

On This Day: March 16, 2012 – Smackdown: Back When AJ Was Interesting

Smackdown

Date: March 16, 2012

Location: Nationwide Arena, Columbus, Ohio

Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T, Josh Matthews

It's that time of the week again. It's time for absolutely nothing being done about Bryan vs. Sheamus because that match means nothing in the grand scheme of Wrestlemania. Odds are we'll hear more about the battling GM's and that's about it. I haven't heard anything announced for tonight yet so it'll be a surprise to me as well. Let's get to it.

Do You Know Your Enemy? Mine at the moment is Iowa St. They need to be defeated Saturday.

Here's Christian to open the show with the Peep Show. He looks healthy now at least. Christian gets a nice reaction but Booker informs us that Christian is looking down at all of us. He talks about the 12 man tag match at Mania and says that it'll change a lot in WWE. Christian brings out Ace and Otunga as well as Teddy who comes out with Aksana. R-Truth is officially part of Team Long.

Christian says let the bidding begin on his services and Teddy gets to go first. Teddy looks at him so Christian goes on a small rant and says make it worth his while. He says to give Christian what he deserves: one more match. Teddy tells Christian he's awesome but won't beg him to be part of the team. Once Teddy takes over both shows, you have to earn title shots and they won't get one if they get on his nerves. So in other words, earn it, but make sure you suck up at the same time?

Ace says that Christian should be on his team and guarantees Christian a title match if Team Ace wins. Christian says he won't fail, unlike Teddy. He officially joins Team Ace. Christian's music plays but Teddy says hang on a minute. He says Christian will be in action tonight but Ace says no because he isn't medically cleared tonight. Instead, Otunga gets to face the newest member of Team Teddy.

David Otunga vs. Kofi Kingston

This is joined in progress as we come back from a break. Ace is on commentary and Christian and Santino are at ringside. Teddy is on commentary too. Kofi kicks away to start but Otunga avoids him to take over. Cole and Teddy argue as Otunga pounds away. Christian can't compete because of an ingrown toenail. Powerslam gets two for David. Teddy and Ace argue about ingrown toenails as Otunga poses.

Off to a chinlock as Cole talks about baseball. Thankfully Josh actually talks about the match even a little bit to get us back to some sanity. Otunga hits a clothesline in the corner and then a second one. Booker says Otunga would have been better off in the WBF. That's allowed to be mentioned? Kofi comes back with a cross body for two and a dropkick to put David down. He loads up the Boom Drop but Christian trips Kofi. Teddy points it out so Christian is ejected. The GM's argue and Cole says something about the IC Title. Otunta tries to hit Kofi with his belt but Santino stops him. Trouble in Paradise ends this at 5:40.

Rating: C-. In a roughly five and a half minute match, we had attempted weapon use, two interferences, a fight between the GM's, and a WBF reference. Who in the world thought this match needed that much to it? The match was just ok and it's good to see Otunga getting some time to be on offense.

Bryan is outside the Divas locker room and AJ comes out in a little black dress. AJ says this dress Bryan bought her

doesn't seem to fit. Bryan: "It looked much better on the mannequin." Bryan talks about how they need to be the new power couple so he's gotten her a match tonight where a win could get her a Divas title match.

AJ vs. Nikki Bella

Bryan comes out to be in AJ's corner. Nikki gets on her knees because AJ is short so AJ dropkicks her in the face. Bryan is coaching AJ from the floor. Nikki stands on AJ's hair and pulls her up. Booker thinks AJ doesn't want to be in the ring. Off to a chinlock as Booker goes on a long and stupid rant about how AJ shouldn't be in there and doesn't want this. Josh and Cole agree that it's stupid because she's a wrestler and that's her job. AJ comes back with a cross body and Twin Magic fails. AJ grabs a rollup for the pin at 2:27.

Bryan celebrates post match. Booker says Bryan is ruining AJ's career and that wasn't a win. WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT???

Sheamus vs. Jericho later.

Raw ReBound shortens the Rap vs. Rock deal to about three minutes.

Cody talks about how dominant Big Show is 364 days out of the year, but at Wrestlemania he's a choke artist. This match also has more story than Sheamus vs. Bryan.

Great Khali vs. Cody Rhodes

Khali easily overpowers him to start and chops Rhodes a lot. Cody grabs a single arm DDT which Khali can't sell right so Cody works over the arm. Booker says go for the legs, even though Cody has Khali down already. Now it's to the knees for a bit but Cody goes up and jumps into a chop. Khali loads up a chop but Cody heads to the apron and hits an enziguri. A dropkick to the knee sets up the Beautiful Disaster for the pin at 3:13.

Rating: C-. Cody beating a giant is a good idea heading into Wrestlemania. It worked for Luger when he was getting ready to face Giant back in 1996. It might work a little better if there was more than one face giant to face before Big Show but you get the idea. Cole called this a huge upset for no apparent reason.

Video on the Central American tour.

Here's Orton with something to say. He says he usually doesn't come out here to talk when he has a problem with someone but instead he hunts them down. However he feels like he's being hunted by Kane. Orton wants to know why Kane has chosen him. Kane wants people to embrace hate and Orton is embracing it as well. He calls out Kane for an explanation. Well forced exposition is better than no exposition I guess. Orton wants to know why he's putting Kane down when it eventually happens.

Here's the Big Fried Freak who talks about how Orton doesn't like being in the unknown. Usually he'd like to see Orton all unsure but since Orton asked, Kane will tell him. At least he's polite. We get a clip from last year where Orton beat Kane in a street fight and post match Kane offered a handshake which Orton accepted. I don't remember that but maybe it was a post show thing.

Kane says he watches that footage every day because it reminds him of what he had become: something with humanity. Kane says he's a monster again but he needs closure, which he'll get by destroying Orton. Orton says come get me but Kane says we'll do it at Wrestlemania. That gets us to eight matches which is acceptable.

Go to the David Otunga law offices!

Here's Drew for a match. Teddy pops up on screen and says Drew has a one year contract that can't be broken. Here's Drew's first opponent.

Drew McIntyre vs. Big Show

Show powers him around to start with pure power. McIntyre comes back with some kicks but Futureshock is broken up and Show spears him down. Show chokeslams him but decides to punch him instead of covering him. Show goes over to him and the referee stops it at 1:52. That's an odd ending.

Mark Henry vs. Yoshi Tatsu

Yoshi immediately dropkicks him but Henry glares at him. Henry takes over with power and powerslams Yoshi into dust. World's Strongest Slam ends this in about 2:00.

Here's Jericho to talk a bit before the main event. He talks about how he's been requested to apologize for what he said on Monday about Punk's family. There's no need to apologize for the truth. Punk has all the signs of an alcoholic such as the tattoos and trying to hide. Jericho talks about how the Pipe Bombs are things Punk wants to say to his parents. He's the best in the world and he's going to prove it by winning the world title at Mania. Afterwards, he's going to make a stiff cocktail and toast Punk and Punk's father. He starts a CM Drunk chant and says Pipe Bomb.

Sheamus vs. Chris Jericho

Sheamus knocks him into the corner to start and Jericho bails to the floor. That goes nowhere as Sheamus takes him back inside and gets two. Jericho gets sent over the corner and out to the floor in a crash. There are the ten forearms to the chest which Booker calls musical chairs. A delayed vertical suplex gets two for Sheamus. This has been one sided thus far.

Just as I say that, Jericho low bridges him to send Sheamus to the floor. A baseball slide sends Sheamus into the barricade. Bryan and AJ (now in matching colors) come out to watch as we take a break. Back with Jericho still in control. The big red welt on Sheamus' back is still there after crashing into the

table on Monday. Jericho hits a belly to back suplex as we hear about Jericho's Vengeance 2001 accomplishments.

Jericho loads up the running bulldog but Sheamus sends him into the corner to counter. Sheamus comes back with his double ax handles and the Irish Curse for two. The rolling fireman's carry slam looks to set up White Noise but Jericho counters into a Codebreaker attempt. Sheamus puts him on the top rope but the Brogue Kick misses. Jericho hits the bulldog and Lionsault for two. Sheamus pulls himself to the top but gets crotched. Jericho gets knocked to the mat and Sheamus hits the top rope shoulder for two.

Celtic Cross is loaded up but Jericho rolls down the back and counters into the Walls. Since Sheamus is a top face though he manages to get the ropes to break it up. Another Celtic Cross is loaded up but Jericho escapes again. They go to the floor and Sheamus throws Jericho over towards Bryan and AJ but they move. Sheamus stares at Bryan but Jericho rams him into the table. Bryan kicks Sheamus in the head as Jericho is getting back in and Chris wins by countout at 10:52 shown of 14:22.

Rating: B. I was digging this one and I can live with the ending because it serves a better purpose. It was obvious neither guy was going to go over clean here which is ok, but they still need to give us something else to care about with Sheamus vs. Bryan. The AJ stuff is kind of there on the side and I don't know if they're going to be able to have it mean anything for the PPV.

Sheamus kicks Jericho's head off to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. I like this one more than I've liked most of their shows lately. This did a good job of pushing a lot of the matches for Mania which is really all you can do with two weeks left. Orton vs. Kane has a story (not a great one but a story nonetheless) now and we FINALLY get a little friction between Bryan vs. Sheamus. It doesn't mean anything but it's

better than leaving them apart. Good show here though and a good Mania build show.

Results

Kofi Kingston b. David Otunga – Trouble in Paradise

AJ b. Nikki Bella – Rollup

Cody Rhodes b. Great Khali – Beautiful Disaster

Big Show b. Drew McIntyre by referee stoppage

Mark Henry b. Yoshi Tatsu – World's Strongest Slam

Chris Jericho b. Sheamus via countout

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