



## **Cubed Circle Newsletter #226 – We're Late!**

We are back this week with Ben captaining the ship! In this issue we look at all of the news from the week in the Pro-Wres Digest for March 6<sup>th</sup> to March 12<sup>th</sup> with the unfortunate passing of Lord James Blears, his legendary World War II survival story, TNA seemingly in jeopardy again, Kota Ibushi news, Dragon Kid's Hayabusa speech and much more! Plus, Mid-South from '82, and the Roadblock go-home show!

– Ryan Clingman, *Cubed Circle Newsletter Editor*

### **The Pro-Wres Digest for March 6<sup>th</sup> – March 12<sup>th</sup>**

*Ben Carass.*

On March 5<sup>th</sup> Lord James “Tally Ho” Blears sadly passed away at the grand old age of 92, which is an impressive age to reach for the average human being but for a pro wrestler is pretty damn miraculous. Blears was born in Manchester, England in 1925 and became a big star in the 1950's in California where he assumed the gimmick of a snobby English Lord and went full-out with the full cape, monocle and cane look. While in California, Blears would hold several incarnations of the NWA and WWA Tag Team championships, first with Anthol Layton in 1953, and later in 1955 with Gene Kiniski; Blears & Kininski beat Mike & Ben Sharpe for the NWA Tag Team titles on May 7<sup>th</sup> 1955 in San Francisco. He was also a fixture of the popular outpost territory in Australia and in 1957 he had a series of matches against Lou Thesz for the NWA World Heavyweight title: 31/8/57 in Melbourne, 5/9/57 in Sydney, 9/11/57 in Brisbane and 14/11/57 in Melbourne again. In all these matches, Thesz retained the title via disqualification, which shows you how important Blears was to the business in Australia when even Lou Thesz himself could not beat him clean. In the late 50's, Blears would go on to hold more Tag Team gold with Joe Blanchard for Ed Francis' 50<sup>th</sup> State Wrestling in Hawaii and he became a true headliner when he defeated Curtis Iaukea for the NWA Hawaii Heavyweight title on October 25<sup>th</sup> 1961 in Honolulu. He later became a booker for Ed Francis and helped guys develop their personalities and promo skills. In more recent years Blears was the “chairman” of the Pacific Wrestling Federation, the Baba-created governing body of All Japan, and he would read out the championship proclamation before big title matches.

Blears was lucky to be alive at all, as during World War II he was deployed as the Second Wireless Operator on the *SS Tijssalak*, a Dutch freighter travelling from Melbourne to Colombo with a cargo of mail and food supplies, which was sunk by a Japanese I-8 submarine. Blears and the other survivors were pulled out the water and onto the I-8's deck and the captors began murdering them one by one. Blears recounted the story to the Honolulu Star Advertiser in 2001.

"They were laughing. [...] They'd just go up and hit a guy on the back and take him up front,

and then one of the guys with a sword would cut off his head. Zhunk! One guy, they cut his head halfway and let him flop around on the deck. The others I saw, they just lopped 'em off with one shot and threw 'em overboard. They were having fun, and there was a cameraman taking movies of the whole thing!"



Blears, like the other prisoners, had his wrists tied together and was then tied to another man.

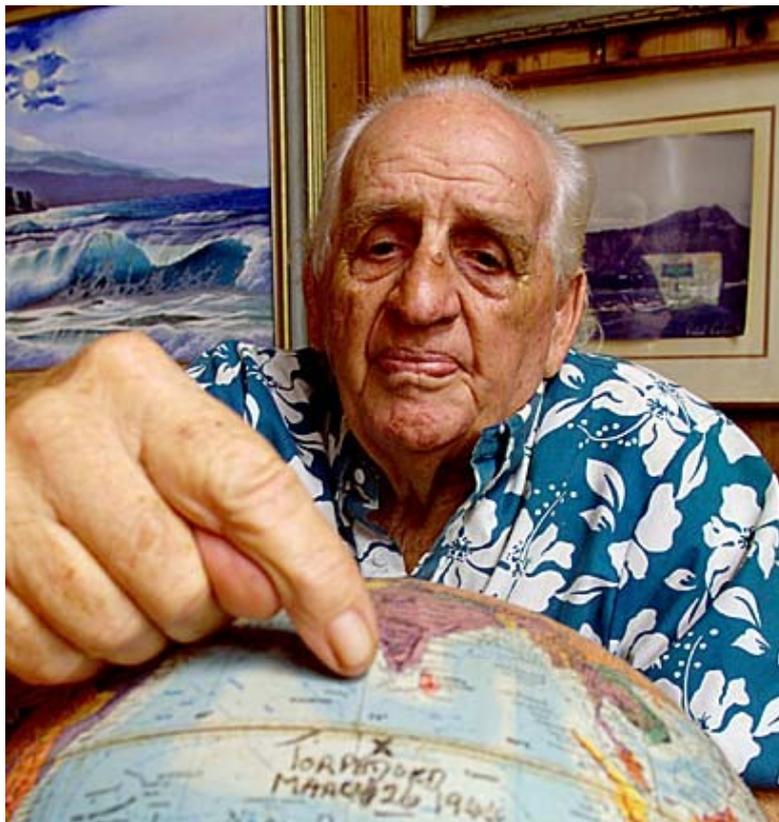
"I tried to keep my wrists as wide apart as I could when they tied me, and when they were finished I knew I could get one hand free. Two Japanese officers were waiting for us, one with a sword and the other with a sledgehammer. When these guys came at us, I kicked with my foot and pulled my hand out (of the rope) right away and stopped the guy and dived off the submarine and dragged Peter (Bronger) with me."

When he bailed off the deck of the I-8, Blears dove as deep as he could to avoid the bullets from the Japanese guns.

"I stayed under as long as I could, and then I came up with my head just out of the water and -- *tat-tat-tat-tat* -- machine gun bullets were going all around. When I came up for my next breath, the submarine was quite a way away. There were two officers in old-fashioned deck chairs firing with rifles. I kept diving until I saw that they weren't firing at us anymore."

The man Blears pulled overboard off the I-8, Peter Bronger, had died during all of this and Blears set about saving himself the only way he knew how, by swimming. Blears was an exceptionally talented swimmer and would have represented Great Britain at the 1940 Olympics, however the Games were cancelled due to the war in Europe. He had joined the merchant marines at 17 years-old, which was too young to actually enlist in the Royal Navy, but he found his way into the merchant marines because of his knowledge of Morse code and became a radio officer. He actually began wrestling as a way to get in shape and to supplement his income as a merchant marine, which

he would use to pay for his swimming training. He swam the Indian Ocean for hours until he spotted a lifeboat and came across four other survivors from the I-8. Three were Dutch officers, who had a similar experience to Blears in escaping and the other was an Indian seaman, who along with about twenty other men was tied to the conning tower of the I-8 submarine as it submerged into the water. The Indian seaman was the last man at the end of the rope and managed to free himself before drowning. Blears and the other four survivors waited in the lifeboat for three days until they were spotted by an American Destroyer, however they came under fire briefly as the US ship mistook the lifeboat's sail for a submarine conning tower. When they finally were rescued and brought aboard the US Destroyer, the American sailors gave Blears a can of peaches. Every year on the anniversary of his rescue, March 29<sup>th</sup>, Blears would start his day with a can of peaches for his breakfast as a humble reminder of his unimaginable ordeal and the fragility of life. Our condolences go out to Blears' family.



*Blears indicating the geographical location of the incident on a globe during an interview.*

Last week it appeared that TNA's life support machine was about to be switched off, as news of Panda Energy no longer financing the much maligned promotion and Bob Carter being opened to “the right offer” of selling the company emerged. There were no TV tapings set and all of talent had no idea if they would ever be working another iMPACT show ever again. On 7/3, TNA sent out an hilarious press release, which looked like it was drawn up in two minutes using Word, announcing that they would in fact be running iMPACT tapings from 15/3 to 19/3. The five days of tapings will include episodes of iMPACT, Xplosion and One Night Only PPVs, and admission to the Impact Zone at Universal Studios will be free as usual, however you can get a VIP pass for \$99 which includes front row seats, plus a meet-and-greet. Imagine paying \$99 for anything TNA related.

The New Japan Cup finals were on 12/3 in Aomori and Testsuya Natio won the tournament by defeating Hirooki Goto in the final match. As the winner of the tourney, Naito could choose any

singles title he wanted to challenge for and he selected the IWGP Heavyweight championship. Naito claimed he would not face Okada at Invasion Attack on April 10<sup>th</sup>, however Okada got in the ring and accused him of being scared. Naito eventually agreed to challenge Okada at Invasion Attack then told the champ to calm down until then. “Tranquilo!” The announcers were playing up the story of Goto trying to erase his “shameful past” and after his loss he ended up shaking Okada's hand, seemingly taking up his offer to join Chaos. Naito's semi-final against Toru Yano only went about 2:30, whereas Goto had a much longer and tougher semi-final against Michael Elgin. So the deck was stacked against Goto going into the final match with Naito. They also set up Satoshi Kojima challenging Katsuyori Shibata for the NEVER title after the TenCozy vs. Shibata & Taguchi match.

There was an interesting note in this week's Observer regarding WWE aggressively pursuing talent from Japan, Mexico and the UK. Dave Meltzer wrote that WWE's main target is Kazuchika Okada, because – get this – “the key people in charge just found out that he's tall.” Okada has been offered a five year contract by New Japan and Kidani has gone on record several times that New Japan would be willing to offer whatever money it takes to keep Okada in Japan. There has been no word on whether Okada has resigned with New Japan, however he has stated publicly many times that he is loyal to New Japan and would not want to leave the company. There were no specific names given for any UK talent that the WWE might be interested in and the same goes for Mexico, however Meltzer noted that there is a big star in AAA & Lucha Underground who is currently unhappy with the LU creative and has never worked for a major US promotion before.

WrestleMania 33 will take place on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017 at the Citrus Bowl in Orlando, Florida. WWE made the announcement on 7/3 at a press conference at the stadium in Orlando with comments from Vince McMahon, Roman Reigns, John Cena, as well as the mayor of Orlando, Buddy Dyer and governor of Orange County, Rick Scott. Orlando was one of a dozen other cities bidding for WrestleMania 33, including Minneapolis, which was rumoured for a long time to be the eventual home of next year's Mania. However, last December Buddy Dyer and a team of delegates went to Titan Towers for a meeting which is thought to have sealed the deal for Orlando. The Citrus Bowl has undergone serious renovation since this last time the stadium hosted WrestleMania in 2008 and Dyer noted that he wanted the city to host WrestleMania, “maybe every five years,” according to Brian Fritz of the Orlando Sentinel.

Speaking of Orlando, after years of speculation, WWE appears to be opening a physical Hall of Fame at Universal Studios. Attractions Management reported on 8/3 that sources at Universal Studios had told them that the WWE are to open a “museum-cum-restaurant” which should be open in time for WrestleMania 33 in April 2017.

For the second year in a row, NXT was part of the Arnold Classic at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, OH last weekend. There were 29 matches over the two days, with everyone from NXT main eventers to Performance Centre rookies, and a series of autograph sessions, Q&A sessions with the likes of Mark Henry, open try-outs and other activities during the expo. HHH even brought out Arnold Schwarzenegger for some back-slapping and glad-handing during his Q&A session.

Evolve booker and promoter, Gabe Sapolsky, announced on 8/3 via Twitter that Kota Ibushi will be working the three WWN iPPVs over WrestleMania weekend. Evolve has shows on 1/4 and 2/4, and on 3/4 there is the big annual WWN Supershow. With Ibushi announcing his status as a free agent last month, there was lots of talk about WWE wanting him for the Global Cruiserweight Series and with WWE's working relationship with Evolve and WWN, this will only lead to more speculation

about Ibushi coming in for the Cruiserweight Series.

Not that anyone will miss him, but Ken Anderson is gone from TNA. He worked an ICW show in the UK last weekend and was greeted by the obligatory, "F\*\*k TNA," chants. Anderson got on the mic and said he no longer works for TNA and told the fans he agreed with them then stated, "F\*\*k TNA," which the crowd absolutely loved. On 10/3, Ryan Satin of Pro Wrestling Sheet reported that Anderson had been fired by TNA due to failing a drug test. Satin claims that his sources told him that the drug test Anderson failed took place after a match he had with Eric Young, which was apparently so bad due to Anderson being intoxicated it had to be cut from that week's iMPACT show on January 19<sup>th</sup>.

The URShow.TV iPPV in Phoenix on 20/3 has had some reshuffling of the card. Ken Shamrock will no longer be fighting Dan Severn, as Shamrock received a medical suspension after losing to Royce Gracie at the Bellator show on 19/2. Shamrock also has been temporarily suspended by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations for failing a drug test before his fight with Gracie after a non-specified banned substance was found in his sample. Severn (57), is now fighting Tank Abbott (50) in a rematch of their hideous 1995 fight at UFC "Ultimate Ultimate." Roy Jones Jr will not be facing a fan after all and instead will be boxing against little-known MMA fighter, Vyron Phillips (5-3). Rey Mysterio Jr vs. Kurt Angle in a pro wrestling match and Chael Sonnen vs. Michael Bisping in a grappling match are still currently scheduled for the event.

The Dragon Gate show on 5/3 opened at the Edion Arena #2 in Osaka opened with a minute silence for Hayabusa and Dragon Kid gave a speech about his close friend who passed away last week. Dragon Kid said he had met Hayabusa in 1993 when he was 18 and that he became his mentor. He stated that Hayabusa fought every day to recover from his injury and noted they would have no new memories together. Dragon Kid broke down in tears and said he had always dreamed of standing in the ring with Hayabusa one day but now that would never happen. Later on the show, Dragon Kid & Eita beat Cima & Kzy and there was a large framed picture of Hayabusa on one of the chairs at ringside. Dragon Kid pinned Kzy with the 450 splash as a tribute to Hayabusa. Also on the show, Yosuke♡Santa Maria beat Kotoka for the Open the Brave Gate title in 15:42. The stipulation was that if Maria lost she would have to wrestle topless forever, which thankfully did not happen. Maria celebrated her first ever single title win by thanking the fans and told her parents she had finally done it. She noted that her parents didn't want her to become a pro wrestler and had never seen her wrestle but now she is a champion she hopes they would consider coming to a show. Naoki Taniaki showed up and attacked Maria then said he would end the embarrassment of the "ugly tranny" being a champion. Maria accepted the challenge and the match was set for 21/3 in Wakayama. The 6/3 show, also in Osaka, saw T-Hawk & Big R Shimizu (Monster Express) capture the Open the Twin Gate titles over Naruki Doi & Yamato (VerserK) in 29:01 when Shimizu pinned Yamato with the Shot-put Slam. In the main event, Shingo Takagi regained the Open the Dream Gate from Jimmy Susumu in 29:00. Takagi pinned Susuma, who failed on his first title defence after beating Takagi for the belt on 14/2, with the Pumping Bomber Lariat. The next big show is on 21/3 in Wakayama for "Memorial Gate" and the top three matches are, Yosuke♡Santa Maria vs. Naoki Tanizaki for the Brave Gate title, Masato Yoshino, Akira Tozawa, T-Hawk vs. Naruki Doi, Yamato, Kotoka for the Triangle Gate belts and Shingo Takagi vs. Ryo "Jimmy" Saito for the Dream Gate title.

Suzuki-Gun will be running their own show on 27/3 and a few New Japan wrestlers will be on the card. So far the only matches announces are Takashi Iizuka vs. Toru Yano, which should be something else, Taka Michinoku & Taichi vs. Muhammad Yone & Rysuke Taguchi, Yoshinobu Kanemaru & El Desparado vs. Yoshinari Ogawa & Jushin "Thunder" Liger, and Minoru Suzuki &

Takashi Sugiura vs. a team to be announced.

Kenny Omega was pulled from the ROH show in Philadelphia on 12/3 due to visa issues. As a make-good, ROH have brought in Kushida to replace Omega and will be defending the IWGP Jr Heavyweight title against ACH.

In addition to Ray “Big Boss Man” Traylor being announced for the WWE Hall of Fame on RAW this week, the new WrestleMania 32 magazine listed the final two names for the 2016 class as Jacqueline Moore and Stan Hansen.



*Wrestling is strange. People are strange.*

The Hulk Hogan vs. Gawker trial got under way on 7/3 and it didn't take long for it to devolve into an utter circus. I'm not going to go into the minutia of the case, one, because I don't really care all that much, and, two, because David Bixenspan of F4Wonline has been covering this thing for well over a year and has you covered if you want to delve into the legal mumbo jumbo. The fun began on day one when Hogan's lawyer asked the jury if any of them were upset when Hogan slammed Andre the Giant or when he turned heel and became Hollywood Hogan. This apparently opened up deep scars for Juror #27, who was dismissed from the jury after he stated that he felt “betrayed” by Hogan's heel turn. You can't make this stuff up. Hogan testified on the first two days of the trial and told his usual pack of lies about working 450 matches a year and not being sure if Andre was going to put him over at WrestleMania III. Hogan was asked by the defence why he was wearing a bandanna and he explained that his first two wives used to bald-shame him and constantly tell him they were going to leave him for younger men, which they actually did. Gawker's lawyers tripped Hogan up about being unaware of the cameras in Bubba the Love Sponge's house and claiming he had not seen the entire clip posted on Gawker. Hogan explained his lies by claiming he was in “Hulk Hogan mode,” which led Hogan into an explanation about the difference between Hulk Hogan and Terry Bollea. Basically he admitted that whenever he is in public he is playing the character of Hulk Hogan and he tells tall tales that fit his character. This led to perhaps the most

quoted and infamous line of the trial so-far on the second day, when Hogan, once again trying to explain the difference between Hulk Hogan & Terry Bollea, stated that Hulk Hogan has a 10 inch penis, while Terry Bollea does not. This actually occurred in an American courtroom. Day three saw a playback of a deposition testimony from AJ Daulerio, the co-defendant of Gawker and former editor of the site, and founder, Nick Denton. In the recording, Daulerio was asked if there would ever be a hypothetical celebrity sex tape that would not be considered newsworthy and he replied, "If they were a child." When asked, "under what age?" Daulerio stated, "Four." Gawker later came out and said Daulerio was being flippant with his remarks, however there is no doubt Gawker is coming off very badly in this case. There whole defence is built on the argument that Hogan had spoken about his sex life in the past in public forums, like the Howard Stern Show, and there fore his sex tape was a matter of public interest. Hogan's claim is that Gawker posting the tape caused him loss of income and emotional distress. There are at least three more weeks of this shambolic display of jurisprudence, unless a settlement is reached, so it looks like the fun and games have only just begun.

### **RAW Ramblings – March 7<sup>th</sup> 2016**

**Allstate Arena: Chicago, IL.**

*Ben Carass.*

This was the go-home RAW for Road Block and all things considered it turned out to be a pretty decent episode, especially when you take in to account how terrible last week's show was. There were a couple of really good matches and two great angles to set up WrestleMania, although I still could not be more disinterested in the Road Block Network special. With four weeks left to go before WrestleMania, they really should be putting all their effort into making that show feel like the biggest WrestleMania of all time and wasting time half-assing a two week build for what is basically a house show just distracted from goal of making April 3<sup>rd</sup> in Dallas seem like the biggest show in the history of the business. The stuff they shot for Road Block was pretty weak and was overshadowed by two segments that built up WrestleMania matches, however **Dean Ambrose** closed the show by standing tall with the WWE title over HHH, which at least the live crowd enjoyed. Although it was made abundantly clear that there is zero chance of **Ambrose** winning the title.



Let's talk about the great stuff first, because there were at least two segments worth going out of your way to see. First, **Kevin Owens & Neville** had a really good non-title match, which **Owens** won in 10:20 with a roll-up and a handful of tights. There were all kinds of big spots: **Neville** did a huge Fosbury Flop-style plancha over the top rope and landed on his feet then got sent into the steps. **Neville** hit a Shooting Star Press off the post to the floor. **Owens** landed a release German and **Neville** just about rotated enough to land on his stomach and not break his neck. Post-match, **Owens** went to give **Neville** a Powerbomb on the apron when **Sami Zayn** ran down for the save. **Zayn & Owens** traded some great fiery punches like **Frye/Takayama** then **Neville** caught **Owens** with a kick and **Zayn** clotheslined him over the top. **Zayn** got a great reaction from the Chicago crowd and the announcers actually tried to make it seem like a big deal that **Sami** had come back to RAW. It's a damn shame that the IC title match at WrestleMania appears to be a multi-man ladder match, while **Kalisto** and, of all people, **Ryback** seem to be headed for a singles match. I know nobody cares about the US title anymore, but still the fact that we will not get to see **Owens vs. Zayn** in front of "100,000" people is damn near criminal.

The other great segment was **AJ Styles & Chris Jericho** challenging the **New Day** for the Tag Team titles. They had an excellent TV match, probably the best of 2016 so-far, which the crowd went insane for. **Jericho & AJ** had matching "Y2AJ" shirts, which looked so ghetto that it was clear a turn was coming from one of them. It was just an average tag match until **AJ** made the comeback off the hot tag. He finally hit his Quebrada Inverted DDT perfectly, which **Kofi Kingston** should take a lot of credit for also. **Big E** gave **AJ** his finish but **Jericho** broke up the pin. **Jericho** gave **Kofi** the Lionsault and **AJ** followed up with his Springboard 450, but this time **Big E** broke it up. Finish saw **Jericho** get the Walls on **Kofi**, but **Xavier Woods** held the rope out for his partner to reach. **AJ** took out **Xavier**, but **Big E** launched **Styles** into the barricade. **Jericho** went for the Codebreaker on **Big E**, who countered and hit the Big Ending for the clean pin at 11:30. (\*\*\*) ¾



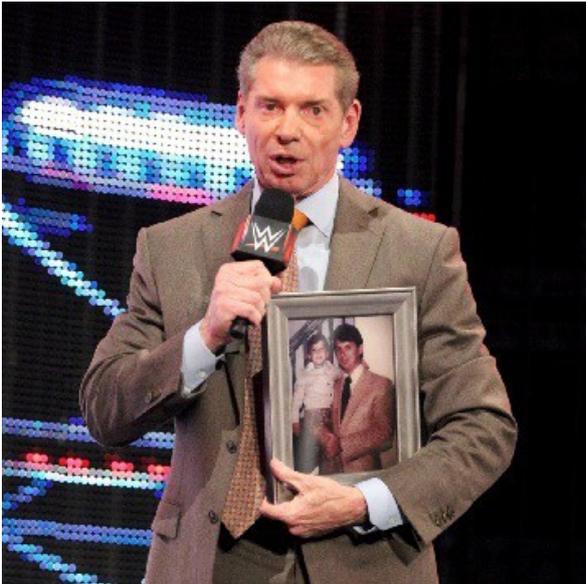
Afterwards, **Styles** helped **Jericho** to his feet but **Jericho** gave him a Codebreaker and the crowd were not happy at all. **Jericho** hit **AJ** with two more Codebreakers then shoved one of the hideous **Y2AJ** shirts down **Styles'** throat. A little later, **Jericho** did a backstage interview with **Renee** and said he was sick of all the people chanting for **AJ Styles** and said the fans won't be chanting his name anymore. - The match was so good that after it was over, I was perfectly okay with **AJ &**

**Jericho** remaining a tag team, however when the turn came I was in fact a little relieved and remembered that wasting **Styles** in a tag match at WrestleMania would have been utterly stupid. None of the **AJ/Jericho** matches have set the world on fire and they have been good/very good at best, however you have to imagine these two will go all-out if they are given enough time at Mania.

**Dean Ambrose** came out at the top of the second hour and cut a great promo about how he would ruin the WrestleMania plans by winning the title and would become the champion that the fans deserved. **HHH** showed up and called **Dean** a “bump in the road” then said he was driven by power, money and success which made him what he is and made **Ambrose** what he is. **Ambrose** challenged **HHH** to get in the ring, but **Hunter** declined and booked **Dean** against **Bray Wyatt** in the main event instead. **Ambrose** was spitting dollar signs with his promo; it was painfully obvious watching this that he is infinitely more charismatic and better and delivering scripted lines than **Roman Reigns**, but he is still not, “the guy,” everyone. **HHH** kind of killed the momentum of the segment by coming out and blathering on; **Ambrose** should have just gone after him like the “lunatic” he is instead of just standing listening **Hunter** talk. **Bray Wyatt** cut his usual pre-tape promo before the match and said he would “conquer the conqueror,” **Brock Lesnar**, at road Block. **Wyatt** showed up for the match without his goons, so it was clear they would be doing some kind of run-in. Match was fine, but these two are near the top of my list of men I don't need to see wrestling each other anymore. Finish saw the **Wyatt Family** show up after a lights-out spot and they attacked **Ambrose** for the DQ then **Bray** finished **Dean** off with Sister Abigail. **HHH** came out again and for some explicable reason he had a stare-down with **Bray Wyatt** and teased a match they will not do in a million years which nobody wants to see. **HHH** went over to the announce table, I guess to prepare it for the beating he was going to give **Ambrose**, but when he got back in the ring **Ambrose** came to life and laid out **HHH** with one single DDT then posed with the belt to close the show. After **HHH** “destroyed” **Roman Reigns'** face and demolished **Ambrose** last week, seeing **Dean** hit one move on **Trips** was hilariously weak, and classic **HHH**.



**Shane McMahon** opened the show and was still wildly over with the crowd. He talked about having the utmost respect for the **Undertaker** and called **Vince** an “egomaniacal, miserable, old bastard.” He rehashed the same stuff he said when he returned about **Vince** being out of touch with



everything and noted that he didn't know how he was going to do it, but it was his destiny to beat the **Undertaker** at WrestleMania. **Taker's** gong went off, but **Vince McMahon** came out on the stage instead; fans chanted “assh\*le” and “**CM Punk**,” but **Vince** was a great troll and made fun of the fans for not keeping the chants up. **Vince** had a picture of himself and **Shane** from the 70's and he noted that it was taken before **Shane's** trip to see his first “wrestling match” in Worcester, MA. He dropped it on the floor and stepped on the picture then stated he wouldn't need it anymore now that **Shane** is no longer his son. **Vince** said it was ironic that his greatest creation (**Taker**) would put his greatest failure (**Shane**) to rest and called out some security to get rid of **Shane**. In a scene not witnessed since the infamous **Legacy** feud in 2009, **Shane McMahon** turned into **Steve Austin**

and beat up all four security guards with his trademark punches that even **Edmond Tarverdyan** would shake his head at. It was of course utterly ridiculous, but it had to be done to get **Shane** over as a, ahem, “badass.” **Shane & Vince's** performances were good, but this story is still obscenely preposterous.

**Other Stuff:** They showed a short selfie video from **the Rock** saying he would be at WrestleMania. Earlier in the day, **Dolph Ziggler** Tweeted something about the **Authority** sucking and subsequently deleted the Tweet. **Stephanie** met with **Dolph** backstage and thanked him for deleting the Tweet then in the most imbecilic moment on the show, **Dolph** brought up the 2014 Survivor Series when he claimed he “single-handedly” forced the **Authority** out of power. That's right, they buried their own stipulation and reminded everyone that the **Authority** had already been removed from power once before which lasted all of two weeks. **Steph** booked **Dolph** in a 3-on-1 Handicap Elimination match against the **League of Nations** later on. Match was better than you would have expected; **Dolph** eliminated **Wade Barrett** at 5:46 with a Superkick but ate a Brogue Kick from **Sheamus** for the pin at 6:35. **Summer Rae** pinned **Brie Bella** in 2 minutes when **Lana** came out and distracted **Brie**. **Lana**, who for some reason was wearing her double denim **Dolph Ziggler** attire, gave **Brie** an X-Factor afterwards, which was quite an impressive feat in a denim mini skirt. **Becky Lynch & Sasha Banks** beat **Team Bad** in 1:54 when **Sasha** tapped-out **Naomi** with the **Banks Statement**. **Charlotte & Ric Flair** were at ringside and afterwards **Charlotte** beat both of them up like chumps. **R-Truth** tried to give **Goldust** a Chicago-style pizza as an apology. **Goldie** said he was lactose intolerant and his butt would explode if he ate it. It was horrible. **Mark Henry** showed up and stole the pizza, which looked absolutely disgusting. **Kalisto** downed **Tyler Breeze** in 2:10 in a non-title match with the **Salida del Sol**. **Kalisto** did a backstage promo with **Jo-Jo** and **Ryback** showed up and proceeded to deliver the most wooden promo of his entire career, which is saying an awful lot. Apparently they believe **Kalisto vs. Ryback** at WrestleMania is a good idea. **Ryback** beat **Curtis Axel** in 2:08; the **Social Outcasts** cut a goofy promo beforehand. It was terrible. **Stephanie** met with **Vince** in the back and was worried about **Shane** beating the **Undertaker** and said they needed to stack the deck. **Vince** said he had it covered.

**Mid-South Wrestling (TV #157)**  
**September 11<sup>th</sup> 1982**  
**Irish McNeil Boys Club: Shreveport, LA.**  
*Ben Carass.*



As we have noted before, the Universal Wrestling Archive has a few missing episodes from the Mid-South collection and last week (MS#156) was unfortunately one of those weeks. Thankfully though, because wrestling companies actually wanted you the fan to follow the weekly storylines, we got a full recap of a big angle they shot on the missing show from last week. Pay attention, because this may get a little complicated.

**Boyd Pierce & Bob Roop** opened the show and they immediately threw to **Bill Watts**, who was at ringside with an important announcement. **Watts** brought up the infamous “double, double-cross” when **Bob Roop & Paul Orndorff** screwed **Ted DiBiase** out of the North American title back in March ([read the full review of that show here](#)) and called it the most devious plot in Mid-South history. **Watts** then said that last week, **Ted DiBiase & Hacksaw Duggan** had an even more dastardly plot to try and shaft **JYD & Mr Olympia** out of the Tag Team titles in a match with **Mr Wrestling II** as the special referee.



**Watts** then threw to an interview he did with **Mr Wrestling II** last week in the ring; **Two** was wearing a referee shirt and talked about being an impartial official. Suddenly, the REAL **Mr Wrestling II** hit the ring and went after the imposter. **Two** got a few shots in, but his doppelgänger managed to escape. **Watts** asked the real **Mr Wrestling II** what was going on and **Two** told a story about being at the Omni in Atlanta, when some fans told him about an imposter posing as **Mr Wrestling II** in Mid-South. **Two** said he bought a plane ticket out of his own pocket to fly down and see the pretender for himself.

He then explained that there had once been a phony **Mr Wrestling II** in Atlanta and he beat him up, unmasked him and ran him out of the business then stated he would do the same to this fraudster as well. **Watts** played dumb and said he couldn't tell which one was the real **Mr Wrestling II**, so **Two** replied that everybody knew the real **Mr Wrestling II** would never run away from a fight and the fake **Wrestling II** had done just that.

Back with **Watts** at ringside and he said that once he looked into the “cold, steely blue eyes,” he knew who the real **Mr Wrestling II** was. **Watts** added that when the real **Wrestling II** showed up it looked like **DiBiase & Duggan's** plan had been foiled, however he explained that the two heels still managed to pull off the “biggest rip-off” he had ever seen during his time in the Mid-South area.

They showed the finish of **DiBiase & Duggan vs. JYD & Mr Olympia** for the Tag titles with **Mr Wrestling II** as the special referee. **Two** got bumped out of the ring and the fake **Wrestling II** showed up and loaded his boot. On commentary, **Watts** went crazy and yelled that only one man loaded his boot like that and said it had to be the **Grappler**. **JYD** had **Duggan** pinned after hitting the Thump, however the **Grappler** kicked **Two** with his loaded boot and **DiBiase** once again knocked out **JYD** with his loaded black glove of doom. **Grappler** got in the ring and counted the fall for the heels and he presented **DiBiase & Duggan** with the Mid-South Tag titles.

Back with **Watts** at ringside again, and this time he said that **Grizzly Smith** had refused to recognise the title change and would not book **DiBiase & Duggan** in any matches until kayfabe president of Mid-South, **Charlie Lay**, made a judgement. **Watts** declared that **Charlie Lay** had been contacted via “long distance phone” and he ruled that the decision of the match had been reversed and **JYD & Mr Olympia** would still be recognised as the Tag Team champions. **Watts** added that this was the first time in Mid-South history that a decision of a match had been reversed and explained that both **Mr Wrestling IIs** had refused to reveal their real identities during the investigation. Back with **Boyd & Roop** at the desk and **Roop** buried the decision being reversed and accused Mid-South of protecting the **Junkyard Dog**. **Boyd Pierce** got hot and yelled at **Roop** and told him that **JYD**, “don't need protecting from anything.” - This may read a little convoluted, but having **Bill Watts** explain everything and them showing the clips in order made the story easy to follow. You just don't get angles and storylines like this anymore. Everything made sense and the company actually wanted, and encouraged, fans to pay attention to the minute details of the story.

**Dick Murdoch vs. Billy Starr.** - **Murdoch** over in 1:32. **Dickie** was not in any mood to give this jobber anything at all and he mowed over **Starr** with ease. **Murdoch** beat **Starr** up from the opening bell and won with the Brainbuster. It certainly was effective and made **Murdoch** look like a really big star.

**Mr Olympia (Mid-South Tag Team Champion) vs. Ron Cheatham.** - **Olympia** over in 2:50. **Olympia** did some basic babyfaces shine stuff: dropkicks, armdrags, drop-downs and leapfrogs etc. He even busted out a Dragon Screw at one point. It was a basic squash for **Olympia**, who won with the Sleeper. Again, like with **Murdoch** before, this was a really effective enhancement match.

**JYD (Mid-South Tag Team Champion) vs. One Man Gang w/Skandor Akbar.** - **JYD** over in 1:28. This was totally baffling. **Gang** was built as an unstoppable monster ever since he came in to the territory about six months ago and mostly squashed everyone he faced in under two minutes. He hardly ever took a bump, never mind lost a match clean. So, what happened here? Well, **JYD** hit the ring and gave **Gang** a headbutt, which he took an absurdly large bump for. **JYD** beat up **Gang** with total ease and gave him the Big Thump. **Akbar** got on the apron, so the **Dog** brought him in the ring and gave him a slam. **Killer Khan** hit the ring, but **JYD** took him out too with a slam then he gave **Gang** another Thump and got the clean pin. - This was utterly ridiculous. **JYD** just completely castrated one of the biggest heels in the entire territory here and seeing him treat **Killer Khan** like any other geek heel was no good at all.. It was in fact done for a reason, as **Gang** would be leaving Mid-South for Continental in a few weeks, so I suppose having your top babyface kill the monster heel on his way out was a perfectly logical thing to do. It was still a ludicrous sight to behold though.



At the desk, **Boyd & Roop** talked about the history between **Dick Murdoch & Ted DiBiase** and they showed the finish of their match two weeks ago, when **DiBiase** beat **Murdoch** after **Hacksaw Duggan** interfered.

**Non-Title Match: Ted DiBiase (North American Heavyweight Champion) vs. Tim Horner.** - **DiBiase** over in 2:19. **Horner** was very young and very green here. **DiBiase** was nice enough to give him a spot during this enhancement match, however **Horner** screwed it up twice and **DiBiase** had enough and took the match home with his Powerslam & Figure Four.

**Mr Wrestling Two vs. Hacksaw Duggan.** - **Wrestling II** over in 6:34. **Two** went for his Knee Lift early and **Duggan** rolled outside. **Two's** shine consisted of a bunch of holds. He even used a standing Anaconda choke, which **Roop** called a "Cross Lever." **Duggan** got a little heat but **Two** hit his Knee Lift and **Duggan** rolled outside again. **Ted DiBiase** showed up and helped **Duggan** back in the ring then **Dick Murdoch** came out and chased **DiBiase** into the ring. **Duggan** went for his NFL Flying Headbutt but he nailed his buddy, **DiBiase**, and **Two** drilled **Duggan** with the Knee Lift to get the win. The match itself was a little dull, however the finish was pretty good and was executed very well.

**The Grappler vs. Vinnie Romeo.** - **Grappler** over in 2:57. **Grappler** beat up **Romeo** with a bunch of heel tactics: raking the eyes on the ropes, closed fists, etc. **Romeo** got a dropkick in, but **Grappler** gave him a Powerbomb (!) then used **Mr Wrestling II's** Knee Lift as the finish. **Wrestling Two** ran out and chased the **Grappler** to the back; on commentary, **Roop** question which masked man was which. This ruled. I've stated my love for the **Grappler**, and old school masked wrestlers in general, on many occasions, so a **Grappler/Wrestling II** feud is right up my alley.

**Buck Robley vs. Tony Anthony.** - **Robley** over in 2:17. **Anthony** was actually in decent shape and had a full head of blonde hair here; it was totally bizarre. **Roop** claimed there were "100 million people" watching Mid-South TV then said **Anthony** had just come back from a "triumphant run" in South Africa, where he beat the legendary **Jan Wilkins**. **Robley** gave **Anthony** an elbow to the back of the head and **Roop** called it as, "the back of the thorax!" **Robley** won a boring enhancement match with his loaded forearm pad elbow drop. **Watts** must have seen something he liked in **Anthony**, because he would eventually become **Len Denton's** partner as **Grappler #2** in a month or so.

**Boyd & Roop** wrapped up the show from the desk and **Boyd** hyped **Kelly Kiniski** for next week's show; oh goodie.

Another strong show from Mid-South this week. The entire opening segment with the recap of the **DiBiase/Duggan & JYD/Olympia** Tag title deal was great and kept the **DiBiase/JYD** feud hot. Also they followed up on the **Dick Murdoch** story and he is another strong challenger for **DiBiase's** title down the line. **JYD** squashing **One Man Gang** was something to behold and the **Grappler/Mr Wrestling II** deal was absolutely classic stuff. Check this show out if you want to see how professional wrestling storytelling used to be done.

## Next Week's Issue

In next week's issue we should be back with a new Mixed Bag segment, together with a review of the Roadblock show (which is up on the site right now), the RAW follow-up, Mania build, the news, and more!



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General Questions/Feedback/Suggestions: [ryan@cubedcirclewrestling.com](mailto:ryan@cubedcirclewrestling.com)  
Ben Carass' Twitter: @BenCarass  
Ryan Clingman's Twitter : @RyanClingman