

# Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania XXX (2018 Redo): Then, Now, Forever

## Wrestlemania XXX

Date: April 6, 2014

Location: Mercedes-Benz Superdome, New Orleans, Louisiana

Attendance: 75,167

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

This is a special one for me and I'm glad that it was the other requested redo. I was in the stadium for this, marking my first ever Wrestlemania live. In case you're really new at this, the show is all about Daniel Bryan, who will be facing HHH for a spot in the main event. He's been riding on the strength of the YES Movement for months now and this is the grand finale. Let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: Tag Team Titles: Usos vs. Ryback/Curtis Axel vs. Real Americans vs. Los Matadores

The Usos are defending and this is under elimination rules. Zeb Colter introduces the Real Americans (Cesaro/Jack Swagger, which feels like it's from forever ago). On the other hand, JBL wants to eat El Torito. Just in case you needed both sides of the spectrum there. I also forgot how much I miss the Siva Tao and the Usos' theme. They're just cool. Axel and Jey get things going as the fans chant WE THE PEOPLE. JBL gets in his own way by saying Colter is the greatest hero to be in New Orleans since Andrew Stonewall Jackson in 1814. You history buffs know how bad that sounds.

Axel runs Jey over with a clothesline and it's already off to Ryback, who feels like a relic despite being in the company over two years after this. Ryback runs him over and bangs on his own chest but Diego tags himself in to cut things off. Why you would do that isn't clear but never let that get in the way of a tag. Diego shrugs off the Usos' double elbow and gets in an OLE! Somehow he's still employed to this day so how can I mock him?

Cesaro tags himself in this time and the fans certainly seem to approve. A jumping back elbow puts Swagger down and Diego knocks him to the floor. The Real Americans, Ryback and the Usos are sent outside so Los Matadores hit stereo dives. Axel won't let Torito dive but Los Matadores catch him on top, allowing Torito to drive Axel onto the pile. Back in and the Patriot Lock makes Diego tap at 5:40 to get us down to three.

Axel tags himself in and snaps Jack's neck across the top rope before running Jimmy over. Ryback gets two off a delayed vertical suplex and some knees to the back keep Jimmy in trouble. We hit the chinlock (notice the REST HOLD sign in the crowd because Wrestlemania fans think they're rather intelligent) for a bit until Ryback is sent shoulder first into the post.

That's enough to bring in Jey for the pop up Samoan drop on Axel. Swagger cuts him off with his belly to belly powerslam for two and it's Ryback snapping off a string of spinebusters. The Meat Hook drops Swagger but Cesaro beaks up the Shell Shock. Cesaro isn't done as it's Swiss Death into the Neutralizer to eliminate Ryback and Axel at 11:47.

The fans are behind the Real Americans as we're down to two teams. A double dive takes the Americans out but Cesaro pulls Jimmy out of the air with a backbreaker for two. It's too early for the Swing though as Jey tags himself in. That's fine with Cesaro, who uppercuts his head off too. Swagger grabs the Patriot Lock but Jimmy makes a save. Swiss Death drops Jimmy but Jey is back up with a Samoan drop to put everyone down. The Americans are sent into each other and it's a double superkick into a double Superfly Splash to Cesaro to retain the titles at 16:13.

**Rating:** B+. Now THAT is how you do a Kickoff Show match. It was fast paced, it was energetic, the fans were into it (because the fans were already in the stadium and the wrestlers weren't performing in front of a bunch of empty seats and 500 people) and it was a lot of fun. This match is really great stuff and it had everyone fired up for Wrestlemania. No complaints here and a heck of a performance.

Post match Swagger yells at Cesaro and blames him for the loss. Colter tells Jack to calm down but it's a Patriot Lock to Cesaro instead. Zeb

wants a handshake but Cesaro swings Jack, breaking up the team and making the fans cheer him even more. This should have been the start of a rocket push for Cesaro but it just never clicked for a variety of reasons.

The opening video starts with a man standing on a dark street when a marching band comes in. The voiceover says someone once said a good time starts when we lose track of time it is. "And man oh man, have we lost track of time." The street fills up with people (and wrestlers, with the Bellas and their signature dance prominently featured) in a Mardi Gras style party with a Wrestlemania highlight package, both historical and modern, airing at the same time. This one didn't click with me at first but it's grown on me a lot over the years and now it's amazing.

As odd as it may seem, the most exciting part of the night is the short stretch between the end of the opening video and the pyro going off. You know it's coming and it's just a few seconds away. That's such a sweet feeling.

Cole: "This is Wrestlemania. Then, now and forever."

We waste no time in introducing the host of Wrestlemania: Hulk Hogan. Well if you insist. At a milestone show like this, it would have been criminal to not have the most important man in the show's history front and center. You can tell the fans are ALL over this as they're losing it over every look he gives the camera. "Well let me tell you something brother" has them even more rabid and I was certainly one of them.

We get the infamous line of Hogan calling it the Silverdome (To this day I still believe that was intentional. Hogan is the oldest player in the business and what's the big thing that people remember from this? Him slipping up on the line. Then you laugh and chuckle because it's goofy, and Hogan looks funny in retrospective. That's the kind of thing he would do.) and not getting why the fans are a little confused. Hogan recaps the first Wrestlemania and messes up the location again.

This time reality sets in and he makes the correction, saying he was thinking about bodyslamming Andre the Giant. Hogan promising more Wrestlemania moments, and you never know when one of those will happen. Then the glass shatters, and the place goes coconuts. I've seen a lot of

wrestling and it takes a lot to surprise me, but I lost it at this point. This was special and WWE knew what they had here, which is why this is one of the best moments they've done in a very long time.

Austin hits all four corners and does a quick staredown for a very cool image. It's good to be back here at the SILVERDOME and Austin even praises Hogan for everything he did at Wrestlemania I-X (he wasn't at X but I can live with it here). Austin brings up the two of them wanting to protect their legacies before shaking Hogan's hand and saying he respects Hogan and everything he's done for the business. He hits the catchphrase....and here's the Rock just in case this wasn't amazing enough already.

Rock takes his sweet time getting to the ring (it's a four hour show so it's acceptable) and even shows off the goosebumps. After hugs and posing, we pause for the completely appropriate THIS IS AWESOME chant. Rock says all five of his senses are on fire because you can see and hear the people, taste it and feel it and OF COURSE you can smell it because FINALLY, the Rock has come back to Wrestlemania. Which means, the three of them have finally come back to the SUPERdome. That means a SUPERDOME chant and thankfully Hogan takes it in stride.

Rock talks about seeing his good friend and his childhood hero, who are the biggest names in the history of the WWE. He's faced them both at Wrestlemania and they've both had an incredible impact on that locker room. Tonight, someone is going to come out here and fight in the name of hustle, loyalty and respect (fans aren't happy) and that doesn't happen if Hogan hadn't promised to say his prayers and take his vitamins. Tonight, someone is going to come out here and rise against the Authority (pause for YES chant) and that doesn't happen if a bald headed SOB didn't cross the boss.

Those are facts, just like so many WWE fans having birthdays nine months after Wrestlemania. It's because of Rock you see. Rock: "Just wait for January. A lot of Rock Babies running around." Rock even throws out some Wrestlemania rhyming before catchphrases are spoken (with Hogan making sure to say SUPERdome) and beer is consumed. I was ready to go home at this point because this couldn't have been done better no matter who they

brought out. This was special, and that's how you start a show this important.

Oh yeah. We have three and a half hours left.

We recap HHH vs. Daniel Bryan with the incredible Monster video. The idea is that Bryan has fought his way up the card because this is all that he's ever wanted to do. Bryan kept fighting his way up, eventually winning the World Title. HHH and Stephanie McMahon, the Authority, didn't want someone so small and plain being the face of the WWE.

Less than five minutes after becoming champion, HHH then cost him the title, setting up a major feud. The fans would have none of this though and hijacked nearly every show, chanting for Bryan and the YES Movement all night long. Bryan knew he would have to beat HHH once and for all at Wrestlemania, but that's not all. The winner of the match will move on to the main event for the title.

Make no mistake about it: this push and this feud played a major role in changing WWE for years to come, as the fans suddenly realized that they could power their chosen star to the top of the company. I highly, highly recommend you see this video as it's one of the best videos WWE has ever put together. You might be noticing a trend in that direction so far tonight.

### Daniel Bryan vs. HHH

Stephanie, in some very revealing shorts, introduces HHH. Now since this is Wrestlemania, HHH appears on a throne with three gorgeous masked women (Charlotte, Sasha Banks and Alexa Bliss) surrounding him. They remove his robe and armor and HHH takes off his skull helmet before the regular music comes on. As usual it's a lot, but also as usual it's hard to ignore the three women around him. Dang indeed. Bryan is coming in with a very bad shoulder.

After a minute of staring each other down, Bryan kicks away an offered handshake and gets two off a rollup. Some kicks in the corner have HHH in trouble and the threat of a big kick sends him bailing to the floor. Back in and a hard shoulder to Bryan's bad shoulder puts him down but it's a

headlock takeover to put HHH down as well. HHH is completely outclassed on the mat so he drives Bryan into the corner as the DANIEL BRYAN chants start up.

A shot to the leg cuts Bryan off again but Bryan is right back up with a tornado DDT off the apron (sloppy, but it did its job) to drop HHH. Bryan follows up with a cannonball off the top to the floor and everyone is down again. Well not Stephanie of course. Like she would ever do what everyone else was doing.

Back in and Bryan gets crotched on top as Stephanie shouts that he'll never win. They fight outside again and while HHH can't get the Pedigree onto the announcers' table, he can drive the shoulder into the table to really take over. Now the real arm work begins with a DDT on the arm and some good old fashioned cranking.

Bryan kicks him away for a second and loads up a suicide dive, only to get punched out of the air to keep HHH in full control. They're doing a very good job here with the slow beatdown as you don't want to have Bryan make his comeback too soon. It makes it that much better to give him a beating like this and let it sink in. A crossface chickenwing into a crossface (hold the chickenwing) stays on the arm but Bryan makes the rope. Bryan slugs away and scores with a running forearm, followed by a pair of German suplexes for a pair of two's.

That's it for the offense though HHH goes out of the comfort zone with a tiger suplex (what an odd thing to type) to cut Bryan off again. The one suplex worked so well for HHH that he tries the super version, only to get reversed into a sunset bomb. It's time for the running dropkicks in the corner but a heck of a clothesline turns Bryan inside out (Stephanie: "YEAH!!! WOO!!!").

This time it's Bryan popping up with the kick to the head but the Swan Dive hits a raised knee. Why that doesn't hurt HHH's knee isn't clear. Granted he's too busy going back to the Crossface to care. The grip starts to slip away as Bryan crawls over to the ropes (it's barely on his forehead) but HHH rolls it back to the middle. Bryan finally switches it over into the YES Lock but a rope is reached. It's time to get fired up

with back to back suicide dives and YES Kicks against the barricade, followed by the missile dropkick back inside.

The shoulder being banged up doesn't seem to bother Bryan as he nips up for more kicks to the chest. The running knee is countered into a spinebuster though and the Pedigree...gets two, sending the fans right back into their frenzy. JBL and Stephanie are both stunned and a small package for two on HHH makes things even worse. Some more Pedigree attempts are countered so HHH knees him in the head. A third attempt is countered so HHH tries a belly to back suplex. Bryan flips out, lands on his feet, and hits the running knee to go to the main event at 25:55.

**Rating:** A. Excellent performance and storytelling from both here as Bryan survives everything HHH has to throw at him and wins in the end through pure determination. This was all about HHH being confident that he was the better man coming in and getting frustrated that he couldn't stop Bryan. You could see the desperation coming in when the Pedigree only got two and there was nothing else he could throw at Bryan.

Also, Stephanie added a lot here with the constant screaming, to the point where you were begging to see her lose. What made it work though was she DID lose and got shown up, a rarity for her. Outstanding stuff here though with everyone doing their thing as well as they could have in a classic match.

Post match Stephanie slaps Bryan for a distraction, allowing HHH to wrap the arm around the post and crush it with a chair. Again: HHH lost his control and is acting like the old savage instead of the corporate boss that he's become. That's a nice touch.

### New Age Outlaws/Kane vs. Shield

Kane and the Shield both work for the Authority but they've been having issues as of late. A few weeks back, Kane sent out the Outlaws and a few other teams to beat Shield down, seemingly going rogue on HHH in the process. Shield comes through the crowd with those thankfully short-lived half masks until Kane INSANELY LOUD pyro interrupts.

Kane and Ambrose slug it out to start with Dean getting the better of it.

Reigns comes in to no reaction (oh, it'll come) and cleans house with the jumping clotheslines and a Samoan drop. The double apron kick hits both Outlaws and everything breaks down in a hurry. Ambrose breaks up a Fameasser attempt on Reigns and there's a Superman Punch to Gunn.

That leaves Billy all alone so the Outlaws bail, earning a double suicide dive from Rollins and Ambrose. The spear drops Kane and a double spear puts the Outlaws down. It's a double TripleBomb to the Outlaws (JBL: "There goes the Attitude Era.") for the double pin at 2:55. Total and complete squash as the Shield has basically turned face already.

Jim Duggan and Sgt. Slaughter are playing with action figures, with DANNY DAVIS refereeing. Ricky Steamboat comes in to challenge...but that's not happening because Ted DiBiase has bought the toys. I chuckled, though I wonder why Duggan isn't wearing a shirt. Ron Simmons, cameo, swearing, you get the joke.

#### Andre the Giant Memorial Battle Royal

Big Show, Sheamus, Dolph Ziggler, The Great Khali, Zack Ryder, Drew McIntyre, Heath Slater, Mark Henry, Titus O'Neil, Santino Marella, Brad Maddox, Darren Young, Justin Gabriel, Yoshi Tatsu, David Otunga, Big E, Fandango, The Miz, Jinder Mahal, Rey Mysterio, Tyson Kidd, Goldust, Cody Rhodes, Kofi Kingston, Brodus Clay, Alberto Del Rio, Sheamus, Sin Cara, Xavier Woods, Cesaro, R-Truth

Only Sheamus and Big Show get entrances. One thing WWE is VERY good at is sneaking the people to the ring when something (the legends segment) is on the screen distracting you. I was surprised when the lights came back on and the ring was filled up. Yoshi is out first as there are way too many people in there at once to keep track of much. Cody and Kofi are sent over the top but hang in, resulting in a battle of kicks to the ribs as they hang over the apron. Cool visual if nothing else and they both get back in.

There goes Maddox (still Raw GM at this point) and Khali's chop gets rid of Clay. Khali is dumped out by a posse and McIntyre gorilla presses Ryder out. 3MB tosses Young but Henry tosses all three of them (including future WWE Champion Jinder Mahal). Show eliminates Henry as the ring is



getting a lot less full in a hurry. Sheamus dumps Titus and Santino loads up the Cobra because that's his one joke and he's going to use it every chance he can.

The Cobra gets rid of Miz (erg) but Alberto throws Santino out in a replay of the 2011 Rumble. There goes Sandow as you can at least see the mat again. Woods was put out off camera and Big E. powerbombs Gabriel out in a big crash. Otunga is out next as even Lawler is acknowledging the rapid eliminations. Fandango kicks out Big E. (Intercontinental Champion in a miserable reign) and the Fandangoing begins. Unfortunately he spends WAY too much time on the apron, allowing Sheamus to hit about 30 forearms to the chest for an elimination.

Truth gets tossed as well and Show mocks the dancing for an unfunny moment. For some reason Rey goes after Show, greatly pleasing JBL who wants Show to eat him. With Sin Cara eliminated off camera, Kidd is tossed as well and Del Rio enziguris Goldust out. We're down to Cody, Alberto, Kofi, Ziggler, Sheamus, Big Show, Cesaro and Mysterio. Before I can finish typing that list, Cody gets tossed to get us down to seven. The 619 hits Alberto but Cesaro blocks a second attempt and uppercuts Rey out. JBL: "Good."

Cesaro LAUNCHES Kofi over the top...but his feet land on the steps for his annual save. I've always liked that one. Kofi comes back in for his run of Troubles in Paradise until Cesaro pulls him out of the air for the Swing. Cesaro is so dizzy that he walks into a chokeslam but a Brogue Kick drops Show. A second eliminates Kofi and now it's Ziggler's turn to get our hopes up. Thankfully Del Rio superkicks him out, much to the crowd's annoyance. Give it a few more years and see how much you care.

Ever the nitwit, Del Rio puts Sheamus in the cross armbreaker but Sheamus powers him up, only to tumble over the top for a double elimination. We're down to Cesaro vs. Big Show and you know who the fans are behind here. Some uppercuts and clotheslines rock Show but he throws Cesaro to the apron. A chop knocks Cesaro out of the air but he PICKS SHOW UP (ala Hogan slamming Andre) and throws him over the top to win at 13:24.

**Rating:** D+. Nothing special for a battle royal but that's to be expected

with so many people in there at once. Like I said earlier though, there is no excuse for this not to have launched Cesaro to the moon. The fans wanted to see it happen, he has the skills and they gave him a great moment to set it up. Now how could that possibly fail? Putting him with Heyman really was a death sentence as it brings this expectation and there's no way around it, which ultimately sank him. Great moment here though and that's at least hope for the future.

Show shakes Cesaro's hand and leaves. It takes five referees to bring the trophy into the ring so Cesaro lifts it up by himself.

We recap John Cena vs. Bray Wyatt. Bray hadn't even been around for a year at this point and it's his first major match after several months of midcarding it. I'm still not sure what the idea here is, but Wyatt started talking about wanting to destroy Cena's legacy. I think it was supposed to be giving in to Cena's inner anger or turning to the dark side, but it wound up with Cena being scared of the Wyatts and saying he'd fight anyway. They were really bad about making the intent clear, which could be said about a lot of Wyatt matches.

### Bray Wyatt vs. John Cena

Wyatt is played to the ring with a bunch of (I think) voodoo dancers and fire around him for a CREEPY visual. Harper and Rowan are here too with Rowan dragging the rocking chair. What a way to debut at Wrestlemania. Cena's big entrance? Running to the ring. Wyatt drops to his knees and offers Cena a free shot, allowing Cena to "be the monster". Cena tells him to get up before grabbing a headlock takeover.

That goes nowhere so an uppercut puts Cena down instead. Some maniacal laughter ensues and Wyatt says Cena doesn't want to fight him. Bray runs him over with a body block but Cena is right back with the clothesline as he goes into a bit of a frenzy. That makes Bray smile and laugh again so Cena chokes in the corner as you can see the anger on his face. A running big boot (Huh?) drops Wyatt again but he's right back with the suplex slam (always looks painful).

The fans serenade the two of them with He's Got The Whole World In His Hands and we hit the sleeper/chinlock to keep Cena down. You don't

chinlock Cena though as he comes back with the ProtoBomb but Bray spiders up to block the Shuffle. That's still one of the coolest signature spots of its day. A release Rock Bottom gives Bray two and he conducts the fans as the singing begins again. Cena manages to get up top but gets powerbombed out of the air for a sick impact.

A spinning gutbuster gives Bray two and a DDT onto the apron knocks Cena even sillier (take a shot for the announcers reminding us that it's the hardest part of the ring). The fans sing again, this time with their arms waving and Bray is smart enough to acknowledge them. Cena powers out of a superplex but dives onto Harper and Rowan, despite them barely being a factor so far.

Wyatt sends him into the steps, and says he knows what to do now. Apparently that would be take too much time picking up the steps and getting posted as a result. Cena can't bring himself to use the steps and gets body blocked for two instead. We pause for more singing and the backsplash misses as a result, meaning the first AA connects for two. Harper and Rowan finally get involved as Rowan offers a distraction so Harper can hit a superkick. Cena rolls outside and drives Harper through the barricade. At least he was justified for once.

Back in and Sister Abigail's Kiss (kissing didn't really fit Bray) is countered into the STF but Bray is in the ropes. Sister Abigail's Kiss gets two and Bray backs into the corner in shock for a good reaction. It's chair time so Rowan comes in for the distraction but Bray throws the chair to Cena instead. He offers him another free shot to end him but Cena hits Rowan instead. I'm not exactly sure if that makes things better. Not that it matters as Cena reverses Sister Abigail into the AA for the pin at 22:27.

**Rating:** C. And that's it for Bray Wyatt being a big deal. For the life of me, I have no idea why Cena needed to win this match and I'm never going to get that. Wyatt didn't have the big win yet and he had clearly gotten into Cena's head but then Cena just pins him clean. How does this help anyone? Cena doesn't need an upper midcard win and Wyatt has his legs cut out from underneath him. Horrible, terrible decision here and the match wasn't even great in the first place.

Recap of the Hall of Fame ceremony. Undertaker coming out during Paul Bearer's induction was great.

And now for the class presentation:

Jake Roberts (not much of a reaction)

Mr. T. (that mother...)

Paul Bearer (his son does such a perfect impression)

Carlos Colon (next to no reaction)

Lita (ROAR)

Razor Ramon (another roar)

Ultimate Warrior (The camera guy pulled WAY back in case he ran to the ring. This is so hard to watch now, knowing what was coming just two days later.)

That's a heck of a class actually.

We recap Brock Lesnar vs. Undertaker. I think you get the idea here: no man can beat the Streak but a Beast might be able to pull it off. During the build, Undertaker stabbed Brock in the hand to show that he was more aggressive, which is rarely a good idea in wrestling. Heyman got in a great line here by saying Brock is the 1 in 21-1. The end of the video is equally awesome with Heyman saying "Eat, sleep, conquer, repeat, eat, sleep, conquer, repeat, eat sleep, conquer...the Streak." Finally, the lyrics playing over this: "In times all things shall pass away." They weren't exactly hiding things.

### Brock Lesnar vs. Undertaker

Brock looks downright terrifying here, being as chiseled as I can remember seeing him and giving that stare that guarantees death that only he can pull off. Undertaker's entrance features a line of caskets with each Streak victim's name on top. They all light on fire because that's the kind of thing Undertaker does.

Undertaker hammers away to start but the first suplex takes him down twenty seconds in. That seems to wake him up and a necksnap across the top rope staggers Brock. Back in and Undertaker wraps the arm around the ropes before sending it into the post. It's weird to see Undertaker this aggressive to start. Old School is broken up with right hands as Cole goes over the history of the Streak. Lesnar misses a charge and posts himself so Undertaker kicks him in the bad arm. There's the apron legdrop as Brock is in trouble for the first few minutes.

Back in and the chokeslam and F5 are both escaped with Undertaker sending the shoulder into the buckle. A running big boot misses though and Brock sends the leg into the post. Undertaker tries a kick but gets shoved down onto the floor, which may be where he suffers a severe concussion. You can see his eyes looking very messed up and he's not moving nearly as well all of a sudden. Back in and Brock chokes in the corner and OH YEAH Undertaker is gone. That glossy look on his face is scary stuff and Lesnar stomps away at the leg.

Undertaker gets in an elbow to the jaw but Brock easily shoves him down again. You can see Brock trying to figure out what he can do right now because Undertaker has nothing to give him. Heyman offers a near creepy laugh as Brock forearm's Undertaker down again and again. I know it's not the most thrilling thing in the world but this is about all they can do safely in Undertaker's condition.

A running DDT puts Lesnar down for a few seconds and Snake Eyes into the big boot (or high boot according to Cole) drop him again. The chokeslam gets two and an F5 gets the same with the latter shocking Brock. A quick Hell's Gate has Brock in trouble but he muscles Undertaker up for the powerbomb break. Undertaker slaps it on a second time (Heyman: "POWER YOUR WAY OUT! YOU'RE BROCK LESNAR") and it's a second powerbomb for another escape.

The Kimura goes on but Undertaker actually reverses into one of his own. Brock VERY carefully takes him down (it's clear Brock knows Undertaker's head is hurt) and drives some slow motion shoulders to the ribs. Undertaker stops a charge with a raised boot but Old School is countered into a second F5 for two more, sending Heyman into a fit.

Some German suplexes rock Undertaker but Brock can't follow up. At least we get an awesome speech from Heyman, saying Undertaker is taking Brock's legacy away from him. Hey now that's Cena's deal (whatever it means). For some reason Brock hammers away in the corner and even stands on the ropes while Undertaker is almost seated in the corner. That means the Last Ride but Undertaker can't follow up.

The worst Tombstone in recorded history gets two (you could see a good eight inches between Lesnar's head and the mat) and Undertaker is stunned. He's fine enough to sit up and try another Tombstone, only to be reversed into the third F5 to end the Streak at 25:11. Heyman makes the segment by going from the cocky grin at two to shock and awe at the pin. And no, this wasn't changed on the fly and Brock didn't shoot on Undertaker or whatever other nonsense conspiracy theories you'll see out there. It was the planned finish and Undertaker got hurt during the match. Nothing more.

**Rating:** D. We'll get to the important part here in a minute. This is a match where you have to excuse the performance because of Undertaker's injury. It's very clear that he was banged up early on in the match and you can see everything change in a heartbeat. With the concussion, Lesnar wasn't able to do much to him and Undertaker was only able to do so much on his own. It's a bad match, but not because of the two people involved. Disappointing, but understandable given the circumstances.

Now for the 800lb gorilla in the room. There are two schools of thought to the Streak and you could go with either of them. There's the thought that it never should have ended and could have gone on as the one thing that never happens in WWE. I can live with that. At the same time though, there's the mentality of it has to end sometime and how can you buy that Undertaker, who hadn't wrestled in a year, could come back and beat Lesnar in one on one match? I can see that line of thinking as well.

However, if you're going to break the Streak, it should have been on someone with a lot to gain. Sure Lesnar went on to beat Cena for the title in a very memorable match, but there were others who needed the win WAY more (like Bray Wyatt for example). Lesnar does look like an even bigger deal, but Lesnar already was a big deal. What's the point in

giving him something like this if it doesn't make that much of a difference?

As for the reaction though...I've never seen anything like it. It was like Santa Claus was shot in front of all the children in the world on Christmas Eve. The air was let out of the stadium and there was nothing that could be done. This wasn't something that happened in wrestling and fans didn't know how to take it. I saw fans crying and running out of their seats while others begged Hogan to come out here and do something about it. But no, the Streak was over, and there was nothing that could be done. That's how it went down and really, I think I can live with it.

Should he have kept wrestling? Again, I could see it going either way. On the one hand, he had some good matches after this and I can understand why he wouldn't want to go out this way. That being said, without the Streak, so much of what Undertaker was is gone. It's a huge part to take away from him and I'm not sure how much of a point there is to continuing at Wrestlemania with the Streak being broken. It's a hard question, but I could see why he didn't want to go out, either this way or at all.

The fans are all stunned (complete with the infamous bug eyed guy in the front row) and it takes a few moments for the official announcement. You'll hear this compared to Bruno losing the title and really, it's hard to argue this being on the same level. The 21-1 sign comes on the screen as Lesnar and Heyman leave and the announcers act like they've seen a murder.

Undertaker looks up the ramp to see that they're gone before sitting up as the standing ovation begins. He falls back down again though and closes his eyes on the mat for a bit. There's another situp and the THANK YOU TAKER chants begin. He gets to his feet (Fan: "YOU SUCK!") and looks around a bit before going back to one knee and shaking his head. The announcers give him a standing ovation as well until Undertaker slowly walks up the ramp. He leaves the stadium...and collapsed backstage as the concussion really was that bad.

Wrestlemania XXXI is in the Silicon Valley.

Divas Title: Vickie Guerrero Divas Championship Invitational

AJ Lee, Brie Bella, Nikki Bella, Aksana, Alicia Fox, Tamina Snuka, Summer Rae, Cameron, Eva Marie, Emma, Layla, Naomi, Natalya, Rosa Mendes

AJ is defending and this is one fall to a finish with only the champ getting an entrance. Vickie, who hates AJ for reasons not important enough to explain, screeches good luck to everyone and we're ready to go, with everyone in the ring at once. AJ and bodyguard Tamina are shoved into the middle so everyone can beat on her. It's a big brawl (well duh) and I'm not going to bother trying to keep up with the play by play here.

The Bellas hit a horrible double gutbuster for two on Layla and Natalya stacks up Cameron, Rosa and Fox at the same time. The triple Sharpshooter doesn't work (partially due to the laws of physics) and it's a four way cover for a four way near fall. Cameron hits a Codebreaker and snaps her top, which is made worse when Emma puts on the Emma Lock. It's time for the parade of secondary finishers as they're trying to get any kind of a reaction here. Brie dropkicks Tamina to the floor and the Bellas hit stereo suicide dives onto the pile (marking the ONLY time I've ever thought the Bellas looked cool).

Back in and the twins shove each other, thankfully without wishing the other died in the womb. The Rack Attack gets two on Brie but Alicia comes back in with a good looking tilt-a-whirl backbreaker on Nikki. Naomi breaks up the Superfly Splash and we hit the required Tower of Doom spot. AJ grabs the Black Widow on Naomi to retain at 6:50.

**Rating:** D-. Oh come on how was this going to be anything but a failure? The women's division was nothing at this point save for AJ and Paige, who would debut the next night (which I called to perfection at least two weeks early). Other than that though, it was a bunch of models trying to be wrestlers and bad action throughout the division. This was a mess, but what were you expecting with fourteen people in there at once?

Mean Gene Okerlund talks to Hulk Hogan (yeah he's still a thing on here) when Roddy Piper and Paul Orndorff come in. Piper COMPLIMENTS Hogan on how good a job he's doing tonight and says he's finally over the loss at Wrestlemania I. It eats Orndorff up though, because every day someone tells him about it. How does that make him feel? Gene: "Horrible!"



Violence is teased and here's Mr. T. to even the odds. Pat Patterson, in a referee shirt for the sake of continuity, comes in to say it was thirty years ago. The four of them actually bury the hatchet, though Piper nearly retches as he shake's Mr. T.'s hand.

Bruno Sammartino, Harley Race, Bob Backlund, Dusty Rhodes and Bret Hart (easily the biggest reaction) are in the front row.

No recap for the main event so we'll improvise. Orton is the Authority's hand picked face of the company and was handed the World Title by HHH. Batista won the Royal Rumble to get here. Bryan is in due to winning earlier (in case you decided to skip the opener for some odd reason).

### WWE World Title: Randy Orton vs. Batista vs. Daniel Bryan

Orton is defending and is played to the ring by Rev Theory. Bryan still has a horrible arm coming in. Batista tries a Batista Bomb but Bryan hurricanranas him outside in short order. A crank to the arm brings Bryan down though and it's Batista coming back in for some shoulders to Orton's ribs. All three head outside with Orton going back first into the apron. It's already time to go to the announcers' table but first, Bryan gets knocked down again.

Orton suplexes Batista onto the barricade but it's Bryan back up with YES Kicks to both of them. The big kick takes out Batista, only to have Orton suplex Bryan onto the bad shoulder for two. Somehow Bryan comes back with the running corner dropkicks to both guys, followed by a top rope hurricanrana to Orton. The fans are back to life, only to have Orton send Bryan outside.

A superplex drops Batista but Bryan is right there with the Swan Dive. Bryan grabs the YES Lock on Orton but here are HHH and Stephanie for the save. The referee gets taken out as well so here's crooked referee Scott Armstrong to take over. The Batista Bomb gets two on Bryan but a spear only hits post. Bryan has finally had enough of this and kicks Armstrong in the head, followed by a suicide dive to take out Stephanie and HHH.

That's enough for HHH who grabs the sledgehammer, only to have Bryan take it away and blast him instead. A livid Orton is back in though and sends

Bryan into the barricade as Batista comes over to help with the stomping. The tape is pulled off of Bryan's arm and Orton drills it with the steps.

They load up two announcers' tables and, after hitting Bryan in the head with a monitor (and some CM PUNK chants, back when they might actually mean something), it's a Batista Bomb into an RKO (jumping reverse neckbreaker in this case) with Orton's back landing square on a monitor. I was terrified that he had a major injury but thankfully he gets up pretty quickly. Medics come down to check on Bryan as Lawler makes a good point: why isn't Batista throwing one of them in the ring and PINNING THEM?

Instead Batista sends Orton into various non-ring things before taking him back inside...for a backdrop to the floor. The hanging DDT off the apron plants Batista as Bryan is being wheeled out. Not so fast though as he fights his way off the stretcher, only to be sent into the steps by Orton. The RKO is countered into a YES Lock but Batista is there for another save. That just earns Batista a YES Lock of his own with Orton making the save this time. A spear cuts Bryan down and the RKO gets two on Batista in a great false finish.

Orton loads up the Punt but Bryan cuts him off with the running knee. Batista throws Bryan outside and gets two on Orton. There's the Batista Bomb to Orton but Bryan comes back in with the running knee to Batista. The YES Lock goes on and Batista taps (that's important because Bryan had showed he could beat Orton before) to FINALLY make Bryan champion at 23:21. Cole: "A MIRACLE ON BOURBON STREET!" I mean, the Superdome isn't on Bourbon Street but that's an awesome call.

**Rating:** B. The wrestling wasn't the point here (duh) but what was important was nailing the ending, which is exactly what they did here. This match made Bryan look like the giant killer and that's exactly the point of what was going on here. It's a rollercoaster of emotions as Bryan fought through everything and won the title that was rightfully his to begin with. It may not be a classic, but the ending was all you could ask for and more.

Bryan celebrates for a LONG time, including the iconic shot with both

belts on the announcers' table, as confetti (of which I have a piece) falls to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** A-. There are some weak spots in there (Undertaker vs. Lesnar stands out like Undertaker's sore head) but the stuff they nailed, they REALLY nailed. Above all else this is the Daniel Bryan show and with a classic to start and the perfect ending, it's hard to complain about much. This show felt like it was a spectacle and that's where WWE shines. Yeah there were some weaker matches, but there was also a twenty five minute segment with Hulk Hogan, Steve Austin and the Rock acting like the biggest stars of all time. I had the time of my life watching this show live and it more than holds up. Outstanding stuff.

### Ratings Comparison

Usos vs. Los Matadores vs. Ryback/Curtis Axel vs. Real Americans

Original: B

2015 Redo: B

2018 Redo: B+

Daniel Bryan vs. HHH

Original: A

2015 Redo: A

2018 Redo: A

Shield vs. New Age Outlaws/Kane

Original: N/A

2015 Redo: N/A

2018 Redo: N/A

Andre the Giant Memorial Battle Royal

Original: C+

2015 Redo: C+

2018 Redo: D+

John Cena vs. Bray Wyatt

Original: B

2015 Redo: C+

2018 Redo: C

Undertaker vs. Brock Lesnar

Original: C+

2015 Redo: C+

2018 Redo: D

Vickie Guerrero Divas Championship Invitational

Original: D+

2015 Redo: D

2018 Redo: D-

Daniel Bryan vs. Randy Orton vs. Batista

Original: A-

2015 Redo: B

2018 Redo: B

Overall Rating

Original: A+

2015 Redo: A-

2018 Redo: A-

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2014/04/07/wrestlemania-xxx-oh-yeah-i-went-there/>

And the 2015 Redo:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2015/03/28/wrestlemania-count-up-wrestlemania-xxx-2015-redo-yes/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the paperback edition of the WWE Grab Bag (also available as an e-book) from Amazon. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2018/03/23/new-paperback-kbs-grab-bag/>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>