

TNA Impact TV report by Jeff Hamlin

1.8 TNA Impact

By Jeff Hamlin (jhamlin@wchl1360.com)

SUMMARY: In a strong go home show, the TNA Tag Team titles changed hands when Consequences Creed and Black Machismo defeated Beer Money. The buildup to the PPV was the best since Lockdown 2008 with Kurt Angle, Mick Foley, B.G. James and even Sting cutting strong promos. The only negative on the entire show was two Sarah Palin skits and an Abyss interview.

1. Alex Shelley defeated Eric Young in a semifinal X Division tournament match in 4:32. They went right to near falls at the opening bell, and Chris Sabin came down to interfere right away. Shelley did a tope. After Young missed an elbow, Shelley got a tornado DDT for a two count. Young countered a monkey flip and hit a superkick, then hit a Randy Savage elbow for a good near fall. Young got a rolling reverse cradle for a two count, but after Shelley kicked out, Sabin kicked Young which was supposed to be behind referee Shane Sewell's back. Unfortunately, Sewell was looking right at it. Shelley pinned him with a sliced bread #2.

Postmatch, Sheik Abdul Bashir confronted Sewell as he was walking to the back. This was as good as advertised. Bashir started slapping him, then put the fists to Sewell, who couldn't strike back since he was one strike away from being fired as a referee. Sewell made his usual hot comeback, complete with the wild eyes and stripping off his shirt. Finally, Earl Hebner came down to pull the two apart. Then Jim Cornette came out for his first appearance in weeks and did some great mic work. At first, he fired Sewell, which made Bashir happy. Cornette then got in Bashir's face and said he wasn't going to be made a fool out of. So he announced that Sewell would be rehired on Sunday, but this time as a wrestler. Of course, his first match would be at Genesis on Sunday against Bashir. Cornette's mic work was so good here, it reminded me of how great he was in Ohio Valley Wrestling as the quasi-authority figure. In fact, this whole storyline had the aura of the old Rollergames angle from the 70's when the babyface couldn't laid a hand on the heel for a probationary period of time. It worked then, and it worked now because the crowd goes nuts for Sewell's comebacks.

The Main Event Mafia came out with Kurt Angle running down Mick Foley, vowing that a total change of power was coming this Sunday. It was an effective heel promo that built the PPV well. Booker T had his hair in a beehive hairdo smoking a stogie. He looked like he walked straight off the set of "Penitentiary II." Jeff Jarrett, Mick Foley and Jeremy Borash were shown watching in Foley's office. I guess it's Foley's office since Jeff supposedly gave up his ownership duties. But Jeff was still sitting at a desk. Angle cut a great promo go-home promo on Jarrett, basically saying his entire world would come to an end this weekend. Angle's mic work building up this feud has been particularly good. Sting then did an interview running down Rhino that was a bona fide heel promo. Kevin Nash proposed taking out Jarrett and Foley tonight. Booker didn't even do his fake accent, which was all the better since the last thing this segment needed was comedy. Good stuff.

Jarrett started to cut a promo backstage, but Brother Dvon and A.J. Styles walked in with Brother Ray's flannel shirt. Dvon handed it to Foley, who said "testify." Dvon and Styles vowed to watch Jarrett's back.

The Beautiful People's journey with the phony Sarah Palin continued with them going to a horse farm. Cute Kip wasn't with them, as Velvet Sky said he "was done with this." You know if Kip James is bailing out, the angle's going nowhere. Palin brought them to the farm to help them with their charity work. When Velvet learned they were standing in horse dung, she acted like she was going to throw up. Yep, it was awful again. This is apparently leading up to either Barack Obama's inauguration or President Bush's final days in office. A word to TNA creative. Instead of another one of these skits, perhaps you should show Bush trying to walk through downtown New Orleans one last time before leaving office. Now THAT would be funny.

2. Awesome Kong defeated Madison Rayne in 1:59. Kong is now carrying a photo of Christy Hemme around, just like she did during her program with Gail Kim. Unfortunately, the photo of Hemme is a better worker than Hemme herself. Sojourner Bolt has apparently joined Kong's stable, which was called the "Kongterogue." Squash match with Kong winning with the Awesome Bomb. DUD

Abyss did his usual horrible interview saying that Matt Morgan wasn't there because he was mad at him. Abyss teased that the old Abyss could return this Sunday. Hopefully, he means the ones that let Jim Mitchell do promos for him, because these segments stink. He started laughing toward the end and thought that Lauren the backstage interviewer was his girlfriend. Lame.

LAX were backstage with their briefcases. Hernandez has a full grown Cheech Marin facial hair. Homicide teased that they would wait until after Genesis to cash in the briefcases. He also denied they were breaking up as a tag team.

The Motor City Machine Guns did an interview about facing each other for the X Division championship this weekend.

Fun segment for random references. Shelley referred to Foley as Duke "The Dumpster"; Droese because he smelled like it. Foley walked in and said that the guns were capable of having a great match, but also capable of delivering as bad a match as Bill Kazmaier vs. Oz at Halloween Havoc 1991. Wait, I'm getting convulsions again. Foley vowed that if they didn't have a great match at Genesis, they would never get a shot at the X title again. Well, that's certainly throwing the book at them.

They did a video package detailing 2008. The most prominently featured show was the Global Impact show from last January. That and Lockdown 2008 are the two times where the company has appeared to be Major League. Another thing that hit home was all the angles that started with promise and went nowhere, like Styles marriage to Karen Angle and Sonjay Dutt's heel turn.

Rough Cut: Beer Money continued. Again, incredible segments if these two were turning face. Storm was shown playing with his daughter while Roode talked about how much fun he has been a world champion.

3. Matt Morgan defeated Robert Roode by referee stoppage in 4:48. Abyss followed Morgan to ringside, much to his dismay. I have no idea why. Morgan got all the early offense until Jacqueline interfered. Roode got a blockbuster for a two count. Roode tried another, but Morgan turned it into a inverted atomic drop. Finish saw Roode take a backdrop onto the floor and started favoring his knee. They treated it like it was a legit injury and had the trainer make a cameo appearance. Rudy Charles simply stopped the match. *1/2

Consequences Creed and Black Machismo came out with their tag team title shot briefcase and cashed it in. So even though the heels were shorthanded, they had to defend the tag team titles right here on the spot. Between this and the Rough Cut segments, if I didn't know any better I'd swear Beer Money's set for a face turn. But it's the creative team that doesn't know any better, so they aren't.

4. Black Machismo and Consequences Creed defeated Beer Money to win the TNA tag team titles in 12:34. Storm worked in jeans. Morgan and Abyss watched from the ramp. The psychology was all screwed up with two faces against one heel. Not to mention Creed and Machismo did all sorts of double team moves to Storm while Roode was selling the knee. Creed was ready to give Storm a double axehandle off the top rope, but Roode crotched him. Roode tagged in after a commercial for the double suplex "Beer Money" spot. Jacqueline unloaded on Creed, including throwing knee strikes that would make Anderson Silva proud. Storm and Roode collided for Creed to make the hot tag to Machismo. Machismo did a cool handspring over Storm's clothesline into a dropkick for a two count. Storm gave Machismo the eye of the storm (cyclone slam) for a near fall. Storm missed a backstabber, and Machismo got the lethal combination. He hit the Randy Savage elbow, but Jacqueline distracted the ref. Roode was about to hit Machismo with the briefcase, but Machismo kicked Roode in the knee, and Roode fell face first onto the briefcase. Machismo then hit Storm with the briefcase to get the pin. So this weekedn's tag team title match is a three-way with Machismo and Creed defending against Beer Money and Morgan and Abyss. Good match with Beer Money doing a great job, despite the screwed up booking. ***

They treated the tag team switch with more urgency, showing a replay of the pin and the celebration with other Front Line members in the locker room. Unfortunately, Machismo started talking about Rocky Johnson and Tony Atlas and the Megapowers.

B.G. James was backstage with Jarrett, who was apparently trying to talk him out of the match with Angle tonight. James, with his voice breaking, talked about how Angle had talked about members of his family for months so he had to fight him tonight.

The Sarah Palin skit ended with Angelina Love and Velvet Sky cleaning up pig slop. They were sick. Palin told them next week they would sign papers which would make them members of her cabinet. Love and Sky started dancing, then did the Hunter Hearst Helmsley fall into the mud.

5. Kurt Angle defeated B.G. James in a no DQ match in 10:32. Another good match. They told a great story where James was a friend of the Jarrett family fighting Angle in their name, even though he's past his wrestling peak. James jumped Angle during his ring entrance and they brawled around ringside like it was a PPV main event. Angle threw James into a post. James juiced. Angle carried James to such a good match, it felt like 1999 again. I was ready for the XFL promos to pop up on my TV screen. James made a strong comeback and hit the pump handle slam for a two count. Angle even let James kick out of the Olympic slam, and didn't tap the first time he clamped on the ankle lock. Finally, Angle got the ankle lock. James kept reaching the ropes, but Angle pulled him away. Finally, Angle put his legs around James ankle for the tapout. ***1/2

Postmatch, the mafia came out and Angle pulled out a chair. Angle laid in the forearms and teased doing the Brian Pillman to James' leg. Jarrett and Foley ran out for the save. Trainers and EMTs came out for James to do a stretcher job.

As he was carried away, Jarrett sat down on a chair with Rhino, Foley, Dvon and Styles in the ring for the go-home

interview. A very good segment. Jarrett was so emotional trying to find the words to run down Angle, he broke down in the ring. Crowd was really behind him, which was a far cry from two years ago when they hated him in the truest sense of the word. Then Foley grabbed the mic for a standard Cactus Jack interview. It was more along the lines of what they needed to do to make it seem the dangerous Mick Foley was coming to Genesis this weekend, as opposed to Mick Foley the children's book author. It wasn't quite a promo that was up to the usual Foley standards, but still quite good. Foley referenced his match at 1998 King of the Ring, and admitted he may not be as good as he once was. But for one night this Sunday, he will be.

SUMMARY: This was the best go-home show I've seen from this company. In terms of building the PPV, it was very good. In terms of match quality, it was the best I've seen in months. The only complaint I have is putting the tag belts on Black Machismo and Consequences Creed. Beer Money has done so much to help the credibility of those belts, putting them on Creed, who has essentially been a jobber for the past few months, devalued the titles big time. But why complain about an otherwise fine show?