

Extreme Rules 2016 Preview

It really feels like we just got done with Payback and now it's already time for the next show. In this case that's not a good thing as the stories were only so strong in the first place and now it's clear that the stories don't have enough steam to keep going beyond this show. I'm genuinely not that thrilled to watch this show but maybe I'll be surprised. Let's get to it.

Starting on the pre-show, we have Dolph Ziggler vs. Baron Corbin in a No DQ match. We're getting this one because someone felt that the best way to get Corbin over was to have him lose a big match before beating Ziggler in a rematch. Now it's the always useful rubber match with a gimmick attached, even though I don't know how many people even wanted the second match in the first place.

Now in theory you have Corbin go over here but that's what everyone would have said going into their first match. Ziggler is a guy who can take loss after loss and be just fine so there shouldn't be any other option here aside from Corbin hitting a chair shot or two and End of Days for the pin, thankfully ending this mess of a feud in the process. More than once I've forgotten that they're even feuding and there's really no excuse for that.

Next up we'll go with Kalisto defending the US Title against Rusev. This is another match where the ending should be obvious, especially if you look at things for more than all of eighteen seconds. Kalisto was beaten down on Raw and Rusev is an absolute monster, so why in the world would you not switch the title here? I'm sure John Cena returning on Memorial Day is just a coincidence as well.

There's a new gimmick match on the show as well, assuming you consider a weapons based cage match to be a new gimmick. This time we have Dean Ambrose vs. Chris Jericho in an Asylum match, meaning we have a cage with weapons on top. In this case the feud is over talk shows and a potted plant named Mitch, which is probably why I'm not very interested in this one. Ambrose should go over, unless it's decided that these two need to

have a third match instead of being in Money in the Bank next month. Yeah Dean wins, but I wouldn't be surprised if Jericho got a surprise win for the sake of being illogical.

New Day is defending the Tag Team Titles against the Vaudevillains and I can't shake the feeling that we're getting new champions here. New Day has held the belts since Summerslam (a stat we're reminded of every few minutes, which is rarely a good omen for a title reign) and it should be near time for someone new to get the titles.

However, I can't exactly imagine the Vaudevillains actually taking them from New Day. It isn't going to hurt New Day if they lose them, especially if they get them back in a big moment. That being said, I think New Day retains but the Vaudevillains have been treated as someone beneath the champs, which makes them much more dangerous challengers. New Day should retain though and then drop them to Anderson/Gallows, who we'll cover next.

What have I done to deserve this? Anderson and Gallows debuted about a month ago and we're closing in on ten TV matches (counting six mans) where they've fought the Usos. If you can come up with a match that has been pounded into the ground any worse than this one, I'd beg of you to not tell me about it.

This time it's under Texas Tornado rules because it makes sense to just have them go to the big brawling segment that ends all of their matches. I'll take Anderson and Gallows for the win here as they've been beaten enough times now that it's ok to let them win, just in case people started thinking something of the Usos while making sure no one thought anything of Anderson and Gallows. I'm thoroughly sick of this match but I'm sure we'll see it again because that's how WWE does things.

Now we have a match that is actually being treated as one of the biggest on the card as Charlotte defends the Women's Title against Natalya in a submission match with Ric Flair barred from ringside. The thing here though is that we have a classic Ric Flair formula: how can Charlotte possibly survive this one?

In this case, it's probably going to be due to some other form of

shenanigans and then winning with the Figure Eight. Natalya just isn't going to win the title because she isn't that interesting and (in theory at least), it should be setting up a showdown with Sasha for the big title change down the line. The stipulation here comes off as a smoke screen though, which isn't the most interesting. The build has been good though and Ric not being around should help things a bit.

Next to last we have probably the second biggest match on the card and the one that I'm looking forward to the most as Miz defends the Intercontinental Title against Sami Zayn, Cesaro and Kevin Owens. They've put together one heck of a feud here as all four could conceivably walk out with the title and there's an actual reason to care about each of them fighting the other.

As for the winner.....I think it's going to be Miz. I know the logical move would be to move the title onto any of the other three but Miz hanging onto it can set up a one on one match for the title, perhaps for Sami, before they move on to the next big Zayn vs. Owens match. It also helps that Miz is quite the champion and could give someone a good rub in a title loss. Anyone could win here but I'd actually like to see Miz retain.

Finally we have the main event and please let this be the final match in the feud. Roman Reigns is defending the WWE World Title against AJ Styles in an Extreme Rules rematch after retaining under some shenanigans last time. The idea here is basically welcoming a bunch of violence and interference, which doesn't really make me want to see the match again. I mean, it was awesome the first time but the Usos/Anderson/Gallows interfering has destroyed any interest I have in this match.

The question here is who interferes as a surprise to cost either guy the title. Of course there's always the Finn Balor option and it would make sense but I'm still not sure they'll pull the trigger here. Of course we'll have Reigns retaining the title but my goodness I'm not really looking forward to this one. I can't imagine Styles stays in the title hunt after this as he'll likely do Money in the Bank and then move on to another feud. Either way I'm not as excited for this one than I was for the previous one and most of that is due to this story being hammered

into the ground without anything being added to it.

Overall Extrem Rules really doesn't feel that extreme. We have a nine match card (counting the pre-show) and there's an Extreme Rules match, a No DQ match, a cage match and a Texas Tornado match. Unless you could submissions and a four way as extreme, this feels like something just a step or two above a regular pay per view card.

Normally the violence and gimmicks can carry this show on its back without too much effort but this last week has killed any interest I had. It's just not a show that feels like it needs to exist and is only happening because the PPV schedule had Extreme Rules listed. There's definitely some stuff I'm interested in seeing but nothing that really blows me away. I'm almost sure things will be fine but the stories need to move on after this one.

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