

Best of 2016: Worst Angle of the Year

We're down to the final two and this is one of the harder ones to get through. Over the years, wrestling tries all kinds of things to get their wrestlers over. In this case, we're going to be looking at the worst angles of the year. Which stories that WWE put effort behind wound up going nowhere and doing more harm than good for everyone involved? As usual, these are in no particular order.

1. Cesaro and Sheamus' Excellent Adventure

Over the course of the end of the summer and a good chunk of the fall, Sheamus and Cesaro engaged in a best of seven series for a future championship opportunity. While the matches were entertaining enough, the fans really seemed to get tired of the same match over and over again. I was one of them and, knowing WWE, I had a bad feeling they would somehow have the series end in a draw and give Sheamus and Cesaro a Tag Team Title match instead.

AND THAT'S JUST WHAT THEY DID! No matter how much people were sick of seeing them fight, now it was time to see them as a tag team who still fought each other despite going after a title. They actually wound up winning the titles off New Day but that doesn't really make up for everything we had to sit through on the way there.

This was a good example of having to put up with what WWE wanted whether we were interested in seeing it or not. While the end result wasn't the worst, it was the equivalent of going to the dentist, having a tooth pulled, and then hearing your condescending dad say "oh come on it wasn't THAT bad". Yeah, actually it was that bad and in this case it took the better part of four months to finally get to the point.

2. Emmalina Debuts. Eventually.

Injuries are horrible things in any sport and wrestling in particular as there's no off season to eat up some of the down time. In this case, Emma was put down with a horrible back injury that has left her off TV for several months. While she's been working house shows as a special guest referee for some of the women's six man tags, she hasn't been seen on WWE TV in a long time.

Well not live at least. Instead we've been getting vignettes for the Makeover of Emmalina, which really seems to just be Emma in various swimsuits. During her time on the main roster, Emma hasn't exactly been one of the women to turn up the sex appeal but that's what we're getting here for some reason. These vignettes have been going on for months now and there's no indication that they'll be ending anytime soon.

The worst case scenario is that this is the female version of Brodus Clay. You might remember that idea: over the course of several months, we were teased with the unveiling of Clay as a monster (which we had seen before). What we wound up with was Clay as a dancer in bright red and called the Funkasaurus. I liked the surprise, but I have a bad feeling about what WWE might find funny.

3. Anderson and Gallows Aren't Funny

Speaking of comedy, we have this gem. Over the course of the year, Anderson and Gallows chased New Day for the Tag Team Titles, just like several other teams. Anderson and Gallows came close to defeating them a few times but could never actually get their hands on the belts. They could however do one thing over and over: put on some of the worst, most unfunny vignettes you'll ever see.

The big problem with them was they tried to use the WWE brand of "comedy", which is to beat you over the head with the same joke until your head hurts from getting the same idea over and over again. These were such brilliant ideas as "New Day is old and we work at a retirement home" or "we're doctors and want to crush New Day's testicles". That's really the best thing they can do to sell a title match on a pay per view?

Overall it just wasn't a good idea and I don't know of anyone who actually enjoyed the vignettes. They weren't funny and they didn't advance the story to any special degree. Anderson and Gallows might be able to get in a few little chuckles here and there but they're not the kind of people who are going to get somewhere by just saying "Hey, here are jokes! LAUGH WITH US!"

4. Roman Reigns vs. Lana

I really don't even know where to start with this one. So back in the fall, Reigns started feuding with Rusev over the United States Championship. Around the same time, Rusev and Lana were married and spent a lot of time bragging about how amazing their wedding was.

One of these nights included a party, which of course had a cake. As you might expect, Reigns came out and crashed the party which included shoving Lana's face into the cake.

Let me make that a little bit more clear: Rusev and Lana were celebrating the fact that they were married and Reigns shoved Lana's face into a cake for no real reason other than they were considered bad guys. How in the world is this supposed to make me want to cheer for Reigns in the situation? In what way is he the good guy in this whole story?

I know WWE is obsessed with the idea of making Reigns into the king of all things good and wholesome about wrestling. Somehow though, I don't think this is the best way to go about the whole thing. People aren't going to look at Reigns and think he did anything great. Well in theory at least, but I'm not sure I'd want those people to be supporting my product in the first place. This is just a horrible idea that doesn't make a bit of sense, unless you're in some weird WWE style mindset.

5. Naked Enzo Amore

It wasn't a good year for Lana and these stupid stories. One night on "Monday Night Raw", Big Cass locked Amore out of their dressing room and, because it's a wrestling show, Amore was missing his clothes. If that's not bad enough, he then ran into Lana. This turned into an awkward flirting session with Lana seemingly getting into the idea. Rusev wasn't cool with it though and wound up destroying Amore as a result.

This continued the following week as Rusev and Lana seemingly had a fight, which led to Amore offering a shoulder to cry on. As a result, Lana invited Amore to her hotel room for some, ahem, entertainment. Since Amore isn't the smartest guy in the world, he accepted and wound up getting one heck of a beating from Rusev, who was of course waiting on them in a trap.

What in the world was the point of something like this? I know it gets us to Cass vs. Rusev but did we really have to sit through Amore hitting on a married woman while standing around without any clothes on? It was awkward, it felt really out of place and while funny, it really wasn't the best way for them to go.

6. James Ellsworth

Now this is a case where your individual miles may vary. Ellsworth debuted in WWE back in July in a match where he was completely destroyed by Braun Strowman. While being off TV for a bit, Ellsworth would be brought back as a mystery partner for AJ Styles, which resulted in several weeks worth of appearances, including a series of victories over Styles in non-title matches, one of which gained Ellsworth a contract.

Those losses are where a lot of people gave up on the story. Ellsworth wasn't around long and he was defeating the Smackdown World Champion. I mean, Ambrose was helping him but that doesn't make it the best idea in the world. It was all about setting up something between Ambrose and Styles and the title was never in any real danger but the champion still lost three times in a row.

That being said, Ellsworth being around was still very tiresome for a lot of people. He overstayed his welcome in the main event and even influenced the ending of the main event at "Tables Ladders and Chairs 2016". It also doesn't help that Ellsworth didn't really gain anything as a result. He's still the comedy goof that was fun to cheer for over a few weeks but then was just kind of there as the story wouldn't end.

7. Shane McMahon's Lock Box

If the Lana stories were just stupid, this one is something that was so confusing that a lot of the audience just gave up trying to figure out what was going on. The problem here was very simple: we never actually got an explanation for what was going on. Shane returned and got into an argument with his father Vince over who would get to run "Monday Night Raw".

Shane brought up something about a lock box that contained evidence of Vince doing....something so Shane agreed to put up its contents against running the show. The match wound up being against the Undertaker at "Wrestlemania XXXII" and Shane lost (thankfully). Depending on who you believe, Shane was originally going to win but Undertaker put his foot down.

This brings us to the second problem. After the match with Undertaker was over, Vince just gave Shane control of "Monday Night Raw" anyway, making the whole thing a big waste of time. It was a fun idea when Shane returned but the whole thing wound up being a huge mess over something that was never made clear in the first

place. And what did this wind up being? More McMahon drama, because that's all any of the big stories around WWE would become.

8. Triple H Likes ME Better!

Oh boy this one. Do you remember "Clash of the Champions 2016" with its main event of Seth Rollins vs. Kevin Owens for the Universal Title? The match itself was fine but do you remember why it was happening? Allegedly it was over the title but I'm talking about the real reason. What were most of the promos about and what did Rollins say his end goal was?

Well that would be proving to Triple H and Stephanie McMahon that HE should have been the chosen one that was receiving the Authority's backing instead of Owens. That's right: this was all about Owens and Rollins trying to impress the McMahon and Triple H, the latter of whom had handed Owens the title in a four way elimination match. Think about that for a minute: this match was about people trying to impress their boss, as in the top heel of the company who was never there.

And people wonder why the match and feud was so poorly received. This whole thing was a complete mess and made both guys look like someone who had no idea what they were doing and had no business being anywhere near the main event. When your whole story is about who should have been Triple's protege and featured star. Not a title, not a personal feud and not even fighting over the profits from a lemonade stand. No, this was all about the Authority and how they were really more important than anything else on the show.

9. The Cabinet

How can I put this? Ah yes: the Cabinet WAS NOT FUNNY. I know everyone went election crazy in 2016 and almost every wrestling promotion tried to do something with it (such as making Darren Young great again) but Ring of Honor decided that they needed a full on election committee.

Comprised of Kenny King, Rhett Titus and Caprice Coleman (all with rather stupid nicknames such as the Secretary of Shoulders), the group wanted to make wrestling great again. It was beating you over the head with an idea and it just wasn't funny. Everyone knew the story was dead after the election was over and that's what happened. The team wasn't done though and then it got even worse.

Now the team is called the Rebellion. Yes the Rebellion, which is just below the Revolution on the list of REALLY STUPID TEAM NAMES THAT EVERY PROMOTION HAS HAD SOME VERSION OF OVER THE YEARS. This was really low intelligence and uninspired booking, which isn't something that should be happening in Ring of Honor. Be creative with it somehow because this was a disaster.

As tempted as I am to go with Rollins and Owens, I've got to go with Cesaro and Sheamus. This was a situation where we knew what they were going to do and then we had to sit through it for months on end with only one ending in sight. I have no idea why WWE wanted to do this one storyline so much or why they kept shoving it down our throats but this is what we were getting, whether we liked it or not. Most people didn't and WWE did it anyway, which is why it's the worst angle of the year.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book, KB's Complete Monday Nitro and Thunder Reviews Volume V at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01MQKDV50>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>