

Smackdown – July 5, 2013: Daniel Bryan Really Does Liven Things Up

Smackdown

Date: July 5, 2013

Location: Landon Arena, Topeka, Kansas

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

We now know everyone in the MITB matches at the PPV so tonight is likely to be all about building towards the match, much like on Raw. Other than that we're likely to get more between Ziggler and Del Rio after Dolph cost the champ a match against Cena. If we're lucky we'll even get more Daniel Bryan goodness. Let's get to it.

The opening airs for the second week in a row. It's better than the voiceover.

Here's Punk to get us going. We get a clip of him getting annoyed at Curtis Axel for stealing the pin in their tag match on Raw. Punk says if he was Cena, he'd come out here and make a big speech about the 4th of July and how awesome it is, but thankfully for the fans, his name is CM Punk. To him, the 4th of July is about independence. A group of like minded guys got together and decided to not live by someone else's rules. They were willing to die for what they believed in and that's something Punk can get behind.

If Punk is given rules to follow, odds are he's going to break them. When someone tells him to do something one way, odds are he's going to run in the other direction. When he was told he was going to be the big thing after Wrestlemania, he walked away. When someone told him that his chances at winning another MITB match were really low, he decided to line

them up and yell at them. He has two goals: get his hands on Brock Lesnar and become WWE Champion again.

Cue Alberto (Punk: "I wasn't done.") who says he was expecting more from Punk. Punk says he was expecting a cool car instead of just a guy in a cheap suit. Del Rio brags about being world champion and says this is his show. Alberto makes fun of Americans for stuffing themselves with hamburgers and hot dogs on Independence Day and then spending the rest of the year getting fatter and fatter. Then they come to Smackdown and cheer for Dolph Ziggler while chanting USA.

Punk wants to know why Del Rio has changed his tune so quickly. Just a few weeks ago Del Rio was bragging about being born in Mexico and made in the USA, but then everyone saw through him. Del Rio says Punk is a little chihuahua and someone like the world heavyweight champion needs to teach him some manners. Punk: "That just makes you the #1 contender to my title: Best in the world." Nice line. Del Rio orders Punk out of his ring right now but remember Punk doesn't like being told what to do. Teddy, main event made, moving on. This was a solid opening segment but unfortunately it results in a Del Rio main event.

Post break Heyman asks Punk if he can get the match canceled because Punk has nothing to gain. Punk says he wants to fight so Heyman offers to be in Punk's corner at MITB. Punk declines again and Heyman looks annoyed.

Usos vs. Rhodes Scholars

The Scholars brag about winning MITB in nine days but the fans don't seem to buy it. Cody starts with Jimmy but ramming the Samoan's head into the buckle has no effect. I miss racial stereotypes in wrestling. Cody dropkicks Jimmy down and brings in Sandow to stomp away for a few seconds. The Russian legsweep sets up the Wind-Up Elbow for two before it's back to Rhodes. Things quickly break down and both Scholars get superkicked, setting up a double Superfly Splash for the pin on Sandow at 2:17.

Post match the Shield pops up on screen and says the loss on Raw isn't derailing their mission of justice. At Money in the Bank, the Usos are going to need more than luck. Ambrose says that Monday was Christian's one chance out of 100 to get lucky. Prepare to live in a world where Dean Ambrose is waiting in the shadows with a Money in the Bank briefcase.

Alicia Fox vs. Kaitlyn

Fox drives Kaitlyn into the corner to start and gets two off a quick suplex. We hit the chinlock thirty seconds into the match before Alicia slams Kaitlyn head first into the mat. Back to the chinlock but Kaitlyn fights up...and here's AJ to skip around the ring. Kaitlyn fights the urge to stare at AJ for a bit but finally knocks her off the apron, allowing Alicia to hit the most devastating move in all of wrestling: the ROLLUP OF DISTRACTION, for the pin at 2:45.

Post match the Bellas stop AJ and say that she needs to watch out because they'll be taking the Divas Title soon. Langston runs them off but AJ is scared of Kaitlyn coming to get her. It isn't that bad though because Kaitlyn is less aerodynamic because of those big man arms. Langston wants to know what AJ is going to do for Dolph's match later but she'll just text him and it'll be all cool.

We recap the events between Bryan, Kane and Orton in their match on Monday.

Christian says that he's beaten Orton before and he can do it again tonight. Orton says he's beaten Christian before and he'll do it again tonight in one more match.

Wyatt Family promo.

Randy Orton vs. Christian

Feeling out process to start with Orton taking Christian down with a shoulder. A clothesline gets two for Randy but Christian sends him throat first into the middle rope. Christian tries the uppercut from the floor but Orton ducks away and tries the Elevated DDT, only to have Christian counter with a backdrop to the floor. We take a break and come back with Orton getting up from a missed knee drop but coming back with the Thesz Press.

Christian snaps Orton's throat across the top rope and gets two off the high cross before putting on a chinlock. Randy escapes and they slug it out again with Orton dropkicking Christian down. He tries the powerslam but Christian puts on the brakes to send Orton down. Instead Randy drives down punches in the corner and gets two off the falling powerbomb (think the Big Ending but with Christian facing up).

Christian avoids an RK0 out of the corner but gets caught in a rolling cradle for two. Both finishers are countered and Christian puts Orton down with a belly to back suplex. The spear gets two but the Killswitch is countered into the Elevated DDT but Christian counters the RK0 yet again. Christian jumps over Orton but walks into the RK0 for the pin at 9:48 shown of 12:48.

Rating: B-. I loved the idea of both guys knowing each other so well that they can counter all the signature stuff. It worked two years ago in their big feud and it still works very well here. Both guys looked good out there, but why put Orton over Christian when the Canadian is already an underdog in the ladder match?

Teddy Long tells Heyman to do commentary on the main event tonight.

We get a clip from the App with Ziggler telling AJ to see the big picture: forget Kaitlyn and become a power couple.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Drew McIntyre

Before the match Ziggler talks about how fast the last few months have gone. He won the world title from Alberto Del Rio and then Del Rio was trying as hard as he could to make people like him. Ziggler may be cocky, but he's never claimed to be something he's not. At MITB, he's taking back his world title.

Dolph fires off right hands in the corner but a hurricanrana attempt is countered into a buckle bomb for two. Drew stomps him in the corner and gets two off a snap suplex. A chinlock is quickly broken so Drew puts him down with a pair of backbreakers. Ziggler comes back with the corner splash and a dropkick before countering a tilt-a-whirl into the Zig Zag for the pin at 3:11.

Rating: D+. There isn't much you can get out of a three minute match, but it's nice to see the jobbers being used like they're supposed to be. Ziggler gets an easy win and the jobbers don't lose anything as a result. There wasn't much to see here but it makes sense given the post match stuff from Raw.

Ziggler bails to avoid a three on one attack. He charges back in, gets in a few shots and then bails again to mess with the Band.

We get the career retrospective on Mark Henry from Raw.

Fandango vs. Justin Gabriel

Fandango quickly takes him down and dances a bit, only to have Gabriel kick his head off. Justin sends him face first into the apron but charges into a knee to the face. The top rope legdrop is good for the pin on Justin at 1:36.

We The People talk about how many Americans don't appreciate the Fourth of July.

Alberto Del Rio vs. CM Punk

Heyman is on commentary. They take turns shoving each other into the corner with Punk snapmaring him down and hitting a dropkick to the back of Alberto's head. Del Rio fires off right hands in the corner but misses a charge to put him down. Alberto rolls to the floor to avoid the Macho Elbow and we take a break. Back with Del Rio hitting a running kick to the arm in the corner before putting on an armbar. The low superkick gets two on Punk as Heyman talks about Cole being a Paul Heyman guy back in the day.

The armbar is countered into a GTS attempt but Del Rio escapes into the Codebreaker to the arm for two. A kick to the head gets two more and it's back to the armbar. Del Rio may be boring but his psychology is sound. If your finishing move is an arm hold, why focus on anything but softening up the arm? Punk slams him down and goes up top but Alberto hits a nasty running enziguri for two.

Punk comes back with some kicks and clotheslines but charges into a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. A baseball slide sends him to the floor and Del Rio whips him shoulder first into the barricade. Alberto loads up the announce table and punches Heyman down, sending Punk into a rage. It's a double countout at 7:40 shown of 10:40. Lillian calls it a no contest by way of a double countout. Are we not allowed to say draw anymore?

Rating: D+. This was dull stuff with a long stretch of the match being spent in the same armbar. Del Rio's psychology may be sound, but man alive can his matches be dull a lot of the time. The ending makes sense as you want to keep both guys looking strong and Del Rio can't lose two matches in a week.

Del Rio takes the GTS and Punk checks on Heyman to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This show did a good job of building up the PPV matches but it wasn't great on its own. The problem with the episode was

they spent a lot of time focusing on the All-Star ladder match which left the Smackdown ladder match in the cold. It's not all that strong on its own and needs all the build it can get, but the show's main event and featured match were about the other ladder match. Not a bad show this week but it needed better prioritizing.

Results

Usos b. Rhodes Scholars – Double Superfly Splash to Sandow

Alicia Fox b. Kaitlyn – Rollup

Randy Orton b. Christian – RK0

Dolph Ziggler b. Drew McIntyre – Zig Zag

Fandango b. Justin Gabriel – Top rope legdrop

CM Punk vs. Alberto Del Rio went to a double countout

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