

Wrestlemania XXXV Preview: Intercontinental Title: Bobby Lashley(c) vs. Finn Balor

I still don't know if it makes sense.

I'll spare you a long rant about how little this story makes sense, or at least how horrible of a job WWE has done at explaining Balor's use of the Demon. Or how little sense it made to have Balor win the title for a few weeks and drop it back almost immediately. This is the Demon's debut at Wrestlemania and I'm not sure what to expect from it. I don't think the match's result is really in doubt, but the question is how we get to that ending.

Balor will get the title back once and for all, but I'm not sure if it's in a squash or a competitive match. It's one thing to have the Demon destroy Corbin at Summerslam but having him do it to Lashley here doesn't make sense. You don't squash a monster like that and that leaves a dilemma for Balor. I'm sure he'll win, but if it's too competitive then it doesn't make that much sense.

Wrestlemania XXXV Preview: Roman Reigns vs. Drew McIntyre

This could go somewhere.

I've been a big McIntyre fan for years now so I'm rather happy

with him getting this spot. He's gotten a lot out of beating Seth Rollins and Dean Ambrose so facing Reigns is the most logical next step for him. It's going to be a hard hitting fight and that's exactly what a match like this needs to be.

And naturally Reigns wins, because you don't have your top star come back from leukemia and lose his first match at Wrestlemania. Reigns winning here is fine and McIntyre will get a lot out of just rubbing elbows with him. It's a good idea and this should be a strong match for both of them. Reigns survives the Claymore and hits a few spears to win as McIntyre gets a rub and Reigns can start gunning for the title again.

Wrestlemania XXXV Preview: Kurt Angle vs. Baron Corbin

GAH!

If there is any hope for this show, this match will be about two minutes long and be a complete squash with Angle winning and getting to have a proper sendoff. There's no need for this match to keep going because there is no reason to have Corbin anywhere near a ring for a long time at the moment. Or for Angle to ever wrestle again for that matter.

This is the biggest layup on the show as Angle isn't going to retire after losing a match to a goon like Corbin. This really should have been anyone else but if this is the best we can get, so be it (I guess). Angle wins with the ankle lock to go out as a winner and is thankfully allowed to heal his broken and mangled body. And Corbin can go tend sheep or something.

Wrestlemania XXXV Preview: AJ Styles vs. Randy Orton

You have to get them in somehow.

Let's go with something that should be good instead of something this boring. Both guys need something to do as Styles has beaten so many people on the show already. Orton has been floating around for years and his beating the heroes gimmick has already been mostly forgotten. That leaves you with little more than two guys needing to have a good match and...well that's not a problem for them.

I'll go with Styles winning here as he's a bigger star, though Orton has a tendency to pull off the surprise wins in these big match situations. I'm not sure if he'll actually pull it off, but it would be cool to see either of them win. Styles knowing to expect the RKO out of the Phenomenal Forearm will be good and if he can prove Orton wrong, it should be a perfectly fine moment. Either could win, but I'll take Styles.

Wrestlemania XXXV Preview:
Raw Tag Team Titles:
Revival(c) vs. Curt

Hawkins/Zack Ryder

Well of course this is here too.

If there's a match that felt more tacked on than this one, I can't remember the last time it happened. This match wasn't even announced on TV with the only mention being in a YouTube video. Hawkins and Ryder, who haven't won a match in years, are now getting a WrestleMania title match because WE MUST GET THE TITLES ON THE SHOW. I think you know where this is going.

Of course Revival drops the titles here and probably never get them back, because WWE doesn't get why they're unhappy with their spot in the company. This match is going to be about five minutes long and belongs on the Kickoff Show but the fans will lose their minds at the New York team winning the titles again. It would be perfectly fine on Monday Night Raw the next night, but that would mean just fifteen matches and that's not good enough.

Wrestlemania XXXV Preview: Shane McMahon vs. The Miz

Just get it over with.

Let's get this out of the way so I don't have to think about it for a few days. This has been treated as one of the biggest matches on the show because reasons of McMahon, though I'm not sure how many people are going to care. The story is built around Miz's father being a horrible person and only caring about his son when he teamed with McMahon and Miz wanting to stand up for his family. Therefore, McMahon needs a big spot

on the show and probably close to twenty minutes.

I'll go with Miz winning as McMahon doesn't win these big matches (just a Tag Team Title match). It's going to be long, commentary is going to talk about how awesome McMahon is, and then Miz will beat him and it won't be worth the five months they put into this one story featuring McMahon, when several others could benefit from having this spotlight. At least Miz might be a better face this time around, though I don't have my hopes up.

Wrestlemania XXXV Preview: Kickoff Show: Wrestlemania Women's Battle Royal

Now with no specific name.

This is another match where I'll need to see the full field before being confident in my pick. It feels like the biggest layup in the world to have Asuka win here to get some heat back after losing the title to Charlotte, but I don't trust WWE to go with the most logical option. There aren't many good options in the match so far, but that's where I think we get to our actual winner.

I'll take Lacey Evans, because I have the blind faith that WWE actually has a plan for her with all those random cameos. There isn't much of a reason for this to be the case and Evans hasn't exactly showed a world of talent yet, but that's never stopped WWE before. I'll go with her winning, though I'll be rather happy if Asuka wins. It's not like it means anything though, as Naomi didn't exactly rocket up the card last year.

But hey: a swerve ending right?

Wrestlemania XXXV Preview: Kickoff Show: Cruiserweight Title: Buddy Murphy(c) vs. Tony Nese

I guess it'll do.

For the life of me I don't get this one. I mean I get the story with Nese being a hometown guy and Murphy's former training partner, but Nese getting a title shot at Wrestlemania is as absurd as you can get. Outside of another Cedric Alexander match, I can't think of a weaker option than Nese in this spot. Murphy has been awesome as champion and should be on the main shows but he's stuck here trying to give some credibility to 205 Live.

I'll take Nese winning for the hometown moment, but my goodness if that's the case have Murphy moving up to the main roster immediately. He's WAY too good for this show anymore and Nese...well he's Nese and I don't know what else to say about him. This isn't going to be interesting and the fans are likely to be getting food or taking one last walk before the show, because it doesn't get much less interesting than this one.

Wrestlemania XXXV Preview: Kickoff Show: Andre the Giant Memorial Battle Royal

Everyone in the ring!

Here's your first of two catch all matches because remember: EVERYONE SHOULD BE ON WRESTLEMANIA! IT'S LIKE THE LAW! I really don't have a problem with this as most of the people are going to be in there for all of five minutes at most and it's not like there's any limit to what you can have in a battle royal. Also, I'd rather they do it this way than have the SNL guys get some kind of a handicap match against Braun Strowman.

I'll take Strowman with my fingers crossed, as he's pretty much the only wrestler involved to have gotten any serious attention. As long as the SNL guys don't win, everything should be fine because it's just a battle royal to warm the crowd up. For some flavor I'll throw Ali out there as a possible candidate, though you almost never get the full list of competitors early so there's a good chance it's going to be someone not even mentioned.

Takeover: New York Preview

We're under two days away from Takeover: New York and I believe that's close enough to start getting excited. The show, as always, looks awesome and with a special imported match this year, we could be in for something even better than usual. There isn't a bad looking match on the card and if

things go well, it's already going to be the show of the year. Let's get to it.

Women's Title: Shayna Baszler(c) vs. Bianca Belair vs. Kairi Sane vs. Io Shirai

We'll start off with a confusing one as it depends on which wrestling story you go for. First of all you have the idea that when everyone else cancels themselves out, the champion, and best performer (maybe) at the moment, in this case Baszler, retains. At the same time though, there is the chance that we could have Baszler showing up on the main roster either over the weekend or next week. You could go either way, or cut it down the middle and have Baszler retain and show up on the main roster.

I think I'll go with Belair winning, which I hope doesn't lead to her talking more often. She's an incredible athlete but she's also one of the most annoying talkers I can remember in a very long time. Baszler can move up to the main roster while Belair feuds with the Sky Pirates or some of the other upcoming stars in the division. It might not be the most appealing choice, but it's the one that makes the most sense.

North American Title: Velveteen Dream(c) vs. Matt Riddle

You know what I love the most about NXT? Ok maybe not the most but it's certainly up there? It's almost impossible to know who is going to win any given match. This one is a real tossup and it comes after a four way tossup. Dream is crazy over, but Riddle isn't going to lose this soon in his NXT career. That and Dream just doesn't win on the big stage most of the time.

That being said, I'll take Riddle, as Dream might be on his way to the main roster (egads I hope not though). It's what makes the most sense at this point and that's usually the way NXT likes to go. These two could have an incredible match with Riddle playing by the rules (mostly) and Dream being so out there that it messes with Riddle's mind. Either way, the fans

are going to be going nuts and it should be awesome. But yeah, Riddle wins in the end.

Tag Team Titles: War Raiders(c) vs. Aleister Black/Ricochet

Can I please have an easy match on this show? Not everything has to be so well put together that it's hard to figure out. Black and Ricochet are going to get a SmackDown Tag Team Title shot on Sunday. Now with that being the case, do you really want them to lose on an NXT show in a Tag Team Title match? If they do, why aren't the War Raiders getting the shot at WrestleMania? Then again this company doesn't tend to think that way so it's anyone's guess.

I'll go with the War Raiders retaining here, as Black and Ricochet are locked in on the main roster and there's no good reason to give them the NXT Tag Team Titles and expect them to be defended. Unless we're getting some insane title unification deal (which I don't think we are), the money move would be to make the War Raiders look even more dominant, as they've held the titles for a few months now but barely defended them.

United Kingdom Title: Pete Dunne(c) vs. Walter

Just take my money now. I'll even up it to \$19.98 for this one. These two are going to have one of the hardest hitting, knockdown drag out fights you're ever going to see and it's going to be awesome. Dunne is the kind of guy who would rather die than lose but he's come close to being beaten before. How do you get around a monster like Walter? I'm not sure it can be done at this point.

Hence why I'm going with a new champion. Dunne has had an all time title reign and somehow doesn't feel like he's outgrown the title or is ready to move on from it, which is perhaps the most remarkable thing about the entire reign. He has to lose at some point though and if it's not to Walter, who else could it be to? This is where the title change goes down, with Dunne

fighting until the bitter end.

NXT Title: Johnny Gargano vs. Adam Cole

Let's pause for a second and mourn the missing of what could have been the greatest blowoff in WWE since...I'll get back to you on that. This was going to be Gargano FINALLY winning the title from Tommaso Ciampa and ending their war once and for all but the pesky neck injury is going to stop us from seeing it for the time being. This is for the vacant title and it's 2/3 falls, which is kind of NXT's signature match for a cool change of pace.

And I'm taking Cole winning the third fall after some kind of a distraction from Ciampa. That final match is going to happen and NXT is smart enough to keep Gargano hot until he's back (they did it before), provided we don't get something stupid like Cole being called up. Gargano is at his best when he's chasing something and is foaming at the mouth to get it, so having him lose again and move on to something else is the right call. Also Cole is a great long term champion and could hold the title for months without much of a problem.

Overall Thoughts

Yes. Do I need to explain this any further than that? This could be one of the most entertaining shows of the year (it will be) with this crowd around them. NXT just gets these things and it's going to be an incredible show with five matches that could all be classics. Just let them do their thing and be handed the weekend, because I don't think it's classified as stealing anymore when it's expected of you.

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