



Cubed Circle Newsletter 188 – Ben Carass Covers the 2015 Elimination Chamber & Best of Mid-South 1981 TV!

Due to exam-related commitments detailed in last week's newsletter, I haven't contributed any writing to this week's newsletter. Thankfully, however, Ben has saved the day once more covering not only RAW and NXT, but also the 2015 WWE Elimination Chamber featuring an abomination of a match in the Intercontinental Championship Elimination Chamber, what may be remembered as an historically important bout mid-way through the show, and the 1981 year-in-review edition of Mid-South TV!

– Ryan Clingman, Cubed Circle Newsletter Editor

WWE Elimination Chamber – May 31st 2015.

American Bank Centre: Corpus Christi, TX.

Ben Carass.

Elimination Chamber was a bad show with one excellent match which saved the entire event from being one of the worst shows of the year. **Kevin Owens**, in his main roster in-ring debut, pinned **John Cena** clean in the middle after a fantastic match then cut a promo about how he was that man who started and finished a fight with **Cena**. It was the finish we all knew they should have done, but this being the WWE, and **John Cena**, it was never certain which way they were going to go. Unquestionably they made the right move, as **Owens** was made an instant star in one night. It was the finish they should have done with **Brock Lesnar** in 2012 or with **Rusev** at WrestleMania, but they saved it for **Owens**, who clearly has some very big fans in high places to be bestowed the honour of a clean win over the biggest star of the 21st century. **Owens** has officially signed a main roster contract, so it remains to be seen what they do with the NXT title, although there is plenty of time to sort that out with NXT taping weeks ahead. The bigger story is that WWE announced a rematch at the Money in the Bank show in two weeks. It's not like losing to **Cena** will kill **Owens** dead, but it certainly isn't an ideal scenario and perhaps they will do some kind of disputed finish to keep the program going. It's a shame they couldn't hold off until SummerSlam and let **Owens** gloat about his huge win on TV for a couple of months, but maybe laying **Cena** out twice on TV then pinning him clean is as far as **Vince McMahon** was willing to go and he quickly booked a rematch for **Cena** to get his win back. I hope it doesn't come to that, but for one night at least the WWE showed they were still capable of making the correct decision for business and executing with near-perfect booking.

The rest of the show was a hodgepodge of boring/downright horrible matches, none more so than the two Chamber matches which were both complete messes. **Seth Rollins** and **Dean Ambrose** had

a solid main event, however someone had the genius idea of booking a Dusty finish which took all the air out of the building and closed the show on a flat note.

The pre-show was the usual assortment of inane blather from the geeks on the panel, useless segments – like a Q&A with **Lana** in which she claimed to be “more tolerant of other cultures” now she has left **Rusev**, and an unannounced nothing match. They announced that **Rusev** was out of the IC title Chamber match due to the injury he suffered on SmackDown and said his replacement would be a “surprise”. And what a surprise it was. **Stardust** beat **Zack Ryder** in 6:12 with the Cross Rhodes. (**) It was a basic Superstars match, which I guess is the start of **Stardust’s** push for whatever they are going to do at SummerSlam with the guy from Arrow, **Stephen Amell**. **Daniel Bryan** was the guest on Miz TV. He essentially spent most of his time plugging his book and told **Miz** he would be returning to the ring. **Bryan** also said he would present the winner of the IC title Chamber match with the belt. For some inexplicable reason, **Bryan** brought out **Macho Mandow & AxelMania** and the two comedy geeks laid out the **Miz** then they all did the **Hogan** pose down deal.

Tag Team Championship, Elimination Chamber Match: New Day (C) vs. Tyson Kidd & Cesaro w/Natalya vs. The Lucha Dragons vs. Los Matadores w/El Torito vs. The Prime Time Players vs. The Ascension. – **New Day** retained in 23:40. All 3 New Day guys were in the match at the behest of Kane and they all were locked inside one pod. Torito stood on top of the Matadores’ pod until it opened, sadly Nattie didn’t do the same. Match was a complete train wreck, although not to the extent that it became ironically entertaining. Lucha Dragons & the Ascension started out.



Kalisto spent most of his time standing on New Day’s pod and Sin Cara did a senton off another. Kidd & Cesaro entered at 4:15 and Cesaro suplexed Kalisto off the pod he had been standing on for 90% of the match. Kalisto then went all Homicide in the Steel Asylum and awkwardly climbed his way to the very top of the Chamber. Los Matadores were in at 8:15 and after some cumbersome swinging, Kalisto just dropped onto everyone inside the ring. It was very unspectacular. JBL noted, “This is absolutely horrible.” He wasn’t wrong. Torito tried a dive off a pod but the Ascension caught him slammed him into the corner. At 10:22 **Ascension** eliminated **Los Matadores** with the Fall of Man then did the same to the **Lucha Dragons** at 11:21. **PTPs** were in at 12:40 and quickly eliminated the **Ascension** at 13:32. **New Day** entered at 16:40 and the babyfaces had the 4-on-3 advantage; there was a Dragon Gate

multi-man suplex spot. **Kidd & Cesaro** gave **Kofi** their finish, but **Darren Young** rolled up **Cesaro** for the pin at 18:30. Nobody in the crowd cared about the PTP/New Day final; Big E gave Young a nasty suplex on the steel. Finish saw **Kofi** hit **Titus** with Trouble in Paradise and all 3 **New Day** members covered him for the pin. – Clunky, sloppy and poorly conceived. I think it’s safe to say the tag team Chamber experiment failed. (* ¾)

Divas Championship: Nikki Bella (C) vs. Paige vs. Naomi. – **Nikki** retained in 6:05. Another mess of a match. Nikki missed a disaster kick about 2 minutes in by a country mile and Paige sold it anyway. There was a dangerous looking tower of doom, which needs to be nixed from these women’s matches quickly. For the finish, **Naomi** damn near killed **Paige** with a sloppy reverse rana then **Nikki** came in and pinned **Naomi** with the rack attack. – They girls tried hard, maybe too hard. It can’t be easy for the main roster women to hear about how the girls in NXT are stealing the show on every big live special while they are still treated like an afterthought. Still, if women in WWE are to be taken seriously they need to bring up a fresh crop of girls who have not been tarnished with the bikini-contest, Total Divas, 2 minute matches brush. (*)

Non-Title, Champion vs. Champion: Kevin Owens (NXT Champion) vs. John Cena (US Champion). – **Owens** won CLEAN at 19:55 of an outstanding match. There was a big fight feel, not to the extent of a Lesnar match, but still you could tell that even the people in Corpus Christi knew this was a big deal. Cena gave Owens a ton and sold forever, almost to the point that it seemed like they were going to do the typical Cena match where he sells and sells then hits the AA for the win. But they didn’t. **Owens** dominated and hit the cannonball at 7:50. Cena made a short comeback but Owens cut him off with the pop-up powerbomb for a near-fall. (I wouldn’t have had Cena kick out of Owen’s finish, but that’s just me.) **Owens** went for his old springboard moonsault but **Cena** moved and hit the AA for another near-fall. Owens gave a shout-out to his former Mount Rushmore buddies, the Young Bucks, with a superkick then mocked Cena by doing the 5 knuckle shuffle, but Cena caught him in the STF. Owens did the “You can’t see me” deal and hit the AA for a great near-fall at 13:20 then Cena used his out-of-control guillotine legdrop for another. Owens



teased the Package Piledriver, but turned it into a wacky slam instead. **Cole** said they were “kicking out of everything!” Indeed they were. Owens kicked out of the springboard stunner at 17:10 then delivered a version of the Steen Breaker off the top and got another near-fall with a senton. **Cena** had one last flurry at 19:15 with some clotheslines, but **Owens** drilled him with the pop-up powerbomb for the pin as clean as a sheet. Owens cut a promo afterwards about how Cena’s time was up and his time was now. – A near-perfect debut match for Owens and even the announcers did their bit in getting him over as a real top tier performer. They sure did kick out of a lot of moves, but hey it worked and at least they built to bigger and bigger near-falls. Everyone needs to see this match, because it will ALMOST restore your faith in the WWE. Certainly a MOTY contender. (**** ½)

Neville vs. Bo Dallas. – **Neville** over in 8:50. These poor lads didn't stand a chance following Cena/Owens and they performed to near silence. The announcers spent half the time putting over Owens, so even they couldn't muster any interest in this. Bo worked on Neville's knee, playing off the TV angle. **Neville** won with the Red Arrow. (**)

Triple H met with **Dean Ambrose & Roman Reigns** in the back. **Trips** put over **Kevin Owens** then told **Reigns** that if he interfered in the main event **Ambrose** would be disqualified, which is absurd. When is outside interference ever not a DQ?!

Elimination Chamber for the Vacant IC Championship: Sheamus vs. King Barrett vs. Mark Henry vs. Ryback vs. Dolph Ziggler vs. R-Truth. **Ryback** became the IC Champion at 25:10 of an absolute atrocity. I mean, this really sucked. Ziggler & Barrett started out and wrestled for 5 minutes until Truth came in; Barrett beat him up immediately like a geek. **Barrett** threw **Ziggler** into **Henry's** pod, which unexpectedly broke and everyone got lost. Eventually, Henry just came out and joined in the match even though it wasn't his turn then Ryback entered about 30 seconds



“What is this?”

later. Men were breaking up pinfalls, why? I have no idea. **Truth** eliminated poor **Barrett** with his move at 11:05. Get this spot: **Sheamus'** pod didn't open and everyone stood around like buffoons, not comprehending what was going on. They appeared to do some bad indie level “stalling” while referees scrambled to try and open Sheamo's pod. **Ryback** pinned **Truth** with Shellshock at 14:01. After more horrendous action, **Sheamus** finally revealed that he had in fact prevented his pod from opening by jamming his cross necklace in the door and he entered the match and eliminated **Henry** with the Brogue kick at 17:20. Yet more horrendousness occurred then **Ziggler** ate a Brogue kick and was sent packing at 20:25.

Crowd was DEAD for the **Sheamus/Ryback** finale. After some painfully tedious plodding from the pair of them, **Ryback** won with the Shellshock. **Daniel Bryan** congratulated “The Ryback” and gave him the IC belt then led the fans in half-hearted “Yes” chants. – Whoever laid out this match needs to be fired immediately because virtually everyone in it looked like an utter imbecile. Truly the worst match I've seen all year. (– ***)

Dolph Ziggler, Neville, Roman Reigns, Randy Orton, Kofi Kingston & Sheamus were all announced for the Money in the Bank match in TWO WEEKS!

WWE World Heavyweight Championship: Dean Ambrose vs. Seth Rollins (C) w/J&J Security & Kane. – **Ambrose** via DQ at 21:40. Match was good. Rollins got the heat around the 7 minute mark. Ambrose came back and landed a tope which sent into the announce table and the crowd decided to chant “this is awesome”. **Rollins** powerbombed **Ambrose** into the barricade at 14:05 then landed his flying knee off the top for a near-fall. Ambrose hit the jawbreaker lariat for a near-fall at 18:20 and got another with his diving elbow off the top. A nice sequence saw Rollins hit a tope then a buckle-bomb, but Ambrose came right back with a big lariat. **Ambrose** fought off **Kane** and **J&J** then dove off the post onto all of them on the floor. Finish saw **Ambrose** go for another diving elbow, but **Rollins** pulled the referee in the way and **Ambrose** hit his DDT to get a visual pinfall while the ref was down. A second referee hit the ring and made the count and surprisingly counted to three! **Dean Ambrose** was announced as the New WWE Champion and he celebrated with the belt. It was obvious to anyone with a clue where this was going and after the two referees consulted with each other, **Lilian Garcia** announced that **Ambrose** had only won via DQ and **Seth Rollins**



was still the WWE Champion. **Ambrose** refused to give up the belt, so **Rollins** and his cronies attacked him. **Roman Reigns** made the save and he cleaned house with **Ambrose**. **Dean** grabbed the belt and the mic and declared he was keeping the belt. The show closed with **Reigns** and **Ambrose** celebrating in the crowd with **Dean** holding the WWE title. – Decent main event, but the finish was weak sauce. They couldn’t even wait until RAW to do the switch-a-roo like they did with Daniel Bryan in 2013 and give the potential new subscribers a happy ending. Dusty finishes have become somewhat of a joke, especially in this day and age, but I suppose they want to keep the feud going until Lesnar comes back to face Rollins and it’s not like we see this finish on a regular basis. (***)

RAW Ramblings – June 1st 2015.
AT&T Centre: San Antonio, TX.
Ben Carass.

I don’t know how many times I have said this over the past few weeks, but WWE are running way too many Network specials/PPVs in a short space of time. There was Extreme Rules on April 26th, King of the Ring two nights later on the 28th, Payback on May 17th, Elimination Chamber on May 31st and now Money in the Bank on June 14th. That’s 5 “big” Network specials in 50 days; one every 10 days! It’s insanity. Maybe the idea is to give the freeloaders, of which I am one, a lot of content

so they feel like forking out the \$9.99 in August (or whenever they decide to actually start charging people). None of those 5 Network specials/PPVs have been blow-away shows, and with the exception of **Cena/Owens** from Elimination Chamber virtually all of the cards had very little going for them in terms of interest or excitement. So we're basically getting a bunch of mediocre shows for free, which I can't complain about however I don't see these rapid fire nothing Live specials and the drab TV product turning many freeloaders into paying customers. With that in mind, WWE had exactly TWO RAWs to build up what is usually one of the more anticipated "B" PPVs of the year, Money in the Bank. Although this year, we've got a completely random MITB ladder match with guys like **Kofi Kingston** thrown in for no reason whatsoever other than to do some SPOTZ, a rematch of **Cena/Owens** at least a month too soon and another **Rollins/Ambrose** main event, this time a ladder match, because they are just treading water until **Brock Lesnar** comes back. Other matches for the show appear to be **Ryback vs. Big Show** for the IC title and **New Day vs. the Prime Time Players**; something tells me that Money in the Banks isn't going to be a blow-away show either.



RAW wasn't very good at all. The best thing on the show, shockingly, was a promo from **Kevin Owens**. He cut a promo about his son idolizing **John Cena** and said the WWE marketing machine had brainwashed him into thinking **Cena** was a real life super hero. **Cena** came out and said **Owens** wasn't a real man because he couldn't put his jealousy aside, a dumb line since **Cena** lost clean to the guy he claimed wasn't a real man. **Cena** said he was going to hand over the US title to **Owens**, but changed his mind because he didn't deserve it then did some more sucking up to the fans. **Cena** put over **Owens** as a "great wrestler" but told him at Money in the Bank he would get beat by a real man! Maybe **Cena** has been watching old Mid-South TV as well! **Cena** squared up to **Owens**, but the NXT champ walked away like a good heel should.

Opening segment was the usual **Authority** promo. It only went about 13 minutes this week, which is something at least. They were all mad about **Ambrose** stealing the WWE title, so **Roman Reigns** came out to speak on **Ambrose's** behalf and fight his battles for him. **Reigns** said **Ambrose** wasn't in San Antonio and he wanted a ladder rematch at Money in the Bank. **Reigns** called **Rollins**, "the worst WWE Champion of all time" and **Seth** flipped out. Hell, I would too if I was accused of

being worse than the **Miz**. **Rollins** agreed to the match and yelled at everyone in the **Authority** then stormed out of the ring. The story of the night from there was **Triple H & Stephanie** booking **Reigns** in matches wherein if he lost, he would be out of the MITB match. First up was **King Barrett** of all people. **Reigns**, the big badass, had a competitive 14 minute match with the guy eliminated first in the Chamber by **R-Truth**. **Reigns** eventually won with the spear. The match was actually pretty good, but it hardly did **Reigns** any favours to go 50/50 with **Barrett** for so long. I have no idea what the deal is with **Barrett**. Maybe **Vince** or **Kevin Dunn** took offence to something a native did on the UK tour and **Barrett** is paying for it now. Perhaps this is revenge for that SmackDown crowd in London that **Vince** had to come out and yell at to have a good time. **Reigns** then beat **Mark Henry** via COUNT-OUT in 3:45, because for whatever reason big bad **Reigns** can't pin **Henry**. **Henry** laid out **Reigns** afterwards with the World's fattest slam then later on **HHH & Steph** booked **Reigns** against **Bray Wyatt** in the main event. Match was fine, nothing wrong with it but by this point in the show I had completely lost interest. **Rollins** and his geeks came out to watch from the stage. **Mercury** tried to get involved but **Reigns** gave him a superman punch then sent **Wyatt** into **Kane** before getting the win with the spear at 12:40. Post-match, the **Authority** went after **Reigns** and **Ambrose** showed up to save his buddy. They fought off all the goofs then **Ambrose** posed with the WWE title before taking off with **Reigns** through the crowd again. **HHH & Steph** came out and were not happy and that's how the show closed. It was a dull, predictable storyline for the night and made for an insufferably tedious show.



Bunch O' Junk: **Ryback** cut a celebratory promo about becoming the IC Champion. He spoke for 2 minutes and literally said nothing of note. He was supposed to defend the belt against **Miz**, but **Big Show** came out and KO'd **Miz** and said he was coming after **Ryback**. What a feud that will be! **Dolph Ziggler w/Lana** beat **Kofi Kingston** in 3:14 then **Big E & Xavier Woods** jumped **Ziggler**. **The Prime Time Players** made the save and we got an "impromptu" 6-man, which the faces won in 5:32 when **Titus** pinned **Xavier** with a pump-handle slam. I guess the program is **New Day vs. PTPs**. **Lana** did nothing of note, besides, you know, being **Lana**. **Macho Mandow, AxelMania, New Day & Big Show** shilled some Sonic shakes which took up way too much airtime. **Nikki Bella** retained the Divas title over **Paige** when **Brie** came out from under the ring for Twin Magic at

5:32, despite **Brie** wearing a different outfit, having darker hair and a completely different body So I guess the **Bellas** are heels again? They are quickly turning into the female equivalent of the **Big Show**. **Randy Orton** returned and faced **Sheamus**. **Orton** won a boring match via DQ at 12:58 when **Sheamus** hit him with a chair. **Sheamo** gave him a couple of Brogue kicks afterwards, so it looks like that's a new program. And I use the term, "new" loosely. **Rusev** did a backstage interview, on crutches and dressed all in black. He was completely morose about losing his championship, career and woman! It made me feel so bad for the guy and made him come off totally sympathetically. **Neville** downed **Bo Dallas** in 3:06 with the Red Arrow. **Bo** was his new serious self, but it didn't do him any good as he was still beaten like a chump.

WWE NXT – June 3rd 2015

Full Sail University: Winter Park, FL.

Ben Carass.

Let's just get into the big news, because there wasn't really much else to talk about on the show. **William Regal** announced on July 4th there would be a live special on the Network from Sumo Hall in Tokyo, with **John Cena**, **Brock Lesnar** and **Chris Jericho** all on the card. **Regal** also announced **Finn Balor vs. Kevin Owens** for the NXT title on the show, which seems like a perfect time for **Owens** to drop the title. Interestingly the show will take place one day before New Japan's Dominion show from Osaka-Jo Hall with **AJ Styles vs. Okada** for the IWGP Heavyweight title headlining.



A recap of **Kevin Owens** pinning **John Cena** clean in the middle opened the show. Imagine OVW Champion **Rob Conway** or **Rico Constantino** pinning **Steve Austin** on a WWF PPV in 2000; how developmental has changed. The announcers then hyped a "huge" announcement from William Regal regarding the status of Kevin Owens and the NXT Championship.

Tyler Breeze vs. Adam Rose. – **Breeze** over in 8:49. The fans chanted, "We want Kruger". I'm in the minority on this one but I actually enjoyed the Leo Kruger character. I thought his entrance was great; his promos weren't

particularly special but he had a good presence and his work was solid enough. It's funny, the Ray Leppan we saw in the E60 documentary was more relatable and genuine than either of his WWE personas. Breeze won a back and forth match with the beauty shot. It was probably Rose's best showing in years and he even did a Cactus Jack elbow off the apron.

Devin was with **Solomon Crowe** in the back. He said the beating he took from Kevin Owens was worth it and told her he would be back in the ring with the NXT Champion again. We got clips of Dana Brooke's muscles from the Arnold Classic in Brazil.

Greg Hamilton introduced **Eva Marie** to the fans, who promptly chanted "You can't wrestle" at her. Eva said she was at Takeover Unstoppable to watch the women of NXT and stated she wanted to

join the division that is “revolutionising” the business. – Eva is going to have a rough time converting the NXT crowd, she simply has to come in as a heel.

William Regal was at a phony press conference deal and there were apparently no reporters there as it was dead silent. He said on the 4th of July there would be a live special on the Network from Tokyo, Japan featuring John Cena, Brock Lesnar, Chris Jericho and Finn Balor vs. Kevin Owens for the NXT title.

Alexa Bliss w/Blake & Murphy vs. Carmela w/Enzo & Big Cass. – Bliss over in 3:30. Carmella was aggressive early but Bliss quickly cut her off and seemed fairly comfortable working as a heel. Carmella did a wacky 80’s babyface dance, which I appreciated greatly, then made a brief comeback but Bliss rolled her up and held the rope to get the pin.

Rhyno was with Devin. He said he came to NXT to be at the top of the “hottest thing in the industry” and beating Finn Balor was the way to get there and become the NXT Champion. A video package on **Sami Zayn’s** recovery from shoulder surgery aired. He explained what happened during the match with Cena and they showed footage of the actual surgery with an interview with the actual surgeon who performed the operation.



The Vaudevillains vs. Jason Jordan & Marcus Louis. – Vaudevillains at 5:22. The ‘Villains are babyfaces again. Marcus Louis STILL had a bald head EIGHT months after the hair shaving angle. Jordan threw some suplexes, however his first choice for the “perfect” tag team partner was hilarious. English sold, Gotch ran wild. English pinned Louis with a running neckbreaker. It was a complete nothing affair and went way too long for what it needed to be. Jordan looked disgusted in his choice of partner and he yelled at Louis afterwards.

A video package on Sasha Banks aired. It made her look like a million dollars and made me wonder why the hell I still have to sit through Nikki Bella matches on RAW.

Finn Balor cut a pre-tape promo about returning to Japan, the place where he made his name and said he wasn’t taking Kevin Owens lightly but Owens was about to meet the Demon. He was so

much more believable than 99% of the main roster promos we see every week.

Finn Balor vs. Rhyno. – **Balor** over in 8:42. Solid stuff. They had a “quick guy” vs. “strong guy” match. Rhyno pounded on Balor early but Balor came back with a big tope con hilo over the top. Rhyno cut him off with the Oklahoma Stampede and got the heat. Balor made his comeback and went for the reverse Bloody Sunday but Rhyno landed a spinebuster for a near-fall. Balor hit the Pele and the Slingblade then scored with the shotgun dropkick before going for the double stomp. Rhyno moved but Balor avoided the Gore and got the pin with a school boy. Post-match, Rhyno gave Balor a brutal Gore on the stage and left him lying. Rich Brennan closed the show by speculating whether Balor would be able to compete on July 4th.

Another decent, but far from enthralling episode of NXT. The Sumo Hall announcement was the biggest thing on the show by far and I’m looking forward to that show more than anything else this side of the G1 Climax. **Sami Zayn’s** health update was cool and **Balor’s** promo about his match with **Owens** in Tokyo was excellent, but there’s nothing really to go out of your way to see.

Mid-South Wrestling (TV #121)

December 30th 1981

Irish McNeil Boys Club: Shreveport, LA.

Ben Carass.



With 1982 on the horizon, **Bill Watts** was our host for a “very special look”, as the Cowboy put it, at the best of the Mid-South action from 1981. **Watts** explained that **Boyd Pierce** was “on vacation” in Hawaii and hyped the Dream Match for next week’s show. As I noted last week, it appears as MS#122 has been lost to history, however never fear because MS#123 features the “second place” Dream Match which is a lot more star-studded than the **Dibiase/Orndorff** match that the fans “voted” into first place. **Watts** talked about **Ernie Ladd** getting suspended from active competition, so **Ladd** went to the trouble of getting a manger’s licence and coached the Samoans to the Mid-South Tag Team Titles. Awesome.

Our first clip was **JYD & Mike George vs. The Samoans w/Ernie Ladd** from October 15th at the Mississippi Fairgrounds for the Mid-South Tag Titles. **Watts** provided the commentary, as he would throughout the show for the non-televized matches, and talked about **Ernie Ladd** being a Chess Champion which helped him become a master of “Human Chess” and “the King of Sports, Professional Wrestling.” They aired about 3 and a half minutes of highlights. Finish saw **Ladd** get knocked off the apron by **JYD**, who then planted **Afa** with the Big Thump. **Ladd** came back and tried to hit **JYD** with a chair but the **Dog** moved and **Ladd** nailed **Afa** in the head; **JYD** made the cover to win the Mid-South Tag Team Championship.

Back with **Watts** in the studio and he noted that the **Samoans** had been suspended after an incident during the rematch in Lake Charles, LA which saw them strike a referee. **Watts** then blatantly read from a script as he recapped the saga of **Terry Orndorff** and the yellow mask. The deal was the **Orndorffs** challenged **JYD & George** to a match where the loser of the fall would have to wear a yellow to signify their cowardice and shame! We saw the closing moments of **Paul & Terry Orndorff vs. JYD & Mike George** in a rematch two weeks later, with **Terry** wearing the yellow mask as per the stip. **Ernie Ladd & Bob Orton Jr** came down and **Orton** went under the ring and emerged in the yellow mask! **Ladd** tripped **George** from the outside and **Orton** pinned him with a piledriver, before rolling back outside and giving the yellow hood back to **Terry Orndorff**.



In the studio, **Watts** accused the heels of, “CAMOUFLAGE and SUBERTEFUGE “ then explained that the following week on TV a rematch was set however **Terry** never showed up and **Bob Roop** took his place. They showed the finish of **Paul Orndorff & Roop vs. JYD & Mike George**. This time, **Bob Orton Jr** ran in with the yellow mask on and attacked **JYD** for the DQ. The masked **Orton** tried to piledrive **JYD** on the floor, but **Dog** reversed with a backdrop then unmasked the devious **Orton** to the delight of the fans. **Orndorff, Orton & Roop** outnumbered the babyface Tag Champs and put a beating on them. **Orndorff** put the yellow mask on **JYD** then **Ted Dibiase** stormed the ring to run off the three heels. **JYD**, still in the hood, sold and staggered (not Lee) to his feet, throwing punches at whoever may have been in front of him. **Dog** finally removed the mask to see **George & Dibiase** and he eventually calmed down. – This was a really great little angle. It was a simple, wacky, old-school deal but the psychology was great. **Orndorff & Orton** had already used the yellow mask once to get a win over **JYD & George**, however this time the babyfaces were

ready for it and outsmarted the heels, until the 3-on-2 advantage caught up to the good guys.

At the desk, **Watts** stumbled over his words something fierce then talked about the history of the **Dusty Rhodes** feud with **Gary Hart** which dated back to 1974 in Florida where **Dusty** famously turned on **Pak Song** to become the American Dream. **Watts** threw to a promo from **Gary Hart** with his “Asian Assassin, the man from CHINA(!)” the **Great Kabuki**. **Hart** cut a typically great menacing promo about **Kabuki** being his hired mercenary and told **Dusty** “the Boogeyman gonna get cha!” **Watts** explained that **Kabuki**’s “religious background” meant he painted his face to display what kind of mood he was in and said **Dusty Rhodes** sent in a video from Florida with his own war paint on.

OK, this is where things got awesomely bizarre. **Dusty Rhodes** appeared with his face painted entirely **BLACK**, with a white outline around his jawline. **Dusty** was 100% serious and refrained from his usual promo staples of cute phrases, stories about growing up a poor son of a plumber and “If you weels.” He spoke softly but his tone was that of a man who meant business and told **Kabuki** the American Dream was ready to go to war.



Back with **Watts** again and he said Mid-South Wrestling was unable to sanction a Bunkhouse match between **Rhodes & Kabuki**, however he noted the match would take place down the road. We got another promo from **Dusty** a few weeks after the “black face” deal. **Dusty** noted that the TV station had received calls and complaints about him painting his face (I wonder why) then explained that “black was the dominant factor in Louisiana” and that “black” was the colour of “war”, which probably didn’t make the people who complained feel any better.

Up next were highlights of **Paul Orndorff** defending the North American Heavyweight title against **Ted Dibiase** at the Mississippi Fair Grounds from October 15th. After a couple of minutes worth of solid action, **Bob Roop** attacked **Dibiase** for the DQ and **JYD & Mike George** ran in to make the save. **Watts** noted that **Dibiase** beat **Orndorff** for the title on November 1st in Lake Charles then said that **Paul Orndorff** had sent his brother **Terry** back to Florida, “in disgrace” for not getting the job done and that **Bob Roop** had come in to help **Paul Orndorff** find a way to counter **Dibiase**’s Figure Four.

We saw **Ted Dibiase vs. Ed Wiskowski** from episode #117, the very first that we looked at, and

Roop was on commentary talking about having a counter to the Figure Four. Next, were clips of **Bob Roop vs. Jim Garvin** from the following week (#118) then back at the desk with **Watts** and he talked about the **Iron Sheik** but said there was no time for highlights of him in action! **BOOOOOO!!!!** **Watts** put over Paul **Ellering** for standing up to **Sheikie** then went back to discussing the **Orndorff/Dibiase** Figure Four storyline. Our final highlights were the **Dibiase/Orndorff** match from MS#118 with **Ernie Ladd** being an amazing man on commentary, putting over **Orndorff** countering the Figure Four like he had just witnessed cold fusion or something. The show ended with **Watts** talking about **Roop** being the mastermind behind the Figure Four counter and he speculated whether **Roop & Orndorff** could continue to work together. **Watts** signed off and told viewers that **Boyd Pierce** would be back from “vacation” next week and hyped the Dream Match, which, again, we unfortunately are unable to see but from my understanding it involved **Ted Dibiase** beating both **Paul Orndorff** and **Bob Roop** in separate matches.

This was probably the weakest of the Mid-South TV shows we’ve looked at so far, but with a clip show that is to be expected. There were still some cool deals here, like footage from the Mississippi Fair Grounds and the **Gary Hart** promo, plus all the **Orndorff/Dibiase** stuff was great as I have mentioned many times. Then there was that **Dusty Rhodes** black face promo, which I genuinely couldn’t believe the first time I saw it. I know it was 1981, but come on. Surely even at that time, in LOUISIANA & MISSISSIPPI of all places, a white man painting his face black and saying “black is the colour of war” is a terribly ill-conceived idea.

Bits & Pieces

Ryan's WWE Elimination Chamber 2015 ratings:

Seth Rollins vs. Dean Ambrose: *** ¼

Tag Team Title Elimination Chamber: ** ¾

Kevin Owens vs. John Cena: ***** ¼

Intercontinental Championship Elimination Chamber: - ** ½

Next Week's Issue

In next week's issue we (we = Ben, mostly) will be looking at the Money in the Bank RAW go-home show, NXT following the Sumo Hall show from this week, two weeks worth of RAW ratings, and the first available episode of Mid-South TV from 1982.

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