



THE CUBED CIRCLE NEWSLETTER

In this week's issue we cover, the Raw situation and New Japan's WrestleKingdom VI, plus we look into the Chris Jericho angle. As always I encourage any feedback, you can send feedback either via any of the social networks listed at the end of the issue or via the comment section.

RAW: OVERCOOKED?

For the past few weeks Raw has been on a downward slope, both in content and in the ratings, but this past week's Raw took it to a new low. It wasn't just the case of bad booking or bad wrestling anymore, but the fact that it made the wrestling business look to unbelievably wacky and foolish.

The Kane angle was leading the pack when it came to insulting content on the show, from Zack Ryder whining on the phone to his dad about how he nearly got dragged to hell of all places, to Ryder changing the tyre for 10 minutes, to the senseless brawling with Cena, this angle has no redeeming qualities. But that wasn't the only insulting thing on the show, there was of course the debut of Brodus Clay. This seemed to be a rib on Clay for the tweets that he made about not being on the show, he seemed uncomfortable in the roll, but he pulled it off well for what it was. I didn't find the Clay segment insulting on it's own, but coupled with the Kane segments and backstage angles, Mahal getting pinned with a cobra and the rest of the shenanigans on the show, this show did no favors for the business.

Throughout the entire show one thought just repeat in my mind over and over again and that was what would someone who had no familiarity with wrestling think? I actually don't know what they would think, but with all the wacky segments during the show I can guarantee that it wouldn't be positive.

Raw did an exceptionally low rating this week, which was probably due to the football game, but the NCIS re-run still got a higher rating than Raw. And I can understand why

(not the reason that people watch NCIS, but the reason that Raw did fewer viewers.). Not only that, but it continued the trend of the past couple of weeks of the second hour doing a lower rating than the first, which is bad news. Will this change going into Mania? I don't know, it should, but will it? That is up in the air. All I know is that Raw cannot carry on this way, if the WWE wants to produce a soap opera then put one on the upcoming network, but keep it out of wrestling.

BITS & PIECES

NJPW WRESTLEKINGDOM VI 2012/01/04 TOKYO DOME SHOW THOUGHTS

This year I hope to cover more Puro in the newsletter, although these reviews won't be full and in depth like the WWE and ROH ones, if the reviews work well and I feel that the newsletter readership enjoys them, I will happily extend them.

Overall I thought that the show was enjoyable and easy to sit through, but I also thought that most of the matches didn't really reach their expectations.

1. No Remorse Corps (Davey Richards & Rocky Romero) vs. Apollo 55 (Prince Devitt & Ryusuke Taguchi)

This was a good fun match, all the moves in the match were well executed and aside from a slightly botched alarm clock everything for the most part was executed fine. Apollo 55 won the tag team championship, with Taguchi pinning Richards with the Toyota roll in 12:44.

*** ¼

2. Mascara Dorada, KUSHIDA, Tiger Mask & Jushin Thunder Liger vs. Taichi, TAKA Michinoku, Valiente & Atlantis

Liger's team got a huge reaction as they were accompanied to the ring by Astro Boy, which was a really great moment and definitely one of my highlights of the night. A lot of the match felt pretty sloppy with a few missed spots, but for the most part the pace was kept fine and there were some good moments like the finish, plus the crowd was into most of the match. Liger hit a Liger Bomb followed by a brainbuster on Valiente for the win in 10:18.

** ½

3. Kazuchika Okada vs. YOSHI-HASHI

This match was sloppy and badly executed it was a return match, but it didn't really come off that way. A sloppy match that ended in 4:37 when Okada pinned Hashi with a terrible looking lariat.

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4. Wataru Inoue & Yuji Nagata vs. Masayuki Kono & Masakatsu Funaki

This was the first of many matches of the card that focused on opponents from another promotion facing New Japan talent. The match was worked pretty stiff and Nagata really shined, Funaki pinned Inoue in 6:34 with a big kick for the win. After the match Nagata and Funaki did a pull apart, it looks like we are going to get a Funaki Nagata match at some point.

*** 1/2

5. Shelton Benjamin & MVP vs. Yujiro Takahashi & Masato Tanaka

I was really impressed with Benjamin and MVP as a team, they came across as stars, Tanaka also looked good, but he has given good performances for the past few shows. It looks like MVP and Benjamin are going to get a push as MVP submitted Takahashi with the cross face in 9:41.

*** 1/2

6. IWGP Tag-Team Championship: Bad Intentions (Giant Bernard & Karl Anderson) vs. Satoshi Kojima & Hiroyoshi Tenzan

This match marked the end of the longest IWGP Tag-Team Championship run in history, Bad Intentions who have had a phenomenal run lost the titles to Kojima & Tenzan when Bernard was pinned with a lariat moonsault combo in 12:40. This was far from the best Bad Intentions title defense, but it was still acceptable.

7. Hirooki Goto vs. Takashi Sugiura

This match was pretty stiff with both men exchanging elbows, Sugiura hit stiff suplexes and there were stiff headbutts. The match started off slow, but both men really worked well, I would have liked the match to have gone longer, but Goto beat Sugiura with the Shoten Kai (vertical suplex into a sitout slam) in 12:25.

*** 1/2

8. Togi Makabe vs. Yoshihiro Takayama

This match was very painful to watch, Takayama is so beaten down, he has been wrestling stiff matches forever, he looks super out of shape probably due to him being too beaten up to train and he has had strokes, this man should not be wrestling. But, he can still draw to an extent, so he still has matches. But, this match was just so difficult to watch, to see this man bump is just so difficult to watch. Luckily the match ended at 9:15 when Makabe hit the King Kong knee of the top.

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9. Toru Yano & Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Go Shiozaki & Naomichi Marufuji

This match was a great example of a match that looks phenomenal on paper, but unfortunately didn't live up to the expectations. I don't think the time was a problem,

because it got a decent amount, I think it was more that the match felt like it was played very safe and the teams didn't feel like they jelled very well. Shiozaki pinned Yano with the Go Flasher in 15:10.

*** 1/2

10. Tetsuya Naito vs. Keiji Muto

This match was the second longest match of the show going 22:35 and for the majority of the match Mutoh worked on the leg of Niato, hitting dragon screws and locking in figure fours and leg locks on Niato. Luckily the crowd was with the match the entire time, it was such a pleasure to watch Mutoh even at this age, hold the crowd in the palm of his hand. The gimmick of the match was genius vs. genius and although Niato didn't go over, it really felt like he could of at certain points, which was probably due to the influence of Mutoh. The finish was executed beautifully, with Mutoh failing to put Niato away with the shining wizard and Mutoh having to hit the moonsault to get the win.

*** 1/4

11. IWGP Championship: Hiroshi Tanahashi vs. Minoru Suzuki

This was the best match of the show and although it probably wasn't in the top 5 best Tanahashi title defenses or maybe even the top 10, it was still a great championship match at a Dome show. Both men really went at it and the match went 25:59 with Tanahashi winning the match with the high fly flow to the back and then one to the stomach for the win.

*** 3/4

THE CHRIS JERICO ANGLE

Since the 2nd January 2012 videos aired many speculated that the mystery man was Chris Jericho and when it in fact was many weren't surprised. However what they were surprised about was the way that he made his return, coming out and milking the crowd of cheers without saying a word, until they eventually turned on him (It took much longer than expected and even when they did, a lot of the crowd still cheered.) and then he walked out. This was met with mixed reviews on the first week, on one hand you had the people saying that it was a great and unique idea and we should see were it goes, while on the other hand people reacted negatively and said that they ruined Jericho.

I fall somewhere in the middle, I don't think that it's the best thing that they could of done with Jericho, at least by the early indications, but I really don't think it's the worst thing either. What I expect them to do is have him come out repeatedly each time slightly different, like on Raw this week when he started crying. And then finely have him turn heel, because he is a rockstar and is insulted that they dare to boo him. I don't know how long it will take for the crowd to boo or if they will boo at all, but that's the direction I think that they are going in.

I would have been fine with Jericho coming out to challenge CM Punk for the championship and title of best in the world, but Jericho isn't the sort of person that stays stagnant. He knows when the crowd is tired of him and then he leaves and when he

comes back he reinvents himself, that's the way it goes. For all I know this angle could turn out even better than a straight up feud with Punk, I think that we should just see how it plays out, it isn't dull that's for sure.

NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

Next week's issue will feature thoughts on the progression of the Jericho angle, the news of the week, ROH on SBG and more! For more information head over to cubedcirclewrestling.blogspot.com

CONTACT

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