

Monday Night Raw – August 13, 2018: This Was Pretty Good Y'ALL



IMG Credit: WWE

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 13, 2018

Location: Greensboro Coliseum, Greensboro, North Carolina

Commentators: Michael Cole, Renee Young, Corey Graves

Now this should be an interesting one as Renee Young will be the first woman to do a full night of commentary on Raw. We're also in WCW country and it's the go home show for Summerslam. It's hard to say what we'll be seeing tonight as it's not clear if Brock Lesnar will be around or not (I wouldn't get my hopes up). Let's get to it.

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

No In Memory of Jim Neidhart graphic. Seriously?

Here's a somber Ronda Rousey to say that Natalya won't be here tonight. She talks about the importance of fathers, including Neidhart who passed away earlier today. Natalya was the first person to help her out when she got here and Rousey will be the first person to stand up for Natalya in her absence. Alexa Bliss had to cheat to beat Natalya and on Sunday, she'll beat Bliss to win the title. That's the same thing Ember Moon is

going to do right now so it's time for a match.

Ember Moon vs. Alexa Bliss

Bliss has Alicia Fox, with plants in her hair and wearing one sleeve of a jacket due to the armbars from last week. Hang on though as Bliss wants to rant about Rousey being such a bully. Bliss is tired of having everyone say Rousey is going to destroy her on Sunday. Rousey has had three matches and Bliss is a five time Women's Champion.

It's not fair that Kurt Angle is willing to protect Brock Lesnar vs. Roman Reigns but Rousey is allowed out here during this match. Therefore she's talked to Constable Baron Corbin and has gotten her own security tonight. Four large guys come out and get in the ring, allowing Bliss to knock Ember into Rousey, knocking the latter off the apron. Rousey beats up the security and the match is after a break.

We're joined in progress after a break with Moon grabbing an armband so here's a promo for Reigns vs. Lesnar. The match wasn't back on for a minute and it's off to the split screen nonsense. Back with Moon getting two and Bliss rolling to the floor, earning herself a baseball slide. Back in and we hit a chinlock for a bit before Bliss dropkicks her in the ribs. Bliss gets kicked to the floor again and we take a break, four minutes and fifteen seconds into a match with a minute of that in split screen.

Back with Moon rolling her up for two but getting caught in a chinlock. A basement dropkick cuts Moon off again and Bliss glares at Rousey, who doesn't seem happy. Moon screams a lot and comes back with the tornado DDT into the snap suplex ala Wade Barrett but Rousey stops to beat up Fox. Bliss actually goes after Rousey and throws her into the barricade in a bit of bravery/loyalty you wouldn't have expected. Back in and Moon hits a gutbuster, followed by the Eclipse...for two as Fox comes in for the DQ at 12:20.

Rating: C-. All of the cuts didn't help things but they did the right thing by not having Bliss take a fall there. I was expecting Rousey to come in and get Moon disqualified but this way works better. Bliss being loyal to Fox was surprising as she tends to change friends a lot (Mickie

James anyone?) and it was nice to have them not go with the champion losing going into a big match.

Long recap of two weeks ago when Brock Lesnar attacked Paul Heyman (but we need to cut out time from a match for a promo video) and Heyman's interview from last week. We get some extra footage, with Heyman implying that there might be a way for Reigns to win but cutting himself off and leaving. Heyman turn or Shield reunion perhaps?

Angle and Corbin argue about Corbin making the match earlier. Corbin doesn't apologize for going over Angle's head and goes to the ring. Dolph Ziggler (with his hair down and straight for a weird look) and Drew McIntyre come in to complain about Seth Rollins not being here. Angle says Rollins had some travel issues after his publicity tour of China but he'll be here tonight.

Baron Corbin vs. Tyler Breeze

Corbin is picking both his and Finn Balor's opponents tonight. Breeze has his old NXT music back for a nice change of pace. Corbin breaks up a wristlock attempt with a hard shove and we're already in the chinlock. As the hold stays on, Renee and Corey argue over Corbin's abuses of power. Breeze fights back with a dropkick to put Corbin on the floor, only to catch Breeze coming off the apron.

Graves asks Renee how she can prefer Balor to Corbin, with Renee saying she plays favorites a bit. We hit the second chinlock (someone has to be telling him to do that hold so often as he couldn't be dumb enough to think it's a good idea) but Breeze fights back up with a kick to the face. Corbin gets clotheslined to the floor, where he sidesteps a dive to send Breeze crashing to the floor. They get back in and a wicked Deep Six ends Breeze at 4:13.

Rating: D. The ending was the right result, even though it continues this really bad story between Corbin and Balor. I like Corbin using something other than his finisher to get the win here, as it fits the narrative of Corbin being big enough to beat someone that much smaller. Then when Balor kicks out of it on Sunday, he'll look like a bigger star. Not a good match, but they kept it short.

Post match Corbin praises himself and brings out Balor's opponent: Jinder Mahal. Actually hang on a second as we'll throw in Kevin Owens to make it a handicap match.

Jinder Mahal/Kevin Owens vs. Finn Balor

Corbin introduces Balor as the little engine that can't. Hang on again though as here's Angle to give Balor a partner.

Jinder Mahal/Kevin Owens vs. Finn Balor/Braun Strowman

I had this written before Angle's music stopped playing because WWE is that predictable. Strowman gets a heck of a home state reaction and Graves calls him the Meat Castle. Renee: "...the Meat Castle?" Jinder takes Balor down to start as Renee talks about her Monday meditation app. Renee: "Everybody get your chi right." Balor rolls through a sunset flip and dropkicks Mahal but it's quickly off to Owens for some stomping.

We hit the armbar for a bit but Balor slips out and knocks Owens down, allowing the hot tag to Strowman. Owens bails to the floor as Strowman runs over Mahal, followed by picking up an unsuspecting Balor and slamming him onto Jinder. It's time for a big dive from Balor but Owens trips him (or at least swipes at his feet), drawing Braun over for the chase. That's enough to put Mahal and Owens together for the big flip dive and we take a break.

Back with Mahal holding Balor in a chinlock (the same arm trap one that Corbin uses) before handing it off to Owens for some right hands to the head. That sounds like the time for an NXT Takeover: Brooklyn promo and we're back WITH THE SAME MAHAL CHINLOCK. Balor comes back with a Sling Blade on Owens and there's the hot tag to Strowman. After running Mahal over, Strowman heads outside for a lap around the ring, though this time he picks up Sunil Singh and drives him into Owens for a change of pace. Back in, Strowman shrugs off Mahal's jumping knee and powerslams him for the pin at 14:00.

Rating: D+. As sick as I am of that chinlock, I'm at least slightly interested in Owens vs. Strowman. I'm not sure who is going to win there and they could go either way with the briefcase. That being said,

Strowman is in big trouble if they have him drop the briefcase and not become Universal Champion at some point. Eventually you have to win something that matters, and being a failed Mr. Money in the Bank isn't enough.

Post match Strowman chases Owens off, leaving Corbin to hit End of Days on Balor. For the love of all things good and holy, please let this terrible feud end on Sunday.

Angle can't get hold of Rollins so here are Ziggler and McIntyre again to mock Rollins for not being here. If Rollins can't be here for the contract signing, there's no title match. Ziggler asks to see the contract for the title match to make sure nothing has slipped through the cracks. Angle calls them idiots after they leave.

Here's a singer named Ricky Roberts, who says Elias is his favorite singer. He's not very good right now but he's going to wind up in the Country Music Hall of Fame. With a name like that, I'd expect him to be more of a Rock N Roll fan. Then Elias is going to come find him and he'll say "Hello, I am Elias."

Cue the real Elias to shill the What Would Elias Do bracelet and offer his respect to Roberts if he can beat Bobby Lashley tonight. Elias mentions his New York City concert on Saturday and mocks the North Carolina fans, but here's Lashley to interrupt. Lashley says we already have a no talent musical clown around here so Roberts hits him with the guitar. The annoyed Lashley hits a heck of a spinebuster and glare at Elias. No vertical suplex?

Bo Dallas is doing the math before tonight's triple threat match when Curtis Axel comes in to tell him to be positive. Dallas panics because the odds are lower against them than usual. Axel: "The odds are always against us." Dallas has checked the numbers over and over, even DM'ing mathematicians on Twitter. Axel: "You can't spell Raw Tag Team Champions without B team!" Dallas: "Or a whole bunch of other letters!" They're going to go out there and run for their lives. B Team!

Ziggler and McIntyre are looking over the contract.

Tag Team Titles: Revival vs. Matt Hardy/Bray Wyatt vs. B Team

The B Team is defending and it's one fall to a finish. Wilder pulls Dallas into the corner to start and it's already time to take turns on him. Matt comes in pretty quickly though and clotheslines Wilder in the corner (not a splash Cole), followed by a Side Effect for two. After a shout of V1 (little flashback), the middle rope elbow to the neck looks to set up the Twist of Fate. Dawson makes a blind tag though and a Hart Attack (nice touch) gets two. Wilder gets two more off a legdrop and we take a break.

Back with Wyatt hitting release Rock Bottoms on everyone but Axel (and Hardy, but I thought that was understood). Dawson sunset flips Wyatt, sending Axel flying in a German suplex at the same time. Wyatt heads outside and counters Wilder's suicide dive into another Rock Bottom onto the apron. A dive off the steps from Dallas knocks Wyatt down but Hardy superplexes Dawson onto the big pile. Back in and the Revival reverses a double Sister Abigail into the Shatter Machine, only to have Axel steal the pin to retain at 10:30.

Rating: C. It dragged a bit at the beginning but they got to a nice pace for a few moments there after the break. The B Team retaining is fine and hopefully they don't have a title match on Sunday. The card is already loaded and there's no need to do a rematch, or just a two on two title match, and make the card even heavier than it already is. What we got here was good enough and the B Team's roll continues.

The B Team celebration goes to the back and they run into an unimpressed Roman Reigns.

Ziggler has found an issue in the contract: Seth is allowed to have someone in his corner. Angle is willing to take it out if Drew isn't allowed to be in Ziggler's corner. Ziggler lets it go.

Here's Roman Reigns for his last big speech before Sunday. Reigns says every day he tells himself to leave a place better than he found it. He can't do that with Brock Lesnar still around though and Lesnar needs to go. Reigns is sick of hearing about him and seeing him so it ends at Summerslam. On Sunday, he's taking back his Universal Title (which he's

never held) and sending Lesnar so far back into the UFC that his head will be stuck inside Dana White.

Cue a perky Paul Heyman to say it's a new day, yes it is. If he was going to steal a line from someone on Smackdown though, it would be the Usos, who are the future of the tag team division. He doesn't actually steal an Uso line, but he's looking at the future of another division in Roman Reigns. Roman: "This is gonna be good y'all." After being accused of crying on command, Heyman says Reigns can make history right here, right now. He brings up what he was about to mention last week in the interview: he's willing to tell Reigns each and every single one of Lesnar's secrets.

Reigns thinks he can beat Lesnar on his own, but with Heyman in his corner, he's GUARANTEED to win the Universal Title. Heyman extends his hand and that gets a big YES chant. Reigns says he knows all those secrets already because he won in Saudi Arabia and would have done it a lot faster without Heyman. That's true and Heyman hopes his sins won't be held against him. Heyman sees himself as the new advocate for Reigns next week and offers his hand again.

Another YES chant gets turned down as Reigns talks about his father teaching him to swim with the sharks. He also knows how to see someone who is drowning, like Heyman. The thing is Heyman isn't worth saving so the answer is no. Heyman talks about riding with Reigns' father Sika and speaks some Samoan, which gets Reigns' attention. Heyman even has an agreement written up, which Reigns can answer on Sunday.

As Reigns looks at it, Heyman pepper sprays him and leaves. Cue Brock Lesnar to beat Reigns up and put him out with a guillotine choke. Lesnar and Heyman walk up the ramp but Lesnar goes back for an F5. So did Heyman and Lesnar make up or was two weeks ago a big ruse? I ask rhetorically because I don't expect an answer from WWE. Heyman was great here as usual and Reigns sounded good for a change. I still don't want to see the match, but they did a nice job here.

Mojo Rawley/Authors of Pain vs. Titus Worldwide/Bobby Roode

Rezar runs Crews over to start and we hit the neck crank, meaning let's

have an inset promo about Rousey vs. Bliss. Back with Akam holding his own neck crank but Rawley comes in and can't hit a belly to back suplex. Instead it's a hot tag to Roode for some clotheslines and a Blockbuster for two. Everything breaks down and the Glorious DDT finishes Rawley at 2:47. At least it was short and ended clean, so expect multiple rematches in the coming weeks.

Reigns is getting his eyes washed out.

We get a tribute to Jim Neidhart, focusing on how he broke into the business and the Hart Foundation. Thankfully we get some of Neidhart's over the top promos and laugh. I was worried when they didn't even have a graphic earlier tonight so this was a welcome surprise.

The announcers talk about the Hart Foundation, including a mention of their Summerslam 1990 match with Demolition. I loved that one.

Summerslam rundown, including the Revival vs. the B Team added to the Kickoff Show. Better than adding it to the regular show. The Cruiserweight Title is on the Kickoff Show as well, because we NEED three matches on the Kickoff Show.

We look back at Rousey snapping and beating up Bliss' security, including one running away in a funny bit.

Sasha Banks vs. Ruby Riott

Banks wastes no time in taking Riott down and pulling on her head. A very early Bank Statement has Riott in the ropes and they head to the floor. Ruby uses a Riott Squad distraction and kicks Banks into the steps, with her hand getting caught to really give Riott a target. Back in and Riott twists the hand around before stomping on it as we take a break.

We come back with Riott working on the hand until Sasha runs the corner for an armdrag to break the hold. The hand is hurting, so Banks dives onto Sarah Logan in a big crash. Liv Morgan pulls Banks off the apron so Bayley is right there for the save. Banks hits Ruby in the hand though and a rollup is good for the pin at 8:59.

Rating: C-. They're going to add something else to Sunday aren't they?

This Bayley/Sasha feud has been running on a treadmill for months now and there's no sign that it's going to get better anytime soon. The hand thing was fine but how many times can we see these people wrestle over and over without getting anywhere?

Photos of Seth Rollins in China last week.

Rollins isn't here so Corbin tells Angle that Stephanie will NOT be happy.

Here's Angle for the contract signing, though first he says that Lesnar isn't going to be suspended or stripped of the title, because he wants Reigns to bring the title back to Raw every week. Cue Ziggler and McIntyre to say they don't believe Angle. He's already lost one title match since Rollins isn't here so Angle won't let the other one fall through. Ziggler says there's no Rollins here tonight because he's scared.

Angle intros Rollins twice but no one shows up. McIntyre goes into a rant about why they got together in the first place: to battle complacency from people who think they belong on top just because they got here. People like Rollins are on top of that list because he worked so hard to get where he is. Ziggler would know because he did the same thing. The fans mean nothing though because the second a shiny object loses its luster, everyone turns on you.

It'll happen to everyone because this vicious cycle can never end because of people like them. Where were they during the hard times? Ziggler knows what it's like to have someone who has his back and now he doesn't care about anyone in the crowd or in the back. He signs and here's Rollins, just a few seconds late because for the first time ever, we don't have a camera watching people show up.

Rollins has actually been here for awhile but he didn't want to come out here until Ziggler actually signed. It's true that he was dealing with travel issues, but they weren't his travel issues. See, there was that clause in the contract about Rollins having someone in his corner because he's tired of dealing with McIntyre all the time.

Since there's going to be a Scottish psychopath in one corner, Rollins better have a lunatic in his. Cue the returning Dean Ambrose, now with a beard and a big haircut (he looks like a less muscular HHH), to a major reaction. The fight is on (with Renee not saying a word) and a superkick knocks McIntyre into Dirty Deeds and Rollins signs the contract to end the show. I like the new look and this is exactly where the story should have gone.

Overall Rating: C+. The first hour was really, really rough with some flat out bad segments and stories (Corbin vs. Balor makes me want to rip by hair out, especially anything Corbin does) but the rest picked it up a few notches. Ambrose returning helped a lot and the Reigns/Heyman/Lesnar segment was quite good.

The biggest problem around here though is not knowing how to advance and then end stories. How many stories and feuds just keep going week after week and match after match? Corbin vs. Balor, Rollins vs. Ziggler, Bayley/Sasha and Reigns vs. Lesnar among others. That was on display tonight with several matches and segments that I feel like I've seen a dozen times already. There were some good ones, but this company needs a seminar in structuring a wrestling story. I'm more interested in Summerslam (at least parts of it) than I was coming in though so we'll call it a slight success.

Results

Ember Moon b. Alexa Bliss via DQ when Alicia Fox interfered

Baron Corbin b. Tyler Breeze – Deep Six

Finn Balor/Braun Strowman b. Jinder Mahal/Kevin Owens – Powerslam to Mahal

B Team b. Revival and Matt Hardy/Bray Wyatt – Shatter Machine to Wyatt

Titus Worldwide/Bobby Roode b. Authors of Pain/Mojo Rawley – Glorious DDT to Rawley

Ruby Riott b. Sasha Banks – Rollup

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