

Smackdown – February 14, 2017: Roses Are Red, Violets Aren't Blue, Smackdown Was Good, This Doesn't Rhyme

Smackdown

Date: February 14, 2017

Location: Honda Center, Anaheim, California

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Tom Phillips, David Otunga, John Bradshaw Layfield

There's nothing in between us and Wrestlemania XXXIII at this point with Elimination Chamber out of the way. We still have some big TV to knock off first though and that includes one heck of a main event tonight. Bray Wyatt won the Smackdown World Title in the Elimination Chamber on Sunday but tonight he has to defend against former champion John Cena. Let's get to it.

Long recap of Elimination Chamber kicks things off.

Here's Bray with the title to open the show. After getting a chuckle at the YOU DESERVE IT chants, Bray says Sister Abigail told him this would never be easy. But now, after everything he's gone through, he truly does have the whole world in his hands. Bray welcomes us to the era of Wyatt but here's John Cena to interrupt him.

After waiting for the Roman Reigns levels of booing to cut him off, Cena congratulates Bray on becoming the new champion. John says Bray has already brainwashed the fans because they think he deserves it. Around here, you earn things instead of deserving them so now there's a target on Bray's shoulder. Cue AJ Styles to say that he's already beaten Cena over and over so he wants his one on one rematch for the title right now. Bray seems willing but here's Daniel Bryan to interrupt and make it a triple threat.

Dean Ambrose storms into the building wanting to fight Baron Corbin.

American Alpha vs. Ascension

Non-title. Gable wrestles Viktor to the mat to start and everything breaks down a few seconds later. Alpha is sent outside but come back in off the top with a double clothesline (old Steiner Brothers move) to take us to a break. Back with Gable fighting out of a chinlock, only to get kneed in the face for his efforts. There's something to be said about getting hit square in the face to cut someone off.

Chad gets an armbar over the ropes for a breather but Viktor runs around the ring to cut of the tag. Not that it matters as Gable rolls over for the real hot tag. That means it's time for the suplexes but Chad tags himself back in, leaving Jordan to miss a charge into the corner. Something like an H Bomb gets two on Chad but Grand Amplitude wraps up Viktor for the pin at 9:59.

Rating: C+. I liked this one more than I was expecting to as they've actually made Ascension feel a little more like a threat with just a few good performances. I know we've been told for years that wins and losses don't matter but the last week or so is proof that just one fall can go a long way. Now of course we need some fresh talent on Smackdown and it's WAY too late for this version of Ascension to work but it's better than nothing.

Post match the Usos pop up on screen to say they're coming for the belts. My goodness FIND SOME NEW CHALLENGERS. It feels like they're the only real competition Alpha has had since they debuted.

James Ellsworth is trying to get Carmella to go to dinner when Ambrose comes in. Dean says Carmella is just using him so try online dating. Carmella tells Ellsworth to stand up for her so James kind of does so, only to have Bryan come in and grant Dean a match against Ellsworth for later tonight.

Dean Ambrose vs. James Ellsworth

And never mind as Baron Corbin drags Dean out to the stage. Deep Six into the production area gives us some sparks and Ambrose is out.

We recap Nikki Bella and Natalya fighting backstage at Elimination Chamber, including Bella being knocked into Maryse.

Nikki is in Bryan's office with the boss saying things need to end. Natalya comes in and the arguing begins again. That quickly turns into a fight so Bryan makes it a falls count anywhere match for next week.

Baron says Dean isn't WWE Champion because of him and now Dean is in

the hospital because of him. That's everything you need to know.

Dolph Ziggler is tired of people like Apollo Crews and Kalisto trying to take his spot. If he has to wipe out an entire generation to prove his point, so be it.

Mickie James vs. Becky Lynch

Feeling out process to start with Mickie going for the arm but getting reversed so Becky can take over on the mat. Back up and a shove puts Mickie on the floor, followed by an armbar on Mickie to copy Sunday's tactics. They head outside again and it's a double clothesline to take us to a break.

We come back with Mickie grabbing a chinlock before scoring with a flapjack. The Bexploder gets two on Mickie and a forearm puts her on the floor. James comes up holding her shoulder (which didn't seem to actually hit anything in the crash) but of course she's goldbricking, setting up a spinning kick to Becky's jaw for the pin at 11:58.

Rating: C. The goldbricking might not be the most creative thing in the world but it does play up the idea that Mickie is a veteran who can use her experience to pull off something like that. I'm not wild on them splitting wins on back to back shows but it sets up what should be an entertaining third act.

Here's new Women's Champion Naomi, who says she was hurt at Elimination Chamber. It doesn't matter though because she's coming in to Wrestlemania with this title one way or another. Cue Alexa Bliss to say Naomi is just hiding from the pressure. Naomi could even have her own 30 for 30 special called The Lights Go Out. Bliss is feeling generous though and is giving Naomi a week to get ready for the rematch.

Black History Month video on Nelson Mandela.

TJ Perkins wants us to watch 205 Live.

Smackdown World Title: Bray Wyatt vs. John Cena vs. AJ Styles

Wyatt is defending and this is one fall to a finish. Bray does his entrance and runs into Luke Harper who gives him a pre-match beating. We take a break before the bell and come back with Cena loading up the Shuffle on Styles until Bray pulls him outside. AJ isn't one to be shown up though and hits a big forearm out to the floor.

Back in and a low forearm gets two on Bray but Cena comes back in for the running shoulders to the champ. The AA is countered into a failed Sister Abigail attempt though as Styles comes in with the forearm. Cena plants AJ with the AA for two, followed by Sister Abigail getting the same on Cena with AJ making the save.

Back from a break with AJ slamming Bray onto the announcers' table and dropping a leg to put him through the wood. Cena throws AJ in for another AA but tries a third and gets reversed into the Calf Crusher. That's reversed into the STF but Bray comes back in with the backplash for the last second save. AJ is sent outside and another AA gets two on the champ. The Styles Clash gets the same on Cena and all three are down. Back up again and AJ is sent outside, leaving Bray to grab Sister Abigail for the pin on Cena at 14:05.

Rating: B+. They were spamming the finishers like few matches you'll see these days but at least Wyatt won in a really solid TV match. The fact that Bray pinned Cena clean with his finisher is a great sign and exactly what should have happened here. Cena isn't losing a thing here and Wyatt gets another big fall on his resume. Well done indeed and they even managed to make me buy some of those near falls, which I really didn't expect coming in.

Post match here's Randy Orton for the big staredown. The fans cheer for Orton as Bray says not to listen to it. Orton says he won't fight Bray for the title at Wrestlemania because he pledges loyalty to Wyatt. Bray says that means Orton has the keys to the kingdom and the double pose ends the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Good show here for the most part as they kept me wanting to come back next week (no not for Nikki vs. Natalya 2, which isn't even big enough to earn Roman numerals) and gave us a hot main event. This was a big step up from Sunday and you can see a mixture of upcoming TV plus Wrestlemania plans forming. I liked the show here and that's encouraging coming off a hot Raw.

Results

American Alpha b. Ascension – Grand Amplitude to Viktor

Mickie James b. Becky Lynch – Spinning kick to the head

Bray Wyatt b. AJ Styles and John Cena – Sister Abigail to Cena

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