

Night of Champions 2013: Well That Was Surprising

Night of Champions 2013

Date: September 15, 2013

Location: Joe Louis Arena, Detroit, Michigan

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

This is the first PPV after the big summer angle with the rise of the new Corporation. Our main event tonight is Randy Orton defending his title against Daniel Bryan in Bryan's first one on one shot against the new champion. The other main event is CM Punk vs. Paul Heyman/Curtis Axel in an elimination tag for Punk's chance to get his hands on Heyman. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Tag Team Turmoil

This is a tag team gauntlet match with the winning team earning a tag title shot at Seth Rollins/Roman Reigns later in the show. There are five teams in total with two teams starting. The winners of the first match move on to face the next team, last team standing wins. It's 3MB vs. Tons of Funk (minus the Funkadactyls) to get us going.

Brodus starts with Heath (teaming with McIntyre here) and quickly crushes Slater in the corner. Off to Tensai who follows Slater to the floor. Drew busts out a flip dive over the top of all things to take over for a bit. Back in and Tensai gets two off a sunset flip but Drew pounds away in the corner, only to get rolled up for the pin by Tensai at 2:40.

The Real Americans are in next but 3MB sticks around to beat on Tensai. Cesaro shouts WE THE PEOPLE and it's time for a commercial on the pre-show. Back with Cesaro still shouting WE THE PEOPLE before Tensai counters a suplex to take him down. Hot tag brings in Brodus to clean

house with his headbutt to the chest and a splash in the corner but Swagger breaks up the cover off the middle rope splash. Swagger makes a blind tag and puts a covering Brodus into the Patriot Lock for the submission at 5:16 total.

It's the Usos in fourth, meaning the Prime Time Players are last. They charge in to the ring with Jey hitting a big flip dive over the top to take out Swagger and a slingshot moonsault connects on Cesaro. Swagger comes in legally with a belly to belly suplex on Jey before we hit the armbar. Back to Cesaro for some choking and we take ANOTHER break. Do we really need commercials during a big commercial?

After seeing the same explanation of how to order the show that we got in the first commercial break, we're back with Cesaro being knocked off the apron but Swagger avoids the Superfly Splash and the Patriot Lock submits Jey at 10:00. It's the Prime Time Players in last with Titus cleaning house on Swagger. A fall away slam puts Jack down but he takes Titus' leg out, only to have Darren Young break up another Patriot Lock. The hot tag brings in Young but he gets caught in the Patriot Lock as well. Young rolls through and the Gut Check gives the Players the title shot at 11:55 total. Cesaro was gone for the last fall.

Rating: D+. These matches are fun in theory but I've never cared for them for the most part. At the end of the day, it doesn't work to see these falls go down in just a few minutes. There's no time to get any story going and one of the last two teams in line always wins the thing. Nothing special here and I think everyone knew the Players were winning here.

The opening video is about what defines a champion with clips of men like Sammartino, Hogan, Michaels and Austin. It transitions into the usual PPV opening video focusing on the main events.

Here's HHH to open the show. He thanks us for joining him in what's best for business and says he's listening to the audience. There won't be any

interference in the main event from anyone, including Shield, Big Show or anyone else. HHH asks us if we're ready for Night of Champions which brings out Heyman (in a suit) and Curtis Axel.

Heyman says he's tried everything to get a message to HHH but this is the best he can do. HHH asks Heyman when he last slept or showered and Paul snaps that he's stressed out. Heyman complains about the position he's been put in as we're ten minutes into the show and this is what we're getting. He explains the entire story of Punk vs. Heyman/Lesnar as well as the match we've got tonight in case you bought all the PPVs available tonight and aren't sure what you want to watch.

Apparently the handicap match is No DQ which must have been announced on the pre-show. HHH says Heyman shouldn't be worried if he trusts Curtis Axel as much as he claims to. The match stays on so now Axel gets to beg for his boss' life. He brings up beating HHH in a match as the fans chant BORING. HHH says this is Night of Champions so HHH is going to go to the back and the first person he finds gets an IC Title shot.

Intercontinental Title: Curtis Axel vs. Kofi Kingston

Well this is a letdown. Kofi takes him down by the wrist and sends Axel to the floor. Back in and Curtis avoids the double leapfrog and bails to the floor again because the seventeen minutes of stalling to open the show weren't enough. Kofi kicks him on the way back in and Axel is on the floor for the third time in three minutes. Back in again and a dropkick gets two on the champion so Axel goes outside AGAIN. Kingston gets tired of waiting and goes outside but gets sent into the steps. Kofi stops himself and jumps to the apron and then the top for a spinning cross body to the floor.

Back inside again and Axel gets in a cheap shot to take over. Kofi is tied up in the Tree of Woe for a spear to the ribs and the snap Saito Suplex is good for two. We hit the neck crank followed by a clothesline for two for the champion. A quick slam gets two on Kofi as this boring

match continues. Back to the chinlock for a bit before Kofi tries to spin around a clothesline but can't quite pull it off as crisply as he wanted to. A DDT gets two on Axel and Kofi's spinning cross body off the top gets the same.

There's the Boom Drop but Trouble in Paradise misses. Axel drives Kofi into the corner but walks into a pendulum kick. Kofi goes up, only to dive into a dropkick to the chest for two. Kingston escapes another Saito Suplex and a side roll gets two. The SOS is countered and Trouble in Paradise is ducked but Kofi counters Curtis' neckbreaker into the SOS for....something as the camera is on Heyman at what could have been the three count. It's only two so Kofi goes to the corner, only to wind up on Axel's shoulders and dropped on the top rope. The neckbreaker into the cutter are good enough to retain Curtis' title at 14:05.

Rating: C. When civilization has come to an end and the human race is gone, Kofi Kingston will still be in the Intercontinental Title hunt. The match wasn't terrible and it got WAY better at the end, but the first five minutes of this match were way too boring. Also what's the idea of having Axel in a nearly fifteen minute match before he was a big underdog in the match later? Methinks something is up.

Chris Jericho is named the best IC Champion ever with 63% of the vote over Mr. Perfect, Pat Patterson, Rick Rude and Honky Tonk Man. Those are your only options.

Ricardo teaches Van Dam how to say his finishing moves in Spanish. Also Del Rio has no testicular fortitude and the universal term for World Heavyweight Champion is RVD.

AJ's new friends (Aksana/Alicia/Layla) want nothing to do with her for the title match. AJ says they're nothing without her, which makes me think they're actually pushing the Total Divas as the good ones in this.

Trish Stratus dominates Michelle McCool, Wendi Richter, Lita and Fabulous

Moolah to be named best Divas/Women's Champion ever.

We get the entire promo that set up AJ vs. the Total Divas and the Total Divas beating AJ up.

Divas Title: Natalya vs. Brie Bella vs. AJ Lee vs. Naomi

Big face reaction for AJ despite the lack of clarity in whom we're supposed to cheer for. AJ gets chased to the floor and sent into the barricade before. The challengers all kick AJ to the floor before the Total Divas break down. The crowd goes SILENT when AJ isn't in there. Brie cleans house but walks into a dropkick from Naomi. Those two take each other out and AJ grabs a rollup on Natalya for two. The Rear View gets two on Natalya and Brie loads up a superplex on Naomi.

Natalya makes the save but has to duck a high cross body from Naomi. AJ sends Naomi to the floor but Naomi pops back up onto the apron to totally miss a high kick to Brie. Natalya baseball slides AJ to the floor and suplexes Brie down for no cover. Brie breaks up a Sharpshooter on Naomi so Natalya slams her down onto Naomi. Why the referee doesn't count Naomi while Brie is on top of her isn't clear. Natalya puts both of them in a Sharpshooter which I believe she did to Laycool before but AJ makes the save. There's the Black Widow on Natalya for the submission to retain AJ's title at 5:45.

Rating: D. This is in no way related to AJ because she did everything she could out there. These other girls SUCK and no one cares about them. There's nothing else to it than that. They're getting this push because they're horrible to each other on a reality show and that's supposed to make them interesting wrestlers. Yeah Natalya can go in the ring and Naomi is athletic, but that doesn't mean anyone cares about them. I'm being very generous with the rating actually. It was that bad.

We go to the All-Star panel of Alex Riley, Booker T and Santino Marella.

World Heavyweight Title: Rob Van Dam vs. Alberto Del Rio

Alberto is defending, Rob is the hometown boy (close enough) and Ricardo is here after being banned from ringside on Smackdown. Del Rio quickly takes him down but Rob comes right back with a kick to the face. A loud spinwheel kick in the corner has the champion staggered and a monkey flip gets two. Del Rio hits a dropkick of all things but misses a charge and falls to the floor. A slingshot moonsault puts Alberto down and Rob drapes him across the barricade for the spin kick to the back.

Del Rio blocks a suplex back in and brings Rob to the apron before knocking him out to the floor. The champion's suicide dive takes Van Dam down and Del Rio sends him into the barricade. We hit the chinlock before Rob rolls him up for two. A snap suplex puts Rob right back down and Del Rio does the finger point. Del Rio kicks him in the back of the head for two and it's back to the chinlock. An enziguri sends Del Rio to the floor but Alberto misses a dive and crashes on the outside.

Back in and a kick to the face gets two for Rob and the middle rope thrust kick gets the same. A top rope kick to the face sets up Rolling Thunder but Alberto rolls away and hits the Backstabber for two. Rob breaks up the reverse superplex and the cannonball off the top gets two. They slug it out with Del Rio getting two off a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. Rob kicks his way out of the armbreaker and gets two off a rollup.

The split legged moonsault gets the same but Alberto comes back with a Codebreaker on the arm. Del Rio's low superkick gets two but Rob kicks him off the ropes. The Five Star hits knees and there's the armbreaker but Rob gets to a rope...and Del Rio holds on through the five count for the DQ at 14:28.

Rating: C+. The match was fine but the ending crippled anything it could have been. Alberto just isn't interesting as a champion whatsoever but he's been in every PPV Smackdown Title match this year. I don't know who we're waiting on to take the title from him but this wasn't the right

ending for this match.

Post match Rob hits a Van Terminator to wake the crowd up.

Axel is confident while Heyman panics even more. We've covered this for weeks now.

Booker T beats out Flair, Edge, Batista and Undertaker as greatest World Champion ever. WHAT?

Orton wants to know what HHH is thinking. HHH says he's just making sure he picked the right face of the WWE.

The Miz vs. Fandango

Here's the filler match we all knew was coming. Fandango dances around to start and drives some elbows into Miz's neck. Miz comes back but can't hit the Reality Check or put on the Figure Four, allowing Fandango to send him to the apron. Back in and Miz hits the corner clothesline but a Summer Rae distraction lets Fandango take over again. We hit a chinlock with a bodyscissors as a Summer Rae chant starts up.

The announcers are talking about baseball as Miz sends Fandango to the floor, only to jump into a kick to the ribs. Now it's a Randy Savage chant as the fans just do not care about this match. Miz fights up and goes after the leg before hitting the short DDT for two. Now the fans want tables. Fandango suplexes him down for two and ties Miz up in the ropes for a guillotine legdrop for two. The real guillotine legdrop misses and Miz gets two as the crowd groans. Thankfully the Figure Four ends Fandango at 8:00.

Rating: D. This show is sinking like a stone. The fans didn't care about this at all and there's no reason for them to. It's a feud about Miz interrupting Fandango's dancing and that's about it. Why would I want to

see that on a show I'm paying to see? Also it's a bad idea after such a dull show so far.

WWE loves the National Guard.

We recap Punk vs. Heyman/Axel. Punk asked Heyman to stop coming to the ring with him so Heyman screwed him over at MITB. Punk swore revenge so Heyman brought Lesnar back to beat Punk up with Brock getting the pin at Summerslam. Now it's Heyman/Axel vs. Punk in an elimination match so Punk can get his hands on Heyman.

Paul Heyman/Curtis Axel vs. CM Punk

No DQ and it's under elimination rules. Heyman of course hides on the floor as the other guys swing kendo sticks at each other. Axel gets in a shot but Punk comes back with a series of his own to take over. Curtis gets knocked down and Punk dives through the ropes to get at Heyman. Paul is taken into the ring and put in a chinlock before Punk picks up the stick. CM takes too long though and a low blow drops Punk. Curtis pounds away and gets in some stick shots to the back.

The beating continues as Heyman does Brock's bounce on the floor. The fans still want tables but they get chops and forearms from Punk instead. Axel hits a clothesline to the back of the head for two and it's table time, making Curtis the most over guy in the arena for a split second. The table is set up in the corner but Punk blocks a suplex through the table, only to have Axel do the same. Axel takes Punk down again and we hit another chinlock.

Punk fights up and sends Curtis into a chair in the corner, knocking Axel to the floor. Back in and Punk hits his swinging neckbreaker and the knee into the corner. Axel rolls away before the Macho Elbow and gets in a chair shot for two. The lone boring chant is blocked out by a Punk chant as Axel gets two off a neckbreaker of his own. Heyman shouts that Axel is better than Punk as Curtis strolls around the ring. More kendo stick

shots to Punk's back get two but Punk counters the neckbreaker into the cutter into the GTS. The Anaconda Vice gets the tap out at 10:40 to get us down to Punk vs. Heyman.

Punk wisely keeps the hold on to knock Axel out even more before going after Heyman. Heyman slowly walks around the ring before running up the ramp, only to go into the crowd and back to ringside. Punk catches him in the ring and pulls on Heyman's ears and nose. Punk gets the stick but Heyman hugs him. The smile on Punk's face is rather creepy as he canes Heyman down. Heyman: "OH THAT HURTS!" Punk pounds away before calling for the GTS. He's not ready yet though as he pulls out the handcuffs from his boot, just like Heyman used on him for the big beating a few weeks ago.

Heyman tries to tap out but the fans think this is awesome. Heyman begs for mercy, making it even better. Punk hits him very slowly with the stick and says to remember that it was him doing this to Paul. Heyman tries to tap with his foot so Punk promises to break Paul's face. Cue Ryback to drive Punk through the table, slicing Punk's back open in a scary looking visual. Heyman is placed on top for the pin at 1 5:56.

Rating: B-. This was exactly what it was supposed to be: Punk getting some revenge, only to have Heyman debut his new guy to give Punk a real challenge next month at Battleground. At the end of the day, Axel just isn't competition for CM Punk and everyone knew it. Ryback isn't a huge star, but he's a much bigger deal than Axel and gives Punk a much better challenge. Good choice here and the perfect booking.

Punk refuses medical attention for his back.

More expert panel stuff.

US Title: Dolph Ziggler vs. Dean Ambrose

Ziggy beat Ambrose via DQ on Friday to get this shot. Feeling out process

with Ziggler trying to speed things up, only to have Dean grab the rope. Ziggler gets two off a dropkick and there are the ten elbow drops. They tumble out to the floor and Dean takes over before heading back inside for a knee in the back and some face rubbing into the mat. We hit a reverse chinlock followed by a regular chinlock until Ziggler fights up and gets two off a sunset flip.

They trade rollups for two each and Ziggy goes to the middle rope, only to be knocked down so Dean can slowly rake his back. A superplex gets two for the champion so Dean flips over the top and goes up but Ziggler catches him in a top rope X Factor for two. Ambrose's full nelson is countered into a rollup for two and Dean goes to the corner.

A Stinger Splash and ten punches set up a clothesline for two on Ambrose and it's off to the sleeper. Dean easily suplexes his way to freedom and a near fall but gets caught in the Fameasser for a close two. Dean's bulldog driver is countered into a rollup for two but the second attempt is good for the pin to retain the title at 9:54.

Rating: C+. I liked this one more than I thought I would. This is the kind of match the show needed: a fast paced, back and forth match with both guys looking good. A clean win over a former world champion is nothing but good for Dean and the match was a nice pickup as well. Good stuff here.

Sting is named best US Champion ever over Bobo Brazil, Harley Race, Sgt. Slaughter and Ricky Steamboat.

Tag Titles: Prime Time Players vs. Shield

It's Rollins/Reigns defending as the Players won tag team turmoil on the pre-show. Rollins and Titus start in a nice power vs. speed matchup. Seth can't throw Titus around and has his cross body caught, only for O'Neil to throw him down like it's nothing. Off to Young with a headlock on the mat followed by some shoulder blocks and a clothesline for two. Roman

gets the tag and blocks an O'Connor Roll before being sent to the outside.

A big elbow gets two for Young and it's back to Titus to pound on Rollins some more. All Players so far as Titus blows the whistle, allowing Rollins to bail to the floor. Darren follows Seth to the floor, allowing Shield to take over as they come back inside. It's Reigns working over Darren before throwing him back to the outside.

Back in and Seth hooks a chinlock on Young before slapping him around a bit. Young comes back with a quick belly to belly but Reigns blocks the hot tag. Darren sends him into the corner and backdrops Seth down, allowing for the hot tag to Titus. O'Neil starts cleaning house and hits the release fall away slam on Rollins. Clash of the Titus gets two as Reigns makes the trademark Shield save. Young and Roman go to the floor but Reigns jumps back in for the spear on Titus, giving Seth the retaining pin at 7:30.

Rating: C. This was fine all things considered. The Players weren't going to get the belts and everyone knew it, but it's nice to see a fresh team in the title scene. It's not like those two getting a title shot is a stretch or anything so I can't imagine a ton of complaints about Young being pushed. Nothing special here but it was fine.

We look at Heyman vs. Punk some more.

DX is named the greatest tag team of all time over the Wild Samoans, the Bulldogs, the LOD and the Harts. That's so laughable I'm not even going to bother making fun of it.

We recap the main event. Bryan won the title from John Cena at Summerslam before being screwed over by HHH and Randy Orton, bringing in the new Corporation with Orton being named best for business. Bryan was then beaten down for weeks on end as he waited for his one on one rematch with Orton here tonight. No one has been allowed to help Bryan for fear of

losing their jobs. Cody Rhodes questioned things and lost his job in a match against Orton.

Hulk Hogan dominates Cena, Punk, HHH and Austin as Best WWE Champion ever. All of the polls were landslides.

WWE Championship: Randy Orton vs. Daniel Bryan

HHH has guaranteed no interference but there are no special rules. BIG pop for Bryan as expected. Feeling out process to start with Bryan taking the arm for early control. Orton takes him down with a shoulder but Bryan fires off a knee to the ribs to take over. Bryan unleashes the kicks but Orton comes right back with a clothesline. Randy takes too much time posing and Bryan comes back with right hands, only to be clotheslined down again for two.

We hit the chinlock for a bit before Orton fights up and pounds away at Orton's head with some good aggression. Randy comes back with a knee to the ribs and the slow circle stomp They're doing the slow build here for the big finishing sequence. Orton rains down right hands in the corner with the fans chanting NO on each one in a nice touch. Bryan fights back with the running clothesline and the kicks in the corner as Orton is suddenly reeling. The headbutt connects to send Orton to the floor for the FLYING GOAT.

Back in and the missile dropkick sends Orton to the floor again, setting up a second FLYING GOAT! Back in again but Orton bails to the other side of the ring but Bryan's third FLYING GOAT meets a forearm. Orton hits the Elevated DDT on the floor but Bryan slides back in at nine for a nice false finish. Orton does the finger point and loads up the RKO, only to have Bryan escape but knock the referee to the floor.

Bryan can't get the YES Lock but there's a second referee in now. Orton's powerslam gets two but the Elevated DDT is countered into the YES Lock in the middle of the ring. Bryan is CRANKING on it too with the arm looking

like a pretzel. Orton very slowly crawls over and finally makes the rope in another nice false finish. There are more kicks in the corner but the running dropkick misses. The first referee is still on the floor which makes me very nervous of a double fall.

Orton puts Bryan on the corner but Bryan slips through the legs and crotches the champion. Orton is put down into the Tree of Woe for more kicks to the ribs and now the running dropkick connects. Bryan loads up a belly to back superplex but Orton knocks him down, only to have Daniel pop up with a forearm to a seated champion. Now Bryan's superplex connects but Bryan hangs on by the legs.

A LONG flying headbutt hits Orton but Randy is out at two. The original referee is back in now which isn't something you see that often. Bryan unleashes more kicks but Orton catches the big one into the high collar suplex to put both guys down. Orton can't get a backslide so Bryan hits the big kick to the head and the running knee gets the pin and the title 17:49.

Rating: B+. This took awhile to get going but once they got on a roll they didn't stop. That running knee has become a devastating finisher and it worked very well here again. I'm sure there will be more shenanigans in the future but the match tonight was very good. Solid stuff here and I can't say I'm upset that Bryan won. Good stuff here, as you would expect.

Bryan celebrates to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. The last couple of matches saved this from being one of the least interesting shows I've ever seen. It's still not a good show but it set up Battleground well enough. That's the problem with having three PPVs in seven weeks: there's not enough time to build anything up. Nothing really happened tonight and it felt like a big episode of Raw. I've seen worse but this was a huge drop after Summerslam.

Results

Prime Time Players won Tag Team Turmoil last eliminating the Real Americans

Curtis Axel b. Kofi Kingston – Neckbreaker into a faceplant

AJ Lee b. Natalya, Naomi and Brie Bella – Black Widow to Natalya

Rob Van Dam b. Alberto Del Rio via DQ when Del Rio wouldn't break the cross armbreaker

Paul Heyman/Curtis Axel b. CM Punk – Heyman pinned Punk after a spear through a table by Ryback

Dean Ambrose b. Dolph Ziggler – Bulldog driver

Shield b. Prime Time Players – Spear to O'Neil

Daniel Bryan b. Randy Orton – Running knee to the head

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