

205 Live – June 20, 2017: The Tight Ship

205 Live

Date: June 20, 2017

Location: Nutter Center, Dayton, Ohio

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Corey Graves

We're continuing down the road towards Neville vs. Akira Tozawa for the former's Cruiserweight Title, though for some reason this includes a big detour into Titus O'Neil Land. I'm assuming this is WWE's way of attaching the shows to the main roster, but there are some more interesting options than O'Neil. Let's get to it.

Rich Swann is talking with Tozawa in the back with Swann being ready to face Neville in tonight's main event. Titus comes in and wishes Swann good luck. With Rich gone, Titus has a contract ready for Tozawa to sign. Tozawa won't do it yet so Titus offers a 5% on Tozawa's first merchandise. Say....the Tozawa Towel? That's still not enough so Titus promises to have the perfect deal ready for Raw. Titus leaves and Tozawa just shakes his head.

Opening sequence.

Jack Gallagher vs. Tony Nese

Fallout from Nese telling the injured Austin Aries to get out of his ring last week. Gallagher wastes no time with doing the headstand in the corner to slow Nese down. They fight over a top wristlock until Gallagher eats (ok not really) a clothesline to the back of his head. We hit the Tree of Woe with Nese dropping to his back to kick Jack in the chest for a unique bit of offense.

Jack fights up and grabs a butterfly suplex for two as Aries (with his trusty banana) are watching in the back. The headbutt connects but does more damage to Jack than Nese, as is typically the case. You might want to switch things up there Jack. Nese goes shoulder first into the post and let's pause for some goldbricking. Tony grabs the rollup into (read as near) the turnbuckle, followed by the running knee for the pin at 5:02.

Rating: C. Totally acceptable match here with Jack wrestling him even until getting caught up by the cheating, which tends to be an

issue for someone of his virtue. That's a great way of showcasing the good vs evil idea here and it makes Gallagher's character fit even better. If nothing else it would be a great way to spark a heel turn down the line.

Noam Dar is on his phone with Alicia Fox again, talking about wanting to move on. Cedric Alexander comes in because OF COURSE this is still going. Alexander does his weekly chat about wanting for this to be over but Dar says he threw Alexander's bag in the river. Cedric holds up his bag and has no idea what's going on.

Cue Ariya Daivari to say his \$15,000 bag is missing. Just play the wah wah waaaaah music already. If nothing else it would be better than Cedric spending weeks saying he wants this thing to be over despite beating Dar EVERY SINGLE TIME. In other words, here's the story and we're going with it far past the point it should have ended.

We recap Drew Gulak vs. Mustafa Ali as Drew channels his former characters in CZW and Evolve (yes I know what Evolve is). There's an interesting idea here but again, Gulak needs some followers if this is going to go anywhere.

Drew Gulak vs. Mustafa Ali

What is this, their third showdown? If nothing else Gulak's music is growing on me a bit. On the way to the ring, Drew shouts into his bullhorn about wanting ground based offense and top wristlocks instead of inverted 450s. Ali dropkicks him through the ropes and hits a running corkscrew plancha for good measure. Something close to a moonsault press gives Ali two but he gets shoved over the top and down to the apron on his wrist.

We hit something like a keylock (clearly the setup for the top wristlock, which is what you call foreshadowing...or maybe me overthinking it) for a bit, followed by an abdominal stretch. The wrist is wrapped around the top rope, only to have Ali come back with a dropkick. The slingshot rolling neckbreaker looks to set up a middle rope dropkick but Gulak tries to counter into a rollup. Ali reverses into one of his own though and grabs the pin at 4:38.

Rating: C-. This wasn't as good as their previous match but the idea of Ali winning is something that could keep this going. That being said I'm not sure why this feud needs to continue without a few big developments. You can only get so far with them trading wins and

bringing in another person or two would do them a lot of good.

Gallagher runs into Aries in the back with the latter suggesting they form an alliance of cutting corners. Jack doesn't like the idea but agrees to an accord (Aries: "I thought you had a Lincoln.") because they're international brothers of the mustache.

We look at Neville attacking Rich Swann last week on Raw.

TJP comes up to Swann and accuses him of...I think colluding with Neville but Swann points out how ridiculous that is. It seems to turn into a TJP pep talk, though it's quite the odd segment.

WWE2K18 ad featuring Seth Rollins.

Tozawa is now sitting ringside courtesy of the Titus Brand.

Neville vs. Rich Swann

Non-title. Swann goes right for him and dropkicks the champ out to the floor. They roll around on the mat for a bit before another dropkick sends Neville outside again. Well to be fair Swann has done the same things since his debut so having him do the same thing twice in a match makes sense. Neville gets thrown outside for the third time and Swann hits a good looking running flip dive.

Back in and something like Rolling Thunder hits raised knees so Neville sends the banged up ribs into the barricade. They run in front of Tozawa to remind you that he's here (despite not really needing to be) before Swann goes into the barricade again. Swann's ribs bounce off the announcers' table, only to just collapse back inside.

Rich pops back up enough for a superkick to drop Neville (making Swann roughly 18 times more effective than the Young Bucks). A kick to the head gets two on Neville and Swann knocks him away while whispering to avoid the Phoenix splash. Neville does as he's told and the Rings of Saturn make Swann tap at 10:41.

Rating: B. Now that's a good story with Swann fighting through the injury and giving it everything he had, only to come up short in the end because he tried one too many big spots and got caught. You don't get that kind of thing around here too often and it's no surprise that Neville was the one to pull it off. Neville is just on another level than these guys right now and it's pretty ridiculous to suggest that he doesn't belong in the heavyweight ranks.

Neville stares Tozawa down to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This is the kind of 205 Live that I love watching: one with a tight ship that addresses every story going on with the show and sets up something for the future. It's like they took a lesson from NXT and actually focused on advancing things along a set path instead of just saying "here's the end goal, nothing matters as long as we get there". Throw in a good main event and I'm rather content with the night.

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Main Event – June 15, 2017: It Didn't Work Before So Let's Do It Again

Main Event

Date: June 15, 2017

Location: Cajundome, Lafayette, Louisiana

Commentators: Corey Graves, Vic Joseph

It's back to what should be the quintessential recap show as it's not like people come here for the original wrestling content. Raw

had one heck of a fight on Monday night and you have to imagine that's going to be a big focal point of this show. We're about three weeks away from Great Balls of Fire and that's not the worst thing in the world. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Curt Hawkins vs. Curtis Axel

Gah this always gets annoying with first names. Axel grabs a headlock to start and stomps away in the corner before getting two off a clothesline. That earns Curtis a knee to the back and a chinlock (with another knee to the back) as the announcers talk about these two teaming together.

Graves makes sure to mention that he and Neville used to be NXT Tag Team Champions, which is a very good idea. He wasn't in NXT very long and that was several years ago. Remind us that you have in-ring credentials and people will pay more attention to you. Axel fights up but can't get the PerfectPlex as Curt kicks away, only to get caught in it the second time to give Axel the pin at 5:12.

Rating: D+. Axel truly is the Main Event Musketeer as he never seems to leave the place. He's good in the ring, the fans react to him and he's using the perfect (See what I did there?) finisher. Just give him a story and see what he can do on the main roster because he's likely going to be more over than most of the people around here.

Long recap of the Hardys vs. Sheamus/Cesaro.

Very shortened version of the Hardys vs. Sheamus/Cesaro from Raw, showing about three minutes of a fifteen minute match.

Also from Raw, this time in full form.

Here's Wyatt to talk about how people shouldn't deny him like Seth Rollins has done. Seth lives in a glass house and a single shout brought it all crashing down. This brings out Rollins, who says he was speaking the truth when he called Wyatt a false prophet. If Bray is that disturbed by what Seth said, do something about it. Bray says Seth is beneath him and that Rollins doesn't want this fight. The lights go out again and Bray is gone. They go out again and Bray is on the screen, saying Seth can slay a king but not a god.

Gran Metalik vs. Ariya Daivari

Metalik sends him into the corner to start and it's already time for

the wristlock. A high crossbody gives Metalik two but gets tossed into the corner. We take a break and come back with Metalik walking the ropes into a dropkick for two. A running hurricanrana sends both guys out to the floor in a big crash and Metalik's top rope elbow is good for two more. Daivari goes for the mask though and it's a hammerlock lariat for the pin on Metalik at 7:53.

Rating: D+. This didn't have the time to go anywhere and I'm still wondering what Metalik did to WWE. He was on 205 Live a few weeks ago and now he's jobbing to Daivari of all people? The match was nothing to see, save for a few good dives from Metalik. I feel sorry for him though as it's like he just can't catch a break.

We look back at Samoa Joe choking out Paul Heyman.

And now, the only way this show could end.

Here are Lesnar and Heyman to get things going with Paul saying it's time for some revenge. Now last week, Samoa Joe attacked Heyman and Paul gets why that's the case. Sometimes he certainly deserves it but that wasn't true last week. Last week, Heyman saw someone that could go man to beast with Brock.

There have been a lot of Samoans in wrestling but Joe is the outcast one. For some reason he's not treated the same and his biggest claim to fame is choking Heyman out. Heyman agrees that the Koquina Clutch was everything that Joe promised it would be. That made Heyman wonder what would happen to the title if Brock was ever caught in that hold. Then Heyman realized that's not a problem because Joe isn't man enough to get the hold on Brock Lesnar.

Cue Joe to headbutt Lesnar right in the face as the brawl is on. Security is sent out and dispatched just as fast so here's the locker room (or at least the midcard) to try again. That goes just as badly with Joe breaking away to superkick Joe right in the jaw. The fight is finally broken up and things settle down. This was an outstanding start but there's one thing: none of this matters if Brock is lazy and just does suplexes into an F5 at the pay per view. Make it a competitive match where they beat the heck out of each other and things will be fine. Just don't make it a squash, please.

Overall Rating: D-. Totally skippable show this week with only the last segment being worth seeing. This felt like one of the older episodes of the show and that's really not a good thing. It was the same cast of characters who weren't interesting in the first place

and now don't do anything more than fill in a space on this show.

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205 Live – June 6, 2017: I Guess Neville Isn't a Gamer

205 Live

Date: June 6, 2017

Location: Blue Cross Arena, Rochester, New York

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

It's actually time for a new challenger this week. Neville retained his Cruiserweight Title at Extreme Rules and that means Austin Aries is finally in his rear view mirror. Now it's time for TJP to get his shot in exchange for all the help he's given Neville over the last few months. Neville didn't take kindly to his claim at a shot and attacked him in advance. Let's get to it.

The opening recap looks at TJP helping Neville with Aries and then being attacked anyway. It didn't feel like a face turn though, making tonight more heel vs. heel.

Opening sequence.

Here's Noam Dar for a match, though he doesn't have Alicia Fox with

him. Well so much for this one being interesting. As a VERY loud fan keeps asking about Fox's whereabouts, Dar talks about Cedric Alexander losing Fox to him, the better man. Fox is at home recovering but she wants Cedric to move on already. Cedric cuts him off and we're ready to go.

Noam Dar vs. Cedric Alexander

Cedric goes after the arm to start so Dar goes to the ropes, screaming in faux agony. Dar's headlock works a bit better until Alexander pops up and dropkicks him to the floor. Back in and Cedric gets kicked off the middle rope before it's time to work on the arm. A kick to the chest doesn't work as well though and Alexander kicks him in the face.

That just earns Cedric another kick to the leg and things slow down again. An awkward looking rollup gives Dar two and another kick to the face gives him the same. You might notice a pattern in Dar's offense here and that's not a good thing. Alexander charges into a boot but is still able to reverse the running kick into the Lumbar Check for the pin on Dar at 7:07.

Rating: C. Dar continues to be one of the most annoying talkers (in a good way) and weaker in-ring performers on the brand. He's just not interesting to watch in the ring and that's going to catch up with him. I can't get interested in someone who does a bunch of running kicks to the chest and works on armbars for the rest of the match. He's good on the mic but at some point, the bell has to ring. Cedric says they're done.

Video on TJP winning the inaugural Cruiserweight Classic.

TJP says Neville has a TJP problem.

Mustafa Ali vs. Louie Valle

Ali grabs the wristlock to start but gets his throat snapped across the top rope. A hard ax handle to the chest gives Valle two and Louie stomps away in the corner. Ali comes right back with a kick to the head and the rolling neckbreaker but cue Drew Gulak with a siren before the inverted 450. Drew: "SAFE AND SOUND! FEET ON THE GROUND!" Not that it matters as Ali reverses a cradle into the pin at 3:34.

Rating: D+. This was just a way to give Ali some momentum back and continue his feud with Gulak. I'm not sure where they're going to wrap things up but I'd have Ali join him for a bit. At some point

just having Gulak on his own doesn't work and he's going to need some followers. I know I say that every week but it's still a problem that needs to be fixed.

Gulak keeps talking on his bullhorn until Ali hits a running flip dive to take him down.

Video on Rich Swann's rise to the Cruiserweight Title and eventual partnership with Sasha Banks.

Swann is speaking Japanese with Akira Tozawa when Titus O'Neil comes in and asks to speak to Tozawa alone. Titus wants to spread his Brand international and says Tozawa should talk to his best friend Apollo Crews about the opportunity. As usual, Tozawa seems confused but that might be due to Titus imitating his barking/shouting/grunting thing.

Neville isn't worried about TJP because TJP was just a means to an end.

Cruiserweight Title: TJP vs. Neville

TJP is challenging. After the Big Match Intros, Neville takes him straight into the corner and slaps TJP's head a bit. That earns him a front flip and some head slapping of his own so Neville grabs a headlock to slow the pace a bit. TJP wristlocks him down into an armbar They take turns flipping out of holds until TJP grabs something like a Sharpshooter/Figure Four hybrid, which sends Neville right to the ropes.

A Tarantula keeps Neville in trouble but he pulls TJP to the floor and stops to glare at the announcers. TJP is in big trouble back inside and a missile dropkick makes things even worse. The champ gets too cocky though and a backdrop sends him outside for a corkscrew dive and a big crash.

There's the slingshot dropkick into the double chickenwing gutbuster for a close two and the shock sets in on the kickout. Neville misses a knee so TJP kicks it out, only to charge into a superkick. The Phoenix splash misses as well and the kneebar goes on but Neville rolls into the Rings of Saturn to retain at 14:07.

Rating: B. This was better than I thought it would be as TJP set up the leg as well as he could have. They're really pushing the idea that Neville is clearing out the division, which is going to make whoever takes the title all the bigger deal. It's almost hard to

believe that he's only held the title for five months. Let him do his thing and then move up to the main roster, like he should have been all along.

Overall Rating: C+. The main event helped a lot and helped this show as more of a stand alone episode rather than something that moved the main story forward. Neville needs a new challenger, which he can get in the next few weeks. In theory that would have been Tozawa but he's getting to deal with Titus O'Neil for reasons of general nonsense. Not a bad show this week but it's nothing you need to see.

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205 Live – June 13, 2017: That's Important Too

205 Live

Date: June 13, 2017

Location: Smoothie King Center, New Orleans, Louisiana

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Corey Graves

It seems that we have a new challenger to Neville's Cruiserweight Title as the champ called out Akira Tozawa last night on Monday Night Raw. Hopefully that doesn't mean we'll be seeing a lot of

Titus O'Neil as a bonus because he's been hitched to Tozawa for reasons unclear. We should also be hearing something about Austin Aries' future. Let's get to it.

Tozawa is getting ready in the back when Titus comes in to say he's gotten Tozawa a main event match against TJP tonight. Akira tries to say something about the Titus Brand but Titus cuts him off and says Tozawa signing would mean, in song, that it's raining yen. Tozawa really doesn't seem impressed and I can't say I'm surprised.

Opening sequence.

The announcers (with Joseph being welcomed to the team) preview the show.

Cedric Alexander vs. Ariya Daivari

Cedric flips out of a wristlock to start and the threat of a kick to the head sends Daivari running away. Back in and Daivari drives Cedric back first into the corner but he comes right back with a good looking dropkick for two. Cedric's springboard clothesline is broken up and we hit the neck chinlock. One heck of a jumping knee to the head gets two on Cedric and it's off to the chinlock again. Cedric fights up and hits the handspring enziguri for two, followed by the springboard clothesline. Hang on though as here's Noam Dar with Alicia Fox on his phone. Cedric kicks him down and grabs the Lumbar Check for the pin at 6:53.

Rating: C+. That might have been the least interesting and worst run-ins I can remember in a very long time. Alexander keeps beating Dar and making him look like a goon so why is he still doing this stuff? The Fox stuff is about as annoying as it can be (in a good way) but what is the point in this story continuing when Alexander has won all the matches and showdowns while saying it's over? I really don't get this one.

Post match Cedric grabs the phone and ignores Fox before hanging up on her.

Here's Austin Aries for his first comments after losing to Neville again. He was thinking this would be a bit of a different kind of moment but he's out here without his Cruiserweight Title. While he's ready to keep going, WWE thinks he needs to be medically cleared and he has to take some time off.

This brings out Tony Nese to say to say Aries needs to get out of

the ring before he starts fading into the past. Aries brings up making Nese tap out recently, which means violence is teased. This brings out Jack Gallagher (Where has he been?) to say this is a city about having fun. If Nese thinks he's Aries' replacement, that makes him the biggest joke of all. Nese swings so Gallagher takes him apart with the umbrella.

TJP runs into Rich Swann, who thinks the fans were starting to believe in him again but that changed in a hurry. Swann wants the old TJP back.

Video on Mustafa Ali but it's cut off by Drew Gulak, who doesn't think Ali has the fans' best interests in mind. On the other hand, Gulak only cares about making fans happy, albeit in a safe way. They square off next week.

Gallagher vs. Nese next week as well.

TJP vs. Akira Tozawa

Tozawa shouts a lot and grabs a headlock. A kick to the chest and the screaming backplash give Tozawa two as Titus O'Neil is watching in the back. TJP finally gets in a dropkick to knock Tozawa out of the air but his arm is a bit banged up. He's fine enough to work on a neck crank with an arm trap as things slow down a bit.

Back up and Tozawa hits a nice springboard forearm into a nipup, making him look like Shawn Michaels with worse hair. For some reason this brings up a CM PUNK chant until TJP puts on something like a standing Indian Deathlock. That's switched over to a butterfly lock until Tozawa comes back up with a hurricanrana. TJP bails to the floor and eats a suicide dive for little reaction.

Back in and Tozawa gets crotched on top, setting up the double chickenwing gutbuster for two. They slug it out with Tozawa getting the better of it, only to have TJP grab a quick kneebar. Tozawa grabs the rope so TJP kicks his mouthpiece out. Not that it matters as Tozawa comes right back up with a Saito suplex and the top rope backplash for the pin at 11:16.

Rating: C+. This took a bit to get going but the last few minutes were quite good. TJP's kick to the face looked awesome, as did Tozawa speeding things up into the Saito suplex. This was the kind of win that Tozawa needed to follow up on the Kendrick feud. Now if only he can ditch Titus, he would be firmly in line for a

Cruiserweight Title shot.

Post match Titus is singing It's Raining Yen in the back when Neville comes up. Neville really doesn't care about any of this because Tozawa isn't ready for the Neville level. Titus says Tozawa is the future to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Good show here as they're setting up a fresh challenge for the title, along with giving us an update on Aries. I still don't get the point in having Alexander vs. Dar continuing but maybe they're setting up something in the future. This might not have been the best show on its own but it helped set stuff up for the future, which is also very important.

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Raw Tenth Anniversary (2017 Redo): Down With The Sickness

Raw 10th Anniversary

Date: January 14, 2003

Location: The World, New York City, New York

Hosts: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is a very different kind of show as there are no new matches on it and probably no angle advancement, but rather a two hour long history package on the history of Monday Night Raw. In other words, this could range anywhere from a lot of fun to the biggest disaster since Rob Bartlett. Let's get to it.

The opening is a big mash up of all the intros in a cool touch. Nice start.

We look at the first episode, which turns into a look at the early years of the show, set to Kid Rock's Bawitaba. They hit almost everything over the ten years as montages are almost always fun.

JR and King welcome us to the show, which has the wrestlers sitting around a bunch of tables with empty plates in front of them. The Academy of Wrestling Arts and Sciences has determined the awards tonight, which made me chuckle for some reason. The awards themselves are called Ruckus Awards for reasons that aren't clear.

Shawn Michaels comes out to present Diva of the Decade as they're hitting the awards in a hurry. We hear about Shawn being #1 in the Rumble and get a few jokes about Bull Nakano and Bertha Faye. Here are the nominees with each one getting a highlight reel, as will be the case all night:

Sable

Sunny

Trish Stratus

Lita

Chyna

Winner: Trish Stratus. Trish gives a nice acceptance speech, thanking everyone who paved the way for her as well as Fit Finlay for his coaching, but the regular fans yelling ruin the moment.

And so much for this show being anything of note. Trish would wind up being a huge deal but at this point, she was eye candy who could

barely get through a competent match more often than not. She only debuted back in 2000 and she's already the best over the last ten years? In other words, she's actually here and not on the injured list. This should have been Sable or maybe Chyna, but Trish makes it a horrible joke from the start.

Coach and Stacy Keibler are counting down the Top Ten Raw Moments so far, as voted by the fans (I'm sure). #10: This is Your Life Rock. How in the world is that not WAY higher? That was one of the better moments of the Attitude Era and one of the funnier things the company has done, just due to the natural chemistry on display. Unfortunately the blurring of the WWF logos make me look for my glasses instead of actually enjoying the segment.

Shane McMahon introduces the Don't Try This at Home Award for craziest spot. The nominees:

Big Show chokeslams Undertaker through the ring

Jeff Hardy in TLC 2002 (no specific moment)

Dudley Boyz powerbomb Mae Young off the stage

Kurt Angle misses a moonsault off the top of the cage

Winner: Kurt Angle. Big Show was on his way to the stage for the award when he was told he didn't win. Team Angle holds up an American flag behind Kurt as Kurt reads a speech with well timed pauses for WHAT chants. His music plays him off as he gets to his childhood and things are wrapped up in a hurry.

Those aren't exactly the best nominees but a lot of big bumps don't take place on Raw. I'd have gone with the Outlaws shoving Mankind and Chainsaw Charlie off the stage in a dumpster but I don't think any of them worked for the company at this point, save for the injured Billy Gunn.

Here's a montage of horrible gimmicks, including but not limited to Kamala (quite the career with a simple gimmick), IRS (the most memorable stretch of a long career), TL Hopper (stupid), Kwang, Dean Douglas (could have been fine with a more accepted performer), Men on a Mission (one of whom main evented Summerslam), Papa Shango (now

in the Hall of Fame), Earthquake (way past his prime by the Raw era), Johnny Polo (had a TON of potential), Hakushi (talented guy and I'm not sure how he qualifies as a bad gimmick, save for the characters on his upper body) and Tatanka (gimmick as old as wrestling itself).

I left out a ton for the sake of keeping this short but most of those are perfectly fine. Like really, how Earthquake was a bad gimmick? Actually is Earthquake even a gimmick? He's just a big guy who sat on your chest (sounds like Rikishi, who is pushed as a veteran star on Smackdown). Yeah a lot of the names listed here were stupid but mixing names like the Bushwhackers (who wrestled with those characters for years and were eventually inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame) and Tekno Team 2000 (a nothing team whose gimmick wasn't exactly clear) is nonsense.

Oh and the person who introduced this: Stacy Keibler, whose gimmicks have included sexy secretary/businesswoman, random blonde woman and marketing director who makes testicle jokes. In other words, this is WWE acting like they're the most clever people in the world and anyone who dares suggest that they've ever had a bad idea doesn't get how sports entertainment works.

Moment #9: Austin crushes Rock's car.

Booker T. presents the Tell Me I Didn't Just See That Award for most shocking moment. After a few jokes about Chris Jericho's outfit and hair (Booker: "You go girl!"), here are the nominees:

3 Faces of Foley

Eric Bischoff Debuts

The Brawl for All (the whole thing)

Kane Lights Things on Fire

Austin Drives a Zamboni to the Ring

Winner: 3 Faces of Foley, though Foley isn't here tonight. That was a really cool moment and showed off how awesome Foley's character really was but it pales in comparison to Bischoff appearing on Raw.

You could also throw in something like the 1-2-3 Kid beating Razor Ramon, Rock and Hogan squaring off or Hogan vs. Austin (it happened, albeit for about eight seconds in a six man tag). But no, let's go with someone who can't be here when Bischoff is RIGHT THERE.

He's so RIGHT THERE that he's interviewed after the award is given and says he's focused on the next 29 days as he tries to fix Raw.

Ric Flair comes out to announce the wrestlers who have passed away in the Raw era, with a video set to Tell Me a Lie:

Andre the Giant (who never appeared on Raw), Joey Marella, Brian Pillman, Rick Rude, Owen Hart, Gorilla Monsoon, Yokozuna, British Bulldog

In other words, the big names instead of people they feel the need to mock, like Bertha Faye earlier. You know, because it was too hard to list more than eight names.

Chris Jericho comes out in his goofy gear and dedicates the look to the Hollywood Fashion Plate Classy Freddie Blassie. We get the nominees for the Gimme the Mic Award:

Steve Austin

D-Generation X

Kurt Angle

Mick Foley

Mr. McMahon

The Rock

Winner: The Rock. Jericho tries to take the award for himself but Rock appears on screen (because he can't show up either) and says tonight is about memories. Rock does FINALLY and the crowd boos, mainly because he's not actually there. After telling Jericho what to do with his microphone, Rock talks about beating Angle in Pittsburgh and dubs Team Angle Team Suck Squad. As for Stephanie a cheap lady of the night, which she finds funny because she's not allowed to give up anything. Goldust and Booker get praised but the fans start up the BORING chant. A few more thank yous and

catchphrases finally wrap this up.

Well that didn't work and can you really blame Rock for that? He's not even there and the company decides that NEW YORK is going to be cool with a satellite feed? At this point the fans have figured out that this whole thing is a big waste of time and they're treating it as such. At least the nominees were all fine here, which is a first tonight.

Moment #8: Shane McMahon buys WCW. You know, because that's what fans wanted when the promotions finally started working together.

Michael Cole and Tazz present the Shut Up and Kiss Me Award for best on screen romantic couple. The nominees:

Mark Henry and Mae Young

Chyna and Eddie Guerrero

Lita and Matt Hardy

Mr. McMahon and William Regal

Stephanie McMahon and Triple H

Winners: Stephanie McMahon and Triple H. Well duh. They reunite on the stage with Stephanie listing off their history on TV. HHH offers a reenactment, only to drop his pants and bend over for a spank. Remember that this is one day after he was stripped to his underwear by Scott Steiner when he was supposed to be the biggest heel in the world.

Moment #7: Steve Austin attacks Vince in the hospital.

Gene Okerlund and Pat Patterson present Network Difficulties Award for most controversial moments. The nominees are:

Mae Young Gives Birth to a Hand

Steve Austin Stuns Santa Claus

HLA

Pillman's Got a Gun

Winner: Mae Young Gives Birth to a Hand. Mae accepts and is rushed off the stage.

This would be another award given out because someone is actually there as Pillman's Got a Gun was about as far as they've ever pushed anything and Young is one of the dumbest things they've ever done. Austin Stunning Santa was pretty tame and could have easily been replaced by Austin being crucified, but I'm assuming that's another one we're banning from memory.

Moment #6: D-Generation X parodies the Nation. Funny, but should be further down the list.

Brock Lesnar presents Superstar of the Decade and does a better job of speaking in such an open forum than you would expect. Here are the nominees:

Mick Foley

The Rock

Bret Hart

Triple H

Steve Austin

Undertaker

Winner: Steve Austin. And there's no Austin as Vince comes out and says Austin wasn't invited so he'll accept on Steve's behalf. While that would seem like a perfect way to have Austin show up, we just go to HHH to say how ridiculous that is and walk out.

Austin was the obvious winner, though if you're talking about the entire decade, Undertaker is the only one to have been around even close to the whole time.

Moment #5: Steve Austin vs. Mike Tyson. I'm really worried about the four moments they're putting above that because it could be a mess.

Match of the Decade has no presenter for some reason so here are the nominees:

TLC 2002

Triple H vs. Cactus Jack – Falls Count Anywhere

Jeff Hardy vs. Undertaker – Ladder Match

Steve Austin vs. Kane

Winner: TLC 2002. Most of the people involved accept the award and thank the TLC performers who came before them.

Out of everything else on the show, this is easily the biggest nonsense. Just look at the nominees. Here's an actually reasonable list of choices for this:

Shawn Michaels vs. Marty Jannetty – May 17, 1993

Triple H vs. Cactus Jack – Falls Count Anywhere – September 4, 1997

British Bulldog vs. Owen Hart – March 3, 1997

Chris Benoit/Chris Jericho vs. Two Man Power Trip – May 21, 2001

Rob Van Dam vs. Jeff Hardy – Ladder Match – May 27, 2002

Bret Hart vs. 1-2-3 Kid – July 11, 1994

And probably about ten more before we get to some of the nominees they listed here. This really feels like an award they put about thirty seconds of effort into and that's not good. When the two recent matches both involve ladders (and aren't even the only two ladder matches from Raw 2002), there's something rather wrong with the nominees and the people who nominated them.

Moment #4: DX Invades Nitro. Now this is an interesting one as I think its importance has been rather overblown. Raw had already won a night in the ratings war so it's not like it sent the show over the top. Also, while DX was hot at this point, it was the Steve Austin Show at this point with everyone else miles behind him. Finally, it's not like anything really happened. It was an amazing setup but at the end of the day, they just shows a door closing and DX on what they called a tank. But it has Triple H involved so it's instantly a big deal. Cool moment, but not as important as it's made out to be.

Moment #3: Rock Challenges Hulk Hogan for Wrestlemania XVIII. No issues here.

Moment #2: Raw is Owen. They're adding a moment about someone passing away to the same list as a DX parody of the Nation on a show

where they make fat jokes about Bertha Faye. I'll be moving on now. Edge presents the #1 moment. After a speech about how awesome Raw is, it's Austin Driving the Beer Truck. Well of course. What better way to end the night than by reminding the fans once again that Austin isn't here? This isn't even the biggest Austin moment as the Austin vs. Tyson showdown was a big part of what made Austin the star that he would become. The beer truck belongs on the list but not at #1, no matter how you look at it.

Everyone comes onto the stage to end the show.

Overall Rating: E. For E. Coli, a sickness you get from something being too Raw. This was a terrible show with a bunch of stuff designed to basically flip the fans off by saying none of the top stars were there (Rock, Austin and Foley were all missing live) and the awards were little more than a joke. I know the top ten was voted on by fans but this was either rigged or the fans are a lot dumber than I thought. Really, calling the beer truck the best moment of all time? How is that possible?

This show was absolutely terrible as they didn't bother trying to hide what they were doing here. It felt like they put this together in all of five minutes and if the fans hated it, whatever. Instead of a celebration of the ten years of Raw, it felt like a way to hype up the Rumble and pay lip service to the show at the same time. When Raw has TESTICLES and Smackdown has Al Wilson, what else is there to take away all the focus from all the creative staff? Terrible show here and a major insult to the fans and wrestlers, which unfortunately isn't a big surprise.

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Main Event – June 8, 2017: Continuity? On This Show?

Main Event

Date: June 8, 2017

Location: Mohegan Sun Arena, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Corey Graves

I'm very pleased by the fact that I'm not sure what to expect about this show. I mean, I know we'll be getting a cruiserweight match but maybe we can also have a Heath Slater/Rhyno match for a bit of fun. Either way, hopefully there's not much from Raw, which really didn't have the best week. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Lince Dorado vs. Drew Gulak

It's nice to see that Dorado's injury wasn't anything serious. Lince grabs an armbar to start and a dropkick is good for two. Gulak doesn't seem to mind and kicks Lince in the face before starting in on the knee. Something like a DDT to the leg sets up a stump puller of all things with the announcers asking how long it's been since I last saw one. Eh about a second ago when I last looked at the screen.

A dragon screw legwhip keeps Dorado in trouble but the knee is fine enough for a moonsault press for two. Dorado hits the handspring Stunner and an Asai moonsault but the knee is suddenly banged up again. Back in and Drew takes the knee out again before grabbing a

rollup with feet on the ropes for the pin at 6:21.

Rating: D. So Lince's knee was banged up, then he was able to do his flying stuff, then it was bad enough for the finish. I'm a bit split on that one but it's a bit hard to be interested in the leg work if Dorado is doing his high flying stuff before getting caught. At least Gulak won though and that's what matters most, especially with him in the middle of a solid push on 205 Live.

Stills of the Extreme Rules main event.

From Raw for the first time.

Roman Reigns vs. Bray Wyatt

Before the match, Bray offers an alliance with Roman, who says this reaction is why he's the guy. He punches Bray in the face and we're ready to go. Sister Abigail and the Superman Punch both miss in the first thirty seconds and Bray is punched to the floor for a break. Back with Roman fighting out of a chinlock but getting caught in a DDT for two.

Another chinlock is broken up with a Samoan drop for two, only to have Bray send him into the post. A backsplash on the floor crushes Roman and takes us to our second break in eight minutes. Back again with Reigns sending him to the floor, only to get Rock Bottomed for two.

Bray takes him up to for some reason, only to have Roman slip out for a big sitout powerbomb. The Superman Punch gets two more but Bray rolls outside before the spear. That's enough to set up the apron dropkick but Roman gets blasted with a clothesline. They're both in at nine and Sister Abigail is countered into the spear for the pin at 19:38.

Rating: B. Well that was long. It was also annoying booking as they were seemingly building Bray up for a potential run at Lesnar but HAHA ROMAN WINS AGAIN! You know, because we have to keep the former three time World Champion strong in case the shine goes away. Bray gets to rebuild again while Reigns just keeps babbling about being THE GUY because people keep cheering/booing him at the same time.

And for the second time.

It's time for Miz's celebration with Maryse hosting and a guy in a bear suit behind her. Miz comes out and we hit the YOU DESERVE IT chants. That's not cool with the new champ, as the fans chant that at every new champion in WWE. Miz brags about how awesome he is and how glad he is to be the new champion.

Maryse is praised for being this great but she didn't order the bear. Miz beats the heck out of the bear...but it's not Ambrose. That earns the bear a toss over the top (Miz: "At least you got beaten up by the Intercontinental Champion.") and here comes a present in a big box. Miz doesn't trust it and destroys the thing with a chair.

Maryse freaks out because it's from her. She got him a grandfather clock because it's timeless, just like her. Maryse yells and leaves as Miz goes off about Ambrose getting in his head. As the rant continues, the cameraman puts his camera down because it's Dean. The beatdown doesn't take long and Miz is left laying.

Curt Hawkins vs. Bo Dallas

Heel vs. heel works for me. This is over their recent failure as a tag team on this same show. Hawkins offers a free shot so Bo clotheslines him down. Curt gives him a hard Irish whip with Bo hitting his face on the middle rope and falling to the floor. Thankfully it's not the same result as Enzo Amore last year and Bo is fine as we take a break.

Back with Hawkins getting two off an elbow drop and grabbing a sleeper. The sleeper sequel doesn't last as long as Curt sends him into the corner instead. Dallas gets tied in the Tree of Woe for a dropkick to the ribs for two. Back up and Bo gets in a shot to the ribs, setting up a hanging swinging neckbreaker for the pin at 9:00.

Rating: C-. Hawkins' entrance continues to carry him through most of his matches and there's nothing wrong with that. I still like Dallas and his energy alone should have him as a jobber on the main roster. If nothing else, it's very nice to have some continuity on Main Event, which you never would have expected around here.

And now, Main Event's main event.

Samoa Joe vs. Seth Rollins

Joe tries an early powerbomb and gets taken down with a hurricanrana, only to have Joe come back with right hands and chops in the corner. A hard knee to Seth's head has Rollins in trouble and the Sling Blade is countered as we take a break. Back with Joe still hammering away as the announcers talk about wrestlers hitting their stride and being on a roll like never before.

Joe crushes him with the backplash and cranks on the arm. The snap powerslam gets two but Seth finally scores with an enziguri. A suicide dive sets up the Blockbuster, followed by a second dive. Rollins muscles him up for a Falcon Arrow and Joe is actually in some trouble. Bray Wyatt's lights hit though and....no one comes out. The distraction is enough to set up the Koquina Clutch though and Rollins is out at 14:14.

Rating: C+. As usual, this match had the standard Raw problem: it doesn't mean anything so why should fans care enough to watch it? We know Lesnar is back to deal with Joe next week so why is this interesting? You know what else isn't interesting? Bray, who lost to Reigns two and a half hours ago completely clean. If you want him to be this big deal, stop having him lose matches over and over. Rollins vs. Wyatt is interesting but it doesn't matter if you have Reigns beat both of them in back to back weeks.

Overall Rating: C-. Not their worst episode and I'm still trying to get over the idea of continuity around here. It's like someone is actually paying attention to the exclusive wrestling on a glorified recap show. Anyway, not terrible here with two guys I like winning, though not much of note from Raw.

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Main Event – June 1, 2017: This Is Your Life Wasn't THAT Bad

Main Event

Date: June 1, 2017

Location: Bon Secours Wellness Arena, Greenville, South Carolina

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Corey Graves

For the first time in a good while, I'm getting to the point where I don't quite know what to expect from this show. They've actually mixed things up a bit in recent weeks and that's been the best idea they could have had. I'm not saying the show is good yet but at least it's easier to sit through. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Drew Gulak vs. Lince Dorado

Dorado starts fast with some kicks to the face and something like a springboard headlock takedown. Drew is smart enough to hide behind the referee to get in a shot to the throat and take over. It's off to the arm with Gulak cranking on the chin for good measure. One heck of a clothesline drops Dorado again and we hit a regular chinlock. Dorado comes back with a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker but hurts his knee and the match is actually called off at 4:40.

Rating: D+. The injury hurts things but you have to assume that Gulak was going to win anyway. Hopefully Dorado isn't out long term as he's perfectly fine for a face jobber in the division. Gulak has found his groove in this character and hopefully he can take it somewhere instead of just doing the same bits over and over.

From Raw!

Here's Alexa Bliss with a table of stuff and some random people for This is Your Life Bayley. Bliss talks about the kendo stick hanging in the corner, which Bayley would probably try to hug instead of use on her. Now it's off to the table, which includes Bayley's first doll, which she still plays with. Then we have a trophy for best in sportsmanship. Bliss also has Bayley's yearbook where she was voted most likely to apologize.

That's enough for the table of stuff though so let's move on to the guests, starting with Mrs. Flapper, Bayley's fourth grade teacher. Apparently Bayley had perfect attendance and sat next to her father, who she just couldn't be away from without crying. Then we have Bayley's best friend Tracy, who says Bayley was the nicest girl in the world. The problem was Bayley let people take advantage of her by taking the fall for them or doing their homework. Then something happened and they stopped talking. Bayley wanted to watch wrestling instead of going out and doing anything else.

Bliss finds this hilarious we have Bayley's ex-boyfriend Phil, who said their first date was ok but kind of strange. Her dad was there every single time, including the time they almost had their first kiss. Phil didn't really like her though because he just wanted to get closer to Tracy. She liked him too so they kiss, which Bliss deems disgusting. Cue the real Bayley to clean house, including going up to grab the stick. Bliss cuts her off though and pulls out a second stick to give Bayley a beating. This was a long segment but Bliss sold it as she can do so well. The joke got old in a hurry more than once but at least they kept it moving fast enough.

We see a few minutes of Samoa Joe vs. Bray Wyatt vs. Finn Balor from Monday.

Heath Slater/Rhyno vs. Bo Dallas/Curt Hawkins

Is there any show Hawkins isn't on (not a bad thing)? Rhyno and Hawkins get things going with the fans going nuts for Rhyno again. Some early shoulders stagger Hawkins and it's time for some cheese to go with those crackers. Slater comes in and works on the arm for a bit and Dallas gets some of the same. A little double teaming sends Slater outside though and we take a break.

Back with Dallas driving knees into Slater's back and grabbing a cravate. Hawkins comes back in for a chinlock of his own as the fans want Rhyno. A kick to the face is enough to grant the fans' wish and it's time to clean house. Everything breaks down and Rhyno TKO's Hawkins for two. The spinebuster puts Dallas away at 10:48.

Rating: C. Is there a reason Slater and Rhyno aren't on Raw? They might not be the best team in the world but they're a perfectly serviceable face team and the fans are always going to be behind Rhyno. Then again that's asking WWE to be able to handle two face teams at once and you know that's not going to happen.

We'll wrap it up here.

Seth Rollins says he'll win.

Roman Reigns says he'll win.

Roman Reigns vs. Seth Rollins

They circle each other to start with the fans being almost one sided behind Rollins. Reigns throws him around and stares Rollins down. Some big forearms send Rollins outside but he hits the jumping knee, followed by a clothesline over the top. A dive takes us to a break with a good deal of time left.

Back with Rollins being sent into the barricade, right in front of a good number of empty first and second row seats. Reigns hits the corner clotheslines but the Superman Punch is pretty easily blocked. Rollins springboards into the Superman Punch for two but it's too early for the spear. Instead Rollins hits the low superkick for two of his own, only to have Reigns no sell the Buckle Bomb and hit another Superman Punch.

They head outside with Reigns going shoulder first into the steps, setting up a Blockbuster for another two. That great looking frog splash is still only good for a near fall but Rollins misses the third Phoenix Splash of the night. An enziguri sets up the windup knee but Reigns spears him down for the pin at 18:22.

Rating: B-. As is the case in the tag match (albeit to a better degree), the match was good but nothing we haven't seen several times before. I know the idea is that Reigns has the momentum heading into Sunday, though it's really hard to buy the idea that he's getting the title shot at some nothing show in July instead of in his fourth Wrestlemania main event in a row. Good main event, but people really didn't seem to care.

Overall Rating: C-. I know this goes against the common opinion but I really didn't think This Is Your Life was that bad. Sure the thing at the end with the actors kissing was dumb but the rest was fine with Alexa being such an awesome heel that it can never be completely bad. The rest of the show was your usual weak effort in a dead time for the show but that's Money in the Bank season for you.

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205 Live – May 31, 2017: Just Get It Over With Already

205 Live

Date: May 30, 2017

Location: Philips Arena, Atlanta, Georgia

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

It's the go home show for Extreme Rules and that means the very final push towards what is hopefully the last Neville vs. Austin Aries match. That's not all though as we also have a guest star in the form of Sasha Banks. I'm sure that has nothing to do with how poor the viewership has been for this show. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of Aries vs. Neville while they change the ropes. You know, to make sure we know the difference between the 205 Live cruiserweight show and the 205 Live knitting show that airs on local access in western Maine.

Opening sequence.

Here are Noam Dar and Alicia Fox with the former saying this is the closest people in Atlanta will ever get to true love. Alicia: "You complete me." Dar: "That's right fluffy button." They don't like Rich Swann and Alicia Fox, who interrupt in a hurry. The two of them have a lot in common too, such as dancing, fashion, and getting revenge on the people in front of them. The ladies insult each others' hair and of course that means it's on.

Noam Dar vs. Rich Swann

Swann chops away to start and Dar bails to the floor, only to eat a dropkick back inside. Dar scores with a penalty kick so Fox screeches quite loudly. We hit the arm crank with Banks looking very out of place as a cheerleader for a cruiserweight act. Swann's arm is bent around the top rope and a running forearm to the chest is

good for two. That's enough for some posing though and the ladies are looking either nervous or elated.

Rich grabs a belly to back suplex and a good looking hurricanrana brings Dar off the middle rope. Sasha hits the cheerleading again and Swann gets two off a small package. He misses an enziguri though and gets caught in an ankle lock, which is quickly rolled out to the floor. Fox gets in a trip so the brawl is on (with Fox losing some hair), allowing Dar to hit his running knee to the face for the pin at 7:50.

Rating: C-. Dar is a good heel but his in-ring abilities aren't the best. The arm work makes sense to start but when he follows it up with an ankle lock and a running knee, it doesn't really seem to make much difference. I'm still not sure why Banks is here other than star power, but she's really not fitting.

Cedric Alexander doesn't have time to care about Dar and Fox because he has to make up for lost time with his WWE dreams.

Cedric Alexander vs. Corey Hollis

Cedric flips around to start and gets in a dropkick to put Corey in the corner. Hollis elbows him in the jaw and grabs a double arm choke. That goes nowhere as Hollis charges into a knee, followed by a Tajiri handspring into an enziguri. The springboard clothesline sets up the Lumbar Check to put Corey away at 2:41.

Video on Akira Tozawa.

Quick recap of Drew Gulak vs. Mustafa Ali, which is mat wrestling vs. high flying.

Drew Gulak vs. Mustafa Ali

Gulak comes out with his NO FLY ZONE sign so Ali hits a running flip dive to take him and the sign down. Drew says ring the bell (though he doesn't seem to know where he is) so Ali sends him outside for a running knee off the apron. They chop it out on the floor with Gulak's few shots having very little effect. Back in and Gulak sends him outside with Ali landing on his knee. Drew stomps away and asks if Mustafa wants to fight the message. We hit a seated abdominal

stretch for a bit before Ali fights up with some clotheslines. Ali heads up top for a high crossbody but Drew rolls through for the pin at 5:03.

Rating: C. That's the second time in a row where Mustafa has tried high flying on Gulak but gotten caught in a quick pin. Hopefully this leads to Ali accepting Drew's teachings and joining him, which could set up a mini stable in the future. Gulak needs some followers and Ali would be a good place to start.

In the back, Drew says that was a victory for the way a lot of people want 205 to go in the future.

Here's Austin Aries for the hard sell to end the show. After a quick plug for his upcoming book, Aries talks about the tap heard round the world. Neville has been saying no one is at his level but then he tapped out. We see the end of the tag match with Neville tapping, followed by a separate clip of just the tap. Aries goes over their history together but here's Neville to say that was nothing more than a fluke. Cue TJP from behind and another double beatdown is on. Aries gets caught in the Rings of Saturn to end the show with no Jack Gallagher making the save.

Overall Rating: C. This show was perfectly acceptable and that's about as good as I can go with it. Neville vs. Aries ran out of steam over a month ago and yet another beatdown segment isn't enough to make it interesting again. There are several people ready to move into the title picture and hopefully they get the chance after Sunday. Good enough show but nothing you need to see.

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Your WWE Champion Ladies and Gentlemen

Main Event – May 25, 2017: Pick Something Already

Main Event

Date: May 22, 2017

Location: Van Andel Arena, Grand Rapids, Iowa

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Corey Graves

Dang it just when I'm getting used to Graves and Phillips being on every show together, or at least feeling like they are. They leave NXT and are now on one of the main shows each, 205 Live and this one. It's allowed these two to develop a great chemistry together and that makes the shows so much easier to listen to. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

TJP vs. Gran Metalik

Joseph points out that this is a rematch from the finals of the Cruiserweight Classic, which of course is taking place on this show

instead of anywhere else. Metalik starts fast with his flips off the ropes and an armdrag to send TJP outside for a big dive. Back in and a springboard elbow gets two but it's way too early for the Metalik Driver.

Instead it's time to go for the mask but TJP settles for just throwing him off the top for two. TJP grabs a modified crossface chickenwing before switching over to a regular chinlock. Back up and TJP kicks him in the face a few times, followed by the top rope splash. A moonsault misses though and TJP hits the Detonation Kick for the pin at 5:27.

Rating: C. Completely watchable cruiserweight match here, which is really not saying much given the history between these two. Metalik has fallen all the way through the floor lately and I really hope there's a big reason for it instead of something petty that was holding him back, like some mistake six months ago.

To Raw for the first time.

Here's Finn Balor for a match but first he has something to say. At Extreme Rules we have a Fatal Five Way (he said Final Five at first) but here's Paul Heyman to interrupt. Paul lists off Lesnar's potential challengers and says Brock would make them all victims. Finally we have Balor himself, who Heyman thinks is the most talented performer in WWE today. Paul wants to see them fight and Balor agrees, even though Brock isn't here tonight.

And again from Monday.

Sheamus vs. Matt Hardy

The winner gets to pick the stipulation for the title match at Extreme Rules. Matt clotheslines him to the floor to start but Sheamus takes over in the brawling. The ten forearms set up a running knee to send Matt into the barricade. Back in and Matt avoids a charge into the corner but gets caught in a Regal Roll for two.

We come back from a break with Sheamus fighting out of a chinlock and using a Jeff distraction to elbow Sheamus in the head. The Side

Effect gets two on Sheamus and a jumping knee to the face gets the same on Matt. Sheamus knocks him to the floor but stops to kick at Jeff, allowing Matt to grab the Twist of Fate for the pin at 12:07.

Rating: D+. Are we done yet? Like really, are we done with this feud yet? They've been doing the same stuff over and over again now with the Hardys never even seeming to break a sweat against these two. I'm liking Sheamus and Cesaro more and more but they need to actually beat the Hardys at some point to make it actually matter. Matt makes it a cage match.

Heath Slater/Rhyno vs. Curtis Axel/Curt Hawkins

Wait Axel is heel again??? Hawkins and Axel argue over who gets to start with Slater but it's quickly off to Rhyno for a HUGE pop. A clothesline gets two on Curt and it's back to Slater for a much more modest pop. Slater falls for a distraction though and gets shoved out to the floor, allowing the villains to take over as we take a break.

Back with Hawkins putting Slater in a sleeper before it's off to Hawkins for an armbar. A good looking dropkick gets Axel booed again but Slater flapjacks Hawkins, allowing the tag off to Rhyno. Everything breaks down with Heath diving onto Hawkins, leaving Rhyno to hit a spinebuster on Axel for the pin at 11:07.

Rating: D. Rhyno's level of overness never ceases to amaze me. The guy goes out there and does his thing every single week, despite not really changing anything in his offense for the last twenty years or so. Maybe it's the Michigan thing but sweet goodness he was as popular as free beer in a frat house.

And the final Raw clip.

Roman Reigns/Seth Rollins vs. Samoa Joe/Bray Wyatt

As usual, Reigns is hated. Joe and Rollins start with Seth getting in a few jabs, only to be sent crashing to the floor as we take an early break. Back with Reigns giving Bray a Samoan drop but getting dropped by Joe. A chinlock and enziguri keep Reigns in trouble and Bray throws him outside.

That doesn't go quite as well as Reigns sends Joe into the barricade, allowing the hot tag to Rollins. House is quickly cleaned with Seth nailing a double suicide dive, only to get caught on top. A double high crossbody takes the villains down but Reigns runs into Rollins by mistake. Rollins and Reigns get into an argument and it's the Kokuina Clutch to knock Seth out at 14:58.

Rating: C. This would be the latest in the long line of matches that mean nothing but feature people who are going to be important later on and therefore are supposed to make you care. It would have done them a lot of good to slowly announce the participants and give us something to bridge the gap between now and Extreme Rules but that's just not how WWE operates.

Overall Rating: D+. Just a run of the mill show here though the new commentator could have been a lot worse. He has a smooth voice and makes the show a bit easier to sit through. The Raw clips didn't help things though, which is what drives this show every single week.

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