

Best Of 2018: Promo Of The Year



IMG Credit: WWE

Shut up and talk. While the matches are important, it's the promos that help build things up. The angles set things in motion but without the promos, the stories wouldn't be able to hold up as well. There were some gems this year as promos shifted a bit more towards long formats and that made for a great year, both in WWE and NXT.

Before we get to the main list, a quick honorable mention to Shinsuke Nakamura's "Sorry, no speak English". It's just one line so I hesitate to call it a promo, but I was in stitches.

Daniel Bryan Is Medically Cleared – Smackdown – March 20

This was all emotion and shock, as I didn't believe it could actually happen. Bryan was back after so many years and you can imagine how long he had wanted to make this speech. It was perfectly done and something I never thought I'd see. Bryan is an underrated talker as he seems so genuine with what he says. That can make for a great promo and given that Bryan had this much emotion involved, it's hard to get much better.

Roman Reigns Vacates The Universal Title – Raw – October 22

I'm not sure how to separate the real life aspects of this from the character work, but this was one of the best promos Reigns has ever given. That probably comes from all of the real emotions involved and it's easy to see why. This is one of those game changing moments and while you can't say Reigns sold anything, he spoke from the heart and it was an actually emotional moment.

The New Daniel Bryan – Smackdown – November 20

Remember when Bryan was supposed to not be great on the mic? This was another outstanding showcase for Bryan as he explained his heel turn to near perfection. Bryan ranted about the fans not being there for him after everything he did and saying that it was all about the end results, which has been a great mindset for a heel since wrestling began. Bryan's incredible run continues in a way that few expected, as he somehow surpasses his work from eight months prior.

Samoa Joe Reads A Story – Smackdown – September 11

This is something I've seen done a few times before and I always like it. Joe had a book ready to read AJ about how he was going to choke AJ out and become WWE Champion as AJ's family watched. Joe is one of the best promos in wrestling as you believe everything he says (even after he lost a bunch of matches) and that can make these things all the more intimidating. The promos against AJ and his family were downright creepy and this was the best of them all.

But there's one creepier thing.

Johnny Gargano Explains Himself – NXT – November 7

One of the best things a promo can do is take things outside the arena. There are only so many times you can look at the same sets and the same backstage areas before it stops working. Moving things elsewhere makes things feel special and that's what happened here, as Johnny walked along the same

path where he attacked Aleister Black weeks before. Johnny explained everything and showed us how deep he was sinking into the darkness. It made sense, it made me want to see more, and it made me believe that Gargano was actually evil. Magnificent work here and the promo of the year.

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