

On This Day: August 31, 2012 – Smackdown: Back When Sandow Was Losing In Longer Matches

Smackdown

Date: August 31, 2012

Location: Resch Center Arena, Green Bay, Wisconsin

Commentators: Michael Cole, Josh Matthews

After last week's huge mess, hopefully Smackdown can turn things around tonight. Last week was one of the worst shows I can remember in a long time, which is a shame as I used to love Smackdown. Anyway, we're getting very close to Night of Champions now and unfortunately, Del Rio hasn't been hit by a bus or anything like that to keep us from having to sit through another title shot for him. Let's get to it.

Do You Know Your Enemy? Mine at the moment is Del Rio vs. Sheamus. I can't stand this feud and about 80% of that is on Del Rio.

Orton vs. Zigler later. Gee I wonder how that's going to end.

Here's Sheamus to open the show. First up, he needs to praise HHH. Sheamus isn't sure what HHH's future holds but he has Sheamus' respect. HHH is the embodiment of a champion, which is everything Del Rio isn't. This brings out Damien Sandow of all people. He talks about how Sheamus is as ignorant as he is enormous because of his praise of HHH.

He goes on about Sheamus and HHH promotes a stereotype to the WWE Universe but Sheamus cuts him off. The champ doesn't want to hear Sandow yap for twenty minutes so why not come into the ring right now and have a fight. Sandow says Sheamus isn't worth his time but here's Booker with a dissenting opinion. He makes Sandow vs. Sheamus for later, which is already more exciting than anything else from last week.

Rey Mysterio vs. Cody Rhodes

Cody talks about how Rey is just like Sin Cara, hiding behind a mask.

Rhodes uses his power advantage to start but he ducks his head, letting Rey get in a kick to the face. Cody sends him out to the floor and we take a break. Back with Cody hitting a spinning suplex for two. A release gordbuster gets two followed by some knees to the back and a chinlock.

Cody goes for the mask but gets sent face first into the buckle. Rey speeds things up and hits a seated senton followed by a big kick to the head for two. A knee to Rey's head gets two but Mysterio kicks Cody into 619 position. Cody catches Rey's legs but Rey counters the counter into a sunset flip for the pin at 5:31 shown of 9:01.

Rating: C. This was fine. It's nice to see Cody having an actual story on Smackdown instead of doing nothing on Superstars every other week. I didn't catch anything being mentioned about Rey and Cody's history, although at least we're hearing about how Cody used to be obsessed with his looks to give a reason to the Sin Cara feud.

Cody beats up Rey post match until Cara makes the save and puts a Sin Cara mask on Cody.

We get the first anger management segment from Monday.

Kaitlyn vs. Natalya

Eve is on commentary. Nattie takes her down with a headlock to start and the place is eerily quiet. Kaitlyn shoulder blocks her down and they head to the floor where Kaitlyn gets her head slammed into the floor. Natalya hooks an abdominal stretch and slaps Kaitlyn's side which has to hurt bad. Kaitlyn comes back with some armdrags but Natalya clotheslines her down. The Canadian runs her mouth and gets small packaged for the pin at 2:45. Getting extra time is helping the Divas a tiny bit but this was more about Eve, who spent the whole match being the corporate suckup, which does nothing for me at all.

Booker is worried about the pressure of being Raw GM is getting to AJ. He says the match between Jericho and Ziggler never should have been made. Vickie comes up and says this is more proof that AJ needs to go. Sweet Christmas enough with the power struggle storylines already.

Raw ReBound talks about Punk/Lawler/Cena from Monday.

Anger management segment #2.

Sheamus vs. Damien Sandow

Sandow is taken into the ropes to start and requests that the referee does his job. Sandow tries to take it into the corner but Sheamus grabs his beard. To avoid getting punched in the face, Damien drops to the floor and things slow down again. The champ starts running him over with shoulders and Sandow heads to the floor again. This time Sheamus is tired of waiting so he goes out after Damien, only to have his knees sent into the steps by Sandow.

That gets an eight count and Sandow stomps away back inside. Off to a chinlock which Sheamus breaks pretty quickly. A regular neckbreaker (as opposed to the double arm version) gets two for Sandow and it's back to the chinlock. This one is broken even faster and Sheamus starts his hard hitting offense.

Damien bails to the floor for the third time but Sheamus throws him right back in and hits the ten forearms. A slingshot shoulder block to the back gets two and Damien heads to the floor for I think the fourth time. White Noise is escaped and the Brogue Kick is ducked. Sandow rolls to the floor and sprints up the ramp for the countout at 6:51.

Rating: C. This wasn't a great match, but it was a logical one. The idea of Sandow not being able to hang in a fight with Sheamus makes perfect sense and having him constantly trying to run and clear his head was a nice touch. This is exactly what Sandow needs: to be able to rub elbows with bigger names. He didn't need to win here and certainly shouldn't have, but having him in there is a good step in the right direction.

Prime Time Players vs. Justin Gabriel/Tyson Kidd

Kidd and Gabriel have matching yellow shirts which look like dresses on them. Kidd and Titus get things going as the Usos Tout about how they should be #1 contenders. Off to Young vs. Gabriel after the starters do nothing of note. Justin takes Young to the mat after making a blind tag,

allowing Kidd to kick Darren in the face.

Off to Titus who powers Tyson down and brings Darren back in. The Players are very good about tagging in and out quickly. Tyson sends Young into the corner and tags out to Justin. An STO puts Darren down and Justin loads up the 450, only for Titus to distract him. Darren crotches Gabriel and hits the fireman's carry gutbuster for the pin at 3:13. This one looked better as he launched Gabriel into the air and Justin was in free fall when he hit the knees.

Rating: C. I know I've used that rating a lot tonight but this was exactly what the rating implies: it was ok and right in the middle. I do like that the guys in the tag division are actually getting a little time every week. If nothing else it lets a lot more guys get on TV as opposed to showing up every other PPV and have a title defense that means nothing. These matches don't exactly equal the Harts vs. the Bulldogs but they're an improvement over what we've been getting the last few years.

The final anger management segment airs. Kane's explanation of his history is still hilarious.

Here's Del Rio with something to say. Alberto brags about beating Orton last week but doesn't care to be reminded that Sheamus has beaten him every time. Del Rio threatens Josh but here's Kane for protection I guess. Kane says he's here to apologize for attacking Josh at Summerslam. Teddy comes out and makes Kane vs. Alberto.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Kane

This is joined in progress after a break but it doesn't look like we missed much. Kane pounds on Del Rio in the corner but Alberto comes back with some kicks to the legs. Kane comes back with a low dropkick to the head for two and an uppercut that sends Del Rio to the apron. Del Rio rams Kane's arm into the buckle and follows it up with a kick to the shoulder. Kane will have none of that and hits a sidewalk slam to set up the top rope clothesline for no cover. Kane loads up the chokeslam but Ricardo pulls Kane's leg. The distraction lets Del Rio hit a Backstabber for the pin at 2:46.

Post match Kane snaps and chokeslams Josh, but he apologizes while he does it.

HHH video from Raw.

Randy Orton vs. Dolph Ziggler

Ziggler dropkicks Randy down to start and struts a bit. Dolph shows off a bit so Randy dropkicks him down as well in a nice touch. A slingshot suplex gets two on Dolph but Ziggler comes back with a neckbreaker and some elbow drops. Orton wins a slugout and fires off his clotheslines. The powerslam sets up the elevated DDT but Ziggler counters. Ziggler doesn't get back inside though and Orton pulls him to the top rope for a superplex.

That only gets two and Ziggler comes back with a jumping DDT for another near fall. The crowd is starting to get into this. Dolph charges at Randy but gets caught in the Elevated DDT for another two. Orton was laughing while he hit that which was kind of a nice touch. They head to the floor with Ziggler being thrown over the announce table. Back inside and Ziggler misses the Zig Zag, allowing the RKO to pin him at 7:10.

Rating: C+. This was a fast paced main event style match, but man alive did they have to have Ziggler lose AGAIN? Orton is leaving for a few months to film whatever the next WWE movie is. Ziggler is indeed Mr. MITB and probably will win the title before the year is over, but as always in WWE, the idea seems to be to have him lose time after time so he can surprise everyone and win it all back at once. You know, because no heel can look strong in WWE and they all have to be cowards that steal every win they get.

Vickie immediately announces that Dolph is still Mr. MITB and says he did a good job. Yes, make sure you hammer in that the guy who is going to get a title match is such a loser.

Overall Rating: C+. This wasn't a great show at all but man alive was it better than last week. It's amazing how much better things are when you don't have Alberto and Sheamus interacting. Seeing Sandow getting a match against the champ, even when he was mostly dominated and lost, was a good

sign that there are big things in his future. This show toned down the stupid stuff and they got a better show out of it.

Results

Rey Mysterio b. Cody Rhodes – Sunset Flip

Kaitlyn b. Natalya – Small Package

Sheamus b. Damien Sandow via countout

Prime Time Players b. Justin Gabriel/Tyson Kidd – Fireman's carry gutbuster to Gabriel

Alberto Del Rio b. Kane – Backstabber

Randy Orton b. Dolph Ziggler – RKO

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