

Daniel Bryan To Announce Retirement On Raw

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/daniel-bryan-expected/49430/>

You really had to expect this at some point and I'm actually glad he's done. There's no need to have him get back in the ring and risk getting hurt even worse. This lets him move on and ends the speculation.

WWE Potentially Spoils Hall of Fame Inductee

Or maybe I'm overthinking this. So over on WWE.com, there's an article on stars' first Raw matches. The caption asks if this "future Hall of Famer" looks familiar. The picture is of JBL, who hasn't been announced as a member of this year's class but it's certainly possible in Texas.

First WWE Hall of Fame Inductee Announced

This shouldn't be a big surprise. It's Sting, according to WWE.com. This was pretty obvious as soon as he debuted in 2014.

John Cena Reportedly Injured, Possibly Out 6-9 Months

<http://www.f4wonline.com/wwe-news/john-cena-likely-out-wrestlemania-due-shoulder-injury-205081>

.....WOW. Well that changes everything. I have no idea what they're going to pull off for Wrestlemania now but this could get interesting in a hurry.

WWE Raids New Japan, Possibly Signs AJ Styles, Shinsuke Nakamura and Others

<http://www.f4wonline.com/wwe-news/njpw-stars-nakamura-aj-styles-luke-gallows-and-karl-anderson-headed-wwe-204971>

If this is true, it's the biggest talent raid since Hall and Nash. This could be huge.

Thought of the Day: Natural

Ah the joys of 80s WWF. I know this is something that's been beaten to death but my goodness it's amazing how much more natural Jesse and Gorilla were on commentary. It feels like two people having a chat while watching a show. They get in catchphrases, plug stuff and talking about the matches while also sounding like they're professionals. I can't remember the last time I heard something like this without going back to some JR and King days. It really shouldn't be pushing ten years since I can remember natural commentary but that's what's happened.

Tribute to the Troops 2015: Yeah Fine

Tribute to the Troops 2015

Date: December 23, 2015

Location: Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Jacksonville, Florida

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole

It's the annual holiday special with the WWE putting on a show for the military. This is also going to include some comedy and musical performances, plus a few appearances from various celebrities. WWE treats this like a big deal and it's the big finale to WWE Week every year. Let's get to it.

We open with the standard video talking about how much WWE wants to thank the troops.

JoJo sings the National Anthem. The red, white and blue ropes are back for the special occasion.

Here are Roman Reigns (minus the title but with it on his graphic), Dean Ambrose (same) and the Usos to open things up. They quickly thank the troops but here's the League of Nations to interrupt. Sheamus (no title either) is amazed that Reigns thinks America is the greatest country in the world. He likes the Americans and thinks it might be in the top twenty nations in the world.

Barrett thinks everything in England is better, especially the food. Do you know how hard it is to find spotted dick around here? Reigns: "This is a family show!" Del Rio doesn't like American TV because it doesn't have any football ("I mean the real football!") and he has to listen to stupid country music.

Sheamus thinks Ireland has the best everything in the world but Reigns cuts him off with a tater tots mention. The League accepts an invitation for a fight but here are the Wyatts to interrupt. Before anything else can happen, the Dudley Boyz, Ryback and Kane come out to give us sixteen men at once. A huge fight breaks out and we take a break.

We'll have a sixteen man tag later tonight.

Rusev and Lana insult America, setting up this.

Jack Swagger vs. Rusev

Boot Camp match because we need a new way for Swagger to lose to Rusev. Swagger starts fast with a Patriot Lock but Lana slips Rusev an ammo box to take over. Rusev gets in a few shots but misses a charge and falls to the floor. A big clothesline knocks Rusev onto a cot and we take a break. Back with Rusev drilling Swagger with a foot locker and squashing Jack's head against the box for two. Rusev throws him to the floor and waves the Bulgarian flag, easily knocking Swagger back as he tries to get in.

Swagger finally gets smart by waving Old Glory, ticking Rusev off enough that Jack can get inside again. Some clotheslines have Rusev in trouble and the Vader Bomb gets two. The jumping superkick puts Jack down again but he catches another superkick in the Patriot Lock. That goes nowhere but Rusev gets sent into the foot locker in the corner. Another Patriot Lock goes on and Rusev actually taps at 11:01.

Rating: C. Well it took him long enough. Not much of a hardcore match but they really didn't have a choice but to go with Swagger here. Having the American hero (that's a stretch) lose at this show would be like having the Evil Santa steal Christmas on the holiday Raw so it's not like Rusev really loses anything. Good enough match but more weapons would have been appreciated.

Some members of the roster went to a Navy SEALs training camp.

Joel McHale loves the troops.

Harrison Ford loves the troops as well.

Mark Henry vs. Bo Dallas

Bo is dressed as Uncle Sam. For some reason he slaps Mark in the face and pounds on his back a few times. Mark snaps up and Bo is terrified. Bo: "I'm gonna go back this way!" The World's Strongest Slam ends Bo at 46 seconds.

The US Women's National Soccer Team loves the troops.

Eva Longoria loves the troops.

Train performs.

Some troops wish their families Happy Holidays.

Wesley Snipes loves the troops.

Kevin Owens vs. Ryback

Before the match, Owens praises Canada, especially Quebec. We even get some French from Owens until Ryback cuts him off to get things started. Ryback muscles him up for a delayed vertical suplex but Owens knees him in the ribs and grabs an early chinlock. That goes nowhere so Ryback tries a Shell Shock, only to have Kevin grab the ropes. They hit each other from the apron and Owens falls to the floor for a breather. Owens takes the countout at 3:06.

Rating: D. Oh come on what do you want me to say here? This is a match

that doesn't mean anything but gives the fans something to smile about. I'm glad they didn't have Owens take a clean loss though, especially with the new character having started up after this show was taped.

A military couple got to go backstage the show and had a Coke with Roman Reigns.

Howie Mandel performs.

Joe Manganiello loves the troops.

JJ Abrams loves the troops.

Brie Bella/Alicia Fox/Charlotte/Becky Lynch vs. Paige/Team BAD

This is your annual "here's a bunch of good looking women" match. Naomi does her stupid shaking spot to Charlotte to start, earning her some chops. Brie, who is clearly a face this time, comes in for some YES Kicks. Tamina clotheslines Brie's head off to break up BRIE MODE (well done) and it's off to Paige for some shots in the corner. Brie shoves Naomi into the corner for a break, kicks Tamina away, and makes the hot tag to Becky. Everything breaks down and it's a Bank Statement to make Alicia tap at 4:40.

Rating: D+. This was fine for what it was and at least we got to see Sasha do something other than be the female Kofi. It's really kind of hard to find stuff to talk about with these matches because the stories are about two weeks behind and the matches mean nothing. Still though, this was a way to get the women on the show and little more so it accomplished its goal.

Clips of the roster meeting some troops.

Toby Keith loves the troops.

Neil Patrick Harris loves the troops.

Train performs again.

Cris Collinsworth loves the troops.

Dean Ambrose/Roman Reigns/Usos/Kane/Dudley Boyz/Ryback vs. Wyatt Family/League of Nations

This is joined in progress, meaning we get to skip the entrances to save some time. Dean is in control of Rowan but it's quickly off to Strowman vs. Bubba. Strowman wants Kane though and it's time for the battle of the monsters. Kane can't slam him though and Braun plants him with a slam of his own. The smaller monster fights back though and knocks Braun to the floor, setting up a big staredown as we take a break.

Back with Harper getting two off a swinging Boss Man Slam to Jimmy. Bray comes in for the backplash and it's time for the League to start taking turns beating Jimmy down. Jimmy gets in an enziguri to Sheamus but can't make the hot tag. Instead it's Harper putting on a headlock until Jimmy suplexes him down in a surprising power display. Now the hot tag brings in Ambrose for the top rope elbow on Harper.

Everything breaks down and Rowan takes What's Up. Dean and the Usos hit dives and it's time for the parade of finishers. It takes a Superman punch, a double shoulder from the Dudley Boyz, a double superkick from the Usos and a Meathook to put Strowman over the top (finally putting him off his feet in a nice touch). Dirty Deeds puts Harper away at 13:25.

Rating: C. Yeah fine. This has become a tradition on these shows and it's a good way to put everyone out there for a big, fun main event for a fun show. I don't know why you would expect this to be anything more than it was as it's been the same idea for years now. Still though, fun enough and that's all it needed to be.

The American flag comes down and the good guys celebrate to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. What else do you want me to say about this show? It doesn't mean anything for storylines and the wrestling is average at best, but that's all it's supposed to be. I haven't cared for the show as much since they stopped going overseas but really it's harmless fun. Standard show this year, which is probably best all around.

Results

Jack Swagger b. Rusev – Patriot Lock

Mark Henry b. Bo Dallas – World’s Strongest Slam

Ryback b. Kevin Owens via countout

Team BAD/Paige b. Brie Bella/Alicia Fox/Becky Lynch/Charlotte – Bank Statement to Fox

Dudley Boyz/Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose/Ryback/Kane/Usos b. Wyatt Family and League of Nations – Dirty Deeds to Harper

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of the History of Wrestlemania at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

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

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

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

I’m Going To Wrestlemania

Along with Raw, Takeover and Axxess when the tickets are available. Tickets have been purchased for the wife and I. She’s never been so this is going to be a big moment for her.

The WWE Network Categories Are A Mess

I went to watch the Legends With JBL interviews about Undertaker and was stupid enough to think they would be in the Legends With JBL section. No no, they're in the Undertaker 25 Years section, meaning the only thing in the JBL section is the Bischoff interviews. This is like where Raw 1999 isn't in the Raw section, but rather the Attitude Era section.

Right now in the Originals section, there are twenty seven categories, some of which haven't been updated in over a year. I'm not sure how you go about doing it, but there has to be a way to make this easier to navigate. I shouldn't have to go on a hunt every time I want to see a special that they keep touting as great.

Coca Cola Sponsoring the Slammy Awards and Tribute to the Troops

<http://411mania.com/wrestling/wwe-news-company-scores-major-sponsorship-signs-new-toy-deal/>

That's big. Like that's REALLY big. Coca Cola is one of the biggest brands in the world and having them say WWE is worth sponsoring is a hugely positive sign for WWE going forward. That means some serious advertising money coming in from more companies that want to be part of WWE because it's worth the investment. Raw may be boring these days, but if it gets them

stuff like this, that's not going to change anytime soon.