

# Tables Ladders and Chairs 2015: Thank You Roman

## Tables Ladders and Chairs 2015

Date: December 13, 2015

Location: TD Garden, Boston, Massachusetts

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

We'll close out the pay per view calendar with some good violence on one of the shows full of the shows full of gimmick matches. The main event in the namesake match is Sheamus defending his World Title against Roman Reigns in what should be a brutal fight between two power guys. Let's get to it.

### Pre-Show: Sasha Banks. vs. Becky Lynch

This would be another unannounced match because the Divas Revolution isn't important enough to mention in advance. Sasha gets the huge hometown pop and we get a little 12 Days of Christmas from Team BAD, which they thankfully cover with the final verse. None of the lines are funny enough to mention but you have to expect that with something WWE thinks is amusing. This would be your nightly attempt to make Team BAD into the second New Day. You know, because when you look at Tamina, she just screams charisma.

They start fast with some nice rollup attempts until Lynch headscissors her down. Sasha doesn't get high enough on a leapfrog and crashes down on her face but it's not enough to get the Disarm-Her. The announcers talk about Paul Heyman praising Becky as she takes Sasha down with an armbar. Banks finally drives her into the corner and avoids a charge, setting up the double knees (I don't remember the last time she got to use that) to the back.

We take a break and come back with Sasha nailing the Backstabber into the Bank Statement but Becky gets to her feet and eventually rolls out before the hold can go on full. They trade more rollups for two each until a Regal Cutter takes Lynch down for two more. A pumphandle suplex gets the

same on Sasha and there's the Disarm-Her. Cue Tamina for a distraction so Naomi can kick Becky in the chest, setting up the Bank Statement for the submission at 11:41.

**Rating:** B-. This felt like an NXT match on the big stage which is how things are supposed to go. They were finally allowed to try some of their submission stuff instead of having the same Divas matches they always have, even with the Naomi and Tamina interference. I can't wait for the day when Sasha is finally allowed to go on her own because this UNITY nonsense is really holding her down. Other than "we don't have anything else for them to do", why is she still stuck with Tamina and Naomi? Good match here though and hopefully a sign of things to come tonight.

The opening video is Reigns standing there while clips of his path through the tournament and Sheamus' cash in play behind him. The video game themed promo? Nowhere to be seen. The simple yet effective Christmas present themed video that ended the pre-show? Not on here either because why be creative when you can be generic?

Tag Team Titles: Usos vs. Lucha Dragons vs. New Day

Ladder match with New Day defending. I'm not sure why they're going with their hottest match to open the show but at least the first fifteen minutes should rock. Before the match, Kofi asks Woods why there's no special hair tonight but Xavier wasn't about to waste a good hair day on Boston. With tonight's win, they will secure their spot as the faces of the division because who else can do it? The Lucha Dragons are too small and the Usos sound like a disease. Woods sits in on commentary and we're finally ready to go.

Kofi and Jimmy start fast with one ladder being slid inside and another being....dropped back down to the floor. Back in and it's a double springboard with Kofi and Kalisto landing on the ladder. A double save is made so the Dragons moonsault from the middle rope to take the champs down. The Usos are all alone so they load up a ladder but knock the Dragons off the apron instead of going up.

They throw the ladder onto the guys on the floor and dive on top of them as JBL loses his mind at how stupid that was. Kofi gets thrown to the

floor but Big E. runs the ladder over as the champs take over again. We get the Unicorn Stampede to Jimmy with a ladder in between, meaning it's time for some tromboning. Jey's save is countered with a belly to belly onto the ladder. The Dragons are back up but Big E. stops their ladder (upside down here) and drives them back into the corner. Kalisto gets smart and dives over the ladder to take Big E. down.

Cara rides the ladder down onto Kofi and takes out the Usos with a running Swanton over the top onto a ladder. The Dragons climb the ladder with Big E. underneath but he bench presses the ladder in an awesome display of strength. Kalisto dives onto the Usos again but they throw him down before dropkicking the ladder into Big E. in the corner. We get the mini ladder as Kofi breaks up a Superfly splash from Jimmy. Woods: "That's what being a veteran ladder match haver can do for you!" Back up and Kofi gets caught in the Tree of Woe for a running Umaga Attack from Jimmy, leaving the twins all alone.

We get a big staredown between all the challengers with the Dragons taking over, including a monkey flip into the 450 to send Kalisto onto the ladder onto Jey. Woods: "WHY???" Kofi comes back in (with Woods saying it's due to the rest building up his stamina like in WWE2K16) and wedges a ladder into the runs of a standing ladder.

That earns him a hurricanrana to send Kofi face first into the side of the ladder. Woods: "Our paintbrushes are fists and feet and you're about to see Kofi do some fantastic art!" Back in and all four challengers climb up with Jey and Kalisto slugging it out on top. In the totally insane spot of the match, Kalisto gives Jey a Salida Del Sol over the top of the ladder and through the bridged ladder, sending Woods (and the crowd) into shock.

Somehow Kalisto isn't dead and climbs up for a slugout with Jimmy but Big E. makes the save and stops Jimmy's charge with a forearm (Woods: "LOOK AT THAT TRICEP MEAT!") but a baseball slide into the ladder puts Big E. down again. Kalisto is all alone but Woods declares the match No DQ (in case there was any confusion beforehand) and hits Kalisto in the back with the trombone, allowing Kofi to retain the titles at 17:46.

**Rating:** A. Well that's your match of the night by about a mile. That Salida Del Sol was absolutely nuts and one of the best spots they've done in years. I'm glad New Day retained because they've earned the right to keep the titles a bit longer, and maybe even a program with Enzo and Big Cass. Imagine the promos on that one.

We recap Rusev vs. Ryback, which is built around Rusev being all romantic with Lana and Ryback wanting to fight.

#### Ryback vs. Rusev

Rusev forearms him down to start and they quickly head outside with Ryback getting the better of it before taking Rusev back inside for a top rope ax handle. Some right hands in the corner set up a powerbomb from Rusev and it's time to slowly stomp on the back. We hit the chinlock as Cole talks about Lana saving herself for marriage to Rusev. They fight over a suplex until Ryback takes over after about the tenth try, followed by a middle rope dropkick for two.

The Shell Shock is broken up so Ryback gets two off a high cross body instead. Points to him for trying some new stuff at least. Lana offers a distraction to break up the Meat Hook though and Rusev superkicks him down. Back in and the Accolade is broken up, only to have Rusev kick him in the head to get the hold on for the knockout at 7:56.

**Rating:** C-. I'm so tired of seeing either of these guys built up only to lose to another upper midcarder because they have no idea how to build up anyone else. The match was a decent enough power brawl but I have no idea how many more times they can go with the Lana injury idea before it gets even less interesting than it is now.

Reigns and Ambrose are ready for tonight and can't wait to see Sheamus and Owens beaten down so they can walk out as double champions.

Quick recap of Alberto Del Rio vs. Jack Swagger which is mainly over Zeb Colter, who split with Del Rio on Monday.

#### US Title: Jack Swagger vs. Alberto Del Rio

Del Rio is defending and this is a chairs match. Both guys grab chairs to

start and we get the early duel. That goes nowhere so they head outside to fight among the dozen or two chairs set up. Del Rio is sent into one face first time after time until he hits Jack in the throat to take over.

A Backstabber gets two for the champ but Jack throws a chair at him. The Vader Bomb is blocked and the tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gets two for Del Rio. They head outside again with Alberto burying him under a pile of chairs and then throwing even more on top. Back in and the armbreaker is broken up with Swagger sending him shoulder first into the post for two more.

Swagger wraps a chair around the leg and puts on the Patriot Lock (meaning the chair doesn't change anything) until Del Rio falls out to the floor. The powerslam sets up the Vader Bomb for another near fall. Jack throws in about ten chairs but Del Rio counters into the armbreaker over the ropes. A bunch of chair shots to the back sets up the top rope double stomp onto the chairs to retain the title at 11:19.

**Rating:** C. The match wasn't bad but again this was such a mess with such an uninteresting story that there's almost no way the match can be good. The finisher is still stupid, the chairs match gimmick is even worse (maybe) and the fans never bought the idea that Del Rio was going to lose. At least Colter wasn't involved though.

We recap the ECW guys vs. the Wyatt Family. The Dudley Boyz were the Wyatts' latest targets due to whatever bizarre reasons the Wyatts had this time (as usual they aren't really clear). This meant the Dudleys had to bring in Tommy Dreamer and Rhyno to even things out, setting up an elimination tables match.

The ECW guys says they've seen it all over the years and now they're here fighting one more time because hardcore is forever and age is just a number.

#### Dudley Boyz/Tommy Dreamer/Rhyno vs. Wyatt Family

The ECW guys go right at them to start and thankfully there are no tags. It's already weapons time and the fight is quickly on the floor. We get a really bad looking sequence where Bubba puts a trashcan in front of his

face so Strowman can punch it back at him. That was horrible. Strowman starts cleaning house until all four fight back. Rowan comes in and puts D-Von on a table but gets shoved off the top as the table breaks anyway. That's not an elimination because it wasn't an offensive move, which goes along with the rules these matches have had over the years.

3D puts Rowan through the table for an elimination but Bubba is clutching his knee. Bray and Harper come back in to take over as Bubba's knee is good enough to go after Strowman on the floor. Rhino suplexes Bray and Harper but Bray stops the Gore with a cross body. A big boot puts Rhino through the table and we're tied up again. Harper takes D-Von to the top but Bubba is back in to turn it into a Doomsday Device. Bubba goes after Strowman on the floor and D-Von gets another table, only to have Bray slam him through it for an elimination.

It's down to Bray/Braun/Luke vs. Bubba/Dreamer. That means it's time for kendo sticks and a cheese grater between Braun's legs. Bubba and Dreamer bury him under a table for no apparent reason, leaving Harper to put Dreamer through a table with a suicide dive. Sister Abigail is broken up with some stick shots to the head and now it's time for fire. Bubba covers a table with the fluid but Braun comes back in to chokeslam him through for the win at 12:30.

**Rating:** C+. This was fun enough and I can live with Rowan getting eliminated because no one cares about him in the first place. At least the Wyatts get a win and the jobbers did the job like they were supposed to. Hopefully this is almost it for Dreamer as he has little to offer outside of hardcore matches. Rhino can do some good enough stuff on his own and might be worth keeping around, but they need to phase the ECW guys out again.

The pre-show panel recaps the show and throws us to the first Royal Rumble ad.

#### Intercontinental Title: Kevin Owens vs. Dean Ambrose

Owens is defending after Ambrose beat him in a non-title match last month and then won a triple threat match on Smackdown. That's about it for the recap because there's barely a story here. Before the match, Owens laughs

at Boston fans for bragging about the success of their sports teams because none of them actually did anything in the first place. Dean might have thrown popcorn and soda in his face on Monday, but no matter what happens tonight, this is going to be the Kevin Owens Show.

Owens kicks him in the back to start so Dean punches him in the face. A belly to belly gets two for Owens and we hit the early chinlock. Dean fights up with a suplex but can't hit Dirty Deeds. Instead it's a clothesline to put Owens on the floor for a suicide dive. Owens pops right back up for a fall away slam and the backplash on the floor, leaving Dean to dive back in at nine. Another backplash hits knees but the top rope elbow is countered into a nice German suplex.

The Cannonball misses though and now the top rope elbow gets two. Dean's superplex is countered into a middle rope Regal Roll and the kickout stuns Owens. The Pop Up Powerbomb is broken up and Dean grabs Dirty Deeds, only to have Owens touch the bottom rope for the break. Dean is stunned and walks into the Pop Up Powerbomb, only to counter into a hurricanrana for the pin and the title at 9:10. Lawler: "He's going to be on cooking shows! He's going to be on soap operas!"

**Rating:** B-. I wish they had let Owens keep going as champion but at least they FINALLY let Dean have something. This was treated as a big deal and could lead somewhere, assuming you believe the Intercontinental Title could actually mean something instead of being a title that is traded around every few months with no one getting anywhere as a result.

Dean celebrates quite a bit.

We recap Charlotte vs. Paige with Charlotte turning mostly heel and Paige not really turning anything new. Charlotte is embracing her inner Flair and Paige isn't cool with that, setting up this title match.

Divas Title: Charlotte vs. Paige

Charlotte is defending and has her dad with her again. Paige knees her in the face to start and Charlotte hides behind her dad on the floor. Ric gets yelled at for a bit, allowing Charlotte to trip Paige as she comes back in and drop some more knees. We hit a front facelock on Paige as the

fans aren't thrilled with this so far. Paige's sleeper attempt doesn't go anywhere and it's time for Charlotte to go after the knee. We see Team BAD, dressed as Team PCB for no logical reason, watching the match in the back.

Ric pulls off a turnbuckle pad but Charlotte doesn't seem pleased. Paige uses the distraction to hit a running knee to the ribs and slap on her own Figure Four until Charlotte quickly rolls over. Back up and Charlotte hits a spinning top rope cross body, only to get caught in a fisherman's suplex for two.

Something like a Rampaige from her knees gets two for the champ but the spear hits a knee to the face. Now the Rampaige connects on Charlotte but Ric pulls Paige's leg under the ropes. Even JBL admits that this one happened. Charlotte uses the distraction to get the rest of the buckle pad off though and Paige goes face first to retain Charlotte's title at 10:44.

**Rating:** C. As usual the psychology was way off here because they have no idea if Paige is a face or a heel. Charlotte is definitely doing better at the moment but Ric really needs to get out of here because the stories are becoming more about him than Charlotte, who actually needs the exposure. The match wasn't bad but they needed some better focus.

After an ad for Kay Jewelers, Becky isn't happy with what Charlotte did. Charlotte offers to make it like old times again but does the pinky swear with her dad instead and laughs at Becky.

Long recap of Sheamus vs. Roman Reigns, which is mostly about Sheamus cashing in his Money in the Bank last month and forming the League of Nations soon afterwards.

#### WWE World Title: Sheamus vs. Roman Reigns

TLC match with Sheamus defending. Sheamus charges into a right hand to start and Reigns pounds away on the mat. The fans are chanting for Cena early on, despite this being a pretty solid show so far. It's almost like they're never happy no matter what they're given. They head outside with the champ being whipped over the barricade and into the timekeeper's



area.

The ladder is bridged between the announcers' table and apron but Sheamus hits him in the back with a chair to get a breather. The fans think Sheamus looks stupid but at least it's better than the Tater Tot chants. Instead of going for the title, they fight up the aisle with Sheamus going through a bunch of tables and chairs for a crash. Reigns takes too long though and Sheamus backdrops him through a table. Sheamus gets back inside for the first climb but has to come back down to throw a ladder at Reigns.

The apron kick is countered by another shot to the face and a big White Noise puts Reigns through a table. They finally get back in with Reigns taking another ladder to the back but of course he's still able to powerbomb Sheamus onto the ladder. Reigns knocks him back to the floor and hits something like a Superman punch off the steps with a chair to the head. Back in again and the regular Superman punch is countered into the Irish Curse as the fans just do not care. Like it's disturbing how little they care here.

The fans chant for NXT as Reigns powers out of the ten forearms to the chest for a Samoan drop through the bridged ladder (clearly made of wood). That gets the fans back but they boo Reigns out of the building as he climbs again. JBL asks if Reigns is finally going to do it, basically admitting that the five minute title reign means nothing. A quick Superman punch drops Sheamus again but he pulls Reigns down again. Now it's Sheamus going up but Roman nails another Superman punch off the ladder (cool spot) to knock Reigns through a table.

Reigns goes up and here are Rusev and Del Rio for the save. You knew that was coming sooner or later. Rusev takes him to the floor for the Accolade but Reigns fights out again and Superman punches both guys, only to eat a Brogue Kick from Sheamus. We get the slow climb and Reigns is back again, only to have Sheamus pull the title down and kill the crowd even deader than they already were at 24:00.

**Rating:** B. The match was fun but we all knew what was coming at the end and there was no way around it. I'm not even going to bother going on a

rant about how stupid this is because there's nothing left to say about it. This story and feud is horrible and it just keeps going because we need the PERFECT moment to put the title on Reigns permanently. What WWE doesn't seem to realize (or acknowledge because I can't believe they're this dumb) is that the moment has already passed multiple times and the Reigns chance is gone.

The League (minus Barrett, who must be busy tonight), poses until Reigns spears them all down and beats them up with a chair. Reigns isn't done yet (like, he won't even listen to Stephanie shouting STOP!) and powerbombs HHH onto (not through) the announcers' table. That sums up Reigns' career so perfectly. An elbow puts HHH through the table as the announcers freak out that someone could touch the boss. Fans: "THANK YOU ROMAN!" HHH is helped out but Reigns runs back to ringside and spears HHH down to finally end the show.

This worked for many reasons, but there's one at the top of the list: emotion. Instead of going by what the script says which may or may not make sense, there was a logical progression of Reigns being pushed to his limit too many times and FINALLY snapping like a 6'4 gladiator would do if he kept dealing with stuff like this. Stuff like that is always going to work and it did here. Of course there are still a dozen problems with the show and this doesn't solve most of them but it was a cool moment.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This was a very back and forth show with the opener obviously being the high point but the rest was like a boat that was trying to get through a bad storm. It had some good moments and there was definitely more good than bad but the main event was just death due to the horrible build. The violence and carnage carried things as it almost does but they still need a lot of changes. This worked for one night though which is a lot more than you can say most of the time.

### Results

New Day b. Lucha Dragons and Usos – Kingston pulled down the titles

Rusev b. Ryback – Accolade

Alberto Del Rio b. Jack Swagger – Top rope double stomp onto a pile of

chairs

Wyatt Family b. Dudley Boyz/Tommy Dreamer/Rhyno last eliminating Bubba Ray

Dean Ambrose b. Kevin Owens – Hurricanrana

Charlotte b. Paige – Pin after Paige was sent into the exposed turnbuckle

Sheamus b. Roman Reigns – Sheamus pulled down the title

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## **Tables Ladders and Chairs 2015 Preview**

Now this is an interesting one as the TV shows are disasters right now but TLC is one of the few shows a year that is almost always worth watching due to the levels of violence and carnage. It's very much a show built around the in ring action instead of the stories building up to it and that's exactly what WWE needs right now. Let's get to it.

Since there's no pre-show match announced yet (though I can't imagine we don't get Breeze vs. Ziggler AGAIN), we'll jump into this at random and

save the main event for the end.

The Wyatts have to go over the ECW guys. Like they have to. As in there's no way can't. This should be the biggest layup in the history of big layups and I hope I'm not getting overconfident with it. One would have thought that Fournite going over EV 2.0 back in 2010 would have been a layup too but Tommy Dreamer pinned AJ Styles because of reasons. Thankfully it's elimination rules so a fluke is less likely, meaning I'll go with the Wyatts.

Alberto retains over Swagger in his first defense of the title since he won it back in October. There's always a chance that the Colter breakup is either a swerve or to set up a reunion with Swagger, but I still can't imagine that they're going to put the title on a loser like Jack. The fans wanted to boo Del Rio but he's right back to being the same dull guy he's always been. Either make him a big face like he was doing in 2013 (which I still really like) or let him be a jerk who gets to talk about something other than being Mexican. I'll take Del Rio to retain but watch out for a swerve here.

Rusev over Ryback because they need to push Rusev as a threat for some reason. This Lana reunion isn't getting them anywhere, which was what I was worried would happen after all those months of people saying "just put them back together" because this isn't the same dynamic they had in the first place. It's almost impossible to put a monster back together after he loses (which would apply to both guys here) and they're not getting anywhere by having Rusev be the same guy he is while getting to make out with Lana. Rusev wins and no one cares.

Charlotte retains over Paige and I guess I'm supposed to boo the champ here. This story has gone from Paige being a jerk over Charlotte's brother to Paige being just kind of there while Charlotte rants about how awesome her family is. We're just killing time until we FINALLY get to Sasha Banks on top of the division, or Nikki returning and being all fearless and such. But yeah Charlotte keeps the title here.

Owens keeps the title over Ambrose because we need to have another instance of two guys splitting a series, likely setting up a third match

at the last Raw of the year. Why? I have no idea, but WWE loves itself some meaningless trilogies. Thankfully the first match was good so maybe the rematch can be too, but it's a pretty big drop to go from the main event of one show to a midcard title match on another. It's almost like WWE doesn't care much for Ambrose and is going to put him out there to put someone else over every single time and then wonder why his reactions get quieter and quieter.

Then we have what should be the match of the night with New Day defending against the Lucha Dragons and the Usos. Despite a lame buildup with the Usos kind of being forgotten the whole way through, this should be a blast as we have three teams who can fly with the best of them flying with the best of them. Just let these guys go nuts and do a bunch of crazy high spots on a ladder for fifteen minutes and the crowd can go nuts as a result. New Day retains because who are the other teams going to fight since there are almost no other heel teams on the roster with anything.

Finally we have one of the lamest main events in the history of modern wrestling as Sheamus defends against Roman Reigns in the TLC match. Now this has the potential to be AMAZING with two big power guys just beating each other up for twenty five minutes. If there's one thing Sheamus is good at, it's having a big power brawl with another guy capable of having a big power brawl. I don't believe for a second that they actually change the title here as the League will likely interfere at the last minute but at least we'll have a good match until we get to the lame ending.

Overall TLC could be subtitled "just try and have fun". The booking is horrible at the moment and a lot of changes need to be made, but it's pretty clear that we're not going to get that anytime soon. However, it does seem like we could get something fun this time with the violence and carnage that comes with this show every year. I know it won't fix everything or even a lot of the problems, but a night of fun brawling and insanity can take our minds off a lot of WWE's current issues. It's almost impossible for things to get much worse now so let's just hope for the best and have some fun.

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## **Reviewing the Review: Monday Night Raw – December 7, 2015**

Let's get this over with. This past week's Raw was nothing short of a disaster as the show simply isn't getting better the people are leaving in droves at this point. There's no secret that this week's show was one of the weakest in a long time and did very little to make me want to see Sunday's pay per view. Let's get to it.

The show opened with the League of Nations talking about how they were going to take care of Reigns and pals on Sunday. This brought out the Wyatt Family and I was immediately interested. They said they were here for the chaos and a brawl was teased, which could have made things a lot more interesting with the Wyatts moving up to the main event and possibly turning face, meaning we could drop this ECW reunion idea that has been done a doze times.

But no, because that might be too interesting. No instead we got the ECW guys coming out again (with Rhyno coming in to even things up), only to be joined by Reigns and company. This opened up some new dynamics for where the teams could go and the promos could have been interesting.

But no, instead of letting them talk or build up ANYTHING, the match was

joined in progress when we got back with everyone in the match at once. Why bother with building something up when you can just give us everything right now and leave nothing to look forward to later tonight? Dreamed pinned Rowan, Sheamus Brogue Kicked Bubba and Reigns speared Sheamus to win, because SCREW YOU World Champion, you need to lose to Reigns like everyone else.

Much like the rest of this show, this was pretty good wrestling with a big middle finger to the fans at the same time. You're excited about the Wyatts moving up the card again after seeing them get knocked down for the last year and a half? HAHA too bad because you're getting the ECW reunion instead. You want to see Reigns actually deal with some issues? HAHA too bad because he beat the League on his own last week and then his team beats them here. Don't worry though because he'll lose another title shot on Sunday, which is supposed to erase all of Sheamus' losing over the last few weeks and months.

Instead of trying to give the fans something they're interested in, WWE is obsessed with just plowing ahead with their back and forth booking that doesn't get anyone anywhere and that the fans reject more and more every single week. Teasing the Wyatts in the main event scene as faces (an idea the fans LOVED) and then pulling the string on it again is even worse than just leaving it as is. It continues to show that WWE knows what we want to see but would rather go with whatever nonsense they have instead because THAT'S WHAT WE'RE GETTING NO MATTER WHAT.

We're long past the point where WWE needs to keep teasing something. At this point the show and the company are ice cold and desperate for something to fire it up. Maybe that's the Wyatts in a face run or whatever, but putting them out there and then having them lose to the ECW guys while Sheamus loses AGAIN before retaining AGAIN on Sunday isn't the solution, which WWE still doesn't seem to get. I don't know when something is going to change, but it's going to be a long road to the Royal Rumble is that's when we can finally expect a change.

Stardust and Titus O'Neil did their weekly thing. Again, I've stopped caring about this until it actually goes somewhere.

In another good match that did little to advance anything, Kevin Owens pinned Dolph Ziggler, who then pinned Tyler Breeze on Smackdown. So we have Owens coming off looking good while Ziggler is still a loser but Breeze, the young guy who came in hot, looks like even more of a loser because he has to trade wins with DOLPH ZIGGLER. Dolph has been around forever and has lost to almost everyone but Breeze has to lose a series to him because he has to pay main roster dues or something because toiling in NXT for years doesn't count.

It doesn't help that this is right around the same time that HHH said on a conference call that they don't bring up people from NXT without a plan for them. WHAT WAS THE PLAN FOR BREEZE THEN??? The ONLY thing he's done is continue the Summer Rae story despite there not even being a story there anymore. Is that what they're going to claim the plan was? If so, we might have set a new benchmark for stupidest line/biggest lie the company has told.

Breeze came up from NXT and is already floundering because they didn't have anything for him to do and now he's stuck looking like a loser who loses to the jobber to the stars. Now am I supposed to buy him as a midcard threat? He has no story and a losing record, but I'm supposed to care about him? WWE has made it clear over the years that Ziggler isn't going anywhere long term (they had him beat the Authority and gave him the Sting rub and he was right back where he was two months later) and now they're putting him over Breeze? Why? Who does this help? Certainly not the fans as I'm sure you've figured out already.

Oh and then Dean Ambrose came out and threw a Coke in Owens' face because Dean is WILD AND CRAZY. I'm sure Owens retains on Sunday though because he needs to get his win back after Ambrose beat him at Survivor Series and we need to make sure no one looks stronger than anyone else.

Donny Deutsch seemed to end the Miz/Neville story by offering Neville a spot on his new sitcom. Well that's better than turning Neville heel at least.

Team BAD beat Team Bella because THIS IS STILL A THING. We're stuck with Charlotte and Paige trying to figure out which one we're supposed to



cheer (more on that later) while Sasha, the most over woman in the division because she tore the house down with Bayley time after time is stuck shouting UNITY with Tamina and Naomi. Yes Naomi, who they're STILL not doing anything with other than HAVING FUN MAGGLE because she uses the Rear View.

This was yet another five minute match that had nothing interesting, nothing going anywhere, the Bellas having no idea if they're good or bad, and Sasha being wasted. Charlotte vs. Paige is fine, but the fans want to see Sasha, who could be swapped in for either of the two Divas fighting over the title without missing a beat. Oh but she doesn't have Ric Flair so that's out of the question.

New Day came out and did their comedy thing before doing the champions losing thing. Yeah this time it was to the Lucha Dragons to set up the ladder match on Sunday because there was NO OTHER WAY to do this than have the champions lose. Having the Usos vs. the Dragons in a show stealer with the New Day interfering for a no contest so everyone looked equal was totally off the table of course.

MizTV had Charlotte, Ric Flair and Paige as guests. Charlotte is now doing her entitles better than you character from NXT which is what got her over in the first place. Unfortunately no one has any idea if Paige is going to be the heel in this feud or not, despite her doing the whole Reid Flair promo. As usual, the match will be ok if they're allowed to tear it up but for some reason we're likely going to have the focus on Ric, just as it always is. It's another idea that could go somewhere but since they can't just figure something out, we're still sitting through a lot of wheel spinning.

Ryback and Rusev's rematch went to a double countout when Lana was run over again. Here's this whole feud in a nutshell: Rusev loves Lana, Lana keeps getting hurt and Ryback is fighting Rusev because the script says he's supposed to. That's the kind of idea that worked in the Muppet Movie, not on a wrestling show that we're supposed to buy as real (or as real as it can be in modern wrestling). This is yet another story that is ice cold and has no one behind it because they've pulled the rug from under Ryback so many times that it's almost impossible to get behind him

again.

Jack Swagger beat Stardust in a quick match which was only there to allow the split between Zeb Colter and Alberto as well as to set up the chairs match stipulation on Sunday. I don't think anyone is going to miss Zeb and Alberto as a team but I'm also hoping this doesn't lead to Zeb and Swagger reuniting. Much like Ziggler, Swagger is such damaged goods that it would be a waste of Colter's talents when he could build up someone fresh for a change.

Braun Strowman squashed Tommy Dreamer just like you would expect him to. You can forget about the Wyatts vs. the League. That really was just a tease at the start of the show.

Then we get to the part of the show that people remember the most. Roman Reigns came out to challenge Sheamus and the champion followed, only to take forever saying that he wouldn't get in until the weapons were out. By that I mean he talked about EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM. They finally started fighting and the whole thing took twenty minutes, capped off by a spear to put Sheamus through a table to end the show.

For once, and I emphasize FOR ONCE, this wasn't on Sheamus and Reigns. Austin and Rock at their best would have had trouble getting this segment over. Either that or they would have said screw it and started doing something entertaining instead. It was long and stupid with Sheamus still looking like a coward while Reigns still doesn't give me a reason to care about him.

The fans were walking out on the segment and I certainly can't blame them. How was this supposed to make me want to see the match on Sunday? Yeah instead of actually fighting, let's stand around while they TALK! I can't remember the last time I saw an episode end this badly, but the worst part is WWE doesn't seem to understand why it was bad. You had a big match earlier in the show but instead of doing that, they ran with it in the first thirty minutes in a failed attempt to keep the fans away from Monday Night Football. I don't know who thought this main event was a good idea but they need to be fired, because this was horrible.

This was a show that felt a lot more fun live, but looking back on it

there are so many major holes in what they were doing. WWE is in desperate need of a new direction and we're not going to get it anytime soon. Instead we're stuck sitting here watching another heel champion run away like a coward while Reigns is STILL waiting on his big moment (which he probably gets at Wrestlemania in a rematch with Lesnar that won't work).

They need to figure this stuff out and give us something to cheer for already. Maybe that's John Cena, but something needs to happen before the end of the year because I'm terrified of how low things could get before then. Raw was bad this week, but not bad in the traditional sense. This was bad in the "why am I wasting my time on this" sense, which is the worst thing they can do.

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<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0188BJRGU>

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

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# Thunder – July 19, 2000: They're On A Roll

## Thunder

Date: July 19, 2000

Location: Breslin Students Events Center, East Lansing, Michigan

Attendance: 5,738

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan, Mike Tenay

This is a rare live Thunder though I can't imagine it's going to make the show any better than it usually is. The big story at the moment is Scott Steiner being all insane and breaking various things, only to get beaten down by Kevin Nash, like so many people before him have been. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap from Nitro. As usual, that was the kind of show that flew by so fast that I could barely remember half of it anyway so for once this was helpful.

Harlem Heat arrives. I know I ask this a lot but what is Russo's obsession with showing people getting out of cars?

Jeff Jarrett is doing commentary tonight. Oh geez. He gets in two slappy's before he even sits down.

#### Crowbar vs. Mike Sanders

Sanders is Above Average and had been on Saturday Night all the way back in 1998. Crowbar looks out at the crowd for some reason, allowing Sanders to get in some forearms to the back for an early two. A German suplex sends Sanders flying as the announcers point out Lenny Lane's huge USE ME sign. Hopefully that makes him put the thing down because it's really distracting.

They head outside with Sanders stopping a charge with a superkick, followed by a dancing knee drop back inside. We hit the chinlock for a bit as the USE ME sign is back. I'm sure the handful of fans that paid for seats behind him (as he goes up and down the row) are thrilled to have their view blocked by a lame angle that isn't going to go anywhere.

Crowbar gets two off a Lionsault and Daffney adds a Frankenscreamer (is she immune to the no interference policy?) to send Sanders outside. Mike is sat in a chair for a plancha from Crowbar (Jarrett: "What kind of rasslin is that?") but Daffney's distraction allows Sanders to steal Jeff's guitar and knock Crowbar out for the pin. Jarrett: "He won the match with Slapnuts." So is Slapnuts the guitar?

**Rating:** C. Sanders will soon find his calling as a talker but this was much more about establishing someone new on the roster. There's definitely a push of some new talent around this time but it's so far past too late at this point that it's only more false hope. Still though, it's always cool to see someone fresh instead of the same horrible acts that have choked the life out of this company.

Lenny Lane is escorted off by security. Thank goodness.

Here's Booker T. with something to say but Rick Steiner jumps him from behind before anything can be said. Stevie Ray comes out for the save and Jeff joins in on the brawl until security breaks it up.

Daffney screams a lot and runs off with a chair to find Mike Sanders. For some reason I want to see where this goes.

Lane is being taken away when he runs into the Cat. All the Laniacs (I believe they meet in the same room as the Jericholics) want is their leader back. Cat: "You're not a leader. You're a jobber." For some reason Cat has a pebble in his pocket and says Lane can have a match if he can take it from his hand. Lane takes it away easily so Cat shouts that he didn't say go. The result: a tables match vs. the Wall.

Here's new US Champion Lance Storm. After the full Canadian national anthem, Storm gets right to the point by listing off some great US Champions. However, that title is dead because he's renaming the US Title the Canadian Heavyweight Championship and puts a Maple Leaf sticker on the front.

As the announcers freak out (save for Heenan because he's Bobby Heenan), Storm demands respect from the fans and asks security to bring in a typical American fan. This means an overweight woman, who Storm rips on for not being in shape. Cue Mike Awesome for the save but Kanyon runs out to try a Kanyon Cutter on the woman. This brings in Buff Bagwell and I'm guessing it's a tag match later.

Jarrett offers to teach Sanders how to swing a guitar and knocks him cold. So much for Sanders meaning anything.

Miss Hancock has gotten David Flair a Cruiserweight Title shot tonight and promises, ahem, some fun to him if he wins.

### Lenny Lane vs. The Wall

Tables match because that's what Wall does. Wall powerslams him to start and throws Lane across the ring with ease. Lane breaks up a superplex attempt and pounds away in the corner, only to charge into something like a backdrop/hot shot, sending him throat first into the middle turnbuckle. They go outside with Lane going throat first across the barricade before Wall sets up the first table. He takes too long though and gets knocked off the apron and through the table to give Lane his job back....in his last match with the promotion. Only in WCW.

The Misfits are given their assignments.

Mike Sanders is still getting up (that's quite the guitar shot) when Daffney comes in and hits him with a chair. "How do you like that rookie?"

Lenny Lane is happy in his locker room (because if you show up with no job, you have a locker room) when Wall comes in. It's implied that Wall took a dive.

The Filthy Animals sneak into Kronik's locker room.

### Cruiserweight Title: David Flair vs. Lieutenant Loco

David is challenging and wearing a suit here. Loco jumps him from behind and gets two off an early side slam. Hancock distracts Loco because.....well because she's Miss Hancock and it's not that difficult for her to distract someone, allowing David to take over off a suplex. Loco comes right back with basic stuff, including a bunch of chops after ripping off David's shirt. Hancock tries to bring in a chair but David gets caught in a sunset flip instead. Some cheating backfires as the referee catches Hancock holding David's hands. Cue Major Gunns to chase Hancock off, leaving Loco to tornado DDT David onto a chair to retain.

Gunns goes to give David mouth to mouth but Hancock starts a catfight. Yep it's time for this feud.

Cat reinstates Lane and fires Wall for taking a dive. That earns Cat a beating from the big man. Security breaks it up and I'm pretty sure Chris Harris and James Storm could be seen.

Sanders is getting up again when Kanyon runs in for a Cutter. Well if they're going to treat the guy like a goon, at least it's funny.

The Jung Dragons beat up the Cat because they finally have an open shot.

#### Tank Abbott vs. Great Muta

Mike Tenay has had to leave commentary due to some throat issues. Tank forearms a few times but gets kicked down to set up the Power Drive elbow. Cue the Dragons to help with a beatdown so here's the Cat to help Tank. That earns him some mist to the face, allowing Tank to knock Muta out for the pin. Was Muta REALLY that bored in Japan that he called up WCW and agreed to put over Tank Abbott on live TV?

Major Gunns challenges Miss Hancock to a Rip off the Camouflage (ROTC) match at New Blood Rising. Gene is WAY too happy about this.

Kronik's locker room has been trashed so they tell a crew member to keep an eye on the door. As soon as they leave, it's another Kanyon Cutter. He's getting really good at those things.

Jarrett and Rick Steiner are making plans for the match when Midajah comes in to say she'll do anything tonight.

#### Kronik vs. Filthy Animals

Disco/Juvy/Rey here in a handicap match with Juvy and Rey coming out in Kronik's vest coats. Juvy tries to jump Clark from behind as Konnan babbles in whatever language he uses on commentary. I know it's not English and I know it's not Spanish but it involves cherries and potatoes. Kronik gets annoyed at the Animals for getting in their way and chases them out to the apron.

Rey comes in and gets to face Adams, which is one of the most backwards face vs. heel dynamics I've ever seen. Mysterio springboards into a full nelson slam and Adams throws Disco into him for good measure. The Animals

finally take over on Clark with a Bronco Buster but Clark throws Juvy away with ease. Everything breaks down and High Times plants Disco for two (called three by Tony), followed by the powerbomb/top rope clothesline for the pin a few seconds later.

**Rating:** D+. Some of Kronik's offense looked cool here but the commentary from Konnan took away any of the good this match had going for it. Thankfully the Animals aren't in the Tag Team Title match at the pay per view because it would have been really stupid to have them lose like this. Don't worry though because I'm sure WCW will find far more stupid things to do in the coming weeks.

Here are Shane Douglas, carrying a bag, and Torrie, with the latter wearing a dress tighter than should be physically possible. Shane pulls out the Stuff Magazine with Torrie inside and asks about her turn-ons listed in the magazine. Apparently she likes seeing her man work out so Shane pulls out a dumb bell and starts lifting, causing Torrie to rub his chest. This brings out Kidman to dropkick Shane but a Torrie distraction lets Shane hit him in the neck with the dumb bell, likely breaking his neck in the process.

We get the Road Report but the guy doesn't have his phone. Perfect Event comes up to suggest that he use 1-800-CALL-ATT. Problem solved until it's another KANYON CUTTER for the best fake commercial I've seen in a very long time.

The Artist, who can talk now, issues an open challenge to any champion. I think you know what's coming.

#### Hardcore Title: The Artist vs. Big Vito

Vito is defending in case you're a bit slow. They quickly go into a room with Paisley and Kwee Wee watching.....I'm guessing a monitor or something. Artist hits him with an ironing board before doing the same to Kwee Wee for no apparent reason. Pink hater. Vito takes over again and brings him down to ringside, only to get hit with a chair a few times. Artist goes with a low blow because good guys are just less bad in WCW.

The Mafia kick and a suplex set up a top rope elbow from the champ and



it's already table time. Vito sets it up in the middle of the ring for the implant DDT...and the table breaks as they're standing on it. The fans boo it out of the building as Vito hits him with a trashcan, followed by the DDT to retain.

**Rating:** D-. So we're using the lame Hardcore Title match to set up what's going to be an even worse Kwee Wee vs. the Artist feud. I can kind of understand Russo's obsession with Jeff Jarrett but I will never get WCW's love of Artist. The guy just isn't that good and it shows worse and worse every time he's in the ring.

Awesome wants to bring one of his women to the ring but Bagwell doesn't think that's the best idea.

#### Positively Kanyon/Lance Storm vs. Buff Bagwell/Mike Awesome

Kanyon during his entrance: "BUY MY BOOK!" We get the Canadian national anthem again until Awesome runs down to clean house. A clothesline puts Lance on the floor and Awesome nails a nice dive to take him down again. Back in and Bagwell beats Kanyon up as Tony recaps Judy Bagwell's recent problems. It's off to Awesome vs. Kanyon with Mike coming in via the slingshot shoulder. A nice suplex plants Kanyon again and it's back to Storm, who walks into an Awesome Bomb.

The Awesome Splash gets two on Kanyon with Storm making the save and everything breaks down. Storm gets the Maple Leaf on Awesome but Buff breaks it up with the Blockbuster. Kanyon makes a quick save though and pulls the ref in the way of a baseball slide. He hits Bagwell with the book (which I'm assuming he reloaded with a fresh brick) and does the same to Awesome, setting up a Kanyon Cutter for the pin.

**Rating:** C. Not a bad little match here but we had to speed through things because we needed to see stuff like the Cat earlier in the night. Storm has somehow been a breath of fresh air for the company despite his character being one of the most boring guys in the history of wrestling. Maybe it's just that he's a fresh name or something but he's working very well here.

Rick Steiner and Jarrett say nothing of note. Jarrett uses the acronym

NOFYB.

Cat doesn't know what that means but is sick of Steiner and Jarrett.

Harlem Heat is ready. Well that's good for them but it's time for the real star power.

We get a sitdown interview with Kevin Nash. He thinks the people behind the scenes of WCW are trying to keep Hall out. The only time WCW ever had a spark was when the two of them came down from New York to make the company go somewhere. Hall has been healthy for months now but he's sitting around because WCW doesn't want him around.

Nash has seventeen months left on his contract and he'll honor that deal, but then who knows because it's not about money anymore. As for Goldberg, WCW gave him too much power too soon. Nash has to keep him in check because he's never paid his dues and won't have nine years from now. It's nice to see guys like Booker make it and he was glad that "they put the strap on him."

Hudson asks about the three way at New Blood Rising (Nash: "It won't be a dance.") which is now a #1 contenders match. Apparently there's a problem with who is going to come out on top. Nash says he's coming out on top no matter how the match is booked and he's not going to lobby for a finish. He's going over (his words) because he says so and it's time for him to get his.

These are the kinds of segments that I never know what to say. Nash talking about someone not wanting Hall around was fine because you can pin that on Russo and Bischoff (Is he even still around anymore? I don't remember seeing him after Bash at the Beach.). Hinting at going to the WWF was even fine, but then you get to him talking about how a match is going to be booked or who is going to go over in a big match because of how the finish was lobbied. I have no idea what this was supposed to accomplish but I'm sure the internet will be talking about it tomorrow, right Russo?

Jeff Jarrett/Rick Steiner vs. Harlem Heat

This is the closest we're going to get to Harlem Heat vs. the Steiners. Cat is out here to make sure things are fair. Booker and Rick start things off with the champ taking over. This brings out Midajah to try to come off the top but Cat calls her down and handcuffs himself to her. Well what did she thing was going to happen with the boss out there and her in bright pink pants?

It's off to Stevie vs. Jarrett with Jeff getting kicked out to the floor. Back in and Steiner clotheslines Stevie for two and we hit the chinlock after all that grueling work. A belly to back puts Steiner down and the hot tag brings in Booker as house is cleaned. Jeff breaks up the missile dropkick and nails a superplex, only to have Booker tie their legs up for a small package and the pin.

**Rating:** D+. The Booker comeback was good but Rick Steiner is just killing anything he's doing at this point. The guy isn't any good and hasn't been for a very long time yet for some reason they just won't get rid of him. Jarrett was Jarrett and Stevie was more energetic than usual but there's only so much you can do in a five minute main event.

Booker gets beaten down to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C-. Dang they're on a roll lately. These last few shows have taken out a lot of the nonsense and just let them have their dull wrestling shows. The point though is you can see the stories they're telling and for the most part, they're working fine. There's still a lot of stuff they need to fix but at least there's some good stuff going here and far less bad, which is the most important thing. Enjoy it while it lasts though because you know this is going to go bad soon enough.

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## Happy Anniversary

To me, as I started this place on December 8, 2010. For some reason I can never get the date right.

I can't believe it's been five years and the site has hit levels I never expected it to reach. Thanks to everyone for following me all this time and I'll be around as long as you'll have me.

KB

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## Raw 2000 Being Added To The Network

Merry Christmas. It's only six shows so far but this is one of the times we've been waiting for.

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# Ring of Honor TV – December 9, 2015: We're Indy Wrestlers

## Ring of Honor

Date: December 9, 2015

Location: Tennessee State Fair Grounds, Nashville, Tennessee

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Kevin Kelly

Final Battle is rapidly approaching and last week saw the first real build towards AJ Styles vs. Jay Lethal for the ROH World Title. The rest of the show is starting to come together and it's looking like a good show. We still have two shows left before the pay per view but the syndicated schedule could cause problems with the second episode. Let's get to it.

### Silas Young/Beer City Bruiser vs. ReDRagon

The Bruiser shoves Fish down to start so Bobby asks for a test of strength. As you might expect, that earns Bruiser a kick to the ribs, followed by a right hand to Fish's jaw. Kyle (sweet goodness that is a pale man) tags himself in for some tandem kicks to Bruiser. Not wanting to feel left out, Silas tries to come in but gets both arms worked over.

With his limbs hurting, Silas goes to the eyes to take over and brings Bruiser back in for a right hand to the jaw. Bruiser's running Umaga attack sets up a Broski Boot for two on Kyle and here's Adam Cole to sit in on commentary. Back from a break with Kyle's comeback being stopped again. Silas takes him into the corner (showing off the really old looking ring ropes) but Kyle avoids a charge and sweeps Bruiser's leg for the hot tag.

Fish gets the better of a slugout with Silas (that's a bit surprising) and a belly to belly sends Young hard into the corner. Now it's a double team on Bruiser until he takes Kyle down with a clothesline. Young is back up to DDT Fish onto the bottom buckle (that was cool) but Bruiser misses a top rope splash.

Kyle has to kick a Boy down and dive onto Bruiser but the distraction means Misery only gets two on Fish. A Samoan drop puts Silas down and it's a double tag to Kyle and the Bruiser. Kyle grabs a guillotine choke on Bruiser for a long time until he reaches the ropes, only to leave Silas to take a beating. Chasing the Dragon puts Bruiser away at 12:10.

**Rating:** B-. As usual, the tag division is the best part of ROH as they continue to have good match after good match. Well at least entertaining match after entertaining match but I'll take what I can get. The Bruiser is a lot less worthless than I thought he was going to be when I first saw him, though that's not really covering a lot of ground.

Cole and O'Reilly almost get in a fight after the match.

Silas orders the Boys to beat up the referee and they don't seem to mind complying. The villains leave but here's Dalton Castle to say Silas has something that belongs to him. Bruiser goes after Castle but gets knocked out by a microphone shot. The Boys tease getting in but walk away, nearly bringing Castle to tears.

Here's Chris Sabin to vent about the man in the red mask. That person has cost the Addiction the World Tag Team Titles but more importantly, they've been STEALING HIS GIMMICK. Sabin demands that whoever it is come out here right now so here's the masked man. He takes off the mask and it's.....Alex Shelley, Sabin's former partner in the Motor City Machine Guns. Nothing is said but I think you know what's coming.

TV Title: Roderick Strong vs. Samson Walker

Strong is defending, Walker is a good sized power guy and Bobby Fish, the #1 contender to the title, is on commentary. Walker shoves him around to start so Strong fires off a leg lariat to stagger the big man. It's out to the floor with Strong's back being driven into the post and the fans chant SEXUAL CHOCOLATE. We hit the kneeling bearhug on the champ, followed by a nice spinebuster for two. There go the straps (drawing gasps from the crowd) but Roderick nails a dropkick. Fish grabs the title and sits back down as Strong hits the running knee and the Sick Kick to retain at 5:37.

**Rating:** D+. Not much to see here but it's always a plus to have the champ get a win like this where he wasn't in much danger in the first place. Fish isn't the most interesting challenger in the world but the fans love him and the match should be fun so it's kind of hard to complain.

Fish gets in the ring with the title on, ticking Strong off even more.

Inside ROH recaps the 2015 Survival of the Fittest, won by Michael Elgin, who wants the World Title shot in New Japan.

### Briscoe Brothers vs. Young Bucks

We continue the night's trend with Kenny King sitting in on commentary and Rhett Titus standing behind him. Mark and Nick get things started after a quick fourway staredown but a quick superkick party takes the Briscoes down. Stereo suicide dives take the Briscoes down again and it's back inside with Nick chopping away at Mark.

Everything breaks down with Jay cleaning house until Mark suplexes Nick down (and dances a bit) for two. Back from a break with Matt superkicking Mark on the apron to take over again. A Whisper in the Wind into a Diamond Cutter gets two on Mark but he comes back with Red Neck Kung Fu, allowing the tag off to Jay. Nick tries to speed things up but misses a moonsault off the apron, allowing Mark to come back with a Blockbuster.

Jay dives onto both Bucks and everyone is down. The Bucks tell Jay to suck it because the Bullet Club is turning the NWO/DX into a goofy comedy bit and the ROH fans eat it up due to irony or whatever, only to have the Briscoes take over again. Matt flips out of a Doomsday Device because he's no selling a top rope clothesline from Mark. A double superkick and the Indytaker set up More Bang For Your Buck for the pin on Mark at 11:20.

**Rating:** C+. This was much better suited to the ROH style but I liked the first tag match, which was a much more traditional power vs. speed match. It doesn't help that I still don't care for the Bucks. I get the idea behind them ("WE'RE DOING STUFF THAT MAKES US LOOK LIKE INDY WRESTLERS!") but it still doesn't do it for me. The Briscoes are fine and the match was good, but the Bucks are just not for me in the slightest.

The Express gets in the ring and it's a big three team brawl with security failing to break it up to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B. As usual, ROH is nailing it going into the biggest show of the year. The only major problem I have with them is they have so much stuff going on and the matches getting this much time means you don't get a touch on every program each week and I forget where things are going at times. Tweak that and this is up there with NXT for best wrestling show of the week.

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# Wrestling Wars Podcast Episode 32

TLC Preview with Shocky.

<http://mightynorcal.podbean.com/e/wwp-31-the-historian-himself-shockmaster-joins-us-for-a-tlc-preview-and-a-lot-of-anger/>

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# Smackdown – December 10, 2015: Waste Of My Time

## Smackdown

Date: December 10, 2015

Location: Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Jacksonville, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Jerry Lawler, Booker T.

It's the go home show for Tables Ladders and Chairs and the show isn't looking like the most interesting in the world. Most of the card is set though and that means tonight is all about the build. I have a feeling we'll be seeing more about the main event, which is a bit of a shame as Smackdown was getting good about building up the midcard. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

## Roman Reigns vs. Alberto Del Rio

Non-title because I don't think Del Rio has defended the thing since he won it. Swagger vs. Del Rio on Sunday is officially a chairs match. The rest of the League, Ambrose and the Usos are at ringside. Del Rio takes him into the corner for a kick to the back to start but Reigns pounds him in the head. Alberto comes back with some kicks and a way too early chinlock (Sheamus: "SQUEEZE THE LIFE OUT OF HIM!"). That doesn't exactly work as Reigns fights up, only to be greeted by what sounded like a Y2J chant.

Reigns takes it to the floor but gets in a staredown with Sheamus, allowing Del Rio to kick him in the ribs as we take a break. Back with Del Rio coming off the top with a right hand to the head for two. With the everything else not working, Del Rio puts on the armbreaker over the top rope for all of four seconds until Reigns powers him off the ropes and out to the floor. As usual, I don't know why I'm supposed to cheer for Reigns when he can do anything. Well aside from get the ratings up that is.

Reigns wins a slugout (duh) and fires off the clotheslines in the corner. The Superman Punch is countered into the Backstabber for two but Reigns does his rollup into a powerbomb for two. A Sheamus distraction lets Del Rio get in the enziguri for two of his own but there's the Superman Punch for two with the League pulling Del Rio away. The big brawl is on and it's a double DQ at 14:38.

**Rating:** C+. They work well together but as usual this was an obvious ending and not for the title because Reigns is programmed for the World Title and therefore doesn't care about the US Title. It's the same, standard operating procedure stuff and I'm getting really tired of it, as are most of the fans it seems.

There's going to be an eight man tag main event. That's not all though as we also get a CONTRACT SIGNING between Ambrose and Kevin Owens. Good grief this is like a Greatest Hits Smackdown.

#### Tyler Breeze vs. Dolph Ziggler

Speaking of the exact same things we've seen time after time, here's Dolph Ziggler in the second segment of the show for I think the third show in a row. Oh and it's in a rematch too because this was screaming for a trilogy. They fight over arm control to start until Tyler grabs a headlock. A nice running dropkick gets two for Breeze and he starts in on the leg.

Ziggler tries to roll out of a knee bar but gets caught in a half crab instead. With that broken up, Breeze tries to wrap the leg around the post but gets pulled face first into the steel instead (with no mention of this from the commentators because Lawler is reading a line about selfies). Back in and the superkick ends Breeze at 4:44. That was Ziggler's only major offensive move of the match.

**Rating:** D+. So let's see. Breeze arrived about a month and a half ago and already has a losing record in general and to Dolph Ziggler. I'm so glad we saw him go through all that work down in NXT, only to have him come up here and lose a feud to the perennial jobber to the stars, who TOTALLY needed to win this feud. As usual, it's the same old things that we've seen for years that don't work but they keep doing because they're sure

it's a brilliant idea.

We recap Ryback vs. Rusev. I'm assuming they'll fight on Sunday.

Here's New Day and since it's Smackdown, this is probably their only appearance for the night. Before their match, Kofi talks about LeBron James just signed a lifetime deal with Nike. Big E.: "Lifetime? As in like it and put a ring on it?" Kofi shows off his shoes as E. gives us a quick commercial. As for Sunday, they're defending their titles in a triple threat ladder match, but getting the belts off of them is harder than getting Adele to answer a phone call. Why you ask? It's because NEW DAY ROCKS of course.

### New Day vs. Lucha Dragons

Again non-title and a rematch from Raw, though this time it's Big E. on the floor. Kalisto flips Kofi down to start but both guys try a dropkick to give us a stalemate. The Dragons take over again with Cara monkey flipping Kalisto onto Kofi for two. New Day finally gets it together with Kofi sending Cara to the floor as we take a break. Back with Woods stomping in the corner and Big E. not being able to master the trombone.

We get an awkward sequence where Woods misses a clothesline and then hits it a second later with Cara standing there so he can hit it. Cara lifts Kofi up into a powerbomb (ala Reigns), finally allowing the hot tag to Kalisto as things speed way up. The hurricanrana driver gets two with Kofi making the save. When that doesn't work, Kalisto kicks Xavier in the head and hits the Salida Del Sol for the pin at 8:14.

**Rating:** C-. This didn't have much time due to the break and was another rematch from Raw. Just like with Owens in the Intercontinental Title feud, the Usos have been completely forgotten in this whole thing and should have been in this match instead of the rematch with the Dragons where New Day loses AGAIN. In other words, they're using the same idea in the Tag Team Title feud that they're doing in the World Title feud. And people wonder why this isn't the most well received time in creative's history.

It's time for the contract signing for Owens vs. Ambrose. Dean comes out

first and has to yell at Owens' attorney. Owens has an attorney? That doesn't fit for some reason. Owens has been instructed to not show up tonight because it's not a safe working environment. Oh sweet goodness with the legal storylines. That's another trope you can check off the list for this show.

Dean says he was hoping for a quick beatdown tonight instead of having to actually do something. He goes to sign but here's Owens, blowing off the ploy a good three minutes after it started. Dean is sent into the barricade but whips Owens into the steps and takes out the attorney as a bonus. Owens bails and the attorney gets Dirty Deeds before Dean signs.

### Ryback vs. Ascension

Lana and Rusev are on commentary. Ryback throws Viktor around to start and plants Konnor with a spinebuster. The Meat Hook and Shell Shock put Viktor away at 1:29.

If you're going to do that, BRING BACK JOBBERS! Good grief man. Someone explain to me the reason why we need to beat down a team that could be used somewhere else for the sake of pushing this midcard feud. If you're going to have someone lose in 90 seconds, bring in jobbers who have nothing to lose. I know Ascension doesn't have much to lose, but they COULD mean something if they're built up. Add this to the list of annoying things WWE doesn't understand that gets on my nerves because they're so obsessed with this way of thinking and no one comes in and says "hey, that's stupid."

Ryback stares at the Russians or whatever country they're from this week.

Recap of Rhino returning Monday.

### Becky Lynch vs. Paige

Paige's early headlock doesn't get her anywhere so she punches Becky in the ribs instead. Some knees to the head set up a chinlock on Becky but she comes back with some hard uppercuts. A double clothesline puts both of them down but here's Charlotte coming to the ring, complete with full music. The distraction only works on Paige (because they're feuding you

see) and the Disarm-Her makes her tap at 3:23.

**Rating:** D+. So instead of having the champion get beat, let's have the challenger get beat so we have even less of a reason to like her. I think they're trying to make Paige the face here but much like everything else, they have no idea how to make the women likeable either. I'm sure the solution is to have her take credit for the Divas Revolution though and then have her be catty with everyone else.

Long video on Reigns vs. Sheamus. As I've said ever since it started: it's a great Intercontinental Title feud but a lame main event.

### League of Nations vs. Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose/Usos

Alberto shoulders Jimmy down to start but Jimmy (who Booker identifies as having the facepaint on the right hand side, even though they're exactly the same in the ring) comes back with a loud uppercut. Off to Jey vs. Rusev with the Bulgarian taking over as you would expect. Sheamus comes in with a kick to the head and we take a break. Back with Jey having his shirt ripped open for some forearms to the chest.

Reigns has to be held back from interfering but the distraction allows the tag to Ambrose but the fans aren't ready to react. The middle rope dropkick puts Sheamus down and the bulldog sets up the strikes against the ropes. Barrett finally does something by tripping Ambrose from the floor, allowing Rusev to come in and choke away. Del Rio comes in for another chinlock (he's a big fan of those tonight) and a Backstabber for two.

Sheamus' suplex slam gets two and it's off to another chinlock. Back to Rusev for a bearhug but Dean counters into a neckbreaker. A tornado DDT to Del Rio is enough for the hot tag to Reigns, though the crowd doesn't seem that thrilled to see him again. Everything breaks down and the Usos take out Sheamus and Del Rio with stereo dives. The spear finishes Rusev at 13:47.

**Rating:** D+. Totally uninteresting main event here with nothing standing out. Reigns wins again before he gets screwed over on Sunday like we're all expecting because that's what the fans want to see: more of the same

thing we've seen for a year now while we keep pedaling towards the carrot on a string that we can never reach.

**Overall Rating:** D-. I don't say this often but this show was a huge waste of my time. I understand that this was the same taping as Tribute to the Troops but this felt more like that "special" ("Yeah it's for the troops and totally not just us taping a house show so we can feel good about ourselves. USA!") than a regular show.

Almost every single thing that happened on this show felt like it came from the book of WWE Easy Ideas and that's not how you ever want a show to go. Between the champions losing, the contract signing and the tag team main event, I saw nothing on this show that makes me care about TLC. Nothing. Not a single thing. I'm sure the show will be fine, but this was a waste of my time.

It's very clear right now that WWE isn't trying. I know it happens every year at this time when the creative team basically puts it on autopilot and throws their feet up for the holidays, but this is the kind of show that makes me wonder why I should bother at this time of year. I never had that feeling before but it's happening almost every November and December in recent years because WWE is stuck with five hours of TV a week and nowhere near enough ideas.

They need to give me a reason to care in a hurry (hint: you can have a face hold the title for more than five minutes in fifteen months) because this is getting old. Stop having champions lose, stop treating these shows like they don't matter, stop repeating the same matches with guys trading meaningless five minute wins and stop using the same ideas every few weeks and expecting us to care. I usually give WWE the benefit of the doubt (more often than I should) but this is the kind of show that makes me feel like I've wasted my time and that's the last thing I should feel when I'm watching something that should be entertaining.

## Results

Roman Reigns vs. Alberto Del Rio went to a double DQ when the League of Nations, the Usos and Dean Ambrose interfered

Dolph Ziggler b. Tyler Breeze – Superkick

Lucha Dragons b. New Day – Salida Del Sol to Woods

Ryback b. Ascension – Shell Shock to Viktor

Becky Lynch b. Paige – Disarm-Her

Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose/Usos b. League of Nations – Spear to Rusev

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# Impact Wrestling – December 9, 2015: What A Dim Light At The End Of The Tournament

## Impact Wrestling

Date: December 9, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: D'Angelo Dinero, Josh Matthews

It's week #10 of the World Title Series and we're down to the final eight. In theory that means we're getting the quarterfinals tonight,

though I'm not sure if that's going to be enough to fill in a full two hour show. There's still no date announced for the finals but they have four weeks left on Destination America and only three rounds of the tournament to go. Let's get to it.

We get the double preview via voiceover and the announcers.

Video on Mahabali Shera vs. Lashley.

### TNA World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Mahabali Shera vs. Lashley

The announcers can't remember the name of Shera's dance. Can't they just go outside because IT'S SWEEPING THE NATION??? Shera takes over with a hard clothesline and some stomping in the corner to start. Lashley remembers that he's fighting a guy who is only know for a lame dance that is sweeping the nation, minus the announcers' booth of course, and powerbombs him out of the corner.

Back from an early break Lashley in control on the floor and high fiving fans. Lashley tries a dive off the apron but Shera catches him in mid air (ok that's good) and slams him on the floor. They head back inside for more clotheslines from Shera before he drops Lashley off a gorilla press. The Sky High is countered though and a spear sends Lashley to the semi-finals at 10:27.

**Rating:** C-. Not a terrible match here and thank goodness they went with Lashley instead of the glorified rookie because they thought they were going to India before that got screwed up again because of whatever reason they're claiming. Lashley is the much better option here though I wouldn't put the title back on him again. TNA needs something fresh on top right now and being back where they were a year ago with Lashley as champion around the time they head to a new network isn't the right idea.

The announcers talk about Lashley a bit.

Video on Eric Young and Tigre Uno's paths to the final eight.

Video on Awesome Kong vs. Jesse Godderz from last week.

Godderz promises to show what the Man is capable of tonight.



## TNA World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Tigre Uno vs. Eric Young

Before the match, Young calls Tigre stupid like the rest of the fans. He wants Tigre to leave like the coward that he is and Tigre teases going, only to come back in and take Eric out instead. A hurricanrana into a rollup gets two for Tigre but Eric drops him with a hard shot. There's a backbreaker for two from Eric and we take a break.

Back with Young still in control as Josh sells merchandise. A shot to the ribs gets two and Eric throws him to the floor. Young chokes some more back inside and tries a moonsault for no apparent reason, resulting in a big crash and burn. Tigre hurricanranas him down and drops a top rope legdrop between the legs for two. A top rope hurricanrana gets the same but Eric grabs the piledriver to advance at 11:42.

**Rating:** D+. This was another obvious ending, which is a major problem with this tournament as a whole. Young would be the worst choice of the realistic contenders for the title but he's fine as a guy to lose in the semi-finals. Tigre looked like a jobber here though, which is exactly what was expected when he fought against the adults outside of the X-Division.

The announcers recap Young winning and preview Jesse Godderz vs. Matt Hardy.

Matt Hardy is ready for Jesse, who is going to take a Twist of Fate and get pinned as one more step towards getting the title back.

Eric Young says these have been warmups for what he's going to do to everyone else in this tournament.

## TNA World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Jesse Godderz vs. Matt Hardy

Matt grabs a headlock to start until Jesse shoves him away. Josh tries to explain the situation that got us to this tournament and it really still doesn't make sense. A few slams drop Jesse and it's time for Matt to pose a bit. They head outside with Jesse driving him into the steps and nailing a dropkick as we take a break.

Back with Jesse working on the back (smart) with forearms and a bearhug.

A slow motion powerslam gets two for Godderz and it's back to the bearhug on the mat with feet on the ropes. Back up and Matt hits a quick Side Effect (with very little elevation) followed by a sleeper drop. Well at least it's different than the four moves he usually uses.

A throw off the top sets up a middle rope elbow to the back of Jesse's head for two. The Twist of Fate is broken up and a dropkick gets two for Jesse. Back up and an enziguri (kind of) sends Matt into the corner but the Adonis Lock is broken up. The Twist of Fate sends Matt to the final four at 17:22.

**Rating:** C. They had to have one longer match like this and this was one of their best option out of the four matches they had tonight. Godderz was a glorified jobber here but it was nice to see him doing some good stuff. He's gone from a total goof to a pretty decent midcarder, which is more than most people expected from him. Good enough match here but longer than it needed to be.

The announcers talk about Matt.

It's time for a sitdown interview with Dixie freaking Carter where she gives her thoughts on the major events of the year: Drew Galloway debuting was cool, Ethan Carter III is family but he was kind of a jerk, Matt Hardy vacating the title was sad, the tournament was awesome and let the Knockouts have a chance to be the best. The big news here: the semi-finals and finals are going to be on the live show on January 5. So wait, what are they doing for the next THREE WEEKS?

Long recap of the ending of Bound For Glory and the tournament up to this point.

Next week it's Group Future 4 vs. Group X-Division in an eight man tag. Also Eddie Edwards vs. Rockstar Spud vs. Mr. Anderson vs. Bobby Roode. These will be the first non-tournament matches in nearly three months.

We recap the night so far.

Quick video on Ethan Carter III vs. Davey Richards.

TNA World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Ethan Carter III vs. Davey

## Richards

Before the match, Ethan makes fun of Davey's Wolves' howl. Richards says he doesn't have a rich aunt or a bad tan, but he has a bunch of fans who are going to howl with him. Ethan grabs an armdrag to start but Davey comes back with a wristlock. A dropkick puts Ethan on the floor, only to have a Tyrus distraction cause Davey to charge into a forearm. We hit a chinlock for a few seconds and an elbow to the mat (called the face) gets two on Davey. Tyrus gets in a cheap shot on the floor (where is Eddie anyway?) and we take a break.

Back with Ethan whipping Davey hard into the corner and putting on the chinlock. Davey comes back with some kicks in the corner, only to miss a charge and crash face first into the buckle. They slug it out until Davey gets low bridged out to the floor, setting up a suicide dive to Tyrus and two in a row to Ethan. A German suplex gets two for Davey but he misses the top rope stomp, setting up a TKO for two.

Ethan goes up top for some reason but gets headbutted several times, setting up a superplex into a regular suplex for two. Both finishers are broken up and Ethan tries a rollup, only to get caught in a triangle choke. Ethan lifts him up and flips him over, giving us a weird edit into a TKO. The 1%er sends Ethan to the final four at 16:37.

**Rating:** B. This was the best match of the night by a mile with the hot segment right before the finish. The ending was totally obvious but at least we had a good match before we got to the ending. Richards clearly wasn't the one that was going to take Carter down but he got things moving here instead of just sitting around waiting for the obvious finish.

Here are the semi-finals:

Ethan Carter III

Lashley

Matt Hardy

Eric Young

**Overall Rating:** C-. This show's problem can be summed up in one line: the winners were never in doubt. Mahabali Shera, Tigre Uno, Jesse Godderz and Davey Richards are not going to be in the final four of a World Title tournament no matter how you look at it. The wrestling was fine, but the endings were never in doubt and that's rarely a good idea for a full show.

The semifinals are coming up in four weeks, but that brings us to the biggest problem: what are they going to do to fill time? Two matches were announced for next week but I have no idea what they're going to do unless it's Best Of shows. You knew these scheduling issues were coming but I didn't think it was going to be this bad. This wasn't a bad show but it felt like a lot of waiting around before we got to the obvious, which made the whole thing feel long.

### Results

Lashley b. Mahabali Shera – Spear

Eric Young b. Tigre Uno – Piledriver

Matt Hardy b. Jesse Godderz – Twist of Fate

Ethan Carter III b. Davey Richards – 1%er