

Tribute to the Troops 2012: A Special That Doesn't Feel Special At All. The Muppets Are Awesome Though

Tribute to the Troops 2012

Date: December 19, 2012

Location: Norfolk Scope, Norfolk, Virginia

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole

This is the tenth anniversary of the biggest publicity stunt WWE does every year. The wrestling tonight is going to be light and the ratings are going to be a lot more lax with this show. The main idea here is to have the troops feel good and there's really nothing else to it other than that. Let's get to it.

The standard video from the President and opening video of "it means more to us" start things off.

Sheamus/Randy Orton vs. Dolph Ziggler/Big Show

The governor of Virginia is here. They're playing this up as live or at least recent, as they mention Orton's separated shoulder from the Smackdown that aired 12 days ago. Actually the injury seemed to occur in this match so who knows what's going on. Orton and Ziggler start things off with Barrett pounding away. The commentary is talking about the stuff that happened in the last two nights, so either it was recorded later or they had some BIG spoilers given to Cole and JBL. Show and Ziggler are knocked to the floor and walk away for the countout at 2:20. Well that was pointless.

Oh never mind here's Booker to say continue the match after a break. Back with Orton pounding on Dolph. Sheamus comes in and gets dropkicked down, but Show drops to the floor to tie his boot rather than face Sheamus. There are the ten forearms to Dolph's chest and it's back to Randy to

pound away in the corner. He charges into a boot though and Ziggler takes over. A dropkick gets two for Ziggler and it's off to Show for some pounding. Cole talks about cannonballs and muskets for some reason. Show misses a chop in the corner but Orton's arm goes out. There's the injury.

The referee immediately starts checking on him and we cut to the crowd, presumably to not see the X sign. A tag brings in Sheamus as Orton is looked at on the floor. You can see Cole with his head on his hand so I'm guessing he and JBL are just sitting there, meaning the commentary was done later. Sheamus cleans house but goes up top and jumps into a chokeslam. That's reversed into White Noise for two as Ziggler makes the save, so Orton gives him a very weak looking RK0. Show gets one as well and it's a Brogue Kick for the pin at 12:54 all together, counting the time Booker took to restart the match.

Rating: C-. I know these shows are for the live fans, but for the seventeen people that watch Smackdown every week, these pairings are so old it's not even funny anymore. This is where mixing the main event and midcard would work wonders. Do that on Smackdown a bit and then matches like these aren't as bad. The match wasn't bad but the injury slowed things down a lot and you can't hold that against them.

Fergie says hi.

The US Gymnastics Team (there are four here and the team is the Fierce Five) read off a teleprompter about how much they love the troops. Maybe the fifth was fixing the screen.

Gonzo talks to Pepe and Rizzo but the latter two are busy staring at Layla. Eh the Muppets can make anything better.

Flo Rida performs. I see what else is on.

Cena says everything you would expect him to say.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Ryback

Del Rio says we're here for the troops, but today is also Ricardo's birthday. He asks for a chorus of Happy Birthday, but Del Rio sings in Spanish because he's a heel here....I think? Del Rio is slammed down to

start but a Ricardo distraction lets Alberto get in some kicks to the leg. A powerslam puts Del Rio down but Ricardo jumps on Ryback's back for the DQ at 1:30.

Ricardo takes a Shell Shock, as does Del Rio a few seconds later.

Kid Rock performs.

Josh tries to interview Kermit before he's on MizTV. Statler and Waldorf have some insults of course.

Some soldiers TOUT IT OUT!

Time for MizTV with the Muppets. Miz doesn't want to talk about Kermit's new single, but rather he wants to expose him. Miz wants to know the REAL story about what's going on with Kermit and Piggy. To be fair, that's a REALLY good question. Kermit: "For me, it's still don't ask don't tell." Ok point for a funny line. Kermit says he thought Miz was a good guy, but Miz insists he's just awesome instead of a good guy.

The second guess is Miss Piggy. Miz wants to know what the deal is with these two, so Kermit says they're just a frog and a pig who care about each other. This turns into a REALLY battle, so Miz says let's have them get married RIGHT HERE. Damien Sandow interrupts. Kermit: "HALLELUJAH!" Piggy: "WHAT?" Kermit: "Uh I mean....How dare he???"

Sandow makes fun of Miz and says that 78% of the fans have taken the pictures of the Muppets out of their wallets and replaced them with pictures of Sandow. He says that Miz and Piggy are both overrated hams, causing Piggy to go into karate mode. Miz decks Sandow for her.

Damien Sandow vs. The Miz

This is joined in progress after the break with the Muppets watching from the stage. Miz pounds away in the corner and we head to the outside. All Miz so far as he high fives some fans. Back in and Damien pounds away before we hit the chinlock. Kermit of course is having his nightly crisis on the stage until Miz comes back with a flapjack. The Reality Check is broken up and Sandow hits a kind of running Blockbuster for two, but Miz counters the pin into a rollup for the pin at 3:30.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see here but Kermit freaking out is always funny. I'm a die hard Muppets fan and they've been by far and away the highlight of the show so far. Just fun all around here, albeit with a boring match for the most part. At the end of the day though, if you want Miz to get over, having him defend the Muppets isn't the worst idea in the world.

Piggy kisses Miz post match and he likes it.

The Miami Heat love the troops.

Katie Couric loves the troops.

Flo-Rida performs Wild Ones.

We look back at Tribute to the Troops over the years.

HELL NO is in the back and they need a third man to face 3MB. Bryan has picked Little Jimmy, and Kane likes the idea. Truth comes up and says that Little Jimmy's cousin Ugly Frida is getting married and Little Jimmy has to be there, so it's Truth teaming up with them tonight. After the match is over, they can go to the club or karaoke or kill some spiders.

Kane blames Bryan for this. Bryan: "IT'S NOT MY FAULT! NO! NO! NO!" A voice from off screen says yes, and it's Animal from the Muppets. They shout at each other until Animal calls him Goatface. Bryan turns around and runs into....a talking goat. "Cousin Daniel?" Too funny.

HELL NO/R-Truth vs. 3MB

We cut to a shot of the crowd during HELL NO's entrance, apparently because Kane tripped and nearly fell off the stage during his entrance. McIntyre and Truth start things off with nothing going on. Bryan comes in and fires off some kicks in the corner, but HE HAS TIL FIVE. Mahal puts on a chinlock for no significant length of time before it's off to Kane. He cleans house and pounds on Slater, hitting the side slam and top rope clothesline. Everything breaks down and Jinder and Heath break up a double chokeslam. Truth makes a blind tag and there's the chokeslam to Mahal. Little Jimmy pins Slater at 3:27.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see here but it wasn't supposed to be anything

major. HELL NO needs some opponents in a hurry, as the division is already falling back into obscurity like it always has been. 3MB needs more character development as they can only be clueless schmucks for so long.

Kid Rock performs Born Free.

Cesaro makes fun of the USA and says Switzerland is better. He gets Cena tonight.

Sam the Eagle salutes Cena.

Some guy from Twilight and Sharon Stone love the troops.

John Cena vs. Antonio Cesaro

Cesaro doesn't even get an entrance. That should tell you where we're going here. The Muppets introduce Cena, which is completely awesome. Cena pounds him down to start but Cesaro throws him into the corner to take over. They head to the floor with Cena being rammed into the steps. Back in and the gutwrench suplex gets two and here's the comeback. Cena shrugs off everything Cesaro did, hits the Five Moves of Doom and wins with the AA at 5:23.

Rating: C. If you don't get why this match happened the way it does, go watch a test pattern. That's more on your intelligence level.

The locker room empties out and Cena gives a speech about how awesome AMERICA is to end the show. Oh wait there's one more thing: some more wrestlers come out dressed as reindeer pulling Santa in a sleigh. I don't recognize Santa this year but the idea is there. Cena throws gifts to the fans and the wrestler walks around high fiving people to really end the show. A closeup of Santa shows that it might (emphasis on that word) have been Johnny Ace.

Overall Rating: C-. This didn't work for me. I get that it's supposed to be a special, but that's where it falls short: nothing about this felt special. It felt like a dull Smackdown with a few musical performances thrown in to fill in some time. The being in America part is understandable, but it really takes away a lot of the fun from these

shows. It's not bad, but after this many hours of WWE in the previous three days, it was REALLY hard to get into this show. Not terrible, but this should have been the Christmas Eve Raw. No one is going to watch that anyway, so why waste major stories on it? The Muppets were awesome though.

Results

Randy Orton/Sheamus b. Dolph Ziggler/Big Show – Brogue Kick to Big Show

Ryback b. Alberto Del Rio via DQ when Ricardo Rodriguez interfered

The Miz b. Damien Sandow – Rollup

HELL NO/R-Truth b. 3MB – Little Jimmy to Slater

John Cena b. Antonio Cesaro – Attitude Adjustment

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Thank You All Yet Again

Today (Tuesday) broke my all time record for views in a day. The site has been doing better than it ever has since October and that's because of all my readers. Thank you for sticking around. I can't state how much I appreciate it.

KB

Smackdown – December 18, 2012: This Is What Smackdown Has Become

Smackdown

Date: December 18, 2012

Location: Consol Energy Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Josh Matthews, John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole

This is a special show so that they can start taping the holiday episodes sooner. This is live as well as commercial free for no apparent reason. After last night's Slammys, we've got a lot of places we can go now, so hopefully the show tonight is as good as Raw was last night. It's hard to say what to expect from these shows though as they can be hit or miss. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap from last night as you would expect a show to do anymore.

The main event is Cena/Sheamus vs. Big Show/Ziggler as you would expect.

We open with MizTV which has to be the most frequent talk show segment in years. The guests tonight are Ziggler and AJ who haven't been confirmed as a thing yet. Langston is with them as well. Ok considering AJ and Ziggler kissed on the stage, maybe they are a thing. Miz asks why all of this stuff has happened and AJ says ask Cena why he played with her heart. She lost her job as GM to keep Cena's good name clean and we get a clip of Cena kissing AJ.

AJ goes on a rant about having her heart broken by Cena. We get a clip from three weeks ago with Cena and Vickie talking about the bows Vickie found in the locker room. Cena made fun of them, AND THAT IS A PLOT POINT. Yes, an eight second line about FREAKING BOWS is the reason this story is happening. Then Cena told AJ to stop coming to the ring with him, like she was some dirty little secret. Cena is supposed to be better than that, but he broke her heart. Therefore, she broke Cena's chances at

TLC.

Miz asks who Langston is so AJ says he's Big E. Langston. Ok then. Miz doesn't really care about what's going on because AJ is crazy. Apparently that work ticks her off, but she's proven to Dolph that she's not crazy. He doesn't care that Cena won Superstar of the Year, because he stole the show and Cena's girl. Miz makes fun of AJ for being a sl** and says Ziggler is the sixth member of One Direction. Langston lays out Miz.

Teddy comes up to talk to Booker T with a prospect for a job later. It's Brad Maddox and Booker goes off on Teddy. Long says that Brad is a good prospect because he has a big social media following. Booker gives him the chance because Teddy says Booker knows what a second chance means. What is with the references to him being an ex-con lately? Maddox gets the match and finds out his opponent later.

Damien Sandow vs. Sin Cara

Rey's music hits for some reason but there's no Rey. Cara speeds things up to start and Damien bails to the floor. Back in and Cara walks the corner for the armdrag, followed up by a springboard missile dropkick. Cody breaks up a springboard something and Cara is down on the floor. That gets two for Sandow back inside, as does a suplex. A quick chinlock goes nowhere so there's the Russian legsweep.

The Wind-Up Elbow misses, but Sin can't get anything going. Back to the chinlock for a bit until Cara escapes and hits a quick cross body. Cara dives on the Scholars on the floor...and here comes the Shield. They have Mysterio's mask and throw it at Cara, allowing Sandow to hit the Terminus for the pin, appropriately enough at 6:19.

Rating: D+. Dull match here which didn't go anywhere. Shield attacking various people is still a good idea, because at least they've proven they can back it up. Not a terrible match here, but once Mysterio didn't show up it was clear that something was up and Shield is the right idea. We still need some reasoning behind these attacks, but it's not bad yet.

Post match, Shield destroys Cara and hurts his knee, which is likely a way to get Cara off TV for a legit knee problem he's been having.

Flo-Rida and Miss Piggy waste some time so we can get Cara out of the ring.

Santino Marella vs. Tensai

This is fallout from the presentation of an award last night. Santino grabs a headlock to start but Tensai runs him over. Santino does his power walk thing but stupidly tries to slam the big bald guy. Instead he escapes a powerslam and tries a German suplex. That goes nowhere and a slam completely fails. Off to a weak looking chinlock by the monster before a cross body is no sold. Santino does his signature stuff and finally slams Albert. The Cobra is blocked and Santino is put in a sleeper. The Cobra hits the top of Tensai's head to no effect. The backplash misses Santino and he steals a pin that was clearly going to him the whole time at 4:18.

Rating: D-. Tensai, go away. Get off of my television, go back to Japan, go to Belarus, go wherever will take you, but get away from me. You're a joke, not interesting, not anything to see, and just annoying overall. Just go away already so no one can miss you. Why he was hired back I have no idea.

Cara has a severely injured knee.

We recap the Cena/Flair/Punk/Heyman/HELL NO/Shield/Ryback segment from last night.

Kofi and HELL NO are in the back with Kane telling Kofi to watch over his shoulder for the Shield tonight. Bryan looks ticked off and apparently he's mad for not winning a Slammy last night. Kofi pulls his Slammy out. "You mean like this one?" They try to console Bryan by reminding him that he got to hang out with Flair, but make the mistake of saying Flair has the best catchphrase ever. Bryan: "NO! NO! NO!" Funny stuff.

Kofi Kingston/HELL NO vs. Prime Time Players/Wade Barrett

Mysterio apparently has a neck injury from the attack by Shield. Kofi and Titus start but Kingston goes right for Wade, allowing the heels to take over. Young gets dropkicked down and here's Bryan to kick him a lot.

There's the surfboard hold by Bryan and it's off to Kane for a low dropkick to Young's chest. Back to Daniel for a dropkick of his own as I think this match is going to last awhile.

Bryan fires off the kicks to Young in the corner but gets caught in a Stun Gun to change the momentum. Barrett comes in to pound away for a bit, but Bryan dives away for a tag to Kofi. The IC Champion goes off on Wade but Young breaks up Trouble in Paradise, allowing Barrett to clothesline Kofi to the floor. The Players work over Kingston as we look at the crowd to see if Shield is coming. Apparently Mysterio's neck injury is a SEVERE neck injury and not just a regular one. Good to know.

Barrett pounds away on Kofi a bit for two before it's back to Young. Kofi finally comes back with a tornado DDT out of the corner, allowing for a double hot tag to Kane and Titus. The masked man takes over and hits a side slam for two. The top rope clothesline misses and there's the Clash of the Titus to Kane, but Bryan makes the save. Everything breaks down and Darren gets the tag. Bryan pulls Titus to the floor and the chokeslam pins Young at 10:45.

Rating: C-. Not bad here but where are we supposed to go with either of these feuds? HELL NO has beaten the Players time after time, while Kofi has beaten Barrett in their PPV title match. Then again, these feuds are likely going to keep going because that makes it easier on the writers, and Heaven forbid they have to figure out something new.

It's the top of the hour so let's hit that recap button.

Sheamus explains some UK comedy show to Cena but he doesn't get it. He says Langston is the strongest person he's ever faced, which seems to turn Sheamus on. Sheamus asks what's up with AJ. "You can tell me, no one is around." Cena whispers in Sheamus' ear and Sheamus starts to laugh but is disturbed by something Cena says. John says more though and Sheamus isn't sure what to think. He looks scared but Cena was kidding him. Sheamus: "But is that even possible?"

Here are Punk and Heyman with something to say. Punk says the fans are going to look back in the years and be shocked that they didn't vote Punk Superstar of the Year. He talks about how the fans clearly don't care

about winning and losing, meaning they're the kinds of parents who put their kids in t-ball where they don't keep score so the kids don't know how big of a failure they are. Punk rips on Cena for being a mockery of the words on his shirt: Hustle, Loyalty and Respect.

This turns into an anti-Flair promo because Punk says he never loses. He's been champion for nearly 400 days and he's still here two weeks after having knee surgery. He's not on strike like the Pittsburgh Penguins because he doesn't have an off season. No one can beat him, and here's Ryback. You know, that guy that loses every match he's in anymore. Ryback actually talks, and says that on the first Raw of the year, he's getting his title shot against Punk.

Antonio Cesaro vs. Ryback

Ryback throws Cesaro to the floor to start and pounds his head into the mat back inside. The Goldberg chant start and Ryback hits the Thesz Press and a splash. All Ryback so far. Cesaro bails to the floor before the Meat Hook can hit and gets his belt to leave. Ryback heads to the floor and tries to throw Antonio back in, but Cesaro escapes and sends Ryback into the steps for a nine count.

Back in and Antonio hooks a cobra sleeper for a few moments. Ryback misses a charge in the corner, sending his shoulder into the post. A middle rope European Uppercut gets two for Cesaro and it's off to a cravate. Ryback fights up and pounds Cesaro down before hitting the Meat Hook. Shell Shock gets the clean pin at 5:11.

Rating: C. Erg. If you need to put Ryback over someone to keep him strong, PICK SOMEONE OTHER THAN THE FREAKING UNITED STATES CHAMPION. This was just a step above a squash as the steps and post did way more damage to Ryback than Cesaro did. The match was nothing good either, but the fans were WAY into it.

We see Miz going through Navy training. He also flies a plane. Riveting stuff.

AJ comes up to Kaitlyn in the back and Kaitlyn doesn't want to talk to her. Kaitlyn tells AJ she's tired of this and a brawl breaks out.

Divas Title: Eve Torres vs. Kaitlyn

We get a freaking recap of the brawl that just happened ON A SHOW WITH NO COMMERCIALS. REALLY? We REALLY NEEDED THAT??? Kaitlyn gets thrown down to start and Eve hits her running flip splash for two. We head to the floor with Eve still in control. Nothing happens there so here's a Downward Spiral for two by Eve.

Off to a chinlock by the champion (Eve if that wasn't clear) until Kaitlyn gets two off a small package. A sloppy middle rope sunset flip gets two for Kaitlyn as does the reverse DDT. Kaitlyn dives onto Eve off the apron to the floor as this just keeps going. Kaitlyn goes up but Eve grabs the referee's foot...AND THAT'S A DQ at about 5:20.

Rating: D. OH GOOD FREAKING GRIEF. If there was EVER a time to change this stupid belt, it was right here. Kaitlyn isn't anywhere near good in the ring and now we have to sit through a long match until we get to THAT stupid ending? Give me a freaking break. Terrible match with a bad ending on top of that.

Ziggler says he's a future world champion when Show comes up. He threatens Ziggler and Langston looks to stare Show down, only to have AJ stop him. Show threatens to kill Dolph if he tries to cash in tonight.

We recap the Sheamus/Show stuff from last night which included the attempted cash in by Ziggler, only to see Cena spoil it. Jerk.

Brad Maddox vs. Brodus Clay

Brodus pounds away with headbutts to start and drops some elbows. Maddox comes back with a quick dropkick to the side of the head for one and we hit the chinlock. Brodus comes back with a splash in the corner and suplex to set up the splash for the pin at 2:08. Same Maddox match as always.

Post match it's the Shield to beat down Brodus. They actually hit the SuperBomb.

Dolph Ziggler/Big Show vs. John Cena/Sheamus

Apparently Santa Claus is hosting Raw on Monday. Shouldn't he be working? Cena and Ziggler start things off with Dolph ducking under a Cena punch and strutting a bit. Off to Show so Cena can fire away punches with little effect. Show misses the chop and gets dropkicked into the corner. Show pounds him right back down again and it's off to Ziggler for some elbow drops.

Cena backdrops Ziggler down but can't make the tag before Show comes back in. He stays in for about two seconds so it's back to Ziggler. Dolph misses a splash in the corner and there's the tag to Sheamus. He hits the ten forearms on the apron but has to stop to punch Show before he can hit White Noise. The Cloverleaf is broken up with Sheamus being kicked to the floor. Show takes Sheamus' head off and the match slows down again.

Sheamus gets pounded on now as we hit the second heat segment of the match. Show gets in his usual power stuff, followed by Ziggler pounding away for awhile with his usual stuff. Back to Show whose chokeslam is countered into a DDT to put both guys down. The double tag brings in Cena to face Ziggler and everything breaks down. Sheamus and Show head to the floor and then up the ramp as Ziggler gets two off the Zig Zag. There's the AA to Dolph but Langston comes in for the DQ at 11:30.

Rating: C-. Why, it's almost like this was EXACTLY THE SAME THING THEY DID LAST NIGHT. Good grief are the writers that creatively bankrupt? I mean, it's the NEXT DAY and you can't come up with another idea? This match did very little to make me feel better about this show, which has been the same story that this match had: no reason for it to exist.

The heels pose to end the show. Seriously, that's it. Oh wait we do get a commercial for Tribute to the Troops because EIGHT HOURS OF TV THIS WEEK ISN'T ENOUGH.

Overall Rating: D. What in the world was the point in this being a special? The lack of commercials makes an already tiring show even more exhausting as you don't get a breather if you want to see the whole thing. The main event was your standard main event tag match and it's nothing to see at all. There's nothing of note here and while it's not a horrible show, it falls into the same category Smackdown stays in

anymore: completely unnecessary viewing.

Results

Damien Sandow b. Sin Cara – Terminus

Santino Marella b. Tensai – Pin after Tensai missed a backsplash

HELL NO/Kofi Kingston b. Prime Time Players/Wade Barrett – Chokeslam to Young

Ryback b. Antonio Cesaro – Shell Shock

Kaitlyn b. Eve Torres via DQ when Eve grabbed the referee

Brodus Clay b. Brad Maddox – Splash

John Cena/Sheamus b. Dolph Ziggler/Big Show via DQ when Big E. Langston interfered

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Monday Night Raw – February 8, 1999: I Can't Remember The Card After The Go Home Show. That's Bad.

Monday Night Raw (Saturday Night Raw)

Date: February 13, 1999

Location: SkyDome, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Attendance: 41,432

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole

This is yet another go home/special show which feels like all I do in 1999. Due to something airing on USA on Monday, Raw was pushed back to Saturday, which is the day before the PPV. The main event tonight is a gauntlet of some kind with Austin having to face the entire Corporation for some kind of prize. I've also done the Raw after this and the link is at the end. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the Rumble where Austin was ambushed by the Corporation.

Here's Austin to open the show to a HUGE pop. He can't wait until tomorrow night to get his hands on McMahon, who better have his track shoes on so he can run for as long as he can. After that, he's going to walk over Vince's body and head straight to Wrestlemania. Austin guarantees bloodshed, and it's not going to be his. Cole: "That means it's going to be the boss'!" Seriously, he was the BEST they could do? REALLY?

Cue Mankind who likes the sound of the word bloodshed. He says that he might have to go get some of Vince's blood on his new white shirt tomorrow night. That's a bit morbid wouldn't you say? Anyway Mankind says that he's ready for Wrestlemania, but tonight one of the two of them is going to take a beating. He reminds Austin that he's the WWF Champion until he isn't anymore. See, when Foley says things like that he can get away with it. When Cole says it, he sounds like an idiot.

Here's the Corporation with Rock saying that he needs to clear a few things up. He gives Mankind directions to the Smackdown Hotel, but says instead of checking Mankind in, he's going to bash Mankind's brains in. Rock calls himself the chosen one which isn't a name that ever stuck. As for Austin, Vince says that Steve has no chance, just like he had at the Rumble. He loved hearing himself announced as the winner of the Rumble, and he'd like to hear it again on Sunday.

Vince guarantees that none of the Corporation will interfere in the

match. If they do, he'll fire all of them and they'll all be out of jobs. After Sunday, nothing will be the same for Austin. Also tonight, Austin will be facing Mankind in a non-title match with Vince as guest referee. Vince's face was AWESOME here as he looked downright maniacal.

Mark Henry stares at Debra.

D'Lo Brown vs. Jeff Jarrett

Before the match, Brown has a surprise for Henry. To make sure Henry stays focused, here's someone nice he can look at. Brown introduces the debuting Ivory, basically as Henry's love slave. Jarrett jumps Brown to start and hits a DDT onto the arm. Brown comes back with a spinwheel kick as Henry hits on Ivory. Jeff puts on the Figure Four but Ivory's distraction lets Brown escape and hit the Sky High. Nothing here.

Post match we get a catfight.

Earlier today, Val Venis and Ryan Shamrock were spotted at a hotel.

We recap Val and the Shamrocks, which has ticked Ken off to no end.

Here are Val and the very good looking Ryan. Kevin Kelly asks them about about why they're doing this and sex lines ensue. Ken runs out and beats up Val. He beats up some referees too because he's insane.

Val says he's going to take care of Ken tonight.

Goldust vs. Gillberg

Goldust gets some blue roses before the match. Gillberg tries the spear and is shoved away with ease. Goldie stomps away and hits a clothesline followed by the Curtain Call. Here's Blue Dust who is shown on the screen

with just some grapes covering him up. Gillberg rolls up Goldust for the pin.

Gillberg gets Shattered Dreams as a reward, followed by Goldust getting a Blue Bath, meaning he's covered in blue paint.

Earl Hebner says that none of his referees will officiate Shamrock's match Sunday. If a replacement can't be found, Shamrock has to forfeit the title. Couldn't that be used by corrupt referees to cost someone a title?

Here's DX with something to say. Apparently on Sunday it's HHH/Pac vs. Chyna/Kane. HHH tells Chyna that she can't even draw a walk in the game because she doesn't have any balls. Pac wants Kane as well and says bring it. Road Dogg says there's not going to be a third fall in the 2/3 falls match with Snow. He moonwalks here a bit for no apparent reason.

Gunn takes off his shirt off and reveals his referee shirt. Dogg: "You want a job at Foot Locker?" Billy is going to referee the IC Title match and that's it. Nothing more to this segment than that: everyone talking about their matches and setting them up a bit better. Why don't we get this more often today? Oh that's right: we need 958 recaps and to have the GM talk for an hour a night anymore.

Steve Austin vs. Mankind

Vince is guest referee and this is non-title. He has the two guys come to the middle and says that anything goes here. The use of assorted furniture is acceptable and kicks to the groin would be appreciated. Austin says someone is taking a beating, but it's not himself or Mankind. Vince stares Austin down and turns around into Mr. Socko and the Claw. The Corporation runs out for the save but are easily beaten down. No match of course.

Post break, Vince puts Austin in the Corporation Gauntlet, minus Rock.

Godfather vs. Viscera

Mideon sits in on commentary and has an eyeball in a jar. Godfather pounds away on the fat man and gets a boot up in the corner to block a charge. Godfather gets Viscera down with a suplex but Mideon runs in for the fast DQ.

Val and Ken are fighting in the back and Billy Gunn is dragged into it.

X-Pac vs. Kane

Let it continue. Pac fires off kicks to start but a spinwheel kick is caught in a spinebuster for two. Kane throws him around even more before sending Pac to the floor. The big man tries to crush Pac with the steps but hits the post instead. A dropkick sends Kane off the apron and we head back inside. Chyna comes in for the lame DQ.

HHH saves Pac from a Chyna Pedigree.

Road Dogg is out cold in the back and bleeding from behind the ear. Medics look at him but he says to find Billy, who didn't do this to him.

Here's Al Snow with something to say. He says that he's going to take his Hardcore Title back and claims that Roadie stabbed him and Head in the back. Snow wants a hardcore match and issues an open challenge, but no one answers. His answer is to have one with himself, so he beats himself up with weapons. We have a referee for no apparent reason as Snow puts himself through a table. Bob Holly comes out to help Al but gets punched for his efforts. They brawl into the crowd and I guess this is a match. Back to ringside quickly and they hit each other with chairs. Referees pull them apart so this wasn't really even a match.

Droz beats up Kevin Kelly for calling him a punk.

Steve Blackman vs. The Rock

Rock pounds away to start but Blackman comes back with his usual kicks. Steve pounds away but gets caught in a DDT for a big pop. Rock heads to the floor and FINALLY tells us that he's cooking a nice Rockwich with extra Rock Sauce. Back in and Blackman gets in some kicks, only to miss a bicycle kick. Rock Bottom and Elbow end this.

Rating: D+. Total squash here which is exactly what it was designed to be. Not everything has to be some big and epic match, and this is a good example of that. Rock would go on to be world champion again very soon, but he just fought a midcard guy. The thing is: it worked fine. Try this and I think you'll be ok modern WWE.

Steve Austin vs. The Corporation

It's a gauntlet match and Shamrock is up first. Slugout to start of course with Shamrock taking him down. The fans tell Vince that he screwed Bret. Austin escapes the ankle lock and hits the Stunner, but here's Test for the DQ. He's the next man as well and is Stunned in less than a minute, but Kane runs in for the seconds DQ. Kane chokes away in the corner but gets caught by the Thesz Press.

Austin pounds away but Kane gets a boot up to stop Austin. There's the chokeslam but Austin kicks out at two. The Tombstone is countered into a Stunner but Chyna comes in for the DQ. I think the match only ends in a pinfall which is why they keep running in. Chyna comes in and takes a Stunner so here's Boss Man. Austin hooks a sleeper but Boss Man escapes and gets the nightstick for the DQ. Austin is dead so Vince comes in and pins him.

Rating: D. You can barely call this a match as it was really just a way

for Vince to get one up on Austin. The longest of the falls lasted about 80 seconds, so what are you expecting this to be? Nothing to see here but Vince's charisma is incredible when he's out there with Austin which makes up for some of the flaws. Also it's less than seven minutes long so how annoyed can I get?

Vince talks trash to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. Definitely not their strongest show, but they set up the cage match pretty well. The world title match was glossed over though, which is pretty annoying in general. I don't even think the stipulation (last man standing) was mentioned here at all. After those two matches though, the level of interest fall off a cliff. I had to look up the rest of the card and I just watched the go home show. That's a bad sign.

Here's St. Valentine's Day Massacre if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/03/16/st-valentines-day-massacre-austin-vs-mcmahon-one-on-one/>

Here's the February 15th Raw if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/05/16/monday-night-raw-february-15-1999-the-forgotten-rock-vs-mankind-match/>

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Thought of the Day the Sequel: Cena's (Kayfabe) Priorities

Anyone that follows my stuff knows I'm relatively neutral on Cena. I respect his work and think he's one of the greatest superstars ever, However lately his character has had some continuity issues. Note that this is all in kayfabe of course. 1. Over the summer, Cena says that Big Show winning the title would be disastrous. Well Big Show won the Smackdown Title two months ago and Cena doesn't seem to be running through the streets saying the sky is falling.

2. Last night Cena says how much he respects Flair, but he's perfectly fine with Shield beating him up. However, when Ziggler, a guy that beat him clean the night before (no rules means interference is clean) tries to legally cash in a MITB case, Cena runs to the rescue. Was he in a rousing game of pinball earlier?

Thought of the Day: Be Patient (Steve Austin In 1997)

I was watching the 1997 Rumble and I realized something. Austin was without a doubt capable of being world champion in April of 1997. He was a beast in the Rumble and pushed harder

than probably anyone ever had been in that match. Yet he wasn't world champion in 1997 and wouldn't be for over 15 months. This decision might have been what kept WWF in business.

Instead of being world champion, Austin got to spend a year in the main event Border War with Bret and the Harts, which was his real seasoning. Austin lost the feud, but by the end of it he was ready. There was no question that Austin was the top star in the company and ready for the championship.

The key difference is that today, someone is handed a title almost immediately (see Sheamus for an example) and is thrown into the main event with it. This rarely works and is a horrible idea, as once they can't handle it, they have to spend the better part of a year building themselves up again. In the worst business year the company ever had, they held off on Austin before riding him to heights never before or since seen a year later. Now when they have ZERO competition, they throw everyone into the main event as soon as they arrive and business is steadily going downhill. I'm sure it's just a coincidence right?

BIG E FREAKING LANGSTON!!!!

He debuted on Raw tonight after tearing NXT apart for months now. If you've never seen this guy and you're a fan of unstoppable monsters, you're in for a treat.

Monday Night Raw – December 17, 2012: Raw FINALLY Stops Taking Itself So Seriously. Oh And He's Back!

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 17, 2012

Location: Wells Fargo Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

It's the Slammys! The catch this year is the voting is all done on the WWE App, which is supposed to be interesting or mean something or other. This is the night after TLC and the main change is that AJ has turned on Cena, possibly to join Ziggler but that hasn't been confirmed. This is a three hour show instead of a three hour special, because that's how Raw works anymore. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of the PPV last night as expected.

Rey Mysterio vs. Damien Sandow

Sandow takes over to start and sends Rey out to the floor with Rey's signature chest first bump. Back in and the Wind-Up Elbow gets two and let's hit that chinlock. Rey comes back with a headscissors and a seated dropkick for two of his own. It's Scholars vs. HELL NO on Wednesday at Main Event. If that's not enough of a clue as to what's coming, I don't know what is. Indeed there it is, as Rey hits the 619 and top rope splash for the pin at 3:14.

Rating: D+. What in the world was the point of this? They already say that the Scholars are getting the title shot in two days, so what in the world is the point here? The match wasn't even any good and Sandow

looked like a jobber, which is the last thing he needs to be right now. No idea what they were going for here.

Here's Booker to present the Tell Me I Did NOT Just See That Award for Biggest Surprise. After explaining that we have to download the WWE App for the 1000th time, we're ready to go. The nominees are:

Brad Maddox's Low Blow on Ryback (Hell in a Cell)

18 Seconds (Wrestlemania 28)

Kofi's Miracle Save (Royal Rumble)

The Rock Gets Punked (Raw 1000)

Before the winner is announced, here's the FREAKING BOOGEYMAN. He's got the clock and the worms and apparently we're taking a break before the award is announced. Well sure why not. Post break, Brad Maddox comes out to stand next to Booker, but Kofi wins. Nothing of note in the acceptance speech.

Kaitlyn vs. Eve Torres

Kaitlyn jumps her to start and pounds away and we head to the floor. The champion (this is non-title) gets pounded on even more and freaks out because Kaitlyn hits her in the face. Back in and Eve pounds away on Kaitlyn, but Kaitlyn comes out of the corner with a gutbuster for the pin at 2:08. Back to the old formula for the Divas I guess.

To present the Comeback of the Year Award, here are the New Age Outlaws, complete with the PG version of their entrance. Billy has to read his line off his hand in a funny bit. The nominees are:

Brock Lesnar

Chris Jericho

DX

Jerry Lawler

We take a break before the awards which I think is going to be a trend tonight. Lawler wins to the shock of no one. He jogs up the ramp and says nothing of note.

Kofi Kingston vs. Tensai

Tensai hits the Vader Bomb in the corner and walks into Trouble in Paradise for the pin at 1:10. Fire him. Please.

Post match Wade Barrett lays out Kofi with the Bull Hammer.

Here's hot to vote! AGAIN!

Here's Vickie to present Kiss of the Year. The nominees are:

AJ and Daniel Bryan

AJ and Kane

AJ and CM Punk

AJ and John Cena

Vickie has something to say before the winner is announced. She'd NEVER be nominated for this award because she wouldn't abuse her position like this. The winner with AJ is Cena. This exists to have AJ come out and explain herself, but she says she doesn't owe anyone anything and she shoves Vickie away. Ziggler comes out and separates them, so AJ kisses Dolph. He's into it as Vickie EXPLODES. AJ skips away and Ziggler chases after him. It's about freaking time.

Great Khali vs. David Otunga

Khali forearms him down and chops him in the corner. A second one is even LOUDER but he misses a big boot in the corner. David stomps away on the leg in the corner but it's shrugged off and the big chop gets the pin at 1:57.

Ric Freaking Flair is here to read the nominees for Superstar of the Year. There's a surprise. Since this is Philadelphia, it might as well be God walking onto the stage. This would have been a bigger shock if they

didn't play WOO and have his voice saying the names before the break.

Sheamus

John Cena

Big Show

CM Punk

Cena wins and is of course booed out of the building. For some reason he gives the Slammy to Flair...but here's Punk with something to say. Heyman of course gets an ERUPTION. Punk goes on a big rant about how he should be Superstar of the Year because Cena keeps losing and hasn't done anything all year. Flair looks at his Rolex and makes fun of Punk but Punk says Flair can't talk about baggage. Flair asks if he means his two Hall of Fame rings or his four ex-wives. Naturally Ric wants to fight and we take a break.

Back with Punk limping into the ring to face Flair and he blasts Flair in the ribs. Flair pokes him in the eye and hits Punk with the crutch before throwing Heyman in the Figure Four. Naturally Flair has something to say, so he says welcome back Jerry Lawler. If he's going to die in a ring, he wants it to be in a WWE ring or with a woman from Philadelphia. He sucks up to Philly a bit more but here's the Shield.

Post break, Ambrose is laying out Flair before heading back to the floor to fight HELL NO who apparently came out during the break. They load up Flair for the SuperBomb, but here's Ryback to a BIG pop for the save. No Cena for no apparent reason. Rollins gets dropped on the announce table and the Shield is beaten down. Flair shakes all of their hands and the good guys stand tall. Well Bryan stands medium height but you get the idea.

Post break again, Flair and HELL NO celebrate in the back and Flair gets into the YES/NO thing. Ron Simmons comes up and you know where this is going.

Brodus Clay vs. JTG

It's an old school Brodus squash with JTG only hitting a decent looking Blockbuster. Total domination with Brodus hitting his usual stuff and winning with the splash at 1:52.

Here are Santino and Tensai to presents LOL Moment of the Year. Tensai falls down coming through the entrance and has a big bandage and ice pack on his head. Santino cracks up looking at Tensai. He calls him Albert and makes fun of him for a bit. Apparently Tensai means Fat Albert. Tensai grabs him and speaks in that thick Boston accent of his.

The Rock throws Cena merchandise into the Boston Harbor

HELL NO at Anger Management

Randy Orton beats up Ricardo and Striker with food

Vickie Guerrero dances

Rock wins because the WWE Universe has no taste. Naturally he's not here so Santino accepts on his behalf. Bryan comes out to say NO because this should be his Slammy. PREACH IT BROTHER!!! Kane drags him away.

Sin Cara vs. Cody Rhodes

Cara's knee is still messed up from last night. Cody takes over quickly as we've got the dark lighting. Cody hits the delayed release gordbuster for two and cranks on Cara's arm. He pounds away for a bit but gets caught by a springboard missile dropkick. There's a rana to put Cody down but he catches Cara in the Cross Rhodes out of nowhere for the pin at 4:15.

Rating: D+. Stupid psychology aside, this wasn't anything of note. What's the deal with the lighting anymore anyway? It's been done for months now, so why bring it back every now and then? Was there really a demand for that stupid thing? Nice to see Cody actually winning a match before his title shot in two days.

Here are Zack Ryder and Layla to present the award for Trending Now Hashtag of the Year. I swear this is a real thing.

Feedmemore

Peoplepower

LittleJimmy

WWYKI

Ryback wins and that's about it.

Here's Big Show with that massive chair of his. He's not surprised that he got the shaft for losing Superstar of the Year. He's still World Champion though and the fans can't handle that. The fans chant boring but Show threatens to sit in the chair all night. Cue Sheamus because three straight losses aren't enough. Sheamus says that he doesn't want to fight tonight and he has no regrets about last night. Last night, Show was the better man.

Show of course rubs it in but Sheamus says there's nothing more to it than that: Show deserves to be champion. He offers Show a handshake and Show of course isn't sure. The champion shakes his hand but Show says go to the back of the line "you potato eating Irishman." Show keeps running his mouth and the brawl is on. Sheamus gets the big chair and pounds away with the huge chair before laying Show out with a Brogue Kick.

Show is out cold.....AND HERE COMES ZIGGLER!!!

Smackdown World Title: Dolph Ziggler vs. Big Show

Cena sneaks in from behind and beats up Dolph so I don't think there's an official cash in. The bell never rang and Show is getting up. Ziggler gets beaten up badly and it's officially not a cash in. Why not? The bell should have rung.

3MB vs. Alberto Del Rio/The Miz/Tommy Dreamer

Before the match we take a break and when we come back, Ziggler is looking for Vickie. Eventually she yells at him for the stuff with AJ but Ziggler says it's over with Vickie. He tired of her jealousy and says she's getting old and ugly. She makes Ziggler/AJ vs. Vickie/Cena. Oh

geez.

As for the match, we still have to have a third partner announced for Miz/Del Rio, which you've already seen by now. The reaction for Dreamer is great of course. Del Rio and McIntyre start things off with Alberto pounding away. Off to Dreamer for some bad dancing and a flapjack. Everything breaks down and the Band is sent to the floor. Del Rio dives onto all three, as does Dreamer. For reasons I can't comprehend, we take a break.

Back with Dreamer suplexing Mahal down and it's off to Miz. The fans in Philly are actually into him as he hits the corner clothesline on Slater. McIntyre breaks it up though and the Band takes over. Mahal comes in to drop a knee and hook a chinlock. Back to Slater who hooks a front facelock for a few moments before it's back to Drew. Miz grabs a rollup for two but can't make a tag.

Drew puts Miz in a fireman's carry and does a little strut before dropping Miz down on his face. Slater breaks up the tag again but Alberto makes the tag and cleans house. A big kick to Slater's head gets two and Del Rio clears the ring out. The armbreaker is broken up but he hits the corner enziguri to Slater anyway. He loads up the armbreaker again but instead tags Dreamer in. Dreamer comes in for the pin at FOURTEEN MINUTES AND THIRTEEN SECONDS.

Rating: D+. WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD THIS FREAKING MATCH GET FIFTEEN MINUTES??? I mean dude, come on. We couldn't get ANYBODY else out there to fill in this kind of time? The match was nothing special, and it's still hard to buy Miz and Del Rio as faces because they never really had a big moment to turn. Del Rio's turn last night was really quick and didn't have a chance to sink in. That's a problem that it's going to take time to get over.

Sheamus comes out to present Newcomer of the Year.

Antonio Cesaro

Brodus Clay

Damien Sandow

Ryback

If you're not sure who wins here, I can't help you. The fans actually cheer for Ryback pretty well. He starts a FEED ME MORE chant and that's about it.

Ryback vs. Antonio Cesaro

This should be good. Non-title of course. Cesaro pounds away to start and let the Goldberg chants begin. Ryback counters a suplex into a delayed one of his own for one. Cesaro comes back with a spinebuster but Ryback backdrops out of the Neutralizer. There's a spinebuster from the good guy but Cesaro rolls away from the Meat Hook. He gets his belt but Ryback gorilla presses him back into the ring. Cesaro tries to run again and it's a countout win for Ryback at 2:08. That's the smartest thing they could have done.

Here are Gene Okerlund, Ricky Steamboat and JR to present the Match of the Year Award.

Undertaker vs. HHH (Wrestlemania 28)

Brock Lesnar vs. John Cena (Extreme Rules)

Sheamus vs. Big Show (Hell in a Cell)

The Rock vs. John Cena (Wrestlemania 28)

There are three VERY strong contenders here and it goes to Taker vs. HHH. I have no issue with that winning at all. HHH makes fun of his short hair but is immediately drowned out by a WE WANT TAKER chant. He sucks up to the crowd for a bit and the fans say thank you. We haven't seen the last of the Undertaker apparently.

In the back the Shield is destroying Tommy Dreamer. Ricardo of all people tries to stop them and is beaten down as well. Referees eventually chase them off.

Here's AJ for the main event but she asks for a ladder to be set up for

her. Post break AJ is on top of the ladder and says everyone has been asking her why she did it. She's about to explain when Vickie interrupts her.

Dolph Ziggler/AJ vs. Vickie Guerrero/John Cena

It's after 11pm already so this isn't going to last long. The guys start things off with Cena escaping a hammerlock. Off to AJ which means Cena has to tag Vickie. I think Vickie is supposed to be a face here. She pounds AJ down and AJ walks out, making it a handicap match. Now Vickie leaves and Ziggler escapes the AA. The jumping DDT gets two on Cena but John ducks a superkick and puts on the STF. AJ and BIG FREAKING E LANGSTON come in for the DQ at 4:29. If you don't know who Langston is, I feel sorry for you.

Rating: N/A. I rarely use this but seriously, there's nothing to talk about here.

Overall Rating: B+. I dug this show WAY more than any Raw in probably six months or so. They had a fast paced show tonight where they mixed things up and didn't keep anything (aside from the six man tag) out there longer than it should have been. This was a much more laid back show that didn't take itself too seriously, which has been one of Raw's biggest problems tonight. Good show and one of the best wrestling TV shows in months.

Results

Rey Mysterio b. Damien Sandow – Top Rope Splash

Kaitlyn b. Eve Torres – Gutbuster

Kofi Kingston b. Tensai – Trouble in Paradise

Great Khali b. David Otunga – Chop to the head

Brody Clay b. JTG – Splash

Cody Rhodes b. Sin Cara – Cross Rhodes

Alberto Del Rio/The Miz/Tommy Dreamer b. 3MB – DDT to Slater

Ryback b. Antonio Cesaro via countout

Vickie Guerrero/John Cena b. Dolph Ziggler/AJ via DQ when Big E. Langston interfered

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Other Slammy Award Categories And Winners

These were announced last night during the TLC preshow.

- Best Dancer of the Year – Brodus Clay
- Top Social Media Ambassador – Charlie Sheen
- WWE.com Video of the Year – Jerry Lawler
- Crowd Chant of the Year – “Feed Me More!”
- Upset of the Year – Daniel Bryan (retaining World Heavyweight Championship at Royal Rumble)
- Diva of the Year – AJ Lee
- Insult of the Year – John Cena
- Tweet of the Year – Daniel Bryan
- YouTube Show of the Year – Z! True Long Island Story
- Facial Hair of the Year – Daniel Bryan
- Feat of Strength Award – Sheamus (for hitting White Noise on Big Show)

– Betrayal of the Year – Big Show (knocking out John Cena)

A Legend Returns On Raw

He's baaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaack.....great. Ric Flair is back and presented Superstar of the Year. No word on if this is permanent or not.