

Smackdown – February 19, 2015: Yep, It's Still Smackdown

Smackdown

Date: February 19, 2015

Location: BB&T Center, Sunrise, Florida

Attendance: 8,000

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

It's the final show before Fast Lane and thankfully the ending to Monday's show was a bit more interesting than trying to figure out exactly when Bryan turned into a whiny loser who is using his contractual obligations to get back in the title picture instead of just winning matches like he did last year. Other than that we have Rollins vs. Ziggler again tonight because what else could they air? Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the Reigns vs. Bryan story from Monday with both of them messing with the others match and a big brawl to end the show.

Opening sequence.

Miz vs. Daniel Bryan

Before the match, we see Miz ripping on Mizdow earlier in the night, but he insists it's just trying to help Mizdow from being a loser. Mizdow of course out pops Miz, earning him a severe tongue lashing. Miz orders him to go get an Egyptian cotton towel for after his match. Apparently Bryan wants Miz to only use American goods and kicks some patriotism into his former mentor.

The running clothesline and corner dropkick set up a top rope hurricanrana but Miz bails to the floor to avoid the running knee. Back in and Miz kicks out the knee before driving knees into the hamstring. You don't try to match submissions with Bryan though and the YES Lock is good for the submission at 2:54.

Ryback vs. Kane

Ryback hammers him into the corner to start and hits a decent belly to belly. A threat of the Meat Hook sends Kane outside in the same sequence from the first match with the running knee. Back in and Kane hits a running DDT followed by a big boot to send Ryback into the corner. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Ryback fights up with a Thesz Press and the Warrior Splash. Ryback gets knocked off the top rope to the floor, which means absolutely nothing as he hits the Shell Shock immediately after getting back in for the pin at 3:51.

Rating: D. This was a ten minute power match packed into less than four minutes. Ryback and Kane could have a decent match if they were given a few more minutes but they had to fly through this instead, likely so we can see a bunch of videos from Raw. Also, Ryback can pin Kane but Reigns can only beat him by countout? These are the kind of things that just make no sense and make you wonder if anyone is actually thinking backstage.

We recap Ambrose making Barrett sign the contract on Monday.

R-Truth vs. Bad News Barrett

Non-title so just raise Truth's hand now. Ambrose is on commentary and wants to know why Truth is shouting WHOMP THERE IT IS, even though it's on his iPod. Barrett stomps away in the corner as Dean talks about the title being the backbone of the company. Truth gives Barrett a pelvic thrust, earning him a beating in the corner.

Cole asks how that contract signing can stand. Dean: "Well there's a graphic for the match on WWE.com and the internet is always true." We hit the chinlock on Truth as Barrett talks trash to Dean. Truth fights up with ease and a side kick gets two. Ambrose ignores more trash talk, even as Barrett takes Truth to the floor and beats him up right in front of Dean. Back in and Dean turns his back on Barrett, allowing Truth to grab a rollup for the pin at 3:09.

Rating: D. Egads man I was kidding about Truth winning. Remember the good old days when champions ACTUALLY WON MATCHES??? On top of that, history

shows us that Truth isn't going anywhere after this win because pinning the champion is a plot device instead of a way to elevate someone. I don't know what Barrett did to deserve this treatment, but he'd have a better future as a shark dentist than as Intercontinental Champion.

Vince is on the cover of Muscle and Fitness.

We look back at Cena and Rusev fighting on Monday. If nothing else, that segment proved that American healthcare is better than Russian, as Cena's eye went from the focal point of the match to ignored in the span of a week.

Bray Wyatt says find him before he finds you.

Sheamus return video.

New Day vs. Ascension

Kofi is the odd man out here. Viktor and Woods get things going with Xavier planting a knee into the ribs for two. Ascension drags Woods into the corner for a double teaming, featuring a lot of choking in the corner. Back to Viktor for a kick to the ribs but Woods rolls over for an ice cold tag to E. Viktor gets thrown around but gets a reprieve as Big E. wipes away the sweat. A cheap shot from Konnor allows Viktor to send Big E. into the post, setting up Fall of Man for the pin at 2:52. I'm not surprised they've already pulled the plug on New Day, even though I like at least two of the members of the team.

Luke Harper vs. Roman Reigns

My goodness Harper has cooled down since winning that Intercontinental Title. It really has become a death knell in the last few years. Reigns throws him into the corner and stomps Luke down with ease. More stomping sends Harper outside and Roman nails him with a running clothesline. If Reigns can do one thing as well as anyone, it's explode with running moves.

Back in and something like the ProtoBomb gets two but they head right back outside where Luke sends him into the steps. Back in and a slingshot hilo of all things gets two for Harper but Reigns fights out of a

headlock. A big Samoan drop sends Harper flying but he escapes another and hits a swinging Boss Man Slam for two. Reigns pops back up, no sells a superkick and spears Harper down for the pin at 4:49.

Rating: C. As much as I can't stand the no selling of hard shots to the face, this is the kind of win that makes Reigns look better. Have him get in there for a hard hitting match and then spear someone in half for the pin. It's a really basic way of getting him over and to show off his physical abilities instead of whatever the heck the story with Bryan is supposed to be. I've watched the entire thing so far and I still don't get it. What I do get however is Reigns spearing people and pinning them because it looks cool.

Recap of Flair and HHH from Raw for the response to the acceptance for the challenge to talk.

Big Show vs. Erick Rowan

I don't see this going well. Show kicks Rowan to the floor before the bell and throws him into the steps. He picks Rowan up by the beard and throws him inside where the referee is fine with opening the match despite Rowan taking a horrible beating which should be a DQ but that might make Big Show look weak and this is a Big Show tribute company after all.

Show stomps him down in the corner and plants him with a slam. More stomping sets up the chokeslam for the pin at 2:26. Why in the world did we need a Big Show squash? He beat Daniel Bryan on Raw and now he needs to win a squash? Oh wait, it's more Survivor Series fallout. Why didn't I see that coming?

Cameron vs. Paige

The Bellas are on commentary and wearing sunglasses, which actually fit them quite well. Cameron flips her hair at Paige to start and gets the revolving elbows in the corner for her efforts. Paige drives knees into the chest and does her shout on the apron to no reaction from the Bellas. Apparently Nikki is fierce. Good to know. Cameron comes back with her horrible offense and slaps Paige in the face, earning her a series of

clotheslines. A kick to the face sets up the PTO for the submission at 2:09.

Paige shouts at the Bellas post match. They were actually far easier to sit through here as they've turned up the obnoxious levels to make it more of a character than just half doing everything and coming off like catty teenagers at summer camp. Naturally Nikki is going to retain the title Sunday though, because Paige has won every match leading up to the showdown and the Bellas are evil, meaning they have to get the upper hand.

We recap Goldust and Stardust's issues with Dusty on Monday.

Stardust knows what it's like to be considered a freak, so he embraced Stardust. They were on fire as a team and won the Tag Team Titles, but then darkness crept in. He saw it coming because it happened to him, and it took Cody away from him. Now Stardust is a cancer eating Cody alive and he wants his brother back. That means he has to face his brother and beat him at Fast Lane. Stardust appears on the screen behind him and asks to be spared from Goldust's sentiments. After Sunday, Cody won't be the only one who has ceased to exist. The universe will forget the name of Goldust.

Jimmy Uso vs. Tyson Kidd

Before the match, Kidd says his decision to team with Cesaro is the best move he's ever made. Natalya's face is rather amusing to say the least. Also of note here: Kidd is about a foot shorter than Cesaro. I've never noticed that kind of a height difference before. Kidd fires off ROH style forearms to the head to start but Jimmy comes back with right hands in the corner. Not that it matters though as Rusev comes in to beat up both guys at 0:57.

Rusev destroys everyone and rants in Russian about Cena. No Lana here.

Seth Rollins vs. Dolph Ziggler

The Stooges are barred from ringside. Feeling out process to start with both guys going for arm holds and Rollins bailing to the ropes. They hit

the mat with Ziggler caught in a headlock but he comes back with a nice dropkick. Rollins avoids a Stinger Splash though and we take a break. Back with Ziggler fighting out of a chinlock (as is almost always the case) but charging into a hot shot for two.

Big Show, Kane, Ryback and Rowan are all at ringside. After what happened earlier, why would you want Rowan out there? Isn't there an elderly music teacher somewhere that could give you a better fighting chance? Rollins yells at Ryback and Rowan, allowing Dolph to come back with a running forearm to put both guys down.

Now the Stinger Splash connects and Ziggler follows it up with a neckbreaker. Rollins tries the buckle bomb but gets countered into a sunset flip, followed by the Fameasser for two more. Dolph dropkicks him out to the floor where Seth slaps Ryback and Rowan. Back in and Ziggler has to fight off Kane, allowing Rollins to hit the buckle bomb, followed by the Curb Stomp for the pin at 10:23.

Rating: B-. Solid enough match here but it's nothing we haven't seen them do far better before. Rollins getting a big win is a good sign and I'd assume there's going to be a six man tag set up for Sunday. If nothing else it would fill out the card a bit and get us beyond six matches for the show. Oh and a big talk, because that's what I want to pay for: a preview for the next show.

The Stooges come out and it's time for the big beatdown. Given that Ziggler is done and Rowan is Rowan, it's basically Ryback getting destroyed, making a decent comeback and then getting destroyed again for the last three minutes of the show, because the Stooges were able to subdue Rowan and we're still doing the same things we did around Survivor Series time. So much for Kane and Big Show having issues I guess, unless something happens Sunday.

Overall Rating: C-. Now this felt like an alternative to Raw. Monday night tends to be about packing as much stuff as you can into a show, but at the same time it feels like they're stalling for time. This show flies by with some decent wrestling and VERY few stories. Smackdown is much more streamlined and makes it an easier show to sit through.

However, that doesn't make it an interesting show. Nothing happens on this show and it was pure false hope when it moved back to Thursdays. This is right back to the same stuff they did for years and there's no real reason to watch it. Yeah there was some mild storyline development here, but it's more like the downloadable content for a video game: it might be fun to kill some time, but if you never saw it, you wouldn't lose anything from the game itself.

Results

Daniel Bryan b. Miz – YES Lock

Ryback b. Kane – Shell Shock

R-Truth b. Bad News Barrett – Rollup

Ascension b. New Day – Fall of Man to Big E.

Roman Reigns b. Luke Harper – Spear

Big Show b. Erick Rowan – Chokeslam

Paige b. Cameron – PTO

Jimmy Uso vs. Tyson Kidd went to a no contest when Rusev interfered

Seth Rollins b. Dolph Ziggler – Curb Stomp

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>