

Monday Night Raw – January 5, 2015: This Show Sucked And I Hated It

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 5, 2015

Location: American Bank Center, Corpus Christi, Texas

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Booker T.

It took awhile to get here but we're finally into Royal Rumble season. The big story from last week (biggest out of many that is) was the return of the Authority, after a grand absence of about a month. Now that they're back they can oppose Daniel Bryan as he tries to make it to Wrestlemania to take the World Title off the corporate backed champion. Well it worked the first time so why not now? Let's get to it.

We open with a recap from the end of last week with Rollins setting the stage for the Authority's return by threatening to cripple Edge. I still have issues with a simple "I respect you" making up for all of Cena and Edge's issues.

Opening sequence. We haven't had one of those in forever.

The roster is in the ring and around ringside to open the show. Cena would like to apologize for what's coming, because he had to go back on his word and bring the Authority back last week. He thought he could slide in at the last second like Superman and save Edge but he just wasn't sure. Now the Authority is back, but 2015 is going to be...cut off by the Authority's music. Cole: "Stephanie McMahon on the left, HHH on the right." In case you thought HHH had become a woman you see.

Stephanie hopes we all had a great new year and HHH knows we were all begging for them to come back. He mocks the guest GM's and praises Seth Rollins for ensuring their return. Rollins tells Cena Happy New Year but HHH has a surprise for him: he's officially added to the WWE World Title match at the Royal Rumble, making it a triple threat with Lesnar

defending against Rollins and Cena.

That brings us back to Cena, because last week he showed that he knows what's best for business. Stephanie declares tonight John Cena Appreciation Night and Cena's attendance is mandatory. As for everyone else, this is a new year, meaning they'll all get what they deserve. That means Ziggler is up first and will be defending the Intercontinental Title against Bad News Barrett. I see no reason why the entire roster had to be out there, but they're out of the opening segment at just 8:14.

Intercontinental Title: Dolph Ziggler vs. Bad News Barrett

Barrett is challenging due to Barrett having to vacate the title due to an injury. The champ nails a dropkick to start but tries to get too high in the corner and takes a kick to the ribs. We're in a chinlock less than two minutes in, meaning I don't see this lasting long. Ziggler pops up and grabs a crucifix of all things to retain the title at 2:38.

Barrett destroys Ziggler post match and sends him into the and steps over and over. Cue Corporate Kane to say the Authority forgot to mention that this match is 2/3 falls. Ziggler is barely able to get up and Wasteland ties us up about thirty seconds in. The referee calls the trainers in before the third fall and we take a break. Back with Ziggler insisting he can continue but taking a boot to the face. Wasteland plants him again for two and Barrett puts him in the ropes for another boot.

Barrett cranks on the arms as Cole gets something as simple as Barrett's hometown wrong (Prescott instead of Preston). We hit the chinlock on the champ but he fights out with a Stunner, followed by a swinging neckbreaker. The Fameasser doesn't work but the Winds of Change gets two. I still really like that move. Barrett's Bull Hammer misses and Dolph scores with a superkick for another near fall. Kane gets up on the apron and eats a superkick, only to have the Bull Hammer knock Ziggler cold to give Barrett the title back at 16:39 total, counting the breaks between the falls.

Rating: C. The match was good but it was almost all angle. Barrett getting the title back is fine and it makes him a five time champion, but I wouldn't get my hopes up given his past experiences as champion. I'm

curious to see where Ziggler goes from here, but again they protected him with the big beatdown leading to his loss. He's looking like a bigger star now and stacking the deck against him is going to make that work as much as anything else.

We get our first John Cena great moment, starting on Smackdown, July 27, 2002 when he answered Kurt Angle's open challenge and took him to the limit. The Undertaker endorsed him post match to really make it mean something.

Clip from last week of Big Show interfering to break up Rollins vs. Reigns. Show buried Reigns under the announcers' table, only to have Reigns do the same to him on Smackdown. Reigns vs. Show again tonight.

Reigns doesn't know what to expect tonight but he knows Big Show can expect a man faster than a speeding bullet, able to leap tall building in a single bound, and more powerful than a locomotive. Believe that.

Bray Wyatt asks Dean Ambrose about his new year's resolution. Is it to become a better father or to get to know his imprisoned father? Well tonight he'll get the chance, because tonight he's going to be locked in an ambulance. Ambrose's lunatic fringe will be forever locked inside his own nightmare. The devil is suffering and pain and tonight he walks beside Wyatt.

Here's the Ascension for a chat. There have been a lot of dominant teams over the years, but they'll demolish Demolition and throw the Road Warriors off the road. Oh what a rush? Oh what a JOKE. Welcome to the wasteland. JBL of course buries them by saying they couldn't carry the Road Warriors' bags and Booker calls them stupid.

Ascension vs. ???/???

Fall of Man in 41 seconds.

Lana and Rusev tell America to stay out of Russia's business. How dare America disrupt Russia's tradition and heritage? Only Vladimir Putin can bring this world to peace, and only Rusev is undefeated.

John Cena beat JBL to win his first World Title at Wrestlemania XXI.

Roman Reigns vs. Big Show

Show spears him down to start and steps over Reigns' ribs. Some kicks have the ribs in even more trouble as the announcers do their job by reminding us that Reigns' had surgery on his abdomen to put him out of action late last year. A hard knee to the face gets to more and Big Show gets back to stepping on the stomach. We hit the bearhug before Reigns fights back, only to have the Superman Punch blocked. They head to the floor and Show hits him with the steps for the DQ at 4:19.

Rating: F. Failure, for the simple reason that this feud MUST CONTINUE! WHY IS IT CONTINUING??? How can WWE sit there and validate keeping Reigns locked up with Big Show for months on end and think that it's going to get him over? Just look at this match too: Big Show dominates, swats away Reigns' big move, and then loses because he beats him up too badly. This was a Big Show squash until the ending, making this match an even bigger waste of time than it looked like on paper. They're going out of their way to annoy fans at this point.

We recap the opening segment.

Natalya vs. Nikki Bella

Rematch from last week when Natalya lost in a minute. Tyson Kidd isn't out here after possibly costing Natalya the match last week. Cue Paige, who started a feud with Natalya last night on Total Divas. Natalya shoves Nikki down to start but can't grab the Sharpshooter. Instead Nikki blasts her in the face as Paige and Brie are about to get into it on the floor. Paige easily destroys Brie but the distraction lets Natalya roll up Nikki for the pin in 1:23.

Paige saves Natalya from a post match beatdown.

Ambrose doesn't have any new year's resolution other than beating Wyatt up and throwing him into an ambulance. This match is going to be brutal and end their feud once and for all. That's the way Dean lives his life and it's the way he's ending Bray's.

The commentators offer their condolences to the family of ESPN anchor

Stuart Scott as he passed away yesterday.

Luke Harper vs. Erick Rowan

Noble and Mercury are guest referees. Rowan sends him into the corner to start but the referees get in his way. He nails Harper with a spinwheel kick but the referees argue over who will do the count. Rowan yells at them and eats the discus lariat for a fast count pin at 1:00.

The Stooges beat up Rowan post match, allowing Harper to hit another discus lariat.

We see Cena's first night as an official member of the Raw roster. That's the night he was officially anointed as the top star of the company.

The WWE Network is coming to the UK on January 19. Allegedly.

Alicia Fox comes up to Naomi in the back and says they'll be friends after they're on different sides in the mixed tag. Fox brags about being part of the Total Divas cast and talks down to Naomi for being off the show. She beats Naomi up and screams a lot until more of the cast comes up to stop her.

We recap Ambrose vs. Wyatt, which has been a series of hardcore brawls since Wyatt cost him the Cell match against Rollins.

Bray Wyatt vs. Dean Ambrose

Ambulance match where you have to throw your opponent in the ambulance to win. This is billed as the end of the story, which I don't buy for some reason. They quickly fight to the floor with Wyatt being sent over the announcers' table and thrown into the crowd. They're quickly up by the ambulance and Dean has a red cross table. Well of course he does. Bray comes back with a stretcher to the knees and they fight back down to ringside with Wyatt sending him knee first into the post.

Back from a break with Bray splashing Dean in the corner and tossing his hair around. I guess he's a Kevin Nash fan. Sister Abigail is broken up and the Rebound Clothesline puts both guys down. Bray comes right back with a shot to the bad knee (because he's smart like that) and they head

to the floor again. Up to the ambulance and Dean is able to clothesline him off the stage for a nice spot. Bray sends him into the ambulance...where there's a chair waiting. Dean pelts it at Wyatt's head but of course the fans only want tables. I'm so sick of hearing that chant every single week.

Another clothesline drops Bray but the knee is too banged up for Dean to give it the full effect. Ambrose nails him with the back board from a stretcher before loading up the red cross table. He lays Bray on it...and looks at the ambulance. With the limp slowing him down, Dean gets on top of the ambulance and drops the elbow to drive Wyatt through the wood, with the table breaking so clean that it ruins almost the entire visual. Not that it matters as Bray hits Sister Abigail into ambulance door. Dean is still able to fight out though, only to take a slow motion Sister Abigail on the concrete to give Wyatt the win at 19:40.

Rating: B-. The violence was fun but this felt like it went on forever. I'm not really sure why an ambulance match is supposed to be the be all and end all of this feud. It wasn't anything we haven't seen them do a bunch of times, but at least Wyatt definitively wins the feud and can now move on to something else. Good brawl, but I'd have liked them to go on and do something new instead of the same old stuff in a different setting.

Time to insult the fans who still pay for regular pay per view.

Remember that opening segment? Well here it is again.

Usos/Naomi vs. Alicia Fox/Miz/Damien Mizdow

Another Total Divas match. The girls get things going with Naomi throwing Alicia around with ease before it's off to Miz for a neckbreaker and chinlock on Jimmy. Mizdow gets the tag and is back out three seconds later before any contact. Does any of this sound familiar to anyone else? Miz ax handles Jimmy from the apron to the floor and it's back to the chinlock. Jimmy finally escapes and makes the hot tag as everything breaks down. In the melee, Jimmy has to stop himself from running into Naomi, allowing Miz to roll Jimmy up with a handful of the tights for the pin at 4:12.

Rating: D. This show is dying before our eyes. The story is starting to drag as there's really no reason for these people to be fighting anymore, other than the required crutch of a rematch that they just have to have. If they wanted to make things interesting they would have Fox get the new projects that were promised to Naomi to show her that Miz was lying to wrap things up, but something tells me the Naomi part is just going to be dropped.

WWE Network song.

Ryback vs. Seth Rollins

Wait a second as Kane comes out to make it a handicap match.

Kane/Seth Rollins vs. Ryback

Ryback runs into Kane's uppercut to start but comes back with the Thesz Press and Warrior splash for one. Off to Rollins who bails in the face of a monster like a villain should. We get a Flair slam from the top and Kane is sent outside as well as we take a break. Back with Ryback fighting out of a chinlock but eating a dropkick from Rollins. Rollins chokes a bit and Kane puts on one of the worst chinlocks I can ever remember seeing. It's like when you're a kid and you do wrestling moves to your friends but you don't know what you're doing and it looks horrible, but this is a former World Champion doing it instead.

Ryback suplexes Kane down for a breather and nails Rollins with a nice spinebuster. The Stooges offer a distraction but Rollins takes the Meat Hook anyway. Kane breaks up Shell Shock but takes it himself, only to have Seth nail the Curb Stomp. He does it again for no particular reason and gets the pin at 11:54.

Rating: D-. END THIS ALREADY! This show has been dragging on and on for the last two hours and I have no idea who thinks this is a good idea. Rollins getting the pin makes sense but if all the fans pass out due to boredom, no one is going to care. Also, well done on giving Ryback the big promo last week and then jobbing him here. You could have at least made this Rollins and Rusev to help build the match, but instead let's just get Kane out there.

Big E. vs. Adam Rose

Rose actually takes over to start and throws Big E. into the corner before slapping on a chinlock. Big E. makes his comeback but we've got masked men for the DQ at 1:50.

Big E. takes a powerbomb/Blockbuster combo and the masked men are Cesaro and Tyson Kidd.

Preview of tonight's new episode of Countdown.

Here's the Authority to introduce Cena for John Cena Appreciation Night at 10:58. We see the ending of last week's show again and Stephanie calls Cena her hero. HHH says he thought Cena was horrible when he debuted and then he had to sit through all those years of hustle, loyalty and respect. Last week though, Cena changed his mind when Cena brought back the Authority. This ring is all that matters to HHH and before the night is over, a lot of people are going to appreciate John Cena (it didn't make sense when he said it either).

HHH brings out Ryback, Rowan and Ziggler, none of whom have had a good night. He recaps how everyone joined Team Cena and now it's time for the punishments: Rowan is suspended for thirty days, Ryback is suspended for sixty days, and Ziggler...has to wait while the Authority walks up the aisle in a conference about what to do. Their decision: they're all fired. HHH: "LET'S HEAR IT FOR JOHN CENA!" Music plays, confetti and balloons fall, and Stephanie does a little dance to end the show.

Overall Rating: F+. The plus is only due to some good action when they could get away from the stories. This show was downright infuriating as they basically forgot everything interesting and entertaining from last week and took us back to the stupid Survivor Series fallout, which has now gone on longer than the build and pay per view itself. They were packing every single thing they could into this show and making sure that the fans had as little fun as possible.

Above all else though, this show lost me with how the announcers talked about Ascension. I know the team isn't for everyone, but this company's philosophy seems to be "let's put every possible thing against the new

guys and see how hard they're willing to get it over." Then when it fails, oh well it wasn't the company's fault for whatever reason. The announcers referred to the new team as stupid and basically called them worthless. I'm so glad they got a year as NXT Tag Team Champions only to be shot down like this a week after they debut.

That's just part of the downside to this show. It just went on and on and kept feeling like they were trying to get on the fans' nerves. And for what? To set up some big moment where the Authority is defeated? Again? As in after they were defeated at Wrestlemania and then again at Survivor Series? I'm supposed to care that they lose again, only to come back a few months later like nothing ever happened? This show drove me crazy and I gave up on it about an hour in. If this is the start of the Road to Wrestlemania, we're in for a long, long ride.

Results

Bad News Barrett b. Dolph Ziggler – Bull Hammer

Ascension b. ???/??? – Fall of Man to #1

Roman Reigns b. Big Show via DQ when Big Show used the stairs

Natalya b. Nikki Bella – Rollup

Luke Harper b. Erick Rowan – Discus lariat

Bray Wyatt b. Dean Ambrose – Wyatt threw Ambrose in the ambulance

Alicia Fox/Miz/Damien Mizdow b. Naomi/Usos – Rollup with a handful of tights

Big E. b. Adam Rose via DQ when Cesaro and Tyson Kidd interfered

Seth Rollins/Kane b. Ryback – Curb Stomp

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