

Smackdown – January 14, 2016: You Knew This Was Coming

Smackdown

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Location: CajunDome, Lafayette, Louisiana

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Mauro Ranallo, Jerry Lawler

We're getting closer to the Royal Rumble and now it's clear that Brock Lesnar is going to be in the match itself, making it even harder for Roman Reigns to hold on to the WWE World Title. As for tonight though, we have Alberto Del Rio getting his rematch for the US Title after losing the title to Kalisto earlier in the week. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Renee Young is outside waiting on Dean Ambrose to arrive. As luck would have it, Dean arrives in a black truck just as Renee says she'll keep us posted. Dean says he has a statement to make regarding Kevin Owens but he'd rather make it in the ring. Therefore, here's Dean in the arena to really get things going. Before he can say anything, we see a clip of Ambrose busting Sheamus open on Monday and getting in another brawl with Owens.

Dean says it's time to put the kids to bed and pop some cheap champagne because he has an announcement. He asks for and receives a drum roll ("Wow that actually works?") but says cut because he needs Owens out here for this one. No Owens, so Dean asks for another drum roll and challenges Owens to a last man standing match for the title at the Rumble.

This brings out Sheamus instead, who says Owens is way more tanned than he is. Ambrose is starting to get on Sheamus' nerves because Dean is living in a fantasy world right now. That earns Sheamus a joke about his hair but Sheamus would rather talk about losing the World Title to Reigns.

To get the title back, Sheamus has to win the Royal Rumble and that's not

to his liking. He also doesn't like the stitches in his head so he wants to pay Dean back. Dean offers to beat on Sheamus until he cries but here's Owens to interrupt. Owens likes these odds but is out here to accept Dean's challenge. As for now though, the beatdown is on until Neville (Dean's partner tonight) comes out for the save.

Dudley Boyz vs. Luke Harper/Erick Rowan

Tables match because this feud is being picked back up for some reason. This is also the first of three matches in a triple main event. The Wyatts appear out of the darkness and jump Bubba and D-Von from behind as Strowman watches from the floor. D-Von is sent outside and it's Bubba getting double teamed, only to have Rowan get backdropped out to the floor. There's a What's Up to Harper and it's table time less than two minutes in. Well they're certainly keeping things moving.

Harper pops back up though and decks D-Von, allowing Rowan to kick Bubba in the face as we take a break. Back with Rowan having issues setting up a table in the ring, allowing Bubba to save D-Von from a double suplex. The reverse 3D drops Harper and it's time to beat on Rowan with a kendo stick. Strowman comes in and misses a charge into the post, followed by Harper being knocked off the steps and through a table at 8:35.

Rating: D. Huh? What was the thinking here? You go back to a feud that the Wyatts clearly won and then have them lose the nothing match? Also why in the world was this a tables match? If you want to have Harper and Rowan lose then let one of them take a 3D. I mean, Rowan loses almost every match he has to begin with so is another loss going to hurt him? This was just strange all around.

Post match, Strowman gets up and starts wrecking things before putting D-Von through two tables in the corner. Harper beats on Bubba at ringside before a double chokeslam puts Bubba through two tables as well. This is the same thinking that they used with having Owens lose to Neville in thirty seconds and then beat him up after the match. Why not just have them win in the first place and then do the beatdown to make them look even more awesome? Wouldn't that make more sense?

We look back at Kalisto winning the US Title on Monday.

Kalisto talks about losing hope during his training. Then he saw people like Eddie Guerrero and Rey Mysterio to give him hope for his career. I'm sure the fact that he doesn't have a name plate on the belt is nothing to worry about.

Social Outcasts vs. Goldust/Damien Sandow/Jack Swagger/Zack Ryder

Slater is sent to the floor by Sandow to start and takes half a victory lap before they're stopped by their opponents. Back in and Axel takes over on Goldust before Rose comes in for two off an elbow. Goldust kicks him in the face though and it's a double tag to Swagger vs. Dallas. The Vader Bomb into the Patriot Lock has Bo in trouble but Axel makes a save. It's off to Ryder for his usual on Dallas including the Broski Boot for two. Rose offers another quick distraction though and the Bodog puts Ryder away at 3:41.

Rating: D+. This did its job though I have no idea how they're going to go anywhere with the Outcasts. You have to give them a few early wins to make the team mean something though and I'm sure this is going to be one of their biggest ever. It's better than having them sit around doing nothing and wasting away though so this was fine.

We look at Cena having shoulder surgery.

Long recap of Reigns vs. All on Monday, including Lesnar coming out to destroy him. You would think that's Wrestlemania but for some reason I'm not sure yet.

Alberto promises to get his title back tonight.

US Title: Alberto Del Rio vs. Kalisto

Kalisto is defending and has new black tights. This is the second match in the triple main event. Del Rio runs him over to start and rains down right hands in the corner before a belly to back gets two. It's already time to go for the mask as Ranallo talks about Del Rio being on the first Pride card that he ever called in Japan. Kalisto knocks Del Rio off the top and scores with a missile dropkick, only to have Del Rio kick him away for two more.

Del Rio is getting a bit cocky in his aggressiveness though, allowing Kalisto to hurricanrana him shoulder first into the post. That still can't keep him in control though as Del Rio comes back with a Codebreaker to the arm off the middle rope to send Kalisto outside. The bad arm is sent into the steps for two and we hit the armbar. Lawler is actually coming off like a heel here as he keeps making short jokes about Kalisto and laughing at his pain.

Del Rio sends the good arm into the post and avoids a charge to send it in again as we take a break. Back with King Barrett at ringside as Kalisto is tied in the Tree of Woe for kicks to the ribs. The top rope double stomp is broken up with a kick to the ribs though and Kalisto takes him down with a super hurricanrana. I'm so glad someone is starting to counter that stupid move. It really shouldn't be that hard.

Kalisto still can't speed things up though as he misses the corkscrew cross body, setting up the low superkick for two. So Kalisto's head is tougher than Cena's? It must be the mask. A quick hurricanrana and the hurricanrana driver get two for the champ but Del Rio drops him AGAIN. Alberto talks trash until Kalisto jumps up for a jawbreaker, followed by a snap enziguri.

The Salida Del Sol is broken up by a Barrett distraction and the cross armbreaker goes on (I didn't know Del Rio still used that). Kalisto finally makes the rope and tries to speed things up again as he sends Del Rio outside. Barrett pulls Del Rio away from a suicide dive though and now the armbreaker gives Alberto the title back at 15:03.

Rating: C-. This was just a step above a squash with Del Rio barely being on defense for the entire match. Kalisto was cut off at every turn and didn't even have control at the beginning. The help from Barrett will ensure another match at the Rumble (instead of just having Kalisto win the title there for a bigger moment) but I have a bad feeling we'll be stuck with Del Rio as champion after that as well because WWE sees something in keeping him as a really boring heel.

Sting Hall of Fame video.

Becky Lynch looks at a video of her recent feud with Charlotte, including

her jumping Charlotte on Monday. Charlotte's recent actions really got to Becky but Monday's attack makes her want a match for the title at the Rumble. She doesn't care how many Flairs are around because there will be a lass kicking.

Becky Lynch vs. Brie Bella

Brie isn't happy after Becky broke up her match on Monday and talks trash as she sends Becky face first into the mat. Some elbows to the head set up a chinlock before Brie fires off kicks in the corner. Becky ducks a big one though and runs Brie over before throwing her down with a t-bone suplex. The Bella Buster is countered and the Disarm-Her puts Brie away at 2:33.

Sheamus/Kevin Owens vs. Dean Ambrose/Neville

Here's the final part of the triple main event, meaning over half of the matches on this show were main events. Sheamus and Neville get things going with the big man being taken down off a hurricanrana. Dean comes in for an Arn Anderson eye rake across the top rope and a clothesline to put Sheamus on the floor. A plancha takes out Owens but Sheamus clotheslines Dean as we take a break.

Back with Ambrose getting choked on the ropes before Sheamus drops a knee for two. Dean finally dives over for a tag off to Neville and things speed up. Unfortunately the crowd doesn't really pick up as Neville can't German suplex Owens. It's back to Sheamus who charges into a superkick, only to have Owens break up a shooting star. Owens: "I won't do it again ref!" Kevin starts yelling at Ranallo (initiation I guess) as Lawler keeps heeling it up with jokes about Neville's ears.

Sheamus grabs a chinlock because we're at the point in a WWE tag match where a heel puts on a chinlock. Owens comes in for a chinlock of his own, though at least his has some more pizzazz. A suplex sends Neville flying into the corner but he snaps off the German to avoid the Cannonball. Ambrose comes in for his usual, including the tornado DDT on Sheamus.

The top rope standing elbow gets two and everything breaks down. Owens

kicks Dean to break up the rebound lariat, setting up White Noise for two more. The Pop Up Powerbomb doesn't work so Dean suicide dives Owens. Sheamus is back up though, allowing Owens to take the cover off the announcers' table and blast Dean with it for the DQ at 13:30.

Rating: C. Well that happened. This was every average Smackdown main event that you've seen in recent months and that's not a good thing. It wasn't bad but it's just another match that doesn't mean anything, doesn't change anything, and just makes me wish that it was time for the Rumble already when a match might be important.

Neville breaks up a powerbomb through the table and Dirty Deeds plants Owens back inside. Owens takes a Red Arrow to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. It says a lot when a show with a title change can feel this insignificant. I know last week's show was a big deal but this was right back where we were before Smackdown changed networks, which means Thursdays are going to feel very long all over again. Kalisto losing was deflating and I'm having issues buying him as a threat to get the title back. This wasn't a bad show but it was mostly uninteresting or unimportant, which is all Smackdown seems to be 90% of the time.

Results

Dudley Boyz b. Luke Harper/Erick Rowan – Harper was knocked through a table

Social Outcasts b. Goldust/Jack Swagger/Adam Rose/Zack Ryder – Bodog to Ryder

Alberto Del Rio b. Kalisto – Cross armbreaker

Becky Lynch b. Brie Bella – Disarm-Her

Neville/Dean Ambrose vs. Sheamus/Kevin Owens went to a double countout

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