off of Booker's ego and he made the match. So I guess they are doing the Ray slow turn, which is fine. Colter and Swagger made it out and Colter did his usual shtick, but this time asked for the crowd to chant USA during Del Rio's entrance. Once again Del Rio made his way out after the competition gimmick during the break, so no USA chants were to be had. This was a two two on one handicap match with Colter and Swagger against Del Rio. The crowd chanted for Ziggler, which was perfect. Del Rio landed a big topé on Swagger to more chants for Ziggler - this of course led to Cole saying that the fans were "firmly behind Del Rio". As he said that there were chants of USA. Swagger locked in the ankle lock, still with no Colter. The match went through the next commercial break with

Swagger grabbing another ankle lock; more "we want Ziggler" chants. Lawler wanted to know if they wanted Colter. Del Rio then submitted Swagger with the cross armbreaker - I guess Vince is over it. They had Del Rio collapse and sell the ankle all the while the announcers put him over. Ziggler's music hit to an absolute super star reaction, pretty much on the same level as Bryan from last year. Grown men were jumping up and down in absolute joy. Ziggler destroyed the leg of Del Rio and landed a fameasser for the nearfall, they did the hope spot with Del Rio landing an enzuigiri to huge boos. Del Rio grabbed the cross armbreaker, but Ziggler made it out tugging at the ankle for the Zig Zag and the win, in a WrestleMania level moment. You could argue that they should have done this on Mania, and there was also the fact that they beat Ziggler on that show, but it really didn't matter here as the fans in the Izod Center made this an absolutely magical moment.



Undertaker made it out to loud "Undertaker" chants. He said that he dedicated the match the previous night to Paul Bearer, and the Shield came out to interrupt, and you know what? After last week, really nothing matters. Still, the Shield and Undertaker have a nice dynamic. Undertaker got ready

to fight, but Bryan and Kane made it out for the save - also super over. The Shield then fled back through the crowd. Ziggler was backstage celebrating with Langston and AJ. He called it his Mania moment and he said that it was "about damn time". It was then time for a match of the complete geeks 3MB versus R-Truth, Marella and Zack Ryder. The New Jersey crowd is normally into Ryder, but then weren't overtly into this. Marella pinned McIntyre with the cobra. They aired the usual "Mania is taking over" video. Sheamus and Orton were arguing backstage and Sheamus said that he would fix it and walked off. There was an interview with Big Show from backstage at WrestleMania, he said that they turned on him, he wanted to prove to everyone that he could get it down, and no one would take his thunder ever again. Only Big Show was important to the Big Show. Sheamus made his way down to the ring, he asked if they wanted to see him kick Show's "arse" to boos. He called Vickie out, but got Orton instead. Orton asked if they wanted to see him versus Big Show and he got a far bigger pop - this led to an awkward end to the segment and a WWE Active poll being put out for during the break. Orton won 73% to 27% Booker and Vickie made their way out and said that they would find a way to solve who would face Big Show. Orton would face Sheamus for the match. Wait, didn't they just have a poll to decide who would face the Big Show? Did they change their minds during the break or what? The crowd chanted "ole", which in all likelihood had nothing to do with Generico. The crowd really didn't like this chanting boring. There were then more "we want Ziggler" chants. The announcers explained that this was in fact due to many fans from the UK being over. There were huge RVD chants for no specific reason and then JBL - yes, no one cared about this match. They then went on to chant for Lawler and then even for Cole! Huge ECW chants followed and the Mexican wave - poor Sheamus,

poor Orton. Randy Savage chants followed, so they were chanting Randy's name, only a different Randy. They chanted HBK, Sheamus finally missed a brogue kick and Big Show's music hit, which was the first reaction for the match itself in around 15 minutes. The crowd proceeded to chants "thank you Big Show" at the top of their lungs. He proceeded to KO Orton and land a huge spear on the floor. "We are awesome!" chants! Big Show proceeded to throw chairs all over the place to the delight of the crowd, and "one more chair" chants.

Fandango made it out complete with dancer, stage and light up silhouette. Kingston made it out as his opponent. The crowd then proceeded to hum and sing Fandango's entrance music, and then popped huge for his offense. Jericho ran out landing shots on the mat and throwing Fandango to the floor and clearing the announce table. He threw Fandango into the steps and locked in the walls, Fandango tapped, but Jericho wouldn't release the hold. He finally released the hold only to hit the code breaker. Fandango on the ground then proceeded to do his name gimmick and the crowd began to sing his theme song again all the while jiving in a phenomenal manner. This was a really great segment, and obviously the crowd made it, and it is for that reason that I don't see it as a definite star making performance like other people do - looking at the yes gimmick from last year Bryan was helped, but ultimately became a comedy act, and I hope that isn't what happens here. It seems as though Fandango does have something, so it will be very interesting to see what comes from this. They showed clips from the media that Cena had been apart of, and they showed pictures from the Lesnar/Triple H match. They then showed clips of Triple H getting x-rays from the previous night. Heyman was talking to Matthews backstage; he basically cut he promo saying that they had lost the battle, but won the war. He said hat Lesnar doesn't perform for free, and Heyman then said that CM Punk would tell everyone how he felt next week - a shame considering how great the crowd was on this show. It was then time for the mixed tag match that was supposed to be on Mania, but was cut. You have to feel something for these eight as they had a big Mania payoff taken right out of their hands, still Tensai and Clay came out in suits, which was pretty cool. The crowd hummed Fandango's music again, but were quickly brought into the match when Tensai landed a huge cannonball in the corner. Still, the crowd could not help but hum Fandango's theme. Clay and Tensai pinned Sandow with a double splash. More pictures were shown from Mania.



Cena and Henry made it out for the mainevent. The crowd entertained themselves with chants of sexual chocolate between performances of Fandango's theme music. Things quickly broke down into a chant of "same old s**t". Henry went for the world's strongest slam through the announce table, but Cena made his way off of Henry's shoulders. The people chanting for

wrestling were soon drowned out by Fandango's theme. Cena then threw Henry into the steps for the

count out win, which was just a blizzard way to finish the match to say the least. Henry lifted the title above his head, but out came Ryback landing a spine buster on Henry and clearing house. Ryback tuned his attention to Cena, and offered to help him up, but pulled him into a face off. Cena mounted the top rope and Ryback did his "feed me more" gimmick and he laid Cena out with the clothesline and shell shocked - a huge ovation obviously. He then lifted the title above his head to close the show off.

RAW Ratings for April 8th 2013

One of the most unique and memorable editions of Monday Night RAW in recent memory, the April 8th edition from the Izod Center in East Rutherford New Jersey, performed at an acceptable level for post WrestleMania RAW standards in the ratings. It did a 3.43 rating and 4.61 million viewers, which is an identical rating to the previous year, but overall viewership was down substantially due to a major drop in viewers per home (viewers per home were at 1.35 as opposed to the 1.48 viewers per home average of the 2013 post-WrestleMania RAW). It went head to head with the NCAA basketball finals between Louisville and Michigan, which did a 12.3 rating and 20.87 million viewers, around the same level of viewers as the final did last year. RAW was once again the highest rated show for the night on cable.

The opening segment of the show, which was Cena coming out for his post-WrestleMania, I guess you could call victory speech, followed by the Mark Henry altercation opened at a 3.74, which was strong. The Daniel Bryan/Big E. Langston match that followed lost 461,000 viewers, which is regular for the second segment of the show following a good opening segment. Barrett regaining the IC title in a match with the Miz lost 222,000 viewers, a number which should really show you just how much that title and the Miz/Barrett program means. The backstage segment with Orton and Sheamus gained 92,000 viewers. Then in the 21:00 segment Jack Swagger and Zeb Colter handicap match against Alberto Del Rio gained 151,000 viewers to a 3.42 rating.

The 20:00 to 21:00 hour drew 4.49 million viewers (a 1.51 rating and 1,908,000 viewers in the 18-49 demo, placing it fourth for the night on cable behind Teen Mom II, which drew a 1.61 and 2.029 million viewers).

Then in what could be considered the biggest success of the show from a ratings perspective, the Dolf Ziggler cash in and Undertaker segment in the post 21:00 segment, a segment that obviously is related to drop-offs of varying degrees each week, gained 460,000 viewers to the highest rating of the show – a 3.76. The jobber six man match with 3MB taking on Santino Marella, Zack Ryder and R-Truth and the annual video featuring WrestleMania taking over [insert host city here], New Jersey/New York in this case, lost 329,000 viewers, which isn't too bad considering what a high they were on at that point of the show. The Orton/Sheamus backstage segment together with the Big Show interview and everything related to the Sheamus/Orton match apart from the match itself lost 110,000 viewers. The Orton/Sheamus match with the crowd going absolutely insane gained a good 329,000 viewers at 22:00 to a 3.58 quarter.

The 21:00 to 22:00 hour drew 4.78 million viewers (2.138 million viewers and a 1.65 rating in the 18-49 demo, which was the number one hour for the night on cable).

The post-22:00 segment with Big Show running down to destroy Sheamus and Orton lost 70,000 viewers – respectable. Fandango versus Kofi Kingston with the Jericho beatdown on Fandango lost 207,000 viewers, which I would consider slightly disappointing. The Brodus Clay, Tensai, Naomi and

Cameron versus the Rhodes' Scholars and Bella Twins match that was supposed to be on the WrestleMania card, but didn't make it lost a major 665,000 viewers – a very bad loss. Finally, the Mark Henry/Cena match with the post match Ryback segment gained 887,000 viewers to a 3.54 overrun. That seems strong, but given the fact that the segment preceding it lost around double of what it loses on average, it was a gain more equivalent to around 500,000 viewers; although thinking in that manner can get a bit tricky.

The 22:00 to 23:07 hour drew 4.56 million viewers (a 1.69 rating and 2.099 million viewers in the 18-49 demo, number two for the night on cable behind the first hour.). As far as other demos went the show did a 2.7 in males 18-49, a 2.5 in male teens, a 1.5 in female teens, which is a huge improvement over prior weeks and a 1.1 in females 18-49.

WWE –NXT
April 10th 2013 – Full Sail University, Florida.
Ben Carass.

Before the titles, a video package recapped the previous three weeks of angles between William Regal and Kassius Ohno.

The Shield came through the crowd for a six-man against a team of complete geeks; there was no explanation why Dusty would book The Shield against a bunch of jobbers; the last time they were on the show Big Dust sent out the entire locker room to run the trio off. The Shield beat down their opponents prior to the bell and cleared the ring of the no-hopers.

Axl Keegan, Percy Watson & Scott Dawson vs. The Shield

When things officially got under way, The Shield isolated Dawson and went to work; Keegan came in, but Rollins came off the top with a knee, as Ambrose had Axl in a bow and arrow. Reigns and Ambrose beat down Percy and Dawson on the outside then Rollins hit Keegan with a shiranui to get the three count.

The Shield defeated Axl Keegan, Percy Watson & Scott Dawson via pinfall, at 2:18.

After the match, The Shield beat on poor Dawson some more and planed him with the triple powerbomb. Ambrose got on the mic and said, “once again, justice has been served at NXT”. Rollins stated they ran Raw, SmackDown and would forever run NXT then Reigns yelled, “believe in The Shield”. Corey Graves appeared on the tron; he told the three that he didn’t believe in them and claimed NXT was his “personal wasteland”, not theirs. Graves reminded everyone that The Shield cost him the NXT title then challenged anyone of the group to a match next week. Rollins said he started all of this with Graves and accepted the challenge then told Ambrose and Reigns to take the night off next week. Seth added that Graves would end up flat on his back like everybody else and would “believe”.

The match was nothing more than a prolonged squash. I enjoyed the post-match angle with Graves and like how he always gets involved when The Shield re-emerge on NXT; a little continuity is always good in pro-wrestling storytelling. Plus having Graves stand up to The Shield on his own solidifies him as a dangerous loner.

Tony Dawson was backstage with Summer Rae; he asked her about running out on the tag match last week. Summer said she didn't run away, but she had realised her curling iron was still on in the locker room and didn't want to burn the place down. Summer told Tony he should be thanking her then claimed Paige should to, because if it wasn't for that curling iron, Paige's career would have gone up in smoke. Summer called Dawson, "Tony Dawkins" then insisted he referred to her as "the first lady of NXT".

Summer's facials, diction, cadence and tone are absolutely tremendous and just scream, conceited heel.

Emma awkwardly joined Renne Young in the back; she looked directly at the camera and said "I'm ready". Renne told her the fans think she is, "a bit of a klutz"; Emma laughed and commented on the kids these days with their "Electric Slide" and "the Macarena" then said they both paled in comparison to the "Emma-lution" (her wacky dance). Emma fell over as she left the interview and Renee asked if she was okay.

This was all kinds of bad.

The Funkadactyls made their entrance and Tom Phillips said this would be a rematch of-sorts from WrestleMania; apparently nobody caught this line in editing, or they did and just assumed nobody would notice. The Bellas came down for the tag match and Brad Maddox, who was on commentary again this week, said he was responsible for signing Nikki and Brie to a new contract.

The Funkadactyls vs. The Bellas

Naomi caught Nikki coming in the corner with her legs then, and I have no other way of describing this, trapped Nikki's face in her ample backside and proceeded give Nikki a motorboat with her butt-cheeks; *I swear I did not make that up.* The Bellas got the heat on Cameron and worked her over in their corner; Tom Phillips constantly referred to each Bella by the wrong name and had to be corrected by Maddox, who apparently has been paying attention to which twin looks slightly more enhanced than the other. Cameron came back with a neckbreaker for a hope spot, but Brie cut her off and tagged in Nikkie. The Bellas got the win after a double rolling monkeyflip.

The Bellas defeated The Funkadactyls via pinfall, at 3:40.

There was nothing to this really; Naomi used her gimmick early then The Bellas got the heat on Cameron and beat her. Not that I enjoyed seeing this match, but it is a good idea to have these four working down on NXT, as they would be able to become more polished and work on their psychology. But since they are on the road every night with the main roster, I don't see them being sent to any Sara Del Ray sessions.

Backstage, Kassius Ohno was with Tony Dawson; Ohno had his back to the camera and turned around to reveal a "Real Man's Man" t-shirt, complete with a picture of Regal wearing the yellow hardhat. Ohno claimed he was not obsessed with Regal, however he had seen all of his matches and heard all of his sound bites. Ohno then said he constantly heard Regal's voice in his head, but after the match, nobody would see or hear Regal again.

They hyped NXT Clash of the Champions for two weeks then showed a bunch of WrestleMania

publicity stuff.

Regal was somewhere in the back; Renne Young approached him and asked why he finally challenged Ohno to a match. Regal said, for years the inside of his head had not been a nice place to be and he was content with his role as the light-hearted colour commentator, but Ohno had unlocked those old doors and had to face the consequences. Regal asked his children for forgiveness due to what Ohno was about to receive.

A graphic hyped Rollins vs. Graves in a Lumberjack match for next week;
I assume this made it easy booking for Ambrose and Reigns to run in.

Ohno was out first for the main event and Regal soon followed.

William Regal vs. Kassius Ohno

They started out slow with an intense collar-and-elbow then Regal went after the arm with some armbars and hammerlocks. Regal continued to out wrestle Ohno and established himself as the master in this student/teacher story then started to pull out a few heel tricks, such as not breaking for the 5 count in the corner and using the ropes for leverage. Ohno finally cut Regal off with a knee and sent him for a ride through the ropes, before connecting with a baseball slide boot to the face. After the break, Ohno got some heat, but Regal escaped from a full nelson and went back to work on the arm. Ohno begged off after Regal continued to surgically dissect the arm, however Kassius broke an attempted armbar with a knee strike to the head. Ohno “popped” his finger back into place after Regal had done some old-school joint manipulation earlier then delivered a boot to the skull as Regal’s head was up against the ring post. Regal sold tremendously with a faraway look in his eye; Ohno unleashed some stomps to the head and tried to lock in the Kassius clutch, but couldn’t apply the grip due to the punishment his fingers took earlier. Regal fought out of a cravate to hit an exploder and went for the Regalstretch; Ohno fought free and landed a belly-to-back for a two count. A fantastic false-finish came next; Regal got to his feet and did the old “come on you SOB” babyface spot then began to stumble due to all the head shots. Ohno hit a big boot to the face and made the cover, but Regal would not stay down. For the finish, Regal pre-empted Ohno’s rolling elbow with a forearm and delivered his trusty running knee strike to get the three count.

William Regal defeated Kassius Ohno via pinfall, at 12:29.

Regal continued to sell his jaw after the match; Tom Phillips put over the match and Maddox said Vickie Guerrero would soon find out about Kassius Ohno. Phillips hyped Rollins vs. Graves for next week as the show closed.

This main event was something special; it’s not every day we get a match like this on NXT. There was so much psychology going on, Carl Jung would have had a hard time keeping up. First off, Regal established himself as the master and the babyface in the match, plus set up a body part to come back to later then pulled out a few of his old heel tricks, but still remained the face. Ohno delivered (safe) shots to the head and Regal went back to the arm, however Ohno was back in control after another head kick. Kassius was unable to lock in his hold, because Regal had twisted his fingers earlier then came the excellent near fall and the great finish. I cannot say enough good things about this match; I was extremely excited the minute I read about this match and I can honestly say it lived up to my

expectations.

The show this week was great. We got an appearance from The Shield; it's always fun to see them return to NXT and there was a nice set up for next week, but this episode was all about the main event. From the opening package, to the promos beforehand, to the actual match itself, everything was set up and executed perfectly. I cannot recommend this edition of NXT enough; I urge all of you to go check it out.

TNA Impact April 11th 2013 American Banks Center, Corpus Christi, Texas

Overall Thoughts

As a whole this was another very solid edition of Impact that they built well to over the past few weeks and served to further all of the main angles on the show in a logical manner. It wasn't pay-per-view quality as TNA was hyping up, although few really expected that. Hardy and Ray had a fun mainevent match to close off the show, and the opener between Roode and Aries and Chavo and Hernandez was also fun, although they really should have kept the titles on Roode and Aries. They did quite a lot for the Styles angle on this show, so it will be interesting to see just how it progresses next week with the

big Styles/Storm match on taped TV. Styles did in fact defeat James Storm with the ankle lock, so it will be interesting to see just how that plays out. Unfortunately the show and mainevent in particular performed at only slightly above the usual level on the ratings, which is a real shame. As a whole if you are looking for a good two hours of pro-wrestling TV then you will probably enjoy this edition of Impact.

Hardy was shown walking into the building when he was approached by Hogan who gave him some words of advice. They then aired a new 'Impact Live' intro, which makes the live shows seem like big events.. Chavo and Hernandez made it out for their Tag Team title match, they were accompanied by Jese James Leija waving a Texas flag. Aries and Roode ran out to attack Chavo and Hernandez before the bell. They landed belt shots to the back and threw Hernandez into the steps. This of course led to Roode stealing the first fall out of three in a



matter of a minute or so. Aries looked to finish Chavo off with a frog splash, but Chavo moved and grabbed a rollup for the second floor, which seemed like a fall that took place far too early. Chavo finally landed a tornado DDT on Roode making the tag to Hernandez. Hernandez then landed his big dive into the ring, which is far safer than his dive on the floor, and still gets a big reaction. After the break Roode and Aries were back in control. The hot gab was finally made to Chavo, who ran wild on both men. Chavo landed the three amigos and Chavo and went to top, but he was knocked down by Aries. Roode grabbed a crossface, Chavo made it out and Hernandez flew in. Hernandez went for the border toss, Aries reversed, but Hernandez landed a double suplex, which set up for the frogsplash on Roode and Aries for the win. I have nothing against Hernandez and Chavo, but I would be lying if I said that I wasn't disappointed with the result of this match. The fact of the matter is that the tag team titles meant more on Aries and Roode, and there really is nowhere for them to go with Chavo and Hernandez on top of the division.

Brooke was walking backstage and was approached by Joey Ryan who offered to referee another match, and she crushed his dreams saying that he would be in a match, insinuating that he would be destroyed. The Aces & Eights were shown arriving on their motorcycles. Park came out to voice his



opinion on the Aces & Eights, saying that justice would be served in the main event. Park drew up a divorce papers to end the marriage of Brooke and Bully. This led to Devon making his way towards the ring tearing the document up. Devon told Park to crawl back under the rock from once he came and to stay out of family business. Park attempted to pick up the pieces of document lying on the floor and was caught with a chain shot to the gut. This felt like a bad drama parody. There was a video package recapping the Gail Kim/Taryn Terrell angle, and they were shown stretching backstage. ODB was the referee for the match. Kim and ODB had numerous altercations during the match and Terrell simply garnered a rollup for the win and Kim was chased to the back by ODB. Terrell didn't waste her time making suggestions related to her appearance on her post match interview. They cut to Pritchard, Snow and Davis backstage talking in half kayfabe half shoot. They cut to Pritchard, Snow and Davis backstage with Magno and Pearce. Somehow, they gave the shot to Magno, I don't know in what world he is better than Adam Pearce. Of course there is the very large possibility that this is all an angle with all the people that won their match, but were rejected joining the Aces & Eights. There was a recap of the AJ Styles angle. Hogan was interviewed backstage saying that

AJ's time was up, he was asked about Sting, but he gave no reply. AJ was shown walking backstage and he was given yet another jacket. There was an awesome video package for the main event.

Hogan made his way out and said "we are on far in Corpus Christi jajaja.". Styles made it out and he was given an ultimatum. Styles didn't take well to it, Storm came out for a fight, but he in turn was interrupted by Daniels and Kazarian. Once again they played the innocent team simply trying to help out. They said that the Aces & Eights and TNA would simply use Styles. Daniels offered him a spot on their side, he said that they set up the Claire Lynch situation, but neither Carter nor Hogan believed in him. They said that it could be just the three of them versus the world, but Storm slapped the mic out of Styles' hand. The crowd chanted for Hogan, which is frankly not what you want them to chant in this situation. Hogan said that Styles would have a match with Storm the next week and Styles simply glared back on his way up the ramp. Angle said that the balance of power would shift that night, and he asked for a handicap match from Hogan against Bischoff and Briscoe the next week - this makes no sense. Joey Ryan made his way out to God Father esque music. Turns out that Ryan's secret opponent was Rob Terry, and you can only imagine how that turned out. Terry pinned Ryan with his chokeslam from the firemen's carry for the win - it is certainly a cliché, but this was in fact what it was. Hogan talked to Brooke backstage, he said that they had a newer marketing partner to meet with, but she said that she had to be at ringside. Morgan came by and said that Hogan did the wrong thing, because he was not the number one contender at Lockdown. He said that Hogan's mistakes would come crashing down on him soon.

Borash was in the ring to introduce the Gut Check judges. Davis said that he would make Magno a star, but they were on Impact nation wide , and he had to "agree with the fans" he said no. Magno cut a promo in half Spanish and half English, he gave a few lines that got a reaction, but it was a rather lackluster promo. Pritchard also gave him a no - it is quite evident that they chose the wrong guy. The Aces & Eights were hyping Ray up in the parking lot. He wanted them to let him do it by himself. Hardy and Ray made it out for their full metal mayhem match for the TNA world heavyweight championship. Hardy started off with his stunner twist of fate knocking Ray into the corner and grabbed a ladder. Ray was thrown into the ladder to set up for a poetry in motion. Hardy was backdropped onto the steel. This led to Ray working over Hardy with the chain. Ray proceeded to land a superplex from the top of the ladder. Ray proceeded to front suplex Hardy onto the middle portion of an upside down ladder, which has become Hardy's new ladder spot, and is suffice to say, not smart. Hardy cupped his hear mocking Hogan. Ray screamed out his ideal process of events. Hardy missed a splash from the apron to the guardrail, which led to Brooke and Ray having a war of words. Brooke slapped Ray, which allowed Hardy to send Ray head first into the staves. Hardy ran all the way up the ramp and grabbed a table, marrying it all the way over to Ray, skipping over debris like he was attempting to clear an obstacle course in the process. Ray was caught with a twist of fate over the tale and Hardy then landed a Swanton bomb through the table. Hardy set up a table before the finish before preparing to climb the ladder, which made no sense. Taz handed Ray a hammer, which of course led to Hardy falling from the top of the ladder through the ladder in a very fun TV main event. After the match the Aces & Eights stepped into a ring and Ray gave the "Aces & Eights never walk alone" line, as they screamed in Hardy's face to close off the show.

WWE SmackDown – April 5th 2013.

TD Garden: Boston, MA.

Ben Carass.

Some stills of Triple H making Brock Lesnar just another guy at WrestleMania opened the show and the narrator hyped Hunter's appearance tonight then a recap of Dolph Ziggler cashing in the Money in the Bank aired.

Big E. Langston appeared on the stage and parodied Ricardo Rodriguez while introducing Dolph Ziggler. The new World Champ made his way down to the ring with his crew; Dolph sounded a little hoarse during his promo, most likely due to screaming his lungs out when he won the belt on Monday. Dolph said he heard 80,000 strong chanting his name at WrestleMania, during a match he wasn't even in then the next night at the Izod Centre the "amazingly insane" crowd saw him make history. Dolph added that the WWE Universe would love to join in with the celebration, but the moment he captured the Title belonged to one person and one person only: himself. Dolph told the people he won the belt in spite of them, not for them and claimed people had been jealous of him for his entire life. Zeb Colter and Jack Swagger interrupted Ziggler and walked to the bottom of the ramp; Zeb officially introduced himself to Dolph then congratulated him on become the champion. Zeb informed Dolph that everyone in the WWE Universe knew Jack Swagger was responsible for the title changing hands. Dolph stated Swagger blew his shot at the strap at Mania and told Jack to get to the back of the line, before stating it was his time. Swagger climbed up the steps, but after assessing the odds chose to back off; Zeb announced the way for Ziggler to show his gratitude was to give Swagger a title shot then added that Swagger wouldn't wait for long. Dolph went back into his heel promo after Zeb and Swagger left, but was quickly interrupted by Alberto Del Rio, who limped out to the stage. There was an awkward moment where Dolph clearly had to do an ADR or "wild" line and they just showed Alberto hobbling on the spot. Ziggler said Del Rio could have his rematch right then and dared Alberto to head down to the ring. Del Rio stated he wasn't there to complain and wanted to congratulate Dolph, because he also knew how it felt to cash in Money in the Bank. Alberto said when his ankle healed, Dolph would be the one whining and complaining then stole the "hasta la vista" line from Terminator 2 and took his leave. Dolph called for the music to stop and claimed everyone was losing sight of the fact that it was his night then declared the next person to interrupt him would find out why he is the real World Champion. Chris Jericho's music hit and he told Dolph to shut the hell up then incited the fans to chant "AJ is crazy". Jericho called himself "the original show-off" and said Booker T had booked Dolph vs. Y2J as the main event.

This was a busy opening segment and it seemed to go forever; I'm not surprised Dolph forgot or messed up his line when Alberto came out. I'm not going to speculate endlessly just yet on where they are going with Dolph's first challenger; it could be a three-way or maybe they just go with Del Rio at Extreme Rules, but I don't see Swagger getting a one-on-one shot due to the heel vs. heel dynamic. They tried hard to keep Ziggler from turning babyface after the monster reaction he got in the Izod Centre. Dolph saying he did it all on his own and did it in spite of the fans was a good move; if Ziggler



is staying heel, the last thing WWE wants is the casual fans jumping on the "Dolph is cool" bandwagon with the heel/workrate fans.

Team HellNo were walking through the back; Josh said they

would be in action after the break.

The Prime Time Players were doing their shtick in the ring when they came back from a break then Team HellNo made their entrance.

Non-Title Match: Team HellNo (Tag Champions) vs. The Prime Time Players

Kane hit Titus with his clothesline off the top early; Bryan came in and worked over Young with some kicks. The PTPs tried for a double team, but Kane came back in to plant Young with a chokeslam and Bryan made Titus tap to the “No”-lock.

Team HellNo defeated The Prime Time Players via pinfall, at 1:40.

The Shield appeared on the Tron; Ambrose said standing next to his brother on Raw must have lifted Kane’s spirits and wanted to make sure nobody mistook The Shield’s strategy on Raw as a sign of weakness. Ambrose claimed they knew when and where to strike; Reigns stated, The Shield never back down or run from a fight and Rollins closed with “believe in The Shield”.

The match was a quick squash to get some steam on Team HellNo for their upcoming run with The Shield. I didn’t think they really needed much steam as they successfully defended their belts at Mania and have been Champs for months. But hey, The Shield are as strong as anyone in the company and giving Kane & Bryan more momentum can’t hurt I suppose; unless you are Titus O’Neil or Darren Young.

Some more stills from WrestleMania aired then they came back to Santino doing his goofy rope running bit; the new, or old, IC Champion Wade Barrett showed up and footage of Wade getting the belt back on Raw aired.

Non-Title Match: Santino Marella vs. Wade Barrett (Intercontinental Champion)

Wade had the advantage from the start; Santino tried a couple of kip-ups but was unsuccessful and sold a kick to the gut by repeating, “I can’t breathe, I can’t breathe!” Barrett delivered a Traylorlam for a two count then called for the bullhammer. Santino finally managed the kip-up on the third attempt and did his customary wacky comeback, but Wade countered the cobra with a boot and got the three count after the bullhammer elbow.

Wade Barrett defeated Santino Marella via pinfall at, 2:26.

Personally, I don’t think you want any comedy in a Wade Barrett match; his tough guy, bare knuckle champ character becomes completely negated if he’s involved in any “ha-ha”. But this was fine since Wade beat him quick with his move; Santino got a little offence in and got to do his wacky routine, but he is the king of the comedy geeks so he’s entitled to that much at least.

Sheamus entered the GM’s office and demanded to know why Booker overruled his match with Big Show on Raw and complained about being booked against Orton. Randy entered and he also wanted to know why the Booker man acted the way he did on Monday. Teddy chimed in and put all the heat on Book then asked Sheamus and Orton blame the assistant GM; Booker eyeballed Teddy and Orton asked how they were going to fix this. Book said he was going to make it right and booked the two in a handicap match against Big Show; Booker went back to staring a hole in Teddy’s peanut head after

Sheamus and Randy left.

The Bellas and Tamina Snuka were out for a six-Diva match; The Funkadactyls and Kaitlyn turned up as their opponents.

The Funkadactyls & Kaitlyn (Divas Champion) vs. The Bellas & Tamina Snuka

Tamina hit Kaitlyn with a clothesline then dropped both Funkadactyls off the apron; Kaitlyn came back with a spear, but Brie broke up the pinfall. Naomi caught Nikki with a springboard crossbody then tried for a headscissors, which even with editing they could not make look good. Brie cut Naomi off on the top, but was taken out by a crossbody off the apron by Cameron; Nikki sent Kaitlyn off the apron with a right hand then simply dragged Naomi back to the mat and pinned her.

The Bellas & Tamina Snuka defeated The Funkadactyls & Kaitlyn via pinfall at, 1:30.

I have no idea what was up with the finish; maybe Naomi was meant to stay down after the bump off the second rope or perhaps Nikki miss-timed the shot to Kaitlyn then wasn't in position for the cover. Either way, it certainly looked messy.

Triple H came out for his big promo with his arm all taped up; JBL, Cole and Josh excessively fawned while putting over Trips and the match with Brock. Triple H said he told everyone that the ass-kicker was back and that he and Lesnar went to war. 3MB (yes, you read that correctly) came out and interrupted Trips. Slater stated that in order to get noticed you have to take out a big dog and there was no bigger dog than Triple H; Heath claimed that the battle with Brock was nothing, because 3MB were going to "rock" his "face". 3MB surrounded the ring in a manner similar to The Shield, but Ambrose, Rollins and Reigns made their way through the crowd and took out the geeks for stealing their gimmick. The Shield jumped on the apron and prepared to go after Hunter; Team HellNo ran down to make the save and stood side-by-side with Triple H, just like they did with Taker on Raw. The Shield retreated through the people to end a bizarre segment.

I have no clue why 3MB were sent out; maybe Hunter wasn't up to cutting his usual lengthy promo and they just sent out the geek squad to kill some time. Regardless, it's clear they are setting up either a six-man or a feud over the Tag belts with The Shield. After Monday, I thought Taker would be working a six-man, possibly at the SmackDown taping in London in two weeks or potentially at Extreme Rules, however now I am not sure. I don't see Triple H teaming with HellNo since he is selling his arm, so maybe Kane & Bryan will continue to rescue legends from The Shield until one of them agrees to team with them. Although, due to purely selfish reasons I am still hoping we get a chance to see Bryan, Ambrose and Rollins in the same ring with The Undertaker.

On a side note, there was more to this segment than was televised; Triple H hit Slater with the pedigree. Team HellNo tried to persuade Hunter to hug it out; Trips refused and Vince McMahon came out. Hunter claimed Vince was the one who needed the hug, but the boss backed off and Triple H was sandwiched between the embrace of the Tag Team Champions.

Booker and Teddy had apparently been arguing since we last saw them; Big Show walked in and Teddy bailed. Show asked why he was booked in a handicap match and Book told him it was punishment for getting involved in business that didn't concern him on Monday. Show told Book that he was biased against him then threatened to walk out of the arena and cited his "iron clad contact". Booker said if Show walked out then he would make sure the "iron clad contact" would be held up in court until it became rusted and worthless. Book told Show, if he wanted to stay, his match was up next.

I'm not into this Booker vs. Teddy idea; Maybe Teddy will go heel and bring back Rodney Mack in an attempt to get his GM spot again.

Randy Orton and Sheamus made their separate entrances then Show stomped down the ramp for the handicap match.

Two-on-One Handicap Match: Sheamus & Randy Orton vs. Big Show

Orton took it to Show early with some strikes, but was cut off by a sidewalk slam; Show worked over Randy's taped up ribs for a while, however the big man missed an elbow from the second rope. Sheamus came in and fired up on Show with some heavy blows, however Show shut him down with a spear then drilled Orton with another shot to the ribs. Orton hit an RKO out of nowhere and Sheamus followed up with the Brogue kick; Show rolled to the outside and got to his feet, but decided to take the count-out and walked to the back.

Sheamus & Randy Orton defeated Big Show via count-out, at 4:02.

This was pretty dumb and accomplished very little; two faces vs. one heel is always a poor booking decision, at least the match was kept short and Randy had his ribs taped to deflect some sympathy off the outnumbered Show.

Renne Young approached Sheamus and Randy in the back; Randy said "see you in the trainer's room" and left Sheamus alone to talk with Renee. She pointed out that it took two of them to beat Big Show and Sheamus replied that he was just happy to have got some revenge then claimed it didn't matter how big or strong you are, all that mattered was the size of your heart. Out of nowhere, Mark Henry blindsided Sheamus and sent him into a conveniently placed table; Henry yelled, "It don't matter, huh?! That's what I do!"

So it appears like we're getting Randy vs. Show and Henry vs. Sheamus, possibly with a tag match or two along the way. I'm fine with that, at least it's better than having two faces feud with the same heel.

Kofi Kingston and Antonio Cesaro were ready to square off in the ring; just two geeks with no entrances having a meaningless match.

Non-Title Match: Kofi Kingston vs. Antonio Cesaro (US Champion)

Cesaro quickly took control with some forearms; Kofi got a hope spot in with a sunset flip, but Cesaro cut him off with a double stomp then delivered a gutwrench suplex. Cesaro yodeled then hit a big European uppercut in the corner; Kofi fought up from a chinlock and started his comeback, however Cesaro cut him off with another well timed European for a nice near fall. Cesaro countered a crossbody off the top and caught Kofi, however Kingston escaped to hit the trouble in paradise for the victory.

Kofi Kingston defeated Antonio Cesaro via pinfall at, 3:09.

Not a bad match, just a little short. The concerning issue here is how Cesaro is being booked at the moment; I don't know what is going on, but I can't remember off the top of my head the last time he won a match and this yodeling gimmick is pure garbage. At least this time after pinning the champion, the guy is getting a title shot; although that is a complete assumption, I just can't see what else they

can do with either guy at this point. It's depressing to see how far a talent like Cesaro has fallen in recent months; the same can also be said about Kofi.

Fandango made his way out to watch the main event; they found two people in the crowd singing and dancing along. Dolph Ziggler hit the stage with AJ and Big E; Dolph had the belt the wrong way round,



so when he shook his ass for the camera the title was on full display: I wonder if Londos or Stecher ever did that. Chris Jericho came down to face the new World Champ.

**Non-Title Match:
Chris Jericho vs.
Dolph Ziggler
(World
Heavyweight
Champion) w/AJ &
Big E. Langston**

Jericho controlled from the start; his shine was cut off briefly when Dolph hit a Stingersplash, but Jericho came back with a dropkick off the second rope. Fandango distracted the ref and AJ tripped Jericho from the outside; Ziggler scored with the Rockerdropper to start the heat. Jericho landed the loinsault after the break for a two count; Fandango got on the apron, but Jericho got rid of him with his springboard dropkick. Ziggler got trapped in the Walls, however Fandango tried to enter the ring; this distracted the ref and allowed Big E. to drill Jericho with a right hand then Dolph hooked a school boy for the sneaky win.

Dolph Ziggler defeated Chris Jericho via pinfall, at 11:46.

After the match, Jericho floored Dolph with a clothesline then nailed Big E. with an enzuigiri, but Fandango distracted him again and Ziggler planted Jericho with the Zig-zag. Big E. followed up with the big ending and Ziggler held up his belt, before leaving with his posse. Fandango entered the ring and pranced around a little then pounded away on Jericho and came off the top with his big legdrop. Fandango said his name and they hit his music as the show went off the air.

There wasn't much to the main event in all honesty, but at least it furthers the Jericho/Fandango programme, although I'm not too sure how many dates Jericho has left. There were a few audible refrains of Fandango's song from the crowd, but apparently the majority of this crowd in Boston were not there to have a good time and neglected to join in with the vocal minority. The finish was screwy and I expect we will see most of Ziggler's matches and title defences end in a similar fashion, due to the way he was beaten every week prior to winning the title. It will be interesting to see if they can come up with fun ways for Dolph to sneak over every week or if they just resort to the AJ distraction and Big E. interference.

On the whole, this show was somewhere between lacklustre and average; other than the main event, the matches were completely missable, however there were a few angles shot that should give some indication the direction they are heading: Mark Henry/Sheamus, Shield/HellNo, Booker/Teddy; although, I have no interest in the latter. If you missed this show I wouldn't lose any sleep over it, I wouldn't even recommend checking out Afterburn (Is that show even still around?) for the highlights.

Bits & Pieces

Unfortunately due to the Charlie Haas situation that we detailed in the newsletter last week, Grizzly Redwood was released by ROH. He tweeted the following statement “Good luck to my friends @ringofhonor in NYC tonight. Should be an amazing show. I will be in South NJ lifting weights and watching GI joe”, TNA star, Austin Aries then responded to that tweet with “*Cough*Koff*Cough* @ringofhonor @ROHDelirious @sbgi So years of loyal service gets @GrizzlyRedwood the shaft, just like it did me. #NoHonor”. Pictures of Austin Aries helping Redwood shave off his beard ensued with the end result being a relatively clean shaven Grizzly Redwood – hard to imagine, I know.

Following Fandango's success with the RAW crowd on Monday there has been a push by fans to get his theme song to the number one position on the UK singles chart. Remarkably, the campaign has been at least somewhat of a success with it placing at number 13 on the iTunes and number 51 on the UK singles charts at press time.

2KSports the developers of WWE2K14, the next game in WWE's video game franchise got a glimpse of exactly who they were dealing with this week when the WWE announced that the Rock would be on the cover of the new game without consulting with 2KSports. It is usually customary for the sports franchise to release that kind of information at a more appropriate time, but then again that is WWE for you.

Nobuo Shiraishi, mentally deranged president of All Japan Pro-Wrestling, was expected to kick off an angle at the New Japan Invasion Attack internet-pay-per-view show this week by showing up at the arena in an attempt to assault Takaaki Kidani. However, no such thing was seen or reported to have taken place during the show, so I guess they are holding back on the idea of the two president's going at it – and hopefully they continue to hold back on the idea. Why? Well, because the match would be fixed right?

Next Week's Issue

Next week we return to a relatively normal sized newsletter with a look at some of the New Japan shows leading to the Invasion Attack show, a preview of their next show, RAW from the UK, the news, Mania fall-out and so much more!

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