

Reviewing the Review – Monday Night Raw: September 15, 2014

This week's episode of Raw was the final push to the Night of Champions PPV, meaning the whole show was really about one thing because that's all this pay per view is going to be about. The interesting thing about this show was the structure which we'll focus on as a whole later on. Let's get to it.

We opened with the big story of the week as Heyman came to the ring but Cena showed up, ready to fight Brock Lesnar. This led to Cena promising to back up his threat from last week, giving Heyman "until halftime" to produce Lesnar. Later in the show, Cena would lock Heyman in a room with Great Khali standing guard.

This was the interesting structure that I was talking about: when Cena said halftime, he meant halftime of the Monday Night Football game. Eventually, right around halftime of the game, Cena brought Heyman out and threatened to beat the tar out of him unless Lesnar showed up. Heyman bought time by saying that he had wanted Cena to be violent and aggressive, which could make him a Paul Heyman Guy. He begged Cena to embrace the hate one time and finally got Cena to shove him by talking about Cena's mom.

Lesnar came out immediately and circled the ring before actually getting in and suplexing Cena out to the floor. John got back in and had a fight with Lesnar, actually getting the better of him on the floor. This was intense, violent and exactly what the match on Sunday needed. It made me believe that Cena could win the match, even though I don't think there's a real chance of him getting the belt back, at least not yet.

Putting this on during halftime of the football game was the right idea, as WWE could have Hulk Hoga vs. Undertaker vs. Cena vs. Austin vs. Rock in a first blood Hell in a Cell Iron Man match and not beat Monday Night Football. Why would WWE try to win a fight where they have no chance? Instead they made sure to get the biggest audience possible which was a

good idea in theory, even though it doesn't seem to have played out that well in the numbers. That being said, I like that they're actually trying something different instead of doing the same stupid stuff over and over again.

We'll jump back to the stuff in between the opening and the showdown. The first match saw Jericho beat Kane in a nothing match after sending him face first into an exposed turnbuckle. Kane is worthless at this point and I have no interest in seeing him do anything on TV anymore. MAYBE have him talk but leave the wrestling to people that can still move. Jericho wasn't much better either and thankfully he's wrapping up his run this Sunday.

Roman Reigns promises to end Rollins tonight.

Jack Swagger made Bo Dallas tap out. Nothing to see here but you would think this might have been the pre-show match on Sunday.

Paige and Nikki Bella beat Brie Bella and AJ with Nikki destroying Brie for most of the match. This was just a way for the sisters to argue post match and Paige and AJ to do their "mind games", whatever they're supposed to be.

Bray did his stuff about Big Show before Show beat him by DQ. Wyatt got to show off a bit but Harper ran in for the save. This was another waste of Bray but at least it wasn't a clean pin. I have a bad feeling we're setting up yet another Big Show push that no one wants to see and a match that he has no chance of winning. I mean, Lesnar beat him in just over two minutes at the Royal Rumble. How can WWE believe that's something worth headlining another show?

Sheamus and the Usos beat Cesaro and the Dusts in your standard "take two feuds and call me in the morning" match. There isn't much to talk about with this one but it wasn't bad.

Orton promises to give Jericho the beating of his life on Sunday. That would be the third or fourth time he's done so.

Naomi beat Cameron after Cameron tried to cover Naomi when her face was

on the mat. I really hope it's character schtick but I have a bad feeling it isn't. Just let Naomi be the athletic freak of the division like she should be instead of making her do this Total Divas nonsense.

Dolph Ziggler and R-Truth beat the Miz and Damien Sandow in the same match they had on Smackdown, minus most of the comedy and with Miz taking the fall instead of Sandow.

Rollins pretended to be a neanderthal like Reigns.

Reigns then beat Rollins in a good match that is going to happen again on Sunday. Why that's the case is beyond me but WWE hasn't made a ton of sense in a few weeks now.

The big closing segment was Mark Henry rallying America before his match with Rusev on Sunday. Again I'm assuming this is their way of giving up the night to the NFL, but they could have had Reigns vs. Rollins close the show instead of this. The viewership plummeted for this segment and I can't imagine anyone was surprised.

Raw this week had the same problems it's had for a long time now: there's clearly no effort other than with Cena vs. Lesnar. Not that that wrestlers aren't trying, but they're being given nothing to work with. Everything feels meaningless coming into Sunday outside of the main event and that's not good. This is the annual fall lull and it really doesn't make me care about the product. There's a house show this weekend five minutes from my house and a main event of Cena vs. Kane isn't enough to make me go. The show was watchable but nothing I'm going to remember by Friday.

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