

Monday Night Raw – March 2, 2015: Screw This Show And Screw Wrestlemania

Monday Night Raw

Date: March 2, 2015

Location: Prudential Center, Newark, New Jersey

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

We're one step closer to Wrestlemania this week and the big event coming out of last week is Randy Orton not attacking Seth Rollins as everyone expected him to at the end of the show. That would seem to be a layup for a match at Wrestlemania but you never can tell around this company. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here are Rollins and the Stooges to get things going. Before he can say anything though, we get a clip of him appearing on the Daily Show with Jon Stewart last Thursday. Stewart is on his way here so Rollins suggests that he beg for forgiveness now and turn around. This isn't like Lawler vs. Kauffman because unlike the Daily Show, every single person in this arena paid to see him tonight.

Cue Roman Reigns, who tells Rollins to keep talking because he wanted to hear what it sounded like to hear the fans tell Seth that he sucks. Rollins says he's worth more than Michael Jordan because he can out work and out talk anyone, including Wiz Khalifa. He can even out eat Mark Henry. Khalifa is scheduled to perform next week and Henry is rumored to be here tonight so that sounds like an internet newsletter come to life.

Rollins doesn't think Reigns can beat Brock Lesnar, but he can beat both Lesnar and Reigns. Roman asks if Rollins is man enough to make the main event of Wrestlemania a triple threat match as the fans chant for Punk. Rollins thinks it's smarter to cash in on the winner of the match, or maybe do it the next night. Or maybe just cash in when no one is

expecting it. Or maybe Reigns should just punch him in the mouth right now, which is what he does. The Stooges are laid out and Reigns stands on the Money in the Bank briefcase, but somehow that still doesn't make me care about him.

Post break, Rollins yells at the Stooges for letting him get hit in the mouth. Randy Orton pops up and says the same thing. He thinks Rollins should demand a match with Reigns tonight to prove he can out talk Jon Stewart and out wrestle Roman Reigns as well. Rollins says he can out wrestle anyone on the roster, which doesn't sit well with Orton. Dang they were getting close to not having a main event set up. I'm glad these coincidences just happened to take place at complete random.

Dean Ambrose vs. Bad News Barrett

Non-title with R-Truth on commentary. Ambrose stomps away in the corner to start as Cole brings up the multi-man ladder match for the Intercontinental Title at Wrestlemania. Truth is officially announced for the match as Ambrose stomps away at the ribs and puts on a cross leg face rip. A bulldog sets up the standing elbow drop but Barrett crotches him to take over. The champ boots him out to the floor and holds up his title as we take a break.

Back with Ambrose fighting out of a chinlock but Barrett goes outside to yell at Truth for being a thief. Ambrose hits a suicide dive to take Barrett down though and hits the running standing elbow off the apron. This allows Truth to comically sneak over and steal the title belt because this is now a children's comedy. Winds of Change plants Ambrose as Luke Harper comes up and takes the belt from Truth. The distraction lets Ambrose hit Dirty Deeds for the pin on Barrett at 9:23.

Rating: D. I have nothing left. Just nothing.

We recap Miz stealing Mizdow's spot in a commercial last week on Smackdown.

Most of the midcard is in the back when Miz asks for silence. He calls Mizdow borderline worthless before giving us the world premiere of the new commercial. Mizdow tries to tell Miz something but Miz cuts him off

and mentions a bunch of actors. As expected, it's for an erectile dysfunction pill and has Mizdow involved with the good looking women. Back live and Mizdow can't control his laughter. Neither can the rest of the people in the room.

Miz yells at everyone and says his little general has plenty of bullets. This is all Mizdow's fault of course and Miz slaps him, again setting Mizdow off to a big reaction but once again he backs down. Mizdow almost has to eliminate him from the battle royal, but does it really matter is Mizdow doesn't win the thing?

Here's Bray Wyatt to ask if Undertaker is still the heart of fear. He wants Undertaker to come out and see him because Bray has built his own casket. Everything comes at a price though and Bray pulls out a gasoline can. He's always had a fascination with fire because it has no prejudice and no feelings, just like him. No one can hide from him because everything burns, including Undertaker at Wrestlemania. He pours the gas on the casket and lights it on fire before shouting to find him. Like most Bray stuff, it makes just enough sense to get the idea across without being able to understand it.

Natalya/Tyson Kidd/Cesaro vs. Usos/Naomi

Genders have to match here. Jey and Kidd get things going but the champs take over with a quick double team. A Samoan drop puts Cesaro down but he bails to the floor, setting up a tag to the women. Naomi pops Natalya in the face and starts a quick pinfall reversal sequence, only to have Naomi kick Natalya in the ribs.

Naomi doesn't buy a leg injury from Natalya and sunset flips her for two, only to have it quickly go back to Jimmy and Kidd. A Whisper in the Wind drops Kidd but he dives away from a double superkick and tags Natalya. The distraction lets Natalya get a rollup pin at 2:54. Didn't we see this EXACT same story last month but with the titles switched? Now I'm supposed to want to see it at Wrestlemania?

Kidd and Natalya almost get in a fight but they hug it out.

Here's John Cena with something to say after Rusev turned down his

request for a rematch last week. He says this is one of those rare occasions where his detractors are having a good time because not only did Rusev beat him in their first match but his rematch was turned down. Cena is going to get his rematch and is going to bring the title back home to America. Rusev is a marked man and he's going to lose that title at Wrestlemania. If he won't defend it though, maybe he could just enter the Andre battle royal.

Oh screw it Stephanie comes out with that smug look on her face. She asks when do people just announce what match they're in. Cena: "That's what everyone does in the battle royal." Stephanie doesn't get the term Murderer's Row (famous baseball lineup, means a great talent pool) and brings up a picture of her sitting on Andre's knee after the first Wrestlemania.

She says Cena can't disparage Andre's legacy (what is she even talking about?) but Cena cuts her off and says this is about Wrestlemania. He says she won't leave him off Wrestlemania so she goes into full on evil Stephanie mode and says WWE is bigger than any star it's ever had. The question is what will Cena do without WWE, not the other way around.

Cue Curtis Axel of all people who says he's already deserving a spot in the main event so he should win the battle royal too. A LOUD Axelmania chant starts up and Stephanie thinks he may be the next John Cena. Stephanie makes a match right now, but stops to say Cena can only get his match with Rusev by changing his mind. Axel: "WHATCHA GONNA DO WHEN AXELMANIA RUNS WILD ON YOU???" He rips the shirt off and Cena looks stunned. Cena gives him one chance to leave before pain comes to him.

John Cena vs. Curtis Axel

The bell rings after the break and Axel does Hogan poses. Cena stares a hole in the back of Axel's head, hits some clotheslines, the AA and the STF for the submission at 2:02.

Post match Rusev comes out and again says no. Cole calls this humiliating because he doesn't know the meaning of basic English words. Cole: "We could be coming up on the first Wrestlemania with no John Cena." Me: "Oh screw off."

Arn Anderson and Michael Hayes talk about Sting's career and how great he really was. This lasts all of ten seconds.

Here's HHH to talk about coming to this company twenty years ago. Now he's the COO and a thirteen time World Champion. Eight days ago he offered Sting a chance to be immortal, but now he has the chance to make it as if Sting never existed. But why didn't Sting come here before? HHH invites Booker T. into the ring because Booker recently said HHH politicized Sting from ever coming to the company. Why does he think that? That makes Booker sound like one of those internet fans that think they know the ins and outs of the business when they don't know a thing.

Booker says no one has ever been able to control Sting and now HHH gets to deal with him at Wrestlemania. HHH thanks him for the opinion and then fires him. Booker goes to leave but HHH says he's changed his mind. That was just an example of the control he has because he's been handed the chance to end the last vestige of WCW and that's what he'll do. I can't believe they're STILL talking about WCW. That company has been out of business longer than it was in business and WWE is still bragging about defeating them.

Divas Title: Paige vs. Nikki Bella

Nikki is defending again in a rematch from Fast Lane. We even get Big Match Intros. Paige knocks her around to start but Nikki bails to the floor to avoid the PT0. A minute in and we hit the break. Back with Nikki cranking on the arms and Cole saying the action before the break was, and I quote (see what I did there?), fast and furious. Paige fights up but walks into a weak spinebuster for two.

We get the third mention of Total Divas in about the third minute of, ahem, action. A double clothesline puts both girls down and of course that one clothesline gets us to even after Paige has been in trouble for a few minutes. Paige hits three more clotheslines and a running dropkick for two. The PT0 is loaded up again but Paige has to nail Brie. Nikki misses her forearm and eats a superkick, setting up the PT0. Cue Brie for the DQ at 6:46.

Rating: D. GIVE THEM A CHANCE! YOU MIGHT GET A FIVE MINUTE MATCH NEXT

TIME! Yeah this was another obvious ending to set up the obvious return to set up the obvious "dream" tag match at Wrestlemania so the Bellas can show how good they really are and AJ can take a loss and be humiliated for calling out Stephanie on her nonsense. But hey, why bother entertaining when you can get one up on AJ in front of the dozens of people who are going to pay for this disaster of a Wrestlemania?

AJ runs in for the save and attacks the Bellas as we have new Super Best Friends.

Post break, AJ and Paige kind of agree to be friends to fight the Bellas.

It's time for the Daily Show with Seth Rollins, complete with a copy of the Daily Show's intro. Rollins takes some shots at Stewart's Oscar hosting last year (it was seven years ago) and at his movie Rosewater for not doing so well as the Stooges applaud in the background. Cue the real Stewart to rips on the Curb Stomp being a New Jersey greeting instead of something to fear. He remembers the wrestlers that earned their spots like Sammartino and Monsoon.

Rollins never went up against the establishment like Austin or fought through injuries like Undertaker. Seth wants to be the poster boy, but just like posters, they get taken down when people are tired of them. If the Authority really cared about him, why isn't he in the main event at Wrestlemania? He's better on the mic and claims to be better in the ring, but it's Lesnar vs. Reigns.

Stewart says the briefcase doesn't belong to Rollins because he was at Money in the Bank and saw what really happened. That's enough for Rollins as he grabs Stewart by the collar, drawing out Orton for the save, but Stewart kicks Rollins low and escapes on his own. This was one of the best celebrity performances ever in WWE and most of that is due to Stewart clearly being a huge fan. You can't fake that kind of passion. Well you could, but if you've ever seen the Faculty, you know Stewart isn't that good of an actor.

Post break Stewart leaves quickly to avoid retaliation.

Daniel Bryan vs. Luke Harper

Cole says Bryan isn't going to Wrestlemania either. Harper starts fast but gets sent face first into the middle buckle. A running dropkick has him in trouble but Luke slams Bryan to the floor as we take an early break. Back with Harper kicking him in the face and hitting a half nelson suplex for two. A rollup gets the same for Bryan before Harper throws him down again. That's fine with Bryan as he counters into the YES Lock for the win at 6:23.

Rating: D+. The Divas got more time than this match, which may or may not be about Bryan going into the title match at Wrestlemania. Just like the rest of this show, it's like they have no real idea where the matches are going and we're less than a month away from the show. Announce the things and let us know what we're getting.

Barrett comes out to take the belt back, but it's stolen by Ambrose, Harper, Truth then Harper again with the big man leaving with the belt. Ziggler cuts him off with a superkick though and puts the title on his shoulder. Dolph climbs the ladder with the belt and Bryan does a YES chant on the table.

Alundra Blayze Hall of Fame video. Two notes here. One, this is shocking if you know your history. Two, in the list of great champions over the years, we saw Moolah, Martel, Trish, the Bellas and Lita. Who on earth actually thinks that's true? I mean, someone say that to me so I can laugh very hard in their face. They actually mention the belt in the trash moment in the video.

Orton yells at Rollins for going after Stewart but promises to have his back if Rollins needs him. Big Show and Kane come up and say they have his back, so Noble says Orton won't be needed. Randy walks away, saying suit yourself.

Here's Heyman who says he's going to shoot from the hip. Yes Brock will be at Wrestlemania. Believe that. He'll be anywhere he pleases before the title match. He'll be anywhere he pleases after the title match. He'll be anywhere he wants as the WWE Champion. Fans like to believe their fantasies, starting with Daniel Bryan having a chance at beating his client.

Reality is that Lesnar would squash him under his boot, so now it's time for Roman Reigns. Heyman has to switch microphones before he rants about the fans buying into this idea of Reigns. WWE has already bought the confetti and the pyro but it's a big waste of time.

Last week he said Sammartino, Hogan, Austin, Rock HHH and Cena couldn't beat Lesnar. Fan: "ANDRE!" Heyman to the fan: "I DIDN'T MENTION HIM BECAUSE HE'S DEAD STUPID!" Of course there's no Stephanie to defend Andre now because that segment earlier made no sense. Heyman says none of those people disputed a single thing he said last week because it's all true. At Wrestlemania, Lesnar is going to conquer Reigns and maybe he'll just Ronda Rousey Roman. BELIEVE THAT.

Roman Reigns vs. Seth Rollins

Reigns knocks him around with ease to start and sends Rollins hard into the corner. Seth's comeback is easily stopped with a knee to the ribs but he catches Reigns with a dropkick. We hit the right hands to the face and Reigns is sent hard into the buckle, but here's Orton for a distraction as we go to our last break.

Back with Rollins holding a chinlock for a bit until Roman makes his comeback with some clotheslines and a tilt-a-whirl slam for two. Mercury breaks up the Superman Punch, allowing Rollins to score with an enziguri for two. Roman fights up again but Noble's distraction lets Rollins kick him in the face.

A powerbomb from Reigns puts both guys down. They head outside with Big Show getting in a cheap shot but Reigns dives off the apron to take him down. Kane nails him in the ribs with a chair, giving Rollins a near fall back inside. We get yet another comeback from Reigns as he nails a Superman Punch, only to have Orton grab the foot, allowing Rollins to roll up Reigns for the pin at 15:38.

Rating: D+. The #1 contender for the World Title and the man that is supposed to save us from the horrors of Brock Lesnar just got pinned less than a month before the biggest show of the year. I don't care what he does after the match. That ending is stupid and there was no reason to not just have the big DQ or something like that. My goodness do they want

me to watch Wrestlemania or not?

Reigns snaps post match and destroys everyone not named Orton. He hits a huge dive over the top and spears Rollins out of the air as JBL shouts about him being ready. No man. Screw that noise. I'm not buying Reigns as anything when he's losing less than a month before the big night, screwy finish or not. You don't do that no matter what, especially when Lesnar isn't here to set up the stupid match.

Overall Rating: F+. Where do I even start? First of all, how do you only have six matches on a three hour plus show with two of them not even breaking three minutes? That's just unacceptable. Second, they really do seem to be making this stuff up as they go. We're supposed to believe Cena and Bryan aren't going to be at the pay per view? That's your big selling point? "Hey people, come see this show without the biggest stars appearing!" Well they might not. I mean, they DARED to challenge Stephanie.

That's the next major point: the Authority was all over the place tonight and not a single bit of it made sense. All of a sudden Stephanie is the patron saint of French giants and HHH is spouting off at the mouth about having to control Sting, whatever the heck that is supposed to mean. I can't get over how bad that Stephanie segment was. How is that supposed to make me want to see Wrestlemania? Cena potentially in the battle royal because he can't convince Rusev to defend the belt, which he'll eventually do by going after the Russian flag, which won't bring up a single mention of Big Show doing the same thing months ago?

The main event continues to be a one sided affair because Lesnar isn't on TV. Heyman can only say YOU CAN'T BEAT HIM in so many different ways before it stops being entertaining. It's one of those cases where you can only perform so well with what you're given and that point has long since passed. Brock and Reigns need to do something face to face again, because the last time was the night after the Royal Rumble.

The Divas' push comes off as a huge joke as the big chance seems to be a tag match at Wrestlemania and a pairing that we've seen before. I don't really know why this is supposed to be a big match, other than AJ is the

one not on Total Divas, which is the real title in this division these days. Give them a chance I guess, but if this is the chance, give them a bus ticket out of the company, because it's not getting better anytime soon.

I have almost no desire to see Wrestlemania this year and I haven't had that feeling in a very, very long time. There's almost nothing on the card that I want to see and somehow it seems to get worse every week. It's like they have no focus for the card this year other than "Reigns wins and we go from there." To what? Reigns vs. Big Show? That's a real possibility and I don't think I can handle it. Then again, I don't think I can handle three more episodes like this either.

Results

Dean Ambrose b. Bad News Barrett – Dirty Deeds

Usos/Naomi b. Natalya/Cesaro/Tyson Kidd – Rollup to Natalya

John Cena b. Curtis Axel – STF

Paige b. Nikki Bella via DQ when Brie Bella interfered

Daniel Bryan b. Luke Harper – YES Lock

Seth Rollins b. Roman Reigns – Rollup

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