

Smackdown – August 9, 2016: False Hope

Smackdown

Date: August 9, 2016

Location: Rabobank Arena, Bakersfield, California

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, John Bradshaw Layfield, David Otunga

Summerslam is coming up but tonight is going to be another light show as a bunch of the roster is off on a tour of Australia. Tonight is again going to be focused on Dean Ambrose vs. Dolph Ziggler and their upcoming WWE World Title match, though there's the chance that the Wyatts will be involved as well. Let's get to it.

Randy Orton is ready to kill Brock Lesnar's legend because all it takes is one RKO to get to Viperville. Alberto Del Rio comes up and says that sounds like Disneyland so Orton offers to give him a VIP tour.

Opening sequence.

Here are Bray Wyatt and Erick Rowan to open the show. Last week Bray did NOT fall to Dolph Ziggler because he was a victim. Ziggler was desperate and in that desperation came a ram into the turnbuckle because it was the only way. You can't defeat Bray Wyatt because he is everywhere. There is no red or blue because this is him against the world.

Cue Dean Ambrose to say this is a new era because Bray is talking about how he's a victim. That sounds like a baby instead of an eater of worlds. Bray invites him into the ring but Dean is smarter than that. This brings out Ziggler who charges into the ring on his own with Dean coming in a few seconds later. Rowan is sent outside but Dolph superkicks Dean by accident, only to eat Sister Abigail.

Post break, Ambrose yells at Ziggler until the bosses come up and make the tag match. As usual I can only wonder why we need both Bryan and Shane for this segment. One of them accomplishes the same as two but we get both of them anyway.

American Alpha vs. Mike Vega/Mikey O'Shea

Before the match, Ascension, the Vaudevillains and the Hype Bros come out to watch. Alpha starts on Vega's leg, followed by the double dropkick and the Grand Amplitude for the pin at 1:11.

All four teams brawl post match with Alpha cleaning house. As they brawl, the announcers talk about the upcoming Smackdown Tag Team Titles.

Miz and Maryse are at Renee Young's interview desk and nearly crawl over her as she sends us to a video package on Miz's #1 contender Apollo Crews. Back with Miz and Maryse laying on the table with Miz calling his wife a modern day Aphrodite. That's enough for Renee as she throws it back to the arena.

Becky Lynch vs. Eva Marie

Eva gets her big over the top entrance and breaks her top on the way off the turnbuckle so again no match.

Post match Becky vents some frustration and issues an open challenge.

Becky Lynch vs. Alexa Bliss

Joined in progress with Bliss in control for a bit until Becky makes a comeback with a clothesline and the Bexploder. Now here's Eva Marie with the big voiceover doing the full entrance again, allowing Bliss to hit a choke shove and Twisted Bliss for the pin at 2:32. Bliss was fine here but I'm not wild on the Divas being more sexualized again. They did just fine and got better than ever without it but now we seem to be seeing it again.

Post match Eva calls this a shame but she'll make her debut next week.

Randy Orton vs. Alberto Del Rio

The fans chant RK0 to start and Orton takes over with some right hands in the corner. Del Rio comes back with a knee to the ribs and then stands there for a second, allowing Orton to snap him back first across the ropes. Back from a break with Orton going shoulder first into the steps

and Del Rio working on an armbar.

Alberto gets the armbreaker across the top rope for a few seconds but gets crotched on top for taking too long. That means the superplex but Orton has to escape an armbreaker attempt. The elevated DDT doesn't set up the RK0 as Orton takes it outside and loads up the announcers' table instead. That takes too long as well though and Del Rio hits him in the arm with a chair for the DQ at 12:20.

Rating: C-. Would anyone notice if Del Rio was traded for a red wagon and a box of Ding Dongs? His entire character can be summed up as "Mexican heel who attacks arms" and that's not enough to carry my interest. I'm also not sure why they didn't have Orton get the clean pin here as it's not like Del Rio needs protecting. Then again they'll probably have a rematch next week because it would be asking a lot to have them come up with a new idea so soon.

Post match Orton hits the RK0 to prevent another chair shot.

Heath Slater asks Rhyno to lay down for him. Rhyno says no because he needs to impress his constituents in his Michigan State Senate district (where he really is up for election). Slater suddenly can't remember how many kids he has so Rhyno says no.

Miz arrived earlier today and met Scooby-Doo, demanding that all of his new DVDs are immediately recalled. Scooby shoves him in a van and steals Miz's car.

Heath Slater vs. Rhyno

Rhyno beats him up to start and shrugs off everything Slater can throw at him. A belly to belly gets two on Heath but he avoids a charge to send Rhyno into the buckle. That's only good for two though as Slater is caught with his feet on the ropes, setting up the Gore to give Rhyno the pin at 3:03.

Rating: D. This was all it needed to be though I'm hoping Slater gets to keep going with this run he's on as it's quite entertaining. Rhyno is fine in the role as well as he can go out there, hit people really hard

and then get pinned while keeping most of his credibility. He's a fine role player and that's all it needs to be.

We go to the Wyatts with Rowan talking about wolves being led by a sheep. Bray says Rowan has always been a good soldier (Good?) but tonight he wants Erick to be ready to give his life for the cause.

After a break the bosses are considering giving Heath a job for his fighting spirit until Slater comes in to yell at them for embarrassing him in front of his seven kids. Heath says Smackdown doesn't deserve him and storms off. They change their mind on the contract.

Carmella vs. Natalya

Natalya jumps her during the entrance and sends her throat first into the ropes. A stomping in the corner makes the orange Carmella scream and we're off to a bow and arrow. It's off to the abdominal stretch with Natalya lifting Carmella's leg to make it even worse. Nattie By Nature connects but Carmella kicks off the Sharpshooter and puts on her headscissors crossface for the tap at 4:12.

Rating: D+. Not much to this one but it's a good way to introduce Carmella. Unfortunately I really don't think she's ready for the main roster in ring level. Keeping it short here like they did with Bliss earlier makes sense though as they both need ring time. I'm still amazed that they think they have enough talent for a division when you have to count Eva and Maryse as members of the roster though. Maybe in a few months when Carmella and Alexa have developed but this is too soon.

Long video on AJ Styles vs. John Cena.

Baron Corbin attacks Kalisto for costing him the triple threat last week.

Erick Rowan/Bray Wyatt vs. Dolph Ziggler/Dean Ambrose

The Wyatts run the good guys over to start and Rowan hits a clothesline to send Dolph outside as we take a break less than ninety seconds in. Back with Dean getting the hot tag to clean house, only to spend too much time on the floor with Rowan so Bray can take him down with a big clothesline. Bray sends Dean outside again for the release Rock Bottom on

the apron, only to have to escape Dirty Deeds.

Instead Dean hits a swinging neckbreaker and makes the real hot tag to Ziggler. Everything breaks down and Rowan's spinning kick to the face gets two on Dolph. The Zig Zag gets the same with Bray making the save but Dean breaks up Sister Abigail. Dean's suicide dive gets tangled up in the ropes and he crashes down to the floor, leaving Rowan to eat the superkick for the pin at 10:40.

Rating: C+. It was false hope at best to imagine Bray being added to the title match and I'm ok with that. Ziggler vs. Ambrose will be a fine match. Not thrilling mind you but definitely entertaining enough for a middle of the shot spot. Rowan taking the fall here was the only way to go as Bray can come back later, hopefully against the winner of the title match and no one is any worse off.

Dean gives him Dirty Deeds as a receipt for earlier in the night. A BIG YES chant ends the show.

Overall Rating: C. This was a bit better than last night's show but a lot of the improvement is due to the show being an hour shorter. It's so much better to have this show wrap up at ten instead of eleven as the show doesn't drain you nearly as much. That being said, it was still little more than a bunch of short matches with so many people off on the overseas tour. The show was completely in the middle though as an easy two hour sit but nothing that you needed to see. Things should pick up with the full roster back next week though.

Results

American Alpha b. Mike Vega/Mikey O'Shea – Grand Amplitude to Vega

Alexa Bliss b. Becky Lynch – Twisted Bliss

Randy Orton b. Alberto Del Rio via DQ when Del Rio used a chair

Rhyno b. Heath Slater – Gore

Carmella b. Natalya – Headscissors Crossface

Dean Ambrose/Dolph Ziggler b. Erick Rowan/Bray Wyatt – Superkick to Rowan

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