

Summerslam Count-Up – 2017 (2018 Redo): Four For Fighting

Summerslam 2017

Date: August 20, 2017

Location: Barclays Center, New York City, New York

Attendance: 16,128

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Booker T., Tom Phillips, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

It's kind of amazing how these modern shows go in one ear and out the other. Aside from the main event, I couldn't tell you a single thing on this show, and I can tell you every match (mostly in order) from the first seventeen or so Wrestlemanias. It's the nature of the shows being built up so fast and then running so long, as the same is true of shows I've been to even this year. Let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: The Miz/Miztourage vs. Hardy Boyz/Jason Jordan

Rematch from Raw. Now this one I remember because it took place about twenty minutes into the two hour Kickoff Show and the place was embarrassingly empty with MAYBE twenty percent of the place full. It's just awful looking as the fans who aren't in yet (as in the majority of them) are going to be annoyed at missing a match and the wrestlers have to go out in front of this empty building like they're on some nothing indy show (in a huge arena for some reason). I mean, what in the world is the point?

Matt headlocks Axel to start and it's quickly off to Jeff as the dozens and dozens of fans get behind the good guys. Jordan comes in to crank on the arm to no reaction, at least partially because there aren't many people here to cheer. A dropkick gets two on Dallas and Jordan muscles him down to the mat.

Everything breaks down and Jordan directs traffic as the Hardys chop away

in the corner. Axel saves Dallas from the Swanton and we take a break. Back with Jeff getting two off a basement dropkick as the crowd is now just embarrassing instead of depressing. Dallas pushed Jeff off the top though and it's time to start the stomping in the corner. Miz (oh yeah he's in this match) comes in for a reverse chinlock but Jeff kicks him away without too much effort.

Instead it's Axel coming in to twist Jeff's neck around as the fans chant for BROTHER NERO. Jeff dropkicks Miz and Dallas off the apron and knocks Axel away as well, allowing the lukewarm tag off to Matt. The middle rope elbow to the back of the neck gets two on Miz but he's right back up with the YES Kicks. Matt shrugs those off though and there's a Side Effect for the same. Jordan comes in to throw Axel around, including a suplex for two. Everything breaks down and Miz makes a blind tag, setting up a Skull Crushing Finale to pin Jordan at 10:31.

Rating: C. The crowd killed what would have otherwise been a pretty good six man tag. When you can hear the wrestlers breathing, it's pretty clear that there isn't much going on in the arena, which isn't exactly the atmosphere you want for a show billed as a big party. The match itself was fine, and it helps to not have watched it six days earlier.

Kickoff Show: Cruiserweight Title: Akira Tozawa vs. Neville

Tozawa, part of Titus Worldwide, is defending after winning the title from Neville on Monday. He also has a banged up shoulder. You remember Neville. He was the awesome guy who turned into one of the best heels in the company but WWE decided that having him put over Enzo Amore made more sense and since there was apparently no way Neville could be a heavyweight again, he walked out a few months later.

Neville shoulders him down to start and then dropkicks the glare off of Tozawa's face. That's it for now though as Neville sends him outside and screams a lot, as is his custom. The jumping backsplash crushes Neville back inside but he's able to snap Tozawa's throat across the top rope. Back from a break with Neville scoring off a missile dropkick to the back for two and stopping to sneer.

The chinlock lets Tozawa have a breather and he fights up to send Neville

outside again. That means the big suicide dive and a Saito suplex but it's too early for the top rope backplash. Instead Tozawa reverses a fireman's carry into an Octopus hold as he's certainly keeping things varied. Neville makes the ropes so Tozawa hits a Shining Wizard for two.

An enziguri staggers Tozawa but he's right back with a second Shining Wizard to put both guys down. Tozawa is up first but gets pulled down by the bad shoulder. His legs are fine enough to kick Neville in the head and it's time to go up again. After knocking Neville off the top, the backplash hits knees and the champ is in big trouble. Neville jumps up top and hits the Red Arrow to the back for the pin and the title at 11:45.

Rating: C+. I get what they were going for here with the title change taking place on Summerslam but why not go with the first title change here and then switch it back tomorrow or the next week on Raw? Or, dare I suggest it, on 205 Live? Other than that it felt like they were just kind of going through the motions at times, but Neville going through the motions is still pretty good.

The crowd is fine now.

Kickoff Show: Smackdown Tag Team Titles: Usos vs. New Day

New Day is defending in what is kind of another Smackdown rematch, though it's a different New Day lineup. Tonight it's Woods and Big E., who has a huge cape. On the way to the ring, Kofi talks about how this is the place New Day first sang together and the original Francesca was born. Her sacrifice is what allowed us to have Francesca II: TURBO. Tonight they're here to tear the house down with the Usos one more time.

Woods and Jimmy start things off in a technical sequence until Woods hits a roaring elbow to knock Jimmy's block off. Some forearms in the corner have Jimmy in trouble but he gets in a shot to the face to stagger Woods. Back from a break with Jey putting on a chinlock and then slinging Woods into the corner. Woods knocks Jey off the top and avoids a charge from Jimmy. A missile dropkick has Jey in trouble but Jimmy pulls Big E. off the apron.

Thankfully the hot tag isn't just a few seconds later and a backbreaker/middle rope knee combination gets two. Woods is in big trouble but scores with a victory roll faceplant (not a bad little move), which is finally enough for the hot tag to Big E. House is cleaned, including the release Rock Bottom out of the corner for two on Jey. Big E. powerbombs Woods onto Jey as the fast tags begin.

Woods even manages to electric chair Big E. so he can splash Jey as well but Jimmy comes in for a save. The double spinebuster gets two on Big E. and there's the running Umaga attack for good measure as the pace picks up. Woods comes back in for a Rock Bottom into a Backstabber, which is somehow only good for two. That's a heck of a finisher for those two if they're ever a regular team.

Jey gets a blind tag but Woods knocks both Usos to the floor just in case. Big E.'s spear through the ropes is cut off by a superkick and a Superfly Splash while he's still stuck in the ropes. The regular Superfly Splash gets a close two on Woods but he pulls Jey into a Koji Clutch. That's broken up as well so Woods goes with a Shining Wizard for two.

A tornado DDT to the floor plants Jey and Jimmy takes the Midnight Hour, only to have Jey dive in at the last second for another save. Jimmy Samoan drops Woods to the floor and Kofi gets sent into the steps for checking on his buddy. Big E. is right back up with the spear through the ropes to take Jey down. Woods is done though and it's four straight superkicks to Big E. into the double Us to give the Usos the titles back at 19:09.

Rating: B. Is there any surprise that this was the best thing on the Kickoff Show? This took some time to get going but these four delivered, as always. They know how to work well together and the diving saves for the false finishes were great. You could run these two over and over again, which is exactly what happened for the next few months. That can only go on for so long though, and that's why the division isn't great to this day.

The opening video starts with a shot of Brooklyn before heading backstage. The bigger matches get a quick look as someone spray paints

the Summerslam logo onto a wall. That's rather generic for the opening of such a big show.

John Cena vs. Baron Corbin

Corbin attacked Shinsuke Nakamura after Nakamura beat Cena, who made the save. Cena then cost Corbin his Money in the Bank cash-in to really hammer this home. The fans, ever so nice, ask Baron where his briefcase is. Cena slides outside to mock Corbin, even throwing on JBL's hat. Well that makes any adult look like a moron so Corbin gives chase but Cena slides back in.

A headlock keeps Corbin on trouble as JBL points out the Cena issue with the crowd: they're always chanting about him, whether it's positive or negative. That's not the best sign for the opponents, but at least Corbin had the chant to start the match. Some knees to the ribs put Cena in trouble and Corbin pops him in the jaw with a right hand.

The slide underneath the corner sets up the hard clothesline for two and Corbin is already looking frustrated. A suplex gets the same so it's time to yell at the referee. Corbin hits a World's Strongest Slam and we hit the chinlock. The fans ask about the briefcase again so Corbin says it's on Cena. Another comeback starts up with the flying shoulders until Corbin slides under the ropes again, only to slide back in for a chokebreaker.

Cena blocks a superplex attempt and hits a tornado DDT, sending the fans right back into their chorus of booing. The AA is reversed into a Deep Six and Corbin can't believe the kickout. He's so serious that the shirt comes off and more slugging ensues. Cena sends him into the corner for the third slide but this time Corbin eats a big clothesline. The AA is good for the pin at 10:12.

Rating: D+. So that happened. The story wasn't great, the action was nothing to see and Cena hit all of two moves to win in the end. Cena would go on to feud with Roman Reigns for the real rub, but that's not the best way to boost Corbin. Just a complete nothing of a match here and it felt like they were getting it out of the way instead of featuring it, which is really weird to see for Cena.

Cena hugging kids and throwing his wristbands and dog tags is always cool to see. That just works.

Some wrestlers played Rocket League.

We recap Naomi vs. Natalya. Naomi won the title at Wrestlemania but Natalya thinks she's turned it into a toy. Natalya attacked Becky Lynch after a match so Naomi made the save. This qualifies for the build to a title match.

Smackdown Women's Title: Natalya vs. Naomi

Naomi is defending and gets slapped in the face at the bell but snaps off a hurricanrana to get herself out of trouble. A Blockbuster off the steps gives Naomi two more but Natalya posts her hard to take over. Back in and Natalya stomps away but the emotional offense has never been her strong suit. James Ellsworth and Miss Money in the Bank Carmella are watching in the back (she held that thing so long that she is still champion and Ellsworth has left, returned and left again in less than a year) as Natalya hits a running clothesline.

Naomi's kicks to the legs don't have much effect so Natalya grabs an abdominal stretch. That goes nowhere so Natalya hits the discus lariat for two and loads up a superplex. Naomi slips out and hits a super Russian legsweep, which of course gets us to even despite both of them taking the same impact. A spinning kick to the head and a headscissors driver give Naomi two but the dancing kicks are shrugged off (as they should be) with Natalya dropkicking her in the face.

Natalya gets caught in the ropes though and a slingshot legdrop gives Naomi two. The reverse Rings of Saturn is countered into the Sharpshooter but Naomi pulls rolls through and sends Natalya head first into the buckle. Not that it matters though as the split legged moonsault misses, setting up another Sharpshooter to make Naomi tap at 10:50.

Rating: D+. I was bored during this as Natalya is a black hole of charisma and Naomi isn't the best at being serious. The wrestling was dull too and there was nothing happening here to draw me in. It doesn't help when the women's division on both shows have been dominated by the

Four Horsewomen for so long that it's almost impossible to get invested in anyone else (though Naomi has come a long, long way in the last year).

Post match Naomi is rather depressed.

We recap Big Cass vs. Big Show. Cass and Enzo Amore have split up and Show is standing up for him. Tonight though Enzo is being locked in a cage (good start) and Show has a broken hand thanks to Cass crushing it in the shark cage.

Big Show vs. Big Cass

Before the match, Enzo makes various Brooklyn/New York City rap references. He talks about loving to talk and how his worst day is better than Cass' best and Cass has no heart. Thankfully Cass comes out to cut off the never ending promo and Enzo goes up in the cage. Show, not being the brightest guy in the world, hits Cass with the broken hand as Enzo is already running his mouth. He dances in the cage a bit, shouting about having the best seat in the house.

Cass gets thrown around and kicked in the ribs and there's the side slam, only to have Show bang up the hand again. Enzo shouts something about Patrick the Starfish as Show misses a Vader Bomb, injuring his hand again. Cass' big boot is blocked by a weak KO punch for two but the second attempt hits Show's chest. It's time to start in on the hand even more, despite that not really doing anything that's going to let Cass pin him. Something like an armbar has Enzo jumping up and down, further making me want to see him put inside a wood chipper.

The fans call the hold boring so Cass stops, poses, and puts it on again. Show throws him down and hits a left armed clothesline, followed by the chokeslam for two. The hand goes into the post as Enzo is leaning through the cage bars. With Show down, Enzo pulls off his pants and whips out a bottle of lubricant (there's no way I'm touching that one), oils himself up, and gets out of the cage. The match completely stops until Enzo gets down so Cass can kick him in the face. A pair of big boots put Show down and the Empire Elbow is good for the pin at 10:29.

Rating: F+. What in the world was that supposed to be? This was all about

the bad hand but somehow it became about Enzo, that loudmouthed idiot, and then Cass just wins clean. I have no idea how this was the best idea they had but it was an awful match and a big waste of time. If I ever see Enzo oiled up again, I'll be off in the next room gouging my eyes out.

General Manager Kurt Angle and Daniel Bryan get in a YES/NO off about which show will be better for the rest of the night.

Randy Orton vs. Rusev

Rusev jumps him from behind before the bell and Orton is in trouble. They get inside for the bell and it's the RKO in ten seconds. That would be your "well the card is huge and we have to cut something" match of the night.

Bayley wishes Sasha Banks good luck tonight. Banks is taking her place due to a shoulder injury.

Raw Women's Title: Sasha Banks vs. Alexa Bliss

Banks is challenging and has special gear that makes her look like a peacock (so she's copying Charlotte tonight). Bliss gets fired up to start and slugs away in the corner but Banks flips her around and hammers at the champ's head. One heck of a forearm drops Banks and Bliss talks some trash. With the forearms boring her, Bliss pulls Banks' hair around the ropes and crotches her on the middle rope for painful measure. We hit the chinlock as it's almost all Bliss in the early going.

A lot more trash talk sets up a choke shove to put Banks down again as the fans are trying to get behind Banks. The middle rope knees into the moonsault knees give Bliss two more and she drops Banks on the back of her head for the same. Bliss goes to the middle rope and chokes some more until Banks slams her down. A dropkick and clothesline put the champ down for two but she knees Banks in the face to take over again. Bliss' Code Red out of the corner is countered into something like an Alabama Slam, followed by just kneeing the heck out of Bliss in the corner.

The Bank Statement doesn't work as Bliss is right next to the ropes. Bliss pulls her down into the ring skirt and dumps Banks to the floor for

a near countout, with Bliss freaking out when she gets back in. Twisted Bliss only gets two more and now Bliss doesn't know what to do. Since hitting it again is out of the question, Bliss picks her up and gets pulled down into the Bank Statement. Banks' shoulder gives out so she tries the hold again and Bliss taps at 13:17.

Rating: C. Nothing much to see here with Banks shrugging off everything Bliss threw at her and winning without a ton of drama. Bliss got to show off the offense here and looked very good, though there's not much she can do when Banks is on offense for all of a minute and a half and wins completely clean. Banks would lose the title just eight days later, continuing her trend of not being able to remain champion for very long.

Video on wrestlers auditioning to be the new Colonel Sanders. A fight breaks out and Shawn Michaels winds up winning in one of the most random, bizarre things you'll ever see. Becky Lynch as the Colonel oddly works.

We recap Finn Balor vs. Bray Wyatt. Bray had targeted Balor as his latest false idol, beat him on Raw, and covered him in fake blood. Balor then decided to bring the Demon back to fight as hard as he could. This worked in NXT but not up here and that was mainly for one reason: Cole explaining/hyping the Demon EVERY TWO FREAKING SECONDS, saying over and over that "the Demon is Finn Balor's alter ego" because WWE doesn't think its fans are that bright. I don't think NXT ever actually explained it (if they did it was once) because they know how smart fans can be. And that's why the Demon has never been back.

Finn Balor vs. Bray Wyatt

Cole mentions the Demon idea again during Bray's entrance but gets cut off as He's Got The Whole World In His Hands starts playing for Finn. We get the big smoky entrance with Finn looking awesome and the camera getting an AWESOME shot of him with his back to the ring and the crowd posing with him. Balor gets to the ring and LET'S HIT THAT EXPLANATION again. Seriously it's not exactly a character that needs to be broken down and it's made worse when Cole does it.

Wyatt is hesitant to start and a right hand just ticks Balor off. Balor shows him how to throw some real right hands and Wyatt needs a breather

on the floor. You don't do that to Balor, who charges around the corner to drop Wyatt again. Back in and Balor isn't phased by the upside down stare so Wyatt bails to the floor. This time it's a big flip dive as it's all Balor so far. Bray finally pulls him off the apron and hammers away, followed by something like a reverse Stunner out of the corner.

Of course that means a chinlock, because even though Bray is a cult leader, he still follows WWE wrestling tropes. Balor is right back up with a Pele kick and a baseball slide to the floor. The double stomp from the apron to Bray's back keeps him in trouble, causing Graves to drop a (failed) external occipital protuberance reference. I knew I liked him for a reason.

Bray kicks him in the face and hits the release Rock Bottom for two. The running backsplash gets the same but Finn kicks him to the floor for the shotgun dropkick against the barricade. Back in and Bray scores with a kick so it's spider walk time. Balor pops to his feet, hits a Sling Blade, another shotgun dropkick, and the Coup de Grace for the pin at 10:39.

Rating: D. This was as exciting as Bray hitting some basic offense while Balor did all of his usual stuff. The problem again is in the Demon, which was what Balor would bring out for his biggest, most violent fights. When it's just the standard wrestling match and even a pretty dominant Finn performance, the whole Demon character is pretty much a waste.

Ad for the Mae Young Classic. In other words, the modern NXT women's division.

We recap Seth Rollins/Dean Ambrose vs. the Bar, which is built around the idea of Dean and Seth not being able to trust each other. They kept offering the Shield fist until they FINALLY got back together, mainly due to having to deal with the Bar. Now they're united after a very well done series of segments that them saving each other but not being willing to trust each other. They got in a fight though and the Bar coming out to join in was FINALLY enough to get them to agree to fight together. This was actually a heck of a build and I got sucked into it, both live and

again during the recap video.

Raw Tag Team Titles: The Bar vs. Seth Rollins/Dean Ambrose

Sheamus and Cesaro are defending and it's Sheamus getting taken down so the challengers can drop some elbows. Rollins Downward Spirals Cesaro into Dean's boot and the champs are cleared out early on. A quick distraction lets Sheamus Brogue Kick Dean so Seth tries a suicide dive onto both guys. That gets him slammed down hard as momentum changes in a hurry.

We settle down to Cesaro gutwrench suplexing Seth and the chinlock goes on. Rollins fights back and hits a Blockbuster but Ambrose is still down off what is apparently the most devastating Brogue Kick of all time. Sheamus keeps Rollins in the corner as Cesaro runs into the crowd and destroys a beach ball, because Cesaro is more awesome than you. An enziguri gets Rollins out of trouble but this time it's Cesaro cutting him off. Seth sends him outside though and Cesaro comes up holding his knee.

Rollins goes out after him with Sheamus following, meaning it's Dean diving onto everyone at once. Back in and Rollins rolls underneath Cesaro and makes the hot tag to bring in Ambrose. Everything breaks down and Seth springboards in with a clothesline to Sheamus. There's the double suicide dive and the fans are eating up all these double team spots. We settle down again with Ambrose powering out of the Neutralizer and hitting the rebound lariat, only to have Sheamus cut off the tag.

Ambrose catches him on top with a superplex into a very fast frog splash from Rollins but Cesaro makes the save. Rollins and Ambrose are tired of this tagging stuff and unload on Sheamus in the corner but he's right back with a tilt-a-whirl slam. Cesaro swings Dean for all of two rotations and the Sharpshooter goes on, with Dean looking more surprised than in pain. With Dean getting close to the rope, Cesaro rolls over into a Crossface to change focal points.

Instead of going for the submission, Cesaro loads up a powerbomb with Sheamus adding a top rope clothesline for another close two. Rollins finally comes in and gets knocked outside just as fast. Dean tells the

champs to bring it so they load up a spike White Noise. Hang on though as Rollins is right in there with a hurricanrana to send Cesaro into Dean and Sheamus for the save. The wind up knee into Dirty Deeds finishes Sheamus for the titles at 18:38.

Rating: B. This took some time to get going but there was no other way to go with the finish. Rollins and Ambrose are a great team and the fans love them so let them have a long match and take the titles for a change. There was some chemistry here and that made for a good, long match that the show desperately needed.

We recap AJ Styles vs. Kevin Owens. They've traded the US Title for a few months now and Owens is claiming a conspiracy thanks to the referee missing his shoulder being up in the most recent title match. Therefore, Shane McMahon is guest referee tonight, despite having a history with AJ and a history of being a crooked referee.

US Title: AJ Styles vs. Kevin Owens

AJ is defending with Shane as guest referee. They get in a fight before the bell with Shane pulling them apart twice in a row, because Shane is going to be the focal point here. The bell rings and they fight out to the floor with AJ hitting a knee from the apron. Back in and AJ keeps him down, followed by a knee drop. One heck of a clothesline takes AJ's head off and the Cannonball gets two.

The backslash gets the same and the near fall off the Edge-0-Matic has Owens yelling at Shane. AJ is right back with a belly to back faceplant and the fireman's carry into a backbreaker gives him two of his own. They're both banged up and the delay allows Owens to "accidentally" shove Shane into the ropes to crotch AJ on top. He's fine enough for a springboard 450, which hits Shane after Owens pulls him in. For reasons of storyline convenience, AJ is down after splashing Shane, allowing Owens to hit the Pop Up Powerbomb for two, thanks to a delayed count.

That means ANOTHER argument with Shane, allowing AJ to grab the Calf Crusher but Owens pokes him in the eye. Owens sends AJ into Shane to knock him to the floor, meaning there's no referee to see Owens tap to another Calf Crusher. Now it's AJ's turn to yell at Shane, who shoves AJ

into a rollup for a pretty fast two. The annoyed AJ puts him on top, only to get caught in the swinging superplex for the big crash.

Owens wins a slugout but gets reversed into a Styles Clash for a clean two. The Pop Up Powerbomb gets three, though with AJ's foot on the ropes at one. Shane: "TWO!" That means another argument with Shane, who shoves Owens into a rollup for two, meaning they're not repeating spots from earlier in the match. The Phenomenal Forearm into the Styles Clash retains AJ's title at 17:23.

Rating: B-. Well of course most of the match was about Shane, because that's what a Summerslam title match should be about. The wrestling was fine but you kept waiting on Shane to do something else. I'm not sure how this was the best they could do with Styles, but at least there's an Owens vs. Shane story set up for the next eight months. That's more important than the US Title and Summerslam right?

Video on some fans winning a sweepstakes and got to go to the show.

We recap Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Jinder Mahal and I can feel the headache coming. Mahal won the WWE Championship in a period of Vince McMahon insanity and has held it since May. Nakamura has hit Kinshasa on a bunch of people, including Cena to become #1 contender. In other words: help us Shinsuke Nakamura. You're our only hope.

Smackdown World Title: Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Jinder Mahal

Nakamura is challenging and a live violinist plays him to the ring. The fans singing the song is awesome as usual, especially when you consider it doesn't have words. Jinder grabs a wristlock to start so Nakamura spins around into a headlock, much to the crowd's delight. Nakamura puts him up against the ropes for the arm shaking and the required COME ON. Mahal bails to the floor so it's a triple COME ON, including the Singh Brothers. The fans chant for 3MB because the comedy version of Mahal is better than the main event version.

With nothing else going on, let's go to the Japanese commentary team. I don't speak Japanese so it's all Greek to me. Back in and Nakamura drops a knee and hits some Good Vibrations as Mahal has nothing. As in all

together, not just so far. The Singh Brothers offer a distraction though and Mahal knocks him off the apron to take over for the first time. Some knee drops set up a chinlock, followed by Mahal doing the COME ON pose but shouting his own name.

After that brilliant display of saying his name, it's back to the chinlock. Nakamura fights up with a kick to the face and some YES Kicks to set up the running knee to the ribs. With the covers not working, Nakamura grabs a triangle choke but Mahal gets his foot in the ropes. Nakamura's running knee in the corner hits buckle and Mahal adds a jumping knee to the face for two of his own. Mahal goes shoulder first into the post but the Singh Brothers' distraction lets Mahal hit a chinlock slam (he has ONE MOVE and can't even do that right) to retain at 11:25.

Rating: D-. You know, it's been about nine months since Mahal lost the title and e-freaking-gads I had forgotten how awful his title reign really was. This felt like a bad house show main event and it's the biggest Smackdown match on the second biggest show of the year. You can feel the fans dying out there when Mahal is...well doing anything actually, but in this case I'll go with being on offense and winning. I remember watching Sami Zayn and Shinsuke Nakamura beat the living tar out of each other for twenty minutes at Takeover: Dallas. Now though, a weak/botched/terrible cobra clutch slam puts him down? Not a chance.

We recap the Universal Title match with Brock Lesnar defending against Braun Strowman, Roman Reigns and Samoa Joe. Lesnar was announced as facing all three challengers and since he wasn't happy, he's threatened to leave WWE if he loses. The three challengers all say they can be the man to take out Lesnar. There's just not much else to be said here but this is by far and away the main event.

Universal Title: Brock Lesnar vs. Roman Reigns vs. Braun Strowman vs. Samoa Joe

Lesnar is defending and it's one fall to a finish. Cole picks Reigns to win because Reigns beat Undertaker at Wrestlemania. Cole: "How can you bet against that?" You pick the guy who did it first, you nitwit. Reigns

is of course booted out of the building because...oh you know the drill by now.

The brawl is on to start (well duh) with Strowman throwing Reigns to the floor and Brock hitting a belly to belly on Joe. Strowman gets posted and it's time for the Reigns vs. Lesnar showdown that no one but WWE seems to love. Booker tries to say that Lesnar knew nothing but winning in UFC, which I'll leave you to make fun of. Some suplexes put Reigns on the floor and it's Strowman time.

Now THIS gets the fans' attention but Reigns and Joe are right back in to break up the fun. That lasts all of five seconds before it's back to Strowman vs. Lesnar, meaning another YES chant. Strowman LAUNCHES Brock into the corner and hits a heck of a clothesline to put the champ on the floor. As usual, Lesnar's selling is very underrated. Everyone is on the floor now and Joe chokes Lesnar but sidesteps a Reigns spear, sending Lesnar through the barricade. That spot will always look cool.

Strowman is back up and loads up the title (with Graves hoping he uses Saxton as a weapon), setting up a running powerslam to drive a kicking Lesnar through it. The fans REALLY like that but here's Reigns to kick Strowman in the face and kill their buzz all over again. Joe is back up with a suicide elbow to take Reigns out, meaning the fans are won right back. Thankfully Cole is doing a great job of explaining how cool it is to see people this big doing this stuff.

That's exactly what he should be doing and it's working here. Strowman throws an announcers' chair at Joe and Reigns in a cool spot, followed by a second powerslam through a table to put Lesnar down again. Heyman has a look on his face that says "well, I didn't see that one coming". Fans: "ONE MORE TABLE!" Greedy twits. To mix things up a bit, Strowman picks that one up and turns it on top of the already out Lesnar. Half a dozen people come out to get the table off of Lesnar and a stretcher is brought out as Heyman seems to be near tears.

We're not done yet though as Strowman hits Joe and Reigns in the head with the steps. With the steps in the ring, Reigns fires off the corner clotheslines and hits a good steps shot into Strowman's shoulder. Joe's

rollup gets two on Reigns but he's right back up with a Samoan drop for two. The Superman Punch is countered into the Koquina Clutch but Strowman (with some blood next to his ear) is back in with a double chokeslam. Everyone is down so here comes Lesnar again.

Strowman is the only one on his feet so it's time for the big showdown. A running clothesline takes Strowman to the floor and there's a German suplex each to Joe and Reigns. Strowman comes back in and elbow his way out of a German suplex, only to get caught in the Kimura. That's broken up with a Superman Punch, with Joe and Lesnar taking one each as well. Reigns spears Lesnar for two so here's Strowman for a dropkick to Reigns, just because he can do that too.

The powerslam gets two on Joe with Lesnar pulling the referee out at the last second. A Superman Punch gets two on Strowman, whose kickout puts Reigns on his feet. There's a powerslam to Reigns with Lesnar making the save but getting loaded up into the F5. That's broken up by a Reigns spear, drawing Joe back in for a Clutch on Lesnar. Brock reverses into the F5 but Reigns is right in there with some Superman Punches. Three in a row put Lesnar down but the spear is countered into the F5 to retain Brock's title at 20:53.

Rating: A-. What a fight and that's all it needed to be. They were making Godzilla/King Kong references here and they nailed the idea to near perfection. The best thing here was Strowman looking awesome and like the man that could beat Lesnar if he had the chance, with the bonus of Reigns taking the fall again. It's not like Reigns losing was going to hurt him (it hasn't yet) so going this way was the right call. This was all about violence and that was the story: big, strong people beating each other up for twenty minutes and all of the chaos that it caused. Well done, all around.

Lesnar can barely stand to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This show suffered from the same problem as the modern Wrestlemania. It's not the length that is the problem (the show never really did drag) but rather that almost nothing has a chance to sink in. Everything jumped from one match to the other and most of the

matches didn't have a ton of time.

It was "well that happened so let's move on" time after time and that doesn't make for a special show. The show isn't terrible but aside from the main event, nothing on here felt important and that's not what Summerslam needs to be. In other words: cut some stuff out and let it breathe, which might as well be the standard operating criticism around here.

Ratings Comparison

Miz/Miztourage vs. Hardy Boyz/Jason Jordan

Original: C-

Redo: C

Neville vs. Akira Tozawa

Original: C

Redo: C+

New Day vs. Usos

Original: B+

Redo: B

John Cena vs. Baron Corbin

Original: D

Redo: D+

Naomi vs. Natalya

Original: C-

Redo: D+

Big Cass vs. Big Show

Original: D

Redo: F+

Randy Orton vs. Rusev

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Alexa Bliss vs. Sasha Banks

Original: B-

Redo: C

Bray Wyatt vs. Finn Balor

Original: C+

Redo: D

Dean Ambrose/Seth Rollins vs. The Bar

Original: B

Redo: B

Kevin Owens vs. AJ Styles

Original: B

Redo: B-

Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Jinder Mahal

Original: D+

Redo: D-

Brock Lesnar vs. Roman Reigns vs. Samoa Joe vs. Braun Strowman

Original: A

Redo: A-

Overall Rating

Original: B

Redo: C-

Time has NOT been kind to this show and aside from two (or maybe three) matches, it's not worth seeing.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/08/20/summerslam-2017-the-star-of-stars/

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