

King of the Ring Network Special: Blink And You'll Miss It

King of the Ring Network Special

Date: April 28, 2015

Location: iWireless Center, Moline, Illinois

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

This is a one off special with the returning King of the Ring semi-finals and finals taking place tonight. It's just an hour long so the matches should have some time to build up instead of having to run through everything in just a few minutes. There's potential for some good matches tonight so let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the history of the tournament and some of the stars who have won before.

Jerry Lawler is brought out to introduce a package on how the final four advanced. It's a bad sign that they seem to be stalling for time four minutes in.

Here are the final four:

Neville

Sheamus

Bad News Barrett

R-Truth

Sheamus says he'll become the two time King and get rid of that little English guy to do so.

Neville was in NXT just a few months ago but now he could be King of the Ring. No one expects him to win tonight, but he's defied expectations all his life. He was fine on the mic here so I wouldn't mind hearing more

from him.

King of the Ring Semi-Finals: Sheamus vs. Neville

Cole mentions Sheamus potentially becoming a two time King, just like Bret Hart. That's a rare reference to the tournaments held when it was still just a house show feature. Sheamus makes fun of Neville's height to start and takes him into the corner with ease. Neville comes back with some right hands and does his front flips followed by a spin kick to the ribs. A quick Irish Curse stops Neville cold though and the big man takes over. It works so well that Sheamus hits a second Irish Curse as the fans are entirely behind Neville.

Sheamus gets a bit too cocky though, allowing Neville to come back with forearms tot he face. He fights out of the ten forearms as well but gets sent face first HARD into the announcers' table. Neville barely makes it back in time though, earning him another beating in the corner. Sheamus is starting to get cocky but here's Ziggler to remind him what happened at Extreme Rules. The distraction lets Neville duck a Brogue Kick and kick Sheamus in the head. The Red Arrow gives Neville the pin and the BIG upset at 5:47.

Rating: C+. I believe in Neville. This is one of the first pushes in a LONG time where they're strapping a rocket to a newcomer's back and letting him ride it all the way, though there's a good chance Barrett winds up winning the crown tonight so they can have him lose his next ten matches. Still though, I'm digging the heck out of Neville right now as they're totally nailing his push.

Post match Ziggler wants to get what he earned at Extreme Rules and the brawl is on. Security breaks it up, but not before Sheamus' eye is busted open badly.

Barrett says R-Truth shouldn't be worried about his arachnophobia because it's time for Bull Hammer-phobia. After he gets done with the has been Truth, he'll move on to the never was Neville.

Truth has a plan tonight: win the King of the Ring and then declare a ban on spiders. That includes all the spiders, even the kinfolks. They'll

build a castle with a drawbridges and a moat. He isn't sure about water in the moat because that might bring water spiders. Saxton: "What about your opponent, Bad News Barrett?" Truth: "Does he has experience killing spiders?"

King of the Ring Semi-Finals: R-Truth vs. Bad News Barrett

Truth grabs a quick rollup to start but takes a right hand to the ribs. Barrett puts him in the ropes for the big boot to the face and it's off to the chinlock as the announcers discuss Nero. Back up and Truth hits some clotheslines and the front suplex for two. The ax kick misses but the side kick is good for another near fall. Truth's Lie Detector gets two but the Winds of Change gets the same. Back up and the Bull Hammer sends Barrett to the finals at 4:40.

Rating: D+. What do you want me to say here? Truth had as much of a chance as I have of being Miss Nevada 1974 and everyone knew it. Barrett is a good option for the crown and there's a good dynamic considering what happened on Sunday. Dull match here but at least they kept it short.

Video on Verne Gagne who passed away yesterday.

Dolph Ziggler says he couldn't take Sheamus' bullying last night or tonight so he had to do something.

We look at Neville beating Barrett on Sunday.

Barrett says it's not fair that he has to fight so soon after beating Truth, but it's also unfair that Neville has to fight him period.

King of the Ring: Bad News Barrett vs. Neville

Barrett goes after the ribs to start but Neville flips forward and snaps off a headscissors, followed by a kick to the jaw. That's fine with Barrett as he clotheslines Neville to the floor to take the first real advantage. Barrett puts on something like an abdominal stretch on the mat but Neville fights up with more kicks to the ribs and legs.

A running kick to the side of the head and a German suplex get two on Barrett. Winds of Change gets the same and Wasteland is eventually good

for another near fall. The Bull Hammer is countered into a rollup for two and Neville kicks him in the head. Neville has to bail out of the Red Arrow and charges into the Bull Hammer for the pin and the crown at 6:10.

Rating: B-. Eh yeah that's probably the right move but man alive they could have pulled the trigger on something big here with Neville. At least there's a story ready for a third match between the two of them, which might work better if they can manage to give them more than six minutes next time.

Barrett crowns himself and promises to rule with an iron Bull Hammer.

Overall Rating: C. Well they made good time. WWE does realize that they have all the time they need on their own network and don't have to have this wrapped up with seven minutes to go in the hour right? They were flying through this match and the entire tournament when you think about it. It's like they needed to get this whole thing wrapped up as fast as they could to get to the end result. It wasn't bad but my goodness, slow down a bit.

Results

Neville b. Sheamus – Red Arrow

Bad News Barrett b. R-Truth – Bull Hammer

Bad News Barrett b. Neville – Bull Hammer

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Watched Jerry Springer's Too Hot For TV (Kind Of)

It's Hail To The Attitude Era time! This is a big waste of time with yet another montage of clips from the Attitude Era, which is basically all the Network exists for during the day. Basically it's a few long packages on Sable/Marc Mero, Chyna/Mark Henry/Mae Young/Sammi and OF COURSE a history of Stephanie's love issues. That would be fine for like ten minutes, but this goes on for over half an hour with a few montages of clips thrown in to fill in the time.

Jerry Springer could be any person in the world on this show and sounds like he's reading off a teleprompter (which he probably was). It's designed to be like a highlight reel of something he'd host, which is fine in theory but the run time just cripples this thing. Cut this up into thirds and it's tolerable, but at half an hour I was skipping through it every few seconds. This doesn't need to exist and I'd be stunned if it survives, at least in this form, until July.

Watched Unfiltered With Renee Young

And it's about what you would expect. It runs less than seven minutes and shows Young eating breakfast with Seth Rollins. There's nothing interesting here other than it being out of character. Rollins talks about a band he likes, his dog, what

he wants to do when he retires and that's about it. It's quick, it's unoffensive and you're not likely to think about it ever again.

The only note here: there's a shot where Renee turns her head and her hair falls over her face with her eyes looking at Seth and good night is that woman beautiful. Not hot like Trish or Lita but just stunningly pretty. Dean Ambrose is a lucky man.

Verne Gagne Passes Away

Gagne was 89 years old and had been battling dementia for years. While I'm not a fan of everything he does, the guy was one of the most important and influential names in wrestling history, which isn't even getting into his in ring work. The list of wrestlers he trained is as great of a who's who as you'll ever see. The guy deserves a ton of respect and he more than earned it.

Monday Night Raw – April 27, 2015: King Me!

Monday Night Raw

Date: April 27, 2015

Location: Resch Center, Green Bay, Wisconsin

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Booker T.

We're past Extreme Rules but the more interesting story is the return of the King of the Ring tournament. The tournament is back for the first time in seven years with the finals being held tomorrow night during a Network special. Other than that we have all the Extreme Rules fallout to get through. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here are the King of the Ring brackets.

Dean Ambrose

Sheamus

Neville

Luke Harper

R-Truth

Stardust

Dolph Ziggler

Bad News Barrett

Rollins, Kane and the Stooges open us up. Rollins brags about what he did last night and runs down his resume in recent weeks. It was clear that Rollins was going to win from the start last night and the SK0 (yes SK0) out of nowhere was a nice touch. Seth says you need good soldiers and thanks Kane for his help, but the monster isn't happy with that. After some yelling and comparing Rollins to Justin Bieber, here's Randy Orton to interrupt.

Randy gets right to the point: due to Rollins cheating last night, it's time for a rematch. This brings out Roman Reigns who seems to think he has a case for a title shot as well. While standing on the announcers' table, Roman talks about their history together and thinks it's his turn for a shot at the title. Rollins says no but Kane says it's going to be up to the WWE Universe.

King of the Ring First Round: Dolph Ziggler vs. Bad News Barrett

Before the match, Ziggler swears payback on Sheamus. Perhaps at Payback? Barrett punches him into the corner to start and kicks Ziggler in the face. A quick dropkick puts Bad News on the floor and we take a break. Back with Barrett kicking him in the face and knocking him to the floor. Ziggler is right back in there though and counters Winds of Change into the running DDT.

Barrett gets back up in a hurry though and gets two off Wasteland. The Bull Hammer is countered with a superkick for two but here's Sheamus with stills of the post match humiliation from last night. The distraction works as Barrett Bull Hammers Dolph from the apron to advance at 8:24.

Rating: D+. As is so often the case, not enough time means not much of a match. This is a common occurrence in tournaments: you have to get so many matches in that you have to keep things moving, meaning there's no time to get anywhere with a lot of them. You can pretty much pencil in Ziggler returning the favor later on.

Here's New Day for Big E.'s match, but before the match, Woods wants to thank all of the clappers out there. It's not just a New Day, but it's time for a new clap, so try this one on: New Day ROCKS! You can imagine the fans' reaction.

Big E. vs. Tyson Kidd

Kidd goes right after Big E. to start but slingshots onto E.'s shoulders. Tyson quickly escapes though and kicks Big E. in the head before stomping to the beat of the chants in the corner. A running kick to the face from the apron knocks E. down again but Big E. hits a clothesline with Woods holding Kidd's foot for the pin at 1:25.

Ryback vs. Bo Dallas

Before the match, Bo gives Ryback one chance to walk away before the beating begins, but he makes sure to insult the Packers fans in the audience. After a GO PACK GO chant, Ryback slugs Bo down but Dallas gets in a series of forearms to the back for two. We hit the chinlock for a

bit but Ryback destroys him with a spinebuster. The Meat Hook and Shell Shock are enough for the pin at 2:06.

Post match we've got Wyatt in the ring to stare down Ryback and hit a quick Sister Abigail. I can dig this feud, and no I don't think we're seeing/need a Bo Dallas/Bray Wyatt connection.

Here's Cena for this week's open challenge. Last night he was on a high after defending the title against Rusev again, but then he saw Rusev and Lana announce one more match for the title. It's an I Quit match at Payback, which sounds right up Cena's alley. He'll never say he quits, but he if does, there's no rematch because Cena couldn't face himself anymore. As for tonight though, the challenge is open.

US Title: Heath Slater vs. John Cena

Slater has a mic with him and says he'll win the title tonight and become the US Champion of the world. He talks about recreating Aaron Rogers' Discount Double Check but gets kicked in the head by Rusev. Lana comes out waving but gets sent to the back as Rusev rants about the fans giving up already. No match. The Russian flag drops, which makes Cena get all serious. Why doesn't he just talk to the production staff and not let them put the flag in place?

Kane explains that the fans can vote for who faces Rollins on the WWE App, sending Rollins into a frenzy. He threatens to call HHH or Stephanie so Kane gives the fans the option of making it a triple threat. Seth is livid.

King of the Ring First Round: R-Truth vs. Stardust

Truth wants to win so he can get rid of all spiders. Stardust wants to become King of the Stars. The Cody chants start up as Stardust nails him in the jaw coming out of the corner and stomps Truth in the back. A chinlock keeps things slow and Stardust busts out a cartwheel. Booker: "Why?" Truth comes back but misses the ax kick. They trade rollups for two each until the Disaster Kick is countered into Little Jimmy (called the Lie Detector) for the pin at 3:52.

Rating: D+. Yeah whatever. Truth was the obvious winner as soon as Barrett won, which is one of the things that gets old in a hurry about tournaments. Once one guy wins, it's almost obvious who is going to win the next match because some matches just aren't going to happen. Nothing to see here with an obvious winner.

Fandango vs. Adam Rose

Fandango starts fast by sending Rose to the floor for a big dive, only to be distracted by Rosa Mendes, who was disguised as a Rosebud. The surprise allows Rose to hit the Party Foul for the pin at 1:50.

Rosa can't believe Fandango picked the fans over her and kisses Rose. This is the latest story that people aren't going to care about and is going to be a waste of time.

We go to Renee Young with Brie Bella, who is WAY too happy to be discussing her husband's health. Renee brings up Bryan and the smile goes away. Did they just not tell her what they were talking about? They want Bryan back in the ring and are so grateful for the fans' support, but Naomi comes up and shoves her down. No one cares about Brie or Bryan apparently.

Naomi vs. Brie Bella

That's a very quickly signed match. Naomi gets in a cheap shot from behind to start, followed by a hard forearm to the face. Thankfully Nikki is on the floor so we don't have COME ON BRIE in a mic this week. Brie comes back with a running faceplant and BRIE MODE. The middle rope dropkick gets two but Naomi gets a horrible looking small package (Brie's shoulder wasn't being touched and there was no reason she couldn't raise it off the mat) for the pin at 3:40.

Rating: D+. The match was nothing to see, but my goodness how much easier are the Divas to sit through when the stories are a bit more logical? Naomi is a jerk and attacked Brie when she was talking about her injured husband. That minute long segment set up the match and made perfect sense. Why is that so hard to do so often?

King of the Ring First Round: Dean Ambrose vs. Sheamus

Dean's decrees if he becomes King: remove all tariffs on ale, ban pop-country and have all disputes settled in street fights. They shove each other into the corner to start until Sheamus drops Dean with a shoulder. Dean takes him to the mat and ties up the legs to try a wrestling match, earning him a right hand to the face. Dean's bulldog is countered but he hits a forearm to send Sheamus outside as we take a break.

Back with Sheamus hitting his release suplex slam. Ambrose finally scores with the rebound clothesline and both guys are down. Back up and the Brogue Kick misses, allowing Dean to send him shoulder first into the post. A powerslam from Sheamus looks to set up White Noise but Dean counters into Dirty Deeds, which is countered into the Cloverleaf.

Dean gets to the ropes for the break and has to fight out of the ten forearms. The top rope standing elbow gets two before they fight to the floor with Dean clotheslining him off the announcers' table. A Brogue Kick out of nowhere nails Ambrose but Dolph runs in for the DQ at 12:41.

Rating: B-. This was rolling along until the obvious ending. As I've harped on all night: tournaments are the most predictable thing in wrestling, but fans always clamor for them if you just slap the King of the Ring name tag on there. I was digging the heck out of this match until Ziggler ran in though, which is a shame.

The best part here comes from Dean after the match: "I GET DQ'D FOR THAT???"

Here's Damien Sandow for his first comments after last week. Three years ago he arrived in the WWE in a blue bathrobe and said he would enlighten everyone. After that he was told he just wasn't entertaining enough so he started going insane imitating people (complete with stills of some of his better/worse moments, depending on your taste). This culminated in Damien Mizdow, which lost him some respect among his peers but gained him the respect of the WWE Universe, which is more important than anything else he could have. He isn't sure where he goes from here, but Curtis Axel comes out to help guide him a bit.

Axel can't stand someone not knowing who they are and trying to be someone else. So WHATCHA GONNA DO....but Sandow cuts him off by imitating everything Axel says like a four year old does and eventually punches Axel out and drops the Wind Up Elbow and a legdrop for good measure.

Bray Wyatt talks about learning to play with fire but doesn't know if Ryback will ever learn. Will Ryback ever learn, or will he always be obsessed with himself? Ryback is transparent and Bray knows what scares him. Tonight was only the beginning so run.

Tough Enough audition tapes.

King of the Ring First Round: Neville vs. Luke Harper

Neville grabs a headscissors to start and kicks Harper to the floor, setting up a hurricanrana off the apron. Back in and Harper knocks a springboarding Neville out of the air for two to take over as we go to a break. Back with Neville fighting out of a chinlock and kicking Harper to the floor for a top rope Asai Moonsault to drop Harper again.

Neville gets two off a standing shooting star but Harper just kicks him in the face and plants him with a half nelson suplex. The big sitout powerbomb gets two for Harper and the fans think this is awesome. They head to the corner with Neville kicking him in the head, setting up a sunset bomb from Neville. The Red Arrow connects for the pin to send Neville to the semi-finals at 10:17.

Rating: B. That was by far and away the best match of the night for multiple reasons, but above all else it was due to the match being a tossup. I could have seen either guy going over here and that makes things far more interesting. Good stuff here with Neville's rocket push working more and more every week.

Here are the final four.

Barrett

R-Truth

Neville

Sheamus

Roman Reigns/Randy Orton vs. Seth Rollins/Kane

Reigns takes Rollins into the corner to start so Randy can kick him in the ribs. Rollins bails to the floor so it's off to Reigns vs. Kane with the former planting him with a side slam. Back to Kane who pulls Orton into the corner for some stomping as JBL won't shut up about how unfair the idea of a triple threat is. We take a break and come back with Rollins holding Orton in a chinlock.

That goes as far as a chinlock is going to go as Orton fights up with a t-bone suplex, setting up the tags to the power guys. Roman fires off clotheslines in the corner, capped off by a big one from the middle rope as everything breaks down. The Authority is sent to the floor but Mercury break up the big dive. Roman follows Joey around and winds up walking into an uppercut from Kane to take over again. Reigns wins a slugout with Rollins so the champ kicks him in the face for two.

Kane scores with the side slam for two before putting on a bearhug. The slow beating continues until Roman finally slams Rollins down, allowing for the hot tag to Orton. Everything breaks down again and Reigns powers out of a chokeslam, only to have Rollins dropkick Kane by mistake.

Mercury is thrown into Kane, allowing Orton to hit the elevated DDT on Seth. The RK0 is countered into a rollup, followed by the low supkick to knock Randy to the floor. Seth tries a suicide dive but hits Kane, sending the monster into a rage against the Stooges. An uppercut drops Rollins and it's the Superman Punch into the RK0 for the pin on the champ at 18:38.

Rating: C+. Longer than it needed to be here but the ending did what it was supposed to. At least Kane isn't going to be added into the title picture, but it's not the most interesting story in the world regardless. Reigns getting back into the title hunt is a good idea though and it sets up a more interesting match at Payback.

Triple threat gets 78% of the poll. This would be more surprising if WWE hadn't spoiled the results last week. Rollins eats a spear to end the

show.

Overall Rating: C. This show wasn't the best but it had two major stories going on at the same time. The tournament was the standard for a first round of a tournament and the poll results were never in doubt, but they kept the show moving enough with far more action than talking, which is more important than anything else. Good enough show here as they're finding a good balance to make things work and get through these never ending rematches.

Results

Bad News Barrett b. Dolph Ziggler – Bull Hammer

Big E. b. Tyson Kidd – Clothesline with Woods holding the foot

Ryback b. Bo Dallas – Shell Shock

R-Truth b. Stardust – Little Jimmy

Naomi b. Brie Bella – Small package

Sheamus b. Dean Ambrose via DQ when Dolph Ziggler interfered

Randy Orton/Roman Reigns b. Kane/Seth Rollins – RK0 to Rollins

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WWE Releases King of the Ring Brackets

I've seen worse. Dean Ambrose
Sheamus

Neville
Luke Harper

R-Truth
Stardust

Dolph Ziggler
Bad News Barrett

Not bad other than basically giving Barrett/Ziggler a bye into the finals. I'm assuming it winds up with Sheamus vs. Ziggler again because WWE loves their rematches.

Checked Out Pro Wrestlers vs. Zombies

And it was pretty fun.

The movie has some big names in it like Kurt Angle, Roddy Piper, Shane Douglas, Jim Duggan and Matt Hardy and it's EXACTLY what the title sounds like. It's made well enough to get by and there are enough funny lines ("I'm an icon! Just ask Hogan!") to make you chuckle a few times. They keep it short at 90 minutes (84 without credits) and it's a good time. They don't try to make it anything more than what it should be and that's

the way to go. Check it out if you get the chance.

Wrestling Wars Podcast Episode #4

NorCal and I break down Extreme Rules, talk about some NXT news and look at the week's top stories. We even disagree about something for once.

<http://mightynorcal.podbean.com/e/wwp-episode-4-kb-is-back-extreme-rules-review-nxt-highlights-and-the-top-wrestling-news-stories-of-the-week/>

Extreme Rules 2015: Extremely... Something

Extreme Rules 2015

Date: April 26, 2015

Location: Allstate Arena, Rosemont, Illinois

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's time for the night of Wrestlemania rematches, which often makes for a very entertaining card. The main event will see Seth Rollins defending the World Title against Randy Orton inside a cage with the RK0 banned and Kane guarding the door. We also have Roman Reigns vs. Big Show in a last man standing match and Rusev vs. Cena III in a Russian chain match. Let's

get to it.

Here's Bad News Barrett on the pre-show to tell us that Daniel Bryan isn't here tonight to defend the Intercontinental Title. Since Bryan can't be here, let's bring out Neville for a replacement so he can take the Bullhammer destined to go upside Bryan's head.

Bad News Barrett vs. Neville

The fans are entirely behind Neville as Barrett grabs a headlock to start. Neville takes him to the mat and hooks a nice rollup for two before the front flips have Barrett even more confused. A dropkick sends him to the floor but Barrett trips Neville up to take over. Back from a break with Barrett holding a chinlock before throwing Neville into the air for a kick to the ribs and two. A big boot to the face gets the same on Neville and Barrett follows up with a nice slingshot backbreaker.

The second chinlock doesn't last as long, allowing Neville to fire off some kicks to the ribs to send Barrett outside, setting up the big spinning dive from Neville. Back in and Barrett catches him going up before planting Neville with Winds of Change for two. Wasteland gets a VERY close two but the Bullhammer misses, allowing Neville to hit an enziguri. The Red Arrow is broken up but Barrett misses another Bullhammer. A second kick to the head sets up the Red Arrow from (Cole: "Adrian") Neville for the pin at 10:40.

Rating: C+. Well that's a surprise. Neville getting the win is a big deal as it's his biggest pin ever, even if everyone and their mother pin Barrett. In theory this sets up a feud between the two of them over who gets the title shot whenever Bryan comes back, if he does at all.

The opening video talks about how this is the most extreme night of the year and focuses on Rusev vs. Cena and Rollins vs. Orton. Again, it makes sense to add gimmicks so it's not just the same show as last month without the big stage.

Luke Harper vs. Dean Ambrose

Street fight, meaning the fall must take place in the ring. Dean takes

over to start and knocks Harper to the floor for a suicide dive. Back in and we get the kendo sticks to Harper's back, followed by a chair being thrown inside. Dean sits down and licks his lips until Harper comes back and suplexes him through the chair. Luke starts going after the knee with the kendo stick before wedging a chair in the corner.

In a unique spot, Harper LAUNCHES Dean face first into the chair for two as the fans stay behind Ambrose. Back up and a tornado DDT gives Dean a breather as the fans want tables. Luke counters Dirty Deeds and the rebound clothesline before they head back to the floor. Dean's suicide dive is countered with a shove, so Dean does a kind of 619 and comes back with a clothesline in a cool spot.

They fight to the back with Luke being rammed into various things. Luke goes behind a wall and the camera has to run around to find him. THANK YOU! I can't remember the last time that happened but it drives me absolutely insane when there's a camera waiting on them. Harper and Dean get inside a car.....and drive away with the referee in the back. So I'm guessing the match is still going and continues later in the night?

HHH tells Kane to find that car before those two hurt someone. Rollins comes in and tells them to calm down because this is a big night. Kane goes off on Rollins and calls him a punk, but HHH wants things calm head into the main event. Kane better not screw up though. The fans could be heard calling this boring and I can't say I disagree. Don't put this stuff on the pay per view. We know the story is boring by now so don't make it even worse.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Sheamus

The winner has to kiss the winner's....uh yeah. Sheamus shoves him away to start but Ziggler comes back with forearms to the face. A dropkick staggers the big man and they fight to the floor. Ziggler is thrown at the steps but jumps on top of them for the slingshot DDT to stun Sheamus even more. Back in and Sheamus hits something like a Brogue Knee to take over. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Dolph fights up with another dropkick, only to get caught in a sitout powerbomb for two more.

Sheamus starts talking trash and follows it up with another devastating,

yes DEVASTATING I say, chinlock. It's not devastating enough to prevent Ziggler from fighting up with right hands and a splash in the corner. The neckbreaker is countered and Sheamus nails a running ax handle, only to walk into a superkick for two. Sheamus plants him with a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker as they're trading big shots here. The Brogue Kick misses and Ziggler rolls him up for two before a rolling cradle is enough to pin Sheamus at 9:25.

Rating: C+. This was just a TV match with a quick ending but the two worked pretty well together. The idea here was to have Ziggler bounce off Sheamus and make all the power moves look good, which he excels at. Solid enough match here, even if the gimmick was really stupid.

Post match Sheamus takes nearly five minutes to do what he's supposed to do but of course he hits Ziggler low and gives him a Brogue Kick before making Ziggler kiss up to him like a heel should.

Long video on what's coming on the Network.

Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Tyson Kidd/Cesaro

Kidd/Cesaro are defending and are the default heels here. Cole says that it's Kofi and Big E. Langston for the New Day. Kofi takes Kidd to the mat to start but Tyson wraps the arm around the ropes to take over. Off to Big E. vs. Cesaro with Cesaro catching Big E.'s leapfrog in midair and throwing him into the corner. It's back to Kidd as the champions stomp Big E. to the tune of New Day Sucks in an awesome moment. Tyson sends both challengers to the floor for a suicide cannonball dive on Kofi, only to have Big E. clothesline him down. Fans: "NEW DAY! SUCKS!" Woods: "WHAT DID WE DO??? WE'RE WINNING!"

Back in and Kofi hits a basement dropkick in the corner before we hit the chinlock. Big E. misses the splash and gets low bridged to the floor, allowing for the hot tag to Cesaro. The Swing is teased but it's a catapult into the corner, where Kofi jumps to the top for a spinning cross body, but Cesaro catches him in mid air for a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for two. Cesaro's apron superplex sets up the springboard elbow from Kidd for two, only to have Big E. dive through the ropes to spear Kidd down.

Back in and the Midnight Hour gets two on Kidd with Cesaro making the save. Kofi gets caught in the Sharpshooter and this time it's E.'s turn to make the save. There's the Swing into the dropkick but Woods gets on the apron for a distraction, only to be taken out by Natalya. Kofi uses the distraction to slide in with a rollup and a handful of trunks for the pin and the titles at 9:37.

Rating: B+. I had a really good time with this as Cesaro and Kidd are one of the most polished teams for such a short amount of time together as you'll ever see. Hopefully these teams have several more matches together as they've got great chemistry and work together really well. Awesome match here and I'd love to see more of it.

The pre-show panel chats for a bit and talks about Neville vs. Barrett.

New Day celebrates their win as Ambrose and Harper return. They fight back to the arena and throw a bunch of weapons into the ring. Harper hits a quick powerbomb onto the chairs for two but takes too long putting Dean under the chairs, allowing Ambrose to toss him onto the steel. Dirty Deeds connects for the pin at somewhere around 59:00.

Rating: D+. So uh....what the heck was the point of this? If they had done something like Mankind vs. HHH at In Your House XVI where they kept fighting all throughout the night this would have been fun but instead it was three fourths of a match, then a 50 minute break, then a quick finish. Were they just five minutes short or something?

Long recap of Cena vs. Rusev. They traded wins at the previous two pay per views but tonight Cena is defending the US Title in a Russian chain match.

US Title: John Cena vs. Rusev

Russian chain match of the four corners variety, meaning forward momentum has to be maintained or your streak of corners is erased. They start with a tug of war and Cena gets three quick buckles, followed by Rusev getting two of his own. Rusev sends him to the floor and suplexes him over the ropes for two buckles but Cena hits him with the chain to break it up. They head outside with Rusev being pulled into the post, knocking him

half silly in the process.

Cena gets two buckles but Rusev wraps his legs around the ropes for the save. Rusev scores with the spinwheel kick and chains Cena in the back a few times but can only get two buckles. For some reason Rusev goes up top, only to get pulled down onto the chain. Cena starts his finishing sequence but gets caught in the fall away slam, setting up the jumping superkick. The fans want Lana so she gets on the apron, only to be ejected by Rusev. Cena hits his usual stuff but the AA is countered into the Alabama Slam.

The Accolade is reversed into the STF and the rope Rusev grabs means nothing. Rusev pulls him down and hooks the Accolade so Cena gets to his feet and drives Rusev into two corners. He collapses from the hold though and Rusev hits the third, only to walk into the AA to break the streak. Back up and they both quickly get three, setting up a tug of war over the fourth. Rusev rushes for it but Cena pulls him into the AA and slaps the fourth to retain at 13:35.

Rating: C. I'm actually surprised but they did find a different way to end the thing. That being said, these matches can only be so good as the gimmick gets in the way of the match. Other than the match being called a Russian chain match, there's no distinct advantage here for Rusev and it makes for a pretty average match. Not bad or anything, but I'll never want to watch this again.

Roman Reigns talks about how he'll keep getting up and win the last man standing match tonight.

Divas Title: Nikki Bella vs. Naomi

Nikki is defending and Naomi got the shot after attacking Paige, who had won a battle royal to earn the title match. Naomi has new music, stupid looking glasses and shoes that light up. Nikki puts on an armbar to start but gets suplexed down for two. The shoes are already really distracting as Naomi hooks a chinlock. Back up and Nikki avoids the Rear View but Naomi stops to dance a bit.

Naomi charges into an elbow in the corner and the Alabama Slam gets two.

Back up and Naomi gets the same off a falling reverse DDT. A quick Bubba Bomb into a rollup gets the same but Nikki comes back with something like a Beautiful Disaster from the middle rope for two. Brie gets in a cheap shot on Naomi, setting up the Rack Attack to retain the title at 7:17. Those are our new heroes?

Rating: C. The Bellas (they're a collective entity in my mind at this point) are acceptable in the ring and improving, but they're far too annoying to make me ever care about/like them, especially with the one not in the match shouting COME ON *insert other sister's name here* a dozen times a match. It also doesn't help that they might be the worst written characters I've seen in years with the stories starting and stopping and them suddenly being faces with no reason given. Also their Total Divas personas haven't done them any favors. Somehow this is going to wind up as the Funkadactyls vs. Bellas isn't it?

Rusev yells at Lana and storms off. Lana hangs her head and walks into the Authority's locker room. That's something I guess and the fans gasped when they saw whose room it was.

We recap Reigns vs. Big Show, which exists to prove that there is a devil and his name is Vince McMahon.

Roman Reigns vs. Big Show

Last man standing. They slug it out to start and Reigns knocks Show to the floor before getting an early table. Big Show shoves it back under the ring so Reigns posts him, setting up the apron kick for five. The table reappears and is set up at ringside but Big Show breaks it with his fists so Reigns can't put him through it.

Reigns opts for a kendo stick and nails Show with it a few times, only to have Show break it apart, saying he's a giant. Thanks for pointing that out. Show goes into his slow offense and the fans chant BORING, so Reigns gets a chair and blasts Show about ten times to put him down. A DDT on the chair stuns Show and allows Reigns to get two tables. The delay lets Show get back up for the KO Punch though, sending Reigns down for eight.

Show is annoyed so Roman hits a Samoan drop through the table. Back up and Big Show hits a spear, followed by the most polite, least impactful Vader Bomb you'll ever see. Reigns gets to his feet so Show goes up, only to get slammed down for almost no reaction. Two Superman Punches connect but Show catches the third and chokeslams Roman over the top and through the two tables Reigns set up earlier.

Naturally it only gets nine so Big Show leaves Reigns alone as he sets up the announcers' table. In a funny bit, Show sees the announcers' notes that say he needs to lose weight and yells at JBL. Back in and Reigns avoids a charge through a table in the corner, setting up a spear for eight.

Show rolls outside so Reigns spears him through the barricade for a spot we've seen before. It doesn't help that Show was motionless at seven and on his feet at nine. Show loads up a chokeslam on the table but Reigns escapes and runs the tables to spear Show through the Spanish table for eight. Reigns finally buries Show under the table for the win at 19:43.

Rating: C+. The worst part? The match wasn't really even that bad. Just too long though and the ending didn't do what they were hoping. Why did they need to have the table cover him when they could have done the spear for the win? In other words, it was a table that kept Show down instead of Reigns. Great way to make your next big star look awesome there guys. This could have been WAY worse, but the lack of crowd interest had them dead on arrival.

Randy Orton tells Kane that the Authority will turn on him.

We look at some Tough Enough applications.

Here's Bo Dallas, who wants to know why Chicago is the Second City when they're clearly #1! That would be #1 at rejecting someone trying to make their lives better. The people here shouldn't worry about how extreme the rules get because they should be worrying about bo-lieving. Cue Ryback and the obvious happens.

Rusev is annoyed about the loss when Lana comes in and says it's done. There will be one more match between Cena and Rusev at Payback and it's I

Quit.

WWE World Title: Randy Orton vs. Seth Rollins

In a cage with Rollins defending, the RK0 banned and Kane guarding the cage door. Pinfall, submission or escape to win. Rollins goes for the cage twice early and Randy pulls him down on the second attempt. A third attempt goes just as badly so Rollins climbs one more time and sends Orton into the cage to take over for a change. Seth gets reversed into the cage again and the chase is on up the cage wall with Orton making a save.

Rollins almost escapes again and this time the Stooges come out to help, only to have Orton superplex him off the top for a big crash and two. Kane yells at the Stooges as Orton can't follow up. To change up the pace of the escape counters, Orton crotches him on the top rope instead. The Elevated DDT plants Rollins and Lawler is already proclaiming Orton the next champion.

Orton loads up the RK0 but opts for a decent looking Pedigree for two instead. The fans chant YES as Orton loads up the Punt but Rollins ducks to the side and hits a quick enziguri. Kane is told to open the door and obeys the champ but Randy is right there with the backbreaker to stop Rollins again.

The door stays open so Orton stops to think about it, but the threat of Kane sends him back. That threat proves to be well founded as Kane slams the door when Orton tries to leave. Randy does the smart thing by kicking the door at Kane before it turns into a fight to escape. Kane slams the door on both men and takes off his jacket, so the Stooges send Kane into the cage. The monster chokeslams both guys and loads up a tombstone on Orton, only to have Randy escape and RK0 Kane. Seth uses the distraction to RK0 Orton, allowing him to escape and retain at 20:50.

Rating: C. This wasn't terrible but it took longer than it should have and ended with a pretty lame surprise. They were treating the RK0 from Rollins like Austin siding with Vince when it was really just a technicality. The match was good enough but the gimmick continues to drag things down. Some of the early escape attempts were good though.

Overall Rating: C+. I liked this more than I thought I would but it still wasn't a blow away show. Unfortunately we seem to be heading for round 3 of multiple feuds at Payback, despite there being very little left for these people to fight over. Definitely a watchable show, but can we please get some fresh ideas on top? Like, even adding someone else to Orton vs. Rollins and no Kane doesn't count. Better than I was expecting but still not great.

Results

Dolph Ziggler b. Sheamus – Rolling cradle

New Day b. Cesaro/Tyson Kidd – Rollup with a handful of trunks

Dean Ambrose b. Luke Harper – Dirty Deeds

John Cena b. Rusev – Cena touched the fourth buckle

Nikki Bella b. Naomi – Rack Attack

Roman Reigns b. Big Show – Show couldn't answer the ten count

Seth Rollins b. Randy Orton – Rollins escaped the cage

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Daniel Bryan Out Of Extreme Rules, Neville To Replace Him

In a non-title match on the pre-show. Wasn't the Tag Team Title match on the pre-show already? If there are two matches there, we have a six match pay per view card. That's an awfully thin show, but maybe Nikki vs. Naomi can go 15 minutes or so.