

## Ryan Capuano reviews ECW

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### Pre-Show Thoughts:

I've been out of the loop lately. The last show I watched the whole way through was last week's ECW, I missed the Bash to go to a wedding (and was too drunk to order the replay), and only saw D-Lo "Strong Style" Brown's match last night (I guess that time in NOAH really helped). So I really don't feel as though I can fully comment on the goings-on of the past week, or whether or not the PPV was any good. From everything I've heard, it was a solid effort top to bottom. No stand-out match of the year candidates, but another worthwhile offering, which seems to be the trend this year with WWE offerings. With the countdown to the second biggest show of the year, SummeSlam, underway, we have one champion who looks like an upper-mid-carder at best, a champion I will never, ever root for based on one unforgivable joke he made a month and a half ago, and a champion who has been around since 1996, but is somehow just now finding his stride as a character on TV. So with that, let's get right down and dirty as ECW is brought back to the old stomping grounds of Philadelphia, so we'll see how the Land of Extreme fares in the city in which it was born (it's a little known fact that the Land of Extreme is suburb just south of the city). You'll note that the last time ECW was held in Philly, it was on that dark, dark day where we had the tribute show for Vince McMahon after he was tragically killed in that limo explosion. Now he's up there in heaven with Paul Bearer and Al Wilson and all the other WWE folk heroes. God rest his soul.

### Show Review:

Teddy Long is in the ring to start us off. And he's standing next to a new ECW Championship. They've eliminated the word "World" from it. It is no longer a world title, I guess. He's designed a (hideous) new belt. And he wants to give it to Mark Henry as a congratulations for his first successful defense. Henry and Tony Atlas strut out to the ring. Henry picks up the belt and makes it seem like it's worth a damn, which is a nice touch. Atlas takes a mic, which is a bad idea. Henry was (surprisingly) strong enough on the mic to carry his own. Atlas says that this is where it all begins again, referring to Heyman's early 90's creation. He says this is a new ECW. Ain't that the truth. He puts over the belt's prestige and says it's a title we can be proud of because it's worn by Mark Henry. This was played off as a changing of the guard, to eliminate the old ECW and institute the new one. Colin Delaney is brought down to the ring and he gets Haas heat. If you can't pop a Philadelphia crowd, you have problems. Delaney explains the reason he turns his back on Dreamer was because he kept getting beaten every night, and he blamed Dreamer. So he joined forces with the hall of famer Tony Atlas, and the World's Strongest Champion, Mark Henry. Delaney says he's getting with the program. Long, in honor of them being in the city of ECW's birth, is going to have Delaney face Dreamer right now. I guess we were wrong: there were very few shades of the old ECW left in this brand, and whatever they were were replaced by that awful new belt that looks like one of the Create-a-Championship from the video games.

### Tommy Dreamer vs. Colin Delaney

So here we are. Dreamer is beating on Delaney until Delaney retreats to the outside. They do the chase around the ring with Delaney catching Dreamer getting back in. Dreamer quickly comes back with more stiff clotheslines and punches. He ties Delaney to the Tree of Woe and nails the dropkick. He pops the crowd for the sentimental ECW factor. The only ECW original left. He picks Delaney up and uses a pump handle suplex. He nails a DDT and gets the pin. FINAL RATING: SQUASH Whatever. It was two minutes long and it was Dreamer's first TV win since Halloween of last year. Delaney needs to go back to Chikara and be part of the Olsen Twins again.

The Miz and John Morrison are backstage. They are complaining how they weren't even pinned to lose their belts. They put over the number one contender's match for tonight. These two are brilliant together. I highly recommend watching this past Friday's edition of the Dirt Sheet on WWE.com, especially if you're a Batman fan, moreover, the (absolutely brilliant, perfect, haunting, disturbing) Dark Knight.

Jenny McCarthy shows up to plug her appearance on Saturday Night's Main Event. Darn my luck, I'll be seeing Rage Against the Machine in concert that night. If I miss anything, let me know.

### Evan Bourne vs. James Curtis

Chavo Guerrero down for commentary. Bourne works a nice armbars to start out. Curtis is eventually able to reach the ropes. He pops up and takes it hard to Bourne. He tosses him into the corner, beats him down a bit, and goes for the snapmare, but Bourne simply flips out of it and hits a huricanrana for two. He goes for his stiff kicks and goes back to working the arm. Curtis backs him into the corner, but misses a clothesline. Bourne goes for the monkey flip, but Curtis blocks it. He punches Bourne in the head and lays in some boots. He hits a back body drop for a two count. He digs his

knee into Bourne's back and straps on a chinlock. Bourne powers up and punches his way out of it, only to be clubbed back down. Curtis tosses on another chinlock. Same results. Curtis goes for another back body drop, but Bourne flips out of it, and goes for his kicks once again, getting a two count for his troubles. Curtis tries a gorilla press slam, but Bourne gives him another hurricanrana and a dropkick. He then goes for the shooting star press, and that's that.  
FINAL RATING: \*3/4 Felt like a good dark match. Curtis has always been hit or miss in his TV appearances, but Bourne did his best with him. And the crowd is reacting strongly to him, so no complaints here.

Post-match, Chavo and Bam hit the ring, but Bourne slips out of their grasp and bolts it to the back. They played it off like he was making the smart decision.

Finlay and Hornswoggle are backstage discussing strategy for tonight's number one contender match.

WWE Did You Know?: In the sports DVD category, WWE outsells MLB, NFL, NBA, NHL, college sports, and NASCAR. I believe it. I can't count how many times I've given my Wrestlemania XVII disc a spin these past seven years.

The RAW Rebound focuses on last night's main event and the resulting shenanigans.

Ricky Ortiz is backstage with Tiffany in Teddy's office. Tiffany apparently has a degree from the University of New Orleans. It's in marketing. Teddy walks in. He puts over Ortiz's hair. Ortiz says he's been working on his gimmick and he wants to call himself the Latin Assassain. Teddy says Ortiz has been getting ahead of himself since he only won one match. As such, he'll give him a match next week to see if he can make it 2-0. After the report that Ortiz stunk it up at the FCW taping last week, I have no expectations.

A video package putting over Mike Knox is shown.

Matt Hardy is backstage. He's now putting himself over as the one who will win the match tonight.

The Miz vs. John Morrison vs. Finlay w/ Hornswoggle vs. Matt Hardy - Number One Contender's Match

Too much going on to recap move for move. Standard fatal four-way psychology with the heels and faces battling each other, with everyone getting in a good amount of offense. Lots of action all over the place with fighting going on outside the ring, in the ring, on the apron, on the turnbuckle, in the crowd.... The highlight spot was Miz and Morrison doing their slingshot into the elbow into the elbow drop on the outside with Morrison jumping from the crowd to the floor. Miz and Morrison worked over Matt Hardy separately after dispatching of Finlay on the outside. Eventually, there was dissension in the ranks at Morrison went for a cover on Hardy. Enter them arguing, allowing Hardy to hit the Side Effect and Finlay re-enter the match and go to town on everyone. The action broke down here with everyone hitting their signature spots and a series of near falls. Eventually, Morrison went for the springboard clothesline, but Hardy caught him with a kick to the gut, followed by the Twist of Fate to get the pin. Matt Hardy will face Mark Henry at SummerSlam.  
FINAL RATING: \*\*\* The first two-thirds were about what you'd expect from a match of this type. But the last few minutes were excellent and whipped the crowd into a frenzy.

Final Thoughts:

Decent show. Not a whole lot going on, but what was here was solid, and occasionally above-average. I'm glad they slowed down the influx of new wrestlers. I'm all for new talent on the roster, but not all at once. That being said, the main event was perfectly enjoyable and the idea of a Chavo/Bourne feud makes me happy.

That'll do it for this week. By the time you read this, the Smackdown! main event for SummerSlam has been revealed. Remember last week I said that it was the one-year anniversary of my most notoriously negative column? Well, there was one inciting incident that sent me into a tailspin of anger. This week on Smackdown, whether it's to spite me or not, they've decided to see if lightening could strike twice and do basically the same fucking thing, thus proving once again that they don't give a shit about what the fans think. And somehow, I still won't root for HHH. Go figure. See you next week.

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