

Smackdown – March 12, 2015: Sign of the Season

Smackdown

Date: March 12, 2015

Location: Joe Louis Arena, Detroit, Michigan

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, Jerry Lawler

It should be interesting to see if this week's show continues Smackdown's recent focus on the Intercontinental Title. After all the weeks of World Title build on Raw, it's nice to have something a bit different on the other show, if nothing else just to avoid the fatigue of seeing the same things over and over again. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's Daniel Bryan to get things going. He thanks the fans for their kindness and says he's been trying to ignore that Wrestlemania sign since Fast Lane. It's become clear to him that he can't repeat what happened last year at Wrestlemania, but when one door closes, another door opens.

A few weeks ago, he was surrounded by people fighting for the Intercontinental Championship and it got him thinking about his heroes. People like Mr. Perfect, Ricky Steamboat, Bret Hart, Shawn Michaels and Randy Savage. When they were fighting for the Intercontinental Title at Wrestlemania, it was more exciting than anything happening in the World Title division. Wrestlemania VIII would disagree with you Bryan.

He's officially in the ladder match this year though and the fans are very pleased. This brings out Bad News Barrett who reminds us that he's still the champion and will still be after Wrestlemania. Dolph Ziggler comes out to disagree but he does say Bryan is his hero. Barrett may be the champion but he can't even hang onto the belt. How could he possibly do that with six other guys throwing him off ladders at Wrestlemania?

Cue Harper to say he wants his Wrestlemania moment. That sounds so wrong coming from someone like Harper. He should be more like old school Cactus

Jack who just does stuff for the sake of violence. Dean Ambrose comes out to a very loud reaction to say every one of them should be locked up if they think they can fight without inviting him. He even knows a good place they can be held for observation if need be.

Now it's Stardust who grabs a mic and looks under the ring for the white stallion of the Milky Way. He wants the ivory enterprise, but instead gets R-Truth with the burlap sack. Truth pulls out the belt and calls it a beaut. He thinks the title has been passed around enough so he's going to hold it until Wrestlemania when he climbs that ladder. Barrett cuts him off but Truth calls him sizzle chest. A brawl finally breaks out and it's Ziggler, Ambrose and Bryan left standing.

Usos/New Day vs. Tyson Kidd/Cesaro/Los Matadores

Big E. is on the floor this time and Los Matadores confirm their heel turn in an inset interview where they say they'll do whatever it takes to have their Wrestlemania moment. Not win the titles mind you but have their moment. Kofi and Diego get things going with the masked man stomping away in the corner. Kingston dropkicks him down for two and it's quickly off to Woods. The intelligence doesn't seem warmed up yet as Diego drags him into the corner for the tag to Fernando.

Jimmy tags himself in, much to Woods' annoyance. Hey dude get over it. You kind of suck in the ring. Diego offers a distraction to break up the Whisper in the Wind and Jimmy gets crotched on the top. We take a break and come back with with Diego jumping on Jimmy's back on the ropes and putting on a chinlock. Jerry: "What do you call a matador with a rubber toe? Roberto!" Jimmy fights up and makes the hot tag to Jimmy, leaving Cesaro to yell at Los Matadores.

Jey starts cleaning house but Kofi tags himself in for a springboard cross body for two on Kidd. Some heel miscommunication sends them to the floor and the good guys bust out dives, only to have Woods land on Jey. Again, he's not that bright. Cesaro uppercuts Kofi through the ropes and Kidd loads up the fisherman's neckbreaker, only to have Fernando tag himself in. Diego sneaks in with a Backstabber for the pin on Kofi at 8:40.

Rating: C+. This did its job and that's almost all you can ask for out of a match like this. I'm assuming it's another multi-team match at Wrestlemania, just like last year, but I'm not sure this one is going to be as good. It also says something that the Usos and Los Matadores are still in the match, just like Cesaro but with a different partner. You would think something would have changed by now. Still though, good way to set things up here.

Video on Sting vs. HHH.

Recap of Rusev vs. Cena from Monday.

Miz lists off his career accomplishments and says winning the battle royal will be the latest entry on that list. Mizdow is worried that Miz can't beat Ryback tonight so Miz tells him to stay in the back, press his pants and get him a drink that is way too complicated to type.

Miz vs. Ryback

Ryback will have none of the sunglasses being taken off so he puts Miz on the top rope. A delayed suplex brings Miz right back down but he hammers Ryback into the ropes to take over. The fans want Mizdow as Ryback blocks a running boot and plants Miz with a spinebuster. The Meat Hook and Shell Shock are good for the pin at 2:59. Ryback's push continues to look strong.

Mizdow chuckles in the back.

Here's Roman Reigns to respond to Paul Heyman's comments from Raw. We get a quick clip of Heyman talking about Lesnar destroying Rock, Undertaker and Cena and promising Brock will do the same thing and worse to Roman Reigns at Wrestlemania. Reigns says Heyman thinks he knows his family but he's just disrespecting them. Heyman thinks Reigns is three generations removed from cannibalism? Who thinks that? Reigns won't take someone disrespecting his family and telling him he can't when he can. He'll win at Wrestlemania and do his family proud.

This brings out a slightly thinner Mark Henry, who thinks Reigns is either trying to be funny or he's been hit in the head by one too many

coconuts. He doesn't like anyone talking about his heritage but Reigns needs to understand that Heyman has gotten under his skin. Mark knows who he is, and he's been in the ring with Lesnar. Brock nearly killed him with the F5 on the floor and Mark doesn't think Roman is ready for that.

Roman says with all due respect but Mark cuts him off and says Reigns has to earn respect around here. That's enough for Roman as he goes to walk away but Mark spins him around and yells at Reigns for being a young buck that thinks he knows it all. That earns him a Superman Punch and a spear through the barricade.

Reigns is tired of hearing he can't, because he can and he will. Believe that. The family heritage idea is better than nothing but it's still not much of a connection to a guy like Reigns. However, being tired of being told he can't do something and proving people wrong IS something people can connect to and the idea they probably should have gone for months ago.

We look back at Bray Wyatt's speech from Monday and Undertaker lighting the chair on fire to accept the challenge.

AJ Lee/Paige vs. Summer Rae/Cameron

Paige is so excited for this match that she took off the white shirt under her jacket between the walk through the back and the entrances. The Bellas are on commentary as you would probably expect. Paige kicks Cameron in the ribs to start and it's off to AJ in about five seconds. AJ goes after Summer on the apron and gets nailed from behind by Cameron.

With two weeks before Wrestlemania, the Bellas are bragging about the ratings for Total Divas. Summer puts AJ in a chinlock as they FINALLY start talking about the upcoming tag match. Paige gets the tag and cleans house with her set of clotheslines, setting up the PT0 for the tap out from Summer at 2:25.

Paige and AJ yell at the Bellas post match. My guess is they're saying "TALK ABOUT WRESTLING! YOU'RE WRESTLERS!"

We look back at Reigns and Henry in case we have the attention span of a

goldfish.

Henry says Reigns has made a believer out of him. He doesn't think Reigns will beat Lesnar, but now he believes Reigns can. It's a shame this wasn't Sexual Chocolate as the old Henry would have certainly hit on Renee in her stomach revealing top here. Very fetching indeed.

We look at a Cricket Wireless event with Dolph Ziggler. He's bringing some kids to Smackdown to be ringside.

Low and behold, the kids are here.

This week's sitdown interview is with Randy Orton. He looks at the footage of Rollins curb stomping him a few months back and says that night changed him. We see him returning at Fast Lane but that wasn't the best way to get his revenge. Instead he wove his way back into the Authority to gain their trust. This is really, really not making this horrible story make more sense.

He used Reigns to get closer to Rollins and this past Monday was reverse psychology. Apparently in WWE, reverse psychology is code for REALLY STUPID STORY. Orton explained getting rid of everyone else in the Authority, even though he had almost nothing to do with getting rid of Big Show or Mercury. Basically all he did was punch Noble.

Then he walked away from the tag and had fun beating Rollins up. Orton loved every single bit of hurting Rollins this past Monday and he let all of it out. He's ready for the Authority's retribution and is ready to challenge Rollins for Wrestlemania. Good for you Randy. You had a stupid plan in a stupid story that makes no sense when you actually think about it, but good for you.

Daniel Bryan/Dolph Ziggler/Dean Ambrose vs. Luke Harper/Bad News Barrett/Stardust

Unfortunately no Truth on commentary here. Ambrose headlocks Barrett to start and runs him over with a running forearm. Off to Stardust vs. Ziggler with the painted one taking over in the corner. Cole talks about Stardust being like Gollum with the Intercontinental Title. To mix things

up a bit, Saxton thinks Stardust is acting like Kim Kardashian. I'm going to move on to Bryan putting Stardust in the surfboard instead as it's less painful than talking about that disturbing, hideous, nightmare inducing creature. It's easier than talking about Gollum too.

Stardust gets out and hammers on Bryan in the corner but gets taken down by a hurricanrana. The threat of a running knee sends Stardust running to the floor and we take a break. Back with Harper Gator Rolling Bryan before it's off to Barrett for some forearms to the in the corner. Bryan finally kicks Harper away and the hot tag brings in Ambrose to clean house. An atomic drop into a faceplant gets two on Stardust and everything breaks down.

Ambrose cleans house and dives onto Harper and Stardust for a big crash. Barrett breaks up Dirty Deeds on Stardust and Harper kicks Dean in the face as we take another break. Back again with Barrett kicking Dean in the face for two. That seems so familiar. Bad News' chinlock doesn't go anywhere and Stardust's top rope superplex does just as poorly. Instead Ambrose nails a top rope dropkick and makes the tag to Ziggler.

Harper comes in as well and eats a dropkick followed by the Fameasser for two. Everything breaks down again and the good guys load up a triple dive but Harper nails Ziggler to break up a third of it. The Batista Bomb gets two on Dolph but he comes back with a Zig Zag, followed by the running knee to give Bryan the pin at 17:38.

Rating: B. Nice long tag match here to close out the show. When a show is built around talking like this one was, you almost have to give them something like this to affirm that it's really a wrestling show. Above all though, Barrett didn't get pinned! That's one whole show in a row and possibly a new record for him.

Cole congratulates Bryan on the win but Ziggler jokes that Bryan stole the pin from him. Last year Bryan had luck on his side but this year Ziggler is going to be out there with him. Dean chimes in and says Dolph stole the show, just like everyone has been stealing the title lately. Maybe Dolph thinks he isn't quite as good as Bryan and it bothers him.

Dean says the people in the locker room know the truth about Bryan: he's,

shall we say, human waste. Ambrose goes to leave and Ziggler agrees with him, leaving Bryan in the ring alone. I really, really hope they don't turn Bryan heel but it seems to be the only thing left for him to do at this point.

Overall Rating: C. We're definitely in the last push to Wrestlemania, which means expect several shows like this in a row: mostly talk and hype with a token long match for most of the wrestling content. Reigns sounded fine and it's good that they're FINALLY giving him a reason to want to fight Brock.

On the other hand, Orton sounded like a crazy man trying to explain a stupid story. Either bring him back as a full on psycho or bring him back as part of the Authority without the Fast Lane attack. What they went with makes it seem like they were just hoping people weren't paying attention, though given how this build has been going, they might be onto something.

Results

Los Matadores/Cesaro/Tyson Kidd b. New Day/Usos – Backstabber to Kingston

Ryback b. Miz – Shell Shock

AJ Lee/Paige b. Summer Rae/Cameron – PT0 to Summer

Dean Ambrose/Dolph Ziggler/Daniel Bryan b. Luke Harper/Stardust/Bad News Barrett – Running knee to Harper

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