

TNA Impact TV report

6.25 TNA Impact

By Jeff Hamlin (jhamlin@wchl1360.com)

The Big News: In a newsworthy show, Sting's nine-month involvement with the Main Event Mafia came to an end when Kurt Angle basically appointed himself the Godfather of the group again after winning the TNA title on Sunday. Matt Morgan seems to be in the group as well as the show ended with the mafia all pounding away on Sting. All non-Mafia material on this show was pretty bad.

He had a rough time in recent years, but Michael Jackson was every bit the icon to my generation as Elvis was to my parents' generation. May he rest in peace.

1. Brother Ray and Brutus Magnus fought to a no contest in a New York Street Fight in 3:08. Yes, a no contest. If Russo can book a double DQ in a chain match in 1998 (DOA vs. Los Boricuas on RAW), I guess a no contest in a street fight isn't out of bounds. Plus, trying to apply logic would mean putting more effort than the creative team did into this match. Whatever happened to the Invasion's briefcases anyway? First, they're stolen from LAX before they can cash in their title shot, then they just disappear without being cashed in at all. Does that mean Curry Man can come back? Brother Ray jumped Brutus Magnus before the bell coming out strong since Team 3-D lost the tag belts because of the British Invasion. They fought in the crowd, where Ray threw Magnus into the wall. Ray brought a table into the ring, which brought Doug Williams, Rob Terry, Kiyoshi and Sheik Abdul Bashir out. Terry gave Ray a spinebuster. Brother Dvon ran out for the save and gave Terry a chair shot over the head, then followed with a 3-D on Kiyoshi through a table. It just ended when the heels ran away. *

Lauren pressed Kurt Angle backstage about how long the process had been to get Samoa Joe into the Main Event Mafia. Angle, who's starting to look like a shorter, bald Brad Pitt in "Kalifornia," just smiled and embraced Joe as he drove up.

The Main Event Mafia came out without Sting. Angle did the talking. And Jenna Morasca and Sharmell were there, despite being fired by Sting a month ago. Maybe it's like that Seinfeld episode now where the two ladies get fired, but they still keep showing up to work anyway. Angle got a surprising pop when he introduced himself as TNA champion. He then introduced Joe, who got a mixed reaction. Joe embraced everyone. Angle said that the mafia saw how Joe came back with a vengeance, and at that point they wanted him in the group. So basically Jenna used her money to buy Joe into the mafia. So the money that the mafia saved up for years by being in main events pales in comparison to what Jenna won on "Survivor"? Yeah, sure. But to make it a ruse, they had Joe beat Booker T, Scott Steiner and Kevin Nash, who all "took one for the team." Even at 50, I knew Nash doing the cleanest jobs in years had strings attached. Angle then turned his attention to Sting and apologized for not telling him about the plan to get Joe into the mafia, but what Sting didn't know wouldn't hurt him. Mick Foley came out as a total face and lots of "Foley" chants. He acted self-absorbed about losing his title on Sunday and wanted a rematch at Victory Road, and said he was cashing in his rematch clause for a one-on-one match. Angle said he was the one with the power and he had a clause in his contract that allows him to pick his opponent for the PPV. Foley reminded Angle of the elbow drop off the penalty box on Sunday which resulted in a pin on Sunday. Angle proposed going back to Foley's office to work out an agreement with the rest of the mafia. This seemed to set up a series of skits with Angle and Foley negotiating, but this was the last of the Foley-Angle interaction on the show.

A.J. Styles walked into the building demanding to know where Joe was. Kip James, who was setting up a light, told him he was with the mafia.

Jeff Jarrett did an interview "over the phone" saying he would resolve his differences with Foley next week once and for all. This was all for Jarrett on the night.

There was a vignette for Sarah Stock, with footage of her in action from AAA and CMLL. She will debut in three weeks under the name "Sarita."

2. Kevin Nash defeated Abyss in 4:02. Virtually all of Nash's offense was stationary, like the elbows, knees, clotheslines. Abyss took a bump over the top rope after a Nash clothesline, and they fought to the floor. Nash missed a chair shot and Abyss rammed his head into the barricade and steps. Abyss brought the chair into the ring and set it up in the corner right in front of the ref, but Nash met him with a kick. Nash got the chair and took the ref, leading to a run in by Dr. Stevie, who had a taser and zapped Abyss in the stomach for the pin. Why copy the finish that killed Goldberg's career in 1998? Lauren ran out to check on him. Match was boring. 1/2*

Beer Money came out for an interview as three-time TNA Tag Team Champions. Robert Roode started to challenge Team 3-D to a rematch, but Booker and Steiner came out. Booker talked about all the great tag teams he and Steiner had been a part of. Booker said that Angle and Foley had just made an agreement for Victory Road where Nash will face Styles for the Legends title, Foley would face Angle for the TNA Heavyweight title, and Booker and Nash will face Beer

Money for the tag belts. Storm did a tremendous babyface comeback interview. Booker brought back his old "Tell me he didn't say that" catchphrase. Booker then claimed Foley had agreed to let Booker face Storm and Steiner face Roode tonight. Team 3-D came out and said Foley had already granted them a rematch at Victory Road. Steiner said that Ray had a problem with his pituitary gland. What kind of message does that send? Ray started doing Steiner impressions, which was amusing. Ray said 3-D would make Foley an offer he couldn't refuse to get the rematch.

3. Taylor Wilde defeated Daffney in a 10,000 thumbtacks Knockouts match in 2:45. It was apparent right away that Daffney was going into the tacks because Taylor Wilde came out in a bikini top. Rules were the tacks were suspended in a bag on a pole above the ring (so you know who booked this). Daffney grabbed the bag and slugged Wilde with it. When Daffney poured out the tacks, there was no reaction at all, which pretty much made the point of the match moot. They jostled for position with Wilde teasing a German suplex, but Daffney blocked it. Finally, Daffney missed a clothesline and Wilde slammed her into the tacks for the win. Daffney just laid there, then they cut right to the back. By now, the show comprised of two gimmick matches that had no point and a Kevin Nash bout where he did virtually nothing. ^{3/4}*

Velvet Sky cut a promo on Tara. There was no Angelina Love for some reason. Apparently, Tara's gimmick is she likes spiders because Tara is short for tarantula. Okay. All of a sudden, they cut to Madison Rayne, who had a tarantula on her shoulder. Everybody screamed and freaked out.

Team 3-D confronted Foley in his office about giving Steiner and Booker the title shot against Beer Money. Foley acted like he was in pain about losing his own world title. Foley proposed 3-D vs. Steiner and Booker next week with the winner getting the title shot. 3-D didn't look to willing to take it, but Foley said he was going to do something he had never done before. Ray thought he was going to say shower after a match. Foley literally begged 3-D to take next week's match, which they reluctantly did. Jeremy Borash was worried about how Angle would take that news, but Foley said he didn't care.

4. Scott Steiner defeated Robert Roode in 5:27. Roode hit a rolling neck snap and did the "Beer Money" spot with the crowd after a vertical suplex. Steiner threw Roode to the floor. Steiner hit the overhead belly-to-belly suplex for a two count. Steiner grabbed a bearhug. To its credit, the crowd was hot because they rallied behind Roode even though no one has submitted to the bearhug in forever. Roode made his comeback with a flying forearm and a blockbuster for a two count. Roode went for the payoff (cradle suplex), but Steiner hit a downward spiral for a good near fall. Steiner tried the Steiner Recliner, but Roode blocked it with punches. Steiner went for a belly-to-belly, but opted instead for a backslide, leading to the clean as a sheet pin. **

Borash talked to Angle backstage. When he told him about Foley's new plan for the tag belts, Angle said he would take Foley out next week. Angle proclaimed himself to be the Godfather of the mafia. Borash then asked him about whether he told Sting about his plan with Joe, and Angle again reiterated that he never told Sting about it. Borash reminded Angle that Sting was supposed to be the Godfather of the mafia, but Angle said he answered to no one. Borash got a text message from Sting saying he was on his way to the Impact Zone tonight and he wanted answers. If he wanted answers so bad, why didn't he show up on time?

Foley was asked about Jarrett's phone call from earlier tonight. He said if Jarrett was willing to apologize, he'd be willing to listen. Borash then told Foley about Angle being unhappy about his tag team plan. Foley went on another rant about being stressed out about losing the TNA title.

There was a package on Eric Young's tenure in TNA, going back to his days in Team Canada. This led to a Young promo where he explained why walked out on Rhino as a tag partner last week. Young said he was sick of being the court jester of the company. Rhino walked in with a Detroit Lions jersey on. Nothing screams jobber more than that. Young challenged Rhino to a match next week and head butted him. Then Jesse Neal ran in to check on Rhino and vowed to join Rhino in order to get Young "on our time." Then Rhino got mad at Neal and tossed him aside. It's like they've started the process of turning Rhino heel but forgot to give him something relevant to turn heel against. And could they make a potential mainstream story like Neal look any more lame?

Booker did a promo about being a 14-time tag team champion with four different partners. Sharmell then ran in and challenged Jenna to a match at Victory Road where only one of them could be in the mafia. But they were both fired from the mafia a month ago. Sometimes I feel like I'm the only person paying attention.

5. James Storm defeated Booker T by DQ in 4:00. Booker tried to throw Storm over the top, but Storm skinned the cat, only to have Booker give him a botched hot shot. Booker threw some knees and got the spin kick for a two count. Booker missed an ax kick, and Storm got a neckbreaker. Sharmell then gave Booker Storm's beer bottle, which Booker whacked Storm with for the DQ. Referee Earl Hebner was selling his eyes while Storm was laid out. Nothing match. *1/4

Styles came to the ring to call out Joe. He got some "you sold out" chants. Styles laid into him for taking the money and screwing the company and the fans. Styles wanted to know who Joe's advisor was. Joe said

Styles could ask him himself and Victory Road. They wound up brawling with Styles getting the better of it until Matt Morgan ran down to jump Styles. Joe and Morgan started putting the boots to Styles until Daniels ran out for the save. Then the entire mafia ran down for the Horsemen beatdown on Styles and Daniels. Then Sting walked down the ramp to a huge ovation, which stopped the mafia in its tracks. It was never explained whether Morgan has officially joined the mafia.

After a commercial, Sting said he expected Angle to turn on him, but he didn't expect it from Steiner, Nash or Booker. Sting was furious about bringing Joe into the family without telling him. Angle acted like he didn't know why Morgan was there. Morgan got the mic and said Angle had everything to do with him being there, which killed Angle's story dead. Angle hid behind Morgan and Joe at this point. Sting laid into Booker and Steiner, then wanted to know why Nash agreed to have Joe in the Mafia and didn't tell him. Nash said time and again, when the rest of his Mafia wanted to kick Sting out of the group, Nash always stuck up for keeping him in. But when Angle came up with the idea of having Morgan take out Sting (I guess he meant two weeks ago when Sting wrestled Angle in the King of the Mountain qualifier when Morgan hit Sting, then Angle acted like he didn't know what Morgan was doing there), he supported the plan. When Sting asked why, Nash said Sting's plan wasn't working. This is where Nash lost me. He said the mafia wasn't working well together with Sting in charge because they didn't have the TNA title, but now Angle has it again. Nash said the entire group was about money, and not friendships, and he didn't want to have to fight Joe, Steiner, Angle and Booker. Sting offered Nash a chance to hit him with the baseball bat while Sting turned his back to him. Nash took the bat and teased hitting the mafia members, then turned to hit Sting. But as he hesitated, Sting pulled out a bat from his pants and hit Nash in the stomach first. Then Joe hit Sting with the bat from behind, and the show ended with Sting being effectively kicked out of the mafia as Sting's former stablemates put the boots to him.

SUMMARY: The final 30 minutes was fine, but this was a rare show where the wrestling was bad because of too many gimmicks. Joe and Morgan in the top heel group is a better pairing than Sting being a reluctant heel. It'll be interesting to see where Angle fits in the grand scheme of things, because he's the top heel again with time running out on his contract.