

Extreme Rules 2019 Preview



IMG Credit: WWE

The summer of WWE continues. There are a lot of problems in WWE at the moment and any WWE fan can list them all off for you at a moment's notice. I've been right there with them, though things have gotten slightly better in recent weeks. One of the underlying problems has been the amount of shows that the company has been running and it's time for another one in the form of Extreme Rules, which doesn't have the most extreme set of rules. Maybe the card itself will surprise me. Let's get to it.

Aleister Black vs. Cesaro

This was literally set up with a knock on the door and even though that is where the story was supposed to go, it doesn't make things that interesting. There is no history between the two of them but that's kind of the point with Black. I have no idea how they've managed to screw up Black's push so badly but I'll take what I can get, even if it has taken this long.

I'll go with Black to win because that's the only thing that makes sense. I know the fans are going to be annoyed at seeing Cesaro lose again, but that's just kind of what happens with him. He'll help get Black somewhere, but it's going to be the Black Mass for the pin, just as it should be. Black is the kind of guy who could go a long way, and Cesaro is a fine

first step. Well the second first step as that first run with Ricochet has been forgotten.

Raw Tag Team Titles: Revival(c) vs. Usos

These two are joined at the hip and that's fine by me. The best part about this whole thing has been the Revival getting away from the HORRIBLE pranks at the hands of the Usos, which didn't help anyone whatsoever. The Revival enjoying the good life is funny enough, though at least they're not looking like the bad end of jokes and that's better than nothing at this point.

This could go either way but I'll take the Revival to retain with some cheating. The Usos have been champions so many times that it doesn't feel important anymore and they certainly don't need the belts. Let the Revival keep them a little longer and rehab their image that much more, which they really do need after the last few months. They can still be a great team, as long as WWE will just let them do so. A win here would help.

SmackDown Tag Team Titles: Daniel Bryan/Rowan(c) vs. New Day vs. Heavy Machinery

As I was getting ready for this show, I wasn't sure if New Day was doing anything on the show or who had these titles. That's how little they matter and that says a lot about the tag division as a whole. Heavy Machinery doesn't exactly belong in this match after they lost last month but when has that bothered them before? The titles are nearly ice cold right now so this isn't the most important match on the show.

Give me the champions retaining here, as I'm hoping that we're getting closer to the New Day getting frustrated with Kofi Kingston getting most of the glory and success. Much like the Usos, the New Day winning the titles again wouldn't mean anything and I can't imagine Heavy Machinery actually winning the titles. Bryan and Rowan are doing nothing as champions,

but somehow they're the best option at the moment.

Cruiserweight Title: Drew Gulak(c) vs. Tony Nese

Somehow this isn't on the Kickoff Show (yet) but you can probably pencil it in. Gulak won the title from Nese in a three way at Stomping Grounds and this is his first title defense. What matters most here is Gulak's new, aggressive character which has gotten him a lot further than his entertaining For A Better 205 Live deal. He's fitting well as champion, though I'm not sure how long he'll have the title.

He'll have it longer than the end of Extreme Rules though as I'll go with Gulak to retain here. Nese has had his run and while he was a success, he's not the long term solution with the title. They've already got Oney Lorcan waiting to challenge Gulak over Summerslam weekend as well and that could be a heck of a match. Nese has come a long way, but he's not getting back to the top again, at least not here.

SmackDown World Title: Kofi Kingston(c) vs. Samoa Joe

This has been a better feud than anything Kingston vs. Ziggler did, mainly because it feels like something fresh. What matters here is having a good match, because this feels like a one off match instead of the start of something big. While there is a chance that we could see a rematch at Summerslam, odds are this is going to be it and there's nothing wrong with that.

Kingston retains here, at least I think, as I could see Samoa Joe pulling off a surprise win. That's the kind of thing he tends to do, though I'm not sure if he's going to do so here. Kingston's title reign has not gone very well so far, though it's hard to put the entirety of the blame on him. Samoa Joe almost has to win the title at some point, but I don't think that's the case here.

Braun Strowman vs. Bobby Lashley

This is Last Man Standing and a result of the two of them blowing up part of the set a few weeks back. It feels like we've seen this kind of thing from Strowman for years now as he gets to look dominant in a story like this, though I have no reason to believe that he's going to win the title in the end. Lashley has looked great as well, though there is a lot more to be done with Strowman, at least in a company that makes sense.

Of course I'll take Strowman here, though it's going to come after a lot of stuff is destroyed. That's not a bad place to go and the match should be fun (or at least extreme) but I have no confidence for where this is going in the future for either guy. At least it's better than arm wrestling or a tug of war though, which means Heyman at least has one good thing going for him.

Undertaker/Roman Reigns vs. Shane McMahon/Drew McIntyre

No Holds Barred for the sake of McMahon. The match itself isn't what matters here, as the whole point is much more about who Undertaker gets to face at Summerslam. Odds are that it's going to be McIntyre, but I'm not sure who would win once we get there. That's for later though so for now, we get more McMahon getting to hang with multiple time World Champions, if not beating them.

For the sake of my sanity, I'm going with Undertaker and Reigns squeaking by a guy whose career highlight is the NXT Title and the Monster McMahon, because somehow this is one of the biggest feuds of the summer. Assuming Kevin Owens vs. Dolph Ziggler isn't added to the card (or even if it is), I could easily see Owens interfering here and taking McMahon down. Not for a pin of course because Undertaker and Reigns aren't on that level, but maybe he can help bring McIntyre down.

SmackDown Women's Title: Bayley(c) vs. Nikki Cross/Alexa Bliss

This feud has gotten a lot of time in recent weeks, though I'm not entirely sure which way it's going. That's the best thing about it though, as they really could take it in a lot of different directions and see what they can find. Cross is being conned by Bliss, but Bayley has been showing some more heelish tendencies as of late. That opens up a lot of doors and any of them could be followed up on here.

I'll take Bayley winning to retain here, likely pinning Cross in the process. Above all else, Bayley needs to get FAR away from Bliss, as the two of them have been joined at the hip for far too long now. It almost never goes well for Bayley either and the longer they're together, the more I expect Bliss to get the title and kill Bayley's momentum again. Odds are Charlotte gets the title shot at Summerslam (because she's Charlotte) so Bayley has to win here to set that up.

US Title: Ricochet(c) vs. AJ Styles

This one is going to come down to how much you believe the stories about Paul Heyman being so high on Ricochet. At the end of the day, Ricochet is the kind of guy who could be turned into a new top star for the company in the blink of an eye and it seems that they're heading that way. At the same time though, Styles is Styles and you don't want the newly reformed Club losing their first big pay per view match.

I think they'll put the title on Styles though, likely through Good Brothers interference, meaning it's time to have Ricochet chase the title again. Ricochet losing due to the numbers game is acceptable, but it would be nice to let the younger guys get a longer term chance. I'm not confident whatsoever in this one though and that's a nice feeling for a match like this.

Universal Title/Raw Women's Title: Seth Rollins/Becky Lynch(c) vs. Lacey Evans/Baron Corbin

We've covered every possible bit of ranting that can be done about this match and these feuds but now we get an Extreme

Rules match for both titles. The big story here is the real life relationship between Lynch and Rollins (because that's REAL while everything else is fake) vs. the business relationship between Evans and Corbin, because that's what we want at an EXTREME show.

For the sake of my sanity (again with the sanity), I'll go with the champions retaining here because...how could Corbin ever be World Champion? I mean I know he will be someday, but egads the possibilities of that give me hives. I'm not sure where this takes Rollins and Lynch (though the Power Couple battle against Triple H and Stephanie McMahon is starting to seem plausible) but for now, they keep the titles.

Overall Thoughts

Main event aside, this is actually a pretty good looking card and I don't remember the last time that was the case for a WWE pay per view. There are a few violent matches sprinkled here and there but did anyone really expect an actual EXTREME show from this event? You take what you can get here as the nightmare summer continues. I don't know what Heyman and Bischoff have in mind for Summerslam, but it almost has to be better than what we've been doing for the last few weeks. At least it's going to be fresh and that's what matters most.

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