10.11 Impact Wrestling
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The Big News: Austin Aries is a complete heel now for his match against Jeff Hardy at Bound for Glory. The go-home show was solid for wrestling, but I think it did more harm than good.

Aries defeated James Storm in 7:19. Mainly both men teasing their trademark spots and then having the other cross them up. Both men tried to hit pescados while the other ran back in the ring until Aries finally caught a tope. Storm focused on Aries' left arm. Aries escaped an attempt at the Eye of the Storm and gave Storm a neck snap across the ropes, but missed a Missile dropkick. Storm attempted Closing Time but Aries escaped, then Storm averted the brainbuster, then both men got lost trying to do a double knockout spot. As referee Earl Hebner checked on Aries, Bobby Roode ran down and sent Storm into the post. Aries allegedly didn't see this, and gave Storm the brainbuster for the finish. Aries got a mixed reaction while Storm was over as much as he's been in quite sometime. **1/2

Kurt Angle talked backstage with Wes Brisco, who wanted to know if he could tag along with him to Bound for Glory. Angle, apparently unaware that there's a long-haired blonde with a mane eerily similar to Brisco, agreed. Brisco slid out while A.J. Styles walked in upset that Angle wanted to tag with Sting against Aces and 8's instead of tagging with him for the tag team titles at BFG. Angle tried to calm him down, but Styles walked out.

Sting and Hulk Hogan came in the ring to talk about the selection of Bully Ray in the tag team match against Aces and 8s. Hogan acknowledged they made a deal with the devil. This brought out Christopher Daniels and Kazarian. Daniels chided Hogan for picking the most untrustworthy guy in the locker room. Aren't the heels supposed to be liars? Kazarian, who called Hogan "Thunderlips," wanted Hogan to cancel their tag team title match at BFG and let Angle tag with Sting. Ray came down and did a babyface interview, saying that Angle would have been a great choice if it was a wrestling match. But it was a fight, and there was no better choice than him. Ray proposed tagging with Sting against Daniels and Kazarian tonight. Hogan signed off on it. Ray did such a good promo, the crowd suspended it's disbelief and cheered him. The fact that Kazarian suggested Angle as a tag partner seems to be teasing another heel turn for him.

2. Hernandez defeated A.J. Styles in 3:53. It's been a few years since Styles has carried Hernandez to a good match, but he did it here. Don't know why others can't make Hernandez look like a powerhouse as well as Styles does, but that's the secret to finally getting him over. The pin came out of the blue after Hernandez hit the pounce period. **1/4

The masked man from Aces and 8's did an interview from their clubhouse. Joseph Parks was shown looking like a hostage, sleep deprived and starving. The leader said that it was funny how a common cause can bring enemies together, and how picking Ray was an ingenious move by Hogan. But it was something that Aces and 8's could overcome. He also teased making an appearance tonight.

Zema Ion came out and said there's no one for him to face for the X Division title at BFG because he's eliminated the entire field. Rob Van Dam came out and said he didn't have a match at BFG either, and talked to Hogan about it. Ion held up the X Division title, and Van Dam gave him a spin kick. Ion remained standing after basically taking a Van Daminator. They're on for Sunday.

Hogan told Sting backstage he didn't trust Ray. Sting said they didn't have any other choice, but Hogan was still reluctant. Ray walked in on this conversation, and Hogan told him straight up he didn't trust him. Ray argued back that he shook Hogan's hand last week and had nothing left to prove. The two started to argue when Sting shouted both men down saying that Ray was his only option. Well, there is Angle and Joe, both of whom have held the TNA title. Sting warned Ray he better not double cross him.

Brooke Hogan talked with Taryn Terrell, who will be officiating the Knockouts title match on Sunday with Miss Tessmacher versus Tara. Then Tara walked up and said Brooke was Hollywood elite. And who wouldn't think that after seeing "Two Headed Shark Attack?" She handed Brooke a list of dressing room demands for Sunday, courtesy of her Hollywood boyfriend. Brooke tore it up. The boyfriend will apparently be unveiled on Sunday. Tara said that Kim and Chloe were right about Brooke, referring to the Kardashians. Well, she could've said something about Bubba the Love Sponge's ex-wife.

3. Christopher Daniels and Kazarian defeated Bully Ray and Sting by DQ in 10:06 in a non-title match. Ray was really hamming it up as a face, going so far as to start a Sting chant. Crowd was with him, though. Sting, wrestling with a t-shirt on, mainly threw clothesline during a rare in-ring appearance. Sting hit his splash on Kazarian and tried another, but Daniels pulled his partner out of the way and crotched Sting. Kazarian did their double slingshot moves on Sting, and Kazarian wrapped him up in a straight jacket choke. Daniels went to the top rope, but Sting threw him off Flair style. Ray's been a heel so long, it's easy to forget he's one of the greats at hot tag sequences. Daniels came up from behind Sting with the championship belt, and Ray went to give somebody a boot, but he hit Daniels. Then Kazarian went to the top rope aiming for Ray, but Sting shoved him out of the way and gave Daniels a big boot. Ray tried to use that as proof Sting could trust him, and they shook hands. Then Sting ordered Ray to get the tables, just like Ray used to tell Devon. Ray pulled out a table and gave Daniels a power bomb through it, resulting in a DQ. Ray and Sting posed together and the crowd ate this up. ***1/4

There was a package previewing the TNA heavyweight title match with Jeff Hardy and Aries. Hardy said he was going to complete his journey to redemption this weekend by winning the championship, and become the best wrestler on the planet.

Samoa Joe challenged Magnus to a TV title match at BFG. Magnus walked up to him and said the championship would belong to him after Sunday. Joe challenged him to a match tonight, but Magnus said Joe wasn't TV, he was. Magnus said he wanted to wait and let millions of people pay to watch him win a title. That's nice, but what does it have to do with Bound for Glory?

4. Miss Tessmacher defeated Gail Kim in 5:29 in a non-title match. No way in hell I can understand how these two got more time than Styles-Hernandez. Tessmacher's punches look

bad, but she can do high spots pretty well. She attempted a huracanrana, but Gail Kim turned it into a Liger Bomb. Kim went to the top rope, but Tessmacher rolled out of the way and gave her the Tess Shocker for the pin. Postmatch, Tara did a run-in and attacked Tessmacher, but Tessmacher gave her a Tess Shocker, as well. That's a hint of a title change. *1/2

Roode started to do a promo about his match with Hardy tonight when Storm walked in. Storm said he knew that Roode hit him from behind earlier tonight. They got into fisticuffs until King Mo ran in to break it up. The Roode-Storm dynamic feels like it peaked seven months ago. And know it just comes off as a feud that's running on fumes.

Hardy talked about his favorite BFG memory being the time he jumped off a ladder with a Swanton onto Abyss. The leap has now been embellished to 37 feet high. Guess it was in front of 93,000 fans in Detroit, as well.

Good tribute package of Sting being the first member of the TNA Hall of Fame. I just hope he doesn't come off looking like a fool on the very night he's formally inducted.

5. Jeff Hardy defeated Bobby Roode by DQ in 16:18. Among the early highlights were Hardy hitting a pescado and reversing a Roode suplex on the floor. Roode caught a blockbuster for a two count. Roode caught a hangman's neckbreaker for another near fall, then clamped on a sleeper hold. Roode held on awhile until Hardy forced him into the corner, then hit the Whisper in the Wind. Hardy hit a splash from the second rope for another two count. Roode spiked him with the Double R Spinebuster for a near fall. Roode attempted the superplex, but Hardy threw him down, then missed the Swanton. Roode nailed him with the spear for a good near fall. Roode attempted the Payoff, but Hardy caught the Twist of Fate. Hardy tried another, but Roode gave him a low blow like it was Friday Night Bellator action. Just like Eric Prindle, he was DQ'd. Hardy gave him a Twist of Fate just as Roode pulled out a chair. ***

Aries came out for an interview that came off like a poor man's C.M. Punk pipe bomb promo. He ripped up paper like it was supposed to be some script he was supposed to read, and said that he was tired of the company catering to Hardy. Crowd cheered that, which wasn't the desired reaction. Aries said that he had asked for new music and a new entrance, but the company was too busy making more Hardy videos. Time was apparently running short, so he had to cut the interview short, and said so. Hardy said his nuts hurt and his neck hurts, so Sunday he was going to kick his cocky ass. Aries allowed Hardy to leave the ring, then jumped him from behind and gave him a brainbuster to complete a long-teased heel turn.

SUMMARY: I'm not sure this was the show to give away so many potential PPV matches for free on a go-home show. Granted, the Roode-Hardy match left you wanting more. But it's funny how this build-up to BFG has ended up. The BFG series, overall, was solid with good booking and good matches. But the end result has been a TNA title match that's less attractive because Aries' title reign has been a disappointment. I'm not sure Hardy is the right challenger for him because Hardy almost certainly has to win the belt. Or else Aries will be a champion that stands outside the spotlight of the company's biggest star. And the booking flaws of the Roode-Storm program have been highlighted here and elsewhere. Storm should have taken the belt in March,

just as Roode should have won it last October. Now it seems like the drawing power of both men have been wasted, and the addition of King Mo won't bring it back. While the product overall is much better than last year, I think the few booking mistakes of 2012 will catch up with the company at their biggest show of the year.