

Monday Night Raw – September 19, 2016: It's Like A Little League Movie

Monday Night Raw

Date: September 19, 2016

Location: FedEx Forum, Memphis, Tennessee

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

It's the go home show for Clash of Champions as we now go two weeks between single brand pay per views. The big stories coming into tonight seem to be Mick Foley punishing Seth Rollins for interfering in last week's main event and the return of Rusev, who came back last week to go after Roman Reigns. Let's get to it.

Last Week on Raw, Kevin Owens beat Reigns to retain the title despite interference by Rollins and thanks to help from Rusev.

Here's Reigns to get things going but Stephanie McMahon cuts him off, only to have Mick Foley cut her off. Stephanie: "FOLEY! FOLEY! FOLEY!" Thank you Stephanie, though we didn't need your input. Foley apologizes for letting things get out of hands last week and makes Rusev vs. Rollins for tonight. On the other hand, Reigns will be getting a US Title shot against Rusev on Sunday. Stephanie: "And I personally guarantee it will happen." Reigns: "Thanks Stephanie. That means so much coming from you." I might have applauded that line.

Foley goes into a discussion of Raw vs. Smackdown and says he's out of a job if they lose the ratings war. That means Kevin Owens vs. Reigns again tonight. This brings out Owens to say he should be getting ready for the title match on Sunday. Stephanie says tonight is non-title but Foley makes it a cage match.

After a break, Stephanie and Foley are in the back when Rusev comes up to plug Lana's movie (Interrogation, with Edge) and Holy Foley. Rusev leaves and Foley gets a call from Chris Jericho.

Rusev vs. Seth Rollins

Non-title. Rusev starts in with his variety of kicks but gets dropkicked out to the floor for his efforts. Rollins is sent back first into the post and a hard whip sends him back first into the buckle for good measure. Some right hands stagger Rusev as Rollins looks so at home as a face. Unfortunately he's not quite at home on the top as Rusev slams him down with one arm to take us to a break.

Back with Seth fighting out of a waistlock and hitting a quick enziguri for a breather. There's the Sling Blade to keep Rusev in trouble and Rollins muscles him over for a Falcon Arrow. Rusev comes right back with a superkick to the shoulder (even Cole acknowledges how off it was) for two of his own. Seth gets in the springboard knee and a suicide dive. They fight up the aisle and that's a double countout at 11:52.

Rating: C+. Oh sweet goodness is Rollins perfect as a face. His size makes him as natural of a good guy as you can get and I still don't know why they brought him back as a heel other than to make sure Reigns stayed a face. Well, as much of a face as Reigns can be in the fans' eyes.

Post match they fight over to the announcers' table where Seth escapes a powerbomb and dives off the table to take Rusev out.

Dana Brooke yells at Foley about last week's double pin. The solution: ANOTHER FREAKING TRIPLE THREAT MATCH. Can you imagine if there were this many last man standing matches or cage matches? Almost every story has to wind up as a triple threat at some point and it's getting really, really tiresome.

Videos on Cedric Alexander and Brian Kendrick, both of whom are debuting as cruiserweights tonight.

Owens and Jericho have a list of grievances for Foley.

Braun Strowman vs. Sin Cara

Rematch from two weeks ago. Cara fires away right hands and kicks to start until Strowman just runs him over like a monster. We hit an early neck crank for a bit before Cara tries to speed things up,

only to have his moonsault caught in a powerslam for the pin at 1:54. What in the world was the point of the countout a few weeks ago?

Bayley and Sasha Banks are ready to team together tonight but they'll fight on Sunday.

Charlotte/Dana Brooke vs. Bayley/Sasha Banks

Sasha rolls Dana up to start before it's off to Bayley, who sends Charlotte into the buckle and us to a break. Back with Bayley in trouble as the heels take turns cranking on her arms. Bayley gets in a back elbow and middle rope armdrag, allowing the tag to Sasha for a double suplex. Charlotte is smart enough to go after the huge tape around Sasha's ribs. It's back to Dana to send Sasha face first into the mat a few times. A headscissors puts Charlotte down and the real hot tag brings in Bayley. Dana saves the Bayley to Belly though and it's a big boot from Charlotte for the pin on Bayley at 11:09.

Rating: C. Perfectly acceptable formula tag match here with the rib injury giving it an easy story and Charlotte getting some momentum heading into the title match after losing for weeks leading into the title defense. It's always fun to see the women having the same kind of match you would expect from the men with the only exception being their genders. The lack of PUPPIES chants probably helps a lot too.

Seth goes into Stephanie's office. After a break, Rollins asks Stephanie why she threw him away for Owens. Stephanie says she had nothing to do with HHH (and since she's apparently not asked her husband about this once) but it was Seth who allowed the title to go to her brother's show. Maybe HHH was tired of Seth ruining HHH's reputation (which has a street value of about \$14). Seth is going to prove that the Authority put their money on the wrong horse. Stephanie gets all serious (of course) and orders him to not threaten her.

Bo Dallas vs. Gary Graham

Bo does more serious poetry about how only he can believe in himself. It's another quick beatdown with knees and right hands as

the fans chant for the jobber. The Roll of the Dice ends Graham at 1:18.

Video on the Cruiserweight Classic final.

Cesaro vs. Sheamus

Match six in the best of seven series with Cesaro down 3-2 and let's get this over with. They slug it out to start and Cesaro flips out of an early backdrop attempt. Sheamus sends him outside and we take a break. Back with Cesaro hitting the uppercut train to knock Sheamus over the barricade and next to some Memphis Grizzlies' feet. Cesaro can't do the apron superplex though and gets caught in White Noise onto the apron. The Brogue Kick misses but Cesaro walks into the Irish Curse for two. Sheamus grabs the Cloverleaf but gets small packaged for two. A rollup with feet on the ropes gets the same on Cesaro before he ducks the Brogue Kick and Neutralizes Sheamus for the pin at 9:40.

Rating: C-. The same problems that have plagued this stupid series for a month are still around here and I won't bother going over them again. This would have been a lot better if the last three or four matches had a gimmick or something but the fact that we're heading to a seventh match and nothing has changed really isn't interesting.

Foley makes the seventh match for Clash of Champions when Jericho comes in. Jericho accuses him of never being a fan but Foley brings up recommending him to Paul Heyman for ECW. Chris has his List of Jericho (list of grievances), which now includes a bad fashion sense. As you might expect, Foley brings up the scarf look. Jericho: "This is very big in Luxemburg." Foley: "Well it looks ridiculous, right here, in Memphis, Tennessee." Jericho: "Number six: Uses cheap babyface pops."

It's time for Jericho's list of grievances. First up: Foley is trying to drive a wedge between Jericho and Owens. A fan yells at him so Jericho adds "brace face in row twelve". We get to the Sami Zayn phone attack last week but here are Enzo and Cass to interrupt. Cass lists off some great friendships, including Bevis and Butthead

and Ashton Kutcher and Danny Masterson.

Cue the Shining Stars to offer some time shares. This brings out the New Day with Kofi saying they have a very good reason to be out here. Big E.: "We have nothing better to do." Woods promises to keep the titles on Sunday so here are Anderson and Gallows to interrupt. Jericho says everyone in the ring is on his stupid idiot list but here's Sami because we need a tenth guy for the huge tag match.

Shining Stars/Chris Jericho/Anderson and Gallows vs. Enzo and Cass/Sami Zayn/New Day

We start after a break with Kofi spinning into a crossbody for two on Jericho. It's off to Sami vs. Epico before Big E. comes in for his spanking abdominal stretch. Anderson comes in and catches Kofi with a spinebuster as the bad guys take over. That lasts all of thirty seconds before the hot tag brings in Big Cass to clean house. The Empire Elbow gets two on Primo as everything breaks down. Sami runs the corner for his tornado DDT and there's a Helluva Kick to Primo. The Bada Boom Shaka Lacka is enough for the pin on Primo at 5:24.

Rating: D+. This is as simple of a way as you're going to find to do three matches in one on a show where Stephanie needs ten segments. I'm assuming Enzo and Cass get their win back on Sunday's pre-show and that's fine enough of a way to end such a nothing feud. Enzo and Cass have to fight New Day sometime and they'd be fine to take the belts away, especially since New Day is less than three months away from Demolition's record.

We recap the opening segment.

Videos on Gran Metalik and Rich Swann.

Video on Eddie Guerrero in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month.

Here's Foley to introduce the cruiserweights. After screwing up a few of his lines, Foley talks about the Cruiserweight Classic and introduces Rich Swann, Gran Metalik, Cedric Alexander and Brian Kendrick. Foley makes the first match: a fatal fourway for the shot at TJ Perkins' Cruiserweight Title on Sunday.

Rich Swann vs. Gran Metalik vs. Cedric Alexander vs. Brian Kendrick

One fall to a finish. It's a brawl to start since there are no tags, eventually leaving us with Kendrick and Alexander. Brian bails to the floor but gets kicked in the face so Alexander sunset flips Metalik for two. A springboard clothesline gets two more on Metalik but Swann comes back in to kick Cedric in the back.

Swann and Alexander trade strikes and miss kicks until Cedric flips out of a headscissors. A big flip dive takes Kendrick down and it's only Metalik in the ring. You know what that means as Metalik dives onto everyone, finally drawing a reaction from the crowd. Kendrick breaks up Metalik's springboard and throws Swann and Alexander into various objects. A few kicks to Swann's leg take us to a break.

Back with Alexander breaking up Swann's cover on Metalik but Kendrick grabs a tornado DDT for two of his own on Metalik. Swann's jumping 450 looks to finish Alexander but Kendrick grabs his Captain's Hook (bully choke) on Cedric, only to have Metalik make the save. A Lumbar Check drops Metalik and the Captain's Hook makes Alexander tap and sends Kendrick to the title shot at 15:04.

Rating: C-. Blame it on whomever you want but this fell apart because of the time. This should have been about people flying all over the place and keeping things moving. You know, like a cruiserweight match. Instead it was your run of the mill WWE multi-man match with WAY too much time and the fans just dying throughout. The guys ran out of things to do and then had six or seven minutes to go. Horrible booking decision here and odds are it's more of the same bickering between Kevin Dunn and HHH's camps with Kevin trying to shoot down whatever HHH sets up. Oh and the new champ doesn't even get a cameo? Really?

Nia Jax vs. Alicia Fox on the pre-show.

Kevin Owens vs. Roman Reigns

Non-title and inside a cage. Reigns slugs away to start but wants nothing of going through the door. The champ gets beaten down in the corner and a running clothesline makes it even worse. A ram into the

cage wall sets up a superkick for two on Roman and we take a break. Back with Owens getting crotched on the top and getting crushed up against the cage a few times.

Reigns' clotheslines have Owens in trouble but he has to Superman punch his way out of a Pop Up Powerbomb. The second attempt at the powerbomb gets two for Owens and they go to the top rope for some rams into the cage. Both guys are down and Reigns sprints up the cage to get outside before Owens can go through the door for the win at 13:17.

Rating: D+. Not only was it boring and not only was there no reason for this to be a cage match but Reigns winning makes Owens' big problem even worse: he feels like someone who is just there while Stephanie has her issues with Foley/Rollins/Smackdown or whatever disease she's so passionate about that week. This should have been Rusev coming out and costing Reigns the match and then doing the beatdown that we all know is coming. But no, instead Reigns is the big star and Owens is just another loser.

Post match, Rusev comes out and locks the door so he can put Reigns in the Accolade. You know, because THERE'S NO WAY REIGNS COULD EVER GET OVER A CAGE WALL. Rollins comes out and does the big dive off the top (reminiscent of Rey Mysterio in the early days of the first Brand Split), not even bothering to look at the door because THERE ISN'T A ROOF ON THE CAGE. Everyone is down to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. It's just too long and I don't know how many other ways there are to say that. Whether it's seeing Sheamus vs. Cesaro week after week after week or the cruiserweights' debut being one of the biggest messes I've seen in a long time or even more Stephanie and Foley hijinks, these shows feel like they're going on for days instead of three hours. These shows are too long and the matches and promos having to be stretched out to fill in the time shows worse every week.

Then there's the main feud as it feels like Stephanie's latest promo about her power struggle (which DOESN'T EXIST) should end Sunday's show instead of Owens vs. Rollins. It's like watching some kids

movie about rival Little League teams where the parents are more into the fighting than the adults and that's getting really, really annoying.

Just let HHH come back and do the match with Rollins at Survivor Series like they should, rather than stretching this ALL THE WAY TO FREAKING WRESTLEMANIA BECAUSE HHH IS WORTHY OF THE BIG STAGE. That main event and these stupid angles ticked me off tonight like they haven't in a long, long time and that's not good for any show, especially when they're heading into a pay per view.

Results

Rusev vs. Seth Rollins went to a double countout

Braun Strowman b. Sin Cara – Powerslam

Charlotte/Dana Brooke b. Bayley/Sasha Banks – Big boot to Bayley

Cesaro b. Sheamus – Neutralizer

New Day/Enzo and Big Cass/Sami Zayn b. Shining Stars/Chris Jericho/Anderson and Gallows – Bada Boom Shaka Lacka to Primo

Brian Kendrick b. Gran Metalik, Rich Swann and Cedric Alexander – Captain's Hook to Alexander

Roman Reigns b. Kevin Owens – Reign escaped the cage

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