

AEW: IT'S A NEW DAY FOR WRESTLING

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Whether you're a wrestling fan or someone completely unfamiliar with the world of "sports entertainment", you've probably heard about the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE). It might've been through one of your friends, who devotedly watches every episode of RAW, or via PS4 sessions of the latest WWE game at a sleepover.

WWE is almost synonymous to wrestling and has been for quite some time. Over the course of multiple decades, WWE has built an empire, eliminating or buying out almost all other competitors, eventually leading to the monopoly it now has over the wrestling industry.

And while other products such as IMPACT! Wrestling (previously known as TNA), New Japan Pro Wrestling (NJPW) and Ring of Honor (RoH) still continue to exist, their dominance in the market is considerably low, even with the large fan followings that they often garner. This is why these companies are often referred to as being in the "indie" scene.

The overall result is that WWE continues to be the only significant holder of the market share.

Enter All Elite Wrestling (AEW).

AEW is the newest wrestling promotion in town, and from the current state of



things, they're likely the only ones who may, someday, give the WWE a run for their money.

As a fan of wrestling, it's quite an interesting time to be alive. You've probably spent most of your life with only the WWE to turn to for your wrestling needs, and such a monopoly usually deteriorates the quality of the product for the consumer. And this has been a complaint fans have had with the WWE.

Now, however, with a legit competitor

entering the market, it calls the WWE into action to get their act together. Mostly because WWE has, for the longest time, been the only route for wrestlers to "make it".

With AEW having arrived, it means wrestlers who are unhappy with WWE's policies or creative direction can switch over to AEW with ease. Even more important is that wrestlers finally have some bargaining power when dealing with the WWE now.

A few superstars have already made

their way over to AEW, with one of WWE's previous talents, Cody Rhodes, being one of the founding members in an executive role. Not to mention there is a plethora of talent such as Kenny Omega, Adam "Hangman" Paige, Chris Jericho, the Young Bucks, etc. who can fill the seats of almost any venue AEW decides to book.

AEW's first pay-per-view (PPV) – Double or Nothing – was sold out within 4 minutes of tickets going on sale. Not to mention the intricate details put into the storylines of each match was something wrestling fans haven't gotten in a long time, at least not from the WWE.

Jon Moxley's (formerly WWE's Dean Ambrose) appearance towards the end of the show blew everyone's mind to the point that for the entire week after Double or Nothing, it was still the talk of the town. Even WWE gave in and mentioned AEW on a segment in their flagship show RAW.

The most important thing to come out of all of this is that wrestling fans have one more show to watch; maybe one that will make up for all their grievances with the current WWE model. Additionally, wrestlers now have more opportunities present for them as well, resulting in an overall better state of the industry.

Aaqib is stuck in an existential crisis loop. Send help at aaqibhasib94@gmail.com

The unsavoury truth of cricket and Bangladesh

WASIQUE HASAN

It's finally happening. After many years of watching Bangladesh go into tournaments with the hopes of "close matches" and "upsets", we're finally at a point where Bangladesh go into every match with the intention of winning. Even with such consistent improvement, however, Bangladesh are not taken seriously by most of the other cricketing nations. Not only has this resulted in most cricket commentators treating us like a second-tier team, this is also the reason Bangladesh has been on the back foot in terms of opportunities.

In the past year, Australia, India and even Pakistan have had full ODI tours of England. All their players have experienced the pitches and conditions of England for a prolonged period even before the other teams in the World Cup (WC) had laid eyes on British soil. People might claim that these matches don't change the outcomes too much, but the facts are against them. Even Pakistan, who lost all their matches in the series against England, beat England in the WC despite all odds being against them. These miracles become less miraculous when you consider the circumstances that led to them. On that front, Bangladesh have gotten the shortest end of the stick not only compared to the big three of England, India and Australia, but also compared to cricketing has-beens like Pakistan. For our WC preparations, we've had to play in Ireland. While the conditions are similar, it is still very different from getting the dress rehearsal against the hosts in their own backyard.

The following stats should be enough to show how bad the current situation has been to Bangladesh: The last time Bangladesh played a series against India was in 2015, four years ago. The last time Bangladesh had an away series in England was in 2010, nine years ago. Most disappointingly, the last completed ODI Bangladesh played against

Australia was in 2011. That is eight years that Bangladesh have not finished a complete ODI against them. The fact that the big three have played against us so rarely just goes to show that their influence isn't limited to higher revenue shares, they are also guilty of bossing the schedules to only play against oppositions that draw bigger crowds. This politicking is why Bangladesh has such striking differences in their home and away records. Of the away series played

in the past five years, Bangladesh have won only 5 ODI's. On the other hand, we've won 37 ODI's at home in the same time period.

Our results will continue to be this lopsided until we see a change. Either in the way Bangladesh is perceived internationally, or the way the system is designed. Till that happens, we'll have to stomach whatever unsavory titles and circumstances will be thrown our way.



OPINION