

Battleground 2013: Ode To The Attitude Era And That's Not A Good Thing

Battleground 2013

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Location: First Niagara Center, Buffalo, New York

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

We've arrived at one of the least interesting shows in recent memory. There's just not much interest in this show and I can't say I'm surprised. The world title matches are both rematches and the other two main matches aren't anything huge. There just isn't much to go on with this show and it's going to be even worse next time with HIAC. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Dolph Ziggler vs. Damien Sandow

Sandow quotes Benjamin Franklin and talks about progress. Tonight he'll show you what progress is about by beating a former Money in the Bank winner, but if the hardcore match goes the way he thinks, you'll see him again as World Heavyweight Champion. Sandow grabs a headlock to start before taking Ziggler down with some clotheslines. Ziggler comes right back with a dropkick and the ten elbow drops to wake the crowd up. Damien will have none of this being in trouble stuff though and whips Ziggler over the corner as we take a break.

Back with Dolph getting two off a small package, only to get clotheslined down for the same result. We hit an arm stretch by Sandow for a bit before Sandow goes up, only to jump into a dropkick to the shoulder. Ziggler comes back with ten right hands in the corner but misses the Fameasser and gets caught with an Edge-0-Matic for two.

Damien kicks out the knee and hits a flip neckbreaker for two more as this match just keeps going. The Terminus is countered and the Fameasser gets a near fall for Dolph. Damien blocks the Zig Zag and rolls Ziggler

up for two but tweaks his knee coming out of the corner, allowing Dolph to hit the Zig Zag for the pin at 10:11.

Rating: D+. The match wasn't terrible but man alive it wasn't interesting. Both of these guys have been beaten down so much that it's almost impossible to care about either one of them. The stakes in this match were so low and the match just kept going, making it even worse. Not much of interest here but it wasn't the worst match ever with some decent near falls.

The opening video recaps the Daniel Bryan vs. Randy Orton feud.

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

Del Rio is defending and this is a hardcore match. Alberto immediately heads to the floor but gets dropkicked through the ropes to give Van Dam control. A moonsault off the barricade puts the champion down and a slingshot DDT onto a chair gets two back inside. Alberto comes back with a wicked Backstabber for two before a few chair shots get the same. The chair is wedged between the top and middle ropes but Rob comes back with a kick to the face.

Rob pulls out a ladder and blasts Alberto in the face to knock him out to the floor. Back in and Rolling Thunder onto Del Rio onto the ladder only hits the ladder and the champion takes over. He snaps off the enziguri and stomps the ladder onto Rob for two before grabbing a trashcan. Rob dropkicks it back into his face and both guys are down.

A superkick puts the champion down and there's the split legged moonsault onto Del Rio onto the ladder for two. Rolling Thunder hits the ladder again and there's the armbreaker. Ricardo makes the save by hitting Del Rio with the bucket, earning himself a trip to the floor and a whip into the barricade.

Rob dropkicks the ladder into Del Rio and hits the Five Star onto the ladder onto Del Rio on the floor. Back in (I guess hardcore no longer means pinfalls count anywhere) Del Rio kicks out at two. A Van Terminator attempt misses and both guys are down. Del Rio gets the chair and drops Rob face first onto the steel before kicking Rob in the head to take

over. He wraps it around the arm crushes it in the chair and puts on the armbreaker to retain at 16:03.

Rating: C+. The match was fun but again I don't get the appeal of this feud at all. There isn't much chemistry here and hopefully this is it between these two. The gimmick helped a bit but Del Rio's title reign is just dragging at this point. He's not bad in the ring at all but he's crashed into the ceiling of his abilities and it's hurting everyone now.

The Real Americans want to dip Khali and Santino in boiling hot oil. They also don't like Buffalo that much.

Santino Marella/Great Khali vs. Real Americans

Swagger and Santino fight over a top wristlock to start with Jack taking him to the mat. Santino still can't do the nipup so the fans chant for the Real Americans. Santino loads up the Cobra but Swagger bails to the floor, only to have to deal with Horny's mini-Cobra. Thankfully Jack rips it up and goes back inside so Cesaro can stomp him Marella down a bit. Cesaro steals the stupid sock and it's back to Swagger for a Vader Bomb and a running stomp by Antonio.

We hit the chinlock for a bit before it's back to Swagger to pull on Santino's arms. Santino suplexes out of it and finally brings in Khali. The giant pounds Cesaro down in the corner and hits the loud overhand chop. JBL: "That knocked one of the languages out of Cesaro." Khali chops both Real Americans down and Santino dives over the top to take out Swagger. We FINALLY get to the point of the match as Cesaro swings Khali around for a remarkable 17 seconds and gets the pin at 7:05.

Rating: D+. The match was nothing of note other than the ending, but to be fair that's what the entire match was designed to set up. Cesaro is going to have to be a face soon if he keeps swinging people around as it's such an awesome looking move that people aren't going to boo him. Now let's see how WWE screws up with him and wastes his potential again.

Breast cancer is bad.

Intercontinental Title: R-Truth vs. Curtis Axel

This is the result of Truth beating Axel on a fluke earlier this week. Truth takes over to start by pounding away in the corner and sends Axel to the floor. Axel sends Truth into the barricade a few times for two back inside and the match slows down. The champion chokes Truth a bit and gets two off a dropkick before we hit the chinlock. Truth fights up and hits some forearms to set up a rollup for two. The spinning forearm gets the same and so does the sitout gordbuster. Axel sends him into the buckle and the fans chant boring. Thankfully Axel listens to them and hits his neckbreaker into a cutter to retain at 6:32.

Rating: D. I'm really getting tired of this idea of some random guy pins the champion and getting a title shot as a result. Instead, why not have Truth beat a bunch of guys (say everyone in 3MB, Swagger and one other guy) and earns a title shot as a result? It makes Axel look like he's beating someone of note and gives Truth some credibility coming into the match. Nah that's a stupid idea so let's just have them trade wins like they do all the time.

We recap the pre-show.

Divas Title: AJ Lee vs. Brie Bella

Brie is challenging and takes AJ down with ease, sending the champion out to the floor. AJ hides behind Tamina and heads back inside to take over. Brie is sent into the post and AJ goes after the arm, wrapping it around the middle rope. Brie's DDT is countered into a DDT on the arm for two before sending her shoulder first "into" the post.

AJ keeps shouting about being better than Brie before going off on the bad arm with elbows. Off to a Fujiwara Armbar but AJ lets it go to skip around the ring. Brie dropkicks her down and hits some really basic stuff before knocking AJ down with a running knee. Tamina is choking Nikki Bella down though and the distraction lets AJ roll up Brie for the pin with a handful of tights at 6:32.

Rating: D+. To recap this story, AJ won the Divas Title clean, defeated every one of the Total Divas in the same match with a completely clean submission hold, and has held the title against all of them, but we're supposed to boo her because the

other girls are catty to each other on a reality show. The match was nothing you wouldn't see on Raw, but the fans were more into it than they were the IC Title match.

We recap the Rhodes Family's troubles, setting up the tag match tonight.

Dusty and his kids are ready for Shield. Cody gives a great speech about how his family may not be perfect but they fight for each other.

Cody Rhodes/Goldust vs. Seth Rollins/Roman Reigns

If the Rhodes Family wins, they get their jobs back. If Shield wins, Cody and Goldust are gone forever and Dusty loses his job too. This is also non-title. Dusty is at ringside to counter act Dean Ambrose and Goldust looks like Darth Maul. Cody pounds away on Seth to start and it's quickly off to Roman who gets pounded down in the corner. Shield bails to the floor and stalks Dusty, setting up a cool looking six man standoff with the brothers protecting their dad.

Back in and Roman knees Cody down as the champions take over. Seth comes in but walks into an elbow to the jaw and a stomping in the corner. Rollins sends him into the buckle to escape and it's off to Roman for some power. After an easy pounding it's quickly back to Rollins to crank on the shoulder a bit. Cody gets caught in the Tree of Woe but frees up a leg to kick Seth down. The moonsault press hits Rollins perfectly and the hot tag brings in Goldust.

An atomic drop slows Reigns down and Goldust pounds him down in the corner. Goldust hits a spinning cross body off the top for two but misses a regular cross body, sending him out to the floor. Goldie dives back in at nine but gets caught in a body scissors from Rollins. Back to Reigns for a good looking clothesline for two before it's back to Rollins who gets the same off a hilo. Goldust comes back by avoiding a dropkick and powerslamming Seth down. There's the hot tag off to Cody for

an Alabama Slam to Rollins for a very near fall. Something like a Muscle Buster gets two on Rollins and everything breaks down. The Disaster Kick staggers Reigns and Cody clotheslines him to the floor but an Ambrose distraction allows Seth to come back in for the save. Dusty elbows Ambrose down and Seth rolls up Cody for two. Rhodes comes pops back up and hits Cross Rhodes for the pin at 13:55.

Rating: B. This was ALL about emotion coming in but the match was good stuff on top of that. Again, this match worked because we were given a reason to care about the underdogs and wanted to see them win instead of being told we wanted to see them win. That's how you make a good story and it worked perfectly well here.

The Rhodes family celebrates and some tag teams, Mike Rotundo and Arn Anderson come out to celebrate. The old school fan in me cringes at Dusty and Arn celebrating together.

Hell in a Cell ad with R-Truth preaching against its evils.

The expert panel of Tensai, Titus O'Neil and Miz talk about the show so far.

Brad and Vickie bicker about who is at fault for the Rhodes' win.

Kofi Kingston vs. Bray Wyatt

Bray runs him over to start but Kofi comes back with a kick to the face. Kofi gets crotched while going up top so Bray can take over with some shots to the ribs and a neck lock. The fans start the Randy Savage chants as the match drags on. Kofi fights up but gets caught in another chinlock. Back up again and Kofi hits a dropkick followed by the Boom Drop, only to miss Trouble in Paradise.

Bray runs Kingston over with the cross body before going to the corner to bend back and look at Kofi upside down. Wyatt ups the ante a bit though by doing the Exorcist spider walk, sending Kofi running to the floor. Bray follows him out but Kofi runs back in and hits a BIG flip dive to take out the entire Family. Back in and Kofi gets two off a cross body,

but the SOS is countered into Sister Abigail's Kiss for the pin at 8:37.

Rating: C-. Those rest holds were death but Bray was so freaky in this match with the spider walk and Kofi's dive helped a lot too. This show is dying as it goes though and the match didn't help a lot. The Wyatts need to move up the card, but at least their antics are still creepy enough to make you take notice.

We recap Punk vs. Ryback. There's not much to this one: Punk was about to kill Heyman last month when Ryback interfered as the newest Paul Heyman Guy. Tonight is Punk's first step back towards revenge and Heyman himself.

CM Punk vs. Ryback

They stare at each other to start until Punk fires off some kicks to the legs, sending Ryback out to the floor. Punk follows him out and sends Ryback face first into the barricade and then into the post for good measure. Ryback shrugs it off and takes Punk back inside for a slam off the top to gain control. Punk's ribs are sent into the post and we hit the chinlock.

A legdrop gets two on Punk and Ryback pounds away with some hard kicks. Ryback stays on Punk and shoves him around with his boot as this is still in slow motion. Off to a chinlock with a bodyscissors as the fans are getting restless. Punk finally comes back with some kicks and a swinging neckbreaker but Heyman grabs a mic and brags about beating Punk, allowing Ryback to come back back with a huge powerbomb for two.

Another powerbomb attempt is countered with a kick to the head and the Macho Elbow for two. Ryback fights out of the GTS and powerslams Punk down for two of his own. Punk is choked on the ropes, allowing Heyman to load up a kendo stick shot as the referee pulls Ryback away. The referee does his job for once though and catches Heyman before the swing, allowing Punk to low blow Ryback for the pin at 14:51.

Rating: C+. This was fine but the ending left a lot to be desired. Ryback is a lot better just showing off with power moves but the ending was never really in doubt as the story has to get to Punk vs. Heyman. That's

not a bad thing but like the rest of this show, it feels like an exercise in pointlessness.

More from the expert panel.

We recap the main event. Orton cashed in on Bryan at Summerslam, Bryan pinned him at Night of Champions but there was a shady referee, meaning the title was held up, setting up tonight's match.

There's a slight delay as the PPV feed cuts out for some reason. We come back to see the announcer and referee standing around in the ring.

WWE Title: Randy Orton vs. Daniel Bryan

No champion coming in and after the big match intros we're ready to go. Feeling out process to start as they trade headlocks with Orton taking over. Bryan scores with a dropkick but Orton takes him right back down and rakes his boot over Daniel's eyes. Bryan throws Orton off and fires away with the kicks as the fans finally have something to cheer for tonight. Daniel goes after Orton's knee with a freaky leg hold before hitting some more kicks to the chest.

Orton breaks up a superplex attempt by crotching Bryan on the ropes before clotheslining him down for two. Randy pounds away in the corner and gets two more off a snap powerslam. We hit the chinlock for a bit followed by a knee to the ribs to stop Bryan again. Daniel fights up again and headscissors Orton to the floor for the FLYING GOAT. Back in and Bryan's missile dropkick is countered into a powerbomb and a Boston crab of all things. Bryan slips out and kicks some more but can't get the YES Lock.

They head outside and Orton goes into Predator mode, sending Bryan into the post, the barricade and then the post again. Back in and a superplex gets two on Daniel as the crowd isn't really into this. A backslide gets two for Bryan and there's a big kick to the head for the same. Daniel goes up top again but Orton shoves him off the top and out to the floor with a big thud. Orton loads up the announce table but Bryan comes back with even more kicks and sends Orton into the steps.

A BIG cross body to the floor takes Randy out and the swan dive is good for a very close two. Bryan is all fired up now and hits the corner dropkicks as the fans FINALLY go nuts. Bryan snaps off more kicks but gets caught in a t-bone suplex to put both guys down. There's the Elevated DDT and Orton loads up the RK0, only to have Bryan shove it away and grab the YES Lock.

Cue Big Show to pull the referee out and knock Bryan out cold, albeit against his will. Brad Maddox waves Scott Armstrong to the ring but Big Show pulls him out for a KO punch of his own. Orton looks furious as Big Show gets in the ring and knocks out Orton. Big Show's music plays and the show goes off the air with no winner after about 25:00.

Rating: B. Another good match from these two but it didn't feel like a classic at all. The ending was straight out of the Attitude Era which isn't a good thing. It's clear that they're setting up the big showdown in the Cell, but that's not what they needed to do here. If Bryan loses there he's more or less done, but again the show ends with the focus on Big Show instead of Bryan or the champion. Horrible ending.

Overall Rating: D. And that's being generous. This show felt like an In Your House with a big time main event and that's not a good thing. The problem here is we've covered the main event already and the tag match was only so good. This whole story is such a mess anymore and the bright spots can only help it so much. It's not going to get any better either as we have another three weeks before the Cell, which will likely be more of the same.

The worst part of this show though is that I didn't enjoy it. Other than the Rhodes match and the main event, what was there to be excited about? This show felt like a chore to sit through coming in and didn't redeem itself at all. The good stuff was pretty good, but everything else was just dull and worthless, which isn't what you need when you have two shows in a month.

Results

Alberto Del Rio b. Rob Van Dam – Cross Armbreaker

Real Americans b. Santino Marella/Great Khali – Cesaro Swing to Khali

Curtis Axel b. R-Truth – Neckbreaker into a faceplant

AJ Lee b. Brie Bella – Rollup

Cody Rhodes/Goldust b. Seth Rollins/Roman Reigns – Cross Rhodes to Rollins

Bray Wyatt b. Kofi Kingston – Sister Abigail's Kiss

CM Punk b. Ryback – Low blow

Daniel Bryan vs. Randy Orton went to a no contest

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