

# Ring of Honor TV – June 22, 2016: Go Home New Japan

## Ring of Honor

Date: June 22, 2016

Location: Ted Reeve Arena, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Kevin Kelly

It's the go home show for Best in the World and my guess is that means it's time to talk about the Bullet Club instead of anything related to the upcoming pay per view. I mean, I really don't think that the last several months focusing on New Japan has been fair to them so we better dedicate another hour to them. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

## Dalton Castle vs. Gedo

The announcers use the entrances to run down Friday's pay per view card. Feeling out process to start with Silas spinning out of an Irish whip, meaning it's time for Young to bend back in a manner that freaks Gedo out in a funny bit. Gedo is sent outside where the Boys fan him down, earning themselves a poke to the eyes. We take a break and come back with Gedo hammering away but running into a forearm to the face. A facebuster has Castle in trouble but the Boys offer a distraction, allowing Castle to hit the Bang A Rang for the pin at 10:55.

**Rating:** C-. Believe it or not this actually has some meaning as Castle is challenging for the TV Title at the pay per view. I mean it's not like they actually build the thing up or anything like that, but why build it up when you can remind us that Gedo is part of the Chaos stable, which means a grand total of nothing over here?

We recap BJ Whitmer vs. Steve Corino, or at least the most recent aspects of it. They bring up the idea of Corino being run out of the promotion but Mr. Wrestling III appearing in his place. Whitmer then drew Corino back by stalking Corino's family (shown here for the first time) to

finally set up the Fight Without Honor on Friday.

Adam Cole doesn't care who wins on Friday because he's going to be the next champ.

We look at Jay Lethal becoming undisputed champion at last year's Best in the World, followed by Jay Briscoe having Jay Lethal pinned at a show back in April.

#### Will Ferrara vs. Tomohiro Ishii

They slug it out to start with Ferrara not getting very far on the bigger Ishii. A shoulder actually staggers Ishii and a dropkick puts him down. A neckbreaker gets two for Ferrara but Ishii slams him down for some two counts of his own. Ferrara comes right back with a running elbow in the corner and a Samoan drop for two. Will goes one step too far though as he tries a suplex, earning himself a beating in the corner. A running clothesline gets two for Ishii so Ferrara slaps him in the face. That means the brainbuster puts Will away at 4:06.

**Rating:** C. Not a bad power match here, especially when you keep in mind how small Ferrara is. Unfortunately it doesn't mean anything other than a way to make Ishii look good, because that's what the world was waiting for. I know I keep harping on this but there's a pay per view in two days and we're spending TV time on a nothing match that advances no story. That's just bad planning and focusing on the wrong issues.

The Briscoes are ready for the main event.

Here's Steve Corino for some thoughts on his Fight Without Honor against BJ Whitmer. Corino is an evil man and it sounds as sweet as a slogan on a t-shirt. Years ago he took barbed wire to Terry Funk's flesh and convinced people to turn on their best friends but it was always about him. A few years ago he fell in love with a woman and tried to change himself but it's just his nature to be evil.

Whitmer has accused him of wearing a mask and BJ was right. However, the mask was this suit, these glasses and under this dyed hair because it made people believe he was who people wanted him to be. At the end of the

day, he's an evil man and BJ Whitmer will be out of Ring of Honor after Best in the World because Corino is taking the trash out.

Jay Lethal likes the idea of facing the Bullet Club on equal footing because something they never try.

Roderick Strong is ready to stand up for Ring of Honor against the Bullet Club.

### Bullet Club vs. Briscoe Brothers/Roderick Strong/Jay Lethal

It's Kenny Omega/Guerillas of Destiny/Matt Jackson for the Club in a somewhat weird combination. Matt and Mark start things off with Matt sliding under the crazy man but getting stopped by the threat of redneck kung fu, which earns him a jumping kick to the face. Strong comes in and knocks Matt down with an elbow to the face, meaning it's off to Lethal vs. Omega for a BIG reaction from the crowd.

That goes nowhere though as Omega tags in Tonga Loa, who gets in a shot from behind to take over on Lethal. Now of course Omega is willing to come in and stomp away in the corner, only to have Mark take him into the ROH corner for a beatdown. Everything breaks down for a bit (of course) and it's time for the multiple dives but Omega pulls Lethal to the floor and sends him into the barricade. Strong kicks Omega in the face though and we take a break.

Back with Omega trying to fight out of the corner but getting planted ribs first onto the mat. The tag brings Matt in anyway and it's time for the superkicks because those are so hard to predict. The fifth superkick puts Roderick down for two and it's off to Tama Tonga vs. Mark. Tonga's suplex doesn't work and it's time for more kung fu. A Roll of the Dice drops Mark and it's another double tag to bring in Lethal and Omega for a slugout.

The Lethal Injection is countered but Matt starts superkicking his partners by mistake. The One Winged Angel and Lethal Combination are both countered so it's Jay Briscoe vs. whoever he can punch at the moment. Everything breaks down and the double superkick hits Lethal but the second attempt is broken up. The Jay Driller plants Loa for the pin at

15:12.

**Rating:** C+. It was nice to have them get together before their matches on Friday but as usual the Bullet Club had to be involved as well. Unfortunately that dominated the match and the pay per view matches weren't exactly touched on because there was no time for something silly like that.

Dalton Castle and Bobby Fish trade promos about Castle earning his title shot but that not being enough to make him the champion.

Roderick Strong says Mark Briscoe may have been around here longer but he's still going to be second best.

The Addiction is ready to prove that they're the best in the world and not just the best in the busi-a-ness.

Both Jay's are ready to go and prove that they're the best in the world. Briscoe hopes Lethal has enjoyed all the good food he's eaten in the last year because after Best in the World it's back to Ramen noodles. This was really good, especially with the editing going back and forth like it did.

**Overall Rating:** C-. This was a watchable show on its own but a pretty lame go home show for a pay per view. That last little bit helped but a lot of it felt like they had forgotten they needed to plug this show. Hopefully the New Japan people are gone for a long while after this because they're really dragging things down. It's one thing to have the Bullet Club around but the people like Ishii, Gedo and Kushida are just taking up TV time from the ROH regulars and that's not a good thing.

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# Thunder – January 31, 2001: I Think I Feel A Stupid Plan Coming On

## Thunder

Date: January 31, 2001

Location: Baltimore Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tony Schiavone

I'm running out of things to say about these intros. We have less than two months to go in this company and it's most likely a skippable B-show with a main event between two midcarders who don't have an interesting feud. Or maybe a tag match with two members of a heel stable against a semi-regular tag team. I would offer a suggestion of a great cruiserweight match with two people being elevated to new heights but that's not the WCW way. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Monday's events, including a big focus on the return of the Rhodes Family.

Cat is willing to give Rick Steiner a US Title shot at SuperBrawl, provided Ric Flair doesn't find out about it. Good thing he's just the CEO and doesn't watch the show or look at the pay per view card. It's always cool to see wrestlers act like a fan.

Opening sequence.

## Billy Kidman vs. Shane Helms

Helms goes straight at him to start until charging into a raised boot in the corner. Kidman tries a wheelbarrow suplex but gets flipped out to the

floor, allowing Shane to hit a good looking dive off the top. They head into the crowd with Kidman hitting a quick dive off the barricade before taking Shane back inside. Helms grabs a fireman's carry into a facebuster before a running neckbreaker drops Kidman again.

A middle rope fist drop ala Jerry Lawler gets two for Shane and for some reason Kidman reaches out under the bottom rope for a tag. Helms' front facelock slows things down a bit and a chinlock makes it even worse. Back up and Kidman grabs a belly to back suplex into a side slam for two.

In a change of pace, Shane grabs a double underhook and pulls back on the arms for a submission attempt. The hold is broken with Kidman scoring off a dropkick and backdrop for two. Kidman's superplex is broken up though and Shane gets two off a top rope sunset flip (that's always cool looking). The Kid Crusher is countered into the Vertebreaker but Kidman flips out of that as well. He takes Shane into the corner where Shane flips out again, setting up the Vertebreaker for the big upset.

**Rating:** B. As usual the cruiserweights are just awesome around this time and it almost never gets boring watching them. I've been digging the heck out of Chavo lately but it's really time for someone to take the title off of him and turn the belt into something more valuable. Helms is the best bet and I'm almost sure this is the launching pad for him to move up to the title scene.

Here are Scott Steiner and Midajah with the champ insulting everyone he can think of but focusing on Dustin Rhodes, who was stupid for not taking the sure thing on Monday. Steiner even rips up Dustin's contract, which is at least better than eating it. Cue Kronik to ask about a fight but Totally Buff jump them from behind. Rick Steiner tries to make the save but gets guitared by Jeff Jarrett. Kronik takes the real beating and I'm sure this means Luger/Bagwell vs. Kronik for the third time this month on Thunder.

Post break, Flair makes Jarrett vs. Rick Steiner and Totally Buff vs. Kronik.

Ron Harris vs. Lash Leroux

Don has a doctor's note but the referee has a solution to prevent more twin magic (which implies that someone actually watches these matches, which makes me skeptical): drawing an X on Ron's hand with a marker....which the Harrises take away before the bell rings. Ron pounds Lash with the intensity you've come to expect from a Harris Brother match.

Lash quickly dropkicks him to the floor and it's already time for the switch as Don throws the marker back in with the referee thinking it fell out of his pocket. Well to be fair the referees are often rather stupid so play it up a bit. Don gives him the H Bomb for the pin. Now why do I have a feeling no one is going to watch this and say, suspend Don from ringside?

Some guy laughs at Kwee Wee and tells him to crawl back into the closet he crawled out of.

Chavo Guerrero says he needs a better challenger than Rey Mysterio. As he's talking, Hugh Morrus sneaks in and jumps Wall.

Norman Smiley wants to make sure Glacier will have his back and is given an affirmative.

Chuck Palumbo and Sean O'Haire think Mark Jindrak and Shawn Stasiak are just jealous of the Tag Team Titles.

Ric Flair gives Mike Sanders a match with Konnan and tells him to come up with something dirty.

#### Norman Smiley vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

There's no Glacier to start so Norman is even more freaked out than usual. Norman makes the mistake of trying to work on Bigelow's arm but actually takes him down. Unfortunately there's not much of a way around Bigelow's power as he shoves Norman to the floor, allowing him to look around for Glacier. Back in and the beating continues as Glacier comes out, just in time to see Norman take Greetings From Asbury Park for the pin.

Post match and post Bigelow leaving, Glacier says he'll always have

Norman's back.

### Jeff Jarrett vs. Rick Steiner

Jeff wants the countout like he got over Page on Monday but Steiner is, you know, here. Steiner takes it to the floor to avoid having to wrestle, only to have Shane Douglas come out in a hurry. The chain shot hits Jeff by mistake and Steiner gets in a bad looking Death Valley Driver for the fast pin.

### Kwee Wee vs. Scotty O

Scotty is a Power Plant guy who would wind up in OVW for a long time and the person who laughed at Kwee Wee earlier. Kwee Wee slaps him in the face and it's Angry Alan time with something like Dalton Castle's Bang-A-Rang planting Scotty. A jawbreaker doesn't get Scotty out of trouble as Kwee Wee folds him in half with a belly to back. Some hard shots to the head and a face plant set up a German suplex as this is a total squash. A piledriver puts Scotty away.

**Rating:** D. Kwee Wee continues to be an interesting "what if" case as he certainly had some in ring abilities and good charisma but he's stuck with one of the gimmicks that are just going to cripple your career. Even a regular haircut and dark tights would have done him a world of good but there was no way this was ever going to be taken seriously.

### Sean O'Haire/Chuck Palumbo vs. Mamalukes

Non-title. Palumbo and Vito, in street clothes instead of his gear, get things going before Johnny comes in for a quick double team to take over. A double spinebuster plants Sean for two with Palumbo making the save. Vito grabs a swinging neckbreaker followed by a gorilla press from Johnny to send O'Haire flying but he hot shots the Bull to take over for the first time. It really is amazing what happens when you get rid of Jindrak and Stasiak and let the two more talented wrestlers represent the team.

O'Haire doesn't quite jump all the way over Palumbo as he tries to land on Johnny's back (more on Palumbo's head) but it looked good in theory. Everything breaks down and it's O'Haire elbowing Johnny in the face on



the floor. The Jungle Kick to Vito sets up the Seanton Bomb for the pin.

**Rating:** C. Not bad here as the Mamalukes are really gelling as the jobbers to the stars tag team. There's just enough there that you could buy them pulling off an upset and making this non-title made it even more possible. O'Haire and Palumbo need more seasoning as a team but you can see the chemistry there.

Post match Jindrak and Stasiak run in and want a title shot. The champs agree and get beaten down.

Scott Steiner, Jarrett and Flair are off to jail, presumably to annoy Page.

Sanders gives Reno his match against Konnan and tells him to tap out in a hurry. I think I feel a stupid plan coming on.

Totally Buff say they beat Goldberg and he beat Kronik so they can beat Kronik. You know who else beat Kronik? YOU TWO, YOU PISTACHIO HEADS!

#### Konnan vs. Reno

Konnan calls him Reno Riggins in a joke that probably goes over 99% of the fans' heads. They trade arm holds to start but Konnan does a nice roll over into a quickly broken ankle lock. The rolling lariat drops Reno and something like Kofi Kingston's SOS gets two. Konnan grabs the Tequila Sunrise and Reno taps before the hold is on.

Sanders comes out to say things aren't always what they seem. Reno hits a quick Roll of the Dice. Wait so they just gave up a clean submission for the sake of hitting a move after the match? Indeed, that was a stupid plan.

#### Totally Buff vs. Kronik

For the third time this month. Bagwell takes the heel beating you would expect him to take to start off with Kronik hitting all of their standard power moves, including a big gorilla press from Adams. He always was good at that. Luger comes in for an elbow to Clark's jaw but a tag back to Adams breaks everything down. Buff saves Lex from High Times, only to

have Animal blast Clark with a chair so Adams can take the Blockbuster for the fast pin.

**Rating:** D. And you thought the Usos vs. the Club was overdone. This is another match that I never see again but in this case I never wanted to see it in the first place. Animal interfering wasn't shocking and it keeps him from falling asleep in his soup for another week. Bad match of course, but I do like Adams' press slams.

Flair and company arrive at the jail but Page made bail an hour ago. Ok pause for a second. WCW acknowledges that Nitro and Thunder are taped on the same nights. Now did Page get arrested on Monday and make bail Wednesday or did he get arrested and make bail less than three hours later? Anyway they go into Page's cell for no apparent reason and find a letter he's left them to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C-. There's some good stuff here and the wrestling is enough to carry it over a lot of the really uninteresting storyline stuff but the show still doesn't work that well. There's only so much you can do when your main story is so all over the place and Page is leaving letters in prison while Nash is just not here. If they threw someone younger into the main event scene it might be ok but as it stands they're destroying the other good stuff they having going on.

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# Smackdown – June 23, 2016: The Smackdown Gravestone

## Smackdown

Date: June 23, 2016

Location: Tucson Arena, Tucson, Arizona

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Mauro Ranallo, David Otunga

It's an interesting time in WWE as we're less than a month away from the new era really taking hold as the Draft takes place and separates the two shows into different entities. On top of that though, Roman Reigns has been suspended for thirty days, meaning the build towards the triple threat match at Battleground could be interesting. Let's get to it.

The opening video focuses on the recent issues with the World Title.

Opening sequence.

Here's Seth Rollins to get things going. He talks about how when he was a kid, his parents would tell him that he could do anything if he worked hard enough. Well obviously that was a lie because no one works harder than he does but Dean Ambrose is the WWE World Champion. Ambrose should have given him his rematch one on one but instead we're coming up on this triple threat at Battleground to make it as hard on him as possible. As for tonight though, Seth is going to prove that he's more man than Ambrose ever could be by issuing an opening challenge.

This brings out Sami Zayn and the fans seem interested. Rollins: "Did your master Kevin Owens let you off your leash for a couple of hours?" Cue Dean Ambrose, who has his guys turn this into an impromptu Ambrose Asylum. Actually wait because Dean needs to draw a title on the sign because this is now the championship edition. Sami is thrilled to be on the show but Rollins freaks out because he hates this show. Dean says Rollins has always has a poor attitude as Seth storms out to get ready.

This was a pretty long way around to set up Sami vs. Rollins.

### Cesaro vs. Alberto Del Rio

OH COME ON. Money in the Bank is over! I shouldn't have to deal with these pairings anymore. They get some inset promos with Del Rio claiming Cesaro cost him the briefcase and Cesaro telling him to do something about it. Del Rio grabs a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker to start so Cesaro hits one of his own.

The uppercut train sends Del Rio outside for the flip dive off the apron, only to have Alberto go after the apron as we take a break. Back with Del Rio slapping on an armbar and taking the arm out to block another uppercut. Alberto goes up but dives into an uppercut from the good arm. The corkscrew uppercut gets two (ok do something else) followed by a double stomp for the same on Alberto.

Del Rio comes back with a Backstabber for two of his own but Cesaro comes back with yet another uppercut. Cesaro gets crotched while trying a superplex but is still able to lift himself up and armdrag Del Rio down. A quick cross armbreaker attempt is countered into the Neutralizer for the pin on Alberto at 10:26.

**Rating:** B-. This was better than most of the Money in the Bank pairings but there's almost no reason to care about any of them anymore. We've seen this so many times now and without a reason to fight, these matches are even less interesting than they were in the first place. At least the match was better this time around.

### Apollo Crews vs. Sheamus

Sheamus hammers away and tells Apollo to smile now, only to have Crews cross body both of them over the top to the floor. Crews sends him into the steps before having to fight out of the Irish Curse back inside. An enziguri sets up the standing moonsault for two on Sheamus but he comes back with the ten forearms to the chest. The Regal Roll on the floor has Crews in trouble and Sheamus makes it worse by loading up the steps. Crews dropkicks him into the barricade, only to have Sheamus kick him off the apron. A whip into the steps is enough to get Crews counted out at

3:55.

**Rating:** D+. Well that means it's time for a rubber match because the fans are dying to see a rematch from a sub-four minute TV match on a show not many people watch that ends in a countout. The idea of Crews beating Sheamus is fine but there really wasn't much of a reason for a rematch, save for maybe Sheamus getting pinned again. I really hope we get somewhere new with the Brand Split because this stuff is getting old.

Recap of AJ Styles vs. John Cena on Sunday as well as Monday's fallout.

The Club is happy with what happened on Monday but the Usos return. PLEASE not this match again. Jey calls the bald guys head and shoulders in an unfunny line and we're getting Jimmy vs. AJ for later.

### Jimmy Uso vs. AJ Styles

Mauro bills this as a Smackdown first. This is joined in progress after a break with Jimmy running Styles over and dancing a bit. That's fine with AJ who takes him down into a headlock but Jimmy reverses into one of his own. Jimmy sends him outside but the baseball slide is countered as AJ grabs the feet and sends him head first into the steps.

Back in and AJ catapults him throat first into the bottom rope. Jimmy comes back with an enziguri so Styles Peles him right back. The Phenomenal Forearm is broken up with a superkick but the running Umaga attack hits buckles. Cue the Club to go after Jey, causing Jimmy to dive over the top and take them out. AJ hits a slingshot forearm to the back of Jimmy's head and the Phenomenal Forearm puts Jimmy away at 6:02 shown.

**Rating:** C. For reasons that I'll never understand, this means more Usos vs. the Club. I'm a big Usos fan but there's little interest for them as singles wrestlers and they've done everything there is for them as a tag team, especially fighting the Club for probably the tenth time in a few months. AJ looked good but this was just a step above a squash for him.

### New Day vs. Vaudevillains

Non-title. Kofi and Gotch start things off but it's off to English inside of twenty seconds to start in on Kofi's arm. Aiden's running spin kick in

the corner staggers Kofi but he runs English over with a clothesline. The hot tag brings in Big E. to clean house with a string of suplexes. Kofi takes out English and a quick tag sets up the Midnight Hour to pin Gotch at 2:28.

Post match the Wyatts pop up on screen to say everyone fears them and that New Day will fall.

Bob Backlund wants to review Darren Young's goals. Darren wants to be a singles champion and then main event Wrestlemania. Backlund has wrestled at Wrestlemania and won singles titles but he's already had his era. Now it's time to start the Darren Young Era.

Sami wants to win so he can make a statement. He isn't worried about Kevin Owens.

Charlotte and Dana Brooke are ready to take out Becky Lynch before showing Sasha that Charlotte is the queen because playtime is over.

#### Dana Brooke vs. Becky Lynch

Dana starts fast with some knees and shoulders to the ribs before avoiding Becky's charge. Charlotte eats a forearm though, allowing Brooke to roll Becky up for the pin at 1:21.

Post match Becky gets beaten down until Sasha Banks makes the save.

Dean follows Seth to the ring to get on his nerves.

#### Seth Rollins vs. Sami Zayn

Dean is on commentary. Rollins scores with a shoulder to start and they pause early on. Some armdrags put Seth down and Sami gets in a nice headscissors. A good right hand puts Sami outside before a clothesline takes us to a break. Back with a fight over a suplex until Rollins gets two off a Falcon's Arrow. Seth slowly stomps away as Dean talks about not sleeping for six or seven days.

A big clothesline drops Rollins and it's time to pound some right hands in the corner. Sami gets two off a high cross body and Seth loses an

elbow pad. That's not exactly interesting stuff so Sami gets in the Blue Thunder Bomb for two. The Helluva Kick is blocked so Seth scores with the buckle bomb. Sami counters the Pedigree and scores with the tornado DDT. Rollins bails so Sami hits the big flip dive. Not that it matters as Seth grabs the Pedigree as soon as they get back in for the pin at 8:42.

**Rating:** B-. The ending was really odd as Sami hit two big moves in a row before Seth just hit the Pedigree with nothing in between. It was like they had to go home really fast and had to cut out a few minutes in the middle. The match was what you would expect from these two, albeit a few steps slower than I thought it would have been.

Seth and Dean brawl post match with Rollins running from the threat of Dirty Deeds.

**Overall Rating:** C+. Another acceptable but totally forgettable show. When they're boasting an AJ Styles vs. Jimmy Uso match, you know your show is in trouble. Again though it's not like any of this matters when you consider everything resets three more shows. At least it's not bad and we got some decent wrestling here though. That's about all there is to say, which is going to be the legacy of this era of Smackdown: it wasn't bad, but I can't remember much about it.

### Results

Cesaro b. Alberto Del Rio – Neutralizer

Sheamus b. Apollo Crews via countout

AJ Styles b. Jimmy Uso – Phenomenal Forearm

New Day b. Vaudevillains – Midnight Hour to Gotch

Dana Brooke b. Becky Lynch – Rollup

Seth Rollins b. Sami Zayn – Pedigree

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# Possible New WWE Pay Per View Schedule Leaks

Of course take this with a big bag of salt but there's a chance that this is legit. Click on the picture for a better image.



## 2016 PAY-PER-VIEW SCHEDULE\*

PPV EVENTS	DATE	VENUE	CITY/STATE	EVENT TIME	BRAND
Royal Rumble®	1/24/2016	Amway Center	Orlando, FL	8p/7p	RAW/SD
WWE Fast Lane	2/22/2016	Quicken Loans Arena	Cleveland, OH	8p/7p	
WrestleMania® 32	4/4/2016	AT&T Stadium	Dallas, TX	7p/6p	RAW/SD
Payback™	5/3/2016	Allstate Arena	Chicago, IL	8p/7p	
Extreme Rules™	5/23/2016	Prudential Center	Newark, NJ	8p/7p	
Money in the Bank™	6/13/2016	Las Vegas Arena	Las Vegas, NV	8p/7p	
Backlash™	7/18/2016	Verizon Center	Washington, DC	8p/7p	
SummerSlam®	8/21/2016	Barclays Center	Brooklyn, NY	7p/6p	RAW/SD
Raw!™ (Network Exclusive)	9/11/2016	TBD	Richmond, VA	8p/7p	SmackDown
Cash in (Unscripted)™	9/28/2016	Bankers Life Fieldhouse	Indianapolis, IN	8p/7p	RAW
No Mercy™	10/9/2016	Golden 1 Center	Sacramento, CA	8p/7p	SmackDown
Hell in a Cell™	10/25/2016	TD Garden	Boston, MA	8p/7p	RAW
Survivor Series®	11/28/2016	TBD	Texas, TX	7p/6p	RAW/SD
WWE TLC™	12/15/2015	TBD	Dallas, TX	8p/7p	SmackDown
WWE Roadblock™	11/28/2016	Comcast Energy Center	Pittsburgh, PA	8p/7p	RAW

The first thing I think is SWEET GOODNESS THAT'S A LOT OF SHOWS and that's going to be the take away from this



schedule. You're looking at basically two shows a month with two or three weeks between them. I can go with that if they cut some of the times down but a lot of people are going to get burned out in a hurry if they're running a three hour (potentially plus if Money in the Bank is the first of its kind) show with an hour pre-show. I can watch wrestling all day every day but even I think that's a lot.

Now for the good: WAY better names. Stuff like Backlash, No Mercy and Clash of the Champions are improvements over a lot of the goofy names we have to put up with so often. It's also going to be nice if the wrestlers are allowed to have some more time but the worst thing they could do is the old formula of making so many matches filler. I'm talking about airing stuff like Mordecai vs. Hardcore Holly on pay per view. Fans aren't going to put up with that and it could get old in a hurry.

It might help a lot if some of these shows are two hours instead of three. Look at Money in the Bank. You could have cut off at least two matches (meaning keep them on the pre-show where they were scheduled in the first place) and trimmed the thing down a bit. If you're paying the same price for it on the Network (I'm aware some people are going to get it on regular pay per view still), it's ok to trim off some of the fat and let the shows actually work for a change.

It's too early to tell but I'm skeptical about this. Knowing WWE, whose new philosophy seems to be CRAM AS MUCH AS YOU CAN IN, I'm worried about what we might be going through with them burning through everything they can as fast as they can.

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# NXT – June 22, 2016: The Greatest Dancing That Ever Lived

## NXT

Date: June 22, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Tom Phillips

It's a rare situation where we're coming off a Takeover and already have another announced. In theory we have our first match set as Shinsuke Nakamura challenged Finn Balor to a match though a promo on Raw suggested that the match would be taking place tonight. For the life of me I can't imagine NXT hot shotted a match like that so maybe it was just badly worded. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Nakamura challenging Balor last week.

Opening sequence.

### Tye Dillinger vs. Oney Lorcan

And I thought Andrade Cien Almas was a bad name. Lorcan is the latest name for Biff Bushick, who takes Tye down to the mat by the leg. We hit a headlock takeover which earns Lorcan a ten. I mean it was from himself but at least he was trying. Back up and Lorcan flips over Tye and blasts him with a running uppercut for no count as Tye was under the ropes.

It seems to fire Dillinger up though as he fires Oney into the corner and starts in on some clotheslines. Oney nails a huge clothesline and another uppercut but runs into a superkick for two. That's good for a perfect ten but Lorcan shoves him out of the corner and hits a running Blockbuster for the pin at 5:55.

**Rating:** C+. They were beating the heck out of each other here but what are they doing with Dillinger? There's a strong chance that they're tearing him down to build him back up again though wins and losses mean

something in NXT and you can only do the Sami/Bayley road to redemption so many times. Oney looked good but that name is just horrible.

Austin Aries is ready to keep going forward when No Way Jose of all people comes up to say you just say NO to adversity. That's quite the fall for Aries or quite the upgrade for Jose. Or maybe either.

We look at Bayley's leg injury.

Bayley is back tonight.

### No Way Jose vs. Josh Woods

Jose dances out of a waistlock to start and hiptosses Woods down for two. Woods takes him down for a chinlock but walks into a double chop, followed by the swinging full nelson slam to keep Jose undefeated at 1:57.

Post match Austin Aries comes out to say Jose isn't defined by wins or losses. Aries was defeated at Takeover but he doesn't blame his bruised ribs. What Aries has learned from Jose is that wrestling is about having fun and he actually dances with Jose as Graves fights the urge to join in. Jose goes over to the announcers' table and the dancing continues until Aries finally lays Jose out with a forearm to the jaw. Aries puts on the Last Chancery on the ramp with Jose slowly blacking out. If nothing else it's nice to have Aries go full on heel.

Earlier today, General Manager William Regal makes Finn Balor vs. Shinsuke Nakamura for three weeks from tonight. Murphy of all people comes in to interrupt and gets Nakamura for later tonight as a punishment.

The announcers talk about Aries attacking Jose.

### Deonna Purrazzo vs. Bayley

You can actually see the fans rise to their feet when Bayley's music comes on. Bayley dances to her the fans singing before suplexing Purrazzo early on. The charge in the corner misses though and Purrazzo hits a running knee lift. Bayley shrugs off some rams into the buckle and hits a

back elbow to the jaw. Bayley to Belly ends Purrazzo at 2:46.

Carmella says she wants to be Women's Champion when Alexa Bliss comes in to say Carmella is nothing without Enzo and Cass. She left Blake and Murphy because she was the star of the team. Carmella gets in her face and dares Alexa to get in her way of the title. I can't believe it but I'm getting into Carmella as a scrappy heroine.

Video on Samoa Joe.

Long video (as in the better part of four minutes) on Nia Jax vs. Asuka.

### Nia Jax vs. Liv Morgan

Morgan grabs a headlock to start but is easily shoved away and pounded about the head and shoulders. Liv's forearms to the head have no effect and it's off to a very loose cobra clutch. An ankle scissors sends Nia into the buckle and a dropkick staggers her a bit. Not that it matters as Nia hits a great looking powerbomb for the pin at 2:11. That's a WAY better finisher for her than the legdrop. Morgan was squashed here but she showed some really good fire which could get her somewhere.

Carmella vs. Alexa Bliss next week.

### Buddy Murphy vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

It's kind of interesting that they put Nakamura out there almost every week. No one else gets this much exposure around here but they've done a great job of having him save the King of Strong Style stuff for the big matches and just let him have fun in matches like this one. Nakamura kicks him away to start and grabs a headlock before doing that head against Murphy's chest.

Murphy misses a clothesline and Shinsuke tells him to bring it, setting up Good Vibrations. A counter sends Nakamura into the buckles and he just smiles at Buddy. It's time for the hard kicks ("KING OF STRONG STYLE!") and the running knee to the ribs makes it even worse. The reverse exploder sets up Kinshasa for the pin on Murphy at 4:35.

**Rating:** C-. Just a squash here to close things out but it's always cool

to see Nakamura flip that switch that makes you realize pain is imminent. Murphy is a good choice for a jobber to the stars as he's a former champion, which actually means something around here. I'm not sure what Blake is going to do because having them in the same vein would be a waste of time. Balor vs. Nakamura should be awesome, albeit a bit predictable.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This was back to the NXT formula as they used some simple matches to set up the bigger stuff for the upcoming weeks. We have a firm date for Balor vs. Nakamura and a few other feuds set up down the line. It's not a great show but that's not what these things are supposed to be. Sometimes you just need an hour of TV that builds towards the big shows and that's where NXT excels.

### Results

Oney Lorcan b. Tye Dillinger – Running Blockbuster

No Way Jose b. Josh Woods – Swinging full nelson slam

Bayley b. Deonna Purrazzo – Bayley to Belly

Nia Jax b. Liv Morgan – Powerbomb

Shinsuke Nakamura b. Buddy Murphy – Kinshasa

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# Monday Nitro – January 29, 2001: The Moral Of The Story

## Monday Nitro #275

Date: January 29, 2001

Location: Baltimore Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Scott Hudson, Tony Schiavone

It's always weird to me when we reach the last every episode in a given month but this is the final ever episode of Monday Nitro in January. Ok so maybe this is just a way to fill in an opening because there isn't much to talk about at the moment other than Nash vs. Steiner coming up in a few weeks. Let's get to it.

### Elix Skipper vs. Yang vs. Shannon Moore vs. Jamie Noble

One fall to a finish. The big story for this match: WCW is bringing back TIME LIMITS. Noble and Yang do a wrestling sequence to start until Yang grabs a neckbreaker to send Noble outside. Skipper dives out onto him and it's Shannon vs. Yang inside. Bottoms Up (Fameasser) drops Yang but Skipper has to break up Noble's German suplex attempt on Shannon. Yang gets crotched on top, followed by Noble front suplexing Skipper for no cover.

Moore is sent outside and all three hit dives in a nice sequence that you only get in cruiserweight melees. Yang drops all of them with an Asai Moonsault and it's time for a breather. Back in and Shannon slams Skipper off the top for two as Yang makes the save. Noble amps things up by tombstoning Yang on the floor before shoving Skipper off the ropes. Jamie tries a superplex on Shannon but gets reversed into a super Bottoms Up to give Moore the pin.

**Rating:** C+. What else were you expecting here as you have four talented guys getting to fly around the ring for a bit. Unfortunately they only

had a few minutes, which is an annoying reality of this new era. These guys are on more shows but their time has dropped significantly. You can only get so far with four people involved in a five minute match but at least it's fun while it lasts.

Here are Ric Flair and Animal for a chat. First of all we get the required Baltimore Ravens insults despite them winning the Super Bowl the day before. Anyway, Flair thinks the Cat might be out of office soon and accuses Page and Nash of showing up drunk on Thunder. We see a shot of them knocked out in the locker room, presumably due to an attack by Ric Flair and/or various other villains.

Therefore, Nash has to qualify for the World Title match at SuperBrawl again tonight by beating Totally Buff in a handicap match. Nash is annoyed in the back and it gets worse as Flair says he has a new contract for another incoming star. I could go for a Tommy Rogers cameo but I was always a Fantastics fan.

We see a bit more complete clip from Thunder with the heels leaving Nash's locker room.

Jeff Jarrett doesn't want to wait until SuperBrawl to face Page.

A guy bumps into Midajah so Scott Steiner breaks his leg. Does no one understand the concept of a lawsuit around here?

Here are the Cat and Miss Jones for some dancing before Cat says he wants to fight someone. Cue Shawn Stasiak and Mark Jindrak with the latter of them being sent to the back (And called Beetlejuice for some reason. I don't see the Art Barr resemblance but I don't have my glasses on.).

Stasiak implies that he'll be Commissioner if he wins and says first up is going to be a Tag Team Title shot against Palumbo and O'Haire.

#### The Cat vs. Shawn Stasiak

Jones kicks him in the chest and it's time for Cat to choke a lot. Cat goes up but dives into an elbow to the jaw, allowing Stasiak to send him outside. A few whips send Cat into the announcers' table and the post before he clotheslines Cat back inside. Cat actually uses a headscissors

before crotch chopping his way out of a sunset flip. The Feliner puts Stasiak away.

**Rating:** D-. This is a good example of two guys who need backup help to put in a good match and it's really sad to see them get stuck out there with such a horrible match. Cat defending the Commissionership isn't an interesting idea, especially when there's no way someone as worthless as Stasiak is going to take it away from him.

The Wall is outside of Chavo's locker room when Hugh Morrus comes in and beats the tar out of him.

Mike Sanders tells Crowbar that he has Lance Storm tonight.

Diamond Dallas Page was at a book signing earlier today when a fan started running his mouth and got in a fight. Page broke it up and that's about it.

A black Humvee arrives.

Luger and Bagwell have a partner for Chavo tonight.

Jeff Jarrett is ready for DDP at SuperBrawl.

Chavo Guerrero Jr./Road Warrior Animal vs. Rey Mysterio/Billy Kidman

...they're going to squash Mysterio and Kidman aren't they? Kidman and Guerrero start things off but Chavo wants Mysterio. It's just a ruse though, allowing Guerrero to get in a few kicks to the ribs to start off. That's fine with Kidman who takes over and brings in Rey for something like a double sitout chokeslam. Kidman comes back in and it's time for a baseball slide between the legs, followed by the Bronco Buster.

Rey's middle rope moonsault connects but he lets Chavo makes the tag. The destruction is immediate as Rey and Kidman literally bounce off of Animal, who throws them both around like nothing. Some double dropkicks have Animal down though but a powerslam to Kidman and a powerbomb to Rey allow Chavo to pin Mysterio with ease.

**Rating:** D. So to recap, Mysterio and Kidman beat up the Cruiserweight



Champion for about two and a half minutes before Animal, a grizzled veteran who had barely wrestled in years, destroyed them both at once with ease. That's life in WCW people and it's a big reason why you don't see them around anymore.

The Humvee doors open.

We see part of Flair's speech earlier.

Here's Ric Flair to reveal the big new talent which is.....Dustin Rhodes. Raise your hand if this actually surprises you. The announcers treat this like a huge deal as Ric thinks Dustin should be in a suit instead of cowboy boots. Dustin wants to know what's wrong with being a cowboy. Well nothing until you're about eight and then you kind of look dumb. They yell at each other a bit and Dustin turns down the offer to be on the team and the contract as well.

Cue Animal to help beat Dustin down until Dusty Rhodes makes his return (after turning his back on WCW last time) to clear the ring. So to clarify: Animal can destroy Rey Mysterio and Kidman but Dusty Rhodes can clear him out in a few seconds. To make it even better, Dusty talks about how Flair has been holding back talented people to push his friends. The Rhodes Family is here to clean up WCW and the fans seem very pleased with the idea.

### Lance Storm vs. Crowbar

Before the match, Storm says Team Canada supports Flair and company. Ever the troublemaker, Crowbar jumps Storm during the national anthem. The other Canadians help Storm with a superkick and it's an early beatdown for Crowbar in the corner. A comeback via clotheslines is cut off with a knee lift and we're already in the chinlock. Crowbar fights up and tries a Tombstone (becoming too common of a move) but has to settle for a reverse DDT for two instead.

A belly to back suplex sets up a slingshot splash for two on Lance, followed by a moonsault out to the floor. Is there a reason Crowbar never got a run near the Cruiserweight Title? It's not like he can't fly around and he has more charisma than half of the division. Storm comes back with

some German suplexes but gets caught in a northern lights suplex. They head up top with Crowbar trying a hurricanrana, only to get countered into the Maple Leaf for the quick submission.

**Rating:** C+. Not bad here and I'm sure the fact that it's the longest match of the night so far has nothing to do with that. I'd love to see Crowbar actually go somewhere beyond just jobbing like this but I really can't imagine that happening. I mean, the guy used to work in a gas station and it's not like can just give him a new character and backstory or something like that.

Flair gives Storm the Cat at SuperBrawl for the Commissionership. Now that's better as you could imagine Storm actually pulling that off.

#### Jeff Jarrett vs. Diamond Dallas Page

Actually not so fast as Page is arrested for assault due to breaking up that fight at his book signing. Apparently Page accidentally bumped into a kid during the incident and the kid is the one pressing charges.

Flair thinks this is awesome.

#### Rick Steiner vs. Shane Douglas

Non-title. Steiner is here to do Cat's dirty work so Shane made sure the title wasn't on the line here, which translates to Steiner is going over. Schiavone thinks Steiner is one of the best WCW performers in the last ten years. Douglas gets in a few shots to the back to start before Rick just beats him down like he was Dean Douglas all over again.

Douglas begs off before throwing the referee at Steiner for a breather. The distraction lets Shane grab an Indian Deathlock though he'll be lucky if Steiner even bothers to limp. I would appear to be right as Steiner pops up and grabs a suplex before....I think a headlock takeover is botched as Shane tries to do something like a rollup.

Shane grabs a rollup with his feet on the ropes for two before the Pittsburgh Plunge gets the same. Hudson: "Rick's brother Scott would be proud." Of what? That the brother he doesn't like at the moment kicked out of the US Champion's finisher? The chain is easily broken up as the

Steiner Line sets up the bulldog, followed by a Death Valley Driver to make the champ job.

**Rating:** D. Rick Steiner is not very good and there isn't much of another way to put it. The booking here continues to baffle me as Rick gets pushed like this every single time he comes back. I'd be stunned if he doesn't wind up with the US Title out of this because he just needs it so badly and is clearly a draw because he's reached the age where you become one without having to actually, you know, wrestle well in the slightest.

### Kevin Nash vs. Totally Buffed

Before the match, Luger and Bagwell rip on the Raven. Apparently winning the Super Bowl doesn't count because the real Baltimore team moved to Indianapolis so this is a sham. I'm not sure what they were going for there but it really didn't work as the fans almost cheered. Nash comes out and pulls Buff to the floor in an attempt to make it 2-1, only to have Buff come back in.

It's Kevin Nash though so he clotheslines them both down and chokeslams Buff, only to have Luger hit him low. A lot of choking ensues until Nash sends Buff outside and hits Snake Eyes into the Jackknife on Luger. So to recap: Goldberg spends three months fighting Luger and Nash can hit his finisher on him in three minutes with Buff Bagwell in the same match.

Bagwell pulls the ref so here's Alex Wright of all people in a referee shirt. Wright stops to dance though, earning himself a beating. Another Jackknife to Bagwell allows Cat to come in for two with Wright pulling him out. Guys it's a short Nitro main event and we're at two run-ins and three referees. Not that it matters anyway as Cat ducks Wright's punch and slides back in to count the pin on Bagwell.

**Rating:** D. As mentioned, this was more about all the shenanigans than anything going on during the match because Bischoff and company think that's how you build someone up. This was much more about Nash than anyone else as you want him to look strong but you shouldn't have two of your top heels losing this badly. In other words, just let Nash beat Luger, assuming Nash is old enough to do that yet.

Post match Nash wants Steiner but we're out of time.

**Overall Rating:** D+. You really can see the line between the generations here as the old guys suck while the young guys are working as hard as they can with the limitations they're put under. They don't get time and they're often there as cannon fodder for the old guys (Kidman and Mysterio getting treated that way by ANIMAL was disgusting) but they're putting in as much effort as they can.

That's probably a big reason why Mysterio is a multiple time WWE World Champion and Kidman had a very nice WWE run before getting a job as a producer. In other words: no matter how little time you're given out there, someone is going to see it at some point and if you're good enough and work hard enough, you'll get a break somewhere down the line.

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## **New Column: The Worst Thing WWE Could Do – Roman Reigns**

# Edition

Looking at what WWE should but likely will do coming off the Reigns suspension.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-the-worst-thing-wwe-can-do-roman-reigns-edition/>

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## Impact Wrestling – June 21, 2016: What's Next?

### Impact Wrestling

Date: June 21, 2016

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, D'Angelo Dinero

We're coming off one of the most entertaining nights Impact has put on in a long time but there was a small bump in the road just afterwards as they aired their regular show. The big news coming off that: we get ANOTHER Matt Hardy vs. Jeff Hardy match this week as they fight inside a cage. I doubt they can top the commercial marathon from last week but let's get to it.

We open with dueling promos from Matt Hardy and Jeff Hardy as they both talk about how this is the final battle. I'm so sure.

Here's Drew Galloway for an opening chat. Galloway isn't going to whine and complain but he wants Ethan Carter III out here right now. Carter apologizes for what happened last week but Drew wants a fight. He thinks Carter was on commentary because Carter thought he deserved the title shot instead.

Ethan says he shouldn't have been in the title match because he was

burned out. They yell about how hard both of them worked as champion but Ethan rescinds his apology and says he should be champ. Drew thinks Ethan got where he was by talking instead of fighting so it's about to be on.

Cue Lashley to laugh about them arguing before both guys think they should have a #1 contenders match. Instead Lashley has set up a tag match where Drew and Ethan will team together. If they win they get a title shot (not clear if it's one at a time or a triple threat) but if they lose they go to the back of the line. If Lashley's team wins, his partner gets a title shot so here's Eli Drake to offer to be the partner. Lashley agrees and it's on right now.

### Lashley/Eli Drake vs. Ethan Carter III/Drew Galloway

Lashley goes after Ethan to start but a standoff means a double tag. Drake gets taken into the corner as the good guys keep tagging themselves in, much to each others' annoyances. Ethan backdrops Drake but Eli grabs a quick neckbreaker. It's off to Lashley for a quick choke before Eli punches Ethan in the face a few times.

The bad guys keep taking turns stomping away before Eli slaps on a chinlock. A double clothesline drops Ethan and Lashley but Drake knocks Drew off the apron to break up the tag attempt. The TK3 allows the hot tag to Drew as everything breaks down. Blunt Force Trauma is broken up and the 1%er plants Eli, only to have Lashley spear Ethan down. That's fine with Drew as he pins Drake at 8:17.

**Rating:** C. Well I'm glad they solved that issue in the span of twenty minutes. As usual, TNA has no idea how to let something build up because it can't be the main event since that's Matt and Jeff's designated territory and the idea of waiting a week just isn't in TNA's lexicon. I like the story and I love the fact that these guys are being built up but let the stories progress over time, not all at once.

Decay wants to know who Rosemary has been talking to but she says to trust her. They'll get an answer tonight.

Lashley comes up to Drew in the back and says he holds all the cards. He might give Ethan the first shot but Drew wants to step outside right now.

Here's Decay to reveal who Rosemary has been talking to. They're the death dealers but tonight they want to offer life to...Bram. She asks everyone to trust each other and thinks Bram is fed up with everyone trying to fix him. Bram lost the King of the Mountain Title because he was alone and they don't want him to be like that anymore. The answer is decay. Bram: "I guess you're kind of hot, I don't know." Bram declines the offer though and the beatdown is on.

Lashley congratulates Ethan on getting his title shot but it's still on his terms. Ethan will know who gets the shot by the end of the night. As I said earlier: SLOW DOWN WITH THESE THINGS.

### Marti Bell vs. Jade

Jade goes right after her to start as a fan tries to start dueling chants. Marti takes over and sends it to the floor while yelling a lot. That's fine with Jade who picks up Marti's baton, only to be told to put it down. You don't argue with Earl Hebner so they head inside, sans baton. A German suplex looks to set up Jade's package piledriver but Marti escapes and slaps her in the face. Jade faceplants her hard and Marti bails to the floor to grab that baton for a knockout shot for the pin at 5:49.

**Rating:** D-. The wrestling was nothing, the story was nothing, and the ending was predictable. I really don't think anyone was looking forward to this match and I have no idea why it's going to continue other than they have a lot of time to fill and think these two are interesting because they've been on TV before.

Maria Kanellis and Mike Bennett will respond to Dixie slapping Maria in the ring.

Lashley laughs at Dixie about the slap so she says he'll face both Ethan and Drew next week. That's fine with Lashley, who is way too cool with this.

Here are Mike and Maria with something to say. Josh says they've gone radio silent on social media since last week. Just out of curiosity I checked both of their Twitters and couldn't find the end of their tweets

from the last 24 hours. In other words, Josh Matthews continues to have no idea what he's talking about. Anyway, Maria says she hasn't slept in a week and the slap last week was assault. They demand Dixie is out here right now so here she is, along with Billy Corgan.

Maria screeches that Dixie needs to step down but Dixie thinks it's crazy. Mike threatens to sue TNA for so much money that Dixie would lose everything. Eh true but small claims courts are backed up for months. Corgan suggests that Dixie take a leave of absence for about a week. Yes a week. Dixie panics but agrees before leaving. Mike wants an X-Division Title shot because Destination X is coming up soon. He can wrestle any style, no matter what the keyboard warriors think. Billy thinks Mike needs to earn that so he can have a title shot right now.

#### X-Division Title: Eddie Edwards vs. Mike Bennett

Eddie is defending and Josh starts things off by talking about everything Eddie has accomplished as champion. He's held the belt NINE DAYS and has had one successful title defense. As usual, Josh Matthews continues to be stupid. Eddie snaps off a hurricanrana to start and avoids a Bennett knee drop. Maria offers a distraction as the announcers talk about bullfrogs. A quick cutter gives Mike two and we hit the chinlock on the champ. Eddie fights back and sends him outside for a pair of suicide dives.

Back in and a Blue Thunder Bomb gets two on Bennett and Eddie heads up top. Mike tries a superplex but Eddie smacks his ears to break it up. Josh: "How appropriate in an X-Division match." Josh Matthews, stupid, you know the drill. Anyway the Miracle in Progress is broken up and Eddie tries a sunset flip, only to have Mike kneel down and hold the ropes (while Maria holds his hands) for the pin and the title at 8:32.

**Rating:** C-. This was your standard "it's that time of the year so the X-Division Title means something to the main eventers" match but I really can't get over all the stupid things Josh was saying. He got on my nerves last year when he called fans stupid for bringing up Austin Aries losing his career because they were paying too much attention and now he just says stupid stuff. I'm sure I'm just overthinking it though because wrestling fans are stupid people who overthink things.



Robbie E. plugs Big Brother After Dark and sees Jesse and Raquel talking about doing something behind Robbie's back.

### Braxton Sutter vs. Balam

Actually not so fast as Rockstar Spud comes out and says he's taking Balam's place because he's sick of the Braxton Sutter show. Spud runs his mouth and gets punched in the face to start things off.

### Braxton Sutter vs. Rockstar Spud

Sutter sends him into the corner but gets caught in a tornado DDT for two. Spud's chinlock doesn't go anywhere as Sutter kicks him in the face and hits a Downward Spiral for the pin at 2:40. There's no reason for them to do so, but I'm sure these two will fight again.

Post match Spud kicks Sutter low, hits him in the back with a belt and spits on him.

Video on Sienna, talking about how hard she trains and how she wants to destroy Gail Kim. Until she mentioned Kim, this was a face promo.

### Matt Hardy vs. Jeff Hardy

Cage match with pin or submission only to win. Jeff doesn't even waste time by throwing in tables, a ladder and a chair before Matt can even come out. Reby Hardy introduces Matt and insists that no one call him crazy. Matt brings in his own chair and somehow doesn't notice Jeff on the top, waiting to dive on him at the bell. Matt comes back by shoving Jeff into the cage for two. Another whip sends Jeff into the cage and us to a break.

Back with Matt still in control as the announcers try to make sense of the story. Matt takes too long setting up a table though and eats a chair to the face. Poetry in Motion only hits the cage though and Matt bites the leg. A Side Effect through a chair only gets two for Matt but Jeff comes back with Whisper in the Wind to put both guys down.

Some Twists of Fate keep Matt down but the Swanton only gets two. The fans aren't reacting to any of this. Another Twist of Fate puts Matt on a

table so Jeff puts a chair on top of him. A second table is stacked on top of that before Jeff puts a ladder on the ropes for a splash through the top table but not through Matt. Not that it matters of course as it's enough to pin Matt at 14:13.

**Rating:** B-. Ok now what's next? I mean, I have no reason to believe this wraps up the feud so what are they doing next? It's clear that these two are going to feud for months on end while the fans get quieter and quieter because they're desensitized to these huge spots after seeing them for years. It's a good cage match and all but the big spot is the only thing that's going to matter.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This was a better show than they've done recently and a lot of that was due to having the Hardys contained to the last twenty or so minutes. They're going to get in their stuff no matter what happens so just let them have their time while the rest of the show is mostly strong. It's not a great show or anything but if they can get this pacing stuff down, everything will get better in a hurry.

Above all else though, the most frustrating thing about TNA continues to be that they clearly know how to create new stars (Sutter, Carter, Galloway etc.) but those people are typically stuck underneath the Hardys' nonsense. It's gotten better in recent weeks but I can't help think that whichever Hardy comes out of this on top is next in line for the title after pushing everyone else out of the way to less of a reaction because we've seen that so many times.

### Results

Drew Galloway/Ethan Carter III b. Lashley/Eli Drake – 1%er to Drake

Marti Bell b. Jade – Baton to the head

Mike Bennett b. Eddie Edwards – Rollup while holding the ropes

Braxton Sutter b. Rockstar Spud – Downward Spiral

Jeff Hardy b. Matt Hardy – Swanton Bomb through a table

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## **Roman Reigns Suspended 30 Days For Wellness Policy Violation**

<http://411mania.com/wrestling/we-suspends-roman-reigns-for-wellness-policy-violation/>

Reigns has also stated that this is legit and isn't denying a thing. This doesn't change anything for Battleground as the suspension will end before then but he won't be around for the Draft.

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## **Monday Night Raw – June 20,**

# 2016: How To Make Battleground Important

## Monday Night Raw

Date: June 20, 2016

Location: Talking Stick Resort Arena, Phoenix, Arizona

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

A lot changed last night at Money in the Bank, not the least of which is all three members of Shield held the WWE World Title at some point. Dean Ambrose walked out with the title after cashing in Money in the Bank briefcase to end the show on new champion Seth Rollins, who had taken the title from Roman Reigns. We're heading towards Battleground now but first up is that whole Brand Split and completely changing the company thing. Let's get to it.

Dean arrived earlier today and threw money at the cab driver, only to have to chase after the cab because he forgot the title.

Opening sequence.

Here's Dean to open things up, walking past a Raw and Smackdown podium on the way to the ring. The fans tell him that he deserves it before Dean talks about barely remembering a lot of last night. Apparently he ran into the Cleveland Cavaliers but he isn't a fan. I'm sure the crowd booing him out of the arena didn't sway that decision in the slightest. Dean gets right to the point: hard work and dedication pay off and when it pays off, it pays off BIG.

If Roman Reigns is the guy, maybe Ambrose can be the Dude. Call him whatever you want but you have to call him champ because it was all worth it to get here. Cue Roman to some LOUD booing. Roman says last night wasn't his night because it was Dean's night. He's here to congratulate the new champ but the fans cut him off with a YOU CAN'T WRESTLE chant. Roman says all the people chanting that need to take a sip of their beer and calm down. The other reason Reigns is out here is to find out if Dean is a fighting champion.

This brings out a furious Seth to say he never properly lost the title and Reigns needs to go to the back of the line. Here's Shane McMahon to calm things down a bit. Shane thinks the best idea is to have Seth vs. Roman with the winner facing Dean. Shane talks to an invisible Stephanie about her idea since the real version isn't here tonight. Stephanie agrees so let's have the match tonight instead of waiting around.

### Sami Zayn vs. Kevin Owens

Owens bails to the floor to start so Sami takes him down with a clothesline. You would think Sami could come up with some different offense somewhere in there. Sami moonsaults off the barricade to drop Owens again so Kevin bails into the crowd. That goes nowhere as Sami throws him back to ringside, only to have Owens drive him into the post as we take a break.

Back from a break with Kevin's backsplash hitting raised knees. Sami low bridges him to the floor for the running flip dive, only to charge into a superkick for two. Sami's half and half suplex looks to set up the Helluva Kick but only earns him another superkick. A victory roll out of nowhere gives Sami the pin at 8:54.

**Rating:** C+. These two always work well together and it's a good idea to have Sami get a clean pin over Owens. You can't have the whole thing be one sided and I kind of like the idea of not waiting for some big moment for the first win for a change. Good enough match here but these two have that natural chemistry that you just can't fake.

Kevin goes after him again post match but Sami escapes a powerbomb on the stage and they trade fists until referees break it up.

After a break, Sami and Kevin are still fighting in the back.

The announcers talk about the Draft, basically making the official announcement.

Here's John Laurinitis to throw his name in the hat as GM but Shane comes out to say no way because that's not how it's going to work.

### Enzo Amore/Big Cass vs. Vaudevillains

Enzo and Shane compare shoes and dance a bit on the way to the ring. After the usual catchphrases, Enzo says he didn't like what Johnny Laryngitis was saying. Any guesses how many dimes he would have if he got one for every time Johnny said something important? English stomps Enzo down to start before it's off to Gotch for a neckbreaker. The slow beating continues until Gotch eats a Downward Spiral into the middle buckle. The hot tag brings in Cass to clean house with the Empire Elbow for two on English. Enzo goes up for the Rocket Launcher, now named the Bada Boom Shaka Lacka, for the pin at 2:53.

Here's AJ Styles to talk about the tainted win last night. The bottom line though is that he beat John Cena, even if it didn't go down like he expected it to go. Either way, the Club is going to continue but he wants Anderson and Gallows to come out and apologize right now. Anderson and Gallows come out and AJ yells at them a bit, saying that was his only first chance to beat Cena and now John has an excuse. AJ wants an apology right now and gets one from both guys, but now he needs Cena out here as well.

Cena comes out and says AJ broke the contract but Gallows says AJ had no idea what they were going to do. That's the apology but Cena thinks it's a coverup to hide the fact that AJ isn't as good as he says he is. Cena can accept the win because that's the most important thing in WWE. What AJ doesn't get is the idea of being a man of his word. Last night Styles proved that he doesn't have a word or balls. That earns him a CENA chant but AJ doesn't think the fans know what they're talking about.

AJ thinks there should be a fight right now and Cena is ready but that's not what Styles meant. Instead AJ meant against either Anderson or Gallows, not Styles himself. Cena says it doesn't matter which one he faces because the other will be at ringside. Therefore, he'll fight all three, which is the contract AJ should have signed in the first place. AJ stops him again and says it's Anderson vs. Cena right now.

### John Cena vs. Karl Anderson

Joined in progress with Cena pounding Anderson down but stopping to look at the entrance for Styles and Gallows. An early ProtoBomb sets up the

Shuffle and the AA, drawing in the rest of the Club for the DQ at 2:24 shown.

Post match Cena takes the Magic Killer and Styles Clash.

Stills of last night's ladder match and World Title situation.

We also look at the opening segment.

Rollins is ready to take the title back from Ambrose and it starts tonight. He wants to prove that he's the best member of the Shield once and for all. Oh yeah that's grounds for a triple threat.

Becky Lynch is sick and tired of everyone turning on her with Natalya being the latest one to do so. Natalya jumps her from behind and says it's time to think about herself.

#### Baron Corbin vs. Zack Ryder

Ryder pokes him in the eye to start but Corbin might have been goldbricking as he blasts Ryder in the face with a right hand. Zack shrugs off some choking and sends him outside for a dropkick from the apron. The Elbro gets two but Corbin slides under the ropes and runs back in for a right hand, followed by End of Days for the pin at 3:03.

**Rating:** D+. This was better than I was expecting with Ryder getting in a lot more offense than I was expecting. Of course the second you heard Ryder's music playing you knew how this was going to go but that's all you can expect from someone like him. At least they kept this short though and there was almost no mention of Dolph Ziggler, a development that is LONG overdue.

We look at WWE announcing a partnership in China and signing a Chinese wrestler to a developmental deal.

The Wyatts are coming back soon.

We look back at Paige beating Charlotte in a non-title match last week.

Paige (who seems to not be under arrest) talks about having a history with Charlotte from Team PCB but Charlotte and Dana are behind her

laughing about getting cell phone service. Charlotte brags about rocketing up the charts after Team PCB broke up while Paige fell down like a tree. Paige says she'll win the title tonight and Charlotte will have no one to blame but herself.

### Women's Title: Paige vs. Charlotte

Charlotte is defending and we get big match intros. A rollup gets an early two for the champ but she nips up off a shoulder. Paige hits a running knee in the corner followed by a series of knees to the face from the bottom rope. Dana offers a distraction though and Charlotte nails Paige to take over as we take a break.

Back with Charlotte doing her figure four headscissors faceplants but Paige grabs a backslide for two. Some superkicks set up a running knee for two on the champ, followed by a fall away slam. Paige's superplex is broken up and the moonsault gives Charlotte two. The Figure Eight is countered into a small package for two and the Rampaige gets the same with Dana putting the foot on the ropes. That earns her an ejection but Charlotte hits Natural Selection for the pin at 8:30.

**Rating:** C+. Good match here as usual and it's nice to see Paige not have to babysit the lower level women for a bit. That being said, we're just waiting on Sasha at this point and it's just a matter of time until Sasha comes back and gives us the big Summerslam feud for the title. Well maybe Battleground but whatever.

Post match Paige gets suplexed but here's Sasha for the big return to clean house. Charlotte gets caught in the Bank Statement to draw Dana back in, only to have Paige help make the save.

Roman says he's going to be the guy to beat Seth Rollins.

The Wyatts are here.

Here are the Wyatts for their big return. We get a big welcome back chant so Bray asks if they missed him. The Wyatts have been locked away and punished but they have never forgotten what they stand for. Bray issues a warning to everyone back there....and here's New Day to cut them off.



Woods says Bray needs to stop talking so much and Kofi goes into the usual spiel, only to have Bray seem to hypnotize Woods. Kofi gets him back but Bray thinks the future is New Day falls. That's uh...quite the odd choice for a pairing but Bray controlling people is interesting. Are the Wyatts still faces though?

Life Lesson With Bob Backlund, focusing on Backlund giving orders, not advice.

### Rusev vs. Titus O'Neil

Titus says this is about respect and revenge instead of the US Title. He charges in and a fight starts before the bell, meaning no match so this MUST CONTINUE! They fight outside with Rusev getting the worse of it and being sent out into the crowd.

Miz and Maryse are on the set of Marine 5 and Miz gets annoyed because he can't get good quail. He freaks out and goes on a rant about how bad the crew is, right in front of the crew.

Chris Jericho is in Shane's office and rants about how he should be #1 contender but Shane doesn't see it that way. Jericho brings up the 69 tacks and calls Shane a stupid idiot, which doesn't sit well with the boss. Chris wants to be on whatever show Shane isn't running but Shane says he'll be on both.

### Seth Rollins vs. Roman Reigns

Winner goes to Battleground for a title shot and Dean is on commentary. Roman shoulders him down to start and they head outside with Rollins getting knocked around even more. Roman loads up the announcers' table but gets caught with a Blockbuster back inside. A dropkick gets two for Seth and we hit the chinlock. Rollins takes it to the floor and sends Roman into the barricade, only to get kicked in the face back inside. They head outside again with Reigns sending him into the barricade as we take a break.

Back with Rollins throwing on a sleeper but Reigns quickly escapes and fires off some forearms until the referee breaks it up. The distraction

lets Seth get in a jumping enziguri and he sends Roman outside for the suicide dive. Back in and Reigns scores with his powerbomb for two. Neither guy can hit a finisher but Seth tries a springboard and dives into the Superman Punch for two. The spear is blocked by a kick to the face so Reigns punches him out to the apron.

Now the springboard knee to the face sets up the slow superkick for two but Reigns avoids a great looking frog splash. There's the apron boot and Roman loads up the announcers' table. Seth escapes to avoid extreme pain and scores with another enziguri. Seth barely breaks the count but Reigns pulls him back outside for a spear over the announcers' table. That spot loses a lot when there's no big crash. Neither guy gets back in and it's a double countout at 17:27.

**Rating:** B-. Obvious ending aside, this was actually a bit more entertaining than last night as the length really pulled the first match down. Of course this sets up the Shield triple threat which should headline Summerslam but why do that when you can do it at a nothing show like Battleground? In theory this leaves Reigns vs. Lesnar II for Summerslam but that's assuming Lesnar is healthy after the UFC fight. But hey, why play it smart when you can play it stupid?

Post match Shane comes out to say we need a #1 contender but Dean says he'll fight both of them in the same night. The triple threat is made and Dean hits Dirty Deeds on both guys to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This show set up some stuff for Battleground as it seems like we're heading towards some Money in the Bank rematches. You have to assume we'll get Sami Zayn vs. Kevin Owens in a big showdown, plus the Cena vs. Styles rematch and of course the big triple threat. Still though, good enough show here with some watchable wrestling but again we're still stuck in a weird bit of limbo with the Draft in a month. I'll take a watchable show that's off the air at two minutes after the hour instead of thirty two minutes after the hour though so this is a bit less annoying than last night's show.

## Results

Sami Zayn b. Kevin Owens – Victory roll

Enzo Amore/Big Cass b. Vaudevillains – Bada Boom Shaka Lacka

John Cena b. Karl Anderson via DQ when AJ Styles and Luke Gallows interfered

Baron Corbin b. Zack Ryder – End of Days

Charlotte b. Paige – Natural Selection

Roman Reigns vs. Seth Rollins went to a double countout

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