

Smackdown – March 21, 2017: Oh Shane... Just Stop

Smackdown

Date: March 21, 2017

Location: Mohegan Sun Arena, Uncasville, Connecticut

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, David Otunga, Tom Phillips

We've got two shows left before Wrestlemania XXXIII and it's not likely that any brand new ideas are going to be added to the card. Odds are we'll have Dean Ambrose vs. Baron Corbin confirmed and we're guaranteed to see American Alpha defending the Smackdown Tag Team Titles against the Usos. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of Shane McMahon vs. AJ Styles from last week, including Daniel Bryan firing AJ.

Bryan is in his office when AJ comes in. Shane isn't here tonight but Bryan warns AJ to watch his steps. Styles says tonight, everyone is going to find out what it means to beat up Shane McMahon.

Mauro Ranallo is out sick this week. This is starting to get a bit suspicious.

Here's AJ to the ring for a chat. It's been seven days since he did what he did to Shane and he doesn't feel a bit wrong about his actions. Shane's challenge is accepted because AJ wants to be part of Wrestlemania but the question is why would Shane want to face him at Wrestlemania. As for tonight, he's going to be waiting for Shane to arrive again and we'll see if it's even worse than last week.

Baron Corbin asks Bryan if Dean Ambrose has accepted his Wrestlemania challenge. Bryan hasn't heard from Ambrose in weeks so tonight, Corbin can face Randy Orton.

Tag Team Titles: American Alpha vs. Usos

Alpha is defending after the Usos beat them last week. Jordan takes Jimmy

down to the mat to start and the twins are in early trouble. A double clothesline sends both Usos outside and it's all champions as we take a break. Back with Gable fighting out of a chinlock but getting sent chest first into the buckle ala Bret Hart.

Chad breaks away but gets sent to the floor instead making the tag. That's good for a nine count before Gable is put in the Tree of Woe. Of course he powers up to avoid a charge and the hot tag brings in Jordan. An Angle Slam (they're just trolling us now) gets two on Jey but Jimmy escapes the Steiner Bulldog.

Back to back superkicks puts both champs down and the Superfly Splash is good for a very near fall. Jordan breaks up another splash and Jey is superplexed down. The Steiner Bulldog is only good for two as Jimmy makes the save. I completely bought that as the finish. With the other three down on the floor, Gable moonsaults down onto everyone. Back in and Jordan gets crotched on the middle rope, allowing Jimmy to superkick him down for the pin and the titles at 12:32.

Rating: B+. This was great stuff with some really strong false finishes. They also really surprised me as I didn't think the Usos had a chance after the Superfly Splash was only good for two. It's not like American Alpha has done anything with the titles (not their fault) so maybe changing the belts can give them a shot in the arm for all of a few days. I just hope they don't put the rematch on Wrestlemania because the card just does not have room for it.

AJ is waiting in the parking lot.

Luke Harper wants Bray Wyatt next week.

Miz and Maryse have a special never before seen episode of Total Bellas. It's Maryse as both Bellas (a really, really good look for her) and of course mocking everything the two of them do. Maryse as Nikki: "Of course I'm Nikki! I'M THE ONE WITH THE HAT!" Maryse as Brie: "BRIE MODE!" Cue Miz as John Cena, who has a bunch of rules like no singing. Since Nikki has followed a rule, he'll pop a question to her, meaning he has a big balloon labeled "the question" which he pops.

Again, I have no idea why I'm supposed to boo Miz and Maryse. If you watch the show, which is supposed to be REALITY, this is exactly what Cena and the Bellas are like. Cena is a control freak who has a ridiculous set of rules and the Bellas are two of the dumbest people who have ever lived. Why am I supposed to cheer for them?

Baron Corbin vs. Randy Orton

Corbin shoulders him down to start but gets sent into the corner for some uppercuts and right hands. A hard whip into the post keeps Orton down though and it's off to a break. Back with Corbin sliding underneath the ropes and back in for his clothesline. Orton grabs the powerslam (that's always good looking) but can't hit the elevated DDT.

Instead they go outside with Orton sending him into various metal objects like a good viper is supposed to do. Now the DDT hits but of course it's too early for the first RKO, meaning Corbin gets two off Deep Six instead. They head outside again (happening too often) and Corbin goes into the steps. Back in again and here's Ambrose for the distraction, setting up the RKO for the pin at 12:49.

Rating: C+. Pretty good stuff here as Corbin has the size to make his offense look good against someone like Orton. There was no doubt that Orton was going over here (save for a surprise by Wyatt) because there's no reason to have him lose so close to his biggest match of the year.

Corbin vs. Ambrose for the title is official at Wrestlemania.

Orton is in the back talking about his match when the lights start to flicker. He tells Bray to show himself but here are an army of people in sheep masks to beat Orton down. Bray appears and seems to bless Orton with a red X on the end. Wyatt kneels in front of him and says Orton changed him by exposing his one weakness. The power of Sister Abigail lives inside him forever and it's time to sing.

Breezango vs. John Cena

Tyler Breeze is dressed as Nikki Bella, which is far too common of a thing tonight. Before the match, Fandango gives Cena fashion tickets and

introduces Breeze as his muscle. This brings out the real Nikki. The bell rings and Cena does his normal stuff but here's Breeze to the apron. Nikki comes in to spear him down and hits the Rack Attack 2.0. Stereo STF's give us simultaneous taps at 1:29. For a Southpaw Regional Wrestling related match, I've seen worse.

Carmella vs. Becky Lynch

Natalya is on commentary and comes in to hit Carmella for the DQ.

Post match Mickie James and Alexa Bliss come out for the big brawl with Bliss being the last woman standing.

Time for more Total Bellas with Miz (as Cena) reading his affections for Maryse (as Nikki) off cue cards and giving her a diamond.....Dallas Page yoga set. As we see the kitchen (the TV kitchen where the unseen servants prepare food off camera so we can feel relateable to the show you see), Miz gives her a WWE ring ("It's to scale!"). Later, in the bedroom, which is TOTALLY where Cena sleeps, Miz agrees to tie the knot. On his shoes you see. Maryse is sad to end things. These are hilarious and makes me cheer for Miz and Maryse even more.

AJ is still waiting but is disappointed when Rhyno and Heath Slater arrive. With fifteen minutes left. Why is Shane even bothering to show up at this point?

Actually never mind as Shane is in the arena, which doesn't please AJ. Back from a break with Shane, sporting one heck of a black eye, calling AJ out. We see Styles making the long walk to the ring and he takes his time going through the curtain. AJ wants to apologize but Shane beats on him anyway. Styles suplexes him into the barricade and loads up the announcers' table, only to have Shane hit him in the head with a monitor. Shane goes up top for the big elbow....which MIGHT have grazed AJ's forearm. The fans call BS on it as Shane slowly gets up to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. As is almost always the case this time of year, the wrestling wasn't the point and if you think it was, you're missing the point. This was all about setting up Wrestlemania (and cracking me up with the Total Bellas stuff) and they did so on a bunch of matches. The

Shane elbow looked horrible but I don't think anyone was expecting him to really be able to pull that off after last year's performance. This show did its job, which is more important right now.

Results

Usos b. American Alpha – Superkick to Jordan

Randy Orton b. Baron Corbin – RKO

John Cena b. Fandango – STF

Carmella b. Becky Lynch via DQ when Natalya interfered

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