

Summerslam 2019 Preview



IMG Credit: WWE

It's the second biggest show of the year (in theory I guess but that's for another time) and this year's show...isn't really that big. For once we only have ten matches scheduled over six hours, but you can probably guess another match or two being added at the last minute. The build for this one has been a bit all over the place as the TV shows are transitioning to the Paul Heyman and Eric Bischoff era and since we've had four weeks since Extreme Rules (including Raw Reunion), it hasn't had time to be fleshed out. Maybe they can pull off something good so let's get to it.

Bray Wyatt vs. Finn Balor

We'll start off with what should be a pretty easy one. This is Wyatt's first match back in about a year and now he's the Fiend, which is the first major change for Wyatt in a very long time. It's basically his evil side and while that might seem a little redundant, it's better than bringing Sister Abigail up again, though you know that's' coming one day.

As for the match itself, it isn't going to be in much doubt. Balor is reportedly taking some time off soon so he's not going to win here, as even WWE isn't dumb enough....ok so they are but I don't think they'll have Wyatt lose his first match back. The Fiend is a good choice for him and if they do it

right, they could have a very evil monster on their hands. Wyatt wins, and he should do so again in a rematch against the Demon.

Goldberg vs. Dolph Ziggler

Let's just get this one out of the way early. For some reason WWE thinks the fans want to see Ziggler mock the legends and then get beaten up by one so they can trot out Goldberg again to make up for the horrible Super ShowDown match. I'm sure Ziggler will sell the spear rather well and Goldberg will look awesome, but my goodness this might have been the biggest waste of time I can remember this side of a Baron Corbin push.

So yeah they're not going to do anything stupid here as Ziggler is scheduled for more comedy shows in the near future and probably needs to go away again for those, meaning some of my medications can go away for the time being. Sidebar: how does Ziggler not qualify for Legend status? Two World Titles, eight midcard titles, Money in the Bank, wrestles part time and he'll be forty next year. I'm sure it's in the fine print somewhere but whatever gets him out of here faster is what matters most.

Cruiserweight Title: Drew Gulak(c) vs. Oney Lorcan

Another month with another Cruiserweight Title match all but destined to wind up on the Kickoff Show. This was only set up on Tuesday but Lorcan has been the obvious challenger for weeks now. Lorcan is a hard hitter and someone who will go head first at Gulak the whole way, though that might not be the smartest thing in the world to do against a submission expert.

That hole in Lorcan's strategy is why I'll go with Gulak to retain. He's got something with this new, serious character and while Lorcan is good, he's not the one to take the title off of Gulak, who shouldn't be losing for a long time. I'm not sure who does take the title off of him, but it's not Lorcan

and certainly not in this spot.

SmackDown Women's Title: Bayley(c) vs. Ember Moon

Despite having held the title for most of the summer, Bayley is in a bad place as champion at the moment. She's winning matches and getting some credibility back, but it's the same place that Seth Rollins and Kofi Kingston were for months: as long as the big star (Charlotte in her case), it doesn't feel like this is a reign that particularly matters. It feels like we're waiting for Charlotte to get the title back and that makes a lot of these matches feel less important.

That being said, Bayley wins pretty handily here as there is no reason to believe that Moon is going to take the title from her. Moon feels like a challenger of the month and while she has the biggest weapon around, I don't think it's going to hit Bayley. After this they might do a rematch, but odds are it's going to come back around to Charlotte sooner or later, because that's how women's titles work in WWE (because her dad is Ric Flair and she has to win a bunch of titles you see).

Raw Women's Title: Becky Lynch(c) vs. Natalya

Yay Canada! Is there any other reason to put this match on the card? Natalya has never been interesting in her WWE career and this will be no exception. She can go out there and have a passable if not good match with anyone, but putting her in one of the highest profile matches of the year doesn't exactly seem like the most intriguing idea. The promos haven't worked and even making it a submission match doesn't do them much good.

Of course Lynch retains because what else are they going to do? The problem here is that there isn't anyone else for Lynch to face as she's beaten Lacey Evans and...well who else is there? Alexa Bliss? The women's divisions aren't deep at the moment so I can understand Natalya getting the spot, but that doesn't really make it better. The match should be good, but

it isn't something that is going to draw a lot of interest.

Kevin Owens vs. Shane McMahon

Has anyone else noticed that less McMahon on the show has made it that much easier to watch? McMahon is still around but he hasn't been the focal point of the whole thing as of late and I don't think it's any surprise that things are at least a little better. I'm sure we'll be seeing more of him after this, but if Owens loses he's off of the show. Again: I'm sure.

This seems to be a pretty easy layup and I'll take Owens for what should be the win. Owens can set up a rematch where McMahon's power is on the line to get rid of him for good, but he can't do that if he loses here. What matters most is getting McMahon's screen time down (not eliminated mind you) and Owens beating him would be a good first step in that direction. Owens wins in one of the most likely picks of the show.

US Title: AJ Styles(c) vs. Ricochet

Of course they're fighting again because they only had three matches in the span of a few weeks. There is plenty of time left to drive a feud into the ground before people get sick of it. Styles turned heel and joined up with the OC again to get the title and now Ricochet needs to fight back and get his big moment. Winning the title was nice but winning it back at Summerslam is what would make him seem like a star.

That's what I think is happening too, as Styles certainly doesn't need the title and Ricochet has everything to gain here. The OC is the kind of stable that can do a bunch of stuff without the title, especially when they already have the Raw Tag Team Titles. Ricochet needs this one and I think WWE knows what kind of potential they have with him. Give him the title back and let him run with the thing for a few months.

Trish Stratus vs. Charlotte

It's pretty rare to have an actual dream match but that's what they've done here. Charlotte has dominated the women's divisions since showing up about four years ago and has a serious claim to being the best ever. Then again so does Stratus, who is viewed as one of the goddesses of women's wrestling. Putting Charlotte in there against her, in Stratus' hometown no less, could be a rather big moment.

This is Charlotte's to win and I don't see any reason to consider the alternative. You don't bring Stratus out of retirement for the one big singles match and then have her win, so let her go out in a fight and come close to beating Charlotte, only to come up short and show that Charlotte is better. Just keep Charlotte away from the title because we've more than covered that one already.

SmackDown World Title: Kofi Kingston(c) vs. Randy Orton

How did we get here? How in the world is Kingston the WWE Champion with a four month reign? This is the match that should have rocketed Kingston up to the main event scene about ten years ago but Orton didn't see it that way so Kingston took the long route. This has been the best built match on the show and you could easily see it being the best match on the show, assuming Orton is motivated.

I'm going with Kingston to retain here but there is going to be a rematch. Eventually I think Orton does take the title from him, but Kingston has been playing with the house's money since the night he won the title. Who would have expected him to be champion for this long and actually make it into a decent length reign? It has to end sometime, but that won't be on Sunday.

Raw World Title: Brock Lesnar(c) vs. Seth Rollins

And then there's this too because we're right back to

WrestleMania and pretending the summer didn't happen. Rollins had a lot of things working against him during his title reign and Lesnar was a big one, but enough of the problems are likely going to be put on him, meaning I don't know when he's going to get the title back.

What I do likely know is that it won't be Sunday so I'm going with Lesnar to retain. That makes the most sense from WWE's perspective at the moment (mainly because they have set it up so that Lesnar is the only real option to carry the title until someone, likely named Roman Reigns, gets to take it from him again). WWE is going to want Lesnar as champion when they move to FOX so he keeps it here, as he probably should.

Overall Thoughts

The more I think about it, the better this show is starting to sound. While you can all but guarantee a few matches being added (Reigns vs. Rowan (or at least a segment about them) and Drew McIntyre vs. Cedric Alexander seem to be locks), it sounds very nice to have a shortened card that isn't overflowing with stuff most people don't want to see. They have a long way to go to beat last year's show but maybe they've got a trick or two left.

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