

Main Event – July 12, 2018: Just Pretend It Matters



IMG Credit: WWE

Main Event

Date: July 12, 2018

Location: TD Garden, Boston, Massachusetts

Commentators: Percy Watson, Nigel McGuinness, Vic Joseph

It's the go home week for Extreme Rules and my goodness that doesn't exactly bode well for the things they'll be recapping here. This show has been one of the weakest builds in recent memory and while Smackdown was better this week, Raw was its usual horrid self. How often do I have to say something like this anymore? Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Titus Worldwide vs. Authors of Pain

Crews does what he can with Akam but gets tossed into the corner, followed by Rezar tossing him right back out of said corner. It's back to Akam for a cobra clutch and a t-bone suplex but Crews sends him into the corner as well. The hot tag brings in Titus to show off some power, including a powerslam for two on Akam. Not that it matters as the Last Chapter is good for the pin at 4:22.

Rating: D+. Actually not too bad here as they kept it moving and the Authors got to look good. The important thing here is to have the Authors establish themselves on the main roster and beating up teams like this is a great way to start that process. It's nothing great and it won't mean anything, but at least they're getting the idea right.

Video on Bobby Lashley vs. Roman Reigns.

From Raw.

Lashley and Reigns are in the back, arguing about Reigns going to the ring. Lashley wants Reigns to call him out as a DANIEL BRYAN chant drowns out some of whatever they're saying. Lashley steps to the side and tells Reigns to carry on.

Here's Reigns in the ring for a chat and he wastes no time in calling Lashley out. Before anything can happen though, here's Kurt Angle, flanked by Baron Corbin, to interrupt. Angle wants them to save it for Sunday but the brawl is on anyway. A bunch of midcarders can't break it up and the fight breaks out over and over again. Reigns is finally taken to the floor as Finn Balor gets in a shot on Corbin for a nice bit of continuity.

The fight keeps breaking out with even more people coming out and failing to separate them. Lashley keeps punching and throws Reigns inside but is finally pushed to the back. Reigns isn't done though and hits the BIG dive over the top to take out about twenty people at the same time. Reigns' music plays but he comes back AGAIN and dives at Lashley. Really, really solid segment here but it's going to be annoying when this headlines again over the World Title. Also, they need to bring this intensity to the match instead of the boring match Reigns and Samoa Joe had at Backlash.

Again from Raw.

Nia Jax/Natalya vs. Mickie James/Alexa Bliss

Natalya wastes no time in trying a Sharpshooter on James but gets kicked away, allowing the tag to Bliss. The same Sharpshooter attempt sends

Bliss bailing to the floor so Natalya baseball slides both villains down. Back from an early break with Natalya being sent into the corner so Bliss can hit her running slap. We hit the chinlock so IT'S TIME FOR AN INSET PROMO FOR SUNDAY! Sweet, I was worried that we wouldn't get these stupid things again. Back to full screen with Natalya getting over for the hot tag to Nia, who starts wrecking Mickie. The splash in the corner sets up the big leg to give Nia the pin at 8:09.

Rating: D. Well what we saw was decent, but the inset promo felt like a second commercial. That and Nia just running over everyone has been done, especially since it's a near guarantee that she loses on Sunday, allowing Bliss to go to Summerslam and hang with Ronda Rousey for a long match. Just not enough content here to make it work.

Immediately after the pin, Bliss hits Jax in the back with a kendo stick. The stick is quickly taken away and broken as Bliss runs away in a hurry.

Video on Kevin Owens vs. Braun Strowman.

Curt Hawkins vs. Chad Gable

Hawkins takes him down with a wristlock and actually gets a LET'S GO HAWKINS chant. Gable easily wins the second wristlock battle and armdrags him into an armbar. A monkey flip sends Hawkins flying but he rams Gable throat first into the rope. Back from a break with Hawkins getting two off a Michinoku Driver in a near fall. A powerbomb is loaded up but Gable slips out and sends him into the corner for Rolling Chaos Theory and the pin at 8:30.

Rating: C-. I know it's not likely to go anywhere anytime soon but Hawkins is getting closer to actually winning a match. I'm not sure if they'll ever actually pull the trigger and have him win something but at least they're not having it be squash after squash. Hawkins can put on a good enough match and that's what he did here, with Gable getting to look good in the end.

We see the big brawl that opened Smackdown and set up the main event.

New Day/HELL NO vs. Bludgeon Brothers/Sanity

Bryan goes after Young to start and we take a break less than a minute in. Just ring the bell when we get back then. Back with New Day rapid firing the elbows to set up Big E.'s Warrior Splash for two on Wolfe. Woods gets caught in the wrong corner though and Harper kicks him in the face a few times, setting up the Gator Roll...and an inset ad for Lashley vs. Reigns.

In kayfabe, that's some pretty awesome timing for the production staff to know when the match is going to grind to a halt so these videos can air. Back to full screen with Dain hitting a backsplash, just in time to go to a commercial. We're not even nine minutes into this match and we've had two commercials and an inset promo. I know this is crazy for a fan to say, but I'd actually like to watch the match instead of an ad every three minutes.

Back with Woods still in trouble and Harper's Michinoku Driver getting two. New Day makes the save, allowing Woods to hit his springboard tornado DDT on Harper. The hot tag brings in Bryan to hammer on Young as everything breaks down. We hit a parade of secondary finishers until Big E. spears Dain off the apron. Back in and Bryan knees Young down for the pin at 16:41.

Rating: C+. Well what we saw of it was good. A match that isn't even eighteen minutes long doesn't need two breaks and an inset promo as a mini break, but WWE has too much stuff to advertise to do a match like this uninterrupted. If nothing else Sanity getting this kind of push (two months after being announced) out of the shoot is nice, and odds are they win on Sunday.

And from Raw one more time.

Seth Rollins vs. Drew McIntyre

If Rollins wins, Drew is banned from ringside on Sunday. McIntyre powers him into the corner with ease to start, allowing McIntyre to do his kneeling pose. A dropkick has almost no effect and McIntyre runs him over with a shoulder. It's off to an armbar with McIntyre in full control so far. A chinlock keeps Rollins in trouble and McIntyre chops him back down to set up another armbar.

McIntyre drives him back first into the apron and we take a break. Back with Rollins flying off an overhead belly to belly and some stomps to the arm setting up yet another armbar. Rollins fights up and finally gets a breather by sending McIntyre face first into the middle buckle. McIntyre heads to the floor for back to back suicide dives, followed by the middle rope Blockbuster for a near fall of his own.

A charge in the corner goes badly for Rollins though as McIntyre grabs a reverse Alabama Slam, sending Rollins face first into the mat on a nasty looking landing. A sitout powerbomb gets two more but McIntyre gets caught up top, allowing Rollins to kick him into the Tree of Woe. That's fine with Drew, who sits up and superplexes Rollins back down.

The Claymore is blocked with a superkick into the Falcon Arrow to rock McIntyre. It doesn't rock him enough though as McIntyre scores with a headbutt, which seems to fire McIntyre up all over again. Rollins is fine enough to hit a Buckle Bomb and low superkick, followed by a curb stomp to an invading Ziggler. The distraction is enough for McIntyre to hit the Claymore for the pin at 21:06.

Rating: B. Now that's more like it as this show was needing a long, good match to really boost things up. Thankfully they seem to have started planting the seeds for McIntyre to split from Ziggler but that needs to happen around Summerslam or so because Ziggler is already getting way too much focus by comparison. At least McIntyre won here though, as a loss would have been a rather bad idea.

Overall Rating: D+. Holy sweet merciful goodness what has happened to Smackdown? I mean I know it's just Smackdown being Smackdown but egads this was basically the Raw highlight show with Smackdown being thrown in at the end. That was the case with Extreme Rules as well and it's becoming more of a problem every week. Just pretend it matters. Is that too much to ask.

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