

Clash of Champions 2016: Champions Clashing At A Champion's Level

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Location: Bankers Life Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, Indiana

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

It's the first Raw only pay per view and things are starting to get interesting around here. Tonight's main event is Seth Rollins challenging Kevin Owens for the WWE Universal Championship but the big question is what role HHH will play in the whole thing. Other than that we have Roman Reigns challenging Rusev for the US Title and New Day defending the Raw Tag Team Titles against Anderson and Gallows. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Alicia Fox vs. Nia Jax

Rematch from Raw when Jax mauled Alicia in a no contest. Fox runs right at her with a dropkick but gets rammed hard into the buckle for her efforts. Something like a half nelson chinlock keeps Fox in trouble and her kicks to the head have no effect. Back up and Nia misses a charge in the corner, allowing Fox to get in a few dropkicks to little avail. A high crossbody sets up the scissors kick for two and that's probably it for Alicia. Nia runs her over and hits her Samoan drop for the pin at 4:56.

Rating: D+. That's exactly what this should have been as Fox gave her just a little more challenge than usual but there was little doubt about what was going to happen here. Nia should be one of the next challengers to the Women's Title and it would be cool to see her against some of the top stars in the division soon. Alicia was fine here and looked as good as she always does.

The opening video focuses completely on the titles and what it means to be champion. It's exactly what you would expect here and nothing out of

the box whatsoever.

Raw Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Anderson and Gallows

New Day is defending but first they have to talk about two guys trying to split them from their titles like Brangelina. Of course, Anderson and Gallows are the kind of guys who give out raisins at Halloween and wear tube socks with flip flops. Anderson and Gallows start fast by taking out Big E. on the floor and Liger Bombing Kofi for a close two in the first thirty seconds. Even Woods takes a beating on the floor and has Francesca II thrown at his feet.

Kofi can't get a sunset flip so he dropkicks Gallows instead and makes the diving tag off to Big E. The Warrior Splash crushes Anderson but he knees Big E. in the face to block the spear through the ropes. Gallows comes in off another tag and the Boot of Doom gets two with Kofi having to dive in for a save. It's back to Kofi, who dives right into a spinebuster for two more.

Anderson and Gallows are a step ahead of them here and it's working really well. A chokeslam plants Kofi but he gets out of the Magic Killer. Big E. tags himself back in and it's Trouble in Paradise into the Big Ending but Gallows pulls Big E. out at the last second. Kofi dives onto Gallows and Woods gets in a Francesca shot, setting up the Midnight Hour to retain the titles at 6:38.

Rating: B+. Where in the world have they been hiding this? They rocked this one throughout and it's one of the fastest paced opening matches I've seen in a very long time. That win should give New Day Demolition's record (which they would get in the middle of December) and that's going to be a big deal. I'm not sure who challenges them next, unless they go with the Sheamus/Cesaro nightmare I've been thinking of for a few weeks now. I loved this though and it was giving me flashbacks to Damien Sandow vs. John Cena: not the most technically classic stuff but I was WAY into the near falls.

WWE Network ad, including Hulk Hogan.

We recap the Cruiserweight Title match which doesn't have much of a

story. TJ Perkins won the title in the Cruiserweight Classic and Brian Kendrick won a four way on Monday to get the shot.

Perkins says he's nervous but knows what it takes to get here. Kendrick knows the same thing but TJ is confident he's keeping his title. WHY WAS THIS NOT ON RAW????

Cruiserweight Title: TJ Perkins vs. Brian Kendrick

Kendrick is challenging. Perkins comes out to a video game style theme as we hear about Kendrick driving Perkins to wrestling lessons because TJ didn't have a driver's license yet. They trade waistlock takedowns to start and Kendrick slows it down with a headlock. The threat of a kneebar sends Kendrick bailing to the ropes and the floor.

TJ goes after the veteran and gets caught in a veteran move as Kendrick ties him up in the ring skirt. Back in and TJ grabs a Muta Lock but Kendrick drops him throat first across the top rope to start in on the neck. Kendrick stretches on the neck and kicks at the head, only to have TJ come back with a double chickenwing into an atomic drop.

Three Amigos look to set up something on top but Kendrick breaks it up. That's fine with TJ as he dives off the top with a hurricanrana to take Brian from the apron to the floor. Back in again and the Captain's Hook is countered into the kneebar but Brian gets out and grabs Sliced Bread #2. Perkins pops back up and hits a modified enziguri to set up the kneebar to retain at 10:32.

Rating: C+. Who is TJ Perkins, who is Brian Kendrick and why should I care? Neither guy has a character, neither guy is overly interesting and I only saw one of them on Raw. What was supposed to be interesting here and who was I even supposed to cheer for? They've got a LONG way to go with this match and letting them have a pretty standard match on pay per view with no story isn't going to get them anywhere.

Post match Perkins gets interview time but Kendrick comes in for a handshake, which turns into a headbutt to the champ.

Cesaro is ready for the final match in the best of seven series. Aren't

we all.

We look back at matches 1-6.

Sheamus vs. Cesaro

It's the final match in the best of seven series and the winner gets a championship opportunity, whatever that's going to mean. Sheamus starts fast with some right hands but gets uppercut off the apron. The uppercut train makes things worse for Sheamus so he goes for the bad shoulder to take over. A top rope clothesline gets two on Cesaro but he stops a charging Sheamus by raising a boot.

Cesaro's DDT gets two and he actually follows it up with a 619 of all things. Well that's fresh. Three straight Irish Curses get two for Sheamus and we hit the Cloverleaf. The Brogue Kick is countered into the Swing which sets up the Sharpshooter to make Sheamus scream. Unfortunately it doesn't make him tap (meaning the feud would be over) so Cesaro kicks him out to the floor instead.

There's a suicide dive and both guys are down with Cesaro **LANDING ON HIS HEAD**. He's all shaken up (understandably so) but the Brogue Kick still only gets two. The Neutralizer gets the same so they do the big slugout with Cesaro getting the better of it, only to have Sheamus pull himself to the top.

Cesaro is right there with a dropkick and they head to the top with Cesaro falling off but catching a diving Sheamus with an uppercut. White Noise on the floor has Cesaro in even more trouble but he posts Sheamus and sends him over the barricade. Both guys are stunned and somehow this isn't a countout yet. Cesaro's arm is banged up and the match is a no contest at 16:49.

Rating: B. I WAS KIDDING ABOUT THIS THING CONTINUING!!! Geez man why can't they follow my good ideas? It was entertaining stuff for a power brawl but sweet goodness I stopped caring at least a month ago. We've seen them do this stuff so many times that it just isn't fun to watch anymore. Good match but REALLY tired story.

Sheamus has to be carried to the back as Cesaro wants to keep fighting.

Charlotte laughs at Bayley for thinking she belongs here when Bayley can't even beat Sasha.

Sami Zayn vs. Chris Jericho

Not much of a story to this one other than Sami wanting to fight Jericho, who is Owens' friend. Sami gets going a bit too fast with a right hand in the corner but gets punched in the face for his efforts. They head outside with Sami hitting the moonsault off the barricade but the referee accidentally blocks Sami from getting back in, allowing Jericho to get in the springboard dropkick.

Another quick beating on the floor sets up a chinlock on Sami but he fights up and hits his big flip dive to the floor. Back in and a Michinoku Driver gets two for Sami, only to have Jericho score with a step up enziguri. The Lionsault hits knees so Sami sends him outside for the diving DDT. Sami misses a Helluva Kick though and has to counter the Walls into a small package. The Blue Thunder Bomb gets another near fall so Jericho grabs a Codebreaker for the quick pin at 15:19.

Rating: B-. How in the world did that go fifteen minutes? Maybe I'm still trying to get over Cesaro and Sheamus continuing but this was hard to get into. Jericho winning the first match is fine as Sami is much better when he's fighting from behind so I'm hoping this doesn't wrap up immediately.

Stephanie McMahon and Mick Foley give Owens a pep talk. Owens is going to do what matters tonight: try to impress HHH. Oh and show that Rollins is the mistake instead of the man.

We recap the Women's Title match with Charlotte defending against Bayley and Sasha Banks. Charlotte injured Sasha and took the title at Summerslam but Bayley debuted and pinned the champ. A triple threat #1 contenders match was inconclusive so here's another triple threat for the title.

Raw Women's Title: Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks vs. Bayley

Charlotte, with Dana Brooke in her corner, is defending and Sasha takes her straight to the floor to take over. Back in and the challengers knock

Charlotte outside so it's time for a big standoff. Charlotte gets inside again and is chopped right back down, allowing Sasha to tie her in the Tree of Woe.

Some running knees to the chest have Charlotte in trouble but Bayley takes her down and drops the running knee on Charlotte's chest. Dana finally does something by pulling Bayley to the floor with Charlotte and Sasha quickly following. A hard shot to Sasha's face has Charlotte in control but Sasha comes back with a headscissors and forearms. Bayley comes back in with a crossbody and running shoulders/knees in the corner. A miss sets up Sasha's knees to both of them in the corner with Bayley getting the worst of it.

Sasha gets all serious with the forearms but takes too much time going after Dana, allowing Charlotte to hit an STO of all things. Some near falls are exchanged and all three are down despite only Charlotte taking a big shot in the form of a Bayley to Belly. Charlotte gets double teamed for a bit but is still able to slam both of them down. A great looking double moonsault gets two on each and Natural Selection has Bayley in trouble.

Banks makes the save with the Bank Statement but Dana makes the save, leaving Bayley to grab a rollup for two more. Bayley has to break up another Bank Statement on Charlotte so Sasha puts her in the same hold. This time it's Charlotte with the save and she throws Sasha into the barricade to make it worse. Back in and Charlotte kicks Bayley into Sasha, setting up a big boot to retain the title at 15:32.

Rating: B+. They're nailing the wrestling tonight and the women have another awesome match because they just can. This was all kinds of fun with Charlotte looking great (especially with that moonsault), Sasha being her usual tough self and Bayley looking more than capable of hanging with either of them. If you give these women the chance to do something special, they're going to knock it out of the park one day.

Kickoff show recap.

We recap Roman Reigns vs. Rusev. Reigns started going after US Champion Rusev and even ruined his wedding celebration by shoving Lana into a

cake. Now normally that would be a heel act but it's Roman Reigns so we'll go with it. The match was scheduled to take place last month but Reigns attacked Rusev before the match. Again: acts of a hero.

US Title: Rusev vs. Roman Reigns

Rusev is defending. They strike it out to start with Rusev being knocked out to the floor. Back in and Rusev gets two off a spinwheel kick as the fans go with LET'S GO RUSEV/RUSEV SUCKS. That's certainly a new one. Now they switch over to the same thing for Reigns which fits a bit better. Some kicks to the ribs have Reigns in trouble but he comes back with clotheslines like any good face would. I mean, Reigns isn't a good face but that's what they do.

Reigns goes shoulder first into the post and the fans chant for CM Punk. Oh come on. We're seven minutes in. There's no way Punk can last that long. Back in and Rusev grabs a waistlock so we get a DELETE chant. A Samoan drop puts Rusev on the floor and Reigns hammers away but realizes this has to be back inside.

Rusev kicks him in the head for two but Reigns comes right back with a Superman Punch. The spear hits so Lana pulls the referee out and gets ejected as a result. Reigns gets in some apron kicks but gets caught in the Accolade. As you might expect, Reigns powers out and hits the spear to win the title at 17:11.

Rating: C+. As usual this was good but I have no reason to cheer Roman after any of this. Reigns is still a jerk and a horrible face in the vein of Diesel (who, also like Reigns, was screwed up by poor booking). He's fine in between the bells but the setup is always lousy and I have no reason to cheer for him because he barely has a character.

Rollins tells Stephanie and Mick that he's going to prove them wrong.

We recap the main event. Owens won the vacant Universal Title and Rollins was granted a rematch by Mick Foley. The real story here though is which of these two can impress HHH as Owens wants to prove him right but Rollins wants to prove him wrong. In other words: the wrestlers are here for the sake of impressing the bosses because that's how WWE works.

Raw World Title: Seth Rollins vs. Kevin Owens

Rollins is challenging and has to go after Owens as he heads to the floor early on. The champ is dropped in a heap so Rollins throws him back inside for some chops in the corner. A Blockbuster gets two but it's too early for the Pedigree or the springboard knee. The champ gets smart by kicking Rollins in the knee and hitting a great looking spike DDT. Some kicks to the back get two more and Owens stays on the knee.

A big backdrop over the top sends Rollins down hard onto the knee and Owens follows with a Cactus Elbow. We hit the chinlock and Owens promises to make Rollins fade to black. Owens: "FADE TO BLACK! GET IT???" After some shouting about being the foundation, Owens gets turned inside out with a clothesline. A quick backbreaker gets two for Seth and it's time for the Spanish announce table.

That's for later apparently as Rollins takes him back inside for a Pedigree attempt, only to have Kevin superkick him in the leg. Rollins hits the jumping knee to the head but gets superkicked again. Seth gets in an enziguri before going down though and both guys are stunned. The springboard knee is countered into the pumphandle backbreaker for two on Seth so Owens goes up.

A super gutbuster (ala Dean Malenko) sets up a quick frog splash for two more and both guys are down. Owens takes it back to the floor and sets up the other table. A quick SUCK IT to the referee and another to Rollins sets up a missed backsplash. Back in and Seth gets in a frog splash of his own for a near fall of his own.

Rollins throws in his own SUCK IT and the Pedigree gets two with Chris Jericho coming out to put Owens' foot on the ropes. A chase scene gives us the obvious ref bump and of course Rollins gets the Pedigree a few seconds later. Jericho interferes again but gets sent outside, allowing Seth to hit a suicide dive. Owens takes one as well but here's another referee as Owens hits the Pop Up Powerbomb to retain at 25:09.

Rating: B. They really couldn't have HHH come out there so the feud could actually go somewhere? Owens winning is the right call as it's too early for him to lose yet (you know, aside from losing to Reigns on Monday) and

Rollins can claim a screwjob to keep the feud going. By feud of course I mean with HHH and Stephanie, who are the top villains on the show. Still.

Jericho: "WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS!"

Overall Rating: A-. I had a great time here and there wasn't a single bad match on the show. Unfortunately, as they ALWAYS DO, Raw went on too long and started to kill some of the mood. That would be the part that wasn't killed by Sheamus vs. Cesaro continuing for reasons far beyond the mental capabilities of normal humans. It's a really good show but trim off a match or so (and redo the Cruiserweight stuff from the start) and it's a much better show.

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