

Extreme Rules 2017: This Show Just Made the List

Extreme Rules 2017

Date: June 4, 2017

Location: Royal Farms Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T., Corey Graves

It's the night of extreme, which is loosely translated as "night of gimmicky rematches". The main event is a Fatal Five Way for a future shot at Brock Lesnar and the Universal Title, likely coming at next month's Great Balls of Fire. The stories aren't the strongest this time around so it's going to be mostly up to the in-ring action. Let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: Kalisto vs. Apolo Crews

Kalisto has been feuding with Crews and Titus O'Neil for a few weeks now with Titus stealing a tainted win over him last week. Feeling out process to start with the announcers talking about LaVar Ball trying to buy into the Titus Brand. If you don't know who that is, leave it at that and consider it a good day. Kalisto takes over with some speedy technical stuff and sends Crews to the floor for a big springboard dive. He tries another dive but gets kicked in the head for his efforts as we take a break.

Back with Crews holding a front facelock but having to clothesline Kalisto down to break up a comeback. Kalisto makes his real comeback with the corkscrew springboard shoulder as Titus plays cheerleader. A small package gets two on Crews, followed by one heck of a tornado DDT for the same. Crews comes back with a Samoan drop but his standing shooting star only gets two. Titus offers some suggestions but the distraction lets Kalisto hit a quick Salida Del Sol for the pin at 9:35.

Rating: C+. That was a lot better than I expected and if it leads to Crews beating the fire out of Titus, so be it. Basically whatever gets Crews pushed better than he has been so far on the main roster with a bit of a character/personality to him is an improvement, as we've been seeing

him waste away for over a year now. Kalisto continues to be the guy that should be near the top of the cruiserweight show but for now he's just a low level performer who fights heavyweights on the main show. You know, because the cruiserweight division is nonsense

The opening sequence talks about about things going extreme and how this is all about facing Brock Lesnar. You might remember him even though you haven't seen him in two months.

We recap Miz vs. Dean Ambrose. They feuded on Smackdown late last year but now they're both on Raw so we'll just keep it going. Miz got a shot at the title but Ambrose got disqualified, setting up this rematch.

Intercontinental Title: Miz vs. Dean Ambrose

Ambrose is defending and can lose the title via DQ. They start slowly with an exchange of hammerlocks as the announcers talk about this being Miz's 92nd pay per view match. A slap to the face annoys Ambrose so he hammers away in the corner. Dean keeps his cool and sends Miz outside for a suicide dive, followed by a whip into the barricade.

Things settle down though as we make sure that the EXTREME show doesn't get too intense. Another yell from the referee allows Miz to get in an apron DDT for two. A neckbreaker is good for the same and Miz kicks him in the face for good measure. Three corner running dropkicks and the running corner clothesline has Dean in trouble but he's still able to punch Miz out of the air.

Neither finish can hit so Dean sends him outside for another dive. Back in and Ambrose grabs a rollup for two, only to tweak his knee coming off the top. That means it's off to the Figure Four with Dean finally getting over for the rope break. Dean gets crotched on top and Miz pulls him away, taking the turnbuckle pad with him.

The champ catches himself from sending Miz into the buckle but Miz uses the distraction to hit some YES Kicks. The big one is countered into a Figure Four on Miz but another rope grab is good for the break. They both limp on the bad leg for the slugout for a double knockdown before we FINALLY get to the obvious idea as Maryse slaps Miz. The referee says no

and ejects Maryse though, allowing Dean to grab a rollup for two. Miz gets smart though and sends Dean into the referee but that's still not a DQ. Instead Miz hits the Skull Crushing Finale for the pin at 20:02.

Rating: B. I'm happy with Miz getting the title back but sweet goodness they were waiting around until the gimmick played into the ending. The slap not counting was pretty obvious but at least the DQ thing set up the ending. The problem here is very simple though: there's not much interest in these two fighting again because they did it for so long back in December and January. But hey, at least Cena got a marriage proposal in there before they send Miz right back where he was a year ago first right?

Bayley thinks Alexa Bliss was no Rock and Mankind but she's been watching Tommy Dreamer, Sandman and Steve Blackman to get ready for tonight. She also saw Wonder Woman and feels empowered to take the title back.

Sasha Banks/Rich Swann vs. Alicia Fox/Noam Dar

Swann gets a great hometown pop with one fan in particular really seeming happy. How do I know that? It's because they cut to the one fan's reaction during the entrance. The women start but it's off to Dar before anything can happen. That means Swann has to come in to kick Dar in the head a bit before handing it back to Banks. The Bank Statement has Fox in trouble until Dar pulls her to the ropes.

Fox takes over on Sasha for a bit but another kick allows the hot tag to Swann, who gets almost no reaction this time around. A running flip Fameasser drops Dar and the spinning kick to the face makes things even worse. Everything breaks down and Sasha hits the double knees off the top to drop Dar on the floor. Back in and the Phoenix Splash ends Noam at 6:23.

Rating: D+. Well that was filler. Seriously what else can you call something like this? They have a six match card and one of the matches gets less than six and a half minutes. That being said, this was a match that shouldn't have gone any longer because it has no place on a pay per view card. Also why does Swann get to survive the hometown curse?

The winners dance.

Elias Samson sings about how bad Baltimore is. This goes nowhere but does manage to kill off three minutes.

We recap Bayley vs. Alexa Bliss. Alexa kind of cheated to win the title last month and then attacked Bayley with a kendo stick. Tonight it's a kendo stick on a pole match but the question is whether Bayley is capable of getting extreme.

Women's Title: Bayley vs. Alexa Bliss

Bliss is defending and gets sent into the corner early on, only to send Bayley outside. She's too short to reach the stick though, which falls out to the floor instead. A belly to back suplex on the floor makes things worse for Bliss and Bayley grabs the stick. Graves: "It's like she went from Prince Adam to He-Man!" Bayley takes too much time pulling the stick back though and gets speared down, allowing Bliss to hammer away with the stick. The beating is cut off with a Bayley to Belly but Bayley can't follow up. More stick shots knock Bayley silly and the DDT finishes her off at 5:13.

Rating: F. So to recap: Bayley is the biggest star in NXT and then is booked like a huge loser in WWE. The fact that NXT was booked by Dusty Rhodes' protege and WWE is booked by a "creative team" has nothing to do with this I'm sure. Yeah I'm sure they didn't think that the simplest idea in the world (Bayley is an underdog who gets beaten down but keeps coming back because she has heart and loves what she does) needed to be completely redone in a horrible way or anything.

Just hand her the title almost right out of the gate, let her win an overbooked match at Wrestlemania and everything will be fine. It's certainly not creative's fault at all. Nah, it's all on Bayley, just like all those other hot prospects in NXT who just can't make it work for whatever reason on the main roster. All on them of course.

To clarify some of that rambling mess: this was a horribly booked match. The whole idea was building towards Bayley finding her inner anger and using the stick. They built it up well enough and then....nothing. She had

one chance to swing the stick and then Bliss just beat her up to retain in a very short match. There was no late hope spot, there was no comeback and there was nothing for the fans to get behind. This was just a step ahead of a squash instead of something interesting, which makes the last month or two a complete waste. Bliss looked great but Bayley continues to be completely mishandled.

Did I mention I REALLY don't like WWE creative as of late?

Tag Team Titles: Hardy Boyz vs. Cesaro/Sheamus

The Hardys are defending in a cage with both members needing to escape to win, meaning no pinfalls. Cesaro and Sheamus head for the walls and the door to start but the champs pull them back in without much effort. A few whips into the cage set up a few Poetries in Motion against the cage. The advantage doesn't last long as Cesaro sends Jeff into the cage. It's still too early to leave though as Jeff makes the save.

They trade some escape attempts to no avail until Cesaro ax handles Jeff. Sheamus misses the Brogue Kick and gets caught in Matt's tornado DDT to put all four down. The champs are up first and go up the cage, only to have Cesaro and Sheamus make quick saves. Jeff actually manages to get to the floor but that leaves Matt in a handicap match. The Side Effect drops Sheamus and Cesaro is put down as well but Matt can't escape just yet.

Jeff tries to help and even pulls him halfway over the top before Cesaro punches him down to the floor. That means Matt gets pulled back down into the ring for a double Razor's Edge (cool spot). A Brogue Kick drops Jeff again but Matt keeps Sheamus from escaping. Back to back Twists of Fate allows Matt to get his legs over the top until Cesaro hits an uppercut.

A super White Noise knocks Matt silly but here's Jeff to dive off the top with a Whisper in the Wind to take Sheamus and Cesaro down again. Matt gets up and drags Jeff's body towards the door as Cesaro and Sheamus go up over the top at the same time. Matt is on the floor first but can't get Jeff out (again), allowing Cesaro and Sheamus to drop down and win the titles (for a face pop) at 15:45.

Rating: B. Uh, is it just me or does that ending not make sense? Matt and

Jeff escaped first but Jeff's escape is rescinded for going back in? When has that been a rule? It's not the worst ending in the world and I'm fine with Cesaro and Sheamus as champions (imagine saying that six months ago) as they had to get the titles off Matt and Jeff somehow, likely without pinning them. The match being good always helps too.

We recap the Cruiserweight Title match. Austin Aries has lost to Neville twice in a row, both times via some shenanigans. Tonight it's a submission match with Aries coming in on a bad leg, though he made Neville tap in a tag match six days ago.

Cruiserweight Title: Neville vs. Austin Aries

Aries is challenging in a submission match. Feeling out process to start with Neville working on an armbars instead of the taped up neck or bad knee. Aries smacks him in the back and hits a slingshot hilo, only to have Neville bail to the floor to escape the Last Chancery. Back up and Aries tweaks his knee coming off the ropes to give Neville a target. A dragon screw leg whip has the leg in trouble but Aries hits a few shinbreakers with the good leg.

The neckbreaker across the ropes is broken up and Aries might have hurt his arm on the landing. The arm is fine enough for Aries to take Neville's leg out again and grab a figure four until Neville makes the ropes. Ignore this being a SUBMISSION match, meaning the rope shouldn't be a break.

The Rings of Saturn go on Aries in the middle of the ring but he gets his feet to the ropes for another break. Now it's Aries grabbing his own Rings of Saturn, only to have Neville grab the referee. That's the threat of a DQ (ERG!) so Aries lets go to tell the referee not to do it.

Neville gets in a superkick and puts Aries on top but gets caught in a sunset bomb. The Last Chancery goes on but Neville crawls to the floor, only to have the hold stay on. Neville taps to no avail because the fall has to be in the ring. Aries misses the suicide dive to send him crashing to the floor. Back in and the Red Arrow hits Aries' back, setting up the Rings to make Aries tap at 17:23.

Rating: B+. Other than actually growling at the referee to STOP WITH THE DQ THREATS BECAUSE IT'S A FREAKING SUBMISSION MATCH YOU STUPID PEOPLE, this was really entertaining stuff. Above all else though, it needs to be the finish to the feud. Aries has lost every single time and now he lost as clean as you can in a match like this (which STILL shouldn't have disqualifications). Let it be over now and give us Akira Tozawa or someone else challenging for the title.

Great Balls of Fire ad with a 1950s theme because that's the best they can come up with.

Lesnar's title defense will take place at Great Balls of Fire.

We recap the Fatal Five Way, which is really happening because Braun Strowman is injured and we need a new #1 contender. Kurt Angle put five guys in a single match with the winner facing Lesnar next month.

Roman Reigns vs. Seth Rollins vs. Finn Balor vs. Bray Wyatt vs. Samoa Joe

Winner gets Brock next month, one fall to a finish and anything goes. It's a big brawl to start with Reigns being left alone in the ring until Bray Wyatt comes in to keep him from being lonely. Wyatt gets caught on the middle rope for a Samoan drop, followed by one to Joe for good measure.

Balor sends Reigns to the floor, leaving Bray to come back in and beat on Rollins and Joe. The three are sent outside for a big flip dive from Balor, only to have Reigns send him into the barricade. Joe breaks up the apron dropkick to Wyatt and sends Reigns into the steps. There isn't much else to do here other than list off moves, as is so often the case in matches like this one.

Wyatt and Joe get together to hit people with steps, including a shot to Reigns which draws some solid cheers. They officially make a deal and take over on Balor inside as Corey is waiting on them to turn on each other. Seth starts a comeback but gets DDTed onto the steps for his efforts. Bray grabs a chair and cleans house again until he and Joe take turns backslashing the chair onto Balor.

Joe finally misses a charge into a chair and Bray misses the crossbody, allowing Reigns to remember that he's in the match. Roman gets the expected house cleaning segment until Bray takes him outside for a Rock Bottom onto the table. Now it's Rollins coming back with a springboard clothesline on Wyatt, followed by a double Blockbuster to Bray and Joe.

Things speed up with Rollins loading up a suicide dive to Bray, who pulls Joe into the path instead. Back in and Sister Abigail plants Rollins, only to have Joe break it up and start the inevitable fight with Bray. Balor comes back in with a chair to break up the Koquina Clutch before dropkicking everyone in sight.

It's time to load up the announcers' table but Reigns comes back with a spear to drive Balor and Joe through the barricade. Seth is back up with a frog splash to drive Bray through the table but stays down holding his knee. The knee is fine enough for him to stand up for a staredown with Reigns as the chair is still in the ring. A quick Superman Punch gives Roman two, followed by Seth's low superkick getting the same.

Another frog splash gets two more but here's Bray for failed Sister Abigail attempts on both guys. Roman spears Bray down and hits Rollins with another Superman Punch. Balor takes one of his own but still comes back with the shotgun dropkick and Coup de Grace. It doesn't matter though as Joe comes back in with the Koquina Clutch on Balor for the win at 29:10.

Rating: A-. I think I can go with Joe vs. Lesnar if I absolutely have to. This was a WAY better match than I was expecting with the extra time doing it a lot of favors. They had all five looking strong with the Bray/Joe alliance working fine for a story during the match. Joe winning is a good idea as he can get a rub from working with Lesnar, despite having almost no chance at actually beating him. I had a great time with this one and the ending is a very good call.

Overall Rating: B+. This was actually a heck of a show, albeit one that isn't going to mean a thing after....oh I'd say tomorrow. That's a common problem in WWE and I'm not surprised to see it continue here. The idea of having a title match to build towards is a nice change of pace and should

help the show a lot. Add that to a lot of really solid wrestling (only the Bayley vs. Bliss match was really bad, which is due to the booking instead of the action, or lack thereof) and you have a much better show than I ever would have guessed.

Results

Miz b. Dean Ambrose – Skull Crushing Finale

Sasha Banks/Rich Swann b. Alicia Fox/Noam Dar – Phoenix Splash to Dar

Alexa Bliss b. Bayley – DDT

Cesaro/Sheamus b. Hardy Boyz – Cesaro and Sheamus escaped the cage

Neville b. Austin Aries – Rings of Saturn

Samoa Joe b. Finn Balor, Bray Wyatt, Seth Rollins and Roman Reigns –
Koquina Clutch to Balor

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