



Cubed Circle Newsletter 185 – Ben Heads South, Solo

Due to test-related delays and various other university related issues I have not contributed to this week's newsletter, and thus Ben has gone it solo once more this week we coverage of not only the Payback 2015 go-home show and NXT, but also the December 10th 1981 edition of Mid-South television!

– Ryan Clingman, *Cubed Circle Newsletter Editor*

RAW Ramblings – May 11th 2015 **US Bank Arena: Cincinnati, OH.**

Ben Carass.

With only three weeks since Extreme Rules, this week's RAW was the go home show for Payback. If you think that is a short turnaround between PPVs, and it is, Payback is only the start of it. WWE announced on RAW that the Elimination Chamber would be a Network only special on May 31st, conveniently the same night when all those free subscriptions are due to expire. So in a six week period the WWE will have run Extreme Rules, King of the Ring, Payback and Elimination Chamber. Apparently there will be two Chamber matches, one for the now vacant IC title and another for **New Day's** tag straps, which is pretty much irrelevant to my point, but still I'm intrigued as to how a tag team Chamber match will work. Running four supposedly "big" shows in six weeks is simply not conducive to smart booking or compelling television and with the main focus of the Fatal Four Way, just like it was for the uninspiring **Orton/Rollins** cage match at Extreme Rules, on what 48 year old **Kane** is going to do, it isn't surprising that fan apathy for these PPVs/Network Specials, and the product in general, is seemingly at an all-time high.

The best thing on RAW was **John Cena's** US title open challenge. **Cena** did a promo about the "I Quit" match with **Rusev** then **Neville** showed up for what at first seemed like the second young up and comer from NXT losing to the legend story in the space of a week. However this differed from the **Sami Zayn** match in a couple of ways. For a start **Neville** wasn't going into the match with a freshly dislocated shoulder and as a result the match was much better and was given more time. Second and perhaps more impressively, **John Cena** didn't actually pin or submit **Neville**, who looked even stronger than **Zayn** last week and who also kicked out of **Cena's** AA. **Rusev** ran in for the DQ at 14:58 just as **Neville** hit **Cena** with the Red Arrow, so for all intense and purposes, **Neville** had **Cena** beat. **Rusev** laid out **Cena** and put him in the camel-clutch afterwards. I'm not particularly interested in seeing another **Cena/Rusev** match, unless **Rusev** wins, which seems unlikely.

Daniel Bryan made his return to TV after being advertised on Twitter 20 minutes before the show

started. Classic WWE. **Bryan** talked about getting an MRI and the doctors not knowing what is wrong with him or how long he will be out. He said it could be weeks, months, or he might never return. **Bryan** mentioned being stripped of the WWE World title last year and announced he was going to relinquish the IC title because it was the right thing to do. It was a real tough deal to watch, as you can't help but feel for **Bryan**, who left the IC title belt in the ring and walked out to a standing ovation and chants of "thank you **Daniel**." **Bryan** stopped at the top of the ramp like **Mick Foley** at No Way Out 2000 then turned around to do what could have been one final "Yes" chant and everyone in the building joined it. It felt like a really genuine promo from **Bryan** and the fans in Cincinnati were unanimously classy.



The WWE world title storyline featured the usual **Kane/Rollins** tension, however the show opened up with **HHH** coming out and declaring, "Daddy's home." **Trips** told **Kane** & **Seth** to get along and told **Kane** he would be fired if **Rollins** loses the WWE title on Sunday. **HHH** booked everyone in the Four Way in matches: **Dean Ambrose** beat **J&J Security** in 5:20, pinning **Noble** with his DDT. **Kane** was booked to face **Roman Reigns**, but it turned into a brawl before the match could get started and **Reigns** ended up spearing **Kane** over the announce table. Never fear though, as they announced **Reigns vs. Kane** in a rematch on SmackDown. – Can you believe these goofs haven't figured it out yet? Main event saw **Randy Orton** beat **Seth Rollins** in 15:15 by DQ when **J&J** ran in and attacked him. The match wasn't particular very good and it felt like they were just coasting for the most part. **Kane** came down for the post-match angle, which saw him just stand at ring side while **Ambrose**, **Reigns** and **Orton** all hit their finishes on **Rollins**. **Reigns** then took out **Orton** with a spear and **Ambrose** laid out his buddy **Reigns** with his DDT and stood tall to close the show for a second week in a row, so he's almost certainly taking the fall on Sunday. The announcers played up big that **Kane** didn't lift a finger to help **Rollins** and tried to get viewers excited about what **Kane** might do at Payback given that his job is on the line.

Decent Filler: **King Barrett** downed **Dolph Ziggler** in 5:55 of a solid little match. **Sheamus** was on commentary and jumped **Ziggler** and hit the Brogue kick. **Erick Rowan** squashed **Fandango** in 37 seconds. The announcers were placing bets on how long it would take **Rowan** to kill **Fandango**,

which was quite amusing. **Luke Harper** came out with **Rowan**, so it looks like the **Wyatt Family**, minus **Bray** of course, are back together, which is good news for both **Harper** and **Rowan** who were floundering as singles.



Lame Filler: Tamina w/Naomi beat Brie Bella w/Nikki in 3:35. It was no good and **Tamina** still doesn't seem to have improved at all. **Curtis Axel had** a match with **Macho Mandow Damien Sandow**, who did a **Randy Savage** imitation promo beforehand. **The Ascension** interrupted the match and buried the two for copying irrelevant 80's gimmicks. **Axel & Macho Mandow** took out the **Ascension** then **Axel** dropped the big leg on **Viktor** and **Mandow** did the elbow drop off the top. It was so goofy. **Cesaro w/Tyson Kidd & Natalya** downed **Big E w/Xavier Woods & Kofi Kingston** in 8:55 of a match that damn near fell apart. **E** was stumbling all over the place and blowing spots left and right. The **Prime Time Players** did another wacky vignette and made fun of the **New Age Outlaws**. **Bray Wyatt** cut his trademark meandering promo on **Ryback**, who showed up and the two had a brief brawl before **Wyatt** hit the bricks.

Here's the line-up for Payback: It should be a good in-ring show, although I thought that about Extreme Rules and that turned out to be not the case.

Pre-Show: Curtis Axel & Macho Mandow vs. The Ascension.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Sheamus.

King Barrett vs. Neville.

Tag Titles, 2-Out-of-3 Falls: New Day (C) vs. Tyson Kidd & Cesaro.

US Title, "I Quit" Match: John Cena (C) vs. Rusev.

WWE World Heavyweight Title, Fatal Four Way: Seth Rollins (C) vs. Dean Ambrose vs. Roman Reigns vs. Randy Orton.

WWE NXT – May 13th 2015
Full Sail University: Winter Park, FL.
Ben Carass

Well Hideo Itami is out for a long time and will not be working Takeover, however this go-home show was taped last month, before Itami's injury, and unfortunately Itami worked the main event of this show, so unless they shoot an angle on the Takeover pre-show, or the live show itself then I guess they will just announce that Itami can't compete. Likewise, the status of Sami Zayn is unclear after his shoulder injury. He's been taken off the Philadelphia shows at the ECW Arena this week and he cut a cryptic promo on this show which didn't really answer if he would be cleared for Takeover.

Show opened with a recap of Sami Zayn vs. John Cena from last weeks' RAW which played up the dislocated shoulder big time and also made Sami look like the biggest star ever.



Solomon Crowe vs. Baron Corbin. – Corbin killed Crowe like a total geek and won with his goofy downward spiral in 2:14. Fans tuned on Corbin a little with chants of, “boring” and “Baron's gonna bore you.” Rhyno came out and got into a brawl with Corbin; some geeks ran down for a pull apart and Rhyno ended up goring a couple of them. Angle was OK, Crowe looked like a chump.

Byron Saxton interviewed Finn Balor and asked who he would like to face if he won the #1 contenders' match at Takeover. Balor said he would definitely win and it didn't matter who he faced and said the Demon wouldn't be far behind him.

Saxton was then with Tyler Breeze and asked him the same question. Breeze said the exact same thing as Balor and said it didn't matter who the champion would be.

Non-Title Match: Sasha Banks (NXT Women's Champion) vs. KC Cassidy. Sasha cut a promo

on Becky Lynch beforehand. The fans chanted “Let’s go black trunks” for the KC, but she wasn’t as over as Blue Pants. Sasha won a total squash with the Banks Statement in 2:30.

Charlotte and Bayley were with Devin in the back; they challenged Emma and Dana Brooke to a tag match at Takeover.

The Uhaa Nation vignette aired and they STILL haven’t given him a name.

Carmella vs. Alexa Bliss. – This was a disaster. Both girls looked awkward and when they weren’t blowing spots they were executing everything at quarter speed to ensure they got it right. Blake and Murphy showed up to watch. Bliss won with her goofy splash off the top at 3:50. Post-match Blake cut a promo and dissed Big Cass & Enzo. Carmella told them, in an hysterically fake manner that her “Boys” would beat them at Takeover and called them SAWF. – Carmella’s boys are nowhere near as awesome as Dalton Castle’s.

Crack Journalist, Bryon Saxton asked Hideo Itami the same hard hitting question: “Who would you rather face for the NXT title?” Itami hilariously said, “Good question” then actually gave a real answer and said he wanted to face Kevin Owens because he didn’t respect him.

Devin was with Dana Brooke and Emma. They accepted the tag match with Charlotte & Bayley; Brooke insisted she was not “Jelly” of Charlotte.



Fin Balor & Hideo Itami Tyler Breeze & Adam Rose. – Breeze & Itami over in 9:15. Ray, biggest babyface in the company, Leppan didn’t even come out with the Rosebuds. This poor guy. Balor & Itami teased some tension early but worked together and took out the heels. Balor sold for the heat; fans were into it for the most part. Rose used a spinebuster into a lion tamer which he hasn’t done for years. Itami made the comeback but Balor made a blind tag and took over. The two IDIOT babyfaces argued over the blind tag and Breeze rolled up Itami for the finish. Breeze laid out Itami & Balor with a pair of beauty shots then gave Rose a supermodel kick for good measure. –

What a ridiculous finish. Itami & Balor looked like complete boneheads here.

They showed an interview with Sami Zayn after the match with John Cena. Sami claimed his shoulder never actually popped out, but said he was in a lot of pain. He talked about it being surreal performing in his hometown and suffering such a freak injury. It didn't really answer any questions about his health regarding the Takeover show.

Main Event segment was the RAW special, Face-Off between Sami Zayn & Kevin Owens. They actually had Sami do post-production lines about him hurting his shoulder against Cena while they showed a shot of Owens. Sami then demanded to know the real story behind Owens stabbing him in the back to win the NXT title. Owens didn't say anything then Sami asked if it was about his son wearing a Sami Zayn shirt to school instead of a KO one. Owens walked out of the ring without saying a word. Sami flipped out and demanded an answer. Owens stood on the ramp with his back turned and calmly explained that it was him that injured Sami and put him out for a month then said he knew exactly what the injury was and told Sami he would injure him again at Takeover. – Both guys were great here, especially Owens, whose realistic delivery is sorely missed on RAW. It's a little strange they haven't made an announcement about the MAIN EVENT of Takeover and whether Sami will be able to go. I guess they'll just see if he is ready on the night and deal with the consequences if he isn't.

Mid-South Wrestling (TV #118)

December 10th 1981

Irish McNeil Boys Club: Shreveport, LA.

Ben Carass.

Roman Reigns vs. Kane on SmackDown? HA! I think not. We've got **Ted Dibiase vs. Paul Orndorff** from 1981 as our TV main event and Orndorff has claimed he knows a counter to Dibase's Figure Four and will expose the young babyface's finishing hold! What could be more exciting than that?!

We're back at the Irish McNeil Boys Club with **Boyd Pierce** and the guest colour commentator for the week, **ERNIE LADD!** Awesome. Pierce welcomed us to the Mid-South Wrestling Television Network and ran down the show then hyped the "Dream Match" fan voting gimmick; Mid-South 30+ years ahead of the WWE once again. The deal was that fans had to write in to the TV station and nominate guys they would like to see in a special dream match for the first show of 1982. Not that I am insinuating this was a work, but Boyd made sure to name drop, **Andre the Giant, Dusty Rhodes, JYD** and the team managed by Ernie Ladd, **Afa & Sika**, who would be back from a 6 week "suspension." Ladd also cut a promo on Andre and said he was the only true Giant in pro wrestling. I'm sure you see where this is going.

Brian Blair vs. The Monk. – Blair won a squash with a nice abdominal stretch into a pinning combination at 3:02. The Monk was Steve Miller, a journeyman who worked his way around the Southern territories in the early-mid 80's, but was pretty much a job guy during this stint in Mid-South. Our first look at Blair was relatively unimpressive; he was just a total mid-card white meat babyface.

King Cobra vs. Tom Renesto Jr. – King Cobra over in 4:46. Cobra was slaughtered by the Iron Sheik last week, so here he had the chance to look good and shine in an enhancement match. First spot they did was a Criss-Cross (!) Fantastic. Cobra worked over the arm and Ladd talked about Afa

& Sika returning from their suspension then referred to an armdrag by Cobra as “HIGH RISK OFFENCE!” – You here that AR Fox? In 1981 an armdrag was put over as “high risk.” Cobra used Bobo Brazil’s Coco-Butt for the finish.

Ed Wiskowski vs. Jim Garvin. – Wiskowski over in 5:18. Both these guys lost last week.

Wiskowski was downed by North American Heavyweight Champion, **Ted Dibiase** and Garvin was toppled by Louisiana Heavyweight Champ, **Bob Orton Jr.** The bigger Wiskowski took most of the match, but the younger Garvin showed a lot of fight and hung in there. Wiskowski tied Garvin up in the Tree of Woe and landed some stomps to start the heat. **Garvin** went for a Sleeper but Wiskowski dumped him to the outside. Finish saw Wiskowski use the Stun Gun and a Gutbuster. – This was fine. Garvin put up enough of a fight to look competitive and Wiskowski cheated just enough to make it clear he was threatened by Jimmy Jam.



Back with **Boyd** and **Ernie Ladd**. Pierce put over **JYD** and the Big Cat shook his head in disgust. They showed the amazingly wacky yellow mask angle from last week with **Terry Orndorff** and all the run-ins from **Bob Orton Jr** and **Paul Orndorff**. The deal with the mask was that Terry Orndorff challenged JYD to a match where the loser would have to wear a yellow mask, to indicate the cowardice of JYD, for 30 days. However JYD won and Orndorff was still wearing the yellow hood two months later. Ladd said JYD got what he deserved from the sneaky gang of heels.

Non-Title Match: Junk Yard Dog & Mike Gero (Mid-South Tag Team Champions) vs. Jerry Novak & Aaron Holt. – Complete squash for **JYD & George** in 1:00. The babyfaces showed their anger after last week’s angle by brawling straight away. George and Novak even did a **Frye/Takayama** spot. JYD pinned Holt with the Big Thump.

Iron Sheik w/Skandor Akbar vs. Buddy Ryan. – **Sheikie** killed Ryan in 3:13. **Sheik** beat the crap out of the poor jobber and hit a Vertical suplex then a Butterfly suplex but refused to go for the pin. Sheikie finally used a gorgeous overhead Belly-to-Belly and a German to put away Ryan. – This was so great. It was like an early **Lesnar/Cena** only without the main event feel, which isn’t a bad

thing at all.

Reeser Bowden excitedly announced it was time for the “LITTLE GIRLS AND THE BIG MEN!” – Something that sounds like it would get you into a lot of trouble in 2015.

Mixed Tag: Diamond Lil & Ric Ferrara vs. Barbie Doll & Tony Charles. – **Barbie Doll & Charles** via pinfall, at 5:10. Barbie and Charles were the faces. The gals started out and were not particularly great. Lil gave Barbie some catapults which drew giggles from the fans. Charles brought some quality to the match with his British style, however it wasn't long until the girls were back in stinking the joint out. Barbie Doll got the pin with a John Tenta splash.

Non-Title Match: Ted Dibiase (NWA North American Heavyweight Champion) vs. Paul Orndorff. – Match went to a TV Time Limit Draw at 7:30. Incidentally, this is the first match on the Legends of Mid-South DVD that WWE put out in 2013 and immediately the intensity level was upped from everything else on the show. Both guys were moving fast and each got an early near-fall with a rollup. Ernie Ladd talked about Orndorff's counter to the Figure Four. **Dibiase** shone and worked over the arm; **Orndorff** cut him off by sending his head into the turnbuckle for the heat. **Dibiase** made his comeback and hit a powerslam before applying the Figure Four. **Orndorff** turned the pressure over and Ernie Ladd absolutely lost it. “**I WOULDN'T HAVE BELIEVED IT IF I HADN'T SEEN IT WITH MY OWN TWO EYES BOYD PIERECE!**” He yelled in his inimitable, gravely Southern drawl. **Dibiase** sold the counter to his finishing hold for all it was worth and held on like **Steve Austin** for at least 90 seconds as the time ran down. Ladd put the spot



over bigger than any man has ever put anything over in history and bellowed, “**WHY WON'T HE GIVE UP?!! WHY DON'T THE MAN GIVE UP?!!**” The ref called for the bell as the TV time limit expired with Dibiase still refusing to quit. **Boyd Pierce** thanked us for tuning in then hyped **Paul Ellering** taking on the **Iron Sheik's** Persian clubs challenge next week. – I freaking loved this match. The finish was tremendous and made Dibiase look like the toughest guy on the planet. I can't tell you if this is the first ever documented reversal of the figure four, probably not as the hold had been around at least 20 years at this point, but still the story of a heel plotting to counter and

expose the babyface's finishing hold is so awesome and simple that it really should be something that is brought back more in modern wrestling.

This show comes highly recommended from me. There wasn't much on the rest of the show, besides Iron Sheik being booked like a total killer, but the main event was tremendous. If you can't find the show then check out the Legends of Mid-South DVD from the WWE to see what an amazing job everyone did in the **Dibiase/Orndorff** match. Next week we get a main event angle involving Paul Ellering and the Iron Sheik!

Next Week's Issue

In next week's issue we cover WWE's Payback pay-per-view, it's aftermath leading into Elimination Chamber, MORE MID-SOUTH, and more!

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