

Smackdown – January 29, 2015: And So It Ends. Please Dear Goodness Let It End.

Smackdown

Date: January 29, 2015

Location: XL Center, Hartford, Connecticut

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole

This is a rare live show due to the massive snow storm in the northeast that wiped out Tuesday's tapings. That might actually be the best thing they could have had happen to them after the negative reaction to the Royal Rumble. Tonight's main event is yet another Bryan vs. Kane showdown, this time in a casket match. Let's get to it.

Here's HHH to welcome us to Raw before realizing he's a bit shaken up. The one thing WWE doesn't like is being told what to do, which is why they did it. Just like they were told they would never have a million Network subscribers, which is exactly what they announced this week. He actually thanks the fans for subscribing in a rare genuine act. Then he was told they couldn't have a show in Hartford, so here they are for the live show.

WWE isn't the only one with a controversy right now because the NFL and Roger Goodell have a problem with their balls. Some like them hard and some like them soft, but WWE has never had a problem with balls. However, that's not something they have an issue with in WWE. HHH is the same way, because he has a problem with the man called Sting, and he'll be dealing with that face to face at Fast Lane.

That brings him back to the Royal Rumble which had its fair share of controversy. First of all there was an exceptional triple threat where Rollins proved that he is the future, Cena proved that he is the past and Brock Lesnar proved that he is the beast and World Heavyweight Champion.

However, that wasn't the major controversy. The controversy was due to

the Royal Rumble itself, which everyone has been talking about. We see some clips with Cole talking about how the fans are upset that guys like Ziggler, Bryan and Wyatt have been eliminated, leaving Big Show and Kane in the end. Reigns eliminated Rusev to win and cemented his spot at Wrestlemania.

HHH promises to make an announcement on Raw that is going to end the controversy and shake the WWE to its core. That sounds like trying to fix the main event already, which might not be the worst idea in the world. This brings out Reigns, who says there was no controversy because he won the Rumble. HHH agrees that he won the match, so now Reigns can win this one.

Big Show vs. Roman Reigns

Now let this be the FINAL match. They shove each other around to start with Big Show shoving him around to start. This is where Reigns is getting hurt more than anywhere else: he should be DESTROYING Big Show to set up a major showdown with giant killer vs. ultimate giant Lesnar at Wrestlemania. Instead it's Big Show looking dominant and Reigns probably making a comeback to win in a surprise. Show throws him across the ring as we're waiting on Reigns' first offense. He slips out of a slam and sends Big Show into the buckle for a breather, followed by a clothesline out to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Show working on the knee and putting on something like an ankle lock. Reigns climbs up the ropes to escape and counters into an ankle scissors of all things to send Show over the top. There's the apron kick but of course Show pops back up. Some clotheslines have little effect but a third one finally puts Show down.

A Samoan drop plants Show again but he rolls outside. Another running clothesline off the apron puts Show down but the knee is banged up. Back in and the Superman Punch is countered into the chokeslam for two. Show goes up but gets Superman Punched twice. He still won't go down so Reigns slams him down, setting up the spear for the pin at 12:21.

Rating: D. AND THEY'RE DONE. Like NEVER AGAIN let these two fight. It's not even that Reigns is looking bad out there but Big Show just looks

like nothing. And what does Reigns get out of this win? Nothing of course, because NO ONE CARES ABOUT BIG SHOW. Dull match here and it's almost infuriating after all the months of these two fighting.

Vince announces February as a free month for new subscribers on the WWE Network.

Here are Rollins and the Stooges with something to say. Rollins says he told us he would prove himself on Sunday and that's exactly what he did. He was a single count away from winning the WWE World Heavyweight Title and he stuck a dagger into Lesnar's heart when he broke his rib. He's feeling so good that he's going to issue an open challenge to anyone in this building that wants to face him.

Cue Ryback to go after Rollins but the Stooges get the better of him. This brings out Rowan to help but the Stooges and Rollins take him down as well. Ziggler completes the trio but gets sent into the announcers' table. Rollins knees Rowan in the back and the Authority bails before anything else happens. I smell a six man.

Kane is caressing a coffin and promises to lock Bryan inside tonight where the only thing he'll be able to hear is the beating of his heart. It's ashes to ashes and dust to dust, so may God have mercy on Bryan's soul tonight, because Kane will have none.

Jey Uso vs. Tyson Kidd

They start fast with Jey going to the corner but getting kicked in the knee. Tyson immediately goes after the bad wheel and slaps on a leg lock like a smart heel (or wrestler in general) should. Jey kicks Kidd out to the floor and nails him in the head, setting up a charge (so much for selling the leg). Kidd kicks him in the head though and springboards back in, only to get caught in a Samoan drop. Jimmy and Cesaro go at it on the floor, allowing Kidd to hit the fisherman's neckbreaker for the pin at 2:30.

Here are Rusev and Lana to talk about this past Sunday. Rusev says he should have been the winner and Lana is so upset that she can't speak English. He's the US Champion and wants to challenge a man from the past:

John Cena. Cena has no hunger or desire and he isn't a superstar anymore. This brings out Cena who looks shocked at what Rusev just said. Cena threatens to shut Rusev's mouth for him.

It sounds like Rusev has bought into his own hype because he thinks Cena is no challenge for him. He's John Cena, a fifteen time World Champion, a two time Royal Rumble winner and the face who runs this place. He had that US Title years ago and challenges Rusev to do the Hartford Hoedown. Rusev is ready to go but Lana calls him off. The Russians leave but Cena isn't done. He's fighting Rusev at Fast Lane and ending the undefeated streak because the champ is here. This really didn't accomplish much but Cena sounded good.

Paige vs. Nikki Bella for the Divas Title is official for Fast Lane. Paige is in the back when the Bellas come up to make fun of her for being pale. She elbows Brie in the face but takes a big forearm from Nikki.

Goldust/Stardust vs. Ascension

The brothers aren't sure who is going to start until it's Stardust vs. Viktor. A hiptoss puts Viktor down and Stardust W00s. Stardust is shoved into a forearm to Konnor but Viktor nails him in the back to take over. Konnor comes in an\& stumps away and hammers away before it's quickly back to Viktor for a chinlock.

Ascension keeps hammering on Stardust in the corner as the Dusts are suddenly the faces in this match. Stardust finally gets over for a hot tag and Goldust comes in with a knee to Viktor's head as everything breaks down. Stardust tags himself back in and Goldust isn't pleased. Konnor shoves Stardust off the top and a quick Fall of Man is good for the pin at 4:33.

Rating: D+. This was more angle advancement than anything else but it also gave Ascension another win. It looks like they're splitting up the Dust Brothers and I can't say I blame them at this point. There's nothing left for them to do and they're starting to get stale as a team, so give the fans a feud that they've been wanting for a good while.

Kane is STILL looking at the casket and slams it shut.

A magician is entertaining some wrestlers in the back when Miz and Mizdow come up to shake his hand. Miz gets annoyed at Mizdow shaking his hand but the magician demonstrates a magic trick with a fake egg, only to mystify Miz by turning it into a real egg. Miz doesn't believe it's real and gets it cracked on his head. R-Truth: The yoke's on you. Mizdow makes sure he isn't caught laughing. I'm a big fan of magic so this was more entertaining than it should have been.

Bray Wyatt asks us what makes us happy. Maybe it's money or a fond memory. He finds enjoyment in things that mommy and daddy hid from us as children. Bray is legion among men so he asks what makes us smile. When he's done, it will be hard for us to ever smile again. Run.

Kane vs. Daniel Bryan

Casket match and they have a lot of time for this one. Cole talks about Bryan looking at the casket because he's never been in a casket match before. I'm sure this has nothing to do with the potential of being locked inside a casket. Kane quickly goes for the casket but Bryan comes back with kicks to the leg while wearing what appear to be furry boots. Kane can't gorilla press him into the casket and runs away from an attempted baseball slide as we take a break.

Back with Kane putting Bryan's face in the ring skirt and hammering away at the covered head. A big boot almost knocks Bryan into the casket but he kicks Kane away for the save. Kane plants him with another side slam but has to fight out of a headscissors to put him into the casket. Bryan nails a high cross body on the floor but gets kicked into the casket, only to crawl out the other side. Kane still can't get him into the casket and we take another break.

We come back with Bryan holding Kane in a chinlock (you don't see that everyday) and hitting his running clothesline to put the giant down. Here come the YES kicks to send Kane outside, setting up the FLYING GOAT and more right hands from Daniel. Kane backdrops him over the barricade as the casket has been forgotten for the moment. They head over to the announcers' table with Bryan getting sent into the chairs, followed by a bunch of chair shots to the back.

They suddenly remember this is a casket match with Kane loading up Bryan for a tombstone off the apron, only to have Daniel slip out and dropkick him a few times. He tries a third dropkick but charges into a chokeslam. Kane loads him into the casket but eats a kick to the face followed by the YES Lock with Kane partially in the casket. Even though it looks terrible, it puts Kane into the casket but Bryan still can't close it. Kane gets out again and almost turns Bryan inside out with a clothesline. Bryan escapes another chokeslam and the running knee to the side of the head puts him in the casket for the win at 22:10.

Rating: D. WAY too long here with a boring match as they had another Bryan vs. Kane showdown that no one wanted to see. Much like earlier, I really hope this is going to be the end of the feud because there's no reason for these guys to fight ever again. It took too long for Kane to put put away here, but at least Bryan won. I'm not a fan of these matches though and it really gets annoying watching them having a dull match until they remember it's a casket match.

We see HHH teasing the announcement for Raw again to close the show.

Overall Rating: D+. The promos carried this show and the show flew by but it really wasn't all that great. The casket match felt like it went on forever, much like the entire Bryan vs. Kane feud. Thankfully Big Show vs. Reigns should be done, which is why you can already see the gimmick rematch coming at Fast Lane. This was a passable show and felt like Raw cut down to two hours.

If they did this style show every Monday, I can't imagine how much more the fans would calm down. They didn't pack this show full of nonsense and there wasn't as much time being wasted. Keep the show moving and don't let it get repetitive and the show becomes much easier to sit through. That third hour really does cripple Raw and this show is proof. It wasn't good, but it was a lot easier to sit through.

Results

Roman Reigns b. Big Show – Spear

Tyson Kidd b. Jey Uso – Fisherman's neckbreaker

Ascension b. Goldust/Stardust – Fall of Man to Stardust

Daniel Bryan b. Kane – Bryan closed Kane in the casket

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book on the History of Saturday Night's Main Event at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00SATPVKW>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>