

Best of 2016: Worst Major Show of the Year

Let's move on to the far more entertaining part of these things: the bad side. There's less to cover here but we're going to start with one of the big ones: the Worst Major Show of the Year. WWE is notorious for being able to put on some horrible shows and today we're going to look at what their absolute worst of the year really was. I know some of these might not be the worst shows but they're the worst options available. These are in no particular order, as usual.

1. Tables Ladders and Chairs

We'll start with one of the last major shows of the year as we look at "Smackdown Live's" last offering. This is always an odd show because it's almost all about the gimmicks and the violence. The problem with that is it forces a lot of matches into gimmicks that really don't need to exist in the first place. For instance, was there any reason for Kalisto vs. Baron Corbin to be a chairs match other than the show required that one exist?

It also didn't help that most of the matches were just ok at best. The main event (AJ Styles vs. Dean Ambrose in the show's namesake match for the Smackdown World Title) was by far the best thing about the show but it really wasn't strong enough to make up for a rather lackluster show. That tends to be the case with this show almost every year and that's not a good thing.

"Tables Ladders and Chairs 2016" was a watchable enough show but that doesn't mean it's a show that needs to exist. I've never been a fan of having these shows because the calendar says so and it's rarely proven to work. On top of that, the use of these gimmick matches on a single show weakens those gimmicks later on in the year. We can't have a TLC match when the show calls for it other than there's one at the end of the year just because it's December. That doesn't make sense and it almost never works.

2. Payback

I went back and forth on this one for a long time but the more I thought about it, the more I thought of the annoying decisions and

how many of them I have to sit through today. This was the show where we had a Natalya vs. Charlotte match end in a Montreal Screwjob reference for the sake of keeping the title on a Flair. I mean, ignore the fact that IT WAS NINETEEN YEARS AGO and add in the fact that it was for another Charlotte vs. Natalya match when the fans were begging for Sasha Banks.

Other than that we had what should have been the layup of the summer with Cesaro winning the Intercontinental Title from Miz. The champ tapped but AGAIN WWE found a way to avoid giving Cesaro a big win for the sake of....well to be fair Miz keeping the title wasn't the worst thing in the world but it really should have been Cesaro getting the title for a change.

Now, that being said, there were two Match of the Year candidates on the show and that should have been enough to make the show great. However, those two big issues are just enough to pull it down to the lower levels of the shows this year. It might not be the worst but those two decisions were so annoying that they took so much of my enjoyment away from the rest of the show.

3. Fastlane

Now we're getting somewhere. Fastlane wasn't anything interesting in 2015 and that's the case again with "Fastlane 2016". They might as well just call the show "Filler 2016" or "Annual Car Themed Show" and it would be just about the same. Most of the wrestling went nowhere and the main event only confirmed the obvious "Wrestlemania XXXII" main event that we all knew was coming.

If the triple threat between Roman Reigns, Dean Ambrose and Brock Lesnar wasn't clear enough, we also had a live interview with Edge and Christian talking to New Day (which was nowhere near as funny as you might expect) and Curtis Axel vs. R-Truth on a pay per view. Is that really the best you can do on a three hour pay per view? A lot of the wrestling was tolerable but really, this just didn't need to exist.

That sums up "Fastlane 2016" as perfectly as anything else could: the show didn't need to exist. Stephanie basically made the main event on a whim and that made it illogical to go along with the fact that it wasn't really interesting. The show was watchable but pay per views really should be more than just filler, which is all "Fastlane 2016" really was.

4. Roadblock: End of the Line

This is a show that really isn't going to age well and I'm not really surprised. Overall, this show really didn't need to exist and I think everyone knew it. The biggest problem here, as is the case so often on "Monday Night Raw", is the lack of interest in the main event. The wrestling itself was fine with Kevin Owens defending against Reigns being fine but absolutely nothing interesting whatsoever.

The problem really boils down to the fact that nothing feels special. It's not a show that I'm ever going to want to watch again and that's rarely a good sign. I spent most of the show waiting on it to end and only enjoyed parts of it because some of the wrestling was good. This really is a case where the individual parts don't add up to the whole score which doesn't fill you with hope.

Finally, there's the name. Was there really no other name available than Roadblock, which already took place back in February? Come up with any generic name (Vengeance, No Way Out, Over the Limit etc) and forget this whole obsession with car names. They hammer the idea in well enough and then have such a boring build that the show is only good in spite of its card. That's really not too good.

5. Backlash

"Smackdown Live" started having its own pay per view as well and for the most part the show was spent crowning new champions. The entire roster was basically brand new and starting from scratch, meaning they had almost nothing going on coming in. Ambrose was the Smackdown World Champion but wound up losing the belt to Styles in the only really good match of the night.

Aside from that, the Usos wrestled twice, Kane defeated Bray Wyatt and Dolph Ziggler managed to lose another match, which was apparently even more important than his World Title shot back at "Summerslam 2016". You really could have accomplished most of these things on a few major episodes of "Smackdown Live" instead of doing all of it on one pay per view, but they didn't have much else to use to fill in a pay per view.

You could probably attribute a lot of the issues on the show to not having enough time to really establish things before getting to a pay per view. Then again, that's how so much works in WWE: it doesn't matter what's going on in the stories because it's all about

getting things going as quickly as possible. If that means the pay per view doesn't need to exist and suffers as a result, so be it.

6. Wrestlemania XXXII

Oh boy we had to get to this one eventually. Where do I even start with this one? Ah well how about with the run time? If you take away the two hour pre-show, this was still a nearly five hour wrestling show and that's WAY too long. This problem came from the simple fact of having too much crammed onto the show. Be it Rock taking nine minutes to get to the ring, Undertaker vs. Shane McMahon taking half an hour (not even counting entrances and post match stuff) or the main event going twenty seven minutes in front of a worn out crowd, this was too long of a show.

The build wasn't great either and a lot of that is due to injuries. It's fairly clear that the big Undertaker match was supposed to be against Cena but, due to the injuries up and down the card, the best we could get was McMahon. Now, in theory, that match probably shouldn't have gone half an hour but then McMahon doesn't get to do his big dive off the cage and that just wouldn't be any fun.

The show is much more disappointing than bad but that's still covering quite a bit of ground. The biggest show of the year shouldn't feel like a never ending night of boredom with matches seemingly ending with a main goal of making the audience wonder what the WWE is thinking. That was the case with Styles vs. Jericho (which I've lightened up on) and New Day vs. League of Nations, which really isn't how things should be going. It's not a good show and that's much more due to being boring than bad, which is often even worse.

7. Survivor Series

This is another case of the main event being all that people are going to remember and in this situation, I'm not sure if that's a good thing or not. I've thought about Goldberg vs. Lesnar a lot now and I'm really not sure what it really means. I don't know if I should be mad about it or not but I know it made an impact. Unfortunately, when the main thing people remember about your show is a match lasting ninety seconds, there's a lot left to be desired.

The other problem is how unbalanced this show really felt. You had the men's Survivor Series match lasting nearly an hour while the tag team and women's versions felt like they were rushed out there

because we needed to fill in time elsewhere. The big match is still good but it took up so much time from everything else and that's not a good thing.

Overall, this show is all over the place and unfortunately that doesn't pan out all that well. It's definitely one of the weaker shows of the year and when your show is approaching five hours counting the pre-show (those thinks are way too pesky) with ninety seconds basically defining the entire thing, there's almost no way for it to really work. The show is a pretty big mess with an infamous main event which overshadows all the good, leaving it pretty low on the WWE charts.

8. Bound For Glory

It just wouldn't be right if I didn't put a TNA show on here and while it's still a stretch to call anything TNA does major, this is about as good as it's going to get. The problem here isn't so much that anything is bad but much more along the lines of it's just kind of there. You know, much like almost everything else TNA does.

As is far too often the case in TNA, Bound For Glory just kind of came and went without anything of note going on. I had to look back at the review to remember anything about it, including the main event. That's a really bad sign for TNA when the show was just a few months ago. The Great War was good enough and a big spectacle but that doesn't mean the match was, you know, good.

I'm really not sure what else there is to say about this show. Like, what else even happened here? The World Title didn't change hands in a mostly Impact level main event. The X-Division Title match was good but, again, really nothing worst checking out. Like I said, for the biggest show of the year, that's really not a good sign.

It's not a good sign that I had to keep dropping nominees from the list because they really weren't all that bad. Really, there are only a few options to really pick from here and there's only one major option: "Wrestlemania XXXII". The show is a glorified disaster with barely any standout matches and a horrible aftertaste in many of the fans' mouths. When fans are leaving the show early to watch the ending of the show on the WWE Network, it's clear that you're doing something very wrong.

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