

# Battleground 2016 Preview

This show has gone from one of the most B level shows ever to one of the least important shows in a very long time. It's still definitely just a filler show before we get to Summerslam but then the Draft has made the whole thing even more of a mess. You could tell things were all over the place when basically two matches were hyped up during the TV shows leading up to the pay per view. Let's get to it.

We'll open with the quick pre-show match between the Usos and Breezango. The Usos are the definition of "just there" and it's getting harder and harder to care about them. Breezango may not be the most exciting team in the world but it's still cool to see them getting even the most moderate push. There's no reason to have the Usos, who haven't done a thing in a long time, win here so we'll go with Breezango getting their biggest win ever.

Let's get this one out of the way: Rusev squashes Zack Ryder and no sells his comeback because that's what happens to Ryder. The mini push means nothing and they made that very clear as soon as they had Sheamus beat him clean in two minutes. Ryder loses to Rusev like he always does as we continue to wait for a serious challenger to the title.

We'll continue the midcard title theme with Miz beating Darren Young. I love the Backlund segments but I just can't imagine them actually giving him the title. He won the battle royal almost by mistake and hasn't won anything of note on his own. Why would I buy him as a midcard champion already? Miz holding the title longer is fine as the big win over him is going to mean even more when he's been built up that long.

In another match that's just kind of there, we'll go with Becky Lynch over Natalya. I barely remember why they're fighting at this point and I can't imagine WWE really cares either way. This might as well be for the Smackdown Women's Title as the division is basically these two and everyone else, which really does show why there's no need to either bring up all the new women or to put the women on both shows. Becky wins here because it's not like Natalya needs much to restore her to her eternal

spot on the card.

While we're here we'll knock out the other women's match as Sasha Banks and a mystery partner team up to face Charlotte and Dana Brooke. This is basically Sasha needing help after all the weeks of Charlotte and Dana beating her up so it's time for her to get some backup. There are some new women on the Raw roster but there's almost no way it's not going to be Bayley. If there's ever been a bigger layup for a mystery partner on a pay per view five days after the latest WWE Draft to debut in a women's tag, I can't think of it off the top of my head.

That being said, Bayley isn't going to be a factor here because this whole thing exists for Sasha to make Charlotte tap in the middle of the ring and set up their big showdown at Summerslam. It's still a great way to debut Bayley as she'll get her own big moment instead of being yet another name being brought up on Draft night. She'll be one of the first challengers to Sasha's new title and the debut should be fun.

In the first of two matches that don't mean much now that everything has changed, New Day faces the Wyatt Family in a six man tag with no titles on the line. The Wyatts have been split up by the Draft while New Day gets to keep going on their longest (modern) reign ever as Tag Team Champions. The whole Xavier Woods is terrified thing has gone nowhere so and I'd be interested in seeing where they were going to go had it not been for the split. Hopefully this wraps it up and we see New Day vs. the Club for the titles at Summerslam. But yeah, New Day wins here with ease.

The other match is basically the same story as John Cena teams up with Enzo Amore/Big Cass to face the soon to be split Club. In theory this is designed to set up AJ vs. Cena for Summerslam in their big rematch so we'll say the Club pins Enzo here. Above all else I love the idea that they're not going to just have the rematch here and then burn through the feud even faster. There are other ways to keep the feud going and I'll never understand why they have to just keep doing the same match over and over again. At least this is working for not though.

Sami Zayn and Kevin Owens are having their FINAL match against each other despite them being on the same roster for reasons that I still don't

understand. My hope is that they eventually team up and fight New Day (or the Club) for the titles as teammates who are forced to work together and happen to have great chemistry despite not being able to stand each other. I'll take Sami winning here in a fluke but it's probably my least confident pick of the show.

That leaves us with the main event and egads where do I even start. So it's the big Shield triple threat that people have wanted to see for years and not only are they throwing it on this show instead of Summerslam but it's less than a week after the Draft so everything is thrown apart and it's not clear how things go after this. Oh and Reigns has been suspended for freaking Adderall of all things so he hasn't been around to help build things up. It's almost like this is a mess and should have been postponed for a bigger show.

I'll take Rollins to win the title after the rather pointless double title matches from earlier in the week. Ambrose has been taking the ratings and Reigns would just be destroyed (like more than usual) if he wins the title back already so there's just Rollins left. Now the key for him would be to stay FAR away from HHH and Stephanie as they destroyed his first title reign, but given who runs Raw I can't imagine she won't have her fingers all over the new reign. I'll go with Rollins to get the title back though and Ambrose to drop right back to where he was before.

Overall Battleground is.....well it certainly exists. This is one of those shows that doesn't need to be there and is pretty clearly just a way to promote Summerslam in a few weeks. I'm not really looking forward to the show but that might be more due to the fact that we're in for four hours tonight, three tomorrow and two each on Tuesday and Wednesday. Tonight is going to be all about matches exceeding expectations though and while that's possible, I don't have the greatest hope in the world.

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