

Monday Night Raw – June 29, 2015: What A Shock

Monday Night Raw

Date: June 29, 2015

Location: Verizon Center, Washington, D.C.

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

Battleground is on the horizon and the Authority seems to be reunited to help Seth Rollins defend his World Title against Brock Lesnar. This means Kane and Joey Mercury at the moment, as Lesnar injured Jamie Noble last week, meaning there aren't many obstacles for Lesnar to overcome to get to Rollins. Let's get to it.

The opening recap shows the ending of last week's show with Lesnar being laid out by the devastating forces of Kane, Mercury and Rollins. I'm so glad they had Lesnar get beaten up as he was getting way too close to feeling like something special and they needed to cut his legs out from underneath him. Well, maybe just the toes or so as Lesnar is going to be fine.

Here's the Authority, complete with the secret weapon of Noble, to open things up. This is officially Monday Night Rollins, because Rollins has been watching some old Nitro matches. Perhaps on the WWE Network for \$9.99? He talks about the power in this city, which you attain by doing things no one else could do. Rollins did something that Cena and even the Undertaker couldn't do, as he conquered the conqueror last week. Suplex City was burned to the ground and Lesnar is now on his way to Japan.

That's what he deserves after what Lesnar did to Noble last week. We even get a quick Jamie Noble chant because these fans are that intelligent. They're quickly tossed aside though as Rollins demands that the fans show Noble the respect that he deserves. However, it's time for presents! Rollins has Apple Watches for everyone, likely fulfilling a product placement agreement. Kane is getting a bonus though. He debuted back in 1997 (that really shouldn't be brought up) and a lot of things have

changed since then.

Bill Clinton was in charge, the internet was dial-up and Paul Heyman was fat and disgusting....so not everything has changed. In all that time, Kane hasn't asked for a thing, so Rollins is sending him to.....Hawaii, complete with a picture saying Hawaii, thereby making this a complete copy of the segment where Rocky Maivia took over the Nation, giving the members watches and Faarooq a picture of Rocky himself.

As a hula dancer and ukelele player come out to complete the mood, Kane is looking forward to deciding which animal to throw into a volcano, but Rollins thinks they should team up to destroy Ambrose and Reigns in a No DQ tag match tonight. Rollins still isn't done though as he has a 2015 Cadillac for the Stooges to travel in. The guys celebrate as Rollins lists off the price and features. I was right about that product placement it seems. This goes on until Big Show comes out for his match.

The tag match later is presented by the new Terminator movie. I'm sure some people will get annoyed by this but it's money for the company in like 30 seconds. It's not the worst thing in the world.

Big Show vs. Mark Henry

Oh...yay. Miz is on commentary to cheer for Henry but Show pounds Mark into the corner with right hands (which are the size of typewriters according to JR), only to have Henry knock him down and hit a splash for two. Not that it matters as two big right hands knock Henry silly for the pin at 1:24.

Ryback (sans belt) hits the ring to take Show down with a shoulder to the leg. Miz runs in to kick Ryback in the jaw, so Ryback wants their match to happen right now.

Miz vs. Ryback

Non-title., but now Ryback has the belt. I know it doesn't mean as much today but it disappears? Miz tries to stomp him down but gets his head slammed into the mat for his efforts. Ryback whips him across the ring with authority (not THE Authority of course. Like they'd be involved with

the Intercontinental Title), followed by a totally ridiculous FORTY SECOND delayed vertical suplex.

Miz bails to the floor but comes back with a short DDT for two, setting up a nice face pull. A chinlock goes nowhere but the Reality Check gets two more. That's it for Ryback as he comes back with a spinebuster but the threat of a Meat Hook sends Miz running for the countout (the rare three count countout before the referee just says screw it and ends the match) at 5:11.

Rating: D. I would say this is what you would expect, but what you would actually expect is for Miz to beat him off a rollup when Big Show distracted Ryback. The triple threat match really isn't doing anything for me, but at least there's an actual feud over the title instead of just a one off match for a change.

Alicia Fox vs. Paige

Alicia comes out to the Bellas' music and has them at ringside. Paige takes her down into an armbar to start and drives a knee into the face for two. Some kicks in the corner don't bother Paige much as she hits a Thesz press, only to have the Bellas offer a distraction so Alicia can take over again as we go to a break. Back with Fox standing on the hair before we hit the chinlock.

As the fans start falling asleep due to the rest hold, the Bellas are right there with the COME ON (insert name here) shouting. A tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gets two on Paige and it's back to the chinlock. Two chinlocks in a match this show tells me that Fox has no idea where to go on offense. Paige comes back with her three clotheslines and a kick to the face for two. Nikki tries a distraction so Fox can roll her up, only to have Paige roll through (with nothing on Fox's arms, meaning there's no reason she didn't kick out) for the pin at 9:43.

Rating: D. The idea was fine here but it's very clear that Fox had no business controlling most of a match this long. Paige vs. Nikki could be good, but I don't buy for a second that Paige is going to win as Nikki just MUST get the Divas Title record so we never think of AJ Lee again. I mean, that would just change so many things right?

Here's John Cena for the US Title Open Challenge (with the promo during the entrance instead of in the ring)...and here's Kevin Owens! I'll ignore Cole calling this a budding rivalry because Cole is that big of a schnook when he stops thinking.

US Title: Kevin Owens vs. John Cena

Owens drops to the floor after the Big Match Intros and says he'll just wait for Battleground. He'll take the US Title there, but maybe this man can do it instead.

US Title: Cesaro vs. John Cena

Owens joins commentary, which should be entertaining stuff. Thankfully they're immediately talking about the Balor vs. Owens NXT Title match this coming Saturday. Cena starts with a headlock and monkey flip to send Cesaro into the corner, meaning it's time for a standoff. This time it's Cesaro putting on a headlock before planting Cena with a powerslam, followed by a crucifix of all things for two.

The AA is countered and Cesaro drops Cena with a right hand for another near fall. As usual, why make things more complicated than they need to be? Off to an abdominal stretch on the mat as Owens talks about having what it takes to be a real champion. A dropkick staggers Cesaro but he casually slugs Cena down and gets two off a crossface punch to the head.

Back from a break with Cesaro trying a Sharpshooter of all things but Cena kicks him away, only to take a big clothesline for two. Cesaro loads up the Swing but opts for a catapult instead, only to have Cena bounce back into something similar to a springboard Stunner (it barely connected) for two of his own. Cesaro flips out of the AA and hits a massive Swiss Death for two more.

There's the STF but Cesaro rolls out, adjusts his legs and turns the hold over into the Sharpshooter. That was Hart vs. Perfect-esque. Cena makes a rope though and Cesaro's frustration is setting in. Owens: "Cena is in trouble. Not as much trouble as he'll be in at Battleground but close enough."

The apron superplex puts Cena down again as Cole thinks this is going to be a match of the year candidate. It kind of loses its appeal if you keep saying it over and over again, which is why a lot of Cole's commentary gets old. And yes, I'm aware it's mainly him being fed lines. Cena gets two more off a tornado DDT and they slug it out until Cesaro tries a high cross body, only to have Cena roll through into...actually not the AA as he spins Cesaro forward into a faceplant for another near fall.

Owens gets up and swings at Cole for praising Cena, who is dropkicked off the top rope and out to the floor. Back in and Cena tries a sunset flip but has to settle for a sunset bomb for yet another two. There's a Neutralizer out of nowhere but Cena kicks out again. A spinebuster sets up the Swing (good idea to have a power move set it up. It's weird when he just grabs the legs) which sets up the Sharpshooter but Owens comes in for the DQ at 20:20.

Rating: B+. Can Cena have a bad match at the moment? The guy is on one heck of a roll, which says a lot given how good he normally is. Cesaro using the Sharpshooter is fine but debuting it against Cena isn't the best idea as Cena hasn't tapped out in about thirteen years. Very good match here, but did you really expect anything else?

Kevin powerbombs both guys and says if anyone is taking the title off Cena, it's going to be him. Owens comes off as such a jerk on commentary and I love it very much.

Tonight, Dolph Ziggler and Lana are going public. Oh man this is going to be bad isn't it?

We get what I think is the same recap that opened the show. That's quite the use of another three minutes.

Bray Wyatt pops up on screen with the ANYONE BUT YOU picture of Reigns. He wants Reigns to open his eyes to see the truth and close his mouth so no more lies can be spread. Wyatt wasn't his father's favorite because his father threw him away like a piece of trash. I wonder if IRS wrote that off his taxes. Wyatt has his wings back now though and Reigns knows everything Bray stands for. There will be no distractions at Battlegrounds because the insects that watch them every week are

inconsequential. They're the yin to each others yang and Bray will be Roman's crown of suffering. Anyone but you Roman. Run.

Lucha Dragons/Prime Time Players vs. New Day/Bo Dallas

JBL: "We lucha on Monday nights!" We get a clip of Rock's big surprise appearance at a house show over the weekend where he laid out Dallas, which is a GREAT advertisement for the house show circuit. It's the same thing as when they would occasionally have a title change and then turn it right back soon after. No it's not going to happen all the time, but make the people think it could and you can sell some more tickets.

Woods and Kalisto get things going with the masked one flipping off the top rope into a wristdrag as JBL says the Dragons remind him of the APA days. Off to Cara vs. Dallas with Sin cranking on the arm, only to have Darren come in for his standing Earthquake splash for two. Titus comes in to throw Dallas around with ease, which is a really simple yet effective power move. Kalisto doesn't have the same luck as Bo knees him in the head to finally take over.

Back to Young for a chinlock as the match slows down. The belly to back suplex onto the apron plants Dallas again and the threat of a huge brawl sends us to a break. We come back with Woods holding Kalisto in a cobra clutch (that's a move that has gotten a lot more popular recently) but it's quickly off to Cara to flip around and kick Big E. in the head.

E. isn't in enough trouble to get caught in the Gut Check though as he shoves Young to the floor to take over. We get the rotating stomps before it's back to Bo for the chinlock. That goes nowhere and the hot tag brings in Titus and everything breaks down. The Dragons hit big stereo dives, allowing Titus to hit a sitout spinebuster for the pin on Kofi at 14:35.

Rating: D+ Longer match than they needed to have here and I'm not wild on New Day losing again before their big rematch. That's why you bring in someone like Dallas: to take the fall and keep the New Day looking as strong as possible, but since WWE never actually thinks these things through, this is what we get. At least the champions didn't lose though.

Here are Dolph and Lana for their big moment. Originally they weren't on the best of terms because Lana was just trying to get back at Rusev. Then things changed, Ziggler is a real man, and Lana cares for him. Rusev finally hobbles out with Summer Rae by his side. He never cared about Lana because kissing her was like kissing the ring post.

Ziggler cuts him off and calls Lana his girlfriend and violence is teased, but Summer grabs the mic and calls Lana a gold digger. She was with Rusev when he won the US Title, but as soon as that was gone, so was Lana. That's enough for Lana and the fight is on, with the fans seemingly very pleased when Lana's skirt comes up. The match could be a disaster but the moment wasn't bad.

Ambrose talks to some Terminators when Reigns comes in and assures Dean that he's ready. Dean is the only family Reigns has around here and they're ready to rage.

Neville vs. Sheamus

Before the match we get a cool video of Neville being turned into a comic book superhero. I actually said he wrestled like a superhero when I saw him at a house show a few months back so they really nailed the idea here. Sheamus takes him down to the mat with a headlock as the announcers debate Neville beating him in the King of the Ring. JBL: "Nobody remembers who came second to Usain Bolt." Cole: "We did." JBL: "Well you're nobody."

Neville kicks him to the floor and Sheamus grabs the briefcase for comfort as we take a break. Back with Sheamus hitting the Regal Roll and a release suplex for no cover. Instead Sheamus just smiles like a bully is supposed to do. The fans think this is boring, so Sheamus puts his hand to his ear and slaps on a chinlock. Now THAT is a great heel move. No sarcasm there if it's not clear.

Neville kicks him in the face for a breather but Sheamus calmly hits three straight Irish Curses to regain control. Sheamus gets low bridged to the floor though, setting up a great looking Asai moonsault. Back in and Sheamus gets kicked in the head again but is still able to kick the ropes for a huge crash to break up the Red Arrow. The Brogue Kick ends

Neville at 12:41.

Rating: C. This was fine and again I like that they're pushing Sheamus instead of having him go on the stupid, stupid losing streak that has become the trend for Money in the Bank winners. I'm hoping Neville can bounce back from this as it felt like a downgrade for him, but there's a very good chance that it's a one off loss and nothing else. The superhero video was a very nice touch and gives me hope.

Jack Swagger vs. King Barrett

Before the match, Barrett demands that all of his opponents must bow down to him. Swagger will have none of that so Barrett bails to the floor to start. Back in and Swagger throws him down with ease and gets the Patriot Lock with Barrett already in the ropes. Well he's a hoss you see so you can't expect that much intelligence. Jack runs into a knee in the corner and the Bull Hammer ends this at 1:47.

Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose vs. Kane/Seth Rollins

No DQ. The Stooges come out in the Cadillac. It's a brawl to start as it should be with Rollins quickly being knocked out to the floor. Kane gets double teamed but Rollins gets back in to shove Ambrose off the top rope. Back from an early break with Rollins holding Reigns in a chinlock and the partners on the apron, because WWE doesn't get what NO DISQUALIFICATION means. Reigns fights away from Kane and it's a double tag to bring in Ambrose and Rollins.

Dean quickly cleans house and knocks Rollins to the floor. It's weapons time with a table getting things started. As if the fans didn't love Dean enough already. The Stooges pull it away so Reigns comes back with a bunch of kendo stick shots to Mercury, followed by three straight Superman Punches to various evildoers. Speaking of evil, cue Bray Wyatt to take out Reigns, including a Rock Bottom onto the announcers' table. Dean can't fight them off alone though and it's a chokeslam and Pedigree for the pin at 11:45.

Rating: C. Again, this was totally fine and they covered all the bases they needed to cover here. Wyatt costing Reigns the match makes perfect

sense and at least the pin on Ambrose took two people. It's a pretty standard main event tag, but I'm glad they made it no DQ to avoid the same tired ending we always get.

Post match Reigns saves Dean from a TripleBomb through the table but Kane chokeslams him down too. Reigns fights back again but is finally thrown through the table in the corner. Another Pedigree puts Reigns down, leaving Wyatt to come back in (where was he for the last eight minutes?) and hit Sister Abigail to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Well it took me three days and....eh. I'm not at all surprised as it wasn't the best looking show in the world but at least it had the awesome Cena vs. Cesaro match (I'm as shocked as you are) and a few other good things in there as well. The Ziggler/Lana segment started off looking bad but Lana getting physical was long overdue. The show wasn't too bad and had more than enough moments to make it work. Good enough stuff here, but the car actually survived. That's quite the shock.

Results

Big Show b. Mark Henry – KO Punch

Ryback b. Miz via countout

Paige b. Alicia Fox – Rollup

Cesaro b. John Cena via DQ when Kevin Owens interfered

Prime Time Players/Lucha Dragons b. New Day/Bo Dallas – Sitout spinebuster to Kingston

Sheamus b. Neville – Brogue Kick

King Barrett b. Jack Swagger – Bull Hammer

Kane/Seth Rollins b. Dean Ambrose/Roman Reigns – Pedigree to Ambrose

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