

205 Live – January 2, 2018: The Enzo P-A-R-A-D-O-X

205 Live

Date: January 2, 2018

Location: Amway Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Vic Joseph

So this show's lull is somehow STILL GOING as Cruiserweight Champion Enzo Amore was hospitalized due to the flu, meaning the title match against Cedric Alexander was postponed yet again. There's really nothing going on at the moment because we're stuck waiting on the title match (and hopefully the title change) so there's a good chance this is going to be another lame duck show. Let's get to it.

The opening recap looks at Amore being sick and Alexander teaming with Goldust of all people to defeat Ariya Daivari and Drew Gulak. If Goldust is this show's idea of a big deal, just turned the Mixed Match Challenge into an hour show and be done with it.

Opening sequence.

Akira Tozawa vs. TJP

This is TJP's first match back in three months. Technical sequence to start until TJP hides in the ropes to avoid a charge. That's fine with Tozawa, who slams him head first into the mat twice in a row. Some overblown stomping in the corner keeps TJP down as this is quite the welcome back to the roster. A suicide dive is blocked by TJP's raised boot to the shoulder though, followed by said shoulder going into the post.

There's a slingshot hilo and TJP holsters the finger guns. I still like this guy no matter how much he's loathed more often than not. Tozawa's shoulder is cranked in various painful looking ways before TJP just stands on his face. The fans want Enzo (mark Miami down as one of the dumb cities) as TJP gets two off a hammerlock belly to back suplex. I

love it when they mix up the offense like that. It's better than five armbars.

A double arm crank doesn't get TJP very far but a kick to the head gets two. Tozawa is back up with a boot to the face of his own, followed by a snap Saito suplex. A suicide dive is good for two but the top rope backsplash is easily broken up. TJP sends him arm first into the post and the Detonation Kick is good for the pin at 9:55.

Rating: C. I still like TJP a lot and that's likely to be the case for a good while. He's smooth in the ring and is a good, cocky heel who can either be pushed or put someone over in almost any given circumstance. Unless he was injured, I'm not sure why he was on the shelf so long as he's someone who should be around more often. Hopefully Tozawa doesn't take his place on the list of talented people who are stuck on the sidelines for no logical reason.

Goldust comes up to Cedric Alexander in the back. After admitting that he's not under 205 pounds, Goldust talks about how he's here to help Cedric on his quest for gold. They could be a great team! Like Turner and Hooch! I know Enzo is out with the flu at the moment, but sweet goodness there was no one better than GOLDUST to replace him? That's really the best option they have? That's how much they think of this show?

Here's Jack Gallagher to demand a rematch with Hideo Itami. First though, we see a clip of Itami injuring Gallagher's friend Brian Kendrick. After looking at the clip multiple times, here's Itami for the match, only to have Gallagher beat him down with the umbrella. Itami falls down in short order and a pipe falls out of the umbrella. No match of course. That's quite the dastardly act and does the right thing here in getting Gallagher over more than anyone else in the whole thing.

The Zo Train says last night was an injustice because their open challenge was only for people on the 205 Live roster. Goldust comes up and insults their breath. Keep bringing that star power buddy.

[Ariya Daivari/Drew Gulak vs. Cedric Alexander/Goldust](#)

Cedric and Daivari feels each other out to start until Daivari pulls him

down by the hair. That earns him a dropkick though and it's off to an armbar. The fans want Goldust and get their wish as he cranks on Gulak's arm for a change. Goldust tries to run the ropes but stops for a second because he needs to catch his breath in a funny bit.

For some reason Daivari stands there before kneeling him in the ribs (Politeness maybe?) and hands it off to Gulak for an armbar. We hit the chinlock for a bit until Cedric sends Daivari into the buckle. There's no tag though and Cedric is sent face first in as well, cutting off whatever momentum he had built up.

It's back to the chinlock as Nigel sends well wishes to Enzo. Cedric is sent into the steps and let's hit that chinlock all over again. The Neutralizer finally gets Cedric out of trouble and the hot tag brings in Goldust. House is cleaned and Goldust powerslams both villains. A blind tag brings in Cedric with the springboard clothesline and Goldust helps him on a big flip dive. The Lumbar Check finishes Gulak at 11:55.

Rating: D. Didn't we pretty firmly establish this last night? It's no secret that Goldust and Cedric (or Cedric and a stuffed turtle at this point) can beat these goons but since WE MUST WAIT ON ENZO, this is all they can do anymore. It's almost like the NXT: Redemption season where they would just throw people out there (including Goldust actually) when they needed to extend a story. Pretty dull match, mainly because everything was already established the night before.

Overall Rating: D-. And that right there is why Enzo is a major, major problem on this show. There's really nothing else of value on the show and if he's gone, there's almost nothing important happening on the show. Due to multiple reasons now, we've been sitting around waiting on Cedric vs. Enzo, which will hopefully FINALLY get us back to a normal show around here. The problem though is if Enzo retains, we're stuck waiting on another challenger to rise up and take the title.

Without Enzo around, there's really no point in this show existing, and that's not even considering that it's become 2011 Smackdown: a place where you put Raw rematches for the sake of filling in TV time because there's nothing else to air. Bring some people up from NXT for some one

off appearances, have some crazy five way elimination match, do the freaking challenges from the original NXT or whatever. Just do SOMETHING more interesting than this waste of time.

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205 Live: Where the Cruiserweights Are These Days

205 Live

Date: December 26, 2017

Location: Allstate Arena, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

We're continuing the slow crawl towards the Cedric Alexander vs. Enzo Amore Cruiserweight Title match, which of course is taking place on Monday Night Raw instead of 205 Live. As has been mentioned, it's clear that this show is little more than a filler show anymore and that's not fixing any of its problems. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Enzo Amore having issues with the Zo Train and having Cedric Alexander pick the members off without much trouble.

Cedric comes up to Drew Gulak, who is waiting on Enzo (his best friend) to call. Drew tells him to mind his own business but Cedric says it'll be a wonderful life when Enzo is no longer champion. Cedric talks about how much better things will be once Enzo is out of power and Drew seems to entertain the thought.

Opening sequence.

Hideo Itami vs. Jack Gallagher

Before the match, Gallagher promises to avenge his friend in front of these Chicago pillocks. Nigel says he's faced a lot of opponents in his career but he was always scared of Itami. I love it when wrestlers mention their careers like that as it reminds you that they actually do have a perspective that can matter in a match like this. Itami knees him in the ribs and again demands respect.

The kick to the face keeps Gallagher in trouble and a Fameasser with Gallagher on the middle rope gives us another respect demand. If you have to shout it three times less than two minutes into the match, it's time for a better catchphrase. Gallagher ties him up in the ring skirt to take over though and we hit a quickly broken chinlock.

Instead it's a cravate to keep Itami in trouble and we're right back to the chinlock. Itami finally grabs a dragon screw legwhip and there's the tornado DDT across the top rope. Back up and Gallagher pulls him into the Captain's Hook but Itami makes the rope. The running corner dropkick rocks Gallagher and a Rings of Saturn (with a leg wrapped around Gallagher's head) is good for the tap at 7:38.

Rating: D+. Itami just doesn't have the fire that he needs and it's showing more every time. Throw in the lack of the GTS (which hopefully isn't permanent) and there's just not much to look forward to with him. He's not the biggest guy in the world and he has limited charisma. He's tailor suited to be the assassin style heel but for some reason he's stuck in this lame face role. Oh right: Enzo has to be the top heel. What was I thinking?

Video on Tony Nese's issues with the Zo Train, leading to him getting

beaten down by the team.

Nese wants to take the Zo Train out but he understands that Enzo is a global superstar and the money is more than worth it. Akira Tozawa comes up to ask about Nese's status and gets punched out. To recap: Enzo is the star and everyone else on 205 Live is a worthless nobody. Good to know.

Tony Nese vs. Akira Tozawa

That's quite the fast turnaround. Tozawa charges in with some right hands at the bell but Nese hammers him down in the corner. The fake out right hand smacks Nese in the jaw though and Tozawa scores with his backsplash. Nese kicks him in the head though and drops some legs for good measure.

We hit the neck crank and then a chinlock with a bodyscissors to really keep Tozawa down. Tozawa finally comes back with a suplex and now the suicide dive connects. Back in and a good looking pumphandle sitout powerslam gives Nese two but he gets kicked in the head over and over. Tozawa's top rope backsplash is broken up though and the running knee gives Nese the pin at 6:48.

Rating: C. Tozawa is far more charismatic than Itami and it's no surprise that I liked his match more. Nese on the other hand is in a weird place as he should be teasing a face turn but I think WWE knows that it would be career suicide. He needs a little more development too as you can only go so far with great abs.

We look at Alexa Bliss breaking up Nia Jax and Enzo's kiss on Monday.

Drew Gulak/Ariya Daivari vs. Cedric Alexander/Mustafa Ali

Before the match, Gulak asks how we are doing. Drew thinks we need a Best Of list and that means a look back at his best slide. What better way to do that than with a POWERPOINT PRESENTATION??? Cedric cuts him off again and Nigel wants to know who is in charge of music.

Alexander points out that we're in Mustafa's hometown and Ali has some valid points of his own to make. Ali says these two would never be friends outside of the Zo Train because Daivari is the kind of guy who would look down on a blue collar scrapper like Gulak. All that matters is

Enzo would pick Nia Jax over the Zo Train every time, which doesn't sit well with the villains.

Ali and Daivari start things off with Ariya hammering away with Daivari getting armdragged into an armbar. It's off to Cedric and Drew, who fight over a wristlock of their own. Ali comes back in with some hard chops but Daivari offers a distraction so Gulak can drop Mustafa from behind. We hit the neck crank and the hometown fans are WAY behind Ali here.

Back up and Ali makes the hot tag for some house cleaning but Alexander gets kneed out to the floor. Alexander gets in a kick to the head though and it's a hot tag off to Ali, though the fans don't seem thrilled. A corkscrew flip dive to Daivari wakes them up a bit more and the rolling X Factor gets two. Daivari takes Ali up top but Gulak tells him nothing off the top. That earns Gulak a Lumbar Check and the 054 puts Daivari away at 8:51.

Rating: C. Now stop me if you've seen this one before, but odds are you've seen this one before. There's only so much interest to be had in a match (or a show for that matter) when everything of note happens on Raw anymore. The title contenders were crowned on Raw, the #1 contenders match was on Raw and now the title match is going to be on Raw.

Overall Rating: D+. There's just nothing going on around here and that's quite the shame. Enzo being gone continues to be a problem whether he's here or not. When he's here, he dominates the entire show and nothing else matters. When he's not here, almost none of the stories goes anywhere because there's no point to them without Enzo around. Given that your big story is basically "Enzo is awesome and none of us matter", that's not the biggest surprise. This was another skippable show, which isn't going to be made any better when the title match is on Raw, but that's where 205 is these days.

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Main Event – December 28, 2017: The Old Stuff Was Better

Main Event

Date: December 28, 2017

Location: Allstate Arena, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

We'll wrap up Chicago week here with a recap of everything else that has happened so far. This Monday's episode of Raw was surprisingly eventful for a Christmas night show (not that there's much to compare it to) and Smackdown was your run of the mill episode. That could mean a mixed bag here so let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Kalisto vs. Tony Nese

Nese says hang on a second because he needs to give these fans the Christmas gift of posing. Kalisto does the same thing and gets kicked in the ribs for his efforts because Nese isn't very nice. A toss to the floor allows Kalisto to backflip into his pose, followed by a hurricanrana back inside.

Nese runs him over though and we hit the bodyscissors to slow things down. One heck of a clothesline gives Nese two but a springboard

crossbody and a moonsault press give Kalisto two of his own. A sitout pumphandle powerslam gives Nese the same but he makes the mistake of grabbing Kalisto from behind, setting up the Salida Del Sol for the pin at 5:46.

Rating: C-. Overall Grinch-esque tendencies of Nese for rejecting Kalisto's gift aside, this was your standard Main Event cruiserweight match: not too long and simple stuff until the good guy won. I don't remember the last time a heel won the cruiserweight match on this show but you can probably count them on one hand.

From Raw!

Speaking of Cena, here he is to open things up. Actually hang on a second as Cena says there's something that needs to change. Cena goes outside and says someone is wearing the wrong colors. He takes off his hat and shirt and hands them to a kid with some sort of a disability who is wearing his old orange gear. And that is why Cena comes off as a superhero and is just flat out awesome to boot.

That earns a MERRY CHRISTMAS chant and Cena talks about how WWE is like a family. However, he wants to say cheers to the good and bad times, but cheers on a special day like today. Cue Elias to interrupt for his big spot of getting a rub from Cena. John actually agrees to walk with him but they get cut off by a CM Punk chant. Elias: "CM Punk ain't gonna interrupt me."

Cena says we need to have some fun tonight and grabs a chair so Elias can perform. The lights go down and Elias is about to play but the CM PUNK chants cut him off again. The song starts and of course it insults Chicago so Cena cuts him off and says hit the lights. Cena thinks Elias is the real jerk because he keeps insulting every city he's in.

Elias thinks Cena might be right and offers to do the song again if Chicago will give him a second chance. He sings again and this time sings a rather nice version before handing it off to Cena for "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas". Cena starts off but gets punched in the face for his efforts. Elias goes to leave but comes back to stomp away and challenges Cena to a match right now. A referee is fine with this and

we're ready to go.

We see less than a minute of the fifteen minute match where Cena won with the AA.

Video on Samoa Joe.

From Raw again.

Jason Jordan comes in to see Kurt Angle but Seth Rollins cuts them off, saying he wants to face Samoa Joe tonight. In a repeat of the same thing he does every week, Jordan says he wants his match against Joe. Angle suggests that they team up to deal with the Bar first but neither seems interested. Kurt makes the match anyway and puts the titles on the line. The two of them leave and Roman Reigns comes in. Angle gives him Joe tonight, with the Intercontinental Title on the line.

We see the end of Roman Reigns vs. Samoa Joe for the Intercontinental Title. Reigns lost via DQ but beat Joe up after the match.

Video on Braun Strowman vs. Kane vs. Brock Lesnar.

Revival vs. Apollo Crews/Titus O'Neil

Is Tozawa still part of Titus Worldwide? I really can't remember the last time I saw him with the rest of the team. Titus shoves Dash into the corner to start and then does it again, this time with an overhand chop. Crews comes in and eats a forearm to the face before missing a dropkick. A double suplex is broken up by Titus and Dash is knocked outside as we take a break. Back with Crews enziguring Dawson, only to walk into the Shatter Machine for the pin at 7:05.

Rating: C. I could watch the Revival hit that Shatter Machine for at least five minutes straight. Titus Worldwide is a team that can put people over but what WWE seems to forget is they have to actually win a few matches before that means anything. Put them over some lower level teams (get jobbers or something) and then these wins mean something more. Other than that though, it's more spinning of the wheels.

We look back at Dolph Ziggler laying down the US Title.

We look at the first two matches of the US Title tournament.

Quick look at the end of AJ Styles vs. Kevin Owens.

Quick look at the end of Jordan/Rollins winning the Tag Team Titles on Monday.

Overall Rating: D. This was too crammed together for my taste and it made the show a lot less entertaining than it should have been otherwise. Throwing in quick clips of the matches covers more but doesn't exactly give you much context. Granted a lot of that was due to showing the ENTIRE Cena vs. Elias promo, which ate up so much time. Not a terrible show but I like the older format more.

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Main Event – December 22, 2017: Even Dana Brooke Can't

Help

Main Event

Date: December 21, 2017

Location: Dunkin Donuts Center, Providence, Rhode Island

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Vic Joseph

We're almost to the end of the year here and hopefully the show does well on the way to 2018. Thankfully we have a lot of clips from both shows this week, but Smackdown might not be the most thrilling option in the world. I think you can guess what's going to get the focus from Raw though. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Kalisto vs. Ariya Daivari

Kalisto does a standing backflip to start and Daivari isn't sure what to think. A standing hurricanrana and an armdrag out of the corner send Daivari outside for a flip dive. Back in and Daivari gets in a cheap shot to escape the Salida Del Sol and grabs a quickly broken chinlock. An abdominal stretch keeps Kalisto in trouble until he slips out and tries a sleeper. Daivari has had it with these holds and grabs a spinebuster for two instead. The frog splash misses though and the hurricanrana driver plants Daivari. Back up and Daivari talks trash, setting up the Salida Del Sol to give Kalisto the pin at 6:03.

Rating: C-. Daivari is fine in the ring but basically a black hole of charisma. There's only so much you can do to overcome that and we're nowhere near the point where Daivari is going to pull that trick off. Kalisto is still the same guy he's been for a long time but that finisher is going to carry him as far as he needs to go.

From Raw.

Here's Kurt Angle to get things going. He recaps last week's main event as well (they really need to stop doing that just after we watched a video saying the same thing) and promises to solve the problem by the end

of the night. Strowman comes out to say he should get the shot, followed by Kane to do the same. Before anything can happen, Paul Heyman comes out to say Lesnar needs to be involved in this. Brock hits the ring and Angle speeds through an announcement of the triple threat at the Rumble so he can get out. Lesnar cleans house and F5's Kane.

From Smackdown.

Here's Bryan to get things going. After mentioning the women's Royal Rumble, he plugs tonight's main event. Cue Shane and it's time for the awkward conversation. They talk about Sunday's match and Shane says the emotions got the better of him. When he was about to count the three, he thought of Owens beating his father up and the two of them screwing Smackdown at Survivor Series.

Bryan cheated too though, and Shane wants to know why. Daniel says he did it to protect Shane from himself, which Shane says he doesn't need. What Bryan did on Sunday was to protect their idea: making this place the land of opportunity for everyone, not just the people Shane likes. Shane warns Bryan that Sami and Kevin will turn on him when they've gotten what they can out of him. Bryan accuses Shane of doing what's best for business, and if that's the case, fire him now because he doesn't want to see Shane turn into Mr. McMahon. Shane teases firing him but says he'll let Daniel run the show tonight.

And from later in the same night.

Randy Orton/Shinsuke Nakamura/AJ Styles vs. Jinder Mahal/Kevin Owens/Sami Zayn

Rematch from Tribute to the Troops. Orton and Mahal get things going but everything breaks down before anything happens. Everyone winds up on the floor with Orton bouncing Mahal off the announcers' table. Back in where Nakamura is driven into the wrong corner so Sami can start in on the arm. Nakamura lays on Sami's chest on the ropes and pulls his chest hair out for a rare bit of offense. Orton drapes Sami over the top rope for two and it's back to Mahal. The referee tells him thirty seconds and about thirty seconds later we go to a break with Owens stomping on Orton.

Back with Orton fighting out of a chinlock and bringing AJ in to...get sent outside in short order. Sami gets in some right hands for two of his own as the villains start taking turns on Styles. AJ DDT's his way to freedom and brings in Nakamura for the real house cleaning. A series of kicks and knees to the head rock Sami and that means Good Vibrations. More strikes look to set up the exploder but Nakamura settles for a cross armbreaker instead.

Owens is right there with the backplash for the save but gets sent outside. Everything breaks down again with AJ slingshotting onto Owens with the forearm. The Singh Brothers break up the Kinshasa but only get ejected instead of drawing a DQ. Not that it matters as Mahal eats an RKO, drawing them back to ringside. That means a double draping DDT, a Phenomenal Forearm for Owens and Kinshasa for the pin on Sami at 15:21.

Rating: C+. Standard house show main event here and that's fine enough. I like the idea of Nakamura getting some feature time for a change as he could become a big time player in the main event scene soon enough if need be. That being said, was there ANY reason for Sami to take the pin here instead of Mahal? Come on already.

Apollo Crews vs. Curt Hawkins

Crews armdrags him into an armbar to start as the announcers talk about the 145 match losing streak. I'd pay to see his performance evaluation. Back up and Crews flips over Hawkins, sending him out for a breather. For some reason Hawkins lays down for Crews, only to try to pull him in for a small package. Back in and Crews is sent shoulder first into the post and we take a break. Back with Crews getting two off a standing moonsault and putting Hawkins on top. That just means a sunset bomb for two, followed by the Toss Powerbomb to end Curt at 8:42.

Rating: D+. Can we please find someone else to beat Hawkins up? We've covered this one about as long as possible and it's not getting any better. Even having Dana Brooke as the secretary/analyst on the floor didn't help here as there's only so much you can do with a pairing like this.

Video on Stephanie McMahon announcing the Women's Royal Rumble, plus

reactions to the announcement.

From Raw.

Seth Rollins vs. Jason Jordan

Joe is at ringside. Jordan wrestles him to the mat for a bit until Rollins superkicks him in the ribs. A clothesline knocks Jordan at Joe's feet and we take a break. Back with Jordan working on the back off some Irish whips into the corner. It's off to a chinlock with a knee in the back before the running shoulder in the corner gets two.

Jordan gets in another suplex and we take a break. Back again with Rollins getting in some offense of his own, including the springboard clothesline. Jordan clotheslines him down again but gets knocked outside for a suicide dive. The second springboard clothesline is countered into rolling northern lights suplexes for two more as this keeps going.

Jordan takes him up top but gets shoved down, setting up the frog splash for two more. They head outside with the Wind-Up Knee smashing into Jordan's face. Seth throws Jordan into Joe before superkicking the Samoan down. Back in and the Wind-Up Knee finishes Jordan at 19:49.

Rating: B-. WAY longer than necessary here and another match that showcased the problem with Jordan: he can have good matches but he's one of the most annoying, whiny characters around. The good thing is they seem primed to turn him heel (the right move) so it might get better, but for now he's being rather annoying.

And from later in the show.

The Bar/Samoa Joe vs. Seth Rollins/Dean Ambrose/Jason Jordan

Jordan tags himself in and gets to face Sheamus, who clotheslines his head off. The triple stomping sets up a Sheamus knee drop for two as Jordan is in trouble. Back from a break with Rollins in trouble this time, including a Demolition Decapitator for two. The Irish Curse keeps Seth down but a DDT gives him a little hope. Joe breaks up the hot tag attempt though and hits the corner enziguri.

Sheamus goes shoulder first into the post but Rollins still can't make the tag. Everything breaks down with a big brawl on the floor with Ambrose cleaning house. Cesaro cuts off another hot tag attempt but Dean comes in anyway. A big suicide dive cuts everyone off but Dean is holding his elbow. The referee calls the doctor over and a very quick Brogue Kick ends Rollins at 13:30.

Rating: C. Well that's not good. They went straight to the finish and while they did keep the camera on Dean longer than they usually would in an injury, that seemed a bit too realistic. Hopefully he's not hurt and doesn't have to miss any time, though given how things have gone for the Shield it wouldn't surprise me.

Joe and the Bar attack Rollins and Ambrose, including crushing the bad arm with an anvil case.

Overall Rating: C-. The lack of Smackdown material is far from surprising as there just wasn't enough going on Tuesday to warrant a spot here. The Women's Royal Rumble is the biggest story of the week and that deserves a lot of attention on this show. Just having a little Smackdown stuff helped though and that's what this show has been needing. Well, one of many things but it's a start.

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205 Live – December 19, 2017: Maybe Gulak Does Make a Better 205 Live

205 Live

Date: December 19, 2017

Location: Prudential Center, Newark, New Jersey

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Vic Joseph

The big story tonight is the (second) debut of Hideo Itami, who made his main roster debut last night on Raw in further proof of the fact that 205 Live really doesn't need to exist. Other than that we have a new #1 contender in the form of Cedric Alexander in a title match with a date to be announced. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last night's #1 contenders match. Again: why does this show exist when the big story happens on Raw?

Opening sequence.

Tonight: a rematch of Alexander vs. Gulak. THIS SHOW DOES NOT NEED TO BE AROUND!

Kalisto/Gran Metalik vs. Brian Kendrick/Jack Gallagher

Before the match, Kendrick talks about Metalik getting involved in their business last week. Kalisto nips out of Kendrick's wristlock to start but doesn't have as much luck with a top wristlock. Some chops put Kalisto in the corner but he comes out with kicks and a headscissors. Nothing wrong with some lucha. Metalik comes in for the rope walk crossbody but gets kicked in the face to cut him off.

Not that it matters as he rope walks into a dropkick to Gallagher, setting up the double flip dives to the floor. Back in and Gallagher ties

Metalik in the Tree of Woe (because you should be doing that fifteen seconds after a big high spot) for the running dropkick before starting in on the leg. Kendrick comes in for a half crab before shifting to just pulling on the leg. It's back to Gallagher for more leg pulling as this match is rapidly dying.

Kendrick takes him to the top, only to get pulled down into a faceplant. The hot tag brings in Kalisto with a springboard seated senton and a double armdrag. The hurricanrana driver and the Salida Del Sol get two with Kendrick making the save. That's actually enough as the match is thrown out at 8:56.

Rating: C. The match wasn't the worst but that leg work in the middle destroyed the crowd's entrance. It doesn't help when you've seen some combination of these four have very similar matches for far too long now and it's not getting any better. They need to mix things up a bit, or just let them fight some fresh opponents. I know it's crazy but maybe they could TALK about their issues to hype up the matches a bit. That's nuts right?

Post match Kendrick and Gallagher use the steps to crush Metalik's leg.

Enzo yells at Gulak and Ariya Daivari for Cedric getting the title shot. Gulak takes the blame and says he can make up for it by taking Cedric out tonight. Enzo tells Daivari to show some emotion. As usual, Gulak is one of the best things about this show without doing anything more than making simple things look good through delivery.

Hideo Itami vs. Colin Delaney

Itami wastes no time in kicking Colin down before shouting RESPECT ME. The tornado DDT into a neck snap across the rope sets up the top rope clothesline. Itami hits a running corner dropkick and the GTS is good for the pin at 1:51. Total and complete squash, as it should have been.

We look back at Tony Nese standing up to Enzo and getting beaten down as a result.

Enzo says that was a learning experience. Cedric comes in and Enzo mocks

him for needing a second chance to qualify for the title match. Alexander says if Enzo was so great, he wouldn't need the Zo Train. There's only one word to describe him. Enzo: "Champion."

Cedric Alexander vs. Drew Gulak

Enzo is with Gulak. Before the match, Drew says there will be no chanting and tonight he'll only make one PowerPoint. Tonight, he'll overpower Cedric and make a salient point. They fight over a lockup to start until a palm strike drops Alexander in the corner. It's off to the knee with Gulak dropping some elbows and grabbing a leglock.

Cedric fights up and kicks him in the face, only to get chopped and kicked down again. That's quite different for Gulak and it's kind of working for me. Drew takes him outside for a posting before we hit the chinlock. That's switched into an armbar with Drew wrapping his leg around Cedric's face for a little bonus. Cedric fights back with a string of clotheslines, followed by a flip dive dropkick to the chest (cool) to knock Gulak silly.

Gulak is rocked but manages to avoid the C4. A clothesline gets two on Cedric and Enzo is elated. Cedric is right back with the bottom rope springboard Downward Spiral but gets tripped down into that seated STF. Drew shifts it over into a crossface chickenwing but Cedric makes the rope. Back up and Alexander loads him up for a superplex, only to be shoved back down. Drew slowly climbs down, allowing Cedric to grab the Lumbar Check for the pin at 11:53.

Rating: B. I had a blast with this one as they had one of the best matches 205 Live has put together in a long time. Gulak is getting better in the ring every single week and Cedric is always fun to watch. They were having some extra energy this time around and it was much better than their Raw match. Again though, if you're going to have a better version of the same match, why in the world did you do the first one on Raw?

Daivari tries to run in but gets a Lumbar Check as well.

Overall Rating: B. Good show this week, Raw induced problems aside. The

one thing I'm worried about is how long they want to stretch out Enzo vs. Cedric. They couldn't possibly try to get this all the way to the Rumble right? I mean, I'd be fine with the match taking place on the first Raw of the year but there's not enough stuff to build to what should be a one sided match. Gulak vs. Alexander was very good and Hideo's debut was solid, making this one of the better shows they've done.

Results

Brian Kendrick/Jack Gallagher vs. Kalisto/Gran Metalik went to a double DQ when all four brawled in the ring

Hideo Itami b. Colin Delaney – GTS

Cedric Alexander b. Drew Gulak – Lumbar Check

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Tribute to the Troops 2017: It Is What It Is

[Tribute to the Troops 2017](#)

Date: December 14, 2017

Location: Naval Station San Diego, San Diego, California

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole, Byron Saxton

It's the fifteenth annual special and that's rather impressive. You never can know what to expect from these but it's always cool to see WWE do something like this. The wrestling means very little at this show and there's going to be a lot of filler but to complain about that would be missing the point. Let's get to it.

The show is outside again for the first time in a good many years for a very cool setting.

Lillian Garcia performs the National Anthem at her usual amazing standard.

We look at a history of the show.

Shield vs. Samoa Joe/The Bar

Rollins and Reigns start things off with the troops in the audience telling Sheamus he'll get sunburned. Some rapid fire elbows have Cesaro in trouble and it's off to Dean for more of the same. Ambrose gets caught in the wrong corner though and it's Joe hammering away. Everything breaks down and it's the Shield cleaning house in short order. Back from a break with Rollins hitting a suicide dive and making the hot tag to Reigns. Everything breaks down again with Reigns Superman Punching Cesaro for two. The Wind-Up knee into Dirty Deeds drops Sheamus and it's a spear to end Cesaro at 9:49.

Rating: C. I'm going to be a lot more lenient on the wrestling tonight because like I said, it's just not the point. I'd be stunned if a heel wins tonight because this is the definition of a send them home happy show. You're going to see these teams fight again on a big stage at some point and this was a nice preview.

Post match Reigns says the Shield brings the fight but the people in the audience here bring the big fight. Rollins and Ambrose say similar things and everyone smiles.

The cast of Star Wars loves the troops.

Clips of John Cena's involvement with the troops over the years.

Carmella vs. Charlotte vs. Ruby Riott

Non-title with most of the division on the floor. Ruby bails to the floor to start before sneaking back in to jump Charlotte from behind. Charlotte gets in a few shots of her own but here's Natalya to offer a distraction as we take a break. Back with Charlotte making a comeback but getting caught on top. Carmella pulls Ruby down and hits a Stratusphere for two on Charlotte and things slow down. Charlotte is back up with a double suplex and the rapid fire chops. A big boot sets up the Figure Eight to make Carmella tap at 10:04.

Rating: C. More of the same here with the face dominating and pulling off a win without much effort. Above all else though, how nice is it that the women aren't in the Santa's Little Helpers matches or whatever they want to call it this time? It's really cool to see them have an actual match, even if it's something this simple.

Charlotte thanks the troops, particularly the women.

Package of the wrestlers with the troops.

The cast of Pitch Perfect 3 love the troops.

Luke Bryan loves the troops.

Stephen Colbert loves the troops.

Machine Gun Kelly performs.

The cast of Daddy's Home 2 loves the troops.

Sgt. Slaughter doesn't want a fake Marine like Miz pretending to be the real thing. Dolph Ziggler is here too but doesn't have much to say. Mark Henry comes in to tell Sarge to keep at it.

New Day/Usos vs. Shelton Benjamin/Chad Gable/Rusev/Aiden English

Before the match, New Day changes up their signature chant to a USA version. Big E. hits the abdominal stretch with some spanking on Gable to start and it's off to Jey for a running Umaga Attack. Jey gets sent outside and into the barricade though as we take a break. Back with Rusev keeping Jey in trouble and Shelton coming in for a hard spinebuster. The Samoan drop allows the hot tag to Jimmy so house can be cleaned. Everything breaks down and the Midnight Hour puts Shelton away at 8:03.

Rating: C-. New Day was a requirement on a show like this as the fans are going to eat them up and the chants are always fun. It was perfectly fine with the right guy taking the fall and the right team winning. If nothing else it's cool to see English getting a chance to do something with that sweet voice of his.

The cast of Ferdinand loves the troops.

The cast of This Is Us loves the troops.

The cast of the Today Show loves the troops.

Sasha Banks/Bayley/Mickie James vs. Absolution

Mandy shoves Bayley into the corner to start but gets forearmed away for her efforts. Mickie comes in to kick away at Sonya and a running forearm gets two. Everything breaks down and they fight on the floor as we take a break. Back with Mandy kneeing Bayley in the face for two but getting caught in a Stunner. Sasha comes in for the running knees in the corner but Sonya makes a save. Mickie's top rope Thesz press gets two on Paige and she dives onto the other two for good measure. Not that it matters as a quick Rampaige ends Mickie at 10:06.

Rating: C+. If any heels were going to win tonight, this makes the most sense. Absolution needs to stay strong, which includes a match like this. The match was rather energetic and it's fine to have Mickie take a fall as that's pretty much all her job entails at the moment. Of course none of this matters for the most part as Asuka is the big target but we'll get to her soon enough.

Stormtroopers were at the base today as Star Wars: The Last Jedi debuts

this weekend.

Machine Gun Kelly performs again.

Clint Eastwood loves the troops.

The cast of Father Figures loves the troops.

Randy Orton/Shinsuke Nakamura/AJ Styles vs. Jinder Mahal/Sami Zayn/Kevin Owens

Orton wastes no time with the threat of an RKO to send Owens bailing to the floor. Back from a break with Owens stomping at Orton long enough that he can bring Mahal in. Nakamura comes in for the knees to the ribs, including the big knee drop for no cover. Mahal takes him into the corner for a bit but Nakamura fights away and gets it back to Styles.

The belly to back faceplant gets two on Owens and Mahal has to break up the Calf Crusher. Orton DDTs both Singh Brothers but walks into a superkick from Owens. Nakamura and Zayn come in as everything breaks down. We hit the parade of finishers, capped off by Kinshasa for the pin on Sami at 10:18.

Rating: C+. Like there was any doubt in this one. Nakamura might not have gotten the best reaction in the world but he has a good looking finisher and this isn't exactly a normal show. Styles and Orton were crazy over of course and there's nothing like beating up three foreigners to end the show.

One last music tribute wraps things up.

Overall Rating: C+. As you might expect, the ratings here mean nothing. This is like wondering what the audience is for a Best Of show or something like that. Tribute to the Troops is for the live crowd and there's nothing wrong with that idea. The wrestling doesn't matter and as long as there's a good atmosphere, which there was, everything is fine.

Results

Shield b. Samoa Joe/The Bar – Spear to Cesaro

Charlotte b. Carmella and Ruby Riott – Figure Eight to Carmella

New Day/Usos b. Shelton Benjamin/Chad Gable/Rusev/Aiden English –
Midnight Hour to Benjamin

Absolution b. Mickie James/Bayley/Sasha Banks – Rampaige to James

Randy Orton/AJ Styles/Shinsuke Nakamura b. Sami Zayn/Kevin Owens/Jinder
Mahal – Kinshasa to Zayn

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Main Event – December 14, 2017: This Is How You Remind Me

Main Event

Date: December 14, 2017

Location: Quicken Loans Arena, Cleveland, Ohio

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

It's the go home show for Clash of Champions 2017 and for once that might

mean something around here. The recent change towards having Smackdown clips as well as Raw stuff is a nice idea and that's a very cool thing for the time being. Maybe we can even build towards the pay per view a bit. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Curt Hawkins vs. Rhyno

Feeling out process to start until Rhyno scores with some chops and an elbow. Hawkins is right back with a clothesline for two but stops to pose. Nigel isn't pleased with Hawkins' offensive choices and we hit the chinlock. Rhyno fights up without much effort and runs Hawkins over again. The spinebuster is good for the pin on Hawkins at 5:04.

Rating: D. I'm not even sure what to say about these matches anymore, though to be fair I'm not sure there's supposed to be much to say about them in the first place. Hawkins losing is a guarantee but you can pretty much write out every Rhyno match for the rest of his career. It's not a horrible match or anything but it's the same thing we've seen so many times now.

From Raw.

Intercontinental Title: Roman Reigns vs. Cesaro

Reigns is defending and starts fast with uppercuts and clotheslines. They fight to the floor and we take an early break. Back with Cesaro cranking on the arm after swinging it into the barricade for a sick thud during the commercial. Reigns fights out with a backslide for two, followed by a rollup. That's reversed into a Fujiwara armbar and then a regular armbar. Reigns fights up again and hits the apron kick to the face for two, only to get pulled into a Crossface.

Reigns reverses into a Samoan drop for two, only to be sent HARD into the post. It doesn't seem to matter that much though as Reigns scores with a Superman punch off the apron. The arm won't let him follow up properly though, allowing Cesaro to grab another Crossface. The Swing is reversed into a sitout powerbomb for two more but Reigns can't follow up. Cesaro

slugs away in the corner but the Neutralizer is countered with a backdrop, followed by the spear to retain the title at 16:53.

Rating: B+. It's a long match but it actually needed a little more time. I would have liked a lot more of Reigns fighting back and something better than "spear, ow my arm, pin". Cesaro working on the arm for that long looked like it was going somewhere but then they just went to the finish. That being said, they beat the heck out of each other for a long time and it was a heck of a match. Just have a better finish and it's a classic.

From Raw again.

Video on Strowman vs. Kane.

Kane vs. Braun Strowman

The winner gets Lesnar at the Rumble. Strowman wastes no time by splashing Kane in the corner, followed by a running dropkick for one. Kane avoids a charge though and a chokeslam gets two. Another chokeslam gets the same before Strowman chokeslams Kane for good measure. They fight into the crowd and Strowman spears Kane through the barricade for a double countout at 4:31.

Rating: C-. It was fun while it lasted in a Brock Lesnar vs. Goldberg at Wrestlemania kind of way but that's about all it had. I don't think anyone expected Kane to win here and Strowman not winning is likely a good idea, especially if it would have meant losing to Lesnar again at the Rumble. I really hope Lesnar does defend at the pay per view (assuming he's not injured or something) but this doesn't give me a lot of hope.

The fight continues post match with both guys picking up steps. Said steps are rammed together with Strowman getting the better of it but he can't crush Kane's throat again. Kane chairs Strowman in the knee and then the back, finally taking the monster down. Kane sets up a table but a double clothesline gives us a double situp. Strowman muscles him up for the powerslam through the table to end the show.

Video on the Riott Squad wrecking the Smackdown women's division.

Pay per view rundown.

Brian Kendrick/Jack Gallagher vs. Gran Metalik/Akira Tozawa

Gallagher and Tozawa get things going with Jack doing his headstand in the corner and jumping over a charging Tozawa. It's quickly off to Metalik vs. Kendrick with the masked man speeding things up, including a rope walk middle rope dropkick. Kendrick hits a super atomic drop of all things and we take a break. Back with the Metalik Driver getting two with Kendrick grabbing a Captain's Hook for the save. Everything breaks down and Metalik drops a rope walk elbow for the pin on Kendrick at 7:10. Not enough shown to rate but it was energetic while it lasted.

From Smackdown.

Here's Styles to open things up. He won the title a little over a month ago and wants to be a fighting champion. This Sunday he defends against Mahal and lists off what Mahal will do to get the title back, including bringing in Great Khali. Cue the Singh Brothers, who say they're not introducing Mahal tonight. We look back at Mahal attacking the two of them two weeks ago so AJ wants to hug it out. AJ: "Come hug it out with Uncle Al!"

The Brothers get in the ring and say they want to be in Mahal's corner on Sunday. One of them rants about how horrible Mahal is ("He thinks we're twins!") while the other tries to calm him down. AJ doesn't buy it and shows a still of the Brothers being in Mahal's corner this weekend in India. They swear they're done with Mahal, who comes out looking rather angry. AJ of course doesn't buy any of this (thank goodness) and lays the Brothers out.

And we'll wrap it up with more Smackdown.

Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Kevin Owens

Bryan is on commentary to continue a trend tonight. Owens grabs a headlock for a bit before getting kicked in the chest for his efforts. A knee to the ribs cuts Nakamura down though and a backsplash gets two. We

hit the chinlock as Bryan talks about how Shane's stipulations aren't exactly fair. Nakamura fights up but can't hit the knee in the corner. Instead he gets sent hard into the barricade as we take a break.

Back with Owens stomping away until Nakamura gets in a running kick to the face. Some YES Kicks have Owens in more trouble and there's Good Vibrations for a bonus. The running knee in the corner gets two but Owens breaks up a superplex. His Swanton hits knees but Owens blocks the reverse exploder. The referee gets bumped and Bryan takes over instead. Nakamura's spinning kick to the head gets a delayed two as Orton and Zayn get in a fight. The distraction lets Owens hit a Pop Up Powerbomb for the pin at 14:29.

Rating: C+. Good match, but the sledgehammer of plot didn't help things. This was supposed to be the smoking gun that proves Bryan is going to be biased on Sunday but it feels a bit forced. Granted some of that might have been Byron Saxton hammering home the same idea over and over again, which makes anything sound annoying. I would say I look forward to this story ending on Sunday but I'd be surprised if it's done by Wrestlemania at this point.

Kevin and Sami say no one is taking their careers away because they'll win at the Clash.

Overall Rating: D+. All this show did was reinforce how boring WWE TV has been as of late. On top of that it also shows how unnecessary Clash of Champions is, but never let that get in the way of putting a pay per view on for the sake of putting a pay per view on. This didn't do anything to change those issues and that's becoming a problem. Hopefully it gets better after next week but I wouldn't bet on it.

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205 Live – December 12, 2017: Check the Date on Enzo

205 Live

Date: December 12, 2017

Location: US Bank Arena, Cincinnati, Ohio

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

So you remember how last week's show was basically a placeholder before we got to the #1 contenders match on Raw this week? You remember how the first question a lot of people had was why is the #1 contenders match happening on Raw and not on the Cruiserweight show? Well we're in the exact same place this week. Let's get to it.

The opening recap looks at last night's Second Chance four way with Cedric Alexander earning a spot in Monday's #1 contenders match.

Opening sequence.

Before the first match, Drew Gulak is here with Ariya Daivari and says he's getting closer to his vision of a better 205 Live. Gulak compares Cedric to the Grinch for stealing Daivari's second chance and says tonight, Alexander is pounded into dirt. On to sadder news: Noam Dar has had to undergo knee surgery and will be missing some time. However, Drew has a 93 step plan for rehabilitation in the form of a POWERPOINT PRESENTATION! And never mind as we have another interruption.

[Cedric Alexander vs. Ariya Daivari](#)

Cedric wastes no time in working on a wristlock while Drew uses his bullhorn to tell the fans to stop chanting. A dropkick sets up the armbar as dueling WE LOVE CEDRIC/POWERPOINT chants start up. Cedric misses a springboard but Drew breaks up a dive while demanding that Alexander stay off that top rope.

Gulak gets in a cheap shot on the floor and the dueling chants begin again. A bulldog gives Daivari two and we hit the chinlock. Cedric fights up without much effort and elbows him in the face. It's too early for the Lumbar Check though and Daivari breaks up a Neuralizer. Instead it's a spinebuster to plant Cedric again but Daivari goes to the top. The frog splash gets two but the second Neuralizer attempt works just fine. Cedric Lumbar Checks him for the pin at 8:03.

Rating: C-. Acceptable but lifeless match here with Gulak stealing yet another show. The problem here was very clear: why would you have any other ending besides Alexander winning clean? He's going on to face Gulak on Monday in a big match and that made this a waste of time. Alexander is always worth a watch but with Raw being where the important stuff happens, it's hard to care about something like this.

We look back at last night's segment with Enzo looking to yell at Gulak but getting cut off by a lovesick Nia Jax.

Enzo yells at the Zo Train but Gulak apologizes for what he said last night. It's not impossible that he could become the next Cruiserweight Champion though. Enzo yells but Tony Nese cuts him off, only to have Enzo call him stupid. He built the Zo Train with his fist and built this show from the ground up. Things calm down a bit but Enzo says he wants the Zo Train at ringside when he faces Nese tonight.

Kalisto vs. Jack Gallagher

Before the match, Brian Kendrick talks about his dream of being Cruiserweight Champion in WWE. Since he lost the title, he hasn't been given a chance to get his title back. Kalisto showed up and got opportunity after opportunity though and that's not right. Gallagher tells Kalisto to watch his step or he'll springboard into a spider's web. Kalisto doesn't seem scared and we're ready to go.

A headlock takes Kalisto to the mat to start but he pops up and sends Gallagher into the corner without much effort. Gallagher gets dropkicked out to the floor but blocks a kick and sends Kalisto's leg into the post. Back in and Gallagher starts working on the knee like an evil Englishman should. The bad leg is wrapped around the ropes and a twist pulls it back down to the mat.

Jack even mocks the LUCHA dance before grabbing a Brock Lock. I can always appreciate it when someone mixes up their holds like this. There's no reason to keep doing the same stuff over and over, especially when you're billed as a submission specialist. Kalisto gets out and hits a middle rope moonsault press for two. The hurricanrana driver gets a delayed near fall of its own, followed by a nipup hurricanrana for the pin on Gallagher at 8:53.

Rating: C+. This would have been better if there was any reason to believe that Gallagher was going to win. You really can tell who is going to win most of these matches and that's the case far more around here than on any other show. There's a hierarchy around 205 Live and people like Gallagher, despite being immensely talented, is on the wrong end of it.

Post match the beatdown is on but Gran Metalik makes the save.

Gulak tries to talk Enzo out of the match with Nese, but Enzo promises a technical spectacle.

Hideo Itami arrives next week.

Enzo Amore vs. Tony Nese

Non-title. Nese doesn't seem thrilled with this, not even showing off his physique on the way to the ring. Before the match, Enzo calls the Zo Train an unbreakable unit, which seems to annoy Gulak. Enzo runs his mouth to start and shows off his foot speed. Trash is talked as there's no contact in the first minute and a half. Enzo finally slaps him and asks what Nese is thinking. Nese backs him into the corner but Daivari comes in for the DQ at 2:40.

The post match beatdown is on and Gulak really doesn't seem happy with any of this. Enzo loads up the Jordunzo but lets Nese go, telling Gulak to get in and prove his worth. Gulak finally gets on the apron as the fans aren't thrilled with this stuff. He gets in Enzo's face...and then kicks Nese down, albeit reluctantly. Now the fans are chanting THIS IS BORING as Gulak slaps Nese in the face a few times. Enzo puts his coat on and hits the Jordunzo (Oh no. Nese's head went down a full ten inches!) to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. What is the point of this show anymore? To fill in time before we get to the big stuff on Monday? In theory they're setting up Alexander winning on Monday and Gulak not helping Enzo in the title match (I'd be stunned if they put the title on Gulak) to get the title off of Amore, but they're beating Nese down to get there? This story might wind up making sense (it probably will) but egads they're making this show feel more and more worthless every week.

The other problem is Enzo himself. Back when he moved to 205 Live, I thought Enzo would have a short shelf life. We're already reaching that point. You can only go so long with the smoke and mirrors of him never wrestling or doing anything more than cutting funny promos. That's where we are now and he's bringing other people down with him. There's enough fresh blood and upgraded characters to make 205 Live every bit as worthless without Enzo around so just give us something new already.

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Main Event – December 7, 2017: I Don't Believe They'll Be Fine

Main Event

Date: December 7, 2017

Location: Valley View Casino, San Diego, California

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Vic Joseph

I'm hoping this idea of doing both Raw and Smackdown highlights continues as it's a lot better than just having the Raw stuff. Smackdown might not be the most thrilling show in the world but it certainly deserves some attention of its own. It's certainly better than most of the original content we get around here so let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Akira Tozawa vs. Brian Kendrick

They trade hammerlocks to start with Kendrick slapping the mat by mistake. Back up with Tozawa flipping out of a belly to back suplex and chopping away. Kendrick pulls him throat first into the middle rope to take over and it's off to a chinlock. Tozawa elbows his way out of what looks like a slam and a suicide dive gets two. A quick Captain's Hook is broken up without too much effort so Kendrick knees him in the chest for two. Tozawa kicks him in the head though and the top rope backplash is good for the pin at 6:33.

Rating: C. For a match without much time and with both guys having to rush, they got in a fair amount of stuff. It was nice to see Tozawa get a win, even if it's on a show like this which isn't going to get him anywhere. Kendrick will be fine and his feud with Kalisto will do him a lot of good, especially depending on who Kalisto brings in to help him.

From Raw.

Here's Kurt Angle to get things going. He's ready to announce that Roman Reigns will be defending the Intercontinental Title against....someone but Jason Jordan comes out to interrupt. He wants Reigns, despite his bad knee. Jordan lists off the people he's been in the ring with, bad knee or no bad knee. This brings out Reigns to say he wants Joe. Jordan still wants the shot so Reigns tells him to step up and take it. Now it's Joe coming out to say Reigns knows he can't beat him. Jordan actually suplexes Reigns so Roman says it's on right now.

Intercontinental Title: Roman Reigns vs. Jason Jordan

Reigns is defending and knocks Jordan outside to start. Back in and Jordan's right hands don't have much effect and Reigns clotheslines him outside again. Jordan fights out of a chinlock and drives Reigns into the corner four times in a row. The running shoulder doesn't work but Reigns is sent shoulder first into the post.

Back from a break with Jordan working on the arm and Samoa Joe watching from the stage. Reigns fights up and hits the corner clotheslines, only to walk into a dropkick for a near fall. They head outside again with Jordan driving him into the steps a few times. That's only good for two more though and we take a second break.

Back again with Reigns putting the bad knee in a half crab. Jordan reverses into a small package but gets his head taken off by the Superman Punch. Some rolling belly to belly suplexes (with the bad knee raised in the air) give Jordan two more but it's the spear to retain the title at 20:34.

Rating: B-. Jordan is a rather interesting case as he's death on the microphone but can put on an entertaining match. Reigns is in a similar place but his talking has gotten far better over time. Jordan might be able to get somewhere in due time but this character really, really isn't working. At least the match was good though.

Video on Absolution.

From Raw again.

Paige vs. Sasha Banks

Alexa Bliss is on commentary again and Banks has Bayley and Mickie with her. Sasha wastes no time in throwing Paige down and hammering away both on the mat and in the corner. Paige kicks her down and stomps away as well before hitting the chinlock. Some shouting sets up a front facelock as things stay slow.

Sasha fights up with a high crossbody for two before grabbing a cross arm choke. Paige makes the ropes so Sasha just hammers away to keep her in trouble. The Bank Statement is broken up and they fall out to the floor as we take a break. Back with Paige grabbing her front facelock as Bliss calls Cole rude for bringing up her leaving last week.

Banks fights up with a clothesline and some dropkicks, only to miss the running knees in the corner. Paige heads up top and catches Banks with a sunset bomb. The Rampaige is countered into the Bank Statement but Paige gets her foot under the rope. The other four get in a brawl on the floor though, allowing the Rampaige to put Banks away at 16:06.

Rating: B. Another good match here and the best thing is that Paige looked like she hadn't lost a step. This was her first match in a year and she was every bit as good as she used to be. Paige can be a very valuable asset to the division and if she can bring the other two up with her, then it's all the better.

Post match Absolution takes out the other two, including Rose gordbusting Banks onto DeVille's knee.

And now to Smackdown.

Randy Orton vs. Sami Zayn

Before the match, Bryan and security is ready to cuff Owens. Kevin says no, but Bryan threatens him with suspension. Orton wastes no time in taking Sami outside and dropping him back first onto the barricade. Sami starts running and hides next to Owens in a smart move. That's fine with Orton, who grabs Sami and bounces him off the announcers' table.

Owens offers a distraction though and Sami gets in a hard shot to take over for the first time. Some trash talk from Owens takes us to a break. Back with Sami stomping away and saying he's not afraid of the Viper. Sami snaps his throat across the bottom rope and pulls out some bolt cutters (which they just had laying around underneath the ring). Orton breaks it up before the chain can be cut but Sami posts him instead.

Back in and Sami gets crotched, setting up a top rope superplex to put both guys down. Owens grabs the cutters and gets free, only to be taken down by an Orton clothesline. The RKO is loaded up but Owens offers a distraction so Sami can get two. The RKO doesn't work but the Helluva Kick misses as well, allowing Orton to grab a rollup for the pin at 11:44.

Rating: C+. So to clarify: Orton can beat the two of them clean on his own so now we should totally be interested in watching him and a partner face off with Sami and Owens on pay per view. The idea should be that Orton can't handle these two because they keep cheating and using their numbers advantage but instead we get Orton pinning Sami when Owens interferes. Where's the logic in that?

Post match the beatdown is on until Shinsuke Nakamura makes the save. The heroes shake hands and we seem to have a partnership. Owens takes and RKO and Zayn gets a Kinshasa.

Heath Slater/Rhyno vs. Luke Gallows/Karl Anderson

Slater shoulders Anderson down to start and it's quickly off to Rhyno. This one doesn't go as well until Rhyno shoulders his way to freedom. House is cleaned and we take a break. Back with a double hot tag bringing in Slater and Anderson as things speed up. Rhyno is sent into the barricade, leaving Slater to take the Magic Killer for the pin at 6:25. Not enough to rate due to the commercial but it was fun while it lasted.

Video on AJ Styles vs. Jinder Mahal.

From Raw.

Tag Team Titles: Seth Rollins/Dean Ambrose vs. The Bar

The Bar is defending. Ambrose armdrags Cesaro down to start but it's off to Sheamus to take over. A double kick to the ribs has Dean in trouble and we hit the choking on the ropes. That doesn't last long though as Dean leapfrogs over Sheamus and makes the hot tag off to Rollins. The Sling Blade give Seth two but Sheamus posts him as we take a break.

Back with Seth not being able to get away as the champs clothesline him down. The ten forearms to the chest rock Seth again and a top rope clothesline gets two. Ambrose gets knocked off the apron, leaving Sheamus to drop Rollins onto an uppercut for another near fall. It's off to an armbar for a bit until a superkick gets Rollins out of trouble.

The hot tag brings in Ambrose and house is cleaned in a hurry. His suicide dive is cut off by an uppercut though and Cesaro adds the high crossbody. Everything breaks down and Sheamus' cheap shot gives Cesaro two on Dean. A powerbomb is broken up and Seth superplexes Sheamus into a Falcon Arrow for a very near fall.

The Neutralizer is broken up and the Wind-Up Knee gives Seth two with Sheamus making a save. The referee is shoved though and the Bar retains the titles via DQ at 17:11. Actually hang on as Angle comes out and says restart the match with No DQ. The double dives takes the Bar out and a frog splash to Cesaro gets two. Cue Samoa Joe to lay the Shield out though, drawing out Reigns to chase him off. The distraction lets Sheamus Brogue Kick Ambrose to retain at 20:03.

Rating: B. Another solid match here and I can actually go with the screwy ending as you can pencil in either a six man tag or a pair of title matches as a result. These teams have some great chemistry together and while this one wasn't up to the other matches' standards, it was still a lot of fun.

Overall Rating: C+. If you like wrestling, this is one of the best episode of Main Event you've ever seen (assuming you don't mind it being clipped half to death). That being said, what we got was entertaining stuff with a nice recap of all the good things that WWE did earlier this week. If they can follow up on them, they'll be fine. In other words, I don't bet on them being fine.

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So HHH Beat Jinder Mahal In India

And no, this doesn't feel like the shovel. This feels like it's finally over and I'm rather pleased. Now just get through tomorrow night and we're fine.

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