

Best of 2016: Worst Match of the Year

This is another big one and something more interesting than several of these. We've all seen some bad matches from WWE every single week and it's always fun to go back and look at what might be the worst of them all. In case you might be a bit slow today, we're looking at the worst matches of the year in WWE. As usual, these are in no particular order.

1. Brock Lesnar vs. Dean Ambrose – Wrestlemania XXXII

We're hitting the ground running with a no holds barred street fight between two people who should have been able to beat the heck out of each other. That's basically what was teased as we came into this match with various hardcore legends giving Ambrose weapons to use, such as a chainsaw and a barbed wire baseball bat. On paper, this had the potential to be one of the best fights of the year.

And it just wasn't. Lesnar destroyed Ambrose for the majority of the match and unfortunately that was the trend for most of Lesnar's matches over the year. Ambrose hung around for a good while and had a few hope spots but above all else this was just boring. The aforementioned weapons were brought in but not really used as the chainsaw didn't work and the barbed wire bad shot missed (of course). One F5 later and Ambrose was done.

This was really just about being boring than bad and that's not a good thing. The problem with Lesnar was the fact that almost no one was able to do anything to him and he would just disappear for months on end while the loser would be stuck doing nothing. Ambrose was treated like a jobber and then won the World Title a few months later. It's hard to overlook Ambrose's complete destruction here though and that's not a good thing.

2. Carmella vs. Nikki Bella – Tables, Ladders and Chairs

If you want to see why so many people don't like Bella, this is where you start. The story behind the match was Carmella calling Bella out for being a reality star with everything handed to her and whose whole relationship with John Cena was based on her fame. Instead of taking this as a bunch of insults like they really were,

Bella basically said “Yeah, what’s your point?”

A No DQ match was set up and it all fell apart from there. Carmella worked on the knee for most of the match and then Bella just popped up like there was no injury, shrugged off everything Carmella did to her and won clean. In other words: let’s all praise Bella because she’s so amazing and interesting when she treats so many people like they’re beneath her and acts all serious because she’s famous or whatever WWE wants you to buy at this point.

Above all else though, the match wasn’t any good to go along with a horrible story. Carmella could be something special in the division going forward but this is another loss to Bella, who really doesn’t seem phased by all of the insults and rather true statements because she’s famous and therefore above any criticism. That’s not interesting and it’s even worse when the match was horrible.

3. Natalya vs. Charlotte – Payback

You know what’s a bad idea? Pushing a feud over and over long past the point where it stopped being interesting. You know what’s an even worse idea? Having the ending to a match tied back into the Montreal Screwjob, which has been brought up over and over again for years despite it being less interesting and more eye roll inducing every single time it comes up.

Yes, somehow in 2016, we got another Montreal Screwjob finish to a match and they made it even better by tying it into the idea of Charles Robinson being a huge fan of the Flair Family. It felt like a way to back out of a story without actually giving us anything logical or a good idea in general. Charlotte vs. Natalya wasn’t the best story in the world in the first place and then giving us a bad ending made things even worse.

This is a case where the booking brings what could have been a totally fine match down. It’s a stupid decision that feels like a way for WWE to chuckle at themselves and stretch their story out even longer because, for some reason, Sasha Banks wasn’t allowed to face Charlotte until later in the year so we were stuck with something like this. Lucky us indeed.

4. Shane McMahon vs. Undertaker – Wrestlemania XXXII

Let’s get this out of the way right now: McMahon was pretty clearly a replacement after names like Cena and Randy Orton were both left

off the card due to injuries. Either of those two against Undertaker inside the Cell would seem like a much better main event level match but this was about as good as we were going to get. Based on that, this match deserves a little bit of a break.

However, that doesn't make up for the fact that it was one of the worst executed matches I've seen WWE put together in a long time. First and foremost, I do not accept that McMahon can give Undertaker a real run for his money, including kicking out of a chokeslam and Last Ride as well as surviving Hell's Gate. This is the same Undertaker who took Lesnar to the limit just a few months earlier but now he's having issues with McMahon? Really?

Couple that with the THIRTY MINUTE run time (longer than Undertaker vs. Shawn Michaels, Undertaker vs. Mankind, Undertaker vs. Lesnar (either time) and Undertaker vs. Edge among other Cell matches) and there was almost no way this was going to work. The big dive, while entertaining, was also terrifying (assuming you ignore the crash pad underneath the table) and not enough to save the match. This should have been fifteen minutes long and a glorified squash rather than a competitive match that lasted twice as long. But hey, you have to fill that six hour run time somehow.

5. Dean Ambrose vs. Chris Jericho – Extreme Rules

Here's a story about a potted plant named Mitch, who became the plot point of a feud between these two major stars. For some reason Ambrose was given his own talk show to replace the "Highlight Reel" and he brought Mitch in as a decoration. Jericho broke the plant over Ambrose's head and a huge feud erupted, eventually setting up a cage with weapons match at "Extreme Rules 2016".

What followed was a nearly thirty minute long match with the weapons barely being used and the plant (one of the weapons included) not being used AT ALL. If there has ever been a match that missed the point worse than this one, it hasn't happened recently. The match was a watchable brawl at times but the big problem is it was supposed to be all about the violence rather than just some mild brawling.

In a word, this one missed. There's more to a match than what you do between the bells. You also have to do the things that make sense instead of just doing something that you want to do. The whole point of this match should have been the plant (as ridiculous a premise as

that is in the first place) but it wasn't even touched, despite the fans waiting on it to be picked up at some point. I'm sure that has nothing to do with the fans not being all that into the match at times.

6. Triple H vs. Roman Reigns – Wrestlemania XXXII

This is a match that was doomed from the start. To begin with, the fans really weren't interested in seeing Reigns in the main event of the biggest show of the year. Making it even worse was Triple H, whose feud with Reigns hadn't been interesting either and really wasn't doing anything to make the fans care that much more. On top of that, by the time the match began (counting the pre-show), "Wrestlemania XXXII" had run for about six and a half hours. Think about that for a minute and wonder how tired you would be.

It didn't help that they then went on to have a twenty seven minute match (not counting Stephanie McMahon's WAY too long intro with some weird Mad Max theme) which was built around working on the arm instead of the violence and anger that the match needed. It was all about standing around, waiting on the inevitable Reigns spear and pin that the fans were dying to boo. Not exactly main event caliber stuff there.

That's the part that really brings this down: it was the main event of the biggest show of the year, making it probably the biggest match of the year by default. You can't go with a match this dull with a bad story after all this horrible buildup and expect it to work in any way. This match was a disaster and neither of the two has really gotten over it in the nine months since it's taken place.

7. Randy Orton vs. Brock Lesnar – Summerslam

Again, this one has to do with the stage. This wasn't some nothing pay per view like "Battleground 2016" or "Fastlane 2016". No, this was the second biggest show of the year and the main event should be a major deal instead of just some nothing match. The match was even hyped up over a month in advance with Orton being announced as Lesnar's opponent a full pay per view in advance.

What wound up happening? A squash. Lesnar absolutely flattened Orton, defeating him in less than thirteen minutes with Orton managing a quick RKO and elevated DDT for his lone important offense. Other than that, Lesnar squashed him with a string of German suplexes and F5's before beating Orton so badly that his head

was busted open and the match had to be stopped.

That's it. That's how the main event of the second biggest show of the year ended. I don't know if that bleeding was the planned ending or not but the build towards it certainly wasn't the most interesting idea in the world. It was even more of Lesnar destroying someone with almost no recourse before walking away. Orton didn't need to defeat Lesnar here but he should have at least given him a challenge, which wasn't the case here.

All of these matches have something bad about them but only one of them had the honor of being the main event of the biggest show of the year and that's enough to make it the worst match of the year. Aside from Reigns spearing Stephanie McMahon, there was nothing here that entertained me. It was a disaster up and down and there's really no way around that.

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