

Survivor Series Count-Up – 2016 (2017 Redo): Still A No

Survivor Series 2016

Date: November 20, 2016

Location: Air Canada Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Attendance: 17,143

Commentators: Corey Graves, Byron Saxton, Mauro Ranallo, John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole, David Otunga

I say this every year but it's always hard to believe that it's been a full year since this show. This was the first time that a Survivor Series was expanded to four hours but thankfully there's a good chance that they could make it work, mainly due to the elimination matches. The main event though is Brock Lesnar vs. Goldberg, which I'm sure will be completely uneventful. Let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: Drew Gulak/Ariya Daivari/Tony Nese vs. Noam Dar/TJ Perkins/Rich Swann

This is a preview match for something called 205 Live, which debuts next week. I know it hasn't gone great but the division really has evolved into a better place than when it started. Swann gets a nice reaction and then starts with Nese, who gets chopped in the corner. They do their regular flips with Swann's jump over Nese's feet getting a good pop (as always) before it's off to Perkins.

Some suplexes set up an Octopus Hold but Nese reverses into a kind of gutwrench suplex. Gulak comes in and gets caught in the wrong corner with everyone working him over. We actually get a TJ PERKINS chant as he slaps on the kneebar to keep Gulak in trouble. Everything breaks down and we take a break.

Back with Daivari in trouble this time as Dar gets two off a running kick to the face. Nese offers a distraction though and a spinebuster takes Dar down. A superkick gives Daivari two and it's back to Gulak to crank on the leg. If this sounds rather uninteresting, it's only because that's

what it is.

Dar dropkicks his way to freedom and the hot tag brings in Swann to very little reaction. A good looking jumping hurricanrana takes Daivari off the middle rope as everything breaks down again. That means we hit the dives but the referee CUTS PERKINS OFF. Now you know that's not working so Perkins dives over the referee to take out some villains. Back in and Swann's standing 450 ends Daivari at 11:48.

Rating: C-. I forgot how uninteresting these earlier cruiserweight matches were. The guys barely have characters and the entire story here was "three faces vs. three heels". It didn't get much better for a long time but, as usual, the problem comes down to one simple thing: if the smaller guys on the main roster can be big stars and do all these dives, why should I be impressed when cruiserweights can do them too?

Kickoff Show: Luke Harper vs. Kane

Harper is part of the NEW Wyatt Family, which screwed Kane over, meaning we need a match here. Kane grabs a full nelson of all things and we're in a chinlock fifteen seconds in. That goes nowhere so Harper grabs a headlock as the fans are oddly split here. Kane starts in on the shoulder by sending it into the buckle. Harper sends him outside though and hits that suicide shove of his (Who needs cruiserweights?).

A slingshot flip splash gives Luke two and we take a break. Back with Kane in a chinlock (well duh) but managing to superplex Harper down for a crash. The sidewalk slam gets two but Harper scores with a superkick for the same. Kane's running DDT and Harper's Boss Man Slam are good for two more each but it's the chokeslam to put Harper away at 9:10.

Rating: D+. Well what were you expecting here? This was exactly the match you would have planned out for them and Kane won with his finisher. It's about as paint by numbers of a power match as you can get and while it wasn't terrible, it's also a match I really didn't need to see.

The opening video looks at Goldberg vs. Lesnar and then all the Raw vs. Smackdown matches. Well at least they got some time. I'm sure Stephanie's voiceovers had nothing to do with it.

Raw Women's Team vs. Smackdown Women's Team

Raw: Bayley, Alicia Fox, Charlotte, Nia Jax, Sasha Banks

Smackdown: Alexa Bliss, Becky Lynch, Carmella, Naomi, Nikki Bella

Entrances alone take forever of course, which will be a theme tonight. Charlotte is Raw Women's Champion and has Dana Brooke in her corner. Becky is Smackdown Women's Champion but Nikki is captain. You know, because of course. Bliss gets a heck of a reaction (gee I wonder why). Actually hang on a second as there's no Nikki. We cut to the back where she's down after being attacked. Not to worry though, as Smackdown coach Natalya is more than willing to take the spot.

Carmella and Alicia get things going and it's an early northern lights suplex to give Fox two. That just earns her a trip into the corner for the Staten Island Shuffle...and let's look at Team Raw while Fox gets in a kick to the face. That felt like a hard edit to make sure we didn't see something. Becky comes in and wants Bayley but Charlotte tags herself in instead. Banks does the same though and everything breaks down as Team Raw is about to implode. As usual, I would ask why Team Smackdown didn't just let them. Nia will have none of this though and easily clears the ring to settle things down.

We settle down to Becky and Banks trading rollups before it's off to Charlotte for more of the same. Becky can't get the Disarm-Her and it's off to Nia as things get a lot more difficult. Carmella and Bliss come in for the expected results and Naomi's high crossbody is pulled out of the air. Natalya actually gets a reaction but Nia clotheslines her head off for her efforts. It's off to Fox vs. Carmella with Alicia avoiding a Bronco Buster, setting up what looked to be a mostly missed ax kick for the elimination at 6:35. Bliss comes right in, sends Fox into the buckle and adds Twisted Bliss to tie it up at 6:48.

Charlotte and Naomi come in with the latter cleaning house, including knocking Nia outside and hitting a high crossbody to the floor. Nia posts her though and that's a countout at 8:23. We pause for the Tye Dillinger TEN chant until Bliss takes Banks down and grinds her face into the mat. Banks sends Bliss and Natalya into each other, followed by the double

knees in the corner to Alexa. Back up and Bliss saves Natalya from the Bank Statement, allowing Natalya to roll Banks up for the elimination at 10:20.

Charlotte comes in and gets suplexed, meaning we hit the SUPLEX CITY chants. You would think fans would know more chants than that. Charlotte goes up for the moonsault but, as always, Natalya powerbombs her down for two in the near fall that never ends Charlotte. The required Sharpshooter sends Charlotte crawling for the ropes but a big boot ends Natalya at 12:01.

Becky and Bliss get in an argument over who should come in, allowing Jax to suplex them both at the same time. Of course that gets a MAMA MIA from Mauro, which I miss hearing so often. Bliss gets caught in a slam but Becky makes a blind tag and missile dropkicks Bliss in the back to knock her onto Jax. The Disarm-Her actually makes Jax tap at 13:35 and it's 2-2 with Becky/Bliss vs Charlotte/Bayley.

Jax mauls Becky, leaving Bliss to get big booted down for the elimination at 14:03. Becky fights back as fast as she can with the series of clotheslines into the leg lariat, followed by Bplex. Bayley has to dive in for a save after a top rope legdrop before coming in for the slugout. Another Bplex gets two but Bayley's elbow to the back gets the same. You can tell Becky is getting tired out there so Bayley blocks the Disarm-Her and grabs the Bayley to Belly for the final pin at 17:53.

Rating: C+. The quick eliminations didn't help things here but the ending was the right call. There was way too much talent on the Raw side to lose and I'm VERY glad it was Natalya, who can wrestle this style without having to dumb things down too much. Becky was pretty much all the blue team had for a lot of the match and she put up a valiant effort, only to be outgunned. That makes her look strong and Bayley getting a win like this is a good thing for her at this stage in her main roster career.

Charlotte takes Bayley out post match and beats her around ringside.

Smackdown mascot James Ellsworth runs into Karl Anderson and Luke Gallows, who weren't funny in 2016 either. They make some bad chin puns but Raw GM Mick Foley comes in to run them off. Ellsworth talks about all

the great memories he has of Foley, most of which involve him being in extreme pain. Foley thanks him anyway and suggests Ellsworth move to Raw. He appreciates the offer but politely turns it down because he's true blue. Foley leaves and Ellsworth runs into Braun Strowman, who asks if he knows Ellsworth. James runs in a smart move.

Intercontinental Title: Miz vs. Sami Zayn

Miz is defending and Sami is trying to take the title to Raw. We get the Big Match Intros and Sami gets quite the reaction for being Canadian. Sami spins out of a wristlock to start and Miz looks annoyed in the corner. Miz gets sent outside but Sami has to bail out of the flip dive. The moonsault off the barricade works though, drawing over Maryse for a distraction. Well she can be quite distracting.

This one works well with Miz taking out the knee to get his first advantage. Some hard stomps to the knees have Sami in trouble but he's still able to clothesline Miz to the floor. A flip dive works as well, followed by a Michinoku Driver for two. Miz's short DDT gets the same and it's time for a double breather. The running corner dropkick/clothesline look to set up the ax handle but Sami reverses into the Blue Thunder Bomb.

The Helluva Kick only hits corner though and that means the Figure Four. This one stays on for a good while until Sami makes the ropes, earning himself some YES Kicks. Sami reverses one into a Figure Four of his own but Maryse rings the bell. Since Sami isn't all that bright, he of course falls for it, only to have Miz roll him up to retain at 14:06.

Rating: C-. Kind of a dull match as you knew a lot of Sami's near falls weren't going anywhere. I can go for Miz and Maryse teaming up to steal wins though and it's a big reason why he's been an awesome Intercontinental Champion. This would also help play into Sami's heel turn nearly a year later as he would get tired of losing while playing by the rules. Makes sense, especially in a long term form.

Dean Ambrose and AJ Styles are bickering over being teammates tonight when Shane McMahon comes in and tells them to cool it so Smackdown doesn't lose again.

Raw Tag Teams vs. Smackdown Tag Teams

Raw: Enzo Amore/Big Cass, Cesaro/Sheamus, Gallows and Anderson, New Day, Shining Stars

Smackdown: American Alpha, Breezango, Heath Slater/Rhyno, Hype Bros, Usos

A fall eliminates both members of a team. Enzo and Cass suck up to the live crowd, as you might expect. New Day and Slater/Rhyno are the respective champions. Fandango tries to give everyone a fashion ticket to start, earning himself a Midnight Hour for the elimination at 44 seconds. New Day spends too much time celebrating though and it's a superkick from Jimmy to pin Big E. at 1:08.

Gallows comes in to punch Jimmy in the face before handing it off to Cass for the tall power. The fast tags continue as it's off to Epico vs. Ryder (who is rocking some old school Survivor Series logo trunks) with Mojo coming in for a clap around the ears. Rawley gets taken down into the corner for the huge group beating though as we keep trying to get everyone in. It's back to Ryder (not Slater like the fans want) but Gallows saves Anderson from the Broski Boot. Instead it's the Magic Killer to pin Ryder at 5:08.

Gable comes in as Graves talks about how scared he is of American Alpha. It doesn't seem to be the most valid fear to start though as Epico takes Gable down into a chinlock. Some rolling suplexes have Gable in more trouble and Primo comes in with a springboard ax handle to the ribs. He misses a charge in the corner though and it's off to Jordan for a quick Steiner Bulldog to get rid of the Stars at 8:08.

The six remaining teams (Enzo/Big Cass, Cesaro/Sheamus, Gallows and Anderson vs. American Alpha, Heath Slater/Rhyno, Usos) come in at once as everything breaks down. That means Enzo gets tossed over the top onto a big pile...which was mainly Raw guys but whatever. Rhyno gets thrown over the top as well, only to have Slater add an even bigger dive. Back in and Cesaro swings Jordan but Gable makes the save with a Rolling Chaos Theory.

Gable isn't done though as Jordan throws him over the top for a HUGE flip

dive onto everyone. Sweet goodness those two were awesome together. I mean, not as awesome as Jordan on his own with Kurt Angle kind of around but still. Back in and it's a quick Magic Killer to get rid of Jordan at 10:39 as the eliminations are still flying. A spinebuster plants Slater and he's caught in the wrong corner.

Sheamus won't tag Cesaro (this was before their ridiculous matching outfits) and an argument breaks out, allowing the hot tag off to Rhyno as everyone bickers. Rhyno comes in and Gores Gallows for an elimination at 12:28. Cass wastes no time with a big boot to Rhyno, followed by the Bada Boom Shaka Lacka for the pin at 12:45.

That leaves us with the Usos...who superkick Enzo down to set up the Superfly Splash and an elimination at 13:26 before I can type the Raw teams. So now we're down to the Usos vs. Cesaro/Sheamus with the latter hitting the ten forearms (you know the chant) on Jimmy. Cesaro comes in and eats a double superkick but Sheamus Brogue kicks Jimmy with Jey making a diving save.

Super White Noise plants Jimmy again but Jey is right back with a Superfly Splash for two with Cesaro making a save of his own. The hot tag brings in Cesaro for the Uppercut Train and a 619 as the fans lose their minds over Cesaro again. A high crossbody gets two on Jey and it's time for the Swing. Jimmy breaks up the Sharpshooter and Jey gets the Tequila Sunrise. That's reversed right back into the Sharpshooter with Sheamus remembering he's in the match to cut off Jimmy, leaving Jey to tap at 18:55.

Rating: B. This was during the time that I couldn't stand Sheamus and Cesaro (not a lot has changed in a year) but they did a lot of stuff in this match, despite the crunched timeline. Getting nine eliminations in less than nineteen minutes is a lot but you have to clear the ring out at the beginning. It's entertaining, but hits a hard ceiling that it's not getting past.

Stephanie and Foley decide that Sheamus and Cesaro should get a Tag Team Title shot tomorrow night. They recap the rest of the show with Stephanie getting way too serious, as usual.

Preview for TLC with Dean Ambrose vs. AJ Styles in a TLC match for the title.

Cruiserweight Champion Brian Kendrick does his best Sean O'Haire impression and is ready for Kalisto. If Kalisto wins, he brings the division to Smackdown. It's fine for a one off match but it was really hard to buy Kendrick as the best cruiserweight in the company in 2016.

Cruiserweight Title: Kalisto vs. Brian Kendrick

Kendrick is defending and charges straight into a knee to the face. Kalisto is right back with a suicide dive, followed by a springboard corkscrew crossbody for two. Some rollups give Kalisto more near falls and a shotgun dropkick has Kendrick in even more trouble. A rollup into the corner finally gives Kendrick a breather and he crushes Kalisto between the steps and the apron for good measure.

Back in and we hit the cravate to slow things back down. Kalisto manages to fight up and get to the apron where he grabs a C4 out to the floor in the big crash of the match. A good looking suicide dive takes Kendrick down again but he reverses a super Salida Del Sol into the Captain's Hook. Kalisto finally grabs the ropes and fires off some kicks, followed by the hurricanrana driver. The Salida Del Sol gets two with Kendrick getting to the ropes. Kalisto heads up top...and here's Baron Corbin for the DQ at 12:21.

Rating: C-. The match was good at times but Kendrick really isn't the kind of guy you want as a long term champion. It also didn't help that you knew they weren't changing up the cruiserweight division so close to 205 Live's launch. Corbin interfering was fine enough, but it really does make the title match feel like a big waste of time.

The Kickoff Show panel recaps the show so far.

Daniel Bryan yells at Corbin, who doesn't want little pests running around on Smackdown.

We recap the men's Survivor Series match, which started in July at the second Brand Split. Naturally this is about the McMahons as Shane and

Stephanie are the Commissioners and therefore they have to be fighting. We look at all the entrants as this is treated like the major match is should be treated as. Then Shane is added to the match and that notion kind of falls apart.

Raw Men's Team vs. Smackdown Men's Team

Raw: Braun Strowman, Chris Jericho, Kevin Owens, Roman Reigns

Seth Rollins

Smackdown: AJ Styles, Bray Wyatt, Dean Ambrose, Randy Orton, Shane McMahon

AJ and Owens are the World Champions, Reigns is US Champion and Ellsworth is here as the mascot. This is also during the period where Orton is part of the Wyatt Family because we needed that story to get to Orton as World Champion again. Rollins gets a nice reaction and it's far better without BURN IT DOWN or whatever the line is. AJ and Owens start things off with Styles wasting no time in hitting the drop down into the dropkick.

That's enough of that though as it's and they slug it out with AJ getting the better of it. The STUPID IDIOT chants mean it's time for Jericho, who throws his shirt at AJ and hammers away. Styles dropkicks him down again as the announcers discuss Jericho insulting Undertaker on Twitter. It's off to Ambrose vs. Rollins, which turns into far more of a wrestling match than it should.

Rollins can't get a Pedigree so let's go back to Jericho. Chris yells at Dean for the \$15,000 jacket issue, earning himself some really bad armdrags. An enziguri cuts Dean down for two but Ambrose is right back with a bunch of right hands to the head. Shane comes in for the first time and my interest goes down. I'm still not a fan of middle aged Shane and this isn't likely to change things.

Shane's bad punches and an armdrag (better than Dean's) take Jericho down until a dropkick cuts him off. The announcers debate the TV ratings as Reigns comes in and gets booed out of the building. Roman hammers him down in the corner and Seth comes in for a chinlock. That's broken up so

let's go with Dean vs. Kevin. Owens hits a superkick but gets caught in a hurricanrana, only to have Jericho break up Dirty Deeds.

Everything breaks down and Strowman tags himself in, leaving the fans to chant for Ellsworth. The fight heads outside with Dean being left alone in the ring until Strowman catches his slingshot dive. Strowman walks him around the ring until AJ's slingshot forearm to the floor breaks it up. Owens dives onto everyone and Strowman tosses Shane across the ring in a pretty good power display.

Some double teaming doesn't do much to stop Strowman but they manage to knock him outside. That's enough of Dean and Ambrose working together so they get in a fight, allowing Strowman to hit the running powerslam for the pin on Dean at 15:57. AJ was looking right at the cover and didn't move. Shane gets to beat on Strowman for a bit but thankfully he gets hammered down as well.

The Phenomenal Forearm is pulled out of the air with AJ being tossed outside in a nasty heap. Orton gets thrown aside too but a stare from Bray stops Strowman in his tracks. Strowman grabs Jericho by the throat but decides to run Bray over instead, followed by a dropkick to put him on the floor. Braun goes outside as well but runs into an RKO onto the announcers' table. After we pause to see what a random eight year old fan thought of it (he was applauding), Shane drops the top rope elbow to put Strowman through said table. That and Ellsworth grabbing Braun's foot get Strowman counted out at 21:18.

Strowman catches Ellsworth running up the ramp though (How slow is this guy?) and throws him off the stage through some tables. Everyone else is mostly dead until Jericho covers Shane for two. Owens is fresh enough to drop the backsplash on Shane for two (but only after mocking the dance). There's the Lionsault but Shane gets two of his own off a small package.

Shane takes a Codebreaker but Orton comes in before the cover, meaning Shane survives another finisher. He avoids a top rope splash though and it's off to AJ to work on Jericho. With Owens getting in an insult to AJ's hair (too far man), Jericho counters the Styles Clash into a failed Walls attempt. The Phenomenal Blitz rocks Jericho but Owens comes in with

the List of Jericho to blast AJ. That's a DQ at 29:23, but not before he gives AJ a Pop Up Powerbomb.

Orton gets the tag and comes in with the RKO to get rid of Jericho at 30:19. Notice Reigns blankly staring up at the ramp and not hearing the RKO RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM. So it's down to Shane/AJ/Orton/Wyatt vs. Reigns/Rollins with Orton hammering on Rollins to start. Wyatt and Orton take turns on Seth as Shane is still laid on the apron after his long time in the ring. The superplex takes Rollins down (looks great too) but it allows the hot tag to Reigns. AJ comes in as well and MY GOODNESS the fans do not like Reigns.

House is cleaned with a series of Samoan drops, followed by a great looking Razor's Edge powerbomb for two on AJ. Seriously that was good enough to cut off the booing. A Pele cuts off a Superman Punch and it's back to Shane for no logical reason. Shane gets in a tornado DDT to drop Reigns and a clothesline takes Rollins down. Reigns tries a spear but gets awkwardly countered into the post.

In probably the spot of the match, Shane loads up Coast to Coast but gets speared out of the air for a SICK landing. Shane actually kicks out at two but you can see that he is completely gone. Like Lesnar after the botched shooting star gone. The referee says Shane is eliminated at 37:07, presumably due to his brains looking like a pie that has been run over by a bus driven by raccoons.

We pause for a bit as doctors get Shane out of the ring until Roman blasts Bray with a clothesline. Rollins and AJ get stereo hot tags with Seth's Blockbuster putting Styles down. There's the slingshot knee to AJ and a suicide dive to Wyatt. With Reigns down on the floor, let's hit that ROMAN'S SLEEPING chant! Still one of my favorites because the fans just will not give him a break no matter what. An enziguri staggers AJ on top and now it's WAKE UP ROMAN. Reigns does in fact wake up and saves Rollins from a hanging DDT on the floor.

With Orton down, it seems as good a time as any for a DoubleBomb. Styles makes a save before it can be loaded up but here's Ambrose to jump Styles again. The fans call Dean a STUPID IDIOT as the former Shield beats up

security. NOW the TripleBomb puts AJ through the table, allowing Rollins to get the pin at 47:00. It's down to two on two with the Wyatts vs. the Shield (not the worst idea in the world)...and here's Luke Harper for a distraction so the Wyatts can take over.

Reigns posts Orton but Harper superkicks him down, only to have Rollins score with a flip dive to the floor. Back in and the low superkick hits Wyatt but he dives into an RKO, giving Bray the pin at 49:25. Reigns, all alone, sends both of them outside and takes Harper out as a bonus. Back in and Orton eats a spear to save Wyatt, leaving Bray to grab Sister Abigail for the pin at 52:50.

Rating: A. This is a great example of a match that benefits from all of the time it had. What I loved about this was how long it took to take someone out. Most of the people in here were former World Champions and it doesn't make sense to have them losing in a minute or two like in the other matches. They let the match build up for a change and that's what makes this feel important.

Above all else though, this felt like someone surviving instead of whoever was left last. Look at the women's match. Bayley barely looked like she had been through anything at the end. Orton and Wyatt looked banged up, which is how they should after a match like this. It's a well put together match that got the kind of time it needed, which is exactly how something like this should be. Really strong stuff here with Bray, who actually needed it, getting the win.

We recap Goldberg vs. Brock Lesnar. Goldberg was being interviewed about being in WWE2K16 and said he didn't owe Lesnar a rematch. Lesnar challenged him though and Goldberg wanted his son to see him wrestle. The match was on and it does indeed feel like a battle of two people who could kill each other.

Brock Lesnar vs. Goldberg

We get the full Goldberg entrance, complete with someone knocking on his door. Lesnar drives him into the corner to start but Goldberg shoves him right back down, scaring the heck out of Lesnar in the process. Back up and the spear connects to drop Lesnar again. There's a second spear,

followed by a Jackhammer to give Goldberg the huge upset at 1:25.

Yeah I still don't like it. Sure it was shocking and a huge moment, but what did this set up? Goldberg eliminating Lesnar from the Rumble, Goldberg getting the most unnecessary Universal Title reign ever, and then a good sub five minute match at Wrestlemania. One of WWE's biggest issues is giving fans something to cheer for and they give this spot to Goldberg, who they didn't even create, for the sake of a video game (might not have been their call) and a story that could have made someone's career. After this, Samoa Joe and Braun Strowman both fell to Lesnar, but Goldberg doesn't. I don't buy it, nor do I like it.

Goldberg celebrates with his family to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. One of the major perks about a match running nearly an hour on a three and a half hour show is that it can REALLY bring an overall rating up. Throw in a good women's match and nothing really bad, this is actually a strong show. It's far from perfect (main event aside, though that was the only thing that could have closed the show) but it's a heck of a card, which I can always go for of course. The main issue is they could have gotten this one under three hours so it's a bit long but nothing too bad. Really solid show though and most of that is due to the mega long match.

Ratings Comparison

Rich Swann/Noam Dar/TJ Perkins vs. Ariya Daivari/Tony Nese/Drew Gulak

Original: C

Redo: C-

Kane vs. Luke Harper

Original: C-

Redo: D+

Women's Survivor Series Match

Original: C

Redo: C+

Miz vs. Sami Zayn

Original: C+

Redo: C-

Tag Team Survivor Series Match

Original: D+

Redo: B

Kalisto vs. Brian Kendrick

Original: C

Redo: C-

Men's Survivor Series Match

Original: A-

Redo: A

Goldberg vs. Brock Lesnar

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Overall Rating

Original: C-

Redo: B+

My eyebrows went up when I saw the original overall rating. The year of mellowing on the ending have helped a lot as there's no way this is a B-. Also I really couldn't stand Sheamus and Cesaro back then.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2016/11/20/survivor-series-2016-there-are-no-words/>

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