

Smackdown – April 30, 2015: The Rivalry Of This Era

Smackdown

Date: April 28, 2015

Location: iWireless Center, Moline, Illinois

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tom Phillips, Jerry Lawler

We're four days removed from Extreme Rules, meaning we're two and a half weeks from Payback. Coming out of Raw, the big story is Rollins having to defend his title against Randy Orton and Roman Reigns in a three way at the next pay per view, which WWE had spoiled about a week in advance. Let's get to it.

This episode is dedicated to Verne Gagne.

We open in the back with Kane coming into Rollins' office. Seth yells about Kane screwing up on Monday and making decisions not best for business because they're not best for him. Kane tells him to cool it but Seth accuses him of being jealous. Kane promises to make a man out of him, so tonight it's Rollins vs. Ambrose because it's best for business. Seth thinks the Kane from 20 years ago would be best for business because this one has nothing to offer.

Opening sequence.

Here's Roman Reigns for a chat. First up we have a shout out to his boy Dean Ambrose for his match tonight against their little brother Seth Rollins. That would be the guy that ripped down everything they had built and then cost him the World Title at Wrestlemania. Thanks to Seth, every fight he's had has been the biggest fight of his life, so wait until he gets his hands on him at Payback. This brings out Kane and it's time for a match.

Roman Reigns vs. Kane

Slug out to start with Kane kicking him down into the corner before

planting him with a belly to back suplex. Roman low bridges him to the floor and sends Kane into the post but a side slam puts Reigns on the announcers' table. Back from a break with Kane holding Reigns in a bearhug before just stepping on his head. Roman gets back up and wins another slugout before suplexing Kane down. A middle rope clothesline puts him down again and Roman follows it up with more in the corner.

The Samoan drop looks to set up the Superman Punch but Kane catches him by the throat for a chokeslam for two. Reigns escapes the tombstone and hits a DDT (because it's just a transitional move), followed by the Superman Punch but the threat of a spear sends Kane running away for the countout at 9:59.

Rating: D+. I have no idea why I'm supposed to care about this potential Kane face turn but it's not working. Kane is decent enough as a power enforcer but he's the focus of the main event scene instead of the champion or either of the challengers. That's really the best idea they have?

Renee asks Seth about what just happened. Rollins says the difference between himself and Kane is he finds a way to win the fight instead of running away all the time. He doesn't need the help of the WWE, the Authority, or even the Stooges.

Cesaro/Kidd vs. New Day for the titles tonight. So much for building a match up.

Damien Sandow vs. Curtis Axel

Sandow has new generic rock music and mimics the ring announcer's introduction. This has all of a few weeks before it gets old in a hurry. Sandow introduces Axel as the village idiot of Minneapolis and the Pigeon Toed Disappointment. Axel does the shirt rip and gets caught in a headlock for his efforts. This time it's Damien ripping his own shirt off and throwing Curtis to the floor before sitting down next to him. Back in and Curtis stomps Damien down and chokes him in the corner. A corner splash misses though and Sandow Hulks Up with three punches and a big boot into You're Welcome (full nelson slam) for the pin at 2:30.

Ryback thinks the eater of worlds has bitten off more than he can chew. Tonight, he's dedicating his match to Bray Wyatt when he devours Bray's former disciple Luke Harper.

Ryback vs. Luke Harper

They grapple around to start with both guys grabbing headlocks. That's not Harper's style though so he slugs Ryback down, only to get caught by the Thesz press and having his head rammed into the mat. Luke comes back with a snap suplex but Ryback one ups him with a delayed vertical suplex, complete with a few marching steps. Davey Boy pounds on Dynamite in the corner but gets powerbombed down as we take a break.

Back with Ryback getting Gator Rolled until he powers Harper off, dropping him face first onto the mat. A powerslam sets up the Warrior splash for two. Ryback plants him with the spinebuster but the Meat Hook is countered by a superkick. The discus lariat is blocked with a Meat Hook though and it's the Shell Shock for the pin at 9:39.

Rating: C. I liked this about as much as I thought I would as you have two big power guys beating on each other for ten minutes. Ryback has been treated very well since his return to form and it's nice to see him getting a strong push. There's always going to be room for a guy like him with the smashmouth style and putting him in there against Harper or Wyatt could make for some good power brawls.

Speaking of Bray, he appears and beats Ryback down post match.

Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Cesaro/Tyson Kidd

New Day took the title with some cheating on Sunday. Fans: "NEW DAY SUCKS!" Woods: "NO WE DON'T!" Kofi and Kidd get things going with Kidd grabbing a quick rollup for one, putting a big smile on his face. Off to a chinlock from Tyson before Cesaro snaps off an uppercut for two. The gutwrench suplex gets the same so Kofi tries a small package. That makes Cesaro chuckle as he powers Kingston up into a suplex, walks him over to the corner and tags in Kidd for a high cross body. That's just scary strength.

Big E. comes in off a blind tag but walks into a German suplex to keep the challengers in control. We get the NEW DAY SUCKS rhythmic stomping in the corner but a Kofi distraction lets Big E. knock Kidd off the apron to finally take over. Kidd gets caught in the wrong corner for some stomping from Kofi, followed by stomping from Big E. and a dropkick from Kofi. Kingston goes to the middle rope but dives into a dropkick. Big E. runs in to break up the hot tag attempt and we take a break. Back with Big E. holding Kidd in a bearhug before planting him with a belly to belly.

The New Day Boom Drop connects but Tyson ducks Trouble in Paradise, finally allowing for the hot tag to Cesaro. European uppercuts a go-go in the corner get two for Cesaro before a gorilla press drop gets the same with Big E. making the save. Big E. speeds things up and cleans house as everything breaks down. Kidd dives through the ropes to take out Kofi before Cesaro's middle rope back elbow drops Big E., setting up the Swing into the dropkick but Woods runs in for the DQ at 13:35.

Rating: B. These four have awesome chemistry and this was no exception. Now if only they could have a match built up instead of just throwing it out there on a Smackdown five days after the title change. Earlier this week on Austin's podcast, Wade Keller suggested building it up as a big time Smackdown main event like a month out. Why not? The match would rock and WWE clearly doesn't care about Smackdown anyway.

Summer Rae and Cameron are catty about Brie and Naomi. Nikki comes out to run Summer off and stands up to Cameron for her sister's honor. A match is made for later.

Tough Enough videos.

Cameron vs. Nikki Bella

Non-title. This is Nikki's chance to carry a match. Naomi gets an inset interview talking about all the good the Bellas think they can do in the world. What good have those two ever done other than paying for a plastic surgeon to have a new boat? Nikki throws her down and does some jumping jacks before cranking on an armbar.

Cameron fights out of an armbar and ducks the spinning kick out of the

corner. A running kick to Nikki's back gets two and the silence as Cameron shouts at the referee is disturbing. We hit the chinlock on Nikki for a bit before she fights up and hits the second attempt at the kick out of the corner for two. The big forearm sets up the Rack Attack for the pin on Cameron at 3:56.

Rating: D+. So here's the thing: Nikki isn't horrible in the ring. She can even have a totally passable match more often than not. However, whether it's "I WISH YOU DIED IN THE WOMB!" to "of course my sister forgave me for being horrible to her" to having to carry Cameron, she gets stuck with some of the worst booking I've ever seen. I don't think she's ever going to be anything special in the ring, but she's doing what she can with what she has.

The Prime Time Players ask about the New Day and hear crickets. They introduce the New Day Clap Away box, which disappears whenever you clap enough times. You should call to put the Prime Time Players on TV and get their shirts on WWEshop.com so they can make millions of dollars.

Rollins and the Stooges come in to see Ambrose and ask him to step down instead. HHH is going to be back soon and he'll take out his rage on anyone who was involved with this mess, including Ambrose. Dean says that sounds good but he means seeing Rollins get humiliated.

Long recap of Tuesday's King of the Ring special with Barrett coming out with the crown.

Dean Ambrose vs. Seth Rollins

Non-title. Dean starts on the armbar early on, sending Rollins outside for a breather. Back in and Seth takes him down with a hammerlock but Dean reverses and kicks him in the back of the head for two. A clothesline puts Seth on the floor but Dean follows him out for a right hand to the head. The Stooges get in some cheap shots so here's Kane to even things out, at least in theory.

Back from a break with Dean kicking him in the face but getting stomped right back down. Dean finally scores with a big clothesline followed by a barrage of chops and punches. A bulldog out of the corner sets up the

standing elbow but Rollins kicks him out of the air, only to get dropkicked to the floor. Dean nails a suicide dive and takes Seth back inside for two off a faceplant. They head to the corner with Rollins pulling Dean down into the buckle bomb for two more.

Rollins and Kane are ready to get inside and celebrate but Kane stares at Seth on the kicking. A surprise rollup gets two for Dean and he backdrops Seth onto Kane. Back up and Dean dives on everyone not named Rollins, who sends Ambrose into the barricade. Kane grabs Dean and Seth by the throat, earning him a tongue lashing from the referee. Dean has to save the referee but gets sent into the steps for his efforts. That falling front DDT is enough to give Rollins the pin at 13:46.

Rating: B-. They went a different way than I was expecting here but it still worked. Kane vs. Rollins isn't an interesting feud but they seem dead set on running with it no matter how many people fall asleep watching them. Above all else though: Rollins' new finisher is horrible. It looks like a transitional move but it's the finisher of the WWE World Champion. There must be something better than that.

Kane stares Seth down post match but joins the Stooges for the big beatdown. Cue Roman Reigns (coming down the ramp for a change) for the save. A double spear drops the Stooges to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. Solid show this week with good wrestling almost all around and two really solid matches. They set up more of the Reigns vs. Rollins part of the title match while leaving Orton's part for Monday. Kane is still annoying but at least they kept it short. Anytime I get to see Ryback trading shots with another brute and New Day vs. Cesaro/Kidd, it's a good night. Solid show this week.

Results

Roman Reigns b. Kane via countout

Damien Sandow b. Curtis Axel – You're Welcome

Ryback b. Luke Harper – Shell Shock

Cesaro/Tyson Kidd b. New Day via DQ when Xavier Woods interfered

Nikki Bella b. Cameron – Rack Attack

Seth Rollins b. Dean Ambrose – Falling front DDT

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