

# Heart of Dixie tour: 2.4

October 20, 2025 | Mobile Civic Center Arena - Mobile, Alabama

## Show Opening

The screen snaps to life with a thunderous roar. "I Don't Wanna Stop" by Ozzy Osbourne blasts through the Mobile Civic Center, rattling the girders overhead. The crowd's a living wall of noise -- hands waving, beer sloshing, homemade signs flashing past the lens as the camera swoops through the sea of fans.

Signs flash across the screen: "THE SOUTH STILL FIGHTS DIRTY," "SUNNY SMILES, BROKEN NECKS," "OUTLAWS > TRUST FUND," and one massive hand-painted banner that just says MONEY BLEEDS TOO. The noise is pure chaos -- the kind that feels alive.

The camera banks low toward ringside, catching the shimmer of the ropes under the lights, then swings hard right -- slamming to a stop on the COMMENTATION STATION. Robbie Ray Carter sits poised behind the desk, headset locked in and eyes wide with the practiced grin of a man trying to wrangle lightning. Beside him, Angus Skaaland leans forward on his elbows, shades halfway down his nose, already smirking like he knows something filthy's about to happen.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"MOBILE, ALABAMA--THE HEART OF DIXIE IS BEATING LOUD TONIGHT, AND THIS IS IRON CITY WRESTLING!"

Angus Skaaland:

"Listen to this place, Robbie Ray! Smells like beer, sweat, and bad decisions--just the way I like it! We're deep down in the dirty South, baby, where the fights hit harder and the grudges last generations!"

RRC:

"You can feel it, Angus--the Foundry may be home, but this crowd? They're every bit as wild. The Civic Center is packed to the rafters, and Iron City is rollin' on strong through the Heart of Dixie!"

Angus (grinning wide):

"Mobile's got history, Robbie Ray. Fistfights on the docks, beer brawls in the bars, and now Iron City's here to give 'em the main event treatment! You couldn't fit more violence under one roof if you tried!"

The crowd surges again, the noise washing over the desk like thunder. Robbie Ray steadies himself, smiling straight into the camera as the opening sting fades into the hum of the house lights.

RRC (settling in as the noise dips):

"Now folks, if you were with us last week, you saw exactly how fast things can go off the rails in Iron City. The New Untouchables were in this ring, runnin' their mouths about Eric Dane Jr. and the Appalachian Outlaws -- and I mean runnin' 'em."

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Angus (snorting):

"Runnin' 'em, stompin' 'em, and buryin' every cousin twice removed. They called that family every kind of hillbilly you could fit between commercial breaks!"

RRC:

"They sure did. And before Jeffrey Daniels could finish his little poetry slam, Dane Jr. hit the ramp with Cherry Mae, Zeb, and Zeke James right behind him -- and the Outlaws weren't there to debate dialects, they came ready to throw fists."

Angus:

"Old-school brawl, Robbie Ray! Boots flyin', bodies everywhere -- that's the kinda Alabama welcome wagon I can get behind!"

RRC (smiling but firm):

"It was chaos until Lee Scott Rothlesberger -- in true New Untouchable fashion -- pulled out a fire extinguisher, blasted half the ring blind, and they made their getaway through the fog."

Angus (grinning ear to ear):

"Smart man. Cowardly, but smart. You don't win bar fights, you survive 'em."

RRC:

"Well, all I can tell you is every one of those names -- Dane Jr., the Outlaws, and the New Untouchables -- are here in Mobile tonight. And after last week's mess, you just get the feelin' something's bound to blow before the night's through."

Angus:

"Good. Let's light the fuse."

RRC (as the crowd buzz carries):

"And speaking of fireworks, last week had 'em in the ring too -- because Jesse 'Iron Kid' Collins just punched his ticket to the Heart of Dixie finale in Birmingham."

Angus (with mock disbelief):

"Yeah, the kid actually did it. He went toe-to-toe with Darian Darrington -- one half of the Trust Fund's golden goose tag team -- and somehow managed to come out with all his teeth and a W to boot!"

RRC:

"It was gutsy, it was scrappy, and it was everything Iron City's about. Darian had Todderick Davenport III whisperin' in his ear, he had every trick in the book, but Jesse fought through it. And now, folks, it's official -- Collins will challenge TD3 for the Iron Crown when this Heart of Dixie tour rolls into Birmingham."

Angus (rolling his eyes):

"Big whoop. The Iron Kid wins one match and suddenly he's slayin' dragons? TD3's got more money, more

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muscle, and a better tailor. You can't buy heart, Robbie Ray, but you sure can crush it."

RRC (with that steady southern pride):

"Don't sell him short, Angus. Collins has made a career outta being counted out -- and every time, he just keeps swingin'. The kid's got a date with destiny, and it's got Todderick Davenport's name on it."

Angus (smirking):

"Yeah, and destiny's got a price tag. You think TD3's gonna walk into Birmingham without a plan? He's probably got three lawyers, two Grapplerz, and a velvet robe for every round of champagne."

RRC (chuckling):

"Maybe so. But if last week's any proof, Jesse Collins isn't afraid of the odds -- or the arrogance. That win over Darian Darrington wasn't luck, it was a statement. The Iron Kid's coming to cash in, and it's only a matter of time before Trust Fund feels that heat."

Crowd pops again at the mention of Jesse's name -- a chant of "IRON KID! IRON KID!" echoing faintly through the Civic Center as the camera catches a few fans pounding the rail in rhythm.

RRC (nodding toward the ring):

"Well folks, it looks like we've got some official business to handle -- and judging by what I'm seein' in there, it's the kind of business that only ends one way."

Angus (grinning):

"With fists or lawyers, Robbie Ray. Either way, it's about to get loud."

Camera cuts to the ring.

A black cloth-covered table sits center ring with the Iron City logo stamped across it. Two leather folders and a fountain pen rest neatly on top. A short podium stands behind it, and behind that -- microphone in hand, sleeves rolled to the elbows -- is Eric Dane Sr. The crowd gives a solid hometown-style pop at the sight of him back in command, his presence enough to quiet the buzz.

Eric Dane (steady, authoritative):

"Mobile, Alabama--how the hell we doin' tonight?"

Big cheer. Dane smirks, nodding along as he waits for it to die down.

Eric Dane:

"Now, I've been in this business long enough to know that when you've got two men on a collision course, you can either wait for it to blow up... or you can get out in front of it and try to steer the wreck yourself."

He taps the table lightly with his knuckles.

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Eric Dane:

"This here? This is me trying. What we've got in front of us is a contract -- the official paperwork for the Iron Crown Championship match at the Heart of Dixie finale in Birmingham. Jesse Collins. Todderick Davenport the Third. One man chasing his dream, the other sittin' on a gold-plated ego the size of the state line."

The crowd pops at the mention of TD3, booing loudly. Dane's grin tilts just enough to show a hint of satisfaction.

Eric Dane:

"I told the front office I'd handle this one personally. Because if we're gonna do business in my ring, it's gonna be done clean. No sneak attacks, no loaded briefcases, no Grapplerz hidin' under the apron. This is about that championship, and that's it."

He leans forward on the podium, tone lowering, the weight of his voice cutting through the crowd noise.

Eric Dane:

"So let's get it started the right way. First up -- the challenger. The kid who earned his shot fair and square. Mobile, you know the name -- give it up for Jesse 'Iron Kid' Collins!"

Cue Jesse's entrance music as the camera swings to the aisle, the crowd lighting up with cheers and streamers as the Iron Kid steps through the curtain, eyes locked on the ring.

The opening riff of "Iron Will" hits the speakers, and the crowd comes alive -- stomping feet and clapping hands in time with the beat. Jesse "Iron Kid" Collins bursts through the curtain, Birmingham patch stitched proudly on his trunks, that blue-collar defiance written all over his face. He slaps a few hands at the rail before locking eyes with the ring and heading straight down the aisle.

RRC (over the roar):

"Listen to this reaction, Angus! You can feel it -- this crowd's behind the Iron Kid every step of the way. He earned his shot the hard way, and tonight he's here to make it official."

Angus (leaning in, half-smirk):

"Yeah, yeah, the people love him. Course they do -- they see a little of themselves in him. Work hard, fight uphill, get punched in the mouth for your trouble. Only difference is, when TD3 punches you in the mouth, you don't get back up."

RRC:

"You've been sayin' that for weeks, and Jesse keeps provin' you wrong. He's beaten bigger, stronger, richer -- and if heart counts for anything in this business, the man's already halfway to that Iron Crown."

Angus:

"Heart don't buy insurance, Robbie Ray. Trust Fund's got lawyers on retainer and the Grapplerz on standby. Jesse better bring more than good intentions to Birmingham."

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In the ring, Jesse climbs the steps, pauses at the apron, and takes a breath before stepping through the ropes. The fans chant "IRON KID! IRON KID!" as he crosses to the table. Dane meets him halfway with a nod and extends his hand.

Jesse takes it without hesitation -- firm, respectful -- and the handshake draws a fresh pop from the crowd.

RRC:

"That right there's what Iron City Wrestling's built on -- respect, earned and returned. Eric Dane knows what this kid's been through to get here."

Angus (under his breath):

"Yeah, and he also knows the poor bastard's about to sign his own death warrant."

Dane releases the handshake and gestures toward the empty chair at the table. Jesse nods, circling around to take his seat, eyes fixed on the second folder -- the one waiting for Todderick Davenport III.

The crowd's still buzzing when the house lights suddenly dim to gold and champagne white. A voice oozing arrogance cuts through the PA system like it's echoing from a country club patio.

? "All I Do Is Win" by DJ Khaled hits the speakers.

The boos hit just as hard.

RRC (dry):

"Oh boy... and here comes the corporate cavalry."

Angus (grinning wide):

"Cavalry? Nah, Robbie Ray -- this is the Trust Fund Parade! Look at 'em, baby! Style, money, and bad intentions wrapped up in designer fabric!"

Through the curtain struts Todderick Davenport III, dripping smugness in a three-piece white suit so loud it practically blinds the first three rows. The Iron Crown Championship gleams across his shoulder like it was minted just for him. His smile could buy a state senate seat.

Right behind him: Jacoby Jacobs, phone already up and streaming to his thousands of followers, narrating the moment as he goes.

Jacoby (into the phone, shouting over the boos):

"Trust Fund Nation, we are live in the Mobile Civic Center -- and the peasants are already restless! Look at this dump, man -- we're out here doin' charity work just showin' up!"

Darian Darrington follows last, dressed like a Miami crypto-bro's fever dream -- loud sunglasses indoors, pastel blazer, and too many gold chains clinking as he gestures with a vape pen he's definitely not supposed

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to have ringside.

Darian (shouting to nobody and everybody):

"Hey, I checked the blockchain, boys -- the odds on Jesse Collins are tanking! Man's portfolio's about to crash hard!"

Angus (snickering):

"I have no clue what that means, but I'm a big fan of the energy."

RRC:

"It means the Trust Fund's as insufferable as ever. They're showboatin' down here like it's prom night at the yacht club."

TD3 saunters up the ring steps slow, milking every second of the spotlight. He pauses on the apron, looks out at the jeering crowd, and mouths the words "You're welcome." Jacoby spins his phone around for a panoramic shot, smirking, while Darian waves a folded stack of hundred-dollar bills at a fan in the front row.

RRC:

"Just look at 'em, Angus. Arrogance made flesh."

Angus (delighted):

"And money well spent! TD3's walkin' like a man who's never lost a bet -- because he doesn't. He hedges 'em."

Inside the ring, Dane's posture tightens as the music fades. TD3 circles the table once, flashing a too-wide grin at Jesse Collins before stepping up to the mic already waiting for him. Darian lounges against the ropes, and Jacoby keeps the stream live, panning between Jesse, Dane, and TD3 like he's filming a reality show.

RRC (under his breath):

"If you could bottle smugness, that man'd be an oil baron."

Angus:

"And we'd all be rich, Robbie Ray. You're just jealous of the drip."

TD3 adjusts his cuffs, the Iron Crown catching the light just right as he leans toward the mic, smirk locked and loaded.

TD3 (smirking into the mic):

"Well... would you look at this picture?"

He spreads his arms wide, basking in the noise -- half boos, half scattered cheers from the irony crowd who can't help but admire the showmanship.

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TD3:

"Eric Dane, standing there in his little authority stance, pretending to be impartial. The Iron Kid, sittin' across the table like he just got called to the principal's office. And me? Well... I'm exactly where I belong -- center stage, Iron Crown on my shoulder, spotlight dead center, and not a bead of sweat on me."

The crowd boos. TD3 adjusts his tie, unbothered.

TD3:

"Let's not waste time. I didn't come to Mobile to soak up the humidity or rub elbows with people who think 'diversified assets' means ownin' a truck and a boat. I came here to make it official -- to remind you, Jesse, and every other blue-collar dreamer in this building... that fairy tales don't pay dividends."

RRC (on commentary):

"Oh, come on."

Angus (laughing):

"He's not wrong though. Fairy tales go broke quick!"

TD3 (continuing):

"You see, Jesse -- you've had yourself a cute little run. You beat Darian, and congratulations, really. That's adorable. You earned yourself a golden ticket to Birmingham. But what you don't seem to understand is that your story doesn't end with triumph. It ends exactly the way it always does for people like you -- with disappointment, and a view from the cheap seats."

He looks straight at Jesse, dropping the tone from mockery to something colder -- almost businesslike.

TD3:

"You can't outwork me, Jesse. You can't outthink me. You can't outspend me. Hell, you can't even outshine me. You're the kind of guy that thinks heart and hustle still matter in 2025, and I'm the kind of man that buys the company before the doors open."

Jacoby's camera is right up on TD3's face now, and he grins into it.

TD3:

"Clip that."

Darian (in the background):

"Already minted, boss. NFT rights secured!"

TD3 (snapping back to Jesse):

"So go ahead, kid. Sit there with that scrappy little grin and that chip on your shoulder. You've got guts, I'll give you that. But guts don't win titles -- leverage does. And I've got it all. The Iron Crown. The Grapplerz. The Trust Fund. The future. And when the dust settles in Birmingham... you'll just be another investment that

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didn't pan out."

He lays the Iron Crown across the table right in front of Jesse, the gold glinting in the overhead lights like a taunt.

TD3 (softly, into the mic):

"So go ahead, Iron Kid... sign the dotted line. Just make sure you know what you're signing away."

He smirks and slides the contract folder toward Jesse, the crowd booing loud enough to shake the barricades. Darian mockingly fans himself with a hundred-dollar bill while Jacoby keeps the phone pointed right at Jesse's face.

RRC (at commentary):

"The arrogance of this man is unreal."

Angus:

"Unreal? It's beautiful, Robbie Ray. Confidence like that's why the man's holdin' gold!"

Jesse stares down at the Iron Crown lying on the table. The crowd's roaring, trying to will him on. He doesn't flinch. Instead, he runs a hand through his hair, pushes the mic a little closer, and lets the noise settle on its own. When he finally speaks, his voice cuts through clean and steady.

Jesse Collins:

"You done?"

The crowd pops instantly. TD3 leans back with a little smirk, waving a hand like "go ahead."

Jesse (nodding):

"Good. 'Cause I've been listenin' to you flap your gums for months, Todderick. Every time you open that mouth, it's the same thing -- money this, leverage that, legacy, dynasty, blah blah blah. You talk like you built this place. Truth is, you ain't built a damn thing."

Crowd roars again -- big "IRON KID!" chant building.

Jesse:

"This company wasn't made in a boardroom. It was made in sweat and blood and busted knuckles. It was made by people who had nothin' but a dream and a ring to fight for. People like me. People who didn't have silver spoons, just steel-toed boots and stubborn hearts."

TD3 scoffs and mimes playing a violin. Jesse catches it -- smirks, but doesn't let up.

Jesse:

"You say I can't outwork you? Buddy, that's all I do. I've been outworking people like you my whole life. You

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were born into money; I was born into a fight. And every time somebody like you told me I wasn't enough, I got up and proved 'em wrong. So go ahead, keep the custom suits and the credit cards -- I'll take grit and scars any day."

The crowd erupts, chanting "LET'S GO JESSE!" as he stands up from his chair. His energy rises with the noise, eyes locked on TD3.

Jesse:

"You can buy your way into headlines. You can buy your way into gold. But you can't buy heart. You can't buy respect. You can't buy what's about to happen in Birmingham. Because at the Heart of Dixie finale, when that bell rings, and it's just me and you? Money don't talk, Todderick. It bleeds."

The pop is massive. Jesse snatches up the pen, scribbles his name across the contract, and slams it shut. The crowd's on their feet, chanting "IRON KID! IRON KID!" while TD3 glares daggers across the table.

RRC (pounding the desk):

"That's the fire, baby! Jesse Collins just signed his name and drew the battle lines for Birmingham!"

Angus (half-laughing, half-impressed):

"Yeah, but the problem with pokin' a rich man, Robbie Ray, is he's got time -- and paid help -- to poke back."

In the ring, Jesse never breaks eye contact. Dane steps between them, keeping a hand on each man's shoulder, as the tension reaches a knife's edge.

Jesse's signature still glistens in ink when TD3 slowly looks down at it, then back up at him with a smirk that could curdle milk. The crowd's still on its feet, chanting "IRON KID!" as TD3 picks up the pen and twirls it between his fingers like it's worth more than Jesse's car.

TD3 (mock applause):

"Beautiful. Really. You signed your name like a grown-up. You even got through a whole speech without crying -- I'm proud of you, sport."

He leans forward over the table, tone dripping condescension.

TD3:

"But let me tell you something, Jesse. You're right about one thing -- this place was built on sweat and blood. Problem is... it's your sweat, your blood, and my company."

Boos cascade from the crowd. TD3 doesn't blink -- he just sets the pen down, straightens his cufflinks, and slides the contract toward himself.

TD3:

"You think this is destiny? Nah. This is debt. And just like every other broke kid who steps into my world,

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you're gonna pay it with interest."

He scrawls his name across the line in one sharp motion, then snaps the pen shut with a click that sounds final. The crowd rains down boos as he picks up the Iron Crown from the table and slings it casually over his shoulder.

TD3 (smirking):

"You wanted this so bad, Jesse? You should've read the fine print."

He takes one slow step closer, almost nose-to-nose with Jesse now, his voice dropping to a venomous whisper the mic still picks up.

TD3:

"Because you don't belong in my ring, you don't belong in my company... and you damn sure don't belong in my league."

That's it. Jesse snaps.

The crowd explodes as Jesse rears back and CRACK! lands a right hand straight to TD3's jaw! TD3 stumbles back into the table, the Iron Crown falling with a clatter. The arena ERUPTS.

RRC (shouting over the chaos):

"Collins just decked him! Jesse Collins just popped the champ right in the mouth!"

Angus (laughing hysterically):

"Oh, he's done it now! You don't hit money, Robbie Ray -- money HITS BACK!"

TD3's reeling -- and Jesse's not done. He lunges in, grabs a handful of TD3's suit jacket, and fires off two more hard shots to the head! The crowd's in a frenzy, chanting "IRON KID! IRON KID!" as TD3 staggers toward the ropes.

Then, out of nowhere--

Jacoby Jacobs and Darian Darrington hit the ring like sharks smelling blood.

RRC:

"The Grapplerz! The Trust Fund Tag Champs have hit the ring!"

Jacoby blasts Jesse from behind with a clubbing forearm to the back of the neck. Darian follows with a blindside knee to the ribs that drops the Iron Kid hard across the table. The crowd's booing so loud the roof's rattling.

Angus:

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"And that's why you don't poke the brand, Robbie Ray! That's asset protection in action!"

Jesse tries to fight back, swinging wildly, but the numbers overwhelm him. Jacoby and Darian drag him up by both arms and sling him chest-first into the table, snapping it in half. The papers scatter across the ring, the contract crumpled under Jesse's body.

TD3 straightens his jacket, rubbing his jaw, and waves the Grapplerz off just long enough to step over Jesse.

TD3 (into the mic, coldly):

"You wanted your moment, kid. Congratulations... it's over."

He drops the mic beside Jesse's head, then raises the Iron Crown high over his shoulder while the Grapplerz pose on either side, their custom belts glinting in the light.

RRC (furious):

"This is a damn mugging! Jesse Collins signs his name like a man, and Trust Fund turns it into a hit job!"

Angus:

"Hey, he threw the first punch, Robbie Ray! Actions have consequences -- and this one comes with compound interest!"

The camera lingers on Jesse writhing in the wreckage of the table as TD3 and the Grapplerz pose smugly behind him. Boos rain down from every corner of the Mobile Civic Center as Eric Dane steps forward, eyes blazing, barking orders for security to clear the ring.

Before Robbie Ray can finish his thought, the crowd detonates. The curtains don't just part--they explode open, and THE BROTHERS GLUCK come barreling out like a pair of freight trains looking for a collision. No music. No pyro. Just thunder under boots and murder in their eyes.

RRC:

"WHAT IN SAM HILL--THAT'S THE GLUCKS! THE GLUCKS ARE HERE IN MOBILE!"

Angus:

"They weren't even booked! They weren't even scheduled! Somebody stop 'em before they--"

Too late. The Glucks hit the ring like a storm. Todderick Davenport III catches one glimpse of them over his shoulder and dives through the ropes to safety, his paisley suit flapping like a parachute. The Rich Young Grapplerz aren't so lucky.

Carlton snatches Jacoby Jacobs off his feet in one brutal motion--COUNTRY STRONG GLUCKPLEX! The impact shakes the ring, Jacobs bouncing halfway across it before he even lands. Darian Darrington charges in like a linebacker--bad idea. T-BONE GLUCKPLEX! Darian nearly hits the ceiling.

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RRC:

"The Glucks are suplexing seven shades of sin out of the Grapplerz!"

Angus:

"Somebody fine these maniacs!"

RRC:

"Oh sure, when the Trust Fund jumps people it's heat, but when the Glucks do it it's a crime!"

Angus:

"Exactly!"

Carlton doesn't even hear him. He scoops Darian again, throws him across the ring with a Throwing German Gluckplex that lands him tangled in the ropes. Chapps vaults onto the second turnbuckle, springs backward, and smashes down with the Bigger Splash across Jacobs just for punctuation. The ring booms like a shotgun blast.

RRC: "The Trust Fund just got liquidated, brother!"

Security floods the ring, but they're five seconds too late and five men too short. The Grapplerz bail out in a heap of gold chains and panic, hitting the floor like overstuffed duffel bags. Toddy's already halfway up the ramp, clutching his Trust Fund International Title to his chest like a security blanket.

Carlton drops to a knee beside Jesse Collins, checking on him amid the wreckage. Chapps leans over the top rope, pointing at the retreating Grapplerz and bellowing into the void:

Chapps Gluck: "That's yer investment portfolio right there--LIQUIDATED ASSETS!"

RRC:

"Ha-ha! Business is closed, baby!"

Angus:

"Closed?! That was an ambush! Somebody call the SEC--Security Enforcement Committee!"

The crowd's still roaring when the house mic cracks to life. The voice cuts through the bedlam like a gunshot.

Eric Dane Sr.:

"Unbelievable. I turn my back for five minutes and my show turns into a demolition derby. You boys want to throw fists before the bell? Fine. But around here, I decide when the fights happen."

He pauses as the crowd starts to roar again, feeding off it, letting his promoter instincts take over.

Eric Dane Sr.:

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"But since the ring's still standing and the people of Mobile paid to see a main event--let's give 'em one. Tonight, right here--Jesse Collins and the Brothers Gluck versus The Trust Fund! Trios rules, sanctioned, and official!"

RRRRAAHHHHHHHHHHH!!!

Dane lowers the mic, smirking just slightly at the wave of noise, satisfied he's wrestled the chaos back under his control.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"OH, IT'S HAPPENING TONIGHT! RIGHT HERE IN MOBILE!"

Angus Skaaland:

"This place is comin' apart, Carter! We're gonna need a bigger building--and maybe a bigger insurance policy!"

## Sunny Holiday & Jenn Tinsley vs Las Reinas de Sangre

Cut to the announce desk. "ICW Women's Tag Team Action" graphic flashes across the screen.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Folks, we've got tag team action coming up next--Sunny Holiday teaming with the new kid on the block, Jenn Tinsley, against the sisters of blood, Reinas de Sangre. This one's got a lotta moving pieces, partner."

Angus Skaaland:

"Yeah, and they all come with bad blood! Last week, Valeria Cruz went to war with Astrid Reichert, and Astrid had her beat clean until Celestina stuck her nose in and got her sister disqualified. Then here comes Sunny Holiday tryin' to play hero--she runs in, makes the save--and what happens? Astrid thanks her by laying her flat!"

Robbie Ray Carter:

"And when the Reinas went in for the kill, Jenn Tinsley hit that ring like a woman possessed, swinging a chair and chasing them out. It was her first big moment in ICW, and now she's got her first big test."

Angus Skaaland:

"She's about to find out the difference between chasin' 'em off and beatin' 'em between the ropes, Robbie Ray."

Crimson and gold lights fill the arena. "Sangre, Honor, Gloria" echoes through the speakers.

Celestina Cruz emerges first, moving with deliberate grace. Valeria follows--slower, heavier--and the camera zooms in on the white tape wound tight across her ribs.

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Robbie Ray Carter:

"And look at that, Angus. Valeria's ribs are taped tight--probably a souvenir from that scorpion body crunch Astrid pulled on her last week. You remember that hold--Astrid wrapped her up chest-to-chest, arms and legs snaked through, and just squeezed the air outta her."

Angus Skaaland:

"Yeah, looked like a damn snake eatin' its dinner. Most folks would've been done right there, but Valeria Cruz don't quit easy. The Reinas might be hurt, but they ain't helpless."

"Walkin' on Sunshine" by Katrina and the Waves hits. The crowd cheers as Sunny Holiday bursts through the curtain, all energy and charisma, followed by Jenn Tinsley--smiling but visibly nervous. Sunny slaps hands with fans down the aisle; Jenn hangs just behind, taking in the noise, feeding off the moment.

In the ring, the Reinas back off into their corner, Celestina whispering strategy into her sister's ear.

DING DING!

Jenn steps forward to start for her team, bouncing on her toes. Celestina tilts her head, smirks, and reaches for a collar-and-elbow.

Jenn ducks low--arm drag! Celestina rolls through, pops up, charges--another arm drag! Then a dropkick right on the button!

Celestina tumbles into the corner and powders out under the bottom rope.

RAAAHHH!

Robbie Ray Carter:

"That's the same spark we saw in her debut last week! Tinsley's not intimidated at all."

Angus Skaaland:

"She better not get cocky. Celestina's been doing this since before Jenn finished high school."

Celestina huddles with Valeria outside, gesturing that she wants a tag. Valeria nods and slaps her shoulder on the way back in.

Valeria stomps into the ring, expression hard, hand brushing her taped ribs as she sizes Jenn up. They circle--lock up--Valeria just shoves Jenn to the mat.

Jenn pops up, tries again--Valeria powers her into the corner and buries a knee to the gut.

THUD!

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Another! Jenn gasps. Valeria grabs her wrist and whips her hard into the opposite buckle--WHAM!--and follows with a crushing clothesline.

Angus Skaaland:

"Even with busted ribs, Valeria's a truck!"

She goes for a backbreaker--Jenn twists free in mid-air! Valeria spins, clutching her ribs--Jenn ducks a lariat, rebounds off the ropes--

CRACK!

Snap German suplex! The crowd pops as Valeria folds over, clutching her midsection.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Ohh, that one hit those ribs hard! I think Tinsley just gave Valeria a receipt from Astrid Reichert!"

Jenn scrambles and dives for the corner--

TAG!

The crowd roars as Sunny steps through the ropes, pointing at Valeria. Valeria shoves up to her feet, defiant despite the pain.

Sunny charges--CLOTHESLINE! Valeria staggers up--another! Then Sunny scoops her clean off the mat and plants her with a belly-to-belly suplex!

BOOOM!

Angus Skaaland:

"Holiday's throwin' her around like luggage!"

Sunny hooks Valeria up again--vertical suplex! Holds her high--drops her! Valeria arches up clutching her ribs. Celestina screams for a tag.

Sunny stalks forward, grabs Valeria by the hair--Valeria reaches out blindly--

TAG! Celestina slaps her shoulder and springs to the top rope!

Celestina leaps--flying arm drag! Sunny stumbles! Celestina charges--tilt-a-whirl headscissors! Sunny drops to a knee, surprised. Celestina bounds off the ropes--step-up enzuigiri!

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Whoa! Celestina Cruz just rocked Sunny Holiday! That's the first time we've seen anyone try straight lucha

## Heart of Dixie tour: 2.4

libre against her!"

Angus Skaaland:

"Maybe there's a method to the madness--don't try to out-muscle the muscle!"

Celestina rushes again--Sunny catches her!

WHAM! JOY--RIDE--POUNCE! Celestina crashes halfway across the ring, rolling into her corner.

RAAAHHH!

Sunny nods to Jenn--tag!

Jenn hops in over the top rope, full of energy. She hits a running forearm--Celestina reels back. Arm drag! Then Jenn kips up and charges for her handspring--

WHAM!

Valeria kicks Jenn square in the back from the apron!

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Cheap shot by Valeria Cruz!"

Celestina pounces immediately--running knee to the face! Jenn crashes to the mat clutching her jaw.

Angus Skaaland:

"And that's what happens when you take your eyes off the enemy! The Reinas are not here to make friends, Robbie Ray!"

Celestina drags Jenn to the Reinas' corner, tags in Valeria. The referee shouts warnings but the sisters ignore him, cutting the ring clean in half as the crowd starts to rally--

"LET'S GO JE-ENN!" \*clap clap clapclapclap\*

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Tinsley's in trouble now. The Reinas are veterans--they know how to isolate a rookie, keep her far away from Sunny Holiday!"

Angus Skaaland:

"Yep, we're in the deep end now. Let's see if the kid can swim."

Celestina grabs a handful of Jenn's hair, yanks her toward the Reinas' corner, and slaps Valeria's hand.

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TAG!

Valeria steps through the ropes, her ribs bandaged tight, jaw set in fury. She drives a knee into Jenn's gut, then another, leaning her into the corner. Celestina holds Jenn's arms behind the turnbuckles as Valeria lays in forearm after forearm until the referee hits a four-count. Valeria steps back with both hands raised, smirking. Then she rams her shoulder into Jenn's midsection again anyway.

THUD!

THUD!

Robbie Ray Carter:

"They're using that five-count like a stopwatch, Angus. Total control."

Angus Skaaland:

"That's tag wrestling, Carter. Isolate, suffocate, and make the other side watch."

Valeria drags Jenn down by the hair, hooks a leg--lateral press!

ONE! TWO!--kickout!

Valeria grits her teeth, sits Jenn up, and cinches in a tight rear chinlock, wrenching her back across that bad ribcage. The crowd begins to rally.

"LET'S GO JE-ENN!" \*clap clap clapclapclap\*

Jenn pushes up on her knees, arms trembling. Valeria jerks her backward again, sneering toward Sunny in the corner. Sunny slaps the turnbuckle pad and shouts encouragement.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Sunny Holiday's trying to will her partner back to life here. Tinsley's taken a pounding but she hasn't quit."

Angus Skaaland:

"Not yet. But the Reinas are like a vice--once they get ahold of you, good luck prying 'em off."

Jenn drives an elbow backward--once, twice--into Valeria's taped ribs! Valeria hisses in pain, loosens the hold, and Jenn hits the ropes--only to get flattened by a back elbow!

Valeria staggers, holding her side, then drags Jenn by the wrist back to her corner.

TAG! Celestina vaults over the top rope, dropping a double-axe handle onto Jenn's spine.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Beautiful tag precision from the Reinas! Valeria's power, Celestina's precision--this is what makes them so

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dangerous."

Celestina locks in a body scissors from behind, arching back into a dragon sleeper variation. Jenn's boots scrape at the mat, hands reaching out desperately.

Angus Skaaland:

"She's not trying to make her tap, she's trying to make her panic. Break the rhythm, make her forget where she is."

The referee checks on Jenn--she waves him off, twisting, rolling to her stomach. Celestina transitions instantly into a grounded hammerlock, torquing the arm. She drags Jenn closer to the heel corner, reaches out--another tag to Valeria.

Valeria steps through the ropes, still grimacing with every breath. She stomps Jenn's ribs, then hauls her up into a gutwrench lift--her bad ribs flaring again. She can't hold it long--Jenn kicks her legs and drops behind!

Robbie Ray Carter:

"She slipped free! Jenn Tinsley looking for daylight--"

Jenn lunges--Valeria snatches her ankle just inches from Sunny's outstretched hand.

Jenn hops on one leg, spins--ENZUIGIRI!

Valeria drops to one knee clutching her head!

RAAAAHHHH!

Jenn dives--TAG!

The crowd erupts as Sunny barrels in like a freight train!

Clothesline!

Another!

Celestina runs in--Sunny snatches her out of midair and hurls her with an overhead suplex!

Valeria charges, wild and desperate--Sunny meets her with a running powerslam!

Robbie Ray Carter:

"The powerhouse of the women's division is cleaning house!"

Sunny roars to the crowd, then turns back to Valeria, hauling her up by the hair. She hoists her between the legs, hooks the arms--

Angus Skaaland:

"She's setting up for the Sunshine Bomb!"

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*But as she lifts--Celestina's back on her feet! She slides out to the floor, snatches her kendo stick from beneath the apron, and loops it around Jenn's neck from behind!*

*Jenn gags, hands clawing at the stick. Celestina yells up at Sunny:*

Celestina Cruz:

"Drop her or I break her throat!"

*The crowd's noise rises into chaos. Sunny freezes, halfway into the powerbomb position. The referee's shouting, trying to get Celestina to release.*

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Celestina's choking out Tinsley with that kendo stick! Sunny's caught between saving her partner and finishing the match!"

*And then--*

*RAHHHHHHHHH!*

*A blur vaults the barricade--Sam Gardner! Jeans, hoodie, no gear--just fury. She grabs the kendo stick, rips it out of Celestina's hands! Celestina spins on her, screaming in Spanish; Sam screams right back, pointing the stick in her face.*

*Security floods the aisle, confused--half think it's a fan invasion.*

Angus Skaaland:

"Who the hell - is that some fan?"

Robbie Ray Carter:

"That's Sam Gardner, Angus, but she's only got a developmental contract, she's not supposed to be here! She's Jenn Tinsley's old tag partner from the indies!"

Angus Skaaland:

"Well then what the crap's she doing here?!"

In the confusion, Valeria drops out of Sunny's grasp, slips behind--SCHOOLBOY!

ONE!

TWO!

THREE!

DING DING DING!

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Robbie Ray Carter:

"Valeria Cruz just stole it! The Reinas steal one from the jaws of defeat--Sunny Holiday's first loss in ICW!"

Valeria rolls out, clutching her ribs, Celestina grabs her arm, and they stagger up the ramp shouting defiance. Jenn is still coughing, Sam still arguing with security, Sunny pacing the ring in disbelief.

The bell's still ringing as the Reinas bail out of the ring clutching each other. Sam's arguing with security, Sunny's on one knee, and Jenn's holding her throat.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"This place has come unglued! We've got bodies everywhere--Holiday's down, Tinsley can barely breathe, Gardner's in the middle of it, and the Reinas are limping out with the biggest win of their careers!"

The house lights dip without warning. The crowd starts buzzing.

Angus Skaaland:

"...Oh no. Oh no, not now--"

A lone figure steps through the curtain--broad-shouldered, head held high, eyes fixed on the chaos. No music. No theatrics. Just the sound of her boots echoing off the ramp.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"It's Duchess Vaughn! And judging by that look, she's not here to talk."

Duchess slides into the ring. Sunny barely makes it to her feet before Duchess spins--

CRACK!

Spinning backfist right to the jaw! Sunny drops like a felled tree.

Jenn turns, wide-eyed--PUMPHANDLE SLAM! The ring shakes on impact.

Sam charges, swinging half the broken kendo stick--Duchess catches it mid-swing, rips it free, and smashes Sam across the spine! Sam crumples to the mat with a sharp cry.

Celestina tries to drag Valeria away from the carnage; Duchess seizes her by the hair, lifts her clean off the floor--PENDULUM BACKBREAKER! Celestina rolls out, clutching her back.

Angus Skaaland:

"She's destroying everybody! There's no rhyme or reason--she's just on a rampage!"

Jenn stirs, dazed, crawling toward the ropes. Duchess crouches behind her, eyes narrowing. She steps in, snakes her arm under Jenn's chin--cobra clutch locked tight.

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Jenn flails, tapping frantically--but Duchess doesn't release. She hauls Jenn upright, shaking her like a rag doll, then drags her down to the mat, legs snapping around her waist into a body triangle.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"She's got that Garrison Lock cinched in--she's trying to tear Tinsley apart!"

Duchess wrenches back, the choke deepening. Jenn's taps turn frantic, then slow. Officials and security swarm the ring; two grab Duchess's arms, prying at the hold--she refuses to let go.

Finally, four of them pile on, forcing her to break the grip. Jenn slumps to the mat gasping for air.

Duchess surges back up and floors two guards with wild forearms. The rest tackle her to the ground, barely managing to restrain her as she thrashes and roars.

Angus Skaaland:

"This is absolute bedlam! Duchess Vaughn has lost her damn mind!"

The crowd suddenly parts down the aisle as Eric Dane Sr. storms out, fury written across his face.

Eric Dane Sr.:

"Enough! Get her out of there! Get them all up and on their feet--because I'm done watching this disaster!"

Security hauls Duchess upright, still snarling, dragging her up the ramp as she spits curses back at the ring. Sunny's pulling herself up with the ropes, Sam and Celestina rolling out to the floor, and Jenn lying motionless in the center.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Dane's calling every one of them to his office. He's had it with the chaos, and frankly, who can blame him?"

Angus Skaaland:

"If this division survives the next ten minutes, it'll be a miracle."

Camera lingers on the wrecked ring--Jenn gasping for breath, officials checking on Sunny--before fading to black.

## The last stone in the road

*BACKSTAGE -- CAMERA OPENS ON THE BROTHERS GLUCK striding down the hallway with purpose. Carlton is composed but seething; Chapps is breathing like a bull ready to charge.*

*They turn a corner -- and standing there are TD3, JACOBY, and DARIAN. The Trust Fund are mid-conversation. Jacoby, of course, is livestreaming.*

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Carlton Gluck:

Well then, boys. Tell us again how we ain't done nothin' t' earn our title shots. We're listenin'.

Jacoby Jacobs: (still to his phone, not even looking at Carlton)

Chat, look who it is -- the Mudflat Mountain Men. Big Waffle House energy. Anyway, like I was SAYIN'--

Darian Darrington: (cuts in, overconfident)

Legally speakin', that wasn't a certified number one contender match. It was, uh... a handshake agreement. You can't just handshake yourself into a title shot. That's not how markets work. You gotta, you know -- diversify your victories.

Carlton: (eyes narrowing)

Of course.

Darian: smug, oblivious)

Bottom line? TNT ain't proven. You beat some middle-of-the-road, respectable, fine tag team -- congrats. But y'all didn't beat value. You beat... potential. At best.

Jacobs: (finally lifting his eyes from the phone, piling on with roast swagger)

Yeah -- Mid Notch Team. Nobody tunes in for 'em. I've had TikTok Lives with more engagement than their entire fanbase. Beat somebody that draws, then maybe we'll talk. Until then? Ratio city.

Chapps is vibrating with murder energy. Carlton's jaw flexes. But--

Jacoby keeps talking -- but suddenly Chapps starts laughing. Not happy laughter. The ominous kind. Chapps points behind the Trust Fund.

Jacobs: (confused)

What? What's funny?

The Trust Fund turn as one. Behind them stands TOP NOTCH TEAM. Derek = stone-faced, arms folded. Cameron = smirking like "please keep talking."

Cameron West: (calm, amused)

Don't let us interrupt. You were on a roll.

Jacobs: (into his phone, trying to save face)

Chat, don't clip that. This is outta context--

Derek Hayes (cold, quiet, deadly serious)

Say it again, son.

Jacobs: (backpedals instantly, hands up -- but still trying to sound in control)

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Hey, hey -- no shade! Just saying numbers don't lie, and y'all aren't trending--

Carlton steps forward. TNT step forward. The Trust Fund realize they are outnumbered and out of room. The walls close in. The air changes.

Todderick Davenport III: (raises a hand -- calm, composed, voice like a scalpel)

Gentlemen... before this turns into a lawsuit and a hospital visit, let's all take a breath. Because if the three of us are "too injured" to make it to Heart of Dixie, then there is no Trust Fund Tag Team Championship match on the PPV. No title defense. No payday. Nor, for that matter, will there be a Trust Fund International Title defense either. And you know exactly who Eric Dane Sr. will punish for that tragedy.

Chapps Gluck:

Ah think we'll live. Now c'mere, cityboy.

*Toddy takes a half step back, but it's unnecessary - Carlton reaches out and blocks Chapps from advancing further.*

Carlton:

Chapps, Ah don't like lettin' 'em walk either, but we could use the payday.

Chapps remains rigid, death glare locked on the Trust Fund.

Carlton:

And th' audience, Chapps. We tear 'em apart now we feel good. We wait a week, we still feel good, we make more money, we prove more, an' they hate it more. It'll be for the best, you'll see.

Chapps inhales loudly, exhales slow, and steps back. Jacoby, finding confidence now that Toddy gave him cover, pulls out a wad of cash and waves it in Cameron's face.

Jacoby:

Yeah. Go ahead. Throw hands. We don't miss checks. You do.

Darian: (nodding, trying to sound smart)

Simple economics. Asset protection. Risk management. Market efficiency. Look it up.

Todderick Davenport III adjusts his jacket, recovering quickly from the shakeup. His voice is calm, composed, and sharp and clean as a razor.

TD3:

Let's be precise. You did beat Top Notch Team. That is a win, and we acknowledge the data... however incomplete it may be. But if that victory is to hold value, then Top Notch Team must first demonstrate their worth.

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I must reluctantly acknowledge that the Trust Fund is in a precarious situation. Now normally I wouldn't do things so unprofessionally, but due to circumstances and necessity we'll do things out of order. We already have a self-proclaimed Number One Contender, but their claim is of questionable value. So tonight, there will be a Number Two Contendership Match. Top Notch Team versus the Night Riders.

If TNT wins, they become the rightful number two contenders -- and that retroactively validates the Glucks' victory, meaning the Glucks would indeed receive their title shot at Heart of Dixie.

Darrington: (swaggering, proud of himself)

But if the Night Riders win? Then mathematically, you didn't beat anybody that mattered. No number one contender. No auto-shot. And the Night Riders -- as the highest verified contender -- go to the PPV instead. Efficient. Logical. Market-ready.

Jacobs: (into the phone, spreading cash like a deck of cards)

So simple, even y'all can follow it. Beat a team that matters. Or don't. And watch the Riders take your spot. Either way? We stay paid.

Cameron steps right back into Jacoby's face -- the smirk is gone now.

West: (low, steady fire)

We'll prove it in the ring.

Derek turns to Toddy, voice unshaken and lethal calm.

Hayes:

Enjoy the loophole. Because when this is over, and there's nowhere left to hide behind your paperwork -- we're coming through you.

Chapps: (leaning in, voice like gravel)

Ah guess y'all boys bought yerselves a few more days. Nothin' more.

Trust Fund straighten up -- but it's hollow. They force composure and back away, dignity bent.

TD3: (gritting his teeth as they exit)

Strategic retreat. I hate the necessity.

Jacobs: (to his phone, whispering)

Chat, we're so back. Trust. Trust. TRUST.

Darrington: (trying to rally morale)

Yeah. Totally under control. Blockchain synergy. All that.

The Trust Fund retreat around the corner. The Glucks and TNT remain, united by anger and purpose. Fade

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out.

### New Untouchables showcase

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Alright folks, it's time for trios action, and I don't say this often--but this next group may be the most unpredictable thing in Iron City Wrestling. In all the time ICW's been open, this is only the third time Jeffrey Daniels and Lee Scott Rothlesberger have actually stepped into the ring. One of those, you'll remember, was that ill-fated night when the Rich Young Grapplerz paid 'em to take a dive. Still, they call themselves cutting edge--mixing high-flying athleticism with martial arts flash--and when they want to, they can absolutely go."

Angus Skaaland:

"Yeah, yeah, the New Untouchables. The Noots. You know how I feel about that name, Carter. I hated the originals, I hate these knockoffs worse. But I'll give the devil her due--Heidi was the dangerous one back then, and I hate to admit it, but this new one, Kirsty McKinney? She might be even meaner."

The lights drop to a pulse of red and blue strobes. "You're Gonna Go Far, Kid" by The Offspring kicks in, its opening riff swallowed by the wave of boos that ripples through the crowd. The video wall flashes fast cuts of mall signage, shattered sunglasses, and Kirsty's silhouette wrapping someone in the Shear Cradle.

Robbie Ray:

"And speak of the devil..."

Jeffrey Daniels bursts onto the stage first--oversized shades, chewing gum, mouthing the lyrics like he's performing karaoke for an audience that hates him. Lee Scott Rothlesberger follows, arms spread, smirk locked in, making a show of brushing invisible lint off his jacket before mock-bowing to the crowd. They preen for selfies, arguing over who looks better on the tron.

Behind them, Kirsty McKinney steps through the curtain--no smile, no posing. She adjusts her wrist tape and heads straight down the ramp, glaring at the ring like it owes her money. Daniels and Rothlesberger clown behind her, trading fist bumps and winking at the fans who boo them.

Angus:

"Look at her, Carter. She's not playin' along with their little TikTok act. You can see it--she's itchin' to fight."

Robbie Ray:

"Kirsty's been on a tear since her debut. And whatever else you think about Daniels and Lee R., they know how to pick their moment--and their muscle."

At ringside, Daniels slides under the bottom rope in a theatrical spin. LSR vaults over the ropes in a smooth, practiced hop. Kirsty climbs onto the apron, steps between them, and raises her head just enough to glare at the hard cam.

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Robbie Ray:

"The New Untouchables are in the ring and ready to go--and you can tell by that look on Kirsty's face, she's not here to dance, she's here to dominate."

Angus:

"Good. Maybe she'll turn around and suplex her partners first. I'd pay double for that."

Quick camera pan to the opposition. Three rather generic looking men in the upper cruiserweight range. Nameplates identify them as Graham Kingston, Troy Lashley, and Danny Perez.

The bell barely finishes ringing before Kirsty McKinney shoots across the ring, straight-double on Danny Perez that dumps him flat on his back. She slides straight into side control, grinding a forearm across his jaw and paint-brushing the back of his head until he squirms for the ropes.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"She's not here to wrestle, she's here to humiliate!"

Angus Skaaland:

"And she's doin' it! That's pure mat control, Carter--look at that ride! She could write her name on his spine if she wanted."

Kirsty releases the hold herself, stands, and gestures for the next man to enter. Graham Kingston hesitates, then steps through the ropes--and gets immediately ankle-picked and rolled like a bag of flour. She rides him out, peppering short elbows to the back of the head before grinding his nose into the mat with one hand while waving to the crowd with the other.

Kingston claws for daylight. Kirsty lets him, pushes off, and slides him out of the ring with a look that says next.

Angus:

"She's allowing tags just to stay entertained! If she weren't associated with the Noots, I'd love this."

Robbie Ray:

"She's toyin' with them, Angus. I've seen cats less cruel to mice."

Troy Lashley steels himself, rushes her as she re-enters--only for Kirsty to sprawl, hook a leg, and dump him into a gut-wrench ride. She crossfaces him, grinds him down, and then releases again, standing tall while all three locals regroup at ringside like kids waiting for detention to end.

None of them want back in.

Jeffrey Daniels rolls his eyes, flicks his gum away, and gestures grandly toward LSR.

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Daniels:

"Fine! If you cowards won't fight the girl, you can fight us!"

The pair hit the ropes in perfect sync, springing into a pair of flipping planchas to the floor that wipe out all three locals in a heap. The crowd, against their better judgment, actually pops for the spectacle.

Robbie Ray:

"Say what you want, Angus, that was picture-perfect!"

Angus:

"Oh yeah, great--cheer the mallrats for doin' gymnastics. Real classy, Alabama."

Daniels and LSR haul the dazed trio back into the ring and roll them toward center.

Kirsty slithers in right behind--snatching Perez into the Shear Cradle, twisting his body into knots--then reaches over with her free arm and cinches Kingston in the Pitty Choke at the same time.

While she's crushing both men, Daniels and LSR grab Lashley, lift, spin, and drop him straight down with the Halkum-Tyrel Untouchadriver.

Lee slides into the cover.

ONE! TWO! THREE!

## We'll have a 4th man

The bell rings and "You're Gonna Go Far, Kid" hits. Daniels lounges across the middle rope while Kirsty still keeps her double-hold locked for another few seconds, just to make a point. Finally she releases, brushing imaginary dust off her hands.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Utter domination! Kirsty McKinney just mauled three men by herself, and the New Untouchables didn't even break a sweat."

Angus Skaaland:

"They didn't break a sweat, but they sure broke the spirit of this crowd. Somebody call the janitor, we need a mop for all that ego left in the ring."

The trio pose to deafening boos, Daniels grinning ear to ear while Kirsty glares straight into the camera--cold and dangerous. She stands tall over the three flattened local competitors, wiping sweat from her brow with a smirk while Jeffrey and Lee strut around the ring like they just headlined Madison Square Garden.

Robbie Ray:

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"That was less a match and more a crime scene."

Angus:

"If I never have to hear that damn theme song again, it'll be too soon. Freakin' Noots hate them so much..."

Daniels snatches a microphone, grinning wide as he paces.

Daniels:

"Hey, look at that! Another week, another massacre. That's our Kirsty McKinney right there--queen of cruelty, the submission surgeon, the woman who's about to send Cherry Mae James straight outta the big leagues and back to the women's division where she belongs!"

LSR:

"Oh, you mean that division full of... what's the word? Oh yeah--'competition.'"

Daniels:

"Competition! Sure, sure--let's talk about that."

He turns toward the hard cam, feigning deep thought.

Daniels:

"We got the Reinas de Sangre--ooh, spooky! Death metal music, skull face paint, and a combined vocabulary of about six words. I haven't seen a Latina with a skull on her face since every Cinco de Mayo ever."

LSR:

"Then there's Sam Gardner. Ballerina girl. Practiced ballet eighty-four hours a week, and somehow thinks that's gonna help her wriggle out of the Shear Cradle or dodge a superkick. Hey, sweetie--'Swan Lake' doesn't have rope breaks."

Daniels:

"Jenn Tinsley! She's like Sam Gardner if Sam Gardner listened to ska and still thought trampolines were a personality trait. Calm down and go back to the clubs, Jenn."

LSR:

"And Duchess Vaughn--"

Both men pause. Daniels holds the mic like he's considering something carefully.

Daniels:

"Actually, we're not gonna make fun of Duchess."

LSR:

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"We're not."

Daniels:

"Because we're scared of Bronson Box."

LSR:

"Deeply."

Angus:

"They said something that wasn't stupid. The proverbial stopped clock, ladies and gentlemen."

Kirsty:

"I'm not scared of Bronson Box!"

Record. Fucking. Scratch.

Daniels and LSR immediately wince.

Daniels: (shaking his head)

"She didn't mean that."

LSR:

"Nope, she meant the opposite of that."

Daniels:

"We respect Mr. Box, deeply, spiritually, legally."

Kirsty grabs the mic out of Jeffrey's hand, and the tone changes fast--gone is the joking cadence. She's scowling, breathing heavy, raw frustration bleeding through every word.

Kirsty:

"What the fuck ever. I've already folded a legend's son like laundry, I'll do the same thing to a different legend's niece if I get the chance. I'm not here to joke about prom queens and ballerinas. I'm here to hurt people. And Sunny Holiday--Miss Sunshine herself--is the one I'm looking at."

She jabs a finger into the hard cam.

Kirsty: "Sunny, you smile, you wave, you flex, you make everybody feel good. You're a walking pep rally with a powerbomb. You think that makes you strong? It doesn't. It just makes you the next one in line to learn the hard way. Astrid Reichert said she had 'leaner fish to fry'? When she's finished frying, I'll be here to clean the bones."

The crowd's noise spikes; even Robbie Ray goes quiet for a beat.

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Daniels: (taking the mic back, chuckling nervously):

"Leaner fish to fry? What a phrase! I mean, what does that even mean? And where is she? Where oh where is Astrid Reichert? Why oh why isn't she here? It's a dilly of a pickle of a mystery!"

LSR:

"Maybe she's off... planning. Y'know, doing Astrid things. Something classy. Something terrifying. Something... thirsty?"

Daniels: "Yeah, probably watching somewhere right now, simultaneously flexing and judging our diction. Hi, Astrid!"

They both laugh as Kirsty rolls her eyes, still stone-faced.

Daniels: "But you know, when you really think about it, this whole situation--the James Gang, the Outlaws, all of it--it only exists because Junior needed somebody to save him. Y'all remember Graysie Parker, right? Top woman in the promotion? Top person in the promotion? His old guardian angel? She's unavailable these days--on account of being run out of ICW by us!"

LSR: "That's right. Not just one person to save him this time, he needed an entire trio. Zeke, Zeb, Cherry Mae--because it takes three Jameses to equal one Graysie, and even then the math's ugly."

Daniels: "Oh, but hold on a second--"

He starts counting on his fingers, brow furrowed in exaggerated confusion.

Daniels:

"One, two, three Jameses... and Junior makes four. Four! Versus us. That's three. Four on three! Completely unfair! Totally biased!"

LSR: "It's discrimination against excellence is what it is."

Daniels: "Exactly! Where's HR? Where's Eric Dane Senior? Probably hiding in the back pretending this is good television while his kid stacks the deck!"

He throws his hands up theatrically.

Daniels: "I'm tellin' you right now, if the odds don't even up by next week, we'll fix it ourselves. Maybe we make a few phone calls. Maybe someone with real class decides to even the score. Who knows?"

The arena lights cut to bright white and the crowd roars before he can finish. Eric Dane Jr. walks out onto the stage, phone already in hand, flanked by Zeke, Zeb, and Cherry Mae James. Jr. lowers his sunglasses just enough to glare down the ramp.

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Robbie Ray Carter:

"And speak of the devil--there's Eric Dane Jr. and the James Gang!"

Angus Skaaland:

"Good! Maybe they'll save us from another five minutes of that podcast nobody asked for!"

Music fades. Jr. raises a mic.

Eric Dane Jr.:

"Y'know, I was gonna let you three run your mouths, because that's what you do best. But then you started complaining again. Four on three, boo hoo, life's unfair. Welcome to the big leagues, broskis."

He starts pacing the stage, gesturing casually with his free hand.

Dane Jr.:

"If you think you're gonna bail on the match and mess up the pay-per-view, you've got another thing coming. You can take Graysie Parker's name outta your mouths right now, because you don't get to use her for clout. You didn't run her out--she left before she had to waste her time dealing with wannabes like you."

The crowd pops hard. Daniels' grin freezes. Kirsty tilts her head, jaw tight.

Dane Jr.:

"And if you're so worried about not having a fourth person? Maybe you shouldn't have spent the last month trolling everybody with your little mall-rat comedy routine. Actions, consequences. You want numbers? You'll get 'em. You'll just wish you hadn't."

Zeke cracks his knuckles beside him; Cherry Mae folds her arms, smirking.

Zeb James:

"Y'all talk about bein' Untouchable? That's fine. We're fixin' to prove you ain't even untouch-ed."

The crowd erupts. Daniels fumes, pacing circles. LSR mouths off silently toward the ramp while Kirsty leans on the ropes, cool stare locked on Cherry Mae.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Eric Dane Jr. and the James Gang laying it down plain! The match is on for the pay-per-view!"

Angus Skaaland:

"And the Noots can count their fingers all they want, Carter, but the only number that's gonna matter next week is three--the number of shoulders they'll have pinned to the mat!"

Daniels looks like he's about to snap back, but Lee R. calmly raises a hand and takes the mic.

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LSR:

"Oh, Juju, Juju, Juju..."

He sighs dramatically, shaking his head like a disappointed older brother.

LSR:

"Don't you remember what happened last time? You came in all full of Dane-family swagger, talkin' about how you were born for this. And then you got outplayed. Mentally, we're over here playing fourth-dimensional chess--"

Daniels:

"Fifth! Fifth-dimensional!"

LSR:

"Right, fifth-dimensional chess, thank you, professor--meanwhile, you're not even ready for checkers, and you still haven't quite figured out how to win at Candyland."

Daniels cracks up, mock-applauding the line. The crowd boos. Kirsty McKinney steps forward, arms folded, eyes locked on Junior. She takes the mic from Lee, voice low and steady--measured, like she's dissecting him in real time.

Kirsty:

"Candyland. That's cute. You know what I remember about last time, Junior? How easily I moved you. How quickly you broke. You came in all heart and heritage, and I left you whimpering on the mat wondering what went wrong. So yeah... keep playing Candyland. It's a lot closer to your speed. Candyass."

The crowd gasps; Junior's smirk vanishes. He drops the microphone and starts down the ramp, the James Gang right behind him.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Uh oh, here we go!"

Angus Skaaland:

"Dumbest thing you can do to a Dane--remind him he lost!"

Junior shouts up the ramp, Cherry Mae yelling right behind him, but the New Untouchables quickly slide out of the ring. Daniels waves them off, backing up toward the barricade.

LSR:

"Hey, hey, hey! Not tonight, TikTok Tommy! We're not fighting you here--we're professionals! But you go ahead and keep that temper warm, because at Heart of Dixie, the New Untouchables will be ready. And we'll have our fourth."

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He drops the mic with a grin as "You're Gonna Go Far, Kid" hits again. The James Gang climb onto the apron while Junior points after them, shouting threats as the Noots retreat through the stands --Daniels and Lee laughing it up while Kirsty just stares coldly back over her shoulder.

Robbie Ray Carter:

"Well, the challenge has been laid down--and now the mystery's on! Who's the fourth person the New Untouchables are bringing to Heart of Dixie?"

Angus Skaaland:

"I dunno, but..."

At this point, the camera is on the commentary desk, just conveniently catching Angus' expression slowly turn from his usual sarcastic one to sheer horror.

Angus:

"Oh no. Oh hell no. You remember that interview, Carter? When they got asked who was gonna be their 'Ronnie Long'? And Lee said it was a 'long shot to fill the Long spot'? You don't think--"

He goes pale, clutching his headset like he's hearing bad news.

Angus:

"What... what if by 'long shot' they meant they're actually bringing back Ronnie Long?! The lump of fuck!

Robbie Ray's trying not to laugh.

Angus:

"I swear to God, if Ronnie Long's the fourth, I'm leaving. I'm ragequitting. Fuck that dude. Fuck the entire entirety of that dude. Fuck every atom in the entire fucking universe that participated in any way shape or form in the creation of that fa...aacking guy!"

Robbie Ray's familiar with Angus's DEFIANCE commentator days, and knows what almost slipped out. He's struggling not to corpse on camera.

Robbie Ray:

"...Folks, we're, uh--gonna take a quick break while Angus finishes having Vietnam flashbacks to 2011."

Angus:

"I know at the end of the days the Noots just want to get paid same as the rest of us but this is seriously! Not! COOL!"

Robbie loses it, burying his face in one arm as he makes the 'cut it' sign with his other hand. The sounds of Angus raving into the ether last for just a second or two after the feed goes black.

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### The Bayou bites back!

RRC:

"Folks, after what we just saw, it feels like the whole Heart of Dixie's turned upside-down -- but if you think the fighting spirit stops at the city limits, you'd better think again."

Angus:

"Yeah, because word is Iron City's about to get itself a visitor from way down south. And when I say south, Robbie Ray, I mean where the road ends and the swamp begins."

RRC:

"You're talkin' about a man who's made his name everywhere from Tokyo to Tijuana -- and now he's bringin' that wild bayou fire straight to ICW. Let's take a look."

CAMERA FADES IN.

Cicadas hum under a heavy Southern moon. The camera pans low over black bayou water, steam rising like ghost breath. Spanish moss sways from cypress branches, and the glow of a single hanging bulb bleeds from a crooked shack at the edge of a dock.

A long snout breaks the water -- eyes gleaming just above the surface. A gator slides along the current, lazy and watchful.

Voice Over:

"Some folks, dey say the bayou's slow. Lazy. Ain't nothin' lazy 'bout her, cher. She just waits."

Boots creak against wet wood. HOWLIN' JOE WOLFE steps into the light -- leather vest, flag bandana, sweat beading on his brow. He crouches at the edge of the dock and tosses a chunk of raw meat into the water. The gator lunges, jaws snapping with a wet CHOMP. Joe grins wide.

Howlin' Joe Wolfe:

"Dat right there's Gumbo. He don't say much, but he listens real good. Been wit' me since he was no bigger'n my hand. Folks see him now, they say, 'Joe, you crazy keepin' dat thing 'round.'"

He laughs low, shaking his head.

Wolfe:

"Mais non, mon ami. Gumbo ain't crazy -- he jus' loyal. You treat the swamp right, she don't bite. You turn your back on her?"

He smirks, letting that question hang as ripples widen across the water.

Wolfe:

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"She bite back. Every damn time."

He stands tall, rolling his shoulders, looking out across the dark like he can see miles of memory laid out in front of him.

Wolfe:

"Been ten years on the road now -- Japan, Mexico, Europe -- learnin' how the world fights. But no matter where I go, this here?" (He taps his chest.) "Dis where the fire come from. Ain't no trainin' camp in the world can teach what the swamp teaches you."

A flash of lightning lights up the sky, thunder rumbling low and long. Gumbo's tail slaps the surface.

Wolfe:

"Some folks say the swamp don't let go. Maybe dey right. Maybe dat's why Iron City 'bout to find out what happens when..."

He grins slow, voice dropping to a growl.

Wolfe:

"...when the bayou bites back."

He turns toward the camera, stepping closer until his shadow swallows the frame. His eyes burn under the brim of his bandana.

Wolfe:

"Now go on an' tell 'em... that the Wolfe is at their door."

He gives a sharp whistle. Gumbo slides under the surface. The water ripples once, twice -- then stills.

FADE OUT.

RRC (voice over as the screen fades):

"If that don't send a chill down your spine, you might wanna check your pulse. Howlin' Joe Wolfe's on his way to Iron City -- and brother, it sounds like he's bringin' the whole swamp with him."

Angus:

"Hope the locker room's got flood insurance, Robbie Ray -- 'cause the bayou's about to bite!"

## Neon promises

[BACKSTAGE -- A quieter hallway near the locker rooms. The Night Riders are posted up: Neon Blaze leaning one shoulder against the wall, arms folded, shades on indoors; Steel Thunder leaning back against

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the lockers, chewing gum, bored and aloof.]

[Enter TODDERICK DAVENPORT III, with JACOBY JACOBS and DARIAN DARRINGTON in tow -- shaken, still stinging from the confrontation with the Glucks and TNT.]

Todderick Davenport III: (brisk, wanting control back):

Gentlemen. We have... an opportunity. You want relevance, exposure, a payday, and a path back to the top? We can provide all four.

Neon Blaze: (slow grin, barely looking at them):

Goin' somewhere with this, Davenport? Or just hearin' yourself talk?

Jacoby Jacobs: (cutting in, phone held up, forced swagger):

Here's the headline, chat -- Night Riders might finally be useful. W for them, W for us, W for the culture--

TD3: (snaps a glare at Jacoby -- then back to business):

Top Notch Team versus the Night Riders. Tonight. Official number two contendership. You win, you leapfrog those blue-collar do-good nobodies. And at Heart of Dixie? You get the title shot.

Darian Darrington: (proud, parroting buzzwords)

Direct pipeline to championship liquidity. Straight to the top of the division's fiscal charts.

Neon Blaze (finally turns his head fully toward them -- cool, unhurried):

And what happens after we do your dirty work?

TD3: (measured, salesman voice):

Then, when the moment is right... you take the fall. We retain the titles. And you get paid. Twice, in fact -- once for tonight's service, and once for your professionalism at the PPV.

Steel Thunder: (without looking at them)

Two checks. Not one.

TD3:

Two. Naturally.

Jacobs: (flashing a money fan at his phone):

Cash flow, baby. Come back when you're in our tax bracket.

Blaze: (unbothered, cool smirk)

We don't work for discounts. We don't take crumbs. If the Night Riders beat TNT -- and we will -- our spotlight is guaranteed. Title match in ink. Then we talk collapse plans.

TD3: (tightened jaw -- he hates ceding terms, but nods anyway):

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Fine. You win, you get the shot. Consider the spotlight guaranteed.

Thunder: (finally looking at TD3:, one line, flat)  
And cash up front. No "later."

TD3: (after a short, bitter pause):  
...Agreed.

Blaze: (extends a lazy half-handshake -- not deference, just acknowledgment):  
Then we'll take out Top Notch Team. Clean. Fast. And your Gluck problem? Stays your problem.

TD3: (taking the handshake -- forced smile):  
Pleasure doing business.

Darrington: (to Jacoby, whisper-bragging):  
I told you -- market synergy.

Jacobs: (still to phone, thrilled):  
Chat, lock it in -- Riders get the shot! This division's gonna be our content farm--

TD3: (curt, snapping back into command mode):  
That's enough. We're done here.

Trust Fund exits, trying to look in control. The camera lingers on the Night Riders.

Thunder: (to Blaze, low):  
You trust 'em?

Blaze: (cool, amused):  
Not for a second. But we don't need to trust 'em. We just need to beat Top Notch Team.

Thunder nods once. Fade out.

## Preston Price vs Cole Marksson

Camera cuts back to ringside where Cole Marksson is pacing in his corner, stretching out his arms as the crowd gives him a polite hand. Robbie Ray Carter and Angus Skaaland settle into the rhythm as the ring announcer clears the mic.

RRC:

"All right, folks, we're back here in Mobile where things are about to heat up again. You're lookin' at Cole Marksson, a powerhouse technician who's been making quiet waves on the Heart of Dixie Tour -- and

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tonight, he's got himself a tough test."

Angus:

"Quiet waves? More like mild ripples. Don't get me wrong, Marksson's solid, but this next guy -- he's got it. The look, the swagger, the 'turn-your-head-and-check-your-reflection' confidence. You can't teach that, Robbie Ray."

The lights dip, a gold hue spilling over the entranceway as "Talk Too Much" by COIN hits the speakers. The crowd pops -- that mix of cheers and high-energy whistles that follows a fan favorite with flash.

RRC (grinning):

"And here he comes -- the 'Primetime' player himself, Preston Price!"

Preston bursts through the curtain with that effortless smirk and swing in his step. He throws his arms wide, soaking in the lights, then points straight into the camera lens with a wink.

Angus:

"I hate that I like this kid. He's smoother than a greased otter, and he knows it. Look at him -- walkin' like he's headlining the Grammys instead of wrestlin' in Mobile."

RRC:

"Hey, confidence sells tickets, and Price backs it up between those ropes. Last time we saw him, though, things didn't exactly go his way. Ricky Dale Cash tried to insert himself into the picture -- called it a 'business opportunity' -- and ended up costing Preston the match."

Angus (mock gasp):

"Oh no, not the businessman making a bad investment! Who could've seen that coming?"

RRC:

"Then to make matters worse, Sammy Starr jumped Price from behind, and the two of them left him laid out like yesterday's newsprint. You can bet Preston hasn't forgotten that -- and you can see it in his eyes right now."

Preston strides up the steps, looking out to the fans with a confident nod. He wipes his boots on the apron, steps through the ropes, and shoots finger-guns toward the hard cam before pacing the ring, jaw set now that the fun's out of the way.

Angus:

"He's got that chip on his shoulder tonight, Robbie Ray -- which means somebody's about to pay the bill."

RRC:

"Marksson's no pushover, though. He's been fighting for every inch of respect he can get here in Iron City, and a win over a name like Preston Price could go a long way."

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The ring announcer backs out of the ring as the referee steps forward, checking both men. Preston rolls his shoulders loose, leaning against the ropes with that easy grin, while Cole Marksson stares him down from across the ring, ready to prove something of his own.

RRC (as the official signals):

"All right, everything's set -- both men are ready to go, and the official's calling for it--"

The crowd swells, clapping in rhythm as the referee motions toward the timekeeper.

RRC:

"--this one's about to get Primetime!"

DING DING DING

The two circle, Marksson crouched and cautious, while Preston bounces lightly on his heels, that trademark grin never fading. The crowd claps in rhythm as the two finally lock up center ring.

RRC:

"Collar-and-elbow tie-up to start it off -- Marksson with that power advantage, but Preston's got quick feet!"

Price slips under the arm, spins out, and pops Cole across the jaw with a sharp backhand slap that echoes through the Civic Center.

Angus (laughing):

"Oh ho! He just styled on him! Somebody call a chiropractor, Marksson's ego just dislocated!"

Cole scowls and charges, but Price sidesteps, arm-dragging him clean across the ring. Marksson pops back up, only to eat another arm drag -- then a third! Preston kips up to a pop from the crowd and throws his arms wide with a flourish.

RRC:

"Primetime showing why he's one of the smoothest in the game! Those quick transitions, those fast bursts -- he makes it look easy!"

Marksson slaps the mat in frustration and storms in again. Price snatches his wrist, spins through, and lands a hip toss right into an armbar. Cole fights up to his knees, grimacing, and Price keeps the pressure on with that confident smirk.

Angus:

"He's out there wrestling like he's got a mirror in every corner of the ring. You gotta admire the swagger -- until it gets you in trouble."

RRC:

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"And that's always the question with Preston Price -- can he keep his head in the game long enough to stay ahead of his own reflection?"

Price breaks the hold, pops up, and points out to the crowd with a wink. The Mobile fans cheer, chanting "PRIMETIME! PRIMETIME!" as he milks it, dusting off his shoulders like the job's already done.

Behind him, Marksson rises slowly, shaking his arm out, anger flashing across his face. He waits for Preston to turn--

RRC:

"Uh-oh, Price better stay focused--"

--and when he finally does, Cole explodes forward with a heavy tackle, driving Preston hard into the turnbuckles!

Angus:

"And there it is! Little too much show, not enough go -- and Marksson just punched his ticket back into this fight!"

Marksson unloads with stiff shoulders to the midsection -- one, two, three -- before snapping him out with a big European uppercut that rattles the ropes. Price stumbles, clutching his ribs as Cole steps forward, cracking him across the chest with a blistering chop.

RRC:

"Cole Marksson's got that mean streak coming out now! He's not here to be embarrassed -- he's here to make a statement!"

Another chop lands. Preston reels back, grimacing as the crowd gives a collective "WOOO!" Cole grabs him by the wrist, whips him hard across the ring, and lines him up for a running back elbow that catches Price clean in the jaw.

Preston hits the mat hard and rolls to the corner, dazed, as Cole pounds his chest and the crowd reacts with growing respect for the underdog power game.

Angus:

"And just like that, Mr. Primetime got reminded that the lights shine just as bright when you're flat on your back."

RRC:

"Marksson turning the tide here in Mobile -- Price came in hot, but that one lapse in focus has opened the door!"

Cole stalks forward, the momentum clearly shifting in his favor as Preston pulls himself up on the ropes,

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clutching his jaw, eyes wide with the realization that the fun part's over.

Marksson closes the distance, grabbing a handful of Price's wrist and dragging him out of the corner. He whips Preston hard into the ropes and catches him on the rebound with a big powerslam! The impact shakes the mat and the crowd lets out a surprised pop.

RRC:

"Whoa! Big-time power from Cole Marksson! He just planted Price in the middle of the ring!"

Angus:

"Where's all that fancy footwork now, Robbie Ray? Kid's gettin' pancaked!"

Cole stays on him, hauling Preston up by the head and firing off a trio of short forearms. He hooks him again, lifts, and brings him down with a crisp snap suplex, floating right over for the cover--

Ref:

"One! ...Two--"

Price kicks out, rolling away toward the ropes.

RRC:

"Marksson's not playin' around tonight. He's got something to prove after that loss last week, and he's turning this into a fight."

Cole gets to his feet, keeping his energy up. He pounds his chest and barks to the crowd, drawing a nice local pop. Preston uses the ropes to pull himself up, shaking his head, trying to clear the cobwebs.

Angus:

"Look at Marksson! You give this guy an opening and he'll take your lunch money. Big, strong, mean -- he's makin' the most of this."

Cole charges in again, swinging for a running clothesline -- but Preston ducks! He hits the far ropes, rebounds, and when Marksson turns, Price baseball-slides between his legs to the other side of the ring.

RRC:

"Preston with the evasive move -- still got that quickness!"

Marksson spins and lunges again, but Preston snaps off a jumping enzuigiri that cracks off Cole's temple. Marksson stumbles back into the ropes, dazed. The crowd gasps at the speed.

Angus:

"See? That's what I'm talkin' about -- ring savvy! The kid's slicker than oil on marble!"

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Preston rolls to his feet, that confident smirk creeping back as he adjusts his wrist tape. He wipes his mouth, then saunters forward with a cocky little nod to the camera, mouthing "Show's mine now."

Marksson staggers forward, swinging wild, but Preston sidesteps, catches him by the wrist, and snaps him down with a quick arm-wringer takedown. In one smooth motion, Price floats over, grapevines the arm, and leans in, driving his knee into Cole's shoulder.

RRC:

"That right there -- that's the difference maker. Experience, control, and knowing when to hit the brakes."

Angus:

"Yeah, yeah, the man's got timing -- but he also knows when the cameras are pointed at him. Look at that grin! He knows he's got this one back on his terms."

Preston releases the hold, rises to his feet, and flicks his hair back, pacing the ring with that same measured arrogance that got him in trouble earlier -- only this time, the crowd can tell he's in control.

RRC:

"Momentum swinging right back to 'Primetime' Preston Price -- Marksson had him rockin' for a second, but all it takes is one opening for Price to flip the script."

Preston stalks back toward Cole, grabbing a fistful of his hair to pull him up as the referee warns him off.

Angus:

"Referee's got his work cut out for him -- because when Preston's in rhythm, the only rule is whatever gets you back on top."

Preston yanks Cole upright by the wrist, lining him up for another whip into the ropes--

RRC:

"Preston Price right back in the driver's seat now--hang on a sec--what's this?"

The crowd noise shifts to a wave of boos as Ricky Dale Cash saunters out from behind the curtain, waving a monogrammed handkerchief like a white flag he doesn't mean. Dressed in a powder-blue suit with sunglasses indoors, he smirks and claps slowly, mic in hand.

Angus (grinning):

"Business is pickin' up, Robbie Ray! That's money walkin' down the aisle!"

RRC:

"Yeah, money--and trouble! Ricky Dale Cash cost Preston a match once already, and I don't think the Primetime kid's in the mood for round two."

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Inside the ring, Price spots him immediately. He drops Marksson's arm and points toward the ramp, barking something over the ropes that the cameras can't quite pick up. The fans are booing louder now as Cash stops halfway down the aisle, adjusting his tie and calling out,

Ricky Dale Cash (mock-offended):

"Now don't be like that, son! I was just here to talk business!"

Preston leans over the ropes, jawing right back, waving him off with an irritated smirk. Behind him, Cole Marksson is still trying to shake the cobwebs... and the noise from the crowd spikes again.

RRC (alert):

"Wait a minute--behind him! Behind him!"

From the opposite side of the crowd barrier, "Superstar" Sammy Starr slides into the ring like a viper. He shoots forward and clubs Cole Marksson in the back, sending him tumbling through the ropes and crashing to the floor!

Angus:

"Oh-ho-ho, business just got a new partner!"

Preston spins around too late--Starr is already on him, raking the eyes before blasting him across the jaw with a wicked forearm. The referee immediately calls for the bell as the crowd explodes in boos.

DING DING DING

RRC (shouting):

"That's a disqualification! Starr just assaulted Price right in front of the referee!"

Angus:

"Referee or not, Sammy Starr's cashing in some receipts tonight!"

Starr doesn't stop -- he drives Preston into the corner and stomps away as Ricky Dale Cash finally makes his way ringside, laughing and egging him on. Cash yells "That's what happens when you say no to opportunity, baby!" while Starr digs a boot into Price's throat.

RRC:

"Come on, somebody get in there and stop this! This is ridiculous!"

Starr drags Preston out of the corner by his hair and drops him face-first with a short DDT. The crowd boos relentlessly as Ricky Dale Cash slides in beside him, slicking back his hair and motioning for Starr to keep going. The two start laying in tandem boots -- one after another, Price trying to cover up but getting mauled.

Angus (half-grinning, half-wincing):

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"Hey, I'll give 'em this -- at least Ricky Dale's learned to delegate. Let the talent do the dirty work!"

Then the crowd roars as Cole Marksson rolls back into the ring, anger written all over his face. He barrels toward Starr, shoving him off Preston and throwing wild fists!

RRC:

"Marksson's had enough! He's not gonna let this stand!"

He gets a few shots in, backing Starr up toward the corner -- but just as he winds up for one more, Ricky Dale Cash clips him low from behind with a cheap kick to the knee. Cole stumbles, clutching his leg, and Starr pounces immediately -- knee lift to the gut, forearm to the back, dropping Marksson to the mat beside Preston.

Angus:

"Bad move, hero! You can't save anybody when the sharks already smell blood!"

Now both men are down as Starr and Cash stand tall over them, boots and insults flying, the crowd booing so loud it shakes the lights.

RRC (furious):

"Somebody get security out here, this is a damn disgrace! Ricky Dale Cash and Sammy Starr have turned this match into a two-on-one -- no, make it two-on-none!"

Angus (half-laughing, half-appalled):

"Oh, c'mon, Robbie Ray, it's just good business! You saw what happened last week -- Preston didn't wanna take the deal, and now he's gettin' the hostile takeover treatment!"

RRC:

"Hostile takeover? This is a mugging, Angus! Cole Marksson came back in to help, and now he's gettin' stomped out right alongside Price!"

In the ring, Starr and Cash keep putting the boots to both men, trading insults and laughs between strikes. Cash straightens his jacket, waving to the jeering crowd like he's just closed a sale, while Starr points down at the wreckage, shouting, "THAT'S SHOW BUSINESS, BABY!"

RRC (over the noise):

"I can't even--look at this! They're proud of it! This is the kind of garbage that poisons the sport, Angus!"

Angus:

"Hey, call it what you want, partner -- but the Superstar and the Salesman are makin' a statement! And if you're smart, you'll read the fine print before you sign up to fight either one of 'em!"

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RRC (snapping):

"Statement my foot! This is assault in broad daylight, and they oughta be fined, suspended--hell, locked out of the building!"

Officials and referees start to flood the ring, pulling the heels back as the crowd pelts them with boos. Cash adjusts his tie and grins, Starr flexing and shouting "Primetime's over!" before being escorted away by the officials.

RRC (as the heels retreat):

"Absolute chaos here in Mobile! Preston Price picks up the win on paper, but in reality he and Cole Marksson just got left laying thanks to Ricky Dale Cash and that smug parasite Sammy Starr!"

Angus (shrugging):

"Hey, welcome to the Heart of Dixie, Robbie Ray -- it's survival of the richest!"

RRC (coldly):

"We'll be back after the break... and somebody better make sure those two can still stand when we are."

The camera lingers on Price and Marksson sprawled on the mat as the crowd boos thunderously, the screen fading to black.

## Unfucking the women's division clusterfuck

The door slams behind the last of them. The entire women's division stands shoulder-to-shoulder: Sunny Holiday, Jenn Tinsley and Sam Gardner on one side; Valeria and Celestina Cruz in matching smirks on the other; and Duchess Vaughn, arms folded, leaning against the far wall like she owns the building. No one sits. Everyone's bristling.

Eric Dane, Sr., makes a small bit of a show of putting his pen down and adjusting his paperwork into a neat stack, before standing up.

He walks to the front of his desk and paces, slowly, examining each woman in their turn. Sunny and Jenn looking battle-damaged but unrepentant. The Cruz sisters in matching smirks behind their facepaint. Sam with a defiant gleam in her eye, and Duchess with a very Boxer-like snarl curling her upper lip.

Dane:

"So."

Silence. Even Duchess lifts an eyebrow.

Dane (icily, pacing):

"Every damn match. Every damn week. Chairs. Kendo sticks. Run-ins. Pull-aparts. Ref assaults. My

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women's division has turned into a demolition derby, and I'm sick of it."

Jenn starts to speak, but Dane whips a glare her direction and she clamps her jaw shut.

Dane (to Sunny and Jenn):

"I signed wrestlers. I did not sign a guardian angel and her rookie sidekick. If someone jumps you, either finish the match or finish the fight--but this Hallmark-Channel-friendship-tour ends tonight."

Sunny, stung, looks down. Jenn bristles but stays quiet.

Dane turns.

Dane (to Sam):

"And you. Do you have any idea how close security was to tackling you? The State Athletic Commission thought a fan had hit the ring. I don't care if you have a developmental deal--you ever jump a rail again without my say-so, and you're back to bingo halls before your feet hit the floor. Are we clear?"

Sam nods stiffly. Celestina snorts loud enough to be heard.

Dane swivels to the Reinas.

Dane:

"And as for you two--this division is not going to become the Celestina-and-Valeria Handicap Match Hour. You want to double-team people? Fine. There are tornado tags and scaffold matches. But you will not hijack every finish."

Valeria steps forward like she's about to get in Dane's face. Celestina holds her back--not out of respect, but strategy.

Finally, Dane steps to Duchess.

The room tenses.

Dane (low, measured):

"You want to go down the Bronson Box route? Go for it. Just don't cry to me when somebody caves your eye in. Because I guarantee you--out there--there's always someone meaner. Even for you."

Duchess smiles. Not a friendly smile. The kind that means: Try me.

Dane has seen it before. It doesn't faze him.

He returns to the center of the room.

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Dane:

"So here's how this is going to work. I'm done babysitting. I want a champion. Not a riot. Not a highlight reel of sneak attacks. A champion."

He points, rapid-fire, naming names:

Dane:

"Sunny Holiday. Jenn Tinsley. Valeria Cruz. Duchess Vaughn. And mostly so I don't have to worry about her throwing a fit about being the only woman left off the PPV - Tigress Wilde. You five. At Heart of Dixie. Five-Way Match. And when that bell rings, one way or another, somebody walks out the inaugural Iron Queen Champion. No more excuses."

Sunny straightens--hope in her eyes.

Jenn nods, ready.

The Cruzes laugh like Valeria's already won.

Duchess doesn't move, doesn't blink--she just stares holes through everyone.

Dane turns to Sam and Celestina last.

Dane:

"And since you're feeling froggy, Gardner--you get to jump. PPV opener: Sam Gardner versus Celestina Cruz. No weapons. No sisters. No 'biffles' or whatever you're calling it these days. No excuses. I'll have extra officials if I need to."

Sam and Celestina lock eyes--burning hatred, zero respect.

Dane (final warning):

"If any of you so much as breathe wrong before Montgomery, I will suspend the entire division and crown a champion out of thin air. Do I make myself clear?"

The room offers a chorus of reluctant, bitter agreements--except Duchess, who simply smirks. Dane doesn't press it. He knows fear when he sees it. He also knows confidence when he sees it--and hers is the dangerous kind.

Dane:

"Good. Now get out of my office."

Everyone files out, resentments and rivalries simmering. Duchess is the last to leave, pausing just long enough to mutter:

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Duchess (under her breath):

"Better make a big trophy."

She walks.

Dane exhales once and shuts his door.

Dane:

"Kels, aspirin."

And then he remembers that Kelly Evans doesn't work here, and he sighs.

Cut to commercial.

### Top Notch Team vs The Night Riders

The camera cuts ringside, with Robbie Ray Carter and Angus Skaaland at the desk. In the ring, the referee stands ready, waiting for the competitors to enter.

Robbie Ray:

"Welcome back to Iron City Wrestling, folks. Our next bout is a big one. Top Notch Team versus the Night Riders -- and the winner will be recognized as the official number two contenders in the tag team division."

Angus:

"And let me just say, Carter -- ICW should be grateful that Todderick Davenport the Third even allowed this to happen. The Trust Fund Tag Team Championship will now be defended on pay-per-view, even though nobody earned a shot. TD3 didn't have to solve ICW's little tag team crisis, but he did. Because he's a giver."

Robbie Ray:

"He backed himself into a corner and got called out on it."

Angus:

"He listened to reason and offered a path forward. That's leadership!"

Robbie Ray:

"Either way, the deal is simple: if Top Notch Team wins, the Brothers Gluck's previous victory becomes legitimate and the Glucks are locked in for the title match. If the Night Riders win, they jump the line and take the payday for themselves. Let's head to the ring -- this one has major implications."

"Kashmir" by Led Zeppelin hits the speakers as Top Notch Team step through the curtain. Derek Hayes and Cameron West walk with purpose, slapping a couple hands before heading straight down the ramp. They enter the ring and take their corner, eyes locked on the aisle.

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Angus:

"No frills, no flash. And no titles. Story of their lives."

Robbie Ray:

"TNT are as hungry as it gets, and they're one win away from rewriting the entire division."

The lights drop. A faint fog spills across the stage as purple and blue laser sweeps cut through the darkness. The Night Riders emerge through the haze -- Neon Blaze strutting out in front, Steel Thunder behind him. No gesturing, no pandering, no wasted steps. They walk the ramp like a bad omen, slide into the ring, and stare across at their opponents.

Robbie Ray:

"These two are as dangerous as they come. They jumped the Urban Ninjaz without warning, and they'll do anything for a payout."

Angus:

"As they should. You fight for money, not for hugs and high-fives."

The referee checks both teams, issues the final instructions, and signals for the bell.

DING DING DING!

Blaze steps out of his corner and immediately lifts his arms into a one-legged karate stance, striking a dramatic crane pose as the crowd boos.

BOOOOOO!

West stares for a brief second, then shoots in low and takes Blaze down with a clean ankle pick. Blaze hits the mat face-first and scrambles, shocked and embarrassed, as the crowd pops.

Robbie Ray:

"West wasting no time! That's how you shut down the showboating."

West floats over into a tight waist ride, controlling Blaze on the canvas. Blaze tries to post up, but West breaks him back down and traps an arm, rolling him into a quick amateur tilt for a one-count before transitioning effortlessly into another hold.

Angus:

"Oh, come on! This is a wrestling match, not a high school gym meet!"

Blaze kicks and squirms, trying to find the ropes. West stays glued to him, maintaining control, then switches to a front facelock and rolls through again, putting Blaze on his back a second time.

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Robbie Ray:

"West is wrestling circles around Neon Blaze right now. Pure fundamentals on display."

West lets Blaze struggle to his knees, then snaps him back down with a tidy snapmare. He immediately follows with a grounded headlock, cinching it in tight as Blaze pounds a fist into the mat in frustration.

Angus:

"Get up! You're letting him embarrass you!"

Blaze fights to one knee again, shoving at West, but West shifts behind him, lifts, and dumps him with a quick amateur-style takedown -- another clean, effortless control point. Blaze rolls to the ropes, clutching them, demanding separation.

The referee steps in and forces a break. West backs off clean.

Robbie Ray:

"West is in complete command. Neon Blaze hasn't landed a thing."

Blaze slaps the top turnbuckle in frustration, glaring across the ring. He steps out again, this time more cautious, circling as Cameron West stays light on his feet, ready to engage. Blaze, red-faced and flustered, barks something unintelligible and hurriedly slaps Steel Thunder's chest to tag out. Thunder steps through the ropes slowly and deliberately, eyes locked on West.

Robbie Ray:

"Neon Blaze wants out. Can't say I blame him after that clinic."

Angus:

"Strategic decision, Robbie. You go to the power when the finesse gets neutralized."

West circles in, but Thunder rushes him with a hard lock-up and muscles him backward. Thunder shoves West off his feet, then stomps around the ring, pounding his chest and yelling at the crowd.

BOOOOOO!

Thunder drags West up and bulls him into the corner, burying short shoulders into the ribs. He clubs West across the back, then hooks the arm and wrenches it, setting up for his flying hammerlock.

Robbie Ray:

"Thunder's gonna try that flying hammerlock early--"

West plants his feet, rolls underneath, and slips free cleanly. Thunder stumbles forward, caught off guard by how easily the counter came. West pops to his feet and sprints to his corner, tagging in Derek Hayes.

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Hayes steps in, same size as Thunder, same stance, same square-shouldered posture. Thunder charges to re-assert dominance, but Hayes meets him chest-to-chest, unflinching. For a half-second, Thunder looks surprised -- bully energy cracking once the target stares back at eye level instead of looking up.

Angus:

"Oh don't you start acting tough just because you're not fun-sized like your partner!"

Hayes shoots in, catches Thunder at the hips, and executes a smooth takedown. Thunder hits the mat and tries to scramble away, but Hayes sticks to him, riding the motion and shifting into a tight waistlock. Thunder powers up, but Hayes transitions, spins, and snapmares him down just as cleanly as West did to Blaze earlier.

Robbie Ray:

"Hayes picking up right where West left off -- TNT are flat-out out-wrestling the Night Riders tonight!"

Thunder growls and swings wildly, trying to make it a fight. Hayes ducks under, lifts, and plants him with a short amateur-style takedown again. Thunder hits the mat harder this time, more frustrated than hurt.

Angus:

"Thunder, stop letting these guys throw you around! They're supposed to be beneath you!"

Hayes floats over into a front facelock and controls Thunder with calm, technical precision. The crowd pops as Thunder slams a fist on the mat, realizing he's in the exact same trap his partner just escaped from -- only now with someone his own size doing it to him.

Hayes keeps Thunder grounded in a tight side headlock, cinched in snug. Thunder grits his teeth, plants a foot, and begins muscling his way up.

Robbie Ray:

"Thunder trying to power out of it-- but Hayes has that locked in deep."

Thunder shoves Hayes off at last, sending him toward the ropes. Hayes rebounds--

--and Neon Blaze snaps a martial arts kick into Hayes' spine from the apron. Hayes stumbles forward, arching in pain as the crowd erupts in boos.

BOOOOOOO!

Robbie Ray:

"Come on! Cheap shot from Blaze!"

Angus:

"Smart shot from Blaze. If the ref didn't catch it, it didn't happen!"

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Hayes staggers on the rebound and Thunder steps in, planting his feet and BLASTING him with a stiff palm strike to the jaw.

THWACK!

Hayes hits the mat hard. Thunder immediately steps back and throws a dramatic martial-arts breathing pose -- feet wide, one palm extended, the other tucked at his hip as he admires his striking arm, exhaling like a movie goon.

Robbie Ray:

"Oh, please. He hit one shot and suddenly he's a kung-fu legend?"

Thunder stomps down on Hayes and waves Blaze into the ring. The referee moves to intervene, but Thunder just laughs, already shifting the rhythm to the Night Riders' kind of fight.

Angus:

"NOW we're talking! See, Carter? A little strategy, a little misdirection, and the Riders swing momentum."

Thunder drags Hayes toward the Riders' corner, signaling Blaze in for more punishment as the heat segment begins.

Thunder holds Hayes in the corner, and Blaze steps through the ropes without waiting for a tag. The ref protests, but Thunder distracts him while Blaze drives rapid-fire kicks into Hayes' ribs.

Robbie Ray:

"They're just taking liberties at this point -- double-teaming, no regard for the rules."

Blaze and Thunder switch without a tag. Thunder pins Hayes' arms back, and Blaze hits a spinning back kick to the midsection. Hayes doubles over, gasping for air. Thunder exits just before the ref turns back around, hands up, innocent as can be.

BOOOOOOO!

Angus:

"That's tag team wrestling, Robbie. If the ref didn't see it, it's just teamwork!"

Blaze struts around Hayes and throws a mocking bow to the crowd. He lines up for another flashy kick -- a high, looping roundhouse meant to humiliate more than hurt. He swings--

Hayes catches the leg.

RRRAAAHHH!

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Blaze's eyes go wide as Hayes stands up straight, still holding the trapped leg. Blaze hops on one foot, panicked, waving his hands and shaking his head.

Robbie Ray:

"Gotcha! Blaze got cocky and Hayes made him pay!"

Hayes drags Blaze across the ring, the heel helplessly hopping the whole way. Blaze tries to swing at him, but Hayes keeps him off-balance and reaches his corner.

West slingshots in and immediately takes Blaze down with a single-leg. Blaze hits the mat and West hangs onto the leg, dropping an elbow to the thigh, then another, and another.

Robbie Ray:

"Cameron West going straight to work on that leg. That's smart wrestling -- take away Blaze's kicks, you take away his whole offense."

West stands, grapevines the leg, and twists, putting Blaze face-down in the canvas as the smaller Night Rider claws for the ropes.

Angus:

"Come on, Blaze! You let him grab your leg like a chew toy!"

West doesn't let up, dragging Blaze back to center and dropping a knee across the hamstring to keep him grounded.

West keeps control of Blaze's leg, twisting down on it and dropping another knee across the hamstring. Blaze claws at the mat, wincing and snarling. Desperate, he reaches out and manages to shove West backward just enough to get free. West rebounds -- but Blaze lunges and whips him hard into the Night Riders' corner.

Steel Thunder reaches in from the apron, grabbing West by the arms to hold him in place.

Robbie Ray:

"Here we go again -- Thunder looking for another cheap shot!"

Blaze charges--

--but West plants a foot on the middle buckle, snaps his head back, and blocks the strike. He fires a back elbow into Blaze's jaw, stunning him, then spins, grabs Thunder's arm, and drops it across the top rope. Thunder yelps and crumples to the apron, clutching the arm. The crowd pops as West turns--

RRRAAAHHH!!

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Robbie Ray:

"West saw it coming! Beautiful counter!"

West knocks Thunder off the apron with a running forearm. Thunder crashes to the floor. West turns back to Blaze--

--WHAM! Spinning back kick to the gut doubles him over.

--CRACK! Superkick to the jaw puts West flat on the canvas.

Angus:

"That's how you stop a comeback! Two shots, lights out!"

Blaze shakes out his bad leg and glares down at the fallen West, breathing hard and regathering his swagger. He stomps West in the ribs and waves Thunder back to the apron as the Riders close in for control.

Robbie Ray:

"And now the Night Riders are going to grind this match down. You can feel it -- we're heading into the heat."

Blaze drags West by the wrist, hauling him to the Riders' corner as Thunder climbs back up, scowling and nursing his arm. The Riders begin cutting the ring in half, setting the trap.

Blaze drags West to the Riders' corner and slaps Thunder's chest. Thunder steps in and immediately puts the boots to West, grinding a heel down across the ribs before the ref forces him back. Blaze chokes West from the apron with the tag rope, dropping it only when the referee turns back around.

Robbie Ray:

"They're cutting the ring in half. This is textbook southern tag wrestling, like it or not."

Thunder hauls West up and buries a knee into the gut. A sharp knife-edge chop snaps across West's chest, then another, and another, backing him into the corner. Blaze holds West's arms from outside, letting Thunder hammer the ribs with short, ugly body shots.

Angus:

"That's how you handle a technician -- hit him until he stops thinking!"

Thunder tags Blaze back in. Blaze hops over the ropes and snaps a low martial-arts kick to West's thigh, then another to the body, then a third to the shoulder. West drops to a knee. Blaze hits the ropes and drills a running knee strike, knocking West flat.

Blaze covers, hooking the near leg.

Robbie Ray:

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"Cover--"

ONE!

TWO!

West kicks out.

Thunder immediately calls for another tag, and the ref rushes to keep it legal. The Riders switch quickly, Thunder stepping back in to stomp West's hand, then wrenching the arm as he jaws at the fans. He yanks West up and throws him throat-first over the middle rope, leaning on him, forcing the wind out of him as the crowd boos.

BOOOOOOOOO!

Blaze shouts something and tags in again. The Riders snap West into a double whip, sending him crashing chest-first into the corner. Blaze follows in, leaping knee to the spine. West drops to all fours, gasping, clutching at his midsection.

Robbie Ray:

"West is in trouble. Blaze and Thunder are smothering him in that half of the ring."

Angus:

"As they should! You don't let the gifted grappler breathe. You put a boot on his back and keep pushing."

Blaze pulls West up and holds him open. Thunder, still on the apron, reaches in and claws West across the face, unseen by the ref. West recoils in pain and Blaze rolls him down with a snapping side Russian leg sweep, floating into another cover.

ONE!

TWO!

West kicks out again, weaker this time.

Blaze snarls and hooks on a chinlock, one knee driven between West's shoulder blades, wrenching back and talking trash into his ear as Thunder applauds from the apron. The crowd starts clapping, trying to rally West back to his feet.

RRRAAAHHH!

West begins to rise, inch by inch, fighting through the pressure.

West claws his way up from the chinlock, fighting to one knee as the crowd rallies behind him. Blaze wrenches back harder, teeth bared, but West fires an elbow, then a second, breaking free. The crowd pops

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as West turns, searching for daylight.

That's when the arena starts booing again -- not at the match, but at the ramp.

The Trust Fund are strolling down, slow as Sunday. TD3 in front, Darian Darrington smoothing his jacket, and Jacoby Jacobs waving his phone around like he's livestreaming the beating. No music. No urgency. Just smug entitlement.

Robbie Ray:

"Oh, look who's here. Not to fight, not to earn -- just to gloat."

Angus:

"Champions have every right to scout the division! And dare I say, enjoy the show!"

West stands, ready to fire off a comeback -- but Jacobs steps right up to the apron, yelling over the ropes as he films.

Jacobs:

"Dab on him, Blaze! Easy work! EZ clap, my guy!"

West turns for half a second, irritated, reaching toward Jacobs as if to swat the phone away--

--and Blaze strikes, snapping a martial arts thrust kick straight to the ribs. West doubles over, wind blasted out of him, dropping to his knees.

Robbie Ray:

"Come on! That distraction opened the door!"

Angus:

"Cry harder, Robbie. If West can't focus, that's not the Trust Fund's fault."

Blaze drags West by the wrist, hauling him back into the Riders' corner. Thunder tags in, stepping through the ropes with a grin as the champions lounge at ringside, arms folded, enjoying every second of it.

Thunder palms West by the face and shoves him into the corner, then unloads short shoulder blocks to the midsection, driving the air out of him again and again.

BOOOOOOOOO!

Robbie Ray:

"The Trust Fund didn't even have to touch him. Just showing up poisoned the moment."

Thunder smirks and yells for Blaze to grab a leg. The Riders line up another double-team, tightening their

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grip on the match as the smirking champions look on from ringside.

West fights to his knees, reaching--only for Blaze to yank him back down by the hair. Blaze stomps him twice, then turns to sneer at the Glucks and Jesse Collins... who are suddenly at ringside, having come in through the crowd on the far side. Carlton and Chapps fold their arms. Jesse perches on the barricade, glaring down at the Trust Fund.

Robbie Ray:

"Now the playing field just got a little more honest."

Angus:

"Honest?! They don't even have tickets!"

Thunder shouts at them from the apron, pointing and threatening. Blaze joins in, yelling over the ropes--both Night Riders fully distracted.

West surges up behind Thunder, hooks the waist, and launches him with a German suplex. Thunder flips and crashes hard to the mat. Both men are down.

The crowd comes alive as West and Thunder begin to crawl.

Robbie Ray:

"West needs this tag! He's inches away--!"

West dives and slaps Hayes' hand.

Hayes storms in, blasting Blaze with a running shoulder tackle. Blaze pops up, wobbling, and Hayes hits a second one, knocking him flat. Thunder staggers up just in time to eat a third running shoulder tackle, flipping to the canvas and rolling out under the ropes.

Robbie Ray:

"Hayes is a house of fire!"

Angus:

"Oh no. I hate houses. Especially fiery ones."

Blaze tries a cheap shot from behind, forearm to the back--but Hayes doesn't even drop to a knee. He turns, grabs Blaze, and hurls him to the mat. West slides back in and helps clear Thunder from the apron with a double punch, sending him crashing to the floor.

The crowd roars as TNT lock eyes, nod, and haul Blaze up. They hook him for the Precision Bomb.

Robbie Ray:

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"They're going to end it right here!"

Before Hayes can lift, TD3 reaches in from ringside and grabs Hayes by the ankle, holding tight. Hayes stumbles, losing leverage.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

Angus:

"TD3 simply preventing slander against his tag team division!"

Jesse Collins suddenly sprints down the apron--leaps--and dropkicks TD3 off it! The Trust Fund leader crashes to the floor.

Robbie Ray:

"Jesse Collins! The Iron Kid is here, and listen to this crowd! He's been waiting to get his hands on TD3!"

Angus:

"Oh GREAT. Mr. Golden Boy wants attention again--someone get him out of here!"

Darrington blindsides Jesse and fires back with wild right hands, and the two spill into the barricade trading shots. Jacoby Jacobs rushes in to help his partner--

--but Carlton Gluck mows Darian down with a single running forearm, and Chapps tears into Jacoby like a dog on a steak, rag-dolling him in a barrage of wild haymakers.

Robbie Ray:

"Chapps is mauling Jacoby! And Darrington's barely holding his own against Carlton -- this is breaking down in a hurry!"

Angus:

"Somebody stop this! TD3's jacket is wrinkled and his whole operation is falling apart! This is SAVAGERY!"

The ringside brawl explodes outward -- Glucks and Jesse Collins throwing hands with the Trust Fund while the referee loses all control on the outside.

Robbie Ray:

"It's chaos! The dam just burst!"

Inside the ring, Blaze is down on one knee, Thunder dazed on the floor, and TNT are recovering, poised to finish what they started. West climbs the turnbuckles, steadying himself. Hayes points to Blaze, signaling for the end. But on the floor--no one is watching Steel Thunder.

Thunder crawls under the apron and pulls out a metal pole. He steps back into view, twirling it

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experimentally, finding his rhythm like he's about to audition for a kung-fu movie.

Robbie Ray:

"Somebody stop this--Steel Thunder has a weapon!"

Angus:

"He has a solution, Robbie!"

West readies to fly--but Thunder rushes in and cracks the pole across West's legs, knocking him off the top rope. West crashes violently to the mat. Thunder whirls and drives the pole into Hayes' gut, doubling him over. Blaze grabs Hayes from behind, pinning his arms, presenting him for a kill shot.

Robbie Ray:

"Steel Thunder just maimed Cameron West! He's not trying to win -- he's trying to end careers!"

Angus:

"He's trying to WIN A MATCH, Robbie! Grow up!"

The arena erupts in fresh boos--

--and then explodes again as two blur-fast figures hit the ring.

The Urban Ninjaz are back.

Robbie Ray:

"YES! The Ninjaz are here! These young men have guts -- and they're not going to let this injustice stand!"

Angus:

"Oh COME ON! They don't belong out here! This is ABOVE their pay grade!"

Flip D and Junichiro launch stereo martial arts kicks to Thunder's chest and arm, sending the pole flying from his hands. Thunder spills under the bottom rope, clutching his ribs.

Robbie Ray:

"Two weeks ago Steel Thunder humiliated these kids and left them laying -- and now they just punched their receipt!"

Angus:

"This is an OUTRAGE! Somebody get security! They're interfering with their betters!"

Junichiro follows Thunder out and immediately starts assembling a table, spanning it between the apron and the barricade. Flip D rolls Thunder onto the wood and climbs the turnbuckles on the opposite side.

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Robbie Ray:

"Oh no--don't tell me--"

Flip D takes flight.

WHOOOOSH--CRASH!!!

Flip D 630 sentons Steel Thunder straight through the table. Wood shatters. Bodies scatter. The crowd detonates.

HOLY SHIT! HOLY SHIT! HOLY SHIT!

In the ring, Neon Blaze panics. He releases Hayes and spins for Neon Lights Out--that flash Trouble-in-Paradise kick--

--but Hayes ducks it, hooks the arm, and wraps the other around the chin.

He locks in the crossface chickenwing. Blaze thrashes, trapped.

Robbie Ray:

"Crossface chickenwing! Hayes has it locked in!"

Blaze claws and kicks with the one good leg--but there's no escape. He taps frantically.

DING DING DING!

The referee calls for the bell. The place blows up.

RRRAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHH!!!!

Robbie Ray:

"TNT wins! Top Notch Team are officially the number two contenders, and that means the Brothers Gluck are locked for Birmingham!"

At ringside, the Trust Fund stop fighting all at once--eyes wide, horrified, staring at the wreckage: Steel through a table, Blaze submitted, TNT standing tall. They back up the ramp like they've just seen their empire crack.

Meanwhile, the Glucks haul Flip D out of the debris and raise his arms. Jesse Collins rolls into the ring, joining Hayes, West and Junichiro. The babyfaces stand united in the center--seven wrestlers, one moment, one crowd cheering them on.

Robbie Ray:

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"That's something money can't buy, folks. Genuine respect. Genuine camaraderie."

Angus:

"AND IT'S BULLSHIT!"

The camera lingers on the united faces in the ring as the Trust Fund retreat up the ramp, shaken to their core.

Fade out on the celebration.

## Havok's meltdown

RRC:

"Before we head to tonight's main event, let's take you back to last week. Jack Havok kept the ICW Television Title--barely--after a disqualification against Lowlife Larry Edwards. What you didn't see on the broadcast was what happened after the bell."

ANGUS:

"He was still seeing red, Ronnie. Cameras caught him backstage, and the man just snapped."

RRC:

"Let's roll that tape."

[PRE-RECORDED: BACKSTAGE AT THE FOUNDRY]

The shot opens on the ICW backdrop. Tyler Voss stands ready with a microphone when shouting echoes from off-camera. Jack Havok storms in--sweat-soaked, belt on his shoulder, chair dragging behind him.

TYLER VOSS:

"Jack, after what we just--"

HAVOK (grabs the mic):

"What you just saw was mercy! You saw me give that lowlife from Yonkers more time than he deserved--and he almost got lucky!"

He paces, breath ragged, slams the chair against a crate with a metallic crack.

"Don't look at me like I was beat! Nobody beats Jack Havok! He caught one shot, and suddenly the whole damn crowd thinks he's walkin' out with my gold?!"

He jabs a finger into the lens.

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"You think I care about a DQ? About rules? The only law that matters around here is mine! You get close to takin' what's mine--" he smacks the title plate "--and I'll cave your skull in to remind you who runs this place!"

Havok crowds Voss, voice dropping to a growl.

"Larry Edwards didn't win nothin'. He survived. Barely. Next time there won't be a bell, there won't be a ref--just me, this chair, and another broken body on the floor."

He hurls the mic aside, storms down the hall, kicking over equipment, the chair scraping across concrete until he's gone.

TYLER VOSS (to camera, quietly): "That wasn't a champion... that was a man comin' apart."

[Back to commentary.]

RRC:

"Jack Havok's got the title, but he's losin' his grip, Angus."

ANGUS:

"And if that's him on a bad week, I don't wanna see what he does on a good one."

RRC:

"The Outlaw's fuse is burnin' fast--let's see who's crazy enough to light the next match."

## Jesse Collins & The Brothers Gluck vs The Trust Fund

Robbie Ray:

"It's main event time, Angus!"

Angus:

"You know, Robbie, I hate times like this."

Robbie Ray:

"You hate them?"

Angus:

"Yeah. Now objectively, I want ICW to do well. Which means we get a good main event, and anticipation for Heart of Dixie, and all that good stuff. But on another level? I want to see the Trust Fund melt the Iron Kid down for bling, and to send the Glucks back to Mississippi. They shouldn't have to deal with any of this, Robbie! They're rich!"

"Lifestyle" by Rich Gang hits and the Trust Fund step onto the stage to a wall of boos. TD3 leads the way

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with his gaudy vanity belt held high, drinking in the hatred like it's adoration. Jacoby flanks him with aloof swagger, barely acknowledging the crowd, while Darian shouts insults at the front row and flexes for people who already can't stand him. The three take their time getting to the ring, forcing the referee to hold the ropes for them as they step inside like royalty.

The lights drop. A beat later, "The South is Rising" rips through the speakers and The Foundry erupts. Jesse Collins marches out between the Gluck Brothers, the trio moving straight down the aisle with purpose. Carlton doesn't posture, Chapps doesn't pose -- they hit the ring fast, and the Trust Fund bail to the apron, demanding the referee "control this chaos" before the bell.

The crowd settles into a rumble of anticipation as TD3 insists on starting. Jesse steps forward to meet him, eyes locked and ready. The bell rings. TD3 smirks and reaches for a casual tie-up, but Jesse slips behind, trips him to a knee, and snaps him down with a clean arm drag. The crowd pops as TD3 scrambles up in shock. Jesse snatches him again -- a second arm drag -- and TD3 dives for the ropes, waving his hands and shouting at the referee.

Robbie Ray: "Collins just out-wrestled the 'champion' twice in under ten seconds!"

Angus: "TD3 is pacing himself, Robbie. It's called strategy. Look it up."

TD3 refuses to re-engage and angrily slaps Jacoby's chest for the tag. Jacoby steps in calm and confident, hands low, daring Jesse to try it again. They circle, tie up, and Jacoby switches behind for a slick waistlock. Jesse counters, runs him off, leapfrogs, and catches him with a sharp flying headscissors that sends Jacoby rolling to the floor. The fans roar as Jacoby pops up red-faced, kicking the barricade while TD3 yells instructions from the apron.

Darian reaches in and slaps Jacoby's shoulder to tag himself, stepping through the ropes and pointing directly at Jesse. Jesse nods, backs into the corner, and tags in Carlton to a fresh explosion from the crowd. Darian doesn't back down -- he beats his chest, yells that he's "bulldozed bigger men," and charges straight at the bigger Gluck as the moment hangs in the air.

Darian charges, trying to bowl Carlton over with momentum alone, but Carlton barely budes. The crowd laughs as Darian stumbles back a step in surprise. Darian squares up, shouts that he "ain't scared of some Mississippi meathead," and hits the ropes for a second run -- only to get flattened by a heavy shoulder from Carlton that sends him rolling to the corner.

Robbie Ray: "Darian Darrington just got run over like a traffic cone!"

Angus: "Lucky shot. Total lucky shot."

Darian scrambles up and tags in Jacoby, who enters cautiously, clearly not eager to trade power with either Gluck. Jacoby calls for Chapps instead, so Carlton shrugs and tags his brother. Chapps springs in hot -- Jacoby rushes, Chapps ducks, and on the rebound Chapps launches into a snap hurricanrana that sends

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Jacoby sliding to the opposite corner. Darian tries to jump in and gets scooped and hurled with a Gluckplex for his trouble. The Foundry erupts.

Jacoby scrambles back in to save face and catches Chapps with a sudden jumping knee and a sharp kick combo. He strings momentum together, hits the ropes, and plants Chapps with the Red Line flipping stunner. The crowd gasps as Chapps rolls to a knee, blinking through the impact. Jacoby turns and bows to the crowd -- and TD3 immediately slaps his shoulder to tag himself in, shouting that "this is how you finish trash!"

TD3 struts in and peppers Chapps with smug little kicks, playing to the hard cam between each one. He doesn't see Chapps' eyes clear. TD3 hits the ropes for something flashy and runs straight into a huge tackle from Chapps that folds him in half and blasts the air out of the arena. Chapps hauls TD3 upright and drives him into the babyface corner, then tags Carlton.

Robbie Ray: "Chapps turned the lights back on and shut TD3's off in an instant!"

Angus: "I'm filing a complaint with the Alabama State Athletic Commission."

Carlton clubs TD3 in the chest and glances to Jesse. Jesse reaches, electric from the crowd. Chapps isn't sure, but Carlton nods -- and tags Jesse in to a roar. Jesse rockets in with a dropkick that sends TD3 sprawling, then hits a running forearm for a fast cover, but only gets one as Jacoby and Darian explode into the ring to cause chaos. The referee restores control, but the distraction lets TD3 rake Jesse across the eyes and chop block him from behind.

Robbie Ray: "Right when Collins had him!"

Angus: "Beautiful ring IQ from TD3."

The Trust Fund isolate Jesse immediately. Darian mauls him in the corner. Jacoby follows with sharp, precise strikes and a basement dropkick to the ribs. TD3 tags in, posing after every stomp, then chokes Jesse on the middle rope until the referee's count forces him off. Every time Jesse fights to his feet, a cheap shot sends him back down. The crowd rallies behind him, chanting his name.

Jesse finally dodges a corner charge and fires back with desperation forearms, knocking TD3 loopy -- but before he can tag out, Jacoby distracts the referee and Darian yanks Jesse down by the ankle. TD3 hits a neckbreaker and covers for two. The Trust Fund stay on him, dragging him farther from help with each exchange.

Jesse swings blind and lands a lucky shot that rocks TD3 backward. The Iron Kid lunges, stretches, dives -- and Carlton's hand smacks his.

The Foundry erupts as Carlton storms in and starts Clobbersaurusing everything in sight -- Darian goes down, Jacoby gets folded inside-out, and when TD3 tries to run, Carlton nearly decapitates him with a third running lariat.

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Angus: "CLOBBERSAURUS! YES--wait--NO--NO, I didn't mean that!"

Robbie Ray: "Too late! You said it on tape!"

Chapps slides in and the Glucks hit a quick double slam on Jacoby, sending him rolling to the floor. TD3 panics and scrambles for his belt. Jesse staggers back in, still dazed but swinging. Bodies fly everywhere as the referee loses control, trying to restore order.

Jesse catches TD3 by the jacket and fires up the crowd with a yell. He pulls TD3 in for a big shot--Darian grabs Jesse's boot from the floor--Jesse stumbles--TD3 lunges, snatching the vanity championship off the mat, and CRACK! blasts Jesse across the skull. The crowd erupts in boos as Jesse crumples.

TD3 tosses the belt aside and dives onto him.

Robbie Ray: "No! Not like this!"

Angus: "One word, Robbie: RESOURCEFUL."

The referee slides into position.

1... 2... 3.

The bell rings and "Lifestyle" hits again as TD3 rolls off and raises his arms like he earned it. Darian and Jacoby regroup and join him, dragging Jesse's limp body with their boots to kick him aside. Carlton and Chapps hit the ring a heartbeat too late, and the Trust Fund bail to the floor, laughing and posing with the fake title.

Robbie Ray: "The Trust Fund stole this! Jesse Collins was robbed in Birmingham!"

Angus: "He who holds the gold makes the rules, Robbie. That's wrestling. Learn it."

TD3 stands on the ramp, holding the belt high while Jesse stirs on the canvas and the Glucks glare murder at the stage. The Trust Fund soak in the heat as ICW 2.4 fades to black.

## Heart of Dixie tour: 2.4

### Show Credits

Segment: "Show Opening" - Written by justin, oldlinejeff.

Match: "Sunny Holiday & Jenn Tinsley vs Las Reinas de Sangre" - Written by oldlinejeff.

Segment: "The last stone in the road" - Written by oldlinejeff.

Match: "New Untouchables showcase" - Written by oldlinejeff.

Segment: "We'll have a 4th man" - Written by oldlinejeff.

Segment: "The Bayou bites back!" - Written by j4m3s.

Segment: "Neon promises" - Written by oldlinejeff.

Match: "Preston Price vs Cole Marksson" - Written by justin.

Segment: "Unfucking the women's division clusterfuck" - Written by oldlinejeff.

Match: "Top Notch Team vs The Night Riders" - Written by oldlinejeff.

Segment: "Havok's meltdown" - Written by Sheriff.

Match: "Jesse Collins & The Brothers Gluck vs The Trust Fund" - Written by justin.

*Results Compiled by the eFed Management Suite*