

Summerslam Count-Up – Summerslam 2014 (2015 Redo): They Made Me Shout

Summerslam 2014

Date: August 17, 2014

Location: Staples Center, Los Angeles, California

Attendance: 14,079

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

Time for a redo of a show with a main event billed as the Biggest Fight of the Summer. The more I think of that line, the more I like it. The main event here is Cena (subbing for the injured Bryan) defending against Brock Lesnar, who is having his first match since breaking the Streak. Interestingly enough, I don't even remember another match from this card. Let's get to it.

I usually don't say anything on the pre-show, but my goodness Renee Young is stunning. I know you often hear about the Divas looking great, but she is just beautiful, especially in a nice red dress here.

Pre-Show: Cesaro vs. Rob Van Dam

No real story here. Rob rolls out of a wristlock to start and we hit the ECW chants. My goodness there's other stuff to cheer over people. Cesaro is sent to the floor and Rob slips a bit on his dive but still manages to kick Cesaro down and hit Rolling Thunder on the outside. Back in and Cesaro simplifies stuff by just pummeling Van Dam in the corner before throwing him down with the gutwrench suplex.

We take a break and come back with Cesaro holding a chinlock as the announcers give us one final hype for Cena vs. Lesnar. Rob fights up for a rolling cradle and the split legged moonsault for two, followed by a superkick to put Cesaro back on the floor. This is Van Dam 101 here, which was the biggest criticism he faced during this time. The Five Star is broken up by a big uppercut but Rob is still able to block a

superplex.

That earns him another uppercut though because Cesaro is pesky like that. Van Dam shoves him down again but Cesaro hits the third straight uppercut, only to be shoved down yet again. Rob is finally able to dive....right into an uppercut of course. This time it's Cesaro kicking Rob in the face for two and frustration is setting in. Back up and Van Dam hits his quick step over kick, followed by the Five Star for the pin at 8:06.

Rating: C-. The uppercut sequence was nice but like I said, Van Dam was just doing high spots here and nothing else. That was the case for most of his 2014 run and that's not really doing anything for him at this point. Cesaro was just wandering around at this point, which makes his Wrestlemania battle royal win feel like the biggest waste of a rub in recent history, which is really covering a lot of ground.

In a sign of the times, Hulk Hogan is brought out to open the show. Well to be fair it worked really well at Wrestlemania XXX so this isn't the worst idea in the world. He thinks it's appropriate for Hollywood Hogan to open the show here in Los Angeles and talks about how amazing Summerslam really is. This turns into a commercial for the Network, all while Hogan's video is playing behind him. Hogan hits the catchphrase and he's out in less than three minutes. This was fine and got the crowd fired up while also plugging something. Well done.

The opening video is in the theme of an old 1980s action movie trailer (Follow the Buzzards Productions) with the usual previews for the main events, but with everyone's nickname instead of their actual name. I really liked this as a movie geek and it holds up quite well a year later.

It's a shame that the curse of the standardized sets has hit Summerslam as well. It's the second biggest show of the year. Mix that stuff up people.

Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Dolph Ziggler

Miz is defending and has the Hollywood star gimmick. I still really like

his work in this and still find him to be one of the better done characters. Before the match, Miz talks about being real instead of CGI and brags about how jealous you all should be of the moneymaker. Tonight he's going to make Ziggler the WWE version of the Lakers. Feeling out process to start as the announcers talk about the Ice Bucket Challenge, back when that was still a thing.

The threat of a superkick sends Miz bailing to the floor as we hear about the Shawn Michaels vs. Rick Martel match from Summerslam 1992 where it was agreed that neither would hit the other in the face. Back in and a quick rollup gets two for Dolph but he gets whipped chest first into the corner as Miz takes over. With his variety of stomps used up, Miz kicks Dolph hard in the face before slapping on a chinlock.

The fans tell Miz that he can't wrestle, but you could say the same thing about Ziggler so it's not really clear. Dolph punches him out of the air and hits a Stinger Splash before a rollup gets two more. Now the superkick connects with the moneymaker for two so we get the required attempt at bailing, only to have Dolph baseball slide him down.

Somehow that earns Ziggler a Figure Four (because Miz needed a submission hold and it's always a good thing to pay tribute to Flair, who won 50 many major matches with that hold right?) but Dolph is in the ropes. His leg is fine enough for a Fameasser but Miz pops to his feet for the Skull Crushing Finale before he starts to sell. The kickout shocks Miz again but he misses another running boot, allowing Dolph to score with the Zig Zag for the pin and the title at 7:57.

Rating: C-. These two don't have any kind of special chemistry but they would fight each other for the better part of eternity because WWE doesn't know how to set up anything fresh more than once every few months. Ziggler winning the title gave the fans a nice moment but there was nothing to the match.

We recap the latest part of the RIVETING Brie Bella vs. Stephanie McMahon feud where Stephanie brought Daniel Bryan's physical therapist to say she and Bryan had an affair, leading to Brie slapping the therapist and getting arrested, just as she had done to Stephanie a few weeks earlier.

The affair stuff was so hated that they dropped it pretty much the next day.

Brie talks about doing a bunch of reflecting while she was in jail where she thought about Stephanie torturing Nikki while Brie was gone, how she insulted Bryan and how she paid the therapist to lie about an affair. She's going to take out the beast tonight because that's best for business. Oh dear I think I'm going to have something to say about this.

Divas Title: Paige vs. AJ Lee

Paige is challenging and they've been feuding for most of the summer with AJ returning and winning the title, causing Paige to start imitating her for reasons that still aren't clear. They're friends and enemies at the same time (yes I know there's a word that combines the two and no I won't use it) so Paige offers a handshake, only to have AJ rip some of her hair out. AJ stays all aggressive (Heaven help me if I say the other word about her) and sends Paige onto the announcers' table, only to have Paige come back with a knee to the ribs.

The champ gets dropped onto the barricade but Paige realizes she can't win the title via countout. Back in and we get Paige's sexy crawl over AJ before she pulls her own hair extensions out. Well no one ever accused Paige of being normal. The chinlock on AJ goes nowhere and she's able to shove Paige off the top, though she's nice enough to blow her a kiss first.

A top rope clothesline to the floor drops Paige again. The Shining Wizard gets two but Paige kicks her in the face, only to have the Paige Turner countered into the Black Widow. Just like at the Raw after Wrestlemania though, Paige powers out again and scores with the Rampaige for the pin and the title.

Rating: C+. This was similar to the Divas version of Shawn Michaels vs. Mr. Perfect back at Summerslam 1993 where they basically guaranteed a classic but just had a good match instead. This was one of the last good feuds before Nikki took over the title in a few months, which we're somehow still surviving nine months later. Lucky us.

Summerslam 2015 will be in New York/New Jersey. That would be slightly changed to Brooklyn

Jack Swagger vs. Rusev

Speaking of things still going on later, these two are still having the same match the following summer. This is also a flag match, meaning a regular match with the winner getting their flag raised. Lana (rocking the white suit here) and Zeb Colter (remember him?) are the seconds. Before the match, Lana says that Hollywood is a great example of everything wrong with America. In real life, there is no happy ending and America is full of worthless cowards.

Swagger counters with members of the US Army Color Guard to present the American flag. Rusev jumps Jack before the bell and the American flag falls, which is a big sign of disrespect. Swagger counters into a Patriot Lock as we're still waiting on the bell. The referee breaks it up so Lana orders Rusev to his feet. Now the bell rings and Jack goes after the leg and ankle again.

Rusev bails to the floor so Swagger, showing some fire for a change, follows him out with a hard clothesline. The Vader Bomb hits knees though, which really should hurt the bad leg but why bother with logic? Jack happens to have bad ribs coming in so Rusev has his own target now. With the leg breaking down, Rusev opts for a bearhug, meaning he has to stay on his feet anyway. Jack can't belly to belly his way to freedom but his second attempt works a bit better.

The Vader Bomb connects but hurts Jack's ribs all over again. Rusev's superkick is caught in the Patriot Lock but Rusev is quickly out, only to walk into a powerslam for two. The second superkick connects and the Accolade (on one leg) goes on, only to be countered into the Patriot Lock. Rusev kicks out of that as well, spinwheel kicks Jack down, and Accolades him again for the knockout victory.

Rating: C. This is a tricky one to grade, as yet again, since these guys have fought roughly a dozen times, I never once believed Rusev was in trouble. That being said, they did a good job here of using the ankle injury to try to add some drama. It's a very difficult thing to do when

there is almost zero doubt as to who is winning, but they gave it a good try.

The problem for these two is they're still fighting on occasion and it never gets any closer for Jack. That's something WWE is really bad about: they don't understand that fans don't want to see the same obvious match over and over again but that's what we get because there's no one other than Swagger (or Henry) to take these losses. Bring back unknown jobbers or something, because they have about the same chance of winning and would at least feel fresh for a change.

Rusev attacks Colter post match and the Russian flag comes down.

We recap Seth Rollins vs. Dean Ambrose, which is Dean's first attempt for revenge on Seth after Rollins broke up the Shield over the summer. Seth ran a lot previously but tonight it's time for a lumberjack match so Dean can finally get his hands on him.

Seth Rollins vs. Dean Ambrose

Most of the lumberjacks were attacked by Rollins and the Shield at some point in the last year and a half. Rollins is Mr. Money in the Bank here. It's a slugout as soon as they're both in the ring with Dean taking over and knocking Rollins outside. That goes as badly as you would expect for Rollins so he goes back inside for something a bit safer: Ambrose ripping at his nose. This time it's Dean being sent outside for a beating but some guys hold the attackers back.

Now it's Rollins in control for a bit so Ambrose just punches him in the face. He goes up top for no logical reason (to be fair he's supposed to be crazy) and gets caught in the Tree of Woe as Seth really takes over. A chinlock doesn't go very far as Dean is sent to the apron, only to suplex Rollins over the top and out onto the lumberjacks in a big crash. The whole thing turns into a war with Dean backdropping Rollins over the barricade.

Dean dives onto the lumberjacks because he's nuts and then down the announcers' tables to get to Rollins in the crowd. This is more like what the match should have been and it's about time they got to it. They fight

into the balcony as Kane comes down to tell the lumberjacks to do their job. Bo Dallas stops Rollins from powerbombing Dean off the balcony so Seth runs towards the entrance but gets caught by Stardust, Big E. and the Usos.

Rollins is literally carried back to the ring but Dean is waiting on them with a huge dive off the top. Back in and Dirty Deeds is countered but Ambrose blasts him with the rebound lariat. NOW the crowd is way into things and Dean curb stomps Seth, only to have Kane come in for the save. The lumberjacks get in another fight because they all have anger management issues. Dean dispatches the Wyatts but walks into a briefcase shot to the face for the pin.

Rating: B-. This is one where your opinions may vary wildly and I'm not going to put up much of an argument either way. There were only so many ways that they mess with the idea to keep the lumberjack gimmick going (which fit the story) while also being insane. Good, insane brawl here and that's what it needed to be.

We recap Chris Jericho vs. Bray Wyatt, which started because Bray decided it was time and didn't like Jericho calling himself a savior. Jericho beat Wyatt clean at Battleground in a stupid decision so tonight the Family is barred from ringside. I have no idea why they thought this would make me interested in seeing it again but it's better than another gimmick match.

Bray Wyatt vs. Chris Jericho

The fireflies are still so cool looking. Bray goes right after him to start and they're quickly on the floor with Jericho stepping over Bray's hat. That's polite of him. Jericho gets shoved to the floor as the announcers start reading Tweets. I know the match isn't the most thrilling story in the world but come on. A running knee sends Jericho's head into the steps and Bray drives him into the post for good measure.

Back inside and we hit the chinlock, because no matter how insane or unconventional someone is, they make sure to throw on a chinlock. Like everyone has ever done, Jericho fights out with ease and gets one off an enziguri. Jericho's dropkick stops a charging Bray but he walks into the

release Rock Bottom for two. Sister Abigail is countered into the Walls but Bray gets a rope (unlike in NXT where he tapped to the Walls years ago).

Bray goes to the middle rope so Jericho can hurricanrana him back down for a delayed two. I'm never a fan of people going up just so someone can hit them with a move. It's a stretch of the suspension of disbelief. Bray spiders up and says that he can't die because he is already dead. Jericho breaks his code for two and Bray slides outside where he smacks Jericho in the face, setting up Sister Abigail into the barricade. Back in and another Sister Abigail is enough to give Bray the pin.

Rating: C-. I wasn't really feeling this one as it's a match that Bray was supposed to win and then did. He was still trying to recover from the huge blow of losing the feud to Cena and losing the first match to Jericho really didn't do him any favors. The match was nothing to see either as Jericho was starting to run on fumes again here. This would have been so much more effective if Jericho hadn't won the first match.

Bray serenades us post match.

We recap Brie Bella vs. Stephanie McMahon, which was a recap I needed when I watched this show live as the whole thing was such a mess. So Stephanie was all evil to Daniel Bryan, but Bryan is on the shelf with his neck injury so the feud was transferred over to Brie, because Brie and Bryan are totally the same thing.

Stephanie threatened to fire Brie but Brie quit first, leaving Stephanie to torture Nikki by putting her in handicap matches against such devastating forces as Alicia Fox, Rosa Mendes, Cameron and Eva Marie. Yes, this was really supposed to be intimidating. Brie and Stephanie sued each other over slapping each other because that's what this feud needed. Then Brie offered to drop the charges in exchange for a match with Stephanie at Summerslam, because that's how wrestling works.

Stephanie McMahon vs. Brie Bella

This is Stephanie's first match in ten years and the announcers act like it's Bruno vs. Hogan. We immediately get to the point as Stephanie comes

out in something that looks like a superhero outfit with skin tight leather that shows off every inch of her figure. Oh and of course she throws the Four Horsewomen sign to Ronda Rousey and the other three women whose names no one knows (in the front row when Rousey was just starting to make noise as a big time star) because Stephanie is cool like that.

The announcers swoon over Stephanie like it's Trish in 2000 and then give Brie a polite response. That's the match right there: Brie looks good while Stephanie looks amazing and it's entirely by design. Stephanie shoves Brie against the ropes to start and blows her a kiss. Brie gets back up and can barely do a lockup properly. Some shoulders in the corner have Brie in more trouble as the announcers try to act like Brie is some big physical threat while also pointing out that Stephanie has long legs.

The big slap is blocked though and the threat of a YES Lock sends Stephanie outside, likely out of fear due to how bad Brie made the hold look on Raw a few weeks back. Brie's suicide dive is blocked by a forearm to the face and it's Stephanie in control again. Stephanie talks trash and busts out a Hennig neck snap, drawing a YOU STILL GOT IT (shut up. Stephanie never had it in the ring in the first place. Think before you chant) and even more praise from the announcers.

Stephanie cranks on both arms as Brie has been on offense for all of fifteen seconds so far. An evil look that would make Edge jealous looks to set up...something, but Brie comes back with a Thesz press and the YES Kicks in the corner. Well close enough to them as she can't get the timing right because the one spot that is going to get her a cheer is too complicated for her.

The middle rope dropkick gets two on Stephanie and Brie follows up with some of the absolute worst punches I have ever seen. I mean even Lita's horrible punches (go back and watch her matches. She's one of the most athletic women in wrestling history but she couldn't throw a good punch to save her life) look great compared to these. HHH comes out but Nikki is here as well because those two are so equal. The Pedigree is countered into whatever Brie calls her imitation of the YES Lock because that's not the hold her husband uses.

HHH pulls the referee out anyway, which shocks Cole for some reason. I have no idea why Cole is switching sides so fast because he's spent the last ten minutes praising Stephanie. Brie baseball slides HHH and does the YES chant, only to have Nikki come in...and turn on Brie because that's the least logical and worst idea they could go with for this story. Stephanie Pedigrees Brie for the pin.

Rating: D+. Where do I even start with this one? First and foremost: Brie Bella is a horrible wrestler. She's a beautiful woman, she's found the right look for herself with the ripped tights and shirt tied around her waist and she can clap on the floor, but she just does not have it in the ring. Some of the stuff in here was Eva Marie level work with those punches and the inability to do a lockup properly just being unforgivable.

On top of that, this is the wrong story. After the months and months of the Authority tormenting the Bellas, they win here in the end with Brie getting squashed until a quick comeback at the end, only to have it all taken away from her again so we can get to the Bella feud that no one other than the Total Divas producers wanted to see. Nikki turning on Brie would lead to the "I wish you died in the womb" nonsense that went on forever and was then just dropped, but I spent a three months ranting about that so I'll cut myself off for now. Brie should have won here, no matter how bad she looked in the ring.

That gets us to the final point: this match was ALL about Stephanie. Brie was just the person in the ring to bounce off of her as Stephanie got to look great (both mechanically and physically. I know she gets a lot of flack, but Stephanie can rock some tight outfits) out there and even had the crowd cheering for her. That praise was well deserved though as Stephanie was as polished here as any Diva had been since probably Mickie James but, as is always the case, Stephanie has to look great and can't get any comeuppance. In this case though, she deserves a lot of praise because this was one heck of a performance.

Some fan won a contest and got to make a character called Mama's Boy, complete with some training. He even got to make an entrance at NXT, to the Hurricane's old theme song for some reason. Eh cute enough.

Randy Orton vs. Roman Reigns

This is due to Reigns costing Orton a title shot and Reigns' first big solo match. I like the blue trim on Reigns' attire but it can be a bit distracting. Orton goes right at him to start and is quickly headbutted out to the floor. Some right hands and a clothesline put Orton outside again but he sends Reigns into the steps and takes it back inside for a chinlock. This isn't exactly thrilling stuff so far. We hit the Garvin Stomp followed by a nice top rope superplex for two. I love a good superplex.

Back to the chinlock for a bit before Reigns counters into a rear naked choke of all things. See, why doesn't he do stuff like that more often today? There's more to life than clotheslines. Orton falls backwards to escape and we're right back to the chinlock. Orton isn't exactly giving Reigns much to work with here. The Samoan drop gives Roman a breather and he jacks Randy's jaw to set up the apron kick. Lawler: "Reigns kicked the Kryptonite out of him!"

Orton whips him into the barricade to take over again though and drops him onto the announcers' table to keep Roman in trouble. Back in again and Reigns punches his way back into it (shocking I know), followed by a super Samoan drop for two more. The Superman Punch knocks Orton silly but he counters the spear into one heck of a powerslam. That looked great.

The Orton DDT gets two but Reigns gets up for another Superman Punch, only to dive into the RK0 for a very near fall. Randy is livid so he loads up the Punt, which is about the dumbest thing you can do against someone who uses the spear for a finisher. Well that's how it should have ended but instead Reigns just moves away from the Punt and then the spear is good for the pin.

Rating: B-. This was supposed to be a huge turning point for Reigns' career but it came off as just an ok match with some good moments. The first seven to eight minutes really dragged this down as the chinlocks took the crowd out of things. Now to their credit, Orton and Reigns were able to get them back later on but this needed some tweaks to really make it work. It's Reigns' biggest win yet but it really wasn't anything

great.

Long recap of John Cena vs. Brock Lesnar. The idea is Cena beat Lesnar two and a half years ago when Lesnar returned, but since then Lesnar has reached his full Beast Mode and is the unstoppable monster. Cena is pretty clearly a fill in for the injured Daniel Bryan, who would have made for a better story here. They really aren't hiding the fact that Lesnar is going to win the title here but you know Cena isn't going down without a fight.

WWE World Title: Brock Lesnar vs. John Cena

Cena is defending of course. They do the big staredown across the ring before the bell and we get one of my favorite Cole lines: "It's the biggest fight of the summer." I know that was the tagline going into this match but I love his delivery there. Before we get started, awesome sign in the crowd: "Cena wins, we logically discuss on Twitter." Cena charges right at him but gets taken down to the mat....and the F5 connects at thirty seconds. I actually screamed "NO WAY! NO WAY!" when I saw that for the first time.

Lesnar shouts that Cena just had his one chance and I think everyone in the building believes him. Cena looks totally out of it and we're 90 seconds into this. The first release German suplex sends Cena flying and the fans are just stunned. German #2 has Cena's mouth hanging open and the replay makes it look even worse. Cena wildly swings but only hits the mat.

A quick drive into the corner and some shots to the ribs just annoy Lesnar as he knees Cena to the mat and slaps on a chinlock so Cena can remember what planet he's on. More punches from Cena are stopped by a knee as this is even more dominant than I remembered. Four more Germans (six total, counting a snap that I didn't mention) have Cena a crippled mass in the middle of the ring. Lesnar drives even more knees into the ribs and pulls Cena up so he can throw another German.

The referee FINALLY checks on Cena, who says he'll have two eggs and sausage. John goes flying off another German but elbows out of the next and gets in some right hands and a clothesline, followed by an AA for

two. That seems like Cena's last gasp though and he can't follow up. Lesnar does the Undertaker sit up....and starts laughing. He tells Cena to get out of the corner and bring it on while bouncing back and forth on his feet. Cena charges and gets taken down and pounded in the head.

Cena can't even move on the mat but tells the referee to let it keep going. Lesnar is ticked off at Cena not quitting so he rolls four straight German suplexes, earning what sounds like applause. He still won't quit, so there are three more rolling Germans. With Brock standing over him, Cena sweeps the leg and puts on the STF but Brock rolls over and just unloads on him with right hands. The F5 finally ends the slaughter and gives Brock the title.

Rating: A+. This was hard to watch. Not hard in the WCW or TNA hard to watch way, but in the "that's enough, stop this before Cena dies" hard to watch way. This was a complete squash that ran 16:14. In that span of time, and this is being VERY generous at times, Cena was on offense for 1:22. That's including the opening where they were grappling on the mat and the time where Cena was trying to break Brock's grip.

Above all else though, this match did what it was supposed to do, which is make Brock Lesnar look like the biggest monster this side of Godzilla. This wasn't a technical masterpiece or anything, but the fact that it got this kind of emotion out of me is doing something right. Outstanding performance and Cena selling so well made it even better.

Cena is checked on and can't move to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Something occurred to me as I was getting ready for this show: I didn't remember anything about it other than the main event. I can tell you the main event for all of the big four shows and every In Your House off the top of my head, but I had no idea that Orton and Reigns had a match here. Looking back, it's easy to see why. Other than Lesnar vs. Cena, nothing on here is anything outside of the average range. Almost all of the redo ratings are in the middle of the pack and nothing else is memorable. It's a watchable show, but totally forgettable, which isn't something you should say about Summerslam.

Ratings Comparison

Rob Van Dam vs. Cesaro

Original: C-

Redo: C-

Dolph Ziggler vs. The Miz

Original: C

Redo: C-

AJ Lee vs. Paige

Original: B-

Redo: C+

Jack Swagger vs. Rusev

Original: C+

Redo: C

Dean Ambrose vs. Seth Rollins

Original: B

Redo: B-

Bray Wyatt vs. Chris Jericho

Original: C

Redo: C-

Brie Bella vs. Stephanie McMahon

Original: C+

Redo: D+

Roman Reigns vs. Randy Orton

Original: C

Redo: B-

Brock Lesnar vs. John Cena

Original: A-

Redo: A+

Overall Rating

Original: A

Redo: C+

.....what? I mean just....what? That overall rating doesn't even make bad sense. Other than Brie vs. Stephanie and maybe Orton vs. Reigns, nothing really changed drastically, but it went from great to above average? I REALLY got into that Lesnar vs. Cena match the first time around. That original rating actually made my eyes bug out when I read it to see what I had originally given the show.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2014/08/17/summerslam-2014-on-the-a-list/>

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