

Vince on Raw Tonight

It's already known that he's going to be there for a State of the WWE Address.

Thoughts on what he's going to say/announce?

I can't imagine it'll be anything but Cena vs. Punk for the Cell, which will likely result in Vince being the next legend to talk to Punk.

Monday Night Raw: December 21, 1998 – Swerves, A Title Change, Whipped Cream And Gerbils

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 21, 1998

Location: Spokane Arena, Spokane, Washington

Attendance: 9,487

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

We're about a month from the Rumble and there are only two shows left to go in 1998. The main story for tonight is likely going to be the debut of Test last week to end the show and what it means for the Corporation, who has all the titles of note right now. Other than that we'll likely see the return of Austin after a one week absence which is never a bad thing.

Let's get to it.

Vince leaves and tells Shane he's in charge tonight. Patterson and Brisco will be held responsible in case Shane screws up.

Cole calls the show an action adventure series and 15 seconds in, Lawler says in case you just joined us, Shane is in charge tonight. To be fair, today you would be expected to have a recap fifteen seconds in.

Here's the Corporation to open things up. Shane is in charge tonight tonight because Vince is off training for the Rumble. Before Shane can get anywhere, here's DX who says Shane may have the keys to the kingdom tonight, but DX has the keys to the boiler room. Here's Mankind but before anything else can be said, Shane wants to talk about the Outlaws. Tonight it's Billy vs. Shamrock (non-title) and Road Dogg vs. Boss Man (non-title as well). Also it's Rock/Test vs. HHH/X-Pac and Shane vs. Mankind. Mankind and DX crack up. Total time to make four matches: seven and a half minutes. Takes notes modern WWE.

D'Lo tells Henry to not have sex before his match but Henry says it's cool.

Al Snow vs. Gangrel

Snow pounds away on Gangrel and the fans want Head. A kick to Gangrel's face puts him down and he charges into Snow's boot to put him down again. Gangrel comes back with a neckbreaker and a floatover suplex for two. Snow puts Gangrel on the top rope but gets shoved off and a cross body gets two for Gangrel. A reverse DDT by Snow is countered but he hits the Snow Plow for the pin.

Rating: D+. This was a strange choice for an opener. It wasn't a good match or anything and it was really basic. I'm not sure why this match was here unless there's something post match. Snow was starting to get a reaction and the fans noticed it, which is why he got pushed a lot harder in 99. See? It's not that complicated. Also take note, because it might be months before you see a 100% clean win on this show.

Post match the lights go out and Snow gets a blood bath. During the break

Snow freaked out and said not again, not again. Normal night for Snow.

Intercontinental Title: Billy Gunn vs. Ken Shamrock

So why would Shane make this a title match? He's in complete control and the Outlaws already beat Shamrock and Boss Man at the PPV, so why risk this? Shamrock immediately takes him down by the leg but Billy kicks Ken away. It's a feeling out process to start but Billy takes him down with a drop toehold. The crowd is HOT tonight. The champ gets put in an armbar for a bit followed by Billy stomping away in the corner.

Shamrock takes Billy's head off with a clothesline and it's off to the leg as you would expect from a submissions guy like Ken. The leg goes around the post and remember that the leg was hurt in the tag match last week. After a chair is taken away from Shamrock, he goes back to strikes of all sorts to the knee. The standing rana gets two for Shamrock and a small package gets the same for Gunn. Another cradle gets two for Billy before Shamrock goes to the knee again. Ken tries a rolling leglock or something close to it, only to have Billy fall on him and hook the legs for the pin and the title.

Rating: C. This wasn't bad at all here. Billy was a guy that had potential all the time but he never kept it going and people got tired of seeing the same stuff over and over again. Shamrock was great as a killing machine with a ton of submissions to use. You know the screwjob is coming though and here it is.

Immediately after the match here's Shawn to say it wasn't a title match, which makes sense in a screw you fans way. Billy moons Shawn and gets decked by Shamrock. Billy pops up and chases them away with his leg feeling fine.

Here's Hawk with some bombs to drop apparently. Hawk admits that he has an addiction problem but now he's clean. The surprise is that Droz was his supplier and Droz was just trying to steal Hawk's job. Now that Hawk's clean, Droz isn't needed anymore. Droz comes out and jumps Hawk, who has a cast on his arm. Animal comes out for the save. This angle never clicked at all.

Henry goes into PMS' locker room as D'Lo guards the door.

Steve Blackman vs. Blue Blazer

Blazer comes out and Owen comes out behind him. Why is this STILL going? The Blazer jumps Blackman and hits an enziguri to take over quickly. Blackman keeps going for the mask as Owen calls conspiracy last week, saying that the tape (on a live show) was doctored. Blackman makes a comeback and Owen comes in for the DQ.

Post match Goldust comes out to break up the double team. The mask is pulled off and it's Jeff Jarrett. Ok, now no one needs to wear the mask again.

PMS (Terri and Jackie) are going to take a shower while Henry watches. Brown is getting frustrated outside.

Road Dogg vs. Big Boss Man

Road Dogg implies Boss Man and Test anally stimulate each other with nightsticks which makes Boss Man make this a title match by his own words.

Hardcore Title: Road Dogg vs. Big Boss Man

Boss Man takes over to start and whips Road Dogg into the corner and out to the floor. He takes too much time though and Roadie gets something made of metal and cracks the champ in the head to take over. A shot with the steps hit the post instead of Road Dogg but Boss Man gets in a shot with the same piece of metal from earlier to knock Road Dogg into the crowd.

Road Dogg gets thrown into the technical area and then choked by a pole of some kind. These early hardcore matches were wild messes which is the appropriate kind of match to have actually. Back to the ring and Boss Man whips Roadie with a thick belt. Boss Man pulls out some powder and gets it knocked back into his own eyes. Road Dogg whips him with the belt and it's back into the crowd.

Boss Man finds a fan (as in one you use to cool off a room) somewhere and

gets in a shot to slow Road Dogg down. Now he's got a noose and chokes out Road Dogg for two in the middle of the crowd. A low blow from Road Dogg stops Boss Man and he puts a trashcan over the champ before diving off a wall onto him. The noose is still around Roadie's neck though and he gets whipped into some walls with it. Here's Mankind from the concourse with a net to tie up Boss Man. Mankind breaks something over Boss Man's head and Road Dogg pins him for the title.

Rating: B-. That's likely too high but I liked this a lot for some reason. It was a huge mess and that's the idea of a hardcore match. They had to take something from the Corporation eventually just to stop the bleeding on the other side a bit. Road Dogg was very popular so giving him a title makes as much sense as anyone else. This was a fun match too.

PMS takes Henry's clothes off before putting a studded collar on him. They give Henry a massage with a bunch of oils followed by covering his stomach with whipped cream.

We go to a commercial and come back with Jeff Jarrett ranting about women that tick him off. This would be the character that finally got people to hate him.

Back to the sex scene and we have Henry being strapped down to the table he's on.

Bob Holly/Scorpio vs. Acolytes

The Acolytes destroy both JOB Squad guys to start and it's Holly vs. Bradshaw to start. Scorpio comes in and things go badly for 2 Cold (Scorpio). Off to Farroq who helps Bradshaw with a double spinebuster but Holly distracts the Acolytes long enough for Scorpio to get up and kick Farroq down. Everything breaks down and the Acolytes beat them up so badly that the referee just calls it a DQ win for the JOB Squad.

Shane McMahon vs. Mankind

The Stooges are here with Shane and they look scared to death because of Vince saying whatever happens to Shane is their fault. Shane pops Mankind with some lefts and rights but a single shot from Mankind puts Shane

down. There's the double arm DDT but instead of covering, Mankind goes to the floor to get a chair and the mic. Shawn is holding the Corporation back on the stage. Mankind pulls the chair back but Shane falls down before Mankind can hit him. Foley hands Shane the chair and says lay him out and make Vince proud. Shane hits him with it but it has no effect. Patterson and Brisco come in and it's thrown out.

Mankind beats up the Stooges and grabs Patterson's crotch. Shane gets kneed in the face and here's Socko. The Corporation and DX come out and it's a Bronco Buster from X-Pac to Shane.

Patterson and Brisco are worried about their bonus.

Brown tries to get Henry to come out for their match but the door is locked and Henry isn't coming out.

Mark Henry/D'Lo Brown vs. Headbangers

I wonder how many years that head swivel added to Brown's career. We cut to the back and Henry is still tied down while Jackie whips him. He's also ball gagged and there are testicle clamps involved. Professional wrestling ladies and gentlemen! It's basically a handicap match and Brown gets caught by a top rope clothesline. Brown hits a Liger Bomb out of the corner on Mosh for two. Off to Thrasher who takes the Sky High for two as Lawler is getting reports of gerbils in the back. Mosh misses a middle rope elbow but the numbers keep the Bangers in control. A double flapjack pins D'Lo in short work.

Henry stumbles to the stage in underwear and with shackles around his wrists. Brown is MAD.

Vince gets back and goes to find Shane. It doesn't seem that Vince has been watching the show.

X-Pac/HHH vs. Test/The Rock

Before the match Shawn throws out DX. Vince comes out and says let them stay. Ok then. Rock and X-Pac start things off and Pac hits a kick to the chest and an armdrag to take over. Off to HHH vs. Test with the bigger guy (Test) looking as awkward as ever (which is pretty awkward). Rock's

distraction lets Test get in a big boot to somewhere around the face for two.

Rock comes in to beat HHH down some more and test gets two off a side slam. HHH gets in a facebuster and makes the tag so things can speed up a bit. Some kicks in the corner put Test down and there's the Bronco Buster. Test dumps Pac to the floor and things break down a bit. Pac gets crotched against the post by Rock and DX is in trouble. Back in with Rock vs. Pac and a slam sets up the Corporate Elbow for two.

HHH comes in sans tag to clothesline Rock down, only to result in X-Pac getting double teamed. Off to Test who misses a clothesline and gets his head kicked off by X-Pac. There's the hot tag to HHH who cleans house and hits a high knee to Rock and a facebuster to Test. Everything breaks down and HHH hits the Pedigree on Test but Rock makes the save. There go the lights and here comes Kane, who is suddenly not institutionalized. He chokeslams HHH and the rest of DX. Apparently Kane is the holiday bonus for the Corporation. The match is thrown out.

Rating: C. The match was fine and given that it's the Attitude Era, expecting a pin or submission ending in a main event is asking way too much. Test didn't look like anything more than a taller and slower Boss Man here, so adding in Kane sort of makes him look worthless. Nothing great to see here but HHH and Pac always had some chemistry together.

Kane grabs Chyna by the throat to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This show started well but the ending brings it down for me. The Hardcore Title changing was finally something going bad for the Corporation but they come back with an even bigger win in the form of Kane. Now given that it's Kane his heel turn likely won't make it past the end of the year, but for now it defeats a lot of the purpose of the stuff earlier tonight. Not a bad show at all, but the ending pulls it down.

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Monday Night Raw – December 14, 1998: DX Parodies The Corporation

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 14, 1998

Location: Tacoma Dome, Tacoma, Washington

Attendance: 17,508

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

It's the night after Rock Bottom and Austin buried Undertaker alive. On top of that, Rock is still world champion as we head towards the Rumble. Since there are three episodes of this show left in the year I'll be running through all three of them instead of doing two and then coming back later. The main event tonight is Rock vs. HHH which would get a lot better in upcoming years. Let's get to it.

We open with some stills of last night with Rock retaining the title because he passed out in the Claw instead of tapping. Also Kane helped Austin bury Undertaker alive.

Cole is on commentary because Ross had an attack of Bell's Palsy.

We open with a pretty famous segment as DX imitates the Corporation. We've got HHH as Rock, X-Pac as Shamrock, Roadie as Vince (with two small guys attached to him as Patterson and Brisco) and Billy as Shane. Chyna is Boss Man I think. Road Dogg starts us off and his Vince imitation isn't that bad. HHH has a painted on eyebrow and Billy isn't wearing pants.

Road Dogg asks Brisco how things taste behind him. Billy shows off his thong and says that Vince certainly isn't one of them. X-Pac says all this talk about sphincters is putting him IN THE ZONE!!! Chyna does a

nice routine with a nightstick like a baton...until she drops it. HHH does a great heel Rock imitation by talking very slowly and talking about sticking his own head in his own anal cavity.

Here's Commissioner Shawn played by....some comedian who isn't named. He has a basketball which he keeps dropping in a not very subtle illustration. Shawn calls himself HB-Gay and is intrigued by all this talk about sphincters. He doesn't lay down for anybody because he's always bending over. There goes the ball again. X-Pac is still IN THE ZONE. He gets in Shawn's face and Shawn freaks out. HHH says if the Corporation doesn't get what's going on here, they've got two words for them. Not as good as the Nation parody but it was still great.

Cue the real Corporation to interrupt with Shawn talking about how DX will pay for this. It's Outlaws vs. Shamrock/Boss Man again and HHH vs. Rock. Shawn: "Careful Rock. He's only used to hanging out with main eventers." It's non-title just in case though. HHH says that's a good idea because it was HHH who was beating up Rock every time they fought and he was the guy that took Rock's IC Title. Rock says that was Chyna's fault but he'll put the title up tonight. Rock then goes into Hogan's, Flair's, Savage's and Bret's catchphrases before getting to his own. Talk about a random moment.

Back with Vince giving the Corporation a pep talk. They're going after Kane later and a surprise is promised.

Val Venis/Godfather vs. Edge/Christian

I think this is the first pairing of the famous team on Raw. Edge and Val start things off with Val taking Edge down and pounding away. Off to Godfather who double teams Edge with a splash/legdrop combo. The not yet named Ho Train hits and here's Val again, this time facing Christian. Godfather beats up both members of the Brood and a hooking kick gets two on Christian. Things rapidly break down and Val decks Gangrel before hitting a fisherman's suplex on Christian for the pin. Short match.

Gangrel promises a blood bath tonight.

Steve Blackman promises to unmask the Blue Blazer tonight and prove that

it's Owen Hart.

Goldust vs. Blue Blazer

Shouldn't this be Blackman given the promo and video we got of Blackman vs. Blazer before the match? Blazer hits a spinning heel kick which is an Owen trademark. The fans chant nugget as Blazer hits a neckbreaker. A middle rope elbow gets two and Blazer tries some kind of running springboard, only to slip off the ropes. Blazer enziguris him down and does an Owen WOO! Goldust hits the Curtain Call and loads up Shattered Dreams but Jarrett runs in for the DQ.

Blackman runs out and saves Goldust before unmasking the Blazer to reveal Owen Hart. Well ok, now what does this change?

One of the commercials for this show is for the VHS of Mask of Zorro. That's one of my favorites.

DX and the Corporation are about to fight in the back.

D'Lo Brown/Mark Henry vs. Bob Holly/2 Cold Scorpio

PMS is with Brown/Henry, the latter of whom is now Sexual Chocolate. Before the match, Henry wants to talk about his date with Chyna. She invited him to her room and wanted him in her bed. Apparently Brown was filming it too. Well that sounds romantic. Chyna wore him out but before we can hear the details, Scorpio and Holly interrupt.

Brown and Holly start things off with Brown charging into a boot in the corner. Holly and Scorpio are the JOB Squad here. Scorpio comes in and superkicks Brown down but it's off to Henry who doesn't go down (at least not in a match) as easily. Back to Brown with the Sky High for two but a Swanton (yep, from Brown) misses. PMS distracts the JOB Squad and Jackie dropkicks Holly so Henry can powerslam him for the fast pin.

Tag Titles: New Age Outlaws vs. Big Bossman/Ken Shamrock

The Outlaws are defending. Shawn is out with the challengers. Also, last night Shamrock went after Billy's leg with a chair. That becomes important later. Billy and Boss Man start things off and Boss Man knocks

him down, only to have Billy ask him to do it again. Boss Man does it again and Billy doesn't get up. Serves the idiot right. Off to Road Dogg who does about as well, getting sent into the corner with authority. Boss Man misses a charge and it's back to Billy.

Boss Man tries to crotch him on the post but gets pulled face first into the post instead. Off to Shamrock who goes after Billy's leg for a good while. Boss Man comes back in and Billy falls down while being whipped to the corner because of the leg work. Shamrock comes back in and tries a standing rana but Billy powerbombs him down to counter.

The double tag brings in Roadie to face Boss Man and Shawn cracks Road Dogg in the back with a chair. The Boss Man Slam gets two and Road Dogg hits Boss Man low for absolutely no penalty. Back to Billy but Shawn whacks him with a pipe. The ankle lock goes on but Billy is out and we have new champions.

Rating: C-. The match wasn't any good but it gave the Corporation yet another title. I believe

<http://onhealthy.net/product-category/muscle-relaxant/> they have everything but the European Title and the Light Heavyweight Title at the moment. Anyway this wasn't much but at least it was short. The wrestling in the Attitude Era just wasn't that good and most of the time that was because no one really cared about it. The fans were there for the drama and that's about it.

Here are Vince and Shane with an announcement. Vince isn't pleased that Austin won last night because now he gets to be in the Royal Rumble. It's Kane's fault that Austin won that match and tonight we're going to fix Kane and Mankind by having them fight in a no holds barred match.

Vince and Shane step back to reveal a table with a tumbler on it. We're going to pick Austin's Rumble number right now, and wouldn't you know it, he draws #1. Just to prove there's nothing up, they draw again and Austin gets #1 again. Vince sweetens the Rumble pot a bit by saying that whomever eliminates Austin will receive \$100,000. Tonight another participant will be announced as well. It's someone that equals Austin's skills. It's the only person that could save WCW. It's....Vince himself!

Vince hopes he's #2 but he gets #30 instead.

The McMahons are about to leave but Mankind pops up on screen. Mankind, calling Vince dad, says that it should be Vince vs. Mankind tonight in the no holds barred match. Well maybe just a match. Vince throws down the mic without answering either way but he seems ticked off.

Back from a break with the Stooges trying to convince Vince not to fight tonight. Hey that rhymes two times.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Steve Blackman

This is a guitar on a pole match for reasons of Russo. Jeff says Debra WILL NOT strip tonight but she kind of wants to. Blackman gets in some quick strikes and goes for the guitar which goes nowhere. I think it's the first person to pull the guitar down wins here. Jeff punches away but misses a dropkick. Debra shows off a little cleavage which does nothing to Blackman as he catches Jarrett climbing. Debra pulls her jacket almost off and Jeff gets the guitar. Both of them miss swings with it and the referee goes down. Owen runs in and blasts Blackman with another guitar to give Jeff the pin.

Rating: D. In a guitar on a pole match, we also had a run-in and a ref bump. Like I said, it's Russomania at this point and that would never be clearer than at the Rumble. Everybody remembers the drama of the main events from this era, but most people forget the midcard, with stuff like Steve Blackman vs. Owen Hart which went on for MONTHS. It wasn't all great stuff.

Tiger Ali Singh finds the word Bloodbath painted on his wall.

Vince says he's going to take on Mankind.

Here's Singh for a match I presume but the lights go out and the Brood's music hits. Red lights keep flashing in the ring. The Brood appears and the lights go out. As they come back on, Singh is covered in blood. They would get better at this.

Mankind vs. Vince McMahon

No holds barred. Thankfully they turn off the red lights a few seconds into the match. They slug it out a bit before Mankind blocks a chokeslam with a knee to the ribs, only to get kicked in the head for his efforts. They head to the floor with Kane sending Mankind into the steps and then hitting a HARD shot with them to Mankind's head. Kane sends Mankind into the corner and clotheslines him in the back of the head but Mankind knocks him to the floor. Here's Vince who says Mankind can fight Vince in the parking lot right now. Mankind goes after him and the match is a no contest.

Rating: D+. The length of the match hurts this more than anything. Foley would be on to much bigger things in just a few weeks while Kane would do little of note for awhile. These hardcore brawls are only able to get things so far and the guys needed some actual matches to give them a break from the hardcore stuff.

During the break, Shamrock and Boss Man beat down Kane and had him put in a straightjacket.

We go to the back and Mankind is beating up Vince in the parking lot. Mankind beats him down and takes out the Stooges as well before putting Vince in the trunk of a car. Rock shows up for the save and Rock Bottoms Mankind on the hood.

WWF World Title: The Rock vs. HHH

Shawn distracts HHH and Rock jumps him to take over. HHH comes back with clotheslines and pounds away in the corner before being thrown to the floor. Rock beats on HHH on the floor while jumping in on commentary to talk some trash. Back in and HHH hits the high knee and an elbow drop for two. Rock elbows him down and we hit the chinlock.

HHH tries a comeback but gets DDT'ed and put right back into the chinlock. Another comeback is stopped with a slam and the People's Elbow for two. We hit chinlock #3 in way too short of a stretch of time. HHH comes back with a suplex and another high knee before stomping away in the corner.

After a quick bit on the floor, Shawn distracts HHH but Chyna uses the

opportunity to low blow Rock. HHH hits a DDT for two and there's the Pedigree, but the referee is with Chyna. Shawn hits HHH with the belt for TWO. Chyna goes after Shawn and a big guy who was a bodyguard for Motley Crue takes out HHH to give Rock the pin.

Rating: C-. This started off slow but by the end it picked up a lot. The bodyguard would later be named Test and he's the newest member of the Corporation apparently. The kickout after the belt shot had the crowd losing their minds but they got very quiet in a hurry. This was one of the worst matches I've ever seen these two have, but then again it's just a TV match at the end of the year so how much are you expecting?

Overall Rating: C+. For a show without Austin, this was pretty good stuff. They're moving forward with a lot of angles and it's nice to see the build for the Rumble starting already instead of burning off two weeks like they do today. Some of this stuff was dull but you can't win them all I guess. Anyway, things are looking good going into 99, which is a good thing.

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Thought Of The Day: Missed Masterpieces Of The 80s

Barry Windham vs. Randy Savage

Ted DiBiase vs. Tito Santana

To the best of my knowledge, neither match ever happened. Tito vs. Ted might have on some house show but I'm 99%

positive that Windham vs. Savage never did, at least not when it would have been great (read as before 1989ish when Windham just stopped trying). Imagine either of these matches getting 20 minutes and see if you don't smile a little.

Smackdown – October 5, 2012: Even Basic Stuff Is A Breath Of Fresh Air

Smackdown

Date: October 5, 2012

Location: BOK Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Commentators: Michael Cole, Josh Matthews

We're closing in on the Cell and we have our main event now. Sheamus will defend against Big Show and they had a debate on Raw to set the match up. The debate wound up being almost as a big of a waste of time as the entire Del Rio feud, but at least the match should be more interesting. Other than that there isn't much going on so we're almost going into this blind. Let's get to it.

Do You Know Your Enemy? Mine is Bud Selig. Why does he feel the need to keep changing everything that was was working fine?

Here's Big Show to open the show. Show talks about Sheamus having a plan for their match, but a punch in the mouth can change any plans. We get a highlight reel of Show knocking people out. Here's Sheamus who says he knows the fight at the PPV is going to be the fight of his life. He offers a handshake and says may the best man win, but Show walks away.

As Show is leaving, Sheamus talks about the plans that Show mentioned. He says Bryan had a plan at TLC and we see a clip of Big Show losing the title in 45 seconds. We also see Bryan's plan from Wrestlemania and the 18 second title change. Show gets back in the ring and extends his hand again but this time Sheamus walks away. This was already more entertaining and interesting than the last two months of Sheamus vs. Del Rio and it was just ok.

Tag Team Tournament: Kofi Kingston/R-Truth vs. Prime Time Players

The winners get Mystério and Sin Cara. Kofi and Young get things going and Kofi hits a dropkick for two. Off to Truth as the former champions take over. Truth hits his spinning legdrop for two but Young powers him into the corner and it's off to O'Neal. Titus has a great look and the power but he's not quite there yet in the ring. Off to Young for their suplex drop onto Truth for two.

Young hooks a bearhug of all things which gets him nowhere. Wouldn't that be a better move for someone like O'Neal? Anyway Truth gets in a shot to take Young down and there's the hot tag to Kofi. Things immediately speed up and after running around a lot, Kofi hits the Boom Drop for no cover on Young. Titus distracts Kofi before Trouble in Paradise can hit. Two kicks miss but O'Neal trips Kingston up and Young's gutbuster gets the pin on Kofi at 4:23.

Rating: D+. This didn't have time to get anywhere but at least the Players finally beat these guys after losing for months on end. Kofi and Truth have probably outlived their shelf life as a team but the Players facing the masked guys is a good idea for a feud. This wasn't awful but the time killed it.

Here are the final four matchups:

Rhodes Scholars

Zack Ryder/Santino Marella

Prime Time Players

Sin Cara/Rey Mysterio

Primo vs. Ryback

Cole says Ryback said he's looking for his next meal with Punk. Primo gets launched into the corner and a big boot puts him down. Ryback slams Primo into the mat a few times but Primo gets in some jobber offense. Primo is then launched across the ring, clotheslined down and sent to the floor. Ryback beats up both cousins on the floor, clotheslines Primo down in the ring and Shell Shocks (Josh actually called it that for the first time I can ever remember) him for the pin at 2:52.

Punk and Heyman are in the back and looking for Dolph Ziggler.

Layla vs. Alicia Fox

Layla's music just does not fit at all. They do basic stuff to start and Alicia shakes her hips a lot. She works on Layla's leg and puts some holds on it but Layla kicks Alicia from the corner, hits her bouncy cross body, and finishes Alicia with a high kick to the head at 3:26.

Rating: D. Not only was the match uninteresting, there was no selling at all from Layla. Alicia worked on Layla's leg for almost two minutes before Layla hit three moves that all involved her leg. Then again, I don't think anyone has ever accused Layla of being what you would call a ring general.

Layla says that it's going to be all the sweeter to take the title from Eve because of how Eve got the title in the first place.

Ziggler and Vickie are in the back and run into Heyman and Punk. Punk yells at Dolph for walking out on the tag match on Monday, which Ziggler points out that Punk did a few weeks ago. All four of them get in an argument until Booker shows up and makes Punk vs. Ziggler in the main event.

Wade Barrett vs. ???

It's a jobber whose name isn't worth mentioning. In an inset interview, Barrett says that he likes toying with the people he fights. A pumphandle slam puts the jobber down and Barrett shoves him off the top to the floor. The Souvenir gets the pin at 1:47.

Sheamus vs. The Miz

Cole hypes up this as being a rare champion vs. champion match. That's true actually. There hasn't been one in two whole days. Miz pounds Sheamus down into the corner to start but the champ (the world champ I mean) throws Miz into the corner and pounds away. The ten forearms in the ropes are blocked and Sheamus is sent to the floor. It's nice to see people start countering that as it means Sheamus is going to have to start mixing it up a bit more.

Miz sends him into the post which gets two back inside. Sheamus fights up but walks into the Reality Check (backbreaker into a neckbreaker) for two. Miz hooks a chinlock and the announcers talk about fantasy football. Sheamus starts his comeback with some high powered shots but walks into the short DDT for two. Miz's corner clothesline is caught in an Irish Curse and there are the ten forearms. White Noise hits and the place gets very fired up when Sheamus loads up the Brogue Kick...and here's Big Show. Sheamus is ready to go but Show KO's Miz to give Sheamus a DQ loss at 6:25.

Rating: C-. We've reached the point where watching two champions go at it means nothing anymore. We saw this two nights ago so why should it mean

anything today? At least Sheamus vs. Show is something new which you can't say has happened in months now. The match should be a physical one as well which is a perk. The match here wasn't bad.

Here's Otunga in wrestling gear. He wants to address something that happened after Smackdown went off the air last week and we get a clip of Del Rio attacking Orton after the end of last week's show. Otunga thanks Del Rio for having the guts to stand up to Orton, and that brings out the Viper. Scratch that as it brings out Del Rio and Ricardo.

Alberto talks like Orton which is kind of funny actually. That lasts all of two seconds and he says Orton isn't here because he's afraid of dying like a snake. This brings out Booker who puts Otunga and Del Rio in a tag match against these guys.

Alberto Del Rio/David Otunga vs. HELL NO

Non-title again. After a break Bryan and Otunga start things off. Bryan gets thrown down and Otunga poses a bit. Daniel comes back and sends Otunga into the corner and poses as well. The NO Lock is avoided and Otunga drapes Bryan over the ropes to take over. A neckbreaker gets two for Otunga and it's off to Del Rio for a suplex for two. Ricardo chants SI and Bryan drop toeholds Del Rio into the middle buckle.

Off to Kane who gets in an argument with Bryan almost immediately. Del Rio gets in a shot on Kane to take over and it's off to Del Rio who spinebusts the big man for two. That gets him nowhere though as Kane hits the chokeslam. Daniel tags himself in and hits a top rope headbutt for the pin on Otunga at 4:04.

Rating: D+. Was there a point here other than getting the champions on TV? I don't know if it's the crowd but the act seems to have died down a little bit. Granted they're being treated like a much more normal tag team now which takes away the stuff that got them so popular in the first place so that's probably it. I'm hoping they go back to what worked for

them as it'll still get laughs. The match was nothing special.

Eve and Teddy are arguing in the back with Teddy saying he never told Eve to suspend Beth. Eve accuses Teddy of losing his memory in his old age. Teddy says he can see straight through Eve and thinks she had something to do with Kaitlyn's attack. Teddy says that he sees through Eve unlike Booker. Booker pops up and yells at him while sending Eve away. Booker tells Teddy to stop bickering or he might be fired.

Big Show vs. Tensai

Show doesn't get an entrance but Tensai does. Tensai pounds away to start and beats Show into the corner with punches and headbutts. Show comes back with a chop but charges into a boot in the corner. Big Show shrugs that off and throws him to the floor where he runs Tensai over. Back in and Show misses an elbow and gets hit by the backsplash for two. Show spears Tensai down and loads up the punch but here's Sheamus to Brogue Kick Tensai to give Show a DQ loss at 2:20.

Raw ReBound.

CM Punk vs. Dolph Ziggler

It's the rare heel vs. heel main event and Punk comes out first. No Vickie entrance for Dolph either. The crowd is DEAD for Ziggler. They argue a lot over respect before the match starts and Punk grabs a headlock to start. Ziggler fights out and it's a stalemate as we head to a break. Back with Punk in control on the mat. Ziggler comes back with a headlock as they're still in first gear here.

Punk goes up but Ziggler is on the apron to meet him. They fight on the top before they both crash to the floor. These guys are mirroring each other so far. Back in and they slug it out a bit before both get two off rollups. Ziggler hits a jumping DDT for two and after ducking a high

kick, Dolph hits a Fameasser for the same. This time the high kick hits for a near fall for the champion. Punk slams him down and loads up the Macho Elbow, only to get stopped by Ziggler. Dolph slams him down but misses a Stinger Splash in the corner. GTS hits out of nowhere for the clean pin at 7:10 shown of 10:40.

Rating: B-. They were going for a big match feel here but it didn't quite get there. The match was entertaining and Ziggler looked like he was hanging with Punk most of the way, but before the break and for part of it after the break they didn't really hit a higher level. It's good to see Punk get another clean win, but I could have done without seeing the MITB guy lose AGAIN.

Punk gets on the announce table and says he's heard it from everyone that he has to enter the Cell to face Cena. It's still not going to happen though.

Overall Rating: B-. I liked tonight's show but there were some problems with it. A lot of the matches felt like they were there to fill in time and had no real purpose other than that. I'm digging the basic stuff they're doing with Sheamus and Big Show as they're showing that Sheamus can do whatever Show can do and that Sheamus is trying to get inside Show's head. That basic story is more than we got in the Alberto feud. I know I mentioned it like three times now, but that feud was so boring and even something simple like this is a breath of fresh air. This was a nice upgrade for Smackdown but it's no masterpiece.

Results

Prime Time Players b. Kofi Kingston/R-Truth – Gutbuster to Kingston

Ryback b. Primo – Shell Shock

Layla b. Alicia Fox – High Kick

Wade Barrett b. ??? – Souvenir

The Miz b. Sheamus via DQ when Big Show interfered

HELL NO b. Alberto Del Rio/David Otunga

Tensai b. Big Show via DQ when Sheamus interfered

CM Punk b. Dolph Ziggler – GTS

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WWE Main Event – October 3, 2012: Perfectly Acceptable Wrestling That I Feel No Need To Watch

Main Event

Date: October 3, 2012

Location: BOK Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Commentators: Michael Cole, The Miz

This is the debut of a new show because seven and a half hours of free TV a week wasn't enough apparently. The main event tonight is Punk vs. Sheamus in a champion vs. champion match which could main event a PPV, but instead we're getting it on Ion Television at 8pm on a Wednesday night because that's how WWE works. Let's get to it.

The opening video is just about the exact same thing any opening video is. The theme song sounds like something from Shinedown.

Miz and Cole are in the ring to open things up. Cole talks about the

champion vs. champion match which is just thrown together and there's no reason for them to fight other than they're champions. They talk about Punk a bit and here's a video on Punk, likely from his DVD. There are some clips from what looks like IWA-Mid South. This is definitely from the DVD as it talks about his beginnings. We get some OVW and ECW clips as well. We move on to Punk rising up the WWE ladder and I don't get why we're seeing this. If this was some big major show it would be one thing, but this is on ION Television, not NBC.

Punk is in the back warming up when Striker has a question for him. He's going to win tonight and maybe that'll be enough for him to get some respect.

Sheamus makes fun of Punk for wanting respect and is going to give that to Punk by kicking him in the face.

Here's a video on Sheamus so he doesn't get jealous.

Sheamus vs. CM Punk

Non-title of course. We get big-match intros at least. Punk grabs a headlock and shouts spots in Sheamus' ear as is his custom. Sheamus puts on one of his own as it looks like we're in for a long match. Punk takes him to the corner but Sheamus kicks Punk away. The Smackdown Champion (Sheamus) pulls himself to the top but gets shoved to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Sheamus guillotining Punk on the top rope and stomping away in the corner, only to get pulled face first into the middle buckle. Punk drops a knee for no cover. That spot between Sheamus' eyes seems to be bleeding. Punk goes after the shoulder and hits a neckbreaker for two. Sheamus gets back up and starts speeding things up with a high knee followed by a powerslam for two.

Sheamus sets for the ten forearms in the ropes but Punk blocks the first one and hits a high kick for two as we take another break. Back with Sheamus holding his arm on the floor. The arm seems to be fine though as he snaps off a forearm and hits a slingshot shoulder for two. Sheamus loads up the Brogue Kick but Punk hides in the corner. The buckle pad is pulled off as Punk is pulled out and there are the ten forearms to the chest.

White Noise gets two and the fans are getting into this. Heyman seems to be praying or muttering to himself at ringside. Sheamus loads up the Cloverleaf but Punk punches his way out of it. There's a running knee in the corner followed by the Savage Elbow for two. The GTS is countered and Sheamus gets the Cloverleaf on in the middle of the ring.

Punk manages to get to a rope and Heyman is panicking even more. They both come out of the corner and Punk charges into the Irish Curse. Sheamus charges again but Punk drop toeholds him into the exposed buckle and rolls Sheamus up with the tights for the pin at 12:18 shown of approximately 18:18.

Rating: B. Good match here and the fact that there was as close to a clean pin as there was is amazing. Sheamus hadn't lost a singles match since like July but at least it was to another main event guy. For a first match on a new show this was excellent and it was a very good match all around anyway.

Post match Sheamus says he gets why Punk doesn't get respect. He promises a Brogue Kick for Punk in the future.

Miz and Cole talk for a good while.

After a break, Punk and Heyman are incensed at being accused of winning through means not entirely on the level. Heyman wants to know what Punk has to do to earn Josh's respect and Josh of course says it's to go inside the Cell with Cena.

The main event for next week is Show vs. Orton so Show says that it'll be Orton's last appearance on this show next week.

Tag Team Tournament First Round: Santino Marella/Zack Ryder vs. Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel

Santino and Gabriel get things going with Gabriel grabbing a quick headlock. The winners of this get the Rhodes Scholars. Gabriel tries a leg sweep but Santino jumps over it and tries one of his own in slow motion. Off to Ryder and Kidd which goes nowhere so it's back to Gabriel who double teams with his Canadian buddy. A kick to the face gets two on Ryder and it's back to Kidd. Kidd and Gabriel work very well together. Kidd launches Ryder over his head and into a kick from Gabriel for two.

Everything breaks down and Santino has issues getting thrown to the floor. Kidd gets a spinning rollup for two but charges into the knees in the corner. Tyson crawls into the corner and looks painfully obvious doing it for the Broski Boot. Ryder hits a good looking flip dive to take Gabriel out and the Cobra advances Santino and Ryder at 4:03.

Rating: C. Gabriel and Kidd looked like a polished team here while Santino and Ryder looked like a pair of comedy guys who got thrown together into a tag team because the fans love both of them. It wasn't a bad match or anything but it's really just kind of there, which is the problem with most tournament matches you'll ever see.

Overall Rating: B-. this is an interesting show for a number of reasons. First of all, this felt like it was booked in reverse. Isn't the idea of the main event match on the Main Event show to be THE main event? As in the match that goes on last? Once you watched that match, are most people really going to stick around for a face vs. face tag match? I'd be surprised if they did.

Second, this show really doesn't need to exist. This easily could have been Superstars put on Wednesday instead of a brand new show. Then again

people are probably going to think it's just something they threw together instead of making a new idea, which is understandable all around.

Finally, I likely won't be watching this on a regular basis. It's a perfectly acceptable hour of TV and had a good match, but does anyone really believe this is going to be what the show looks like at the end of the year? WWE will get bored with it and they'll turn it into Superstars II, which is fine, but don't expect people to care about it. In short, this show makes eight and a half hours of WWE programming a week, and I was perfectly fine having seven and a half.

Results

CM Punk b. Sheamus – Rollup after a drop toehold into an exposed turnbuckle

Santino Marella/Zack Ryder b. Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel – Cobra to Kidd

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I Want To Talk A Little Bit About Wrestlers Sticking To Their Strengths

For some reason wrestling fans expect wrestlers to be able to do everything. I'm not sure where this comes from but I think it has something to do with the theory that wrestling is based around being able to do a lot of moves. This is another of those ideas that needs to be crushed and needs to be crushed quickly. Today I'm going to be talking about wrestlers using the moves that they're supposed to use and why the

amount of moves someone uses is completely irrelevant to their talent level. Let's get to it.

Back in 1997, Shawn Michaels had a "knee injury" and couldn't wrestle at Wrestlemania 13, so instead he did commentary on the world title match. That night, Sid defended the world title against the Undertaker. During the match, Sid was in control and Shawn said something like "Sid doesn't deviate from his game plan that much, because that power takes him everywhere he needs to go."

That right there is a lesson that a large amount of wrestling fans need to learn. Today, you hear people talking about guys like Punk and Bryan and using the words Best in the World to describe them. Their justification for this seems to be that Punk and Bryan put on long and entertaining matches with a wide variety of moves. These same fans tend to criticize guys like Hogan and Cena for using a much smaller moveset.

Think about it: how many times have you heard someone criticize Cena because "he only knows five moves"? If you've heard it once, you've heard it way too many times. This is a stupid thing to say for a number of reasons which we'll cover today. Not only is this stupid to say about Cena, but it's a stupid thing to say about anyone.

Let's take a look at the greatest wrestler of all time: Hulk Hogan. Love him, hate him, whatever you think about him, there is zero denying that since 1980, no one has had a bigger influence on professional wrestling. No one has been a bigger star than Hogan and few have become a bigger household name (which is another article for another time as well). In short, he's the biggest star ever in wrestling and there isn't much to argue about that.

Now that being said, I don't think anyone would call Hogan a ring general, in the sense that he wrestled a lot of matches the exact same way. Hogan had a formula to his matches and he rarely shifted from that formula. There isn't much denying of that, nor is there really any denying that Hogan used probably less than ten different moves (punch, big boot, legdrop, high knee, choke, back rake, suplex, ax bomber and that's about all that jumps to mind) in his entire career.

Here's the big secret though: there is absolutely nothing wrong with that. Hogan wrestled a very basic style and found something that worked (aside: how many botches can you think of from Hogan when he was in the red and yellow? I'd be impressed if you could come up with more than five. The guy was a very safe worker which he never gets credit for) so he never really shifted from it.

Why did Hogan never change or mix it up? Well why should he have done so? Hogan got some of the biggest reactions for well over 20 years doing the exact same stuff, and it never stopped working. Hogan got to the top of the wrestling world using the same formula and it never stopped at all. Somehow being the biggest star ever made him into the worst wrestler ever.

Another subject that often gets the same reaction is the current biggest star in the world, John Cena. I've never been what you would call a Cena hater. I've never come close to one and I likely never will be one. I'm not a huge Cena fan either, but I respect the guy. One of the biggest knocks on Cena is that he doesn't have as wide ranging of a moveset as Bryan or Punk. This is another criticism that has a true premise (Bryan and Punk likely do have more variety in their offense) but an untrue conclusion (this makes them better wrestlers).

Cena's offense (which has more than five moves: shoulder block, AA, STF, Shuffle, top rope legdrop, spinout slam. There, idea proven wrong) is one based around firing up the crowd at the right times. Look at his matches with Punk. I don't think anyone would suggest that they're boring and I don't think anyone would suggest they're bad. Cena and Hogan both are masters at making comebacks and working a crowd, just like guys like Bret and Shawn were.

This is what makes Hogan and Cena great: they know how to work a crowd. Look at the biggest names in the history of wrestling (in no order): Hogan, Cena, Rock, Austin. What do these four have in common? Among many other things, they play to the crowd. That's what makes them great. They get the fans to care about them and get the crowd to care about them. The true test of the greatness of a wrestler is the amount of a reaction they can draw from an audience.

Think of it like this: when is the last time you remember Cena coming out to no reaction? Ask the same question about Rock, Austin or Hogan. The people respond to them and care about them. How many wrestlers have you seen come out and no one moves? How many times have you seen a tag match with the hot tag without a reaction from the crowd? The match may be fine from a technical standpoint, but no one cares at all. I can't count how many indy matches I've watched with a lot of flips and high flying moves and ten minutes after the match I can't remember the people in it. That's not a good sign.

Let's take a look at another side of this. Another criticism of guys like Cena or Hogan is that they don't know how to perform moves like Punk and Bryan do. Is this honestly believed? Do you think Cena couldn't do a hurricanrana if he tried to and practiced it? Let's take a look at this from the other perspective: what do you think would happen if Punk tried to AA the Big Show? Even with months if not years of physical training, do you think he could pull it off on that frame? Cena uses his physical

abilities in the right way. Here's another example of that which might make a little more sense.

When the names of worst wrestlers in the world are brought up, one that is often mentioned is The Great Khali. Usually when people say this, I roll my eyes because it's clear these people have little idea what they're talking about. Khali is legitimately over 7'0 and weighs probably 400lbs or so. He has physical attributes that only a handful of people on the planet have. In other words, almost no one in the wrestling world are built like Khali.

SO WHY WOULD PEOPLE WANT HIM TO WRESTLE LIKE EVERYONE ELSE??? Khali doesn't run the ropes or use armbars and wristlocks because it would be REALLY stupid for him to do so. He's a freaking giant, meaning that everything he does is enhanced. Khali using a simple move like a chop isn't the same as say Michael McGillicutty using a chop. You're talking about a guy's arm probably being ten feet off the ground and coming down with 400lbs of weight powering it. His size alone makes it look painful.

No, Khali can't get down on the mat like a Bret Hart or fly through the air like a Kofi Kingston, but Bret Hart can't make power moves look as devastating as Khali and Kofi can't realistically use a chokebomb as a finisher. It would make no sense for them to try because that's not their natural strength. Complaining because Khali can't perform basic wrestling moves is ridiculous because he doesn't need to perform them to be effective.

In short, the idea that a wrestler's ability is tied to the amount of moves that he uses is ridiculous. To say that for example Daniel Bryan is a better wrestler than Cena because he uses a ton of submissions makes no sense. If that's what determined who the best wrestlers in the world

were, William Regal vs. Dean Malenko would have headlined about seven Wrestlemanias in a row. Wrestling is a performance first, not an athletic event first. It's about using what works, not using everything there is.

Impact Wrestling – October 4, 2012: That Period Right Before The Biggest Show Of The Year

Impact Wrestling

Date: October 4, 2012

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Taz

We're closing in on Bound For Glory with this show and then one more next week before the biggest show of the year. Last week Hogan and Sting agreed to a tag team match against two Aces and 8's guys at the PPV and it'll be Sting and someone else, possibly RVD, to face the bikers. However, the deal is nothing else happens from Aces and 8's until the PPV, so it's not likely that's what we're going to be discussing tonight. Let's get to it.

Normal recaps open things up.

Hogan and Sting are in Hogan's office but Hogan can't be with Sting at the PPV. Sting is going to watch every match tonight to determine who his partner is going to be at BFG.

Mr. Anderson vs. Gunner

Anderson says he wants to be Sting's partner and to watch him do his thing here. Gunner immediately jumps Anderson to take over. Anderson

knocks him to the floor but Gunner takes over back inside. A quick chinlock doesn't really get Gunner anywhere so he whips Anderson into the corner only to miss a charge. Mic Check gets the pin at 2:28.

Post match Kid Kash comes in to beat on Anderson but gets Mic Checked as well.

Tara is on the phone with her boyfriend when Gail comes up. They have a tag match later and Tara insults Gail's cable TV star husband, who is a TV chef I think.

Gail Kim/Tara vs. Miss Tessmacher/ODB

ODB and Gail start things off with the bigger chick throwing Gail into the corner. The beating continues with ODB in complete control. Off to Tess for a Stink Face because that's what she's good for. ODB comes back in and misses the Bronco Buster but saves herself before pain hits her crotch. Off to Tara who can't get out of the way of the Bronco Buster but a Gail distraction allows the heels to take over.

Tara and Gail keep having issues as Tara wants to come in and get the glory after Gail does the work. Tara's standing moonsault hits ODB's knee and it's off to Tessmacher to very little reaction. A headscissors takes Tara down as does a faceplant out of the corner. ODB gets a shot from the flask and spears Gail down but Gail comes back in and is shoved by Tara into Tessmacher. The Widow's Peak pins Tessmacher at 4:44.

Rating: C. The Knockouts are a shell of what they used to be but there's an angle here which is tried and true over time (teacher vs. student) and it's hard to screw up. On top of that we have the mystery of Tara's boyfriend which could wind up being something interesting. Either that or it's Jason Hervey which would just be stupid.

Bruce Pritchard is showing Al Snow something on a contract and Snow says he'll get it done.

We recap Al Snow vs. Joey Ryan over the months.

Here's Snow and he brings out Joey Ryan with something to say to him. Snow says that several months ago he did something he shouldn't have and

put himself and TNA in a bad position. He offers an apology to Ryan but that's not good enough for Joey, who wants it more personalized. Ryan says tonight he's in control and wants to hear about the other legal agreement they've come to. Snow pulls out a contract for Ryan but Joey wants to sign it on Snow's back. There's a catch though: Ryan has a match with Snow for BFG and it's win and get a full time contract.

Angle wants to pull a double at BFG but Sting will only think about it. Kaz and Daniels are seen in the back hoping that Sting says yes. Angle leaves but Ray steps in and says he should be in the world title match, but he'll take a spot on Sting's team instead. Sting says go be a bully and prove your worth.

TV Title: Samoa Joe vs. Rob Van Dam

Joe won the title last week and it's his first defense. That's a different belt than the one he held last week too. Joe takes him down to start but Van Dam comes back with a few forearms. Those get him nowhere as Joe clotheslines him down and hits an enziguri in the corner. Van Dam tries his rolling roll up but Joe catches the leg and puts on an STF. They head to the floor and Van Dam dropkicks the leg out before trying to drape the wide load over the barricade.

That fails due to the laws of gravity and RVD gets rammed into the steps for his efforts. Back inside and Van Dam hits a middle rope cross body to put Joe down but he goes up top WAY too fast. Joe pulls him off the top and the MuscleBuster is enough to retain the title at 4:27. I miss that move.

Rating: C+. This didn't have any time to get going but it worked while it lasted. Joe being all dominant and tough again is a good thing as he's one of the guys that is hard to screw up when he's booked right. RVD continues to be kind of there in TNA. He doesn't really do anything but he's a big enough deal that he can be thrown into whatever story and fit. Match was short but it was decent while it lasted.

Everyone in the tag team triple threat but Angle gets in an argument about last week and Chavo losing the match because of interference.

Dixie talks about her BFG memories.

Aries talked to Hardy earlier today about their tag match last week where Hardy stole the pin after Aries did the work. Ray comes up and says he's not going to punch either of them right now, but he'll punch one of them later. It's to prove himself to Sting by beating Hardy. Aries takes offense to this and wants to fight Ray instead. They argue so Hardy suggests a triple threat. Ray is cool with that.

Chavo Guerrero vs. Kurt Angle

No Kazarian? I would have thought it would be another triple threat like last week but this is a nice surprise. Feeling out process to start with Chavo hooking a headlock that can't be broken by an Angle suplex. That's quite the headlock. Angle takes him into the corner and stomps away but Chavo comes back with some uppercuts. Angle finally gets Chavo on the mat with a go behind grip and a kind of slam gets two.

Back up and Chavo dropkicks Kurt down and literally rolls onto him for two. A release belly to belly puts Chavo down but he escapes the Angle Slam and hits a quick rana for two. It's time for Three Amigos but Angle blocks the third and rolls some Germans. The ankle lock is countered and there are the Three Amigos in full. The Frog Splash misses and there's the Angle Slam. Hernandez looks at Angle and the distraction is enough for Chavo to roll up Kurt for the pin at 6:42.

Rating: B-. Another pretty good but short match here. I don't know what the deal is with that unless Angle is still hurt and can't go at full speed yet. His thigh is taped up so maybe there's something not quite healed yet. They've done a good job with the three way feud and I'm digging the idea of the match at the PPV. Pretty good stuff here.

Hernandez and AJ get in for a staredown as the tag champs stand on the stage.

X-Division Title: Douglas Williams vs. Zema Ion

Williams starts out fast and clotheslines Ion to the floor. Ion is defending in case you had forgotten this title existed. Back in and Ion

cranks on the arm with a hold and Williams taps almost immediately at 1:19.

Ion won't let go and the decision is reversed. He says he's on the top of Sting's list but he wants off it, because his looks aren't worth the risk.

We look at King Mo, an MMA guy who is coming to TNA and will be guest referee for Storm vs. Roode because that match needs a guest referee for some reason.

Pritchard and Brown are looking at a video of Matt Morgan running in at a house show and beating up a referee. Pritchard yells at Brown for letting this happen.

Here's Storm to talk about the match with Roode a bit more. Ten days from now this war with Roode started and at BFG, it's not about proving that Storm is a better fighter or a better wrestler. It's about being a better man. Hogan doesn't like the referees being pushed around so he's brought in King Mo to be the guest referee. Cue Roode for the interruption.

Roode accuses Storm of riding his coattails and being jealous of Roode for years. Bobby promises that this isn't just a match, but it's going to be a fight. He's not going to stop at BFG until he knows Storm's career is over. It's going to be a bloodbath and Roode doesn't care about King Mo, because no one is going to stop him at the PPV. If Mo were here, Roode would say it to his face. Mo comes out in a glittery silver robe, MMA gloves, a big freaking medallion and a crown and shoves Roode down. Mo gets in the ring in Storm's face and they share a beer.

Hogan has picked his guy and has it written down, because he can't say it to Sting who is right next to him. Sting likes the idea but wants to see Bully first.

Aces and 8's tortures Joseph Park a bit more. He's been kidnapped for three weeks now. WHY HAS NO ONE CALLED THE COPS??? They tear Park's shirt off and apparently are going to attack car battery clamps to his nipples. We're going to find out who their two guys are tonight to face Sting and whoever it is.

Joe vs. Magnus at BFG. That was obvious and that's the right call for sure.

Bully Ray vs. Jeff Hardy vs. Austin Aries

Non-title here. This is joined in progress after a break with Ray knocking down Hardy in the ring. Aries is on the floor I presume but he pops back in as Hardy is sent to the floor. Aries and Hardy start working together with some Poetry in Motion with Aries playing Matt. The legdrop between the legs and a low dropkick set up a Twisting Stunner to Ray and Jeff goes up. There's the Swanton but Aries makes the save. Aries hooks the Last Chancery but Hardy makes the save this time.

Hardy is sent to the floor and Ray backdrops Aries onto Jeff in a good looking crash. Back in and Aries says he doesn't need anyone, which is pretty solidly heel of him. He hits the running dropkick to Ray but Bully blocks the brainbuster. He goes to look for his chain but settles for the title belt instead. Hardy back in now and Ray sends Jeff into the champ. Bubba Bomb to Hardy gets the pin at 4:10 shown. Yeah less than five minutes.

Rating: C. This is the night of the short matches. Ray winning is one way they could have gone although I'm not sure it's the right one. It's also not the wrong move but they put themselves in an awkward place here. Ray winning is probably the best possible outcome they could have gone with, but this likely wasn't the best match for them to pick.

Here are Hogan and Sting to announce Sting's partner for the match. Hogan talks about how Aces and 8's are running wild around here and now it's getting personal. Really? Just NOW it's getting personal? Hogan says he needs a real partner for Sting and it's going to be...Anderson. Yes, apparently beating Gunner is more impressive than beating the world champion and the number 1 contender. And never mind as Anderson is beaten down by Aces and 8's in the back.

Ray runs out and says it should be him now for sure. He gives a great speech about going to war (ruined by the fans chanting for D-Von) and sticks his hand out to Hogan. Sting likes the idea and Hogan waits before shaking his hands. The fans boo of course because nothing makes these

people happy. Ray is ready to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This show was....understandable. It certainly isn't a good show but they built up the PPV. This is the funky period before a major PPV where the card is mostly set and now you're filling in the stories before you get there. It happens every year before Wrestlemania and it happens every year before BFG. It's not fun but it has to happen. Nothing on here was terrible, but nothing on it was great either. They're not even trying to hide that Aces and 8's is the real main event and I'm actually hoping it goes on last so we don't get the same thing Roode and Angle got last year where no one cared. Slow, but not awful show.

Results

Mr. Anderson b. Gunner – Mic Check

Gail Kim/Tara b. ODB/Miss Tessmacher – Widow's Peak to Tessmacher

Samoa Joe b. Rob Van Dam – MuscleBuster

Chavo Guerrero b. Kurt Angle – Rollup

Douglas Williams b. Zema Ion via DQ when Ion wouldn't release his hold

Bully Ray b. Jeff Hardy and Austin Aries – Bully Bomb to Hardy

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NXT – October 3, 2012: A Solid Wrestling Show, Which You Rarely See Anymore

NXT

Date: October 3, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, William Regal

Back for another show as this show has been in a bit of a rut lately. Last week's main event of Steamboat vs. Ohno is probably the main story on the show right now but other than that there isn't much going on. We should be setting up another opponent for Rollins soon enough which is something we need in the near future. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week's main event and the post match attack.

Earlier today Ohno was getting into the building when Richie Steamboat jumped him.

Welcome Home. Where do these people go that they have to be welcomed home every week? In case this makes no sense to you, the theme song is Welcome Home by Coheed and Cambria.

Drew McIntyre vs. Richie Steamboat

Feeling out process to start with Drew shoulder blocking Richie down. Steamboat comes back with forearms and right hands as he seems to be abandoning his usual style here. Drew catches Steamboat with a kick to the ribs as Steamboat tries to jump over him in the corner. That gets two and McIntyre takes over before hooking something like a seated abdominal stretch.

Drew knocks him to the apron where Steamboat gets two off a sunset flip. Back inside McIntyre hits a release Wasteland with Steamboat landing on his face. Drew loads it up again but Richie tries to counter it into a hurricanrana, only to botch it by falling off McIntyre's head. Steamboat starts firing off elbows but here's Ohno for a distraction. Richie turns around and walks into a shot to the head and the Futureshock DDT for the pin at 4:25.

Rating: C. This was more about the angle but building up McIntyre with a win is a good idea. The guy has potential but he's fallen so far in the last few years that he's having to start all over again. As for Steamboat, this is a good story for him as he's getting to show some emotion and I'm not complaining about what I see. Being boring was the biggest knock on him so seeing some good emotion out of him is a good sign.

Big E. Langston vs. Aiden English

The place starts chanting 5 as Langston comes in. English pounds away and gets beaten down for trying to fight. A running clothesline takes Aiden down and there go Langston's straps. The falling slam kills English and gets the five count at 1:14.

Langston hits the finisher again post match for another five count to a big reaction. The fans seem to love this guy. Langston's face looks a bit like Monty Brown's when you can't see his hair. He hits another falling slam on Aiden for fun.

Steamboat is looking for Ohno in the back but only finds Michael McGillicutty who hasn't seen Ohno.

CM Punk is here next week.

Here's McGillicutty with something to say. Apparently he gets a title match next week. McGillicutty says it's going to be Rollins' first and last title defense. He calls Rollins out to the ring and gets what he asks for. Well partially as Rollins stops on the stage. Rollins talks about how much McGillicutty talks, including calling Rollins a paper champion. Rollins thinks that shows a lack of respect and holds up the title, which means the respect is real. He's earned everything he has and didn't have a path laid out for him since birth. Rollins wants to fight now but McGillicutty says on his own terms.

Gabriel and Kidd are ready for Ascension later tonight. This was earlier today and as they're talking, Ascension's entrance starts and they pop up on the screen but don't say anything.

Percy Watson vs. Kassius Ohno

Steamboat jumps Ohno on the stage during Ohno's entrance. Ohno says he's good to go and goes off on Percy quickly. Watson speeds things up and leg lariats Ohno down. Ohno comes back with something like a neckbreaker (Ohno was standing behind Watson and facing him so it was hard to tell what he was doing) but Watson dropkicks him down. The spinning Heisman splash gets two but Ohno blocks the Persecution. A knee in the corner stops Watson and the spinning elbow gets the pin for Ohno at 3:20.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see here as usual with Watson matches. The guy isn't bad at all but man alive there's nothing to care about with him. Ohno's matches are still nothing interesting but this was better than his usual stuff. I think it's the elbow finisher that holds him back more than anything, especially given what we know he's capable of.

Ascension vs. Justin Gabriel/Tyson Kidd

Kidd and Cameron start us off but Gabriel tags himself in and the smaller guys double team Cameron with a double hip toss and a pair of kicks. A release German throw (not really a suplex) takes Gabriel down and we take a break. Back with O'Brien hammering on Gabriel until Justin rolls around O'Brien and tags out.

Tyson kicks him in the head and hits a springboard missile dropkick for two. O'Brien is sent to the floor where he blocks a baseball slide and slams Kidd onto the floor to take over. Back inside and Ascension takes turns stomping away. That style of rapid fire stomping and pounding is reminiscent of Demolition and there's nothing bad about that. Cameron puts on a body scissors with a chinlock and O'Brien follows up with a body scissors of his own.

Kidd starts fighting back but Conor tags out immediately to make sure Tyson can't escape. You can almost hear JR beaming as he talks about the tag team continuity of Ascension. Kidd avoids a charge from O'Brien and side steps Cameron, which lets Kidd make the hot tag to Gabriel. Justin takes Cameron down and immediately tries the 450 but crashes and burns. With Tyson down on the floor, Ascension hits the running Total Elimination (called the Fall of Man) for the pin on Gabriel at 8:20 shown of 11:50.

Rating: B-. This was a solid tag match although the ending felt abrupt. I really like Ascension's stuff as they have the look and aggressive style that makes them feel like they could dominate anyone. When you combine that with an awesome finisher and a great entrance, what more could you want? Kidd and Gabriel were their usual good selves.

Overall Rating: B. I liked this show better than most recent episodes. We got a lot of stuff from this one with a good main event, a continuation of the main angle for the show and some stuff set up for next week. This is what NXT is good at doing: offering an old fashioned hour long wrestling show and they did that again here. Good show and I enjoyed it.

Results

Drew McIntyre b. Richie Steamboat – Futureshock DDT

Big E. Langston b. Aiden English – Falling Slam

Kassius Ohno b. Percy Watson – Spinning Elbow

Ascension b. Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel – Fall of Man to Gabriel

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Shotgun Saturday Night – January 4, 1997: A Truly Revolutionary Show

Someone requested the second episode of this show but I couldn't find it. Sorry Rocko. Here's this one as a consolation.

Shotgun Saturday Night

Date: January 4, 1997

Location: Mirage Night Club, New York City, New York

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Sunny

This is a show I've wanted to do for a very long time. It's the debut episode of a show obviously called Shotgun Saturday Night. This is airing at about 11pm live from a night club in New York. These shows were FAR edgier than what you saw on WWF and it kind of the ancestor to the Attitude Era. Eventually one Vince Russo would do commentary but that's not for about a year. This was a legit shift in what WWF had, and is a very interesting piece of company history. I've never seen this so let's get to it.

Bob Backlund says you don't want to go in there because there's violence and sex and crime in there. He wants to ban the show and even New York as a whole. He'd make a GREAT mod here.

The opening video is shots of New York and various wrestlers, including Taker in a leather jacket and sunglasses. That could never happen right?

Crush vs. Ahmed Johnson and minis tonight. Oh and Goldust vs. Sultan.

The atmosphere here is very different and the ring is clearly smaller.

Godwins vs. Flying Nuns

The Nuns are Sister Angelica and Mother Smucker. They're women in case you couldn't tell. We see a video of them coming out of a cathedral. The ropes are yellow and the mat is black. Also, WHY DOES EVERYTHING HAPPEN ON JANUARY 4TH? That was the Fingerpoke of Doom and Foley winning the title and the debut of this show and Impact moving to Mondays and Shawn and Bret reuniting. Is it like November 5, 1955 in Back to the Future?

The Nuns jump the Godwins and are rather powerful it seems. Apparently men vs. women is fine now? Angelica and Phineas start and we get a HOLY CRAP chant for no apparent reason. Wow those women are large. Hard punch and I think one Banged her Head on the mat. Sunny thinks these two are from the Nun Wrestling Federation.

Hillbilly Jim isn't sure what's going on. Angelica has facial hair it seems. Smucker takes over and Vince wonders how the WWF sanctioned this. Vince if you can't remember why you did it you may want to lay off the hard stuff. The lights are really low I'm guessing to make sure the size of the place isn't notable, which is fine. Brother Love of all people comes out and is the manager of the girls I guess.

We take a break and come back to more of the same. The girls beat up Henry, who is about 6'7 and over 300lbs. Those are some big old girls. LOUD ECW chant as well. We hear about some rookie that Sunny likes named Rocky Maivia. Eh I'm sure he'll never mean anything. Top rope legdrop from Smucker misses and hot tag to Phineas (Mideon). Smucker complains about him trying to slam her as apparently she doesn't like the hand placement. That's kind of funny. Love blasts Phineas with whatever is in his hand for the pin.

Rating: D. This was a long comedy match and the joke got old

quick. In case you didn't get the reference, the Nuns are of course men and would soon be VERY repackaged as the Headbangers. This went nowhere at all though and was FAR too long, at nearly 13 minutes counting commercial.

Brother Love renames them the Sisters of Love.

Ad for WWF on Tour.

Todd Pettingill (the original Michael Cole) is in the VIP Section with Goldust and Rocky. Bob Backlund comes over to freak out over Marlena's dress and various things associated with it.

Goldust vs. The Sultan

Sultan is more famous as Rikishi. You can barely see the guys on the floor as the lights are on that low. Sultan likes Marlena apparently. Backlund won't talk to Todd because he doesn't have his glasses on. I loved this guy because he was just so insane and awesome at the same time.

This is a very generic match so far with not much going on at all. Weak powerslam by Sultan for two. Sunny is funny on commentary as she's very sassy and cute. Backlund comes over and yells about life in general as a nerve hold is on Goldust. BW0 chant as this is dragging. The match is boring but the atmosphere is very fun. This match needs to end like NOW. Sultan takes a neckbreaker and beats Goldust to his feet.

Vince gets the two guys confused. Clearly this is a problem as they look SO much alike! Sultan hits a Samoan Drop because he's, you know, Samoan. Camel Clutch goes on but Marlena gets up on the apron and flashes Sultan, sending Backlund into hysterics. Sunny is TICKED as apparently she wants to be the flasher. I don't think anyone would tell her no. Sultan gets counted out. Marlena is declared the winner.

Rating: D. This should be double D because that's what this

was about. The match sucked but obviously it was about the ending here. It set the tone for what you were going to get on this show, which is a nice touch. If the match had been cut in half it would have been even better and actually, you know, decent.

Sunny promises a sex tape next week.

Crush vs. Ahmed Johnson

Crush is in the Nation at this point and since it's any point in Ahmed's career, he's feuding with them. The fans chant Jailbird because Crush had a long prison sentence due to weapons charges. We actually acknowledge that but say he did no time, which is a lie I believe. Clarence Mason, the lawyer of the Nation, talks about how Crush has been misused. I have no idea what he's talking about but whatever.

Full Nelson by Crush and Ahmed makes his comeback. He sets for his Butterfly Powerbomb but the man that would become known as D'lo Brown runs in for the DQ. Big beatdown follows including a LOUD chair shot. Goldust and the Godwins come in for the save and Ahmed goes after Crush with the chair. They fight out the door and onto the streets, which is apparently 56th Street. Pearl River Plunge on the car, which looked SICK.

Rating: D+. Pretty short here but it was an ok power match I suppose. This was part of the seemingly never ending feud between Ahmed and the Nation. Farroq vs. Ahmed would kind of happen at the Rumble but it never really went anywhere. This was ok but all just to set up the big car spot, which is fine I guess.

Mascarita Sagrada vs. Mini Vader

Mascarita is a legend as far as minis go. We get a comedy skit of Mini Vader and Jim Cornette. Mascarita always had a weird thing with Sunny, so she comes up and dances with him. It's the Macarena which Todd does an actual funny song in perfect

timing to the music, which may not have been scripted. Hot women dancing is always a good way to go though, so this worked.

Cornette joins commentary which instantly makes things better. And then he's gone. Sagrada was fun to watch but here's Cornette in the ring for a time out. You can't see anything again because of the lighting but whatever. BIG (ok that's a stretch) powerbomb from Vader and this is one sided for the most part. Nice rana from Mascarita gets us back to even and then he goes OFF THE TOP which is like the top of the cage by proportion.

Sagrada was AWESOME and is here as well. A missile dropkick ends it. Post match, Cornette challenges Sagrada to a fight. Oh this could be good. Mini Vader turns on him and there go Jim's pants.

Rating: B-. Fun, especially with Cornette freaking out. This was to excite the crowd and give us something you wouldn't otherwise see, which is a nice perk. These matches could be really fun if done right which is what they did here. They messed up once and had a 15 minute match, which is FAR too long. This was fun though and as a quick thing that happens rarely, it can be great.

Vince and Sunny wrap us up with Sunny dancing on a table. That works.

Overall Rating: C+. Kind of a mess but that's kind of the point. This was to give you something different and that's exactly what they did. In that sense this worked very well although the wrestling was pretty horrible for the most part. Still though, this is well worth checking out if you've never seen it before, as the dynamic is totally different than what you're used to in this era. Fun show but they didn't really know what they were doing yet, which would improve to a degree.

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