

No Way Out 2012: Where's The Way Out Of These Boring Shows?

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Location: IZOD Center, East Rutherford, New Jersey

Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T, Jerry Lawler

The show is back after a few years' absence with the main event in a cage. It's Cena vs. Big Show with Cena and Ace's respective jobs on the line. Other than that we have Sheamus defending against a fill in challenger in the form of Ziggler, as well as Bryan vs. Punk vs. Kane in what should be a solid match. This card has the potential to be entertaining which is more than I would have said about Over the Limit. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: David Otunga vs. Brodus Clay

Otunga attacked Clay's knee on Friday to set this up. Chimmel says Otunga is from Larvard Hart School. Brodus' knee is taped up but he pounds Otunga into the corner very easily. Striker says that Brodus has an MCL sprain. Otunga finally uses that Larvard Hart brain and goes after the knee. He hooks a DDT onto the leg and a chop block gets two. Otunga gets the knee tied up in the ropes and hits a neckbreaker for no cover. Off to a front facelock but Brodus powers out of it. Brodus hits the headbutt to the chest and the suplex to send Otunga to the floor where he takes the countout at 5:45.

Rating: D+. The match was ok despite the weak ending. I guess this is going to continue which at least means Brodus has something to do. It would seem like they're setting up Big Show vs. Brodus, likely at MITB, so putting him against another Ace crony makes sense. This got the fans going though which is the point of a match like this so it accomplished its goal in that regard.

The opening video of the PPV is about Big Show vs. Cena and their whole backstory.

Smackdown World Title: Sheamus vs. Dolph Ziggler

They do big match intros which at least makes this seem like it's important. To be fair though there's no story here and Ziggler is filling in so I can't complain that much about it opening. Vickie kisses Ziggler on the cheek and Sheamus tries the Brogue Kick ala Wrestlemania. Ziggler gets to the floor and looks terrified. Back in and Sheamus takes over with a headlock onto the mat. Dolph gets up and hits a sweet dropkick to take Sheamus down.

That gets Ziggler nowhere though as Sheamus runs him over. The sleeper is quickly broken up as Sheamus sits him on the top rope (not in the corner), so Ziggler slaps him in the face. They go to the floor as the champion is fired up. Sheamus grabs the arm for a bit but Ziggler escapes to the top. His cross body is easily caught and an elbow to the face puts Dolph back down again.

The ten forearms are broken up and we get the rare apron fighting. Ziggler pulls the weakened shoulder into the post and Sheamus is slowed down for the first time in five minutes. A DDT gets two back in the ring for the challenger. Ziggler takes it to the mat and hooks a chinlock including the handstand. Sheamus breaks the hold but his Regal Roll is countered into another DDT for two.

The fans are chanting for Ziggler now. Back to the chinlock which was running long earlier on. Sheamus counters out of it but gets caught in a rollup with a hand on the ropes for two. Off to a modified crossface chickenwing with a bodyscissors by Ziggler but Sheamus powers out of it again very quickly. Brogue Kick misses and Ziggler grabs the sleeper which is quickly broken.

Dolph goes up but Sheamus "catches" him. I think it was supposed to be a slam position into a fireman's carry but Sheamus dropped him. Sheamus shows off his brain though as he shifts to an Irish Curse position instead. That was a good save by the champion. Ziggler escapes White Noise and hits the Zig Zag for two. Sheamus pulls himself to the top but

Dolph hits an X-Factor off the top for two. ANOTHER sleeper attempt is countered into the Irish Curse and there are the ten forearms. The sleeper is easily countered into White Noise and the Brogue Kick keeps the title at 15:04.

Rating: C-. This was working at times but the constant chinlocks/sleepers hurt it a lot. They were on different pages in there at times and it really brought things down. This wasn't a bad match or anything but the chemistry was off the level that it usually hits for these two. The fans popped big for the Brogue Kick though and that's the right idea. Good stuff considering it was a replacement match.

Vince is here and finds Ace in a red suit. Ace thinks there's no need for a man with a concussion to be here. Show is guaranteeing victory so there's no need for Vince to be here. Vince doesn't say anything and walks into his office, shutting the door in Ace's face. Josh comes up to talk to Ace, sending Johnny into a rant about how he has work to do tonight and tomorrow, so leave him alone.

Santino Marella vs. Ricardo Rodriguez

This is a tuxedo match and the logical conclusion to the feud between these two. Ricardo has his own music now which is much faster and perkier than Alberto's. Both guys present themselves to the crowd to start and Santino seems to be the favorite. Ricardo makes first contact by ripping the pocket off. Santino: "THIS IS MY ONLY TUXEDO!" He rips Ricardo's sleeve off and we get a few atomic drops.

Ricardo loses his jacket and it's time for some bullfighting. Santino's jacket is ripped up too. A drop toehold lets Santino get the shoes off and we get a LOUD boring chant. There goes Ricardo's shirt and jacket but he comes back with a jawbreaker. Santino loads up the Cobra but Ricardo throws the sock into the crowd. He takes Santino down and removes the pants...revealing a Cobra sock. Santino kicks him in the neck and removes the pants for the win at 4:25. Ricardo wears Del Rio underwear.

Rating: D+. This was a comedy match and while it was funny at times, I'm with the fans. This belonged on Raw or Smackdown rather than second on a PPV. Hopefully this ends the feud or lets Alberto get the US Title off of

Santino. It would do both of them some good, as Del Rio needs to be seasoned some more before he bores us in the main event.

Punk says he has no relationship with AJ and that he'll overcome the odds tonight. AJ comes up and kisses him for good luck, but he says luck is for losers and leaves. AJ glares at Josh for some reason.

Intercontinental Title: Christian vs. Cody Rhodes

Christian is defending in this Over the Limit rematch. Feeling out process to start with Cody taking him to the mat with some kicks to the ribs. Christian comes back and sends Cody into the corner for a stalemate. Cody goes to the apron and tries to suplex the champ to the floor but gets dropped onto the apron instead. A dropkick to the floor puts Cody down but he comes back by ramming Christian into the apron.

Back in and Cody starts in on the arm but Christian slides to the floor. He tries to crotch Cody on the post but gets pulled into the post face first. Front suplex gets two on Christian and Rhodes pounds away in the corner. Off to a short arm scissors, but wasn't it Christian's ankle that was hurt on Raw? Christian goes up but Cody knocks him down and the shoulder hits the apron on the way to the floor.

Cody follows him out but walks into a tornado DDT off the steps to put both guys down. Back in and a dropkick gets two for the Canadian. Cody gets put into 619 position but Christian's uppercut misses. Christian's top rope cross body is rolled through, getting two for Cody. Cody reverses a victory roll but takes FOREVER going up. Another tornado DDT gets two but Christian is hurting.

Cody hits the Alabama Slam for two but walks into the reverse DDT. The champ loads up the spear but Cody drops to the floor. Back inside the sunset flip out of the corner is countered but Christian hits the Killswitch....for two. Frog Splash hits knees but the Disaster Kick misses. Killswitch is countered into another missed Disaster Kick, letting Christian spear him down to retain at 11:30.

Rating: B-. As much as I can't stand the spear as a finisher anymore, the ending sequence was pretty freaking good with both guys hitting

everything they had until Christian got the pin. That was a great false finish on the Killswitch and the fans were totally buying into Cody as a real threat after that. This was better than I was expecting and hopefully it lets Cody move on to the main event.

Usos vs. Titus O'Neal/Darren Young vs. Epico/Primo vs. Justin Gabriel/Tyson Kidd

#1 contenders match, even though Epico and Primo already were #1 contenders. The crack production staff cuts away from Rosa dancing to show us AW giving Epico and Primo a pep talk on the pre show. Young and O'Neal are officially the Prime Time Players. That used to be my fantasy football team name so I'm liking them more and more. Booker: "They're a little bit fruit bootyish if you know what I mean." I think this is one fall to a finish with tags.

Titus and Jey starts things off but it's quickly off to Young. You don't have to tag your partner here either. Jimmy comes in quickly with a double chop for two on Darren. The Usos tag again and Epico tags himself in off a staggered Young. Jimmy hits a Bubba Bomb on Epico who tags in Justin for some reason. Justin and Jimmy hit a stalemate, followed by a Gabriel headlock.

Jey comes in and it's the double Samoan Drop for two. Rosa yells a lot as Titus tags himself in for two on Justin. Off to Darren as Gabriel is in trouble. Justin gets in a kick but Primo tags himself in to prevent the hot tag. Epico hits a dropkick for two and it's off to a chinlock. Apparently automatic rematch clauses expire after 30 days. Ok then. Epico hits rolling belly to back suplexes for two and it's back to Primo.

He misses an elbow and there's the tag to Kidd. Tyson fires off kicks and hits a suplex on Primo. Things break down a bit and the springboard elbow drop hits knees. Things break down even more and the Usos dive onto Titus and I think Epico. Young tags himself in but Tyson knocks him off the apron. In a SWEET spot, Kidd rana Primo onto the other pile of people on the floor. Young and Primo are legal and the fireman's carry into the gutbuster give Young and O'Neal the pin at 9:33.

Rating: C. For a bonus match, this was fine. Titus and Young are as good

as a set of challengers as you can ask for right now and since there are more face teams on the roster than heels, it would make sense to give them the belts so we can have some more challengers. Decent stuff here and it's good to see something resembling a division existing.

AW jumps ship to the winners post match. That fits him WAY better.

MITB ad, which is about Del Rio having all kinds of money. These ads featuring the wrestlers are a nice change of pace.

We recap HHH vs. Lesnar/Heyman, which is Brock Lesnar, the biggest PPV draw in the company, being used in a legal angle. And people wonder why the ratings are dropping over the summer.

Here's HHH to address the situation, minus anything visible on his arm. He talks about how he's spent over half of his life in the ring because he loves it and has never wanted to get a real job. Now he has a real job and it's a corporate one. He hates having to do all of this corporate and legal stuff because he's a fighter. That gave him an idea: Lesnar is supposed to be a fighter too, and HHH's arm is healing. It should be healed somewhere in the middle of the summer. So how about we get rid of the lawyers and Heyman and get down to Lesnar vs. HHH, say at Summerslam? HHH wants it there and that's it.

Bryan is in the back when AJ comes up. She says they've been through a lot but he says this isn't the time. There's still a part of her that hasn't gotten over him but she doesn't expect him to do anything about it. She wishes him luck and kisses him on the cheek, drawing a smile from him as AJ leaves.

Divas Title: Layla vs. Beth Phoenix

Layla grabs Beth's waist to start but Beth gets the rope. Beth shoves her down and basically shouts a promo at her, talking about how she'll win the title tonight. Layla gets the headband off Beth and mocks her poses. Layla takes her down and dances as Beth gets in a fetal position. End this NOW, please. The champion goes to the apron and kicks Beth in the face, only to get sent to the floor. Back in the Glam Slam is escaped so Beth shoves her down. Beth hooks a backbreaker and bends her over the

knee. Layla climbs the corner (botching at the same time) to counter the Glam Slam before hitting a cross body out of the corner for two. A powerslam gets two for Beth but her press slam is countered into a DDT for two. Layout out of nowhere gets the pin at 6:56.

Rating: D. This match was one of the worst I've seen in years at first and then upgraded to bad to end it. The division is rapidly reaching new levels of horrible as we had about two minutes to build this match in the course of a month. Terrible match and Layla is really lacking since she's gotten back.

AJ goes up to Kane but doesn't have much to say. Kane grabs her arm and kisses her which she doesn't seem to mind.

Hunico vs. Sin Cara

These two just can't get away from each other can they? They speed things up to start and Hunico dropkicks him down. Cara snapmares him to the floor but his suicide dive is countered by a kick to the face. Back in and Hunico chops him down in the corner followed by a slingshot dropkick. Off to a chinlock as Cara is being grounded here. The fans want Ryder as Hunico hits a powerbomb for two. Cara hits a pair of headscissors followed by some kicks and the spinning mat slam gets the pin at 5:47.

Rating: D+. This was your usual Smackdown match. Cara is getting the same treatment a lot of people get anymore with these random wins over people that don't really matter. It keeps him on TV though which is more important than almost anything short of giving him a story. This wasn't horrible but it couldn't be more of a filler match if they tried.

We recap the Raw triple threat which revolves around AJ. Bryan almost beat Punk last month and demanded a rematch, so Punk said cool. Kane beat them both on Smackdown so it's a triple threat. AJ is involved because she's psycho and awesome and may be in love with all three of them. She's the wildcard here.

Raw World Title: Kane vs. Daniel Bryan vs. CM Punk

Punk is defending of course. After the big match intros we're ready to

go. Kane goes after Punk so Bryan kicks Kane. Uh....ok? Double chokeslam is broken up and they both kick the monster down. Stereo dropkicks put Kane down but they get in a fight over the cover as is the tradition in triple threats. They slug it out with Punk taking over, backdropping Bryan to the floor. A suicide dive by Punk is broken up by a Kane clothesline which gets two.

Bryan knocks Kane to the floor so Punk dives on both guys to take over. Kane stays on the floor and pulls Punk outside. He sends the champion into the barricade and uppercuts Bryan to block the knee from the apron. Kane bends Punk around the post and kicks him in the head for good measure. He sends Punk into the corner and fires off some knees to the head followed by the low dropkick for two.

Off to a bodyscissors which Punk quickly elbows his way out of. Bryan is back in and hits a running dropkick into the corner on Punk, but he jumps into the claws of Kane. Kane shrugs off a clothesline but a drop toehold sends him into the buckle. A kick sends him to the floor and it's the small guys one on one again. Bryan goes up but gets caught by Punk. The champion loads up a superplex but Kane breaks it up. He breaks up a second attempt at one and Punk's trunks come down for a second.

Kane tries the superplex now but Punk breaks it up. Bryan gets tired of waiting and hits a dropkick to both guys for two each. Both guys are on their knees so Bryan fires off kicks to both guys. A big kick to Kane's head puts him down but Punk grabs a rollup for two. Kane gets in the corner and both guys take running knees. Neckbreaker gets two on Kane as Bryan makes the save. Snap powerslam gets two for Punk and he goes up for the Macho Elbow. Bryan tries a superplex but gets caught on Kane's shoulders. Punk plays Hawk in a Doomsday Device but only gets two on Bryan.

A horrible looking Macho Elbow hits Bryan but since this isn't Raw, it only gets two. Kane comes in before we can get the GTS and sends Punk to the apron. The champion hits a high kick but the Macho Elbow misses Kane. Bryan hits a Swan Dive on Punk for two. He low bridges Kane and knocks him to the floor but Punk rolls him up for two. A big kick to the head knocks Punk down and there's the YES Lock. Bryan CRANKS on it but he

cranks too hard, giving Punk a rollup for two ala Over the Limit.

GTS hits out of nowhere but Kane breaks up the cover. Kane comes back in with the top rope clothesline to Punk but the chokeslam is countered into a DDT for two. This time the Macho Elbow hits Kane but Punk can't hit the GTS. Chokeslam kills Punk but it only gets two. Dang I thought that was it. Kane yells at the referee and sets up a tombstone. Punk escapes and AJ is on the apron. Kane gets sent into her and the GTS hits for Punk to retain at 18:16.

Rating: B. I was really digging this one although AJ continues to be almost a red herring. She was only there for about five seconds and Bryan was gone for the last five minutes of this. Still though, it's good to see Punk retain as he continues his very long run as the #2 guy on Raw. Good match here though as they used Kane perfectly.

By the way that officially gives Punk the longest reign since Cena's year long run in 06/07.

Kane carries AJ off and she has a very evil smile. Punk smiles back at her and I think something is afoot. Punk celebrates long enough that his song restarts.

Ryback vs. Dan Delaney/Rob Grymes

The jobbers say they'll win and be in the main event of....and they sing the Wrestlemania X song, complete with old school Mania music. I like these guys already. Double Samoan Drop, 1:30. Ryback shouted to give him three while he was holding them up. I hope that's not what we get stuck with for the next few weeks.

The theme for Summerslam is Be A Star. Oh good grief.

The cage is lowered.

We get a LONG recap of this feud, which is basically Cena feuding with Ace because he's the boss and Ace being somewhat corrupt. Show was brought back to keep Ace's job so now the job is on the line again after Vince wanted to fire Ace but didn't for some reason. Vince got "punched" in the "head" on Monday and has a concussion. If Cena loses tonight he's

fired and if Show loses Ace is fired.

Big Show vs. John Cena

You can win by pin, submission or escape. Vince and Ace are at ringside. Show shoves him down to start and then into the cage. Cena goes into the cage again but the WMD hits the wall. There's the big chop in the corner as this has been all Show so far. Cena gets in a dropkick and goes for the door but is almost immediately pulled back. Show clotheslines him down and runs his mouth a lot.

Cena gets rammed into the cage again as this is a total squash so far. Show fires a punch into Cena's ribs and walks around a lot. He crushes Cena in the corner and stands on the neck in front of the door. Cena FINALLY gets his feet up in the corner to slow Show down and a bulldog gets one. Cena gets up on top of the cage but Show pulls him back in. They both get on the top rope but Show gets crotched.

Instead of charging out the door as fast as he can, Cena fires off a shoulder block to ram Show into the cage. Cena climbs the cage like an idiot and gets powerbombed into the cage wall. Well he deserved that. A regular powerbomb gets two as does a Vader Bomb. Show grabs him by the throat and climbs to the top rope while still holding Cena's neck. He picks Cena up off the mat to the top and drops him down to the mat. Seems counter productive but whatever.

Show drops an elbow off the top but Cena rolls away to prevent a bad case of death. The ring literally shook as he landed. Show tries to crawl out the door and gets his hand on the floor but Cena pulls him back in. Cena goes for the door but gets pulled back in as well. Chokeslam is countered and a double clothesline puts both guys down. Cena goes for the door but Ace knocks the referee down. Vince stops it but Ace shoves Vince into the door which goes into Cena's head. Chokeslam gets two.

Show loads up the WMD but it hits the referee of course. AA is avoided and Show hits the WMD on Cena. Show is the only one up and there's no referee. He goes for the door but Brodus Clay is waiting with a chair. Doesn't that mean he's fired now? Instead Show starts to climb and Brodus rolls his eyes before stepping two feet to the left so he's in front of

Show again.

Show is frustrated so Brodus waves out Riley and Santino, guys that Show knocked out. They get knocked down so Brodus waves out Ryder. Kofi comes out and gets to the top of the cage and knocks Show to the mat. Cena crawls towards the door but Show grabs the leg. They go back into the ring and the AA puts Big Show down. There's no referee as Cena covers so he climbs up instead. Brodus has the door covered but Ace blocks Cena's way out. Brodus goes over and subdues Ace so Cena can escape and win at 19:48.

Rating: C-. This had about 10 minutes of action in a nearly 20 minute match. The ending made sense and was overdone, but it was probably better than the other alternative. Cena winning was the pretty obvious choice but I can't imagine Ace is going to be gone for more than about two weeks or so. The match wasn't what I would call good but it was ok I guess. The laying around got REALLY boring though.

Post match Vince fires Ace and Cena gives Ace an AA through the table, because that's just the kind of guy he is.

Overall Rating: D+. This wasn't what I'd call a bad show but it was pretty underwhelming. Ace getting fired is good at the moment but I can't imagine it'll be a lasting decision. The triple threat was by far the best match of the night but it's clear that the injuries and suspensions are crippling these guys at the moment. Clearly the solution is to have more squash matches because we COULDN'T just bring someone else up on the roster right? Passable show but it's nothing great at all.

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