

Main Event – February 8, 2018: That's What It's There For

Main Event

Date: February 8, 2018

Location: Wells Fargo Arena, Des Moines, Iowa

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

We're heading towards Elimination Chamber and Fastlane at the same time, meaning we already have a bunch of stuff going on at once. Therefore, this week is likely to be about qualifying matches and getting ready for a World Title match, all while slowly building things up for Wrestlemania at the same time. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Goldust vs. Curt Hawkins

Goldust has Mandy Rose in his corner and my goodness. Hawkins hides in the ropes to start, earning himself a quick spank. Goldust does his "I'm old and need to breathe" thing before knocking Hawkins outside. A clothesline puts Goldust down on the floor but he dives back in, earning himself a chinlock. Curt spends too much time posing at Mandy though, allowing Goldust to grab a spinebuster. The snap powerslam gets two and the Final Cut ends Hawkins at 4:45.

Rating: D+. This was what you would have expected from Goldust vs. Curt Hawkins. The Mandy/Goldust thing surprised me a bit as they certainly do have chemistry, which is at least part of why I would have expected them to be split up. It's not like there's a point to keeping Absolution together so let Mandy get what she can out of Goldust.

Quick look at Miz defeating Apollo Crews to qualify for the Elimination Chamber.

From Raw.

Elimination Chamber Qualifying Match: Bray Wyatt vs. Roman Reigns

They trade headlocks to start until Reigns powers him into the corner. A charge misses though to give Bray two as Matt Hardy is watching in the back. We hit the chinlock for a bit until Reigns fights back and clotheslines him to the floor. The apron dropkick is broken up with a hard clothesline and Reigns is sent into the steps as we take a break. Back with Wyatt holding a reverse chinlock until Reigns grabs a Samoan drop.

Bray runs him over with the crossbody and takes Reigns to the corner. The superplex attempt is reversed into a powerbomb for two on Bray and Wyatt is in trouble. He's fine enough to counter the Superman Punch into a release Rock Bottom and the backsplash gets two. Reigns' spear is blocked and Sister Abigail gets two and it's time to just unload with right hands. Another Sister Abigail is blocked and the spear (which was a shove minus any significant contact) sends Reigns to the Chamber at 14:50.

Rating: C+. These two have solid chemistry but that was a bad ending. Reigns just shrugs everything off and mostly misses a spear for the pin. It's also REALLY hard to buy Reigns as being in jeopardy when you know full well what's coming at Wrestlemania. But let's just act like there's drama there and hope for the best right?

From Smackdown.

Sami Zayn vs. Kevin Owens

The winner gets AJ, on commentary, at Fastlane. They're tentative to start until Owens runs him over, only to charge into some armdrags. Some right hands send Owens to the floor and he tells Sami to calm down. Owens gets knocked off the apron and we take a break. Back with Sami in trouble but still being able to block the Cannonball.

The exploder suplex into the corner is countered so Sami settles for a tornado DDT and two instead. Sami gets shoved off the top but is still able to get his knees up and block the Swanton. Kevin rolls to the floor and gets caught with a diving DDT to put both guys down on the outside.

Back in and a superkick sets up Owens' frog splash for two more and he can't believe the kickout. Sami is right back up with the Blue Thunder Bomb (which now has a chance to win as he got a pin out of it a few weeks back) for another near fall (ok maybe I'm overly optimistic). Owens stumbles out to the floor and it's time for the argument with AJ, who beats both guys up (though he hit Sami first) for the no contest at 14:02.

Rating: C+. These two have great chemistry together and it's very easy to have Sami slip back into face mode, even for one night only. He's a natural face who is playing a good heel and it makes for an easy dynamic against a natural heel like Owens. They had a good match here, even if the ending was obvious from before the opening bell.

Cue Bryan to say it's a triple threat at Fastlane, leaving AJ wanting a fight to end the show.

Kalisto vs. Ariya Daivari

An early wristdrag takes Daivari down but he sends Kalisto into the corner and mocks the Lucha pose. That earns him a trip to the floor and a suicide dive so Kalisto can do the real thing. Daivari kicks the leg out though and we take a break. Back with a clothesline dropping Kalisto again and the referee yelling at Daivari for messing with the mask.

We hit the chinlock for a bit, only to have Kalisto come back with the usual. The rolling kick to the head and the hurricanrana driver give Kalisto two but Daivari drops him again. Daivari's frog splash gets two but Kalisto grabs a quick Salida Del Sol gives Kalisto the fast pin at 10:12.

Rating: C. Actually pretty good stuff here with both guys working hard. You get that more often than not and it's a nice thing to see. There's no real reason to put in effort in a match like that but these two did so here. Kalisto was doing his usual stuff here, meaning he was better than most of the cruiserweights.

And from Raw.

John Cena vs. Braun Strowman vs. Elias

The winner gets to enter the Chamber in the six spot. That's quite unfair as the two who qualified tonight don't have a chance to get in. Why? Just because they weren't booked last week? What bias. Elias bails to the floor to start so Strowman kicks Cena in the face as we take an early break.

Back with Strowman chasing Elias around the ring, only to get caught in an AA. Well an AA attempt at least as Cena collapses under the weight. Elias is clotheslined out to the floor but some double teaming keeps Strowman in trouble. A double clothesline puts Strowman on the floor and a pair of whips into the post keep him down.

The guitar over the back into the AA onto the steps have Strowman knocked silly but Elias uses the rest of the guitar on Cena. A backbreaker gives Elias two on Cena but he comes back with the finishing sequence. The Shuffle doesn't work though as Braun is back in with the running powerslam on Cena. Elias escapes one of his own and sends Strowman to the floor before stealing the pin on Cena at 9:58.

Rating: D+. This was much shorter than I was expecting and while the surprise ending does help, I needed a little more than this one. Strowman as the unstoppable monster was a good idea, but it would help a bit if he wasn't just there as the big guy to be vanquished by Reigns.

Post match Strowman powerslams both guys multiple times to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. Totally standard Main Event this week with only Mandy being a highlight. It's not bad or anything and I flew through the show, which is pretty much the point of the whole thing. Things are getting interesting around this point and building towards the big shows with the big matches. A show like Main Event can help things in that area and hopefully things keep picking up.

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