

Smackdown – December 27, 2013: Cena Steals Another Show

Smackdown

Date: December 27, 2013

Location: American Bank Center, Corpus Christi, Texas

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole

It's the final blue show of the year and I don't remember anything being announced on Raw. The main story from Monday was Big E.

Langston/Cena/Punk running off the Shield after being them for the DQ, meaning it's payback time tonight. We're getting closer to the Rumble and have less than 100 days until Wrestlemania so the times are getting exciting. Let's get to it.

Here's Cena to get things going. After looking at a clip of the end of Raw, Cena says the last Smackdown of the year is even more important than that. Tonight the WWE Universe is going to ring in the new year so we need NOISE. They have to have fun tonight because after the new year everyone has to worry about new year's resolutions.

Cena would like to give a bear hug to a real bear or star in a 1-800-Fella commercial or land the lead role in a musical production of No Holds Barred (dead silence on that line) or make a hip hop album with Great Khali (lukewarm) or reboot an animated Manimal series with Michael Cole in the lead role or, and only if he has time, get started early on his XFL fantasy team (nice chuckle).

There's one other thing he wants to do: gain forty pounds. Luckily for him he doesn't have to wait for the new year because the WWE World Heavyweight Championship weighs about forty pounds and he has a rematch clause. If Orton is listening he can get out here right now but instead

here's Shield. They surround the ring and easily take Cena down but here's Mark Henry for the save. When that doesn't work, Big E. Langston comes out for the real save to clear the ring. Kane comes out on stage and makes three singles matches for tonight: Langston vs. Ambrose (non-title), Reigns vs. Henry and Rollins vs. Cena.

Usos vs. Wyatt Family

Before the match we get a clip of the Family throwing Bryan off a ledge last week. The Usos send the monsters to the floor and Jey takes Rowan down with a dive. Jimmy gets two off a rollup to Harper and a Whisper in the Wind gets the same. Rowan makes a blind tag and takes Jimmy's head off with a clothesline. A splash is enough to pin Jimmy in just 1:10.

Post match Bray gives Jey Sister Abigail.

Renee Young asks Randy Orton if he has any new year's resolutions. Orton says he's beaten everyone else in the company so maybe he'll win the Royal Rumble so he can spend Wrestlemania in a skybox writing his Hall of Fame introduction speech. Ziggler comes up and says he'll shut Orton up tonight. Orton promises an RKO until Kane comes in to make the match for later. Ziggler leaves and Kane says backstage must be a safe zone, but out there anything goes.

Cody Rhodes vs. Antonio Cesaro

Colter's sign this week: "Press 1 for English, press 2 for INS." Cesaro is now residing in the US. This is fallout from Main Event when Cody went after Cesaro for interfering in a Swagger vs. Goldust match. Cody grabs a headlock to start as the announcers talk about Kane being the eyes and ears of the Authority tonight. Cody takes Cesaro to the mat and then out to the floor where Goldust gives Antonio a deep breath.

Back in and Cesaro punches Cody in the jaw and kicks him out to the

floor. After a Goldust staredown leads nowhere, Cesaro takes Rhodes back inside for a pummeling in the corner. Cody quickly breaks out of a chinlock and comes back with a front suplex for two but a Swagger distraction lets Cesaro get in a cheap shot and a rollup for the pin at 4:11.

Rating: D+. Another match that changes nothing as we wait for the title match that may never come. I'm not a fan of champions losing but at least this was a singles match instead of yet another tag loss. On the good side though, Cesaro getting a pin in a singles match is a nice thing to see and hopefully the first of many.

Prime Time Players vs. Ryback/Curtis Axel

I refuse to refer to them as "Rybaxel." Ryback pounds on Young to start but Darren scores with a right hand to the jaw and a dropkick to the knee. Off to Titus for the front suplex to Darren onto Ryback for no cover. A hard shoulder puts Ryback down but Axel gets in a knee to O'Neil's back to take him down. Curtis chokes him in the corner ("BARK LIKE A DOG!") before it's quickly back to Ryback for a front facelock.

The heels take turns on O'Neil in the corner with Axel slapping him in the back of the head, only to run into a big boot. Darren gets the tag and scores with an overhead belly to belly on Axel before getting two off a northern lights suplex. Everything breaks down and Ryback is clotheslined to the floor, allowing Young to pin Axel at 4:51.

Rating: D+. The underlying problems with the tag division continues: it doesn't matter if you build up teams if the teams are boring and keep trading meaningless wins with no advancement in sight. This match doesn't change anything for either team and doesn't move the Players up towards a title program, at least not anytime soon.

We get a clip from the 50 Years of WWE DVD focusing on Saturday Night's Main Event.

Randy Orton vs. Dolph Ziggler

Another non-title match. Ziggler now has a streak of pink hair which leaves JBL stunned. Dolph gets taken into the corner but comes back with a shot to the jaw to send the champion out to the floor. Back in and Orton headlocks him down and takes Ziggler's head off with a clothesline. Dolph comes back with right hands in the corner and the big jumping elbow for two. I guess the ten elbow drops spot is long gone.

Orton pulls Ziggler face first into the middle buckle to take over again and walks around very slowly. He walks around too long though and Ziggler gets in a dropkick, sending Orton to the floor and us to a break. Back with Orton stomping away on a fallen Ziggler. Randy puts on a reverse chinlock for a bit but Ziggler gets out with a jawbreaker. Dolph pounds away in the corner and scores with a neckbreaker before getting two off a neckbreaker.

The Fameasser misses but Ziggler avoids the powerslam and gets two off a jumping DDT. Dolph gets crotched on the top but breaks up a superplex attempt. A bad looking missile dropkick gets two and Orton is sent shoulder first into the post (same thing Orton did to him during a break). A bulldog gets two for Ziggy but Orton pokes him in the eye and RKOs Ziggler for the pin at 13:20.

Rating: B-. I like the ending with Orton taking the easy way out again, just like Cena accused him of doing leading up to TLC. The match was the usual good stuff from these guys as they've shown that they have chemistry. Ziggler getting to show off a little bit is much better than seeing him in nothing matches against Fandango.

Post match Orton takes Ziggler outside and gives him the Elevated DDT off the barricade.

Shield says they'll win all their matches tonight. Cena vs. Rollins sounds promising.

Daniel Bryan vs. Damien Sandow

JBL wants to know why there was a good Santa and a bad Santa on Monday. Cole: "That's the way the story was written?" JBL: "WHAT KIND OF AN ANSWER IS THAT???" Bryan fires off some kicks in the corner to start followed by some knees to the ribs to put Sandow down. Damien comes back with some forearms to the back and sends Daniel out to the floor. The Russian legsweep sets up the Wind-Up Elbow for two and we hit the crossface chickenwing. Back up and Bryan hits the running clothesline and dropkick in the corner to set up the top rope hurricanrana. The YES Kicks set up the running knee for the pin at 4:01.

Rating: D+. Just a quick win here for Bryan in the kind of matches I wouldn't mind seeing more of. Well, more of as long as the opponents change every now and then and we don't have to sit through the same pairing every week. Sandow doesn't lose anything here as he's not ready to beat someone on Bryan's level so there's nothing bad in this whole thing.

Post match Bray appears on stage and says he realizes that Bryan is the one the people want. That means Bray has to destroy him.

Dean Ambrose vs. Big E. Langston

Neither title is on the line. In addition to the other Shield members, Cena and Henry are both at ringside as well. Langston shoves Ambrose into the corner to start and drives shoulders into the ribs but gets clotheslined down. Dean pounds away with rights and lefts on the mat before hitting the running dropkick against the ropes.

We hit the chinlock for a bit before Ambrose goes up top, only to be slammed down like a ham sandwich being thrown off a cliff. A belly to belly puts Ambrose down again but he sends Langston to the floor for a standoff. No brawling ensues and Ambrose throws Langston back inside, only to have the big man run Dean over, setting up the Big Ending for the

pin at 2:46. That was close. I thought they wouldn't have Ambrose job clean again before the year was out.

Reigns comes in for the showdown with Langston but Henry moves Big E. out of the way.

Mark Henry vs. Roman Reigns

Reigns wants a test of strength to start but headbutts Henry instead. A hard clothesline sends Reigns to the floor and a headbutt from Henry puts him down. Back in and a big boot to the jaw puts Reigns down as the slow pace continues. Roman snaps Henry's throat across the top rope and gets two off the Superman Punch. We hit a chinlock on Henry for a bit but he comes back with the JYD headbutts. Reigns will have nothing to do with that jive turkey nonsense and lifts Henry up for a Samoan drop. Another Superman Punch and the spear are good for the pin on Mark at 4:01.

Rating: D. Reigns looked good but he had to work through a lot of Mark Henry suck. It's a good sign that he's pinning former world champions clean in four minutes though. There's a BIG future for Reigns and the fact that these wins are becoming more and more natural are telling signs for him.

John Cena vs. Seth Rollins

There's a lot of time left for this. Cena quickly takes him down and works on a hammerlock. Back up and Cena sends Seth to the floor with a hiptoss for a meeting with Shield. Back in and Rollins gets in some shots to knock Cena into the corner. Rollins blocks a bulldog and drops a knee for two before putting on a cobra clutch of all things. Cena tries to fight out and gets caught in a one arm camel clutch, only to fight up and drive Rollins into the corner to escape.

Rollins gets a boot up in the corner to stop a charging John and gets two

off a neckbreaker as we take a break. Back with Rollins firing off right hands to the jaw. Cena is sent into the corner but he reverses a whip into the corner to put both guys down again. John tries a comeback but gets caught in a quick Downward Spiral into the middle buckle. Rollins does You Can't See Me but Cena counters a neckbreaker into the ProtoBomb and hits the Shuffle. Rollins flips out of the AA and hits a Buff Blockbuster (that's a finisher that needs to be pulled out of mothballs) for two.

Cena gets taken down by a Stinger Splash but avoids the second attempt. He grabs a half nelson and lifts Rollins up before spinning into what was supposed to be a neckbreaker. Cena landed a foot or so away from Rollins but luckily the move could have passed for a half nelson slam. Rollins kicks out at two so Cena goes up, only to get knocked down to the mat.

The standing Sliced Bread #2 gets another near fall for Seth but Cena comes back with a Batista Bomb (not gimmick infringement just yet) for two. Cena tries to pull Rollins away from the ropes but Seth lands on his feet again and hits a jumping enziguri for a VERY close two. Rollins gets the same off a top rope knee to the face and the frustration sets in. The Black Out (running curb stomp) is countered in the STF but Rollins is into the ropes before too much damage can be done.

Ambrose tries to come in but gets picked off by Langston before he can make any contact. Dean is thrown over the announce table but Reigns hits a running clothesline to drop Langston. Henry throws Reigns onto Ambrose as Cena rolls through Rollins' cross body into the AA for the pin at 17:40.

Rating: B+. I was digging the heck out of this match and I was so glad that the ending wasn't a DQ. Rollins looked outstanding in there as he continues to prove his worth once the Shield breaks up. I could see him being the next Kofi Kingston, having awesome matches with anyone they put him out there with but never getting the big break. That's not a bad career to have at all.

Overall Rating: B-. This took some time to get going and the main event was by far the best part of the show. The first half of the show is only ok but the Orton vs. Ziggler match along with Rollins vs. Cena more than make up for it. This was using the old formula of wrestling on Smackdown and that's what was needed after a more entertainment based Raw. It's a nice way to close out the year and hopefully a good way to get us into 2014.

Results

Wyatt Family b. Usos – Splash to Jimmy

Antonio Cesaro b. Cody Rhodes – Rollup

Prime Time Players b. Ryback/Curtis Axel – Rollup to Axel

Randy Orton b. Dolph Ziggler – RKO

Daniel Bryan b. Damien Sandow – Running knee

Big E. Langston b. Dean Ambrose – Big Ending

Roman Reigns b. Mark Henry – Spear

John Cena b. Seth Rollins – AA

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