

Impact Wrestling – December 1, 2016: Old People Rule

Impact Wrestling

Date: December 1, 2016

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, D'Angelo Dinero

We're down to two regular shows left in the year and the big story tonight is the crowning of a new Knockouts Champion as Gail Kim has vacated the belt due to injury. That leaves Jade and Rosemary inside Six Sides of Steel for the title because it's not like they have any better options at the moment. Let's get to it.

We open with a DCC video as they're focusing on the Hardys. Matt is back to help his brother tonight thanks to a well placed bolt of lightning.

Grand Championship: Aron Rex vs. Moose

Rex is defending in an open challenge. Rex: "NO! HIT GRADO'S MUSIC!" We have to wait a minute though as Rex wants to do his warmups. That's followed by a trip to the floor for a cartwheel from the champ. Back in and Rex rakes the eyes to set up the ring punch, only to walk into the Game Changer to give Moose the title at 1:45.

Moose says he'll defend against anyone. Rex on the other hand has nothing to say but seems to be crying.

Jeff Hardy arrives and doesn't know which Matt we'll be seeing tonight. They'll have a plan in the title match though.

Here's the DCC to say they don't want to delete anyone but they want to erase things. Cue Jeff to say the DCC has no idea what they're getting themselves into. The beatdown is quickly on and...the DCC video comes on again. The lights go out and Matt returns for the save. Deletion is guaranteed.

Go For Broke is ready to fight each other for the X-Division Title. It's

a challenge for DJZ because his friends know him better than anyone else.

X-Division Title: Braxton Sutter vs. Mandrews vs. DJZ

DJZ is defending and this is one fall to a finish after Go For Broke won last week's three way tag. They trade rollups to start in that three way style where it's clear that this has all been choreographed in the first place. Mandrews suplexes the champ down and gets two off a standing moonsault. Another moonsault off the steps takes down Sutter and DJZ but it's time for the "fun" part with the skateboard.

DJZ elbows him in the face but tweaks his knee back inside. That goes nowhere as DJZ high crossbodies both challengers, only to have Sutter snap off a Flatliner. Mandrews uses a twisting Stunner to get out of a suplex but as soon as he hits the shooting star, DJZ pops back up with a rollup to retain at 5:58.

Rating: C. Another meaningless X-Division match with the whole "we just know each other so well" idea going nowhere. The lack of story continues to destroy this division, but some of that has to do with Mandrews being really uninteresting. Yeah he can do shooting stars and moonsaults. That's nowhere near enough to make him a complete character but you take what you can get around here.

They pose together but Mandrews goes heel by kicking DJZ's bad knee out. Mandrews is the least interesting of the three but this is in fact better than nothing.

Laurel Van Ness says that she can make Braxton feel better but Allie wonders why she never sees Laurel and Braxton together.

Here are Maria and Laurel to vent some frustration. Maria gets right to the point by calling Allie out and demanding an apology. Allie is sorry she hit Maria with a pumpkin pie but Maria wants to talk about Allie costing her the title at Bound For Glory. It's because Allie believes in honesty so Laurel goes on about what she did with Braxton last night. Maria calls Allie stupid and gets slapped in the face, making this the third time Allie has stood up to her. Laurel beats Allie down and AGAIN we haven't really done anything new in this story.

Rosemary is ready for the cage match.

Tag Team Titles: DCC vs. Hardys

Bram and Kingston are challenging and the champs take over early on with a pair of double suplexes. Things settle down with Bram getting beaten up in the corner, followed by a chinlock from Jeff. You don't often see that from a face but TNA has never been your normal promotion. Double Poetry in Motion gets two on Bram and we take a break. Back with the DCC working over Matt in the corner until Bram charges into a boot.

The hot tag brings in Jeff but Storm hits him with a belt, meaning the heel beatdown starts up again. Kingston grabs a chinlock and runs Jeff over with a shoulder as this just keeps going. Bram spins out of the Twist of Fate and a double clothesline puts both guys down. The real hot tag brings Matt back in and it's time to bite Kingston's arm and hand. Bram breaks up the Twist of Fate so Kingston takes it instead, allowing Matt to retain the titles at 15:54.

Rating: C+. I've said it before and I'll say it again: the Hardys are great when they're out in their own universe but they're just boring in the ring. Both guys look old and tired in their matches but at least they're trying. The bigger story here though is the DCC losing already, which makes me think that it's yet another stable that isn't going to live up to its potential because TNA would rather push Matt and Jeff even more.

We recap Gail Kim being attacked, forcing her to vacate the title. If she wasn't hurt during the Bound For Glory match, I really don't know of a reason why she needed to get the title at the pay per view.

Ethan Carter III mocks Eli Drake for not being able to talk. When Ethan gets the title back next week, all Eli has to do is say the word and he can have a shot.

Al Snow gives a really intense speech about giving the Tribunal what they have coming to them. This is one of the best things on the show but again, WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT AL SNOW???

Ethan Carter III comes to the ring and has some words for World Champion Eddie Edwards. This brings out the champ to see him face to face with Ethan talking about how much that title changes people. Carter has failed to capture the title twice this year but he won't fail a third time. Eddie knows the kind of man Carter is but Ethan says that when a title is involved, his mindset is kill em all and let God sort it out. Well that intensified quickly.

Knockouts Title: Rosemary vs. Jade

Inside Six Sides of Steel with the title vacant coming in and Madison Rayne on commentary. Oh and Gail Kim is outside because we just need her presence. You can only win by pinfall or submission so Rosemary knocks Jade to the floor right after the bell. Rosemary throws a trashcan inside but gets knocked down as we take a break.

Back with Rosemary sending Jade into the cage and yelling at Gail for selecting Jade as the future of the division. Jade is thrown into the cage wall again but comes back with a top rope hurricanrana for her first real offense. A powerbomb gets two on Rosemary but let's stop for a second so Madison can praise Gail some more. Rosemary is thrown off the top rope so Jade climbs to the top of the cage (Madison: "SHADES OF GAIL KIM! 2006!") for a high crossbody. It's only good for a delayed two but the yellow mist blinds Jade. An F5 makes Rosemary champion at 14:42.

Rating: C-. Yeah I know we have a new champion. That's great and all, but can we get a little more about Gail Kim? I mean, how does she feel about this? Did you know she's the first Knockout in the Hall of Fame? Or that Rosemary basically beat her because Gail picked Jade as the next face of the division? Rosemary winning is the best option as someone else can rise up to beat her but you're almost crazy if you don't think Gail is a top contender for that honor.

Rosemary laughs at Gail to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. The wrestling was better this week but the focus on the older talent is getting old. Gail Kim was the focus of the main event, Al Snow got a big promo and the Hardys are about to get their own special. The World Title match next week got a little focus but the rest

of the card just doesn't do much for me right now. At least the wrestling was better though and that's a positive step for TNA.

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Main Event – November 29, 2016: Even The Benches Are Better

Main Event

Date: November 29, 2016

Location: Spectrum Center, Charlotte, North Carolina

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Byron Saxton

I'm not sure what to expect this week as we're officially taped on Mondays now with Superstars being added to the canceled list. Last week's show was a lot of fun with a big focus on past moments but I have a feeling this is going to be back to the standard. Thankfully that's hardly a bad thing so let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Sin Cara vs. Bo Dallas

Feeling out process to start with something like a springboard armdrag sending Bo outside for a breather. A running hip attack staggers Cara though and it's off to a chinlock. Cara comes back with a springboard crossbody and a standing Lionsault for two. The swanton misses though and a Roll of the Dice puts Cara away at 4:32.

Rating: D. So Cara keeps getting pushed on Raw (at least making appearances) while Dallas keeps winning over on Main Event and can't even get a cameo on Raw? Remember a few weeks ago when he was winning a few matches on the big show? Apparently WWE doesn't either and just put him on this show for reasons that aren't clear.

Back to Monday for something that hadn't happened when this was taped.

We get a sitdown interview with Paul Heyman, who says he and Brock Lesnar screwed up by underestimating Goldberg. After twelve years on the sidelines, Goldberg stepped into the ring and cracked Lesnar's ribs with a spear. This is now part of Lesnar's legacy and it's an embarrassment. The loss makes Lesnar think he has something to prove, which really scares Heyman, who doesn't know what it's going to turn Lesnar into. If Goldberg is in the Royal Rumble, so is Brock, which means there will be one conqueror, 28 losers, and one victim.

Also from Raw, we get a montage of Seth Rollins beating up Chris Jericho and Roman Reigns beating Kevin Owens, earning himself a title shot at Roadblock in December.

Darren Young/Curtis Axel vs. Shining Stars

Curtis and Epico get things going before it's off to Darren for a wristlock. You can hear the nearly stoic silence as Young works a headlock on the mat. An atomic drop sends Epico outside and a double clothesline does the same thing to Primo. Back from a break with Epico finally going for the throat to take over but the threat of a Backlund sends Epico running into a rollup.

Young gets beaten down in the wrong corner with Primo breaking up a

comeback attempt. A belly to belly suplex is enough for the hot tag off to Curtis for the house cleaning. Axel suplexes Primo but Epico plays Bobby Heenan for the Ultimate Warrior/Rick Rude finish to put Curtis away at 11:25.

Rating: D+. Just a tag match here as Backlund continues to be the most interesting thing one out of the whole group. There's a reason these guys are over on Main Event instead of getting time on the main show. Axel has potential but LOSING EVERY SINGLE WEEK isn't exactly doing him any favors.

One more Raw clip to take us home.

Women's Title: Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks

Charlotte is defending and this is anything goes with falls counting anywhere. Sasha starts fast by knocking the champ outside and scoring with a suicide dive. A double clothesline puts both women down as we take a break. Back with Sasha fighting out of a bodyscissors and kneeing Charlotte in the face.

The double knees in the corner miss though and a big boot knocks Sasha off the apron for two on the floor. Natural Selection on the floor gets the same and the champ is annoyed. The annoyance takes so long that Sasha pulls out a kendo stick and swings away, drawing the ECW chants. Charlotte knocks her down again and grabs the Figure Eight, only to have a stick shot break it up.

They fight towards the announcers' table where Charlotte moonsaults onto Sasha...or at least a few feet to Sasha's right, for a near fall. Sasha gets in a Thesz press off the barricade for two more and both of them are down. They head into the crowd and Sasha ties her up in a handrail, setting up the Bank Statement to make Charlotte tap at 16:28.

Rating: B. I'm not sure how many more times I can put this the same way: the match was good, Charlotte missed the big spot, and Sasha gets the title back. She's held the title twice before with both reigns lasting twenty seven days. It's really hard to care again when we've seen this multiple times and it's ended in less than a month both times. Still

though, good stuff.

Ric Flair comes out, raises Sasha's hand, and is gone in less than thirty seconds. Banks celebrates to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. Dang it they've ruined Main Event. I'm running out of ways to say that Smackdown is the better show but now even their benches are beating Raw. The original wrestling here was horrible but at least Charlotte vs. Sasha was fun to see again. Thanks for taking away some of the fun I was having WWE. I'm sure it was worth it for the sake of Darren Young and Bo Dallas.

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Lucha Underground – November 30, 2016: Break Up The Tribe

Lucha Underground

Date: November 30, 2016

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

It's time to get back to focusing on one of the more interesting members of the roster as tonight we're looking at Pentagon Dark. Black Lotus and her tribe are going after Pentagon so maybe we can get a bit more clarification on what's going on with their story. One of the problems with Lucha Underground is they have so much going on that it's hard to keep track of the individual stories. Let's get to it.

We open with a much needed recap of Black Lotus vs. Pentagon Dark. This includes Pentagon breaking Dragon Azteca Jr.'s arm and Lotus sending her cronies to eliminate Pentagon from Aztec Warfare.

Vampiro and Pentagon run into each other in the back, meaning it's time for flashbacks. Pentagon is threatened and doesn't seem pleased.

The announcers open us up but Vampiro doesn't have anything to say.

Pentagon Dark vs. Black Lotus/Black Lotus Tribe

Gauntlet match with Pentagon vs. all four in turn. First up is Doku, who walks to the ring with her arms folded for an odd look. Doku fires off some chops in the corner and a hard kick to the ribs, only to get dropkicked across the ring. Pentagon starts getting more serious so the kicks and chops get even harder. Well at least louder, with one sending Doku out to the floor.

A gorilla press toss sends Doku face first onto the apron and a sick kick to the thigh has her in even more trouble. Back in and Doku scores with a good looking spear followed by a top rope elbow. She tries it again though but Pentagon is waiting on her and breaks the arm for the win at 6:12.

Before we get back to the match, we see Catrina coming up to Jeremiah Crane in the back and taunting him about Ivelisse. It seems that they have a past and Catrina thinks he's not over her.

Back in the arena, Pentagon promises to break Lotus' arm as he waits for the next member of the tribe. That would be Yurei, who again is named for the first time here. The match (which is treated as an individual match instead of part two) starts fast with Yurei sending him outside for a big

dive. They're certainly giving the women some solid offense here.

Pentagon is sent into the chairs and hit in the head with a metal sign. Back in and Pentagon starts wrenching on the knee but Yurei comes back with a hurricanrana. A tornado DDT looks to set up something out of the corner, only to have her dive into the package piledriver. One more broken arm later and Yurei is done at 7:22 (13:34 total, not counting breaks between falls).

Before the third fall, Matanza is working out when Dario comes in. Next week Matanza will get his rematch for the title but the monster wants Mysterio.

The third entrant is Hitokiri, which translates to Assassin. A dropkick sends Pentagon outside and a big moonsault press has Pentagon in even more trouble. Hitokiri starts banging away with a chair and Pentagon is in trouble. Vampiro is getting turned on by the violence and Pentagon is thrown through some chairs. Again. Pentagon is slammed onto the exposed concrete and you can see his body being broken down.

One heck of a kick to the ribs slows Hitokiri down and now it's her turn to go through the chairs. Her body being in a broken heap is quite the visual. An AA onto the concrete has Hitokiri reeling but she sends him into the post. That's enough time for her to go up to the top of Dario's office for the HUGE dive (the first woman to do so) and both are down. Back in and the Package Piledriver is countered into a standing Canadian Destroyer for the pin at 11:55 (25:29 total).

Actually we're not done as Black Lotus gets to face the broken Pentagon as well. Lotus kicks the referee down and the entire tribe surrounds Pentagon. Things get even more personal as Lotus breaks Pentagon's arm, bringing a smiling Vampiro to his feet. Cue Dragon Azteca Jr., who the women leave alone to break Pentagon's other arm. No match with Lotus and I won't add any time because the bell never rang.

Rating: B. I liked the match but I still don't have much of a connection to this story. It's such a complicated and at times intense story but the other problem is it rarely gets any attention. This is the story that's been going on in the background instead of getting the main focus. That

doesn't make it bad but at least it's an entertaining match, especially with the Tribe breaking Pentagon down and making him fight until he just couldn't do it anymore.

Prince Puma wakes up in his coffin and Vampiro is waiting on him.

Vampiro: "Come with me."

Overall Rating: B. These one match shows are fun but you don't want to do two of them in three weeks. I need a little more variety than this to really get into things, especially with how many stories are going around in this promotion. I'm also not sure where they're going with Pentagon, who is one of the most over acts in Lucha Underground but is just kind of there on the side while everything else goes on.

Here's my main issue with this season: what is the big story? You have Dario being evil and serving his master (whoever that is), Pentagon vs. Black Lotus vs. Dragon Azteca Jr., the cops running around, Matanza vs. Mysterio and the title picture but none of those feel like a bigger story than the rest of them, which is a problem. Still though, good show this week as the season is starting to get back on track.

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Monday Night Raw – July 1, 2002 (2016 Redo): Make Yourself Famous

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 1, 2002

Location: Verizon Wireless Arena, Manchester, New Hampshire

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

We're starting the second half of the year as things aren't exactly the most thrilling at the moment. The big story here though is Jeff Hardy challenging Undertaker for the Undisputed Title in a ladder match. Now this match is really, really fondly remembered but I wasn't blown away when I saw it a few months back. Maybe another viewing will change that so let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Vince's Ruthless Aggression speech from last week which transitions into Lesnar destroying Van Dam.

Here are Heyman and Lesnar with the former talking about how this is the summer of Brock Lesnar. See, Brock has the intelligence to be inspired by people like Kurt Angle. Over on Smackdown, Angle issued an open challenge to any rookie (actually it was to anyone Angle had never wrestled but whatever). Tonight, Lesnar has issued an open challenge to any veteran willing to be put into retirement.

Brock Lesnar vs. Ric Flair

Flair calls himself a legend but Brock says it's the wrong year against the wrong guy. As usual, Lesnar is just not a good talker. Lesnar shows off the power to start but gets slowed down by a chop. A powerslam plants Ric and it's time for Heyman to dance a bit. Some backbreakers send Flair outside because he has no idea what to do with a monster like this.

Back in and Brock goes shoulder first into the post but grabs the bearhug anyway. A not great looking spinebuster has Flair begging off but also

sets up a low blow on Brock. The Figure Four is quickly broken up but Flair goes after Heyman, setting up the F5 to give Brock the pin.

Rating: D+. Lesnar beating a legend is a good thing but it didn't exactly show us anything new. We've seen Brock do the exact same stuff time after time and that's not exactly thrilling. He really is just a monster who is rising up the ranks but the lack of charisma and presence is hurting him.

Jackie Gayda says she didn't lose the Golden Thong Award because she just didn't win. Also, Molly Holly cost them the tag match last week. Cue Molly so they can brawl into the arena with Jackie missing a swing with a pipe. The fight heads into the ring but here's Trish to pants Molly. Humiliation ensues.

Christopher Nowinski doesn't want the Hardcore Title because it's not worth the constant looking over your shoulder. Fair point actually.

Bradshaw vs. Christopher Nowinski

Non-title. Bradshaw beats him up and goes for weapons, only to be told that it's a regular match. Chris gets in a bell shot for the cheap pin.

Rob Van Dam arrives and is annoyed that Lesnar has already had a match. He'll settle for William Regal instead.

Jeff Hardy runs around backstage and climbs onto various things because tonight is a ladder match.

And now, Goldust is Darth Vader. Booker says he's never seen Star Wars and he never will but he does seem to like the Lightsaber. "OBI-BOOK KENOBI!!!"

Vince and Eddie have a chat about ruthless aggression. The Spanish translation for ruthless aggression: EDDIE GUERRERO. Chris Benoit comes in and is ready for his Raw debut tonight. "The Smackdown guys" will have to be compensated somehow, even though Vince owns both shows now and should be able to dictate all roster moves.

Rob Van Dam vs. William Regal

Neither title is on the line. Regal starts with the half nelson suplex and those evil forearms to the face. The jumping double knees to the face have Van Dam in even more trouble and we hit a chinlock. A monkey flip gives Van Dam a breather and a spinning crossbody is good for two. Regal's tiger bomb is countered with a backdrop and the Five Star gives Rob the pin.

Rating: C. Completely acceptable match here, assuming you're ok with a champion losing clean. I get the idea of building towards Van Dam vs. Lesnar again and it gives Brock an actual feud but the lack of any serious drama doesn't help much. This was fine though and that's an improvement for Raw.

Post match Van Dam calls out Lesnar but Heyman comes out and says they'll do it at Vengeance, presumably for the Intercontinental Title.

Bubba Ray Dudley/Spike Dudley vs. Chris Benoit/Eddie Guerrero

This is Benoit's first match in over a year. Guerrero and Spike start things off with a dropkick and neckbreaker actually putting Eddie down. Bubba comes in and scores with a running splash in the corner as this is more one sided than you would expect. Benoit gets the tag and actually earns a nice round of applause for his first appearance in so long. It's nice to see the fans show appreciation like that.

The first German suplex rocks Bubba but he partially lands on Benoit's head for a somewhat scary visual. It's back to Spike so we can get to the real beatdown. Bubba has to break up the Crossface but the save only allows some double stomping. Eddie dropkicks Benoit by mistake though and the Dudley Dawg sets up the hot tag to Bubba. One heck of a powerbomb gets two on Eddie as everything breaks down. What's Up hits Eddie but he's fine enough to climb the corner for a hurricanrana on Bubba. Not that it matters as Bubba gets in the Bubba Bomb to put Eddie away.

Rating: B. Who knew Bubba and Spike worked so well together? This was way better than I was expecting with Bubba doing everything he could and Spike taking a beating like few others could pull off. Benoit is back and while him losing doesn't make a ton of sense, he looked great out there, especially with the suplexes.

Post match Spike gets thrown through a table and Bubba takes the Crossface, which turns into a choke.

Rey Mysterio is coming.

Big Show yells at Goldust, who says he's Show's father. Goldust hits him in the head with a plastic sword but here's Kevin Nash, who says he's Goldust's daddy. You know, Nash and Dusty do have some similarities. Goldust gets beaten down.

Jeff Hardy ladder match highlight reel.

Undertaker isn't worried about being in a ladder match and walks out when asked if he's nervous. JR interprets this as being scared.

X-Pac is out too.

Booker T. vs. Big Show

This was supposed to be a tag match but Goldust and X-Pac are taking their naps. They take turns hitting each other in the corner and Show gets the better of it with a vertical suplex. It's off to the bearhug for a bit, followed by a hard clothesline to drop Booker. Speaking of dropping, Show gets low bridged and dropped out to the floor. Show picks up the steps but gets them kicked back into his face for the very lame countout.

Rating: D-. Oh come on with that ending. You can't have BIG SHOW do a job against Booker T., who could easily be in the main event scene at the drop of a hat. Big Show on the other hand looks like he's wearing a one piece women's swimsuit and has almost no business anywhere near above the midcard. But the NWO was a big thing years ago so let's go with that.

Booker leaves through the crowd to avoid the NWO.

Post break here's the NWO with Nash punching Show in the face. Shawn plays peacemaker and everything is cool because HHH is about to join the team. Ignore the fact that the NWO is on Raw and HHH is on Smackdown of course. For reasons of "it's the NWO", this takes WAY too long to accomplish. Shawn superkicks Show to wrap it up.

Vince makes Undertaker vs. Rock at Vengeance.

Matt Hardy wishes his brother luck and Lita makes a cameo to say the same.

WWE World Title: Jeff Hardy vs. Undertaker

Undertaker is defending and it's a ladder match. JR warns us that this could be the biggest trainwreck in history. Before the match, Jeff jumps onto Undertaker's motorcycle to start the mind games. The champ goes outside and has a ladder dropkicked into him, followed by a chair shot to the head.

That goes nowhere though as Undertaker clotheslines Jeff's head off, only to have Jeff send him into the ladder up against the apron. Another ladder shot to the head knocks Jeff into the announcers' table but Undertaker opts to climb back down and do some more beating. They both wind up inside for I believe the first time with the very slow beating continuing. Jeff slugs away for a bit but is punched right back down to kill the crowd again.

Undertaker puts Jeff inside the ladder for the apron legdrop and the destruction continues. A Whisper in the Wind gets Jeff out of trouble and he uses the ladder as a springboard to take Undertaker down again. It's time for the big ladder and a horrible looking hurricanrana sends Undertaker outside. Jeff gets a hand on the belt but a chair to the back brings him right back down.

Undertaker loads up the Last Ride but Jeff gets in a weak chair shot to the head. Thankfully Undertaker almost pops back up so Jeff BLASTS him with a much better shot. That's not really sold either as more chair shots slow Jeff down. A chokeslam off the ladder (chokeslame really) allows Undertaker to pull the title down.

Rating: C-. This is one of those matches that just hasn't aged well. I remember losing my mind when Jeff hit Undertaker with the chair on the original viewing but this really doesn't hold up later on. The last few minutes help this but it was a long squash until the ending. We've sat through a few weeks of Undertaker destroying the Hardys and now he does

it again in Jeff's signature match before moving on to the Angle match. Not great but watchable enough.

Undertaker leaves as Jeff pulls himself up. That's not cool with the champ so he comes back and gives Jeff a Last Ride. Undertaker tries to leave again but Jeff says he's still standing. Well with some help from the ropes that is. That brings Undertaker back to the ring again but he raises Jeff's hand in a sign of respect.

Overall Rating: D+. This show is running with an anchor but they're getting a few steps further this week. The main event made an attempt at elevating new stars and the tag match in the middle of the show was strong. Unfortunately this show's biggest problem is that it's compared to Smackdown. The blue show is doing almost everything right and making almost none of Raw's mistakes. They're trying a bit harder but there's still a long way to go.

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New Column: We Get It Already

Looking at why Sasha vs. Charlotte is a horrible way to book a feud and why the blue women are that much better.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-we-get-it-already/>

NXT – November 30, 2016: In The Big House

NXT

Date: November 30, 2016

Location: Canadian Tire Centre, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

Now this should be interesting as this show was taped on the same night as last week's Smackdown, meaning they're in a big arena instead of the tiny Full Sail. I'm always curious to see how things translate when they go somewhere else, especially when it's not an NXT crowd. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Asuka vs. Nicole Matthews

Non-title. Matthews is a regular in Shimmer and her early shots to Asuka's head just seem to annoy the champ. That means the beating is on in a hurry with Asuka firing off the kicks. Some YES Kicks look to set up a big kick but Matthews swings away even more. A Fujiwara Armbar is the prelude to the Asuka Lock for the submission at 2:17.

We look at Sanity attacking Rich Swann last week with No Way Jose making the save. Jose vs. Eric Young later tonight.

Samoa Joe doesn't care that he's facing Shinsuke Nakamura in Osaka, Japan on December 3 because he's the best. Tye Dillinger comes up to say he'd like to test that theory and a match is made for tonight.

Eric Young vs. No Way Jose

Jose takes him straight down but Eric bails to the floor. A good shot knocks Eric off the apron and into the rest of Sanity as we take a break. Back with Alexander Wolfe grabbing Jose's leg so Young can take over. A dragon sleeper with Young standing on the middle rope has Jose in even more trouble before Young cranks on the neck even more. Jose makes his quick comeback but Sanity offers another distraction so Young can hit his wheelbarrow suplex into a neckbreaker for the pin at 9:19.

Rating: C. This was more of a way to let Sanity get its first win and Young looked good enough out there. It's amazing how much easier Young is to sit through when I don't have to hear him talk about how great he is. Jose didn't get squashed and there's a good chance we'll see a tag match next.

Sanity mauls Jose again post match.

Asuka wants competition but there's no one left.

Samoa Joe vs. Tye Dillinger

Non-title. Dillinger starts fast and knocks Joe outside as we take a very early break. Back with Dillinger firing off left hands in the corner but it's way too early for the Tyebreaker. Joe crushes the knee to take over, setting up a kneebar to make Tye dive for the ropes. That gets an NXT chant as Joe unloads with right hands in the corner.

Tye's knee is wrapped around the ropes and Joe walks around as we take another break. Back again with Joe putting on a neck crank to set up Tye's comeback. The Tyebreaker still doesn't work so Tye superkicks him in the chest for two instead. Joe's release Rock Bottom out of the corner sets up the powerbomb into the Boston Crab into the Koquina Clutch to knock Tye out at 20:15.

Rating: C+. This was longer than it needed to be but I've seen much worse. Tye had no chance of winning here but the fans were into him. At some point he needs to actually win something though and having him lose both big matches in Canada didn't help him. His match with Roode did a

lot for him and this certainly didn't crush him but Joe won handily here.

Dillinger gets the big ovation from the crowd.

Overall Rating: C+. This was just a filler show as we get ready for the new taping cycle back at Full Sail. The wrestling was fine and they set up a few things to bridge us to the next tapings. Joe vs. Nakamura in Osaka could change a lot of things but it should be interesting to see if it's done there or if they go on to San Antonio. Fine show here but nothing memorable.

Results

Asuka b. Nicole Matthews – Asuka Lock

Eric Young b. No Way Jose – Wheelbarrow neckbreaker

Samoa Joe b. Tye Dillinger – Koquina Clutch

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205 Live – November 29, 2016 (Debut Episode): It's All About the Presentation

205 Live

Date: November 29, 2016

Location: Colonial Life Arena, Columbia, South Carolina

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Austin Aries, Corey Graves

Remember the Cruiserweight Classic being all awesome? Now do you remember the cruiserweights being equally awesome on Monday Night Raw? Odds are you don't, because the division has floundered on Monday nights and it's already time for the show to have its own show on the WWE Network. This debut episode could range from good to a mess so let's get to it.

Also, these are probably not going to be done on Tuesday nights. I'll have them up as soon as possible every week though.

The opening sequence says tonight it's time to defy expectations. There are very few clips from Raw here with almost everything coming from the tournament. I'm as shocked as you are.

Opening sequence.

It should be interesting to see how the crowd looks as this was taped after Smackdown went off the air.

Austin Aries, currently out with an eye injury, is a surprise commentator. He teases winning the title once he's healthy.

The roster (or at least tonight's roster) is on stage for introductions. We have Rich Swann, TJ Perkins, Jack Gallagher (SWEET), Hoho Lun, the Bollywood Boyz, Noam Dar, Tony Nese, Drew Gulak, Ariya Daivari, Cedric Alexander, Lince Dorado, Akira Tozawa, Mustafa Ali, Gran Metalik and Brian Kendrick. This minute long series of introductions is already more than we got on Monday Night Raw and gives me some hope.

Video on the Bollywood Boyz, Harv and Gurv Sirah. They grew up watching Bret Hart and want to bring the Indian culture to America. Again, HUGE improvement over what we got on Mondays.

Bollywood Boyz vs. Drew Gulak/Tony Nese

The Boyz do a lot of dancing and are clearly the faces here. The fact that they're fighting heels was your second clue. Aries doesn't get the point of the handshakes and I still can't disagree. Gurv (who is in trunks instead of tights like his brother) works on Drew's arm to start before it's off to Harv for more of the same.

Drew takes Harv's head off with a running dropkick as Ranallo is, say it with me, a big improvement over what we've had in recent weeks. Harv gets taken down into the corner with Gulak working over his leg like a technical mat wrestler should do. Nese's chinlock doesn't last long and a neckbreaker gets Harv over to the corner for the hot tag to his brother.

Everything breaks down and we get the eternally stupid spot with Gulak being thrown into Nese, who DDT's his partner because he's incapable of letting go of his partner's head. Harv springboards into a crossbody to take Gulak down outside but Nese slams Gurv to take over again. Back in and a DDT sends Nese outside, setting up a double superkick to pin Gulak at 7:04.

Rating: C+. Let's see: characters, good action, defined faces and heels and a better reaction from the crowd. This is how you start a show and introduce some new talent, which seems to be more over with the crowd than almost anyone else has accomplished in the last few months.

Gulak and Nese say the Dancing with the Stars rejects won because of greasy ropes. That sounds like the start of a story, which again puts this one up on Raw.

Video on Noam Dar.

Kendrick says you should gamble on him tonight because he's going to capitalize on Swann's mistakes. Perkins comes in and wants his rematch so he wishes Kendrick luck.

Video on Gran Metalik. These are a bit long but you only have to air them once and people will catch on in a hurry.

Ariya Daivari vs. Jack Gallagher

Gallagher is a wrestling gentleman and got a very strong reaction in his Cruiserweight Classic run. Jack does his fancy spin to counter a wristlock before bending both arms around in ways other than nature intended. Even Graves has to appreciate how awesome Gallagher really is.

Gallagher handstands his way out of a headlock by walking on his hands. Another headstand in the corner has Aries freaked out and it's time to tie Daviari's limbs up in so much of a knot that Gallagher stands off to the side and smiles at him. A running kick to the back of the trunks annoys Aries because it wasn't great.

Daivari comes back with some basic wrestling, including a neckbreaker and chinlock, which finally slows Jack down. Some dropkicks have Daivari in trouble again and a headbutt knocks him into the corner. One of the hardest running dropkicks I've ever seen puts Daivari away at 5:28. Even Aries calls it impressive, partially because that's one of his signature moves.

Rating: B-. Here's the simple point: Gallagher works because he's unlike anyone else on the roster. As I've said for a long time: if you do the same thing over and over again with the only difference being the name attached, no one is going to notice. If you do something completely different, people are going to notice. That's what Gallagher did here and that's why people will be talking about him.

Ranallo: "Austin, what do you think of 205 Live so far?" Aries: "Well I'm here so it's great."

Lince Dorado video. He's your standard masked luchador.

Video on Rich Swann, who lost his parents young and has traveled the world wrestling anyone he can.

Cruiserweight Title: Rich Swann vs. Brian Kendrick

Swann, billed as outlandish for some reason, is challenging and they're absolutely insane if they don't change the title here. We're ready to go after the Big Match Intros and the standard handshake. They trade wristlocks to start before it's time to speed things up, including a hard dropkick for two on the champ. A tiger bomb drops Kendrick again and he bails to the floor for a breather.

Back in and the champ snaps off a hard belly to back suplex but it's too early for the Captain's Hook to really work. A similar suplex does the same to Kendrick but Swann takes too long going up and gets caught in a neckbreaker onto the buckle. Kendrick has a target now and a bridging dragon suplex makes things even worse. It's off to a straitjacket hold for a bit, only to have Swann grab something like a Michinoku Driver.

Brian's eyes are bugging out (great visual) but he gets the knees up to block the standing 450. The long form Captain's Hook gives us the dramatic crawl to the ropes and Kendrick's frustration continues. It only gets worse when Sliced Bread #2 gets two, allowing Swann to hit three straight spinning kicks to the head for the pin and the title at 13:31.

Rating: B. This felt like a big title change and that's exactly what it needed to be. There's no other way to put it: Brian Kendrick is one of the least interesting heels in a very long time. He was on a great nostalgia run in the tournament and the big idea was to turn him heel because...well I have no idea actually. Swann as the new face champion has potential and whoever beats him can actually be the big bad that this division needs. Good match here, which is what they needed.

Swann dedicates the win to his mother and Kendrick says you shouldn't get used to this.

A replay of the title change ends the show.

Overall Rating: B. As Paul Heyman said, it's all about the presentation. On Raw, the cruiserweights are wedged in on a show where they don't fit in the slightest. It's basically the new Divas match so people can go get nachos (Hopefully with barbecue sauce. Try it.) and that's not worth keeping around.

This show actually felt like it mattered and even if it's just a low level show for the sake of validating the talent being signed, it's WAY better than giving them ten minutes in front of a crowd that doesn't want to see them. On top of that, the talent was actually introduced to the fans so we can get to know them a bit.

Look at what we had here: two guys from India who like movies, a British wrestling gentleman and a fun guy who loves to dance winning the title. In other words, something other than a bunch of guys doing a similar style with no charisma (Perkins and Kendrick for example, meaning the top two names in the division).

I don't think this show is going to blow the doors off of anything but giving them their own show is the only possible option if they want the division to be a success. It's not a great show or anything but it's different enough to be entertaining and that's the important thing. I liked what I saw here as it felt like a weekly episode of the Cruiserweight Classic. If they just have to keep the division on Raw for awhile so be it, but their best bet is right here.

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Smackdown – November 29, 2016: Going Home With A Smile

Smackdown

Date: November 29, 2016

Location: Colonial Life Arena, Columbia, South Carolina

Commentators: Tom Phillips, David Otunga, Mauro Ranallo, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's the go home show for Tables, Ladders and Chairs 2016 and Smackdown has managed to put together a pretty decent build in such a small time frame. Tonight we've got Dean Ambrose hosting the Ambrose Asylum with James Ellsworth as his guest, meaning AJ Styles is bound to get involved. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

There are tables, ladders and chairs all over the arena.

Renee Young is in the ring for a contract signing for the Women's Title match. Alexa Bliss and Becky Lynch come out with Alexa telling Renee to get out of here because they need someone with better fashion sense. They recap the feud with Becky saying Bliss has the mentality of a four year old. The champ signs but Alexa keeps talking about Becky's accent and how this isn't the Disney Channel where you get further by being nice. Becky rips into her for not accomplishing anything in her time here other than having a loser mentality. Alexa signs as well and the fight is on with Becky actually being knocked through the table.

Dolph Ziggler/Kalisto vs. Baron Corbin/The Miz

Corbin knocks Ziggler down to start and we take a break less than thirty seconds in. Back with Corbin whipping Dolph hard into the corner and doing that slide underneath the bottom rope to keep Dolph in trouble. It's off to Miz, who pulls out a ladder to lean up against the steps. Ziggler gets in the running DDT on the floor, followed by a superkick to Miz.

The hot tag brings in Kalisto for his usual, including the hurricanrana driver for two on Miz. A big suicide dive sends Miz into the announcers' table. Everyone is staggered and Maryse shoves the ladder onto Ziggler. Back in and the Salida Del Sol looks to finish, only to have Corbin use a chair for the DQ at 7:31.

Rating: B-. For a match this short, they packed in a lot of action into the time. Kalisto could be an interesting guy if they would stop cutting his legs out from underneath him. The same is true with Corbin, who certainly has the look but I'm not sure if he has enough in ring skills yet to hang at this level.

American Alpha isn't scared of the Wyatts and are ready to levitate the Wyatts with suplexes.

The Wyatts are ready for American Alpha and don't like their positivity. Orton gives Luke Harper a pep talk for his match with Kane but Harper doesn't seem to trust Randy.

Carmella comes out for her match but first of all she has a message for John Cena. She promises to hit Nikki with a chair so hard that the real Bella Twins pop out of her back. Nikki charges to the ring and the brawl is on, meaning no match. Carmella is easily cleaned out.

We recap last week's ladder match with Ellsworth earning his contract and a shot at Styles' World Title.

It's time for the Ambrose Asylum, complete with a single piece of carpet in the middle of the ring. Ambrose gets right to it by bringing out Ellsworth as the first guest. Dean asks how old James' boots are before letting James celebrate his win a little bit. Ellsworth offers to do anything Dean needs so Ambrose gives him money to pick up a six pack after the show. As far as James' future, he'd rather face AJ for the title after beating him three times in a row. Ambrose: "He's drunk with power ladies and gentlemen."

Cue AJ to stand on the announcers' table and make puppet jokes about Ellsworth. Dean: "So what you're saying is you lost to a dummy three times?" AJ gets in the ring and promises to get rid of Dean before

dealing with the new superstar, as long as James shows up on Sunday. The brawl is on with AJ shoving both guys through the furniture. Ellsworth is hung upside down for a chair shot to the back, followed by a Styles Clash onto the steps. That should get rid of him for awhile but odds are he'll be at the pay per view.

Post break, Ellsworth is taken out on a stretcher.

Kane vs. Luke Harper

Harper's headlock doesn't get him anywhere as Kane comes back with his own power offense. A big boot and clothesline puts Harper on the floor and we take a break. Back with Harper kicking him in the knee and head, only to get caught with the running DDT. Harper hammers away in the corner but gets powerbombed out for two more. The swinging Boss Man Slam gives Luke two of his own and a superkick drops Kane again. Back up and Harper misses the discus lariat, setting up the chokeslam to give Kane the pin at 11:05.

Rating: B-. What is with the good matches on here tonight? These two beat the heck out of each other in the only kind of match they should have had. Kane has taken a backseat since the Draft but he's still fine for something like this. You can tell they're doing something with Harper so maybe he'll wind up getting a push out of the thing.

We recap the contract signing.

Becky has a sore back but doesn't care what kind of match she has with Alexa. Again, and I can't emphasize this enough: they've taken a simple idea and ran with the thing, which can often make for something very entertaining.

Bray Wyatt/Randy Orton vs. American Alpha

The winners get the title shot on Sunday. Orton and Jordan get things going with Jason snapping off some armdrags and working an armbar. It's off to Wyatt who throws Jordan throat first into the ropes to take over. The beatdown begins with Orton draping him over the top rope and grabbing a chinlock.

Jordan fights up and makes the tag off to Gable, who cleans house for a bit until being sent hard to the floor as we take a break. Back with Gable getting DDT'ed onto the apron for two as the beating continues. Bray hits the release Rock Bottom and Orton's awesome looking superplex has both guys down.

Unfortunately it's actually enough for the hot tag to Jordan as everything breaks down. The suplexes begin on Bray but the lights go out, revealing Harper at ringside. Gable breaks up Sister Abigail but an RK0 breaks up the Grand Amplitude. Jordan's spear hits the post and Sister Abigail sends the Wyatts to the title match at 15:29.

Rating: B. Heck of a match here with the right team going over. Bray almost has to win a title soon and they even protected Alpha in the loss. There's something so cool about watching Jordan fighting for all he's worth as he does the big comeback as well as almost anyone in the company right now. This was better than I was expecting and I had a good time with it.

Slater and Rhyno are ready for the challenge when Styles comes up to say no one cares about the Tag Team Titles. Ambrose runs in and beats AJ up to end the show.

Overall Rating: A. Now THIS is how you go into a pay per view. Smackdown had a battle plan tonight and executed it to near perfection. I'm pretty sure every match on Sunday got some focus here and the wrestling was even good on top of that. You really can tell that there's a lot of effort put into the planning of these shows and they know exactly what they want to do on almost any given week. This was one of the better go home shows I've seen in a very long time and it was everything they needed to do and more.

Results

Dolph Ziggler/Kalisto b. The Miz/Baron Corbin via DQ when Corbin used a chair

Kane b. Luke Harper – Chokeslam

Randy Orton/Bray Wyatt b. American Alpha – Sister Abigail to Jordan

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Monday Night Raw – November 28, 2016: False Teeth, Short Cameos and Deja Vu

Monday Night Raw

Date: November 28, 2016

Location: Spectrum Center, Charlotte, North Carolina

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

It's another big week for Monday Night Raw as there are two title matches announced coming into the show. This week we have New Day coming down the home stretch to the Tag Team Title record with a defense against Anderson and Gallows, plus Charlotte defending the Women's Title against Sasha Banks (again). Let's get to it.

We open with a look at last week's main event.

Here's Chris Jericho to open us up with the Highlight Reel. This week's

guest is Kevin Owens, who is setting a record with his second consecutive appearance on the show. Owens rips on America in general for their actions on Thanksgiving and Black Friday, which you would never see from Canadians like them.

They're thankful for each other but Jericho is also thankful for Seth Rollins, who blew another title shot last week. People have been accusing Jericho of interfering last week but that was clearly Sin Cara wearing a Chris Jericho match. "He got the Mast of Jericho and he put it on maaaaan." Apparently Rollins isn't medically cleared to be here tonight so here's Roman Reigns instead. Jericho calls Reigns a joke but Roman thinks Owens being Universal Champion is the real joke.

Owens stumbles over the name of his title so Reigns says Owens would have lost that title in any of his recent defenses. That's enough for Jericho who asks if Reigns knows what that means but Owens tells Jericho to shut up because he's got this (smart move as YOU JUST MADE THE LIST would have gotten a face pop). Owens threatens to powerbomb on the apron just like Rollins, which sounds fine to Reigns. Roman thinks if he wins tonight, he should get a title shot at Roadblock. The match is made.

Post break, Kevin and Chris get in an argument over whether or not Owens needs him. They split up until Mick Foley comes in to say Jericho won't interfere in the match tonight. Jericho is more than willing to walk away on his own.

R-Truth vs. Braun Strowman

Truth gets in a few shots but the powerslam puts him away in 38 seconds.

Post match Goldust goes after Strowman until Sami Zayn runs in for some revenge after last week. This goes as badly as you would expect it to with Sami being put in the Tree of Woe again. Foley comes out to help break it up as we take a break. Back with Foley saying Sami is never going to quit, meaning he needs to be saved from himself.

That sets Sami off on a rant about Foley being bossed around by Stephanie. Foley says he saved Sami's job by making Zayn vs. Strowman because Stephanie was going to fire him for not winning the

Intercontinental Title (GOOD GRIEF PICK A SIDE WITH STEPHANIE ALREADY!). Sami wants Foley to be himself because he's a hero to these people. All Sami sees when he looks at Foley is a hypocrite. All I saw was Foley's teeth falling out as he talked for a very weird visual.

Charlotte is ready for her championship celebration and sends Dana off to get things ready.

Cedric Alexander vs. Tony Nese

Cedric is the hometown boy and starts fast with a monkey flip. We see Alicia Fox watching in the back and smiling rather heartily at Cedric. Drew Gulak trips Alexander up so Nese can get two off a moonsault. We hit a bodyscissors for a bit until Cedric knees him in the face. Gulak offers another distraction though and a pumphandle driver ends Alexander at 3:24.

Rating: D+. Not much to see here but they're setting up people as the cruiserweights get their own show tomorrow night. If Rich Swann gets the title tomorrow, Nese could be a potential first challenger for the title, which would be an upgrade over Brian Kendrick's nothing character.

Enzo and Big Cass shill merchandise for Cyber Monday.

We recap the Jericho/Owens issues.

Jericho is offended at being asked if this argument is real. He goes to his car and the limo driver knocks the List out of his hands, only to have Rollins appear and beat Jericho down, including a big Pedigree on top of a car.

Raw Women's Title: Sasha Banks vs. Charlotte

Charlotte is defending and we get Big Match Intros. Sasha gets in the Banks Statement about thirty seconds in but Charlotte is no Lesnar and makes the ropes. They're quickly on the floor with Sasha being sent into the barricade to set up some chops. It's actually a double countout at 3:09.

Rating: D+. What am I even supposed to say about this? I know WWE loves

to keep these two fighting forever but I'm getting a little tired of it, especially when this is almost a guaranteed way to set up something else between them down the line. Of course this didn't have time to go anywhere but what we got was the usual goodness between them.

Hang on a second as here's Foley to say they're restarting this match later tonight with no countouts, no disqualifications and falls count anywhere.

Rusev vs. Enzo Amore

Enzo says Rusev had the luckiest day of his life last week and it came on the luckiest day of his wife's life because she got to see why Enzo is the realest guy in the room. We hear what Rusev and Lana might have had for Thanksgiving dinner but Enzo thinks she was thinking about him stuffing her turkey. A low blow DQ's Rusev at 30 seconds.

Mark Henry is in a new movie and shoves Titus O'Neil down for saying it should have been his part.

Rich Swann vs. Noam Dar

Brian Kendrick is on commentary to yell about how he's the champ and won't be going anywhere because he needs to take care of his family. Swann starts fast as is his custom but Dar sends him throat first into the bottom rope to take over. A neck crank goes nowhere and it's Swann's spinning kick to the head ending Dar at 3:29.

Rating: C-. Words cannot express how much anything associated with Kendrick sucks the life out of a show. The guy is one of the least interesting heels in a long time and is really just there. You know what he reminds me of? Chavo Guerrero as ECW Champion. Yeah he can have watchable matches but there's no energy to him at all and no one is looking forward to his matches.

Post match Swann calls Kendrick out and promises to win the title.

Sheamus and Cesaro are in a bar and talk about being the best team in WWE, even though they can't stand each other. Various drunk guys come up and make fun of them, triggering a bar fight with the wrestlers cleaning

house. They celebrate with a drink and seem to be on the same page.

Roman Reigns vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title. Owens jumps him before the bell but Reigns says ring the bell anyway (WAY too common anymore). The beating is on in a hurry with Owens knocking him to the floor before a backslash gets two inside. Back with Reigns hitting a clothesline but having to put the brakes on to avoid hitting the referee.

That means a chinlock and Cannonball, followed by a long chinlock to keep Reigns down. Another backslash hits knees though and they trade big forearms. A superkick gets two for Owens but he takes so long going up that Reigns nails a Superman Punch. Another one off the steps knocks Kevin silly and the spear finishes clean at 14:33.

Rating: C. Of course that's the only way they can set up the pay per view rematch. It's not like they could have had Owens get counted out or something (because we just HAD TO DO THAT FINISH earlier) because the solution was to just pin one of the weakest booked champions in recent years.

Owens is annoyed at being asked about the match. He blames Foley for the loss because he should have been at Jericho's side. They're still best friends you see.

We get a sitdown interview with Paul Heyman, who says he and Brock Lesnar screwed up by underestimating Goldberg. After twelve years on the sidelines, Goldberg stepped into the ring and cracked Lesnar's ribs with a spear. This is now part of Lesnar's legacy and it's an embarrassment. The loss makes Lesnar think he has something to prove, which really scares Heyman, who doesn't know what it's going to turn Lesnar into. If Goldberg is in the Royal Rumble, so is Brock, which means there will be one conqueror, 28 losers, and one victim.

Emmalina video.

Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Anderson and Gallows

New Day is defending of course. An early powerbomb gets two on Woods and

a fireman's carry flapjack gets the same. With Big E. down on the floor, Gallows kicks Woods in the head as we go to a break. Back with Big E. coming in off the hot tag to clean house. A belly to belly suplex drops Anderson but a Gallows distraction lets Karl get in a kick to the chest.

That earns Anderson the spear through the ropes but the Midnight Hour is broken up with a boot to the head. The Magic Killer doesn't work either so Woods blasts Anderson with forearms to the face. Karl tries a rollup with a handful of trunks but Woods reverses into one of his own to retain at 9:58.

Rating: C. The match was fine but there was no way the titles were changing with two weeks to go before the record. If they're going to do that (and I'm not sure who it would be against unless we get Cesaro and Sheamus again), it's not going to be until two days before the record is broken. New Day still cheated again but it felt more like the fun cheating instead of the evil version last week.

Bayley gives Sasha a pep talk and it turns into a speech about the greatness of Ric Flair.

Women's Title: Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks

Charlotte is defending and this is anything goes with falls counting anywhere. Sasha starts fast by knocking the champ outside and scoring with a suicide dive. A double clothesline puts both women down as we take a break. Back with Sasha fighting out of a bodyscissors and kneeling Charlotte in the face.

The double knees in the corner miss though and a big boot knocks Sasha off the apron for two on the floor. Natural Selection on the floor gets the same and the champ is annoyed. The annoyance takes so long that Sasha pulls out a kendo stick and swings away, drawing the ECW chants. Charlotte knocks her down again and grabs the Figure Eight, only to have a stick shot break it up.

They fight towards the announcers' table where Charlotte moonsaults onto Sasha...or at least a few feet to Sasha's right, for a near fall. Sasha gets in a Thesz press off the barricade for two more and both of them are

down. They head into the crowd and Sasha ties her up in a handrail, setting up the Bank Statement to make Charlotte tap at 16:28.

Rating: B. I'm not sure how many more times I can put this the same way: the match was good, Charlotte missed the big spot, and Sasha gets the title back. She's held the title twice before with both reigns lasting twenty seven days. It's really hard to care again when we've seen this multiple times and it's ended in less than a month both times. Still though, good stuff.

Ric Flair comes out, raises Sasha's hand, and is gone in less than thirty seconds. Banks celebrates to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This was an awkward show as it had good wrestling but the stories felt slapped together. It's really amazing how fast Smackdown turned around to be ready for Tables, Ladders and Chairs but Raw seems to be scrambling with twice as much time before Roadblock. I liked the show but they need to tighten things up a bit, which doesn't mean threatening us with more Stephanie anger.

Results

Braun Strowman b. R-Truth – Running powerslam

Tony Nese b. Cedric Alexander – Pumphandle driver

Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks went to a double countout

Enzo Amore b. Rusev via DQ when Rusev hit him low

Rich Swann b. Noam Dar – Spinning kick to the head

Roman Reigns b. Kevin Owens – Spear

New Day b. Anderson and Gallows – Rollup with a handful of trunks

Sasha Banks b. Charlotte – Bank Statement

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Smackdown – November 18, 2005: Viva La Legacy

Smackdown

Date: November 18, 2005

Location: Target Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

This is another request and it's the Smackdown version of the Eddie Guerrero Tribute Show. On top of that, it was also taped the same night as the Raw version (double taping on a Sunday due to the European trip) which was the day Eddie passed away. I've grown to respect Eddie a bit more over the years so it should be interesting to see how this goes. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's Smackdown World Champion Batista in a low rider to Eddie's music for a perfect opening. Batista immediately starts crying and says he's not sure he's the right man to be out here. All he knows is that Eddie loved his family and loved this business. He had a lot of demons to deal with but the pain went away when he walked through that curtain. Batista has to pause a bit to fight back the tears and you can feel the real

emotion here. Eddie is with God now and Batista isn't going to let anyone ever forget him.

Eddie video set to 3 Doors Down's Here Without You. They're my favorite band so this is about as perfect as it's going to get. Above all else though: that frog splash was a thing of beauty.

Clip from the Eddie documentary focusing on his childhood and family. It's kind of weird to hear Eddie talking about his brothers and sister.

The low rider, with Batista's title on the hood, will be in the aisle all night.

Matt Hardy vs. Carlito

This is interpromotional as Carlito is from Raw. As you're probably going to guess, these matches aren't going to mean a thing. Matt is freshly on Smackdown after losing the feud with Edge on Raw. It's so strange to see Matt looking absolutely svelte. He's probably 30 pounds lighter than he is today and looks great. Matt grabs the afro to start but gets sent outside to give Carlito control.

The announcers aren't even bothering with the match as they're just telling Eddie stories for a nice touch. Carlito loads up the middle rope legdrop but dives into a raised boot (still hate that spot). The Side Effect gives Matt two but Carlito grabs the Backstabber for the same. Matt comes right back with the real middle rope legdrop and the Twist of Fate is good for the win.

Rating: C. This is a good indication of how this night is going and there's nothing wrong with that. There's no need to try and make this show mean anything storyline wise so just go out there, have decent matches, and give the fans something to smile about. Good little match here too.

Vince gives a tribute to Eddie, who was a true craftsman. He actually tears up talking about how much Eddie loved his family, both blood and co-workers.

Another documentary clip talking about Eddie meeting Vickie then

marrying, losing and getting her back.

Road Warrior Animal/Heidenreich vs. Lance Cade/Trevor Murdoch

I still have issues calling Animal and Heidenreich the LOD. This is another interpromotional match, which is probably going to be a trend all night. Cade and Heidenreich start things off with the cowboy being taken down off a hard clothesline. The announcers get in a debate over which Tag Team Titles belong on which show (which is why I just go with the show's name and ignore the official names) as a cheap shot puts Heidenreich in trouble. That goes nowhere as he spears the villains down and makes the hot tag. Everything breaks down and the Doomsday Device ends Cade.

Rating: D+. I'm going a bit lighter on the matches tonight as there's no reason to go crazy with the ratings, especially when the wrestlers probably aren't all there mentally. This version of the LOD never worked as Heidenreich didn't feel like Hawk at all. It didn't help that the tag divisions were such a mess at this point and even interpromotional stuff wasn't interesting.

Booker T. and Sharmell miss Eddie with Booker telling a story about getting in a fist fight with Eddie back in WCW.

Documentary stuff on the Lie, Cheat and Steal vignettes. These were some of the first things that really made me appreciate Eddie as a character instead of just a performer. This transitions into a look at all the cheating over the years, which really was hilarious at times.

A sweaty Big Show is glad Eddie isn't in pain anymore.

Eddie talks about playing other sports but giving them up because he only cared about wrestling. We also hear about his childhood growing up around wrestling because his dad was a promoter.

Chavo Guerrero Jr. vs. John Bradshaw Layfield

Chavo still has blonde hair from the Kerwin White gimmick, which was completely done after Eddie passed away. JBL has image consultant Jillian Hall with him. Some forearms in the corner have Chavo in early trouble so

he snaps off a headlock takeover. We hit the cheating, including a thumb to the eye to send JBL outside. That's quite the selling for a basic move.

Back in and the crossbody is caught in a fall away slam to put JBL in control like he should be. The heavy right hands in the corner are accompanied by stories of sewage and burritos. We hit the sleeper, which looks really weird from someone so big on someone so much smaller. Or maybe it's just that JBL isn't good at using that move.

Chavo comes back with a dropkick and a DDT to break up another fall away slam. It's time for a few chairs and of course Chavo throws one to JBL and falls down just like Eddie did so many times. Ok I smiled at that one. The distraction lets Chavo get in a low blow, followed by Three Amigos and a frog splash for the pin.

Rating: C-. The result here means nothing at all as this was all about paying tribute to Eddie. Chavo winning was the only possible option here as he was basically Eddie's little brother and could wrestle the same style so well. It's not a good match (fine enough though) but it was exactly what it was supposed to be.

Video of Eddie's mom talking about his childhood.

The announcers talk about Eddie a bit.

Video on Eddie at Wrestlemania XX. That was the rather awesome match against Kurt Angle where Eddie took his boot off, which they played up in the Summerslam rematch. This leads to the ending of the show which is really hard to watch now.

JBL was Eddie's arch nemesis but he was lucky enough to be his friend.

Video on Eddie winning the World Title from Brock Lesnar at No Way Out 2004.

Cruiserweight Battle Royal

Tajiri, Gregory Helms, Paul London, Kid Kash, Brian Kendrick, Scotty 2 Hotty, Nunzio, Funaki, Psychosis, Super Crazy, Juventud

Nothing on the line as Juventud is already Cruiserweight Champion. Everybody gangs up on Helms and Tajiri (the Raw guys) but don't bother to actually eliminate either of them. Kendrick gets kicked out for the first elimination and Super Crazy goes out as well. Tajiri and Funaki follow them, leaving London to do a bunch of springboard kicks to the back. Helms and Nunzio take a double Worm.

Scotty dumps Kash and London does the same to Helms to get us down to five. Make that three as Nunzio gets rid of Scotty, leaving us with Nunzio, Juventud and London. Nunzio's attempts at alliances don't work and the Italian is sent out. Both guys wind up on the apron for a kicking battle until they both crawl back inside. Juventud dropkicks London out for the win.

Rating: D+. I've seen worse battle royals but few that were more pointless. The champ is entered into a match and then wins the thing? The division wasn't the most interesting in the world at this point and other than having some cruiserweight stuff involved on the show, I have no idea what this has to do with Eddie.

Video on Eddie and Chyna, which was pretty awesome stuff. His kids try to figure out what Latino Heat means.

We look at Eddie's last match, a DQ win over Mr. Anderson.

Shane McMahon talks about how cool it is to have major families like the Guerreros (and the Jarretts). He talks about what Eddie meant and breaks down in tears.

Video of the end of Wrestlemania XX with JR's voice giving out.

Chris Benoit vs. HHH

HHH is a heel here but plays to the crowd during the entrances. Given the circumstances, that's totally fine. An early Crossface attempt sends HHH to the ropes and we take a breather. Back in and Crossface attempt the sequel gives us the same plot (but likely fewer laughs). This time Benoit follows him out and sends HHH head first into the steps, only to get sent crashing outside as well.

Back from a break with HHH hitting some forearms to the back and getting two off a spinebuster. We hit the abdominal stretch but the powers of an EDDIE chant....don't really do much as HHH throws Benoit down. Your standard sleeper reversal sequence is followed by an exchange of failed finishers. That means it's time for the rolling Germans on HHH and a Swan Dive for two. The Pedigree is countered into the Crossface, which Benoit lets go in favor of a rollup for the pin.

Rating: B. Even the announcers said this was just about having a good match and that's what we got here. When HHH gets rid of the whole "I'm amazing and one of the best ever" stuff, he can put on some outstanding performances because he really is that talented. I liked this match for different reasons than I usually would have but it was still good stuff.

Benoit chants Eddie's name and Dean Malenko comes out for the big hug ala Wrestlemania XX to wrap things up.

Overall Rating: A. This is a weird one to grade as the wrestling was actually good but it had nothing to do with the show's quality. This was about celebrating Eddie's life and nothing else. I had a lot of fun watching it and actually started missing Eddie as the show went on. I've never been the biggest Eddie fan but things like this, where you look back at his career and life, really show how special he truly was. I may not be a huge fan but I certainly respect him, which is probably more important.

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