

Smackdown – November 25, 2011 – Bryan Ascends

Smackdown

Date: November 25, 2011

Location: Mohegan Sun Arena, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T, Josh Matthews

After Survivor Series it looks like we're moving closer to Show vs. Henry III at TLC. The build up for it looks like it'll be a chair match which is fine as I don't want to see them in a ladder match. Other than that, I'm not sure what else we could see on the show tonight. Hopefully the show before the live one next week should be good. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Show vs. Henry at the PPV and Show breaking Mark's leg post match.

Here's Henry to open the show, on crutches. He talks about pain and says he's hurt but not broken. The fans aren't all that enthused with him. A champion fights through pain, but he can't compete tonight due to Teddy Long. Here comes Big Show who complains about Henry intentionally lost but next time...and Henry says there won't be a next time. They stare it down and Show knocks him out cold.

HERE'S BRYAN!!! HE CASHES IN THE CASE AND GETS THE TITLE (AFTER ROLLING HENRY OVER LIKE A BURRITO)!!! Cole loses his mind and calls Bryan a hypocrite as Bryan nearly breaks the title throwing it around so much. HUGE pop for the title change, but since the fans are interested in that, here's Teddy to say that Henry wasn't awake so it didn't count. I guess if you cripple Bryan's continuity you have to keep the MITB continuity to balance things out.

Cole's celebration is great, cheering Teddy on the entire time. Henry gets up and takes the title back before leaving.

Bryan gets the case back but is really ticked off. However, Teddy gives him the consolation of putting him in the main event with Barrett, Rhodes and Orton in a fatal fourway #1 contender match for the world title shot next Tuesday.

Justin Gabriel vs. Hunico

The title match next week is in a cage and Big Show gets the title shot at TLC. Hunico takes over and the announcers are ignoring everything going on in the match. Time for a chinlock and this match is far more boring than you would expect it to be. A slingshot dropkick puts Gabriel in the corner but he fights back and hits a corkscrew plancha to the floor. A Lionsault gets two. They go up to the corner where Gabriel gets knocked off. A Swanton Bomb ends this at 4:22.

Rating: D+. This got better once Gabriel went on offense but other than that everything was really dull. Gabriel can dive really well and I have no idea what the point was with having Hunico get a push. The guy is such a generic character and there's no point to any of his push at all. He'll get a mild push and then will fade back to FCW. Not much to see here.

Video on the European tour. Punk: "I can't pronounce any of the cities we went to."

Beth Phoenix/Natalya vs. AJ/Kaitlyn

Think this will be a squash? It's the blue show so that means the evil ones will dominate. Alicia is on commentary with them here. Kaitlyn vs. Nattie gets us going and the Canadian one is in some trouble. I don't see this lasting. Off to AJ and there goes the advantage. A rollup gets two for the smaller one. And there's the Sharpshooter for the tap at 1:04. Kaitlyn doesn't break it up that quickly.

The heels do the double beatdown post match and the CRY thing until Alicia makes the save. Kaitlyn isn't really interested.

Kane is still coming back in the mask. My question about this is based on an old Chris Rock line: "We know what you look like!"

Teddy is in his office and says Foley is going to host next week. Cue the still hot Aksana who asks about mistletoe. Henry comes in to complain and says he's injured. Teddy says he needs a huge main event and the doctors said Mark is ready to go. Henry gets all mad and we're told it's a cage match, which Matthews told us earlier. Mark is all mad and says Teddy will get his.

Sheamus and Ryder says they'll be Broskis after Ryder gets the title. He sings a techno version of Sheamus' song and Big Pasty gets all mad. Then he smiles and Ryder can breathe again.

Jack Swagger/Dolph Ziggler vs. Sheamus/Zack Ryder

Ryder comes out, and for the first time ever I see a star in him. Sheamus and Ziggler get us going and it's a pretty nice chess game with both guys looking for control but not being able to get anything past a few seconds worth. Off to Swagger (two time world champion according to Josh) who takes the ten forearms in the ropes. Ziggler tries to cheat so Ryder goes aerial with a flip dive to the floor as we take a break.

Back to Sheamus who hits the slingshot shoulder block. He nearly botched it as he jumped late so his legs landed on the ropes for the most part. Swagger manages to get in a shot to bring Ziggy back in and momentum shifts again. Back to Jack very quickly but he misses the Vader Bomb. You know, he doesn't do much very well anymore. Off to Ryder but Swagger doesn't tag.

Broski Boot hits and everyone heads to the floor. Ryder beats up both guys on his own until the numbers finally catch up with him so that Swagger can hammer away a bit more. The fans cheer for Ryder as Ziggler's elbow gets two. A double team

Fameasser gets two on Ryder and a surprisingly big pop for the save by Sheamus. Dropkick gets two for the US Champion.

This match is getting some solid time. Swagger takes a cheap shot on Sheamus to draw him in with some solid tag team strategy. He puts Ryder on the top rope and slaps him. That wakes up the Jersey Shore dude, allowing him to get in a shot from the middle rope for the double tag. Sheamus vs. Ziggler now with Sheamus in total control. Swagger breaks up the High Cross as Ryder makes a blind tag. Brogue Kick puts Swagger down and the Rough Ryder pins Ziggler again at 12:20 shown of 16:50.

Rating: B. I liked this one a lot as the face team was seemingly thrown together but we got a fun tag match out of it. You don't need to have much going on there but it works just the same if you can get the crowd into it. Having someone like Vickie and Ryder out there guarantees that, and we got a very fun match out of it. Good stuff.

Bryan complains to AJ about having it taken away earlier from him. Barrett comes up and runs his mouth so Bryan tells him off. He leaves and AJ kisses Bryan on the cheek.

Ted DiBiase vs. Heath Slater

Hey Slater still has a job. Who knew? Just after the bell, Jinder Mahal pops up on the screen and says something in whatever language that is. He complains about DiBiase hanging out with commoners in the parking lot like he's been doing lately. Slater jumps DiBiase and we get going. We talk about Tim Tebow for a bit as Slater hammers away. He works on the arm a lot and the announcers ignore them. And never mind as Dream Street ends this at 4:50.

Rating: D. Nothing match here and I don't know if they're actually going to go with Mahal vs. DiBiase as it's not the most interesting feud in the world. That being said it's still better than nothing I suppose. Neither guy is all that

interesting but it wasn't a horrible match I suppose.

DiBiase takes a knee in prayer after the match.

We get a clip of Rhodes throwing the water in Booker's face on Monday. Rhodes says he didn't like hiding behind a mask and now he's free to do whatever he wants to do.

Daniel Bryan vs. Randy Orton vs. Cody Rhodes vs. Wade Barrett

Winner gets Henry in a cage next week for the title and this is one fall to a finish. Barrett and Orton fight in the ring as Bryan and Rhodes go to the floor. Now we get to an interesting showdown with Orton vs. Bryan. And there's a commercial before there's any contact made at all. The pairings that started the match are back again, this time with the locations reversed.

The heels double team Bryan until it's back to the two big stars. Orton escapes the pumphandle slam but Rhodes helps the Brit out and the double teaming continues. Bryan comes back with a missile dropkick but what appears to be a top rope rana attempt is countered into a Doomsday Device by Rhodes and Barrett for two. We take another break and come back to see Orton get two on Rhodes via a suplex.

A big boot puts Orton on the floor and a Boss Man Slam gets two on Bryan. The Beautiful Disaster gets two on him as well. Rhodes is sent to the floor so Bryan hits a big suicide dive to put him down. Orton comes back in and loads up his ending sequence on Barrett. Bryan kicks Orton's head off for two. Rhodes takes over on Orton for a bit but Randy fights back and pulls off a superplex but Barrett comes in to steal the two count.

Everyone is down in the ring but Orton gets up first. He throws the heels to the floor and hooks the elevated DDT on Bryan. Here comes the RKO but Barrett pulls him to the floor and plants him with a DDT. Cody tries to steal the pin on

Bryan but Bryan reverses into the LeBell Lock for the nearly instant tap at 11:47 shown of 18:47.

Rating: C+. This was long and there were a lot of good spots, but the problem was that it felt like it was all over the place. The commercials were at odd times as well which made things a little awkward. Still though, pretty good match and for a TV main event, I don't think anyone can say it was bad.

Rhodes beats down Bryan but walks into an RK0.

Overall Rating: B+. Very solid show tonight with a lot of stuff happening here. Most importantly, how nice is it to see something new being entered into the main event for Tuesday? Instead of seeing something like Orton vs. Henry again, we're getting a breath of fresh air in there and that's all it needs to be. Good things all around here tonight.

Results

Hunico b. Justin Gabriel – Swanton Bomb

Beth Phoenix/Natalya b. AJ/Kaitlyn – Sharpshooter to AJ

Sheamus/Zack Ryder b. Jack Swagger/Dolph Ziggler – Rough Ryder to Ziggler

Ted DiBiase b. Heath Slater – Dream Street

Daniel Bryan b. Randy Orton, Wade Barrett and Cody Rhodes – LeBell Lock to Rhodes

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