

Smackdown – January 28, 2016: But He Hit It Here

Smackdown

Date: January 28, 2016

Location: Amalie Arena, Tampa, Florida

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Jerry Lawler, Byron Saxton

We've got a main event for Fastlane now, which means we'll have a main event for Wrestlemania in just a few weeks. This past Monday on Raw, it was announced that Roman Reigns, Dean Ambrose and Brock Lesnar will face off for the World Title shot at Wrestlemania against HHH, which doesn't make a ton of sense but should be a good match. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of the Royal Rumble and Monday's fallout.

Opening sequence.

Here's the New Day who shame the Rock after seeing a recap of his surprise appearance on Monday. Rock is clearly just jealous of their gold (it's bronze actually) because he insulted the unicorn horns. This brings out the Miz of all people, who says he feels their pain. How dare Rock insult one of his fellow movie stars? Miz deserves respect but here are the Usos to interrupt as well.

They get on him for still talking about main eventing Wrestlemania, but maybe that's where he got the money to buy that dress. Woods: "Miz has the best mouth in the business." Big E. laughs at the Usos for never winning any gold and Kofi says the Usos' cousin Dewey isn't here for the rescue. The Usos aren't worried because here are Titus O'Neil and Dolph Ziggler to help with the brawl.

New Day/Miz vs. Usos/Titus O'Neil/Dolph Ziggler

Miz and Jey get things going with the Uso sending him into the corner for some dancing. Woods refers to Jey as a varmint as it's off to Titus vs. Kofi. Kingston dropkicks him down and it's off to Ziggler. Big E. gets in

a slam but Ziggler dives away and makes the tag off to Jimmy as things pick up again. There's the running Umaga Attack (with Rinaldo actually mentioning Umaga) to Big E., who pops up and belly to bellies Jimmy into the corner.

The Unicorn Stampede has Jimmy in more trouble and we get some sweet Francesca II. Jimmy finally knocks Woods down and makes the tag off to Titus for some house cleaning. A powerslam gets two on Miz and everything breaks down. The Usos hit stereo dives on Big E. and Kofi and Ziggler superkicks Miz into the Clash of the Titus for the pin at 7:54.

Rating: C-. What is up with the Titus push lately? I know it's not likely to go anywhere but he's getting pins on TV and actually looking like something of note. It might be due to the charity stuff he's been doing lately but it's cool to see someone getting a mini push. The match was fine and at least Miz took the fall.

US Title: Kalisto vs. Neville

Kalisto is defending and we get some Big Match Intros. They hit the ropes to start and Kalisto does a walking handstand to show off. Neville is sent to the floor and Kalisto snaps off a hurricanrana into the barricade. They get back inside and we take an early break. Back with Kalisto springboarding into a sitout powerbomb for two as Neville is having to wrestle as the default heel.

Neville lifts him up into a fireman's carry and goes up top, only to have Kalisto reverse into a top rope hurricanrana for a huge crash. Back up and Neville fires off the kicks to the ribs but the lifting German suplex is countered into a rollup for two. Neville tries it again and gets countered into something like a Salida Del Sol to retain Kalisto's title at 8:54.

Rating: C+. Botches aside, this was a fun match with Kalisto getting to show off against someone who can wrestle a similar style. I know the ending wasn't the smoothest in the world but it's cool to see Kalisto hitting that move from almost any angle. It makes it that much more dangerous and that's going to give him a lot more mileage.

They shake hands post match.

It's time for the Highlight Reel with Jericho talking about having a great run in the Royal Rumble, only to have HHH come in and win in the end. That win helped set up the main event of Fastlane with the triple threat for the #1 contendership. Therefore, his guests tonight are Roman Reigns and Dean Ambrose.

After presenting Jericho with a potted plant and a stool to help replace some of the often destroyed set, they say they're not jealous people so they aren't going to lose their friendship over this match. Dean says he's going to punch Reigns in the face and kick him in the ribs as soon as the bell rings and that's just fine with Roman.

Jericho brings up Brock, who Dean has never faced before. Ambrose says Brock is the most destructive force but that doesn't matter when you're indestructible. Reigns doesn't think it's that simple, but Dean points out that he can just beat Roman to get the shot. Reigns: "Well it would be the first time because you never have before." Cue the Wyatts to say they slayed the Beast but Reigns says he doesn't get what they're talking about. A challenge is issued but Bray says patience. This seems to be the main event.

Here are the Social Outcasts to talk about how they should be trending. Instead people are talking about AJ Styles, who they call the phenomenal anomaly. Axel yells about being eliminated for over a year until AJ jumped him from behind.

AJ Styles vs. Curtis Axel

Styles starts fast with the drop down into the dropkick as Lawler goes on a rant about how AJ's past accomplishments don't mean a thing around here. Axel knocks him down in the corner and scores with a backbreaker, only to miss a middle rope elbow. Styles misses the middle rope moonsault into the reverse DDT but it looked enough like a Pele to count. A flip dive takes out Slater and Dallas and it's the Pele into the Styles Clash to pin Axel at 3:20.

Rating: D+. So he can't hit it in the Royal Rumble and he can't hit it in

the match against Jericho but he can hit it against Axel in a nothing match on Smackdown? That's their thinking here? At least they haven't stopped his push yet, which is actually a relief after all the other people this company has screwed up.

Charlotte vs. Natalya

Non-title and Natalya says the Queen of Harts is back. Charlotte gets rolled up for an early two and the basement dropkick sends the champ into the corner. Natalya follows her in and gets kicked in the face for her efforts, followed by an abdominal stretch to slow things down. A dropkick and some chops have Natalya in even more trouble but she sends Charlotte to the floor. Some WOOing distracts Natalya though and Charlotte gets in a chop block, setting up the Figure Eight for the submission at 3:53.

Rating: C-. They're firmly in the Evolution formula now with Flair causing all the distractions and setting up the endings. At some point they need to change things up because that formula got old back in the day and it's already getting boring here. Natalya being back in the ring is a good thing as the division can always use talented veterans.

Charlotte puts the hold on again but Becky Lynch runs in for the save.

R-Truth is getting ready for a run when Goldust comes up. Jokes about stretching and massaging a groin strain ensue, though this time R-Truth seems intrigued by the idea of a team.

Wyatt Family vs. Chris Jericho/Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose

Strowman is the odd man out here. Rowan chops Jericho into the corner to start but it's quickly off to Dean for a kick to the ribs. Reigns gets in a quick turn before it's back to Jericho, who is dragged into the corner for the tag off to Harper. Some shots to the throat have Chris in trouble but he comes back with a dropkick and enziguri. No tag though as he pounds in right hands instead.

The bad idea results in Harper coming back with a suplex for two as we take a break. Back with Rowan putting on the head vice for a bit before a backbreaker gets two on Jericho. Harper comes in for a leg lock of all

things, followed by a more traditional chinlock. Bray seems a bit disappointed that we didn't get a broken limb. A Michinoku Driver gets two for Harper but he's smart enough to kick Reigns off the apron. Jericho grabs a one knee Codebreaker for a breather, allowing the hot tag off to Ambrose.

The top rope elbow gets two on Rowan and everything breaks down with Dean diving onto Bray. Dean goes up again but dives into a spinwheel kick from Rowan, allowing Bray to come in for the backsplash. The rebound lariat drops Wyatt though and the hot tag brings in Roman to clean house. Everything breaks down again and the good guys take over, setting up the Superman Punch for two on Harper with Strowman pulling Roman to the floor for the DQ at 13:41.

Rating: C. Totally run of the mill six man tag here and that's not the most interesting thing in the world. I like that they didn't feel the need to give the Wyatts another clean loss and went with the DQ instead. Hopefully Bray can be kept strong leading into his match Brock, though I'm still not sure how strong that's going to be.

Post match the Wyatts destroy the good guys until Big Show of all people comes out for the save. Show is beaten down as well but the good guys get up and help clean house to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. There were a few good things here and there but above all else this show was lacking. Smackdown shows promise once in a while but then it gets stuck with this lame formula of tag matches and meaningless midcard stuff which is almost never mentioned again. It's fine for a quick show but nothing necessary to remember by the time the next Raw airs.

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