

Survivor Series Count-Up – 2011: Woo Woo Woo The Rock Is Back

Survivor Series 2011

Date: November 20, 2011

Location: Madison Square Garden, New York City, New York

Attendance: 16,749

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, Booker T

This show is all about the Rock. Seriously, that's it. The main event is Rock/Cena vs. Awesome Truth in Rock's first match in seven years. They totally gave away the announcement of the match before the announcement on Raw but they were trying at least. This show didn't sell that well for reasons we'll get to later. Let's get to it.

The whole history thing starts us off again, as always. Take a guess as to what the opening video is about.

John Laurinitis welcomes us to the show. That's all he says so this was a minute wasted, brought to you by one of the Dynamic Dudes.

US Title: Dolph Ziggler vs. John Morrison

Morrison lost FOREVER, then won a match on Raw after Mason Ryan helped, and gets a title match as a result. This was during a bad period where Ziggler had a rock cover of his song which didn't work at all. Feeling out process to start and the fans want RYDER. This was when Ryder was white hot but WWE decided that crushing him for the sake of Kane and Jack Swagger. Ziggler gets taken down by the arm as the announcers talk about Ryder.

The fans now think this is boring so Dolph jumps over John in the corner and hits a dropkick to take over. Off to a headlock by the champion as the fans still want Ryder. Dolph gets thrown to the floor and Morrison hits a big corkscrew dive to take the champ out. Vickie offers an

annoying distraction and Ziggler takes over back inside. Ziggler takes Morrison down and nips up in a good athletic display before hooking a near Crossface.

As the fans chant the same thing I'd expect to hear for the entire show, Ziggler stands around a lot. Morrison misses a charge in the corner and Dolph hits a reverse powerslam for two. The sleeper doesn't go on and Morrison starts speeding things up with clotheslines and a leg lariat. That gets two and so does a rollup with tights for Ziggler. Morrison kicks Dolph in the head for two and a half and they trade sleepers.

The fans seem to be more behind Ziggler but it's New York so that's not shocking. John hits a spinning DDT for two as Vickie puts Dolph's foot on the rope, which earns her an ejection. Morrison misses a running knee and they rapidly trade near falls. The Flying Chuck misses for Morrison and it's a Fameasser....for two. Wow I thought that was it. The running knee hits Ziggler in the face but Starship Pain hits Ziggler's knees. Zig Zag retains the title.

Rating: B-. I dug this match a lot, annoying crowd aside. Sometimes there's nothing better you can do than throw two talented guys out there for ten minutes and let them have fun. Ziggler is more or less in the same spot he's in a year later which is annoying but it's the way of life in the WWE. Morrison would be gone in eight days which almost knew was coming.

Post match Vickie gets our attention as only she can and hands the mic to Ziggler who says he'd hate to have to follow what you just saw. He says it's not showing off it you can back it up every night. As Ziggler celebrates, here's Ryder...who is immediately beaten down. Ryder comes back and hits the Rough Ryder to send Ziggler running. They probably should have changed the title here, but I'm not sure they were sure they wanted to go with Ryder yet or not.

Divas Title: Eve Torres vs. Beth Phoenix

Beth is defending and this is a lumberjill match. Beth catches a cross body and just drops Eve like she doesn't care. Eve kicks her down and does her STUPID dancing moonsault but Beth rolls to the floor and calls

it stupid. Good for her! Back in and the moonsault hits anyway for two. Eve gets sent to the apron and has to kick away Natalya, allowing the champion to take over.

Off to a reverse chinlock for a bit before Eve counters a wheelbarrow suplex to send Beth into the middle turnbuckle. Eve hits a kick to the face but a rolling flip hits knees. The Glam Slam is countered and Eve hooks a freaky kind of Octopus Hold before shifting to a modified triangle choke. Eve has to chase off some evil chicks but manages to kick Beth in the head. The moonsault gets broken up though and the Glam Slam off the middle rope retains Beth's title.

Rating: C. Not terrible here and the ending looked awesome. I loved Beth and Natalya's heel run together as they HATED the stupid Barbie stuff that chicks like Kelly and Eve were doing because it's almost embarrassing at times. This particular match started slow but once it picked up it got a lot better.

Otunga comes in to annoy Punk and says Cole deserves an apology from some attack by Punk. Punk says let me go become world champion first.

Rock is in the back and he's got a mic. He talks about MSG (no FINALLY for some reason) and being here in the 70s, watching his grandfather fighting for the world title. Then in the 80s he hung out with Andre the Giant in the locker room. Then in 1996 he debuted in the WWF, and despite having a hideous outfit and the worst haircut known to man (his words), the fans chanted his name. That's correct actually and they didn't even tell him to die. Rock runs us through his history of catchphrases and title wins, with the most important being him becoming the People's Champion.

There's FINALLY and he has to stop for a chant. He does his stupid boots catchphrase before moving on to his partner: John Cena. The fans think Cena sucks but Rock talks about the things that have happened in MSG like Ali vs. Frazier. Then he sings some Frank Sinatra and asks the fans to sing with him. It's on tonight and that's about it. This is what the fans wanted and he could have had them say anything he wanted here. That's what Rock is great at and it worked.

Team Barrett vs. Team Orton

Wade Barrett, Cody Rhodes, Jack Swagger, Hunico, Dolph Ziggler

Randy Orton, Kofi Kingston, Sheamus, Mason Ryan, Sin Cara

Ziggler is subbing for an injured Christian. There's no real reason for most of these guys other than needing four midcard faces and heels to fill out the teams. Cody is IC Champion. Kofi and Bourne are tag champions here but Bourne is on a Wellness violation. Kofi and Ziggler start things off with Ziggler hitting a quick elbow to take Kofi down. The reverse powerslam is countered and Dolph gets one off a dropkick.

Kofi's SOS is countered so it's a forearm to take Dolph down instead. There's the tag to Orton and an RKO eliminates Ziggler quickly. To be fair he had a match earlier so this isn't a bad thing for him. Barrett has a huddle on the floor with his team but Orton wants to fight some more. Back in and it's most of Team Orton to clear the ring before Kofi and Cara try stereo flip dives. Cara, being the klutz that he is at this point, trips on the top rope and rips his knee apart, putting him in the shelf for the next seven months.

The match stops for a few moments as we're told Cara is eliminated. We get back to normal and it's Cody vs. Randy now. Orton grabs the arm and it's off to Ryan. Prepare for a trainwreck. Ryan hits some very basic stuff including a knee to the chest before Cody bails to the floor. Hunico gets the tag but Ryan has to literally pull him in. Off to Kofi whose tights look like they have the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man on them if you don't look too long.

Kofi misses a charge in the corner and it's off to Barrett for a chinlock. Back up and it's a double clothesline to put them both right back down. Double tag brings in Hunico vs. Ryan with the latter hitting a series of backbreakers and a fallaway slam. Hunico gets gorilla press dropped into the corner for a tag to Cody. There's the Disaster Kick and the Cross Rhodes (POP) for the pin and elimination.

Off to Sheamus vs. Cody now with the Pale One quickly getting annoyed. He pounds Rhodes down in the corner and hits the ten forearms in the ropes,

which they tried to name some Irish word. It lasted about two weeks before they realized it speaks for itself pretty well. Cody tries to low bridge Sheamus but Sheamus lands on the apron. Barrett decks the Irishman and Hunico comes in with a springboard dropkick to the knee.

Cole starts talking about Shawn Michaels for no apparent reason as Sheamus takes out Hunico's knee as well. Off to Kofi who chops Barrett down a lot but gets kicked in the face after having to deal with Swagger. Upon further review, that IS the Stay Puft Man on Kofi's trunks. With Barrett mostly dead from the kick, the Wasteland eliminates Kofi. It's Orton and Sheamus vs. Swagger, Barrett, Hunico and Rhodes.

Orton comes in and tries the Elevated DDT, but Wade drops him to the floor where Hunico hits a suicide dive to take Orton out. Swagger comes in to pound on Orton a bit before Cody comes in for a release gordbuster. That gets two and it's off to a chinlock for a bit. A bulldog by Cody is easily countered and it's hot tag to Sheamus. The Pale One pounds on Swagger and hits the top rope shoulder and the Irish Curse. Swagger escapes the High Cross so Sheamus drops knees on his head, drawing a DQ when the referee gets to five. They were really trying to keep Sheamus strong here and that mostly worked.

Before Sheamus leaves, he takes Swagger's head off with a Brogue Kick. Orton gets the easy pin and it's 3-1. Rhodes comes in and stomps a spent Orton down in the corner but Orton comes back with some clotheslines. There's the powerslam to Rhodes followed by the Elevated DDT. Randy has to chase off Barrett so Hunico gets a blind tag. He springboards right into the RK0 for the elimination to make it 2-1, but Rhodes distracts Orton into the Wasteland to give Barrett the final pin.

Rating: B. This is your usual good formula based Survivor Series match with Orton and Barrett getting to advance their feud and not having Orton lose any face at all. The rest of the teams didn't mean much but Kofi is perfect for matches like this: he's got the resume to make him look like a threat but he never steals anyone's thunder. Good match.

The Bellas hit on Alberto when Ace comes up. Del Rio isn't worried about Punk tonight. Ace texts someone.

Don't be a bully!

The ring is reenforced for the next match after Big Show and Henry broke the ring at Vengeance. That's why the rematch is happening here tonight.

Smackdown World Title: Mark Henry vs. Big Show

Henry is defending. They trade the big dramatic shoves to start and Henry gets shoved to the floor. Back in and Show takes it to the mat which goes a lot better than you would expect it to. If that's not shocking enough, Show armdrags Henry to the floor. Henry stalls in the corner before going after Show's knee. Mark lays on the leg a bit and drops some elbows. I think the fans are chanting boring, likely due to New York fans being ridiculous.

A clothesline puts Show down but Show comes back with a DDT for two. Now the fans want Daniel Bryan, who has an MITB case at this point. Show shoulders Henry down and calls for the chokeslam, but Henry kicks him in the knee and hits the World's Strongest Slam for two. A splash gets the same and Henry is getting frustrated. Booker sums up what Henry should do: give him another World's Strongest Slam. I've never gotten why wrestlers don't do that. Just because a finisher doesn't work, it doesn't mean a second or third won't work.

The fans want Undertaker as the guys go to the floor. Show gets posted and then tackled through part of the barricade. That finally gets the fans' attention on the match instead of on guys who aren't here. Show barely makes it back into the ring in time but he manages to break up another superplex attempt. He busts out a superkick of all things to knock down Henry and draw an HBK chant.

Big Show goes up top (uh oh) and even though he takes forever, he hits a top rope elbow on Henry....for two. Why do a huge spot like that if it doesn't end the match? Now it's a Randy Savage chant. Show loads up the WMD, but Henry kicks him low for the FREAKING LAME DQ to retain the title.

Rating: C+. There's something awesome about two huge guys beating the tar out of each other and that's what we got here. Henry was AWESOME in 2011

and made for a great world champion, which is the last thing most people expected. That elbow was great, but to have the match end the way it did sucked. Show would beat Henry the next month, only to have Bryan cash in and win the title 45 seconds later.

Post match Henry tries to Pillmanize Show's ankle again but Show gets out of the way and knocks Henry out cold. The fans chant for Bryan but no such Goatface appears. Show wraps the chair around Henry's ankle instead and drops a leg on the chair to break Henry's ankle.

Barrett says that the world title is next for him but Awesome Truth comes in and demands respect. Truth talks about an argument he had with some pigeons. The pigeons said nothing though, because pigeons don't talk. Crazy Truth was great.

The New York National Guard is here.

We recap Punk vs. Del Rio. Del Rio cashed in MITB at Summerslam after Punk won, Cena beat Del Rio at Vengeance, Del Rio won a threeway with Punk and Cena in the Cell, tonight is the rematch from Summerslam, if you call that a match.

Raw World Title: CM Punk vs. Alberto Del Rio

Alberto is defending. Del Rio has Ricardo Rodriguez introduce him, so CM Punk brings out his own ring announcer: HOWARD FREAKING FINKEL! Round one goes to Punk. Howard waddles out and seems genuinely choked up by the reaction he gets. The fans want ice cream which is a thing he said he wanted in his own image. Feeling out process to start as Punk does his headlock so he can call spots to Del Rio.

Now the fans chant for Colt Cabana. Man these guys just won't stop. Punk cranks on the arm a bit and Alberto hides on the floor. Back in and Punk knees him down in the corner and hits a dropkick to send the champ back to the floor. There's the suicide dive from Punk and it's back in to work on the arm. Alberto sends him into the ropes where Ricardo gets in a shot, allowing Del Rio to take over.

Alberto comes in off the top with an elbow to the head for two and it's

off to the arm for the champion. Both guys have arm finishers which isn't something you often see. Punk fights out of the hold but can't hook the GTS as Del Rio hooks a DDT on the arm. The champ drops knees on the arm and we hit about the 8th armbar of the match. Punk breaks that one as well but charges into a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for two.

CM ducks a charge to send Alberto to the floor and things slow down again. Back in and Punk makes a comeback with a lot of strikes to the head and a neckbreaker for two. The knee in the corner and bulldog get the same but Alberto counters the GTS into a Backstabber for two. A running enziguri in the corner gets a VERY close two on Punk and now it's Alberto that's frustrated.

Del Rio loads up a superplex in the corner but Punk knocks him off and loads up the Macho Elbow but gets crotched. Alberto gets in a hard kick to the arm but misses a charge into the post while Punk is still on top. Now the Macho Elbow hits to a big pop but it only gets two. The crowd is really getting into these kickouts now. Punk shouts for the GTS but Alberto counters it for the third time. The armbreaker is escaped but Punk's high kick misses as well and there's the armbreaker on full.

After getting as close to tapping as a face is going to, Punk gets his feet in the ropes. Del Rio escapes the GTS for the fourth time because the arm isn't there. Punk kicks Ricardo in the face and gets rolled up with trunks for two. The high kick gets two for CM so he immediately puts on the Vice and wins Del Rio is in big trouble. He grabs at Punk's face (realistic, nice) but has to tap and Punk wins the title.

Rating: A. I don't remember liking this as well the first time but this was a really good match. Del Rio seemed like a real threat to keep the title here as Punk's arm just wasn't going to be able to do hit the GTS. The Vice is a little more realistic and I can live with him being able to do that so even the ending is ok. This was a very solid match, but the problem with the story overall is the title changes happening so rapidly.

In short, Del Rio getting two title reigns and Cena getting one out of all this didn't need to happen. Punk could have won at Summerslam, beaten Del Rio cashing in here, and things would have been much stronger. But

hey, that would mean MITB would be interesting instead of there for a shock value and we can't have that.

Finkel does the "and NEEEEEEEEEEEEEW" WWE Champion call. Punk is the new WWE Champion having won it in the middle of Madison Square Garden and The Fink got to tell the people about it. Is there a cooler moment in wrestling? No, there isn't.

Punk celebrates for a long time post match. As I'm writing this (November 7, 2012), he's STILL champion.

Austin has yet another DVD.

We recap Awesome Truth vs. Rock/Cena. Cena had beaten up both guys before a tag match was made for this show. He was told he could pick ANYONE he wanted as a partner so he picked The Great One. Pay no attention to the PPV ad that played at the end of HIAC and advertised the match before Cena officially picked his partner. Basically the only way Awesome Truth (Miz/R-Truth) can win is to have Rock and Cena implode. Other than that we're looking at a squash.

Awesome Truth vs. The Rock/John Cena

Rock is going to start as Cena is off to kiss the widow of Arnold Skaaland. Miz gets to face Rock to start and the Great One grabs a quick headlock. Rock snaps off some GREAT armdrags and gets two off La Magistral (it's an armtrap cradle) on Miz. Awesome Truth huddles on the floor and Cena looks impressed. Truth wants to fight Rock now and Rock says Just Bring It. The fans do the Cena dueling chants before Rock hits a fisherman's suplex on Truth, but Cena is going after Miz, meaning no count.

Now Miz wants to get back in and he wants it to be with Cena. Given how Rock looked, that's a wise choice. Cena quickly takes over with snapmares, a monkey flip (!!) and a dropkick. The fans boo him out of the building and tell him he still sucks. Off to Truth who walks into Cena's finishing sequence but Cena tells Rock that he can't see Cena. They stare each other down, allowing Truth to nail Cena (Rock saw it coming and didn't do anything) to give the guys with no chance the advantage.

Truth and Miz take a few turns on Cena before Truth hooks a chinlock. Cena gets thrown to the floor by Truth which gets two back in the ring. Back to a leg choke by Truth as the fans want Rocky. Off to Miz who counters an AA into a short DDT for two. The fans seem to be into Miz as he hits his running clothesline in the corner. Truth hooks a front facelock to kill a few moments and it's back to Miz who gets two off a clothesline.

The spinning legdrop gets two for Truth as the crowd is waiting to explode for Rock's hot tag. Truth goes up for a cross body but Cena rolls through. His AA attempt is countered into a sitout gordbuster for two and it's back to Miz. Miz hits a pair of boots to the face of Cena but the third is countered into the STF. Truth makes a quick save and Rock is content to stand on the apron. Cena grabs a quick AA on Truth but Miz knocks Rock off the apron to tease the crowd even further.

Truth drops Rock on the barricade to keep him down as Cena gets put in another chinlock. A double flapjack gets two on Cena and it's back to the front facelock by Truth. Truth's second legdrop misses There's the real hot tag to Rock and house is cleaned in a hurry. Miz gets put in the Survivor Series Sharpshooter but Truth saves as everything breaks down. With Cena and Truth on the floor, Miz goes off on Rock but charges into a spinebuster. The People's Elbow returns and Rock gets the pin on Miz.

Rating: B. What else were you expecting here? This is one that has indeed changed over time as we knew Rock would have a great match with Cena at Wrestlemania. The match itself was formula stuff which is perfectly fine and all that it should have been. Rock making the save was the right call and there's almost no complaints at all here. Good match but it didn't need to happen, which we'll get to in a bit.

Cena leaves so Rock can have him moment, but Rock calls him back in. Cena's posing gets booed, Rock's gets cheered. Rock lays out Cena with a Rock Bottom to end the show.

Overall Rating: A. This is an AWESOME show with a great world title match and a solid main event. The problem was it didn't sell that well and it's really clear why: the main event was a bad idea. The whole idea of Rock

vs. Cena at Mania was that it was Rock's first match in 8 years. Well now it's Rock's first match in about five months and for what? Rock and Cena had beaten up both guys one on two leading up to the match. There was no doubt as to who was going to win and nothing was on the line, so why watch the match? There was no reason and not a lot of people did. Still though, great show and worth seeing.

That's the end of the Survivor Series Redo Count-Up and it really was fun to do this. A lot of the shows were about the same the second time around, but one thing is very clear: I was freaking WORDY back in the day. All of these reviews were shorter this time around and that's probably better. Anyway, I'll be back for the Rumble, Wrestlemania and Summerslam versions of these. Thanks for reading and supporting me all these years to the point where I can do another set of these. I really appreciate you all.

Ratings Comparison

Dolph Ziggler vs. John Morrison

Original: B-

Redo: B-

Beth Phoenix vs. Eve Torres

Original: C

Redo: C

Team Barrett vs. Team Orton

Original: B-

Redo: B

Big Show vs. Mark Henry

Original: B-

Redo: C+

CM Punk vs. Alberto Del Rio

Original: C+

Redo: A

The Rock/John Cena vs. Awesome Truth

Original: B

Redo: B

Overall Rating

Original: B

Redo: A

The World Title really changed things for me here. Still a great show though.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/11/20/survivor-series-2011-rock-still-has-it/>

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