

Smackdown – September 21, 2012: Well... That Was Different

Smackdown

Date: September 21, 2012

Location: Wells Fargo Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Michael Cole, Josh Matthews

Night of Champions is over and not a ton has changed on Smackdown. Sheamus is still the champion after pinning Del Rio with a Brogue Kick. This is of course more exciting than the other two times he pinned Del Rio with the Brogue Kick because in this, the move wasn't legal until seconds before the match. Hopefully someone new challenges the champ before HIAC. Let's get to it.

Do You Know Your Enemy? Mine is a hospital that is letting its service to customers fall apart because it let a ton of its workers go to cut costs.

The main event is a tag match of course. In this case it's Ziggler/Del Rio vs. Orton/Sheamus.

We open the show with EDGE! It's Philly so you know the fans erupt for him. He has really short hair now which is a look that kind of works for him. Edge says coming out here like that never gets old. He's here because Philly is the home of the Broad Street Bullies and because it's been 18 months since his retirement. He's been able to sit at home and watch WWE as a fan again, but he's never seen anything as crazy as he's seen lately.

We get a clip from Monday with Bryan and Kane arguing over the titles and then hugging it out before shouting at each other that they're the tag team champions. He doesn't understand how this could happen and would

like an explanation, which leads to him being cut off by Bryan. Bryan corrects Edge on his use of pronouns. THEY didn't become tag team champions. Bryan is the tag team champions.

Bryan starts yelling again but Edge says chill. He asks Bryan about the little world Bryan lives in now but Bryan says he's a rock and at one with his emotions. Edge says excuse me when Bryan says all this, which Bryan interprets as repressed thoughts about Vickie. Bryan says Edge's theme music (You think you know me) tells the whole story: no one really knows Edge. If Bryan really knew Edge, he would know that hasn't been his theme music in years.

Bryan says there is nothing anyone can do to make him snap. Edge: "Well played grasshopper." Edge says that wasn't his intention but it sounds like a challenge. It turns into the Bugs Bunny/Daffy Duck routine of yes it is/no it isn't before Edge turns the tables and Bryan goes into a rant of NO IT WASN'T which draws out Kane.

Kane and Bryan argue over the same thing they always argue about before Edge shouts them down. Kane: "Edge, calm down buddy. You know Dr. Shelby has some great relaxation exercises." Edge snaps again because while he gets Bryan being at peace and such, he doesn't get Kane at all. Edge gives us a quick history of himself vs. Kane, including the weddings and the torture they've put each other through. He leaves out the time that he caused Kane to seemingly murder his father but there's a lot of history to get through.

Kane wants to rectify this right now and steps back as if to fight. Edge takes his jacket off but Kane opens his arms to hug it out. Edge is a combination of reluctant and shocked but he eventually hugs Kane. Bryan SNAPS, shouting NO over and over again for no apparent reason. Edge and Kane open their arms for a group hug and Bryan looks like it's Christmas morning.

This draws out Sandow for no apparent reason. He's here to help of course

because for the last fortnight, this serial has been brought down by the attempts at hugging it out. He blames the fans for bringing down the show before Edge cuts him off. Edge talks about how he'd rather watch the champions hug it out for the whole show instead of listening to Sandow for thirty seconds. Edge says Sandow should come out and fight one of these two and after a lengthy audience poll, Kane is picked as the opponent.

Kane vs. Damien Sandow

This starts after a break and at the end of the previous nearly 20 minute segment. It was entertaining and got the job done though which is all that matters. Kane knocks Sandow to the floor with a shoulder to start and an uppercut knocks Damien to the floor. Back in and a big boot takes Sandow down again.

Damien bails to the floor but runs into Bryan. Sandow guillotines him on the ropes to take over The offense only lasts a few seconds as Sandow walks into the side slam and there's the top rope clothesline. Bryan gets on the apron as Kane is loading up the chokeslam. The distractions lets Sandow hit his neckbreaker for the pin at 3:05.

Rating: C. As I've said for a few weeks, the idea of Sandow getting ring time with these bigger names is a great thing for him. While it wasn't clean, a pin over Kane is by far the biggest win of his career so far and it's a great sign that he was put into a segment with a hall of famer and the hottest act in the company. That's a great sign for Sandow and the match wasn't terrible. Another good thing here: Bryan didn't attack Kane. It was Sandow's finisher alone that got the pin on him.

Back from a break....and it's more Kane. He's freaking out looking for Bryan but finds Dr. Shelby. Shelby tries to calm him down but Kane calls Bryan a goatface. Bryan pops up for ANOTHER argument until Dr. Shelby snaps. Shelby wants to try a trust exercise. Kane promises to not rip Bryan's beard off in exchange for his title back. That's not enough

though as Bryan cost Kane a match. Shelby offers to talk to Booker and get Bryan a match tonight. That makes Kane feel better and he says he's the tag team champions before leaving.

I'd like to note we're about 35 minutes into this show and we've seen NOTHING but Bryan and Kane stuff. They're going to run this into the ground and they're going to do it soon.

Tonight the Brogue Kick controversy continues. WHY DOES IT HAVE TO CONTINUE? It's over.

Booker comes into his office to find Del Rio. Alberto calls Booker a coward and wants to know why the Brogue Kick was reinstated. Booker says his investigation was over. The kick is dangerous but it's legal. If Alberto doesn't want to get hurt, don't mess with Sheamus. PREACH IT BOOKER MAN! Alberto asks for another title shot but Booker says Alberto has to earn it. He can do that in the tag match apparently.

Eve comes out for commentary.

Layla vs. Natalya

Layla easily takes Natalya down to start but she keeps pointing at and glaring at Layla. Natalya gets in a shot to the ribs and puts on an abdominal stretch which Layla rolls out of. Sharpshooter is countered and the Layout gets the pin on Nattie at 1:30.

Alberto Del Rio/Dolph Ziggler vs. Sheamus/Randy Orton

Pretty early for the main event. This is joined in progress after a break but it doesn't look like we missed much. Sheamus and Del Rio start things off and Alberto pounds Sheamus down into the corner. Sheamus shrugs him off and brings in Orton for a dropkick for two. Back to the champ to pound on Del Rio some more, only to be sent into the corner and get

caught by a running kick to the shoulder.

Cole talks about JBL climbing a mountain because Sheamus vs. Del Rio isn't capable of holding his interest. A shoulder block takes Del Rio down but the managers get on the apron, letting Ziggler get in a shot to take over. Off to a chinlock from Dolph before it's back to Del Rio. This is dull stuff so far. Del Rio hooks a chinlock of his own but Sheamus gets up with ease.

A powerslam puts Del Rio down and it's off to Orton who cleans house. Both heels get powerslams but Del Rio hits a Backstabber for two. It's Ziggler vs. Orton now with Ziggler hitting a dropkick for two. It's back to Del Rio but Orton dropkicks him to the floor almost immediately. Hot tag brings in Sheamus who cleans house again but Dolph avoids the Brogue Kick. Irish Curse gets two on Ziggler and there's an RKO to Alberto. Brogue Kick takes out Ziggler for the pin at 8:19.

Rating: C. Standard main event tag here but the most important thing is that Del Rio didn't get to prove anything. Hopefully that means a new opponent will show up for HIAC which would be great news. Ziggler losing again is annoying but that's what you have to expect in WWE. The match started slow but it picked up by the end.

Daniel Bryan vs. Cody Rhodes

Feeling out process to start with Bryan taking over, only to yell at the crowd and let Cody get in some offense. Bryan moonsaults out of the corner and clotheslines Cody down followed by a dropkick in the corner. He loads up the NO Lock but here's Kane. The hold never goes on and Cody uses the distraction to hit Cross Rhodes for the pin at 2:10.

Back from a break and Kane and Bryan are fighting some more. Well it had been a full ten minutes so it's to be expected. Bryan wants to know why Kane did that but Kane has no idea what Bryan is talking about. Kane says they're even so Bryan says Kane belongs in a basement. Kane says Bryan

belongs in a petting zoo. They yell some more until they see Sandow and Rhodes standing off to the side. A tag match is made for later tonight. The champs argue over who the other guys are more scared of.

We recap the end of the PPV and Raw.

Brodus Clay vs. Heath Slater

Brodus does his full intro again. It's a dance off to start as you would expect. Brodus takes over with his usual power stuff and there's the release suplex. And here are Jinder Mahal and Drew McIntyre to jump Brodus for the DQ at 1:10. So is Brodus feuding with these two now instead of Cesaro which was teased on Monday? Or is it the rest of the world vs. Planet Funk?

Santino Marella vs. Antonio Cesaro

Well of course Brodus can't fight Cesaro. It's time for Santino to fight him for the 95th time this month. Cesaro immediately takes him down and hits the gutwrench suplex. Off to the cravate but Santino comes back with his usual. There's the Cobra but Aksana distracts him again. Aksana tries to get the sock but falls into the ring. Cesaro hits the European Uppercut and in the distraction, Santino rolls him up for the pin at 1:50. Well of course since there is NO ONE ELSE IN THE COMPANY that can fight Cesaro.

Cesaro dumps Aksana post match in five languages.

Kane/Daniel Bryan vs. Damien Sandow/Cody Rhodes

This is a lumberjack match for no apparent reason with the Usos, Kidd/Gabriel and the Prime Time Players at ringside. The non-champions don't even get an entrance. Kane and Cody start things off with Rhodes being pounded down very quickly. Cody brings in Sandow but Kane has to

pull him into the ring. There's the low dropkick but Bryan tags himself in before Kane can cover. Guess what that leads to.

Cody got tagged in during the argument and Bryan fires off kicks at the chest. Bryan goes to tag Kane but shouts NO instead. The Disaster Kick gets two on Bryan and Sandow jumps Kane on the floor. Cody and Bryan collide in the ring and it's off to Kane a few seconds later. Sandow avoids a chokeslam once but the second attempt works, but here's Cody with a chair for the DQ at 4:09.

Rating: C. Another match that didn't have time to go anywhere but wasn't horrible. I guess we have a fifth team now which is ok, and it's good that this wasn't long and didn't have a definitive ending. It's good to see these guys having something to do, which has been the problem for guys like Cody for awhile. When all else fails, throw them into a tag team. It can work a lot of the time.

Post match Bryan stops Cody from using the chair but can't bring himself to hit Cody with said chair. Instead he hands it to Kane who blasts Cody out of the ring. Bryan gets his own chair and they take turns destroying Sandow with it. They probably hit him twenty times between the pair of them. Kane puts his chair down and beats up the other three teams, feeding them into Bryan for chair shots. Bryan and Kane stand in the ring with their titles and chairs as bodies surround them. They argue one more time to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. Well....that was certainly different. Throughout the show I was thinking that this was a bad idea as it was all about Bryan and Kane. Then it occurred to me that the biggest complaint I've had for months about Smackdown is that it's the same stuff week after week. On this show, Sheamus and Del Rio were an afterthought and that was a nice change of pace. I'm worried about them running this angle into the ground, but man the ending here was fun. Now that they've got a hot act, they need to use that to build up the division as a whole. Fun and different shot tonight, which might be what they needed.

Results

Damien Sandow b. Kane – Double Arm Neckbreaker

Layla b. Natalya – Layout

Sheamus/Randy Orton b. Alberto Del Rio/Dolph Ziggler – Brogue Kick to Ziggler

Cody Rhodes b. Daniel Bryan – Cross Rhodes

Brody Clay b. Heath Slater via DQ when Jinder Mahal and Drew McIntyre interfered

Santino Marella b. Antonio Cesaro – Rollup

Kane/Daniel Bryan b. Damien Sandow/Cody Rhodes via DQ when Rhodes used a chair

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews

Monday Nitro – May 26, 1997: Star Power Is The Key To This Show

Monday Nitro #89

Date: May 26, 1997

Location: Nashville Municipal Auditorium, Nashville, Tennessee

Attendance: 6,484

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Bobby Heenan, Tony Schiavone, Larry Zbyszko

We're back to the regular two hours again and that might be something good in this case. Also Hogan is here tonight which always helps make the

shows feel bigger than they do without him. We're coming up on the Great American Bash in three weeks and odds are we'll get the main event announced tonight. Let's get to it.

Here are Hogan and Bischoff to open the show. Hogan's beard appears to be infecting his head and is growing at an alarming rate. This is the one year anniversary of Hall jumping the guard rail. Bischoff says he's checked under the ring and there's not Sting this week. Hogan talks about partying in the Bahamas with Nick and Brooke, which are names that don't mean anything at this point. Hogan runs down Sting and Eric says that Sting is just afraid of Hulk. Hogan says he's going to be looking around and if he finds anyone in Sting makeup, he's going to take them out.

Hector Garza/Juventud Guerrera/Super Calo vs. Ciclope/Damien/La Parka

This is under Mexican rules, which means if you go to the floor, another member of your team can come in just like a tag. La Parka and Juvy get us going with Juvy taking over with a quick spin kick to the face. Juvy goes up but his cross body is caught and La Parka struts over to the corner and sets Juvy up top. Juvy comes back with a big top rope rana to send Parka to the floor.

Off to Ciclope as Larry complains about the Mexican rules because "we're not in Mexico." Sometimes common sense is the best approach. Calo comes in to replace Parka and hits a headscissors to send Parka to the floor. Calo hits a HUGE suicide dive to send both guys into the crowd, giving us Damien vs. Garza. Garza is basically here for one move: a corkscrew plancha to the floor. The idea is that he's going to hit it but you don't know when or how many people he'll take out.

Everything breaks down and it's almost impossible to tell who is legal as four people came in at the same time when Garza and Damien went to the floor. It appears to be Calo vs. Damien now with Calo in control, only to take his eyes off Damien and get jumped. Off to Garza who speeds things up but gets sent to the floor.

Everyone goes to the floor and it's time to fire off the dives. Garza hits his big corkscrew plancha, prompting Larry to ask if Garza thinks he's Captain Planet. Turner property or not, that's the best Larry can come up with? Damien tries a seated senton back inside but Garza catches him in a powerbomb and hits a standing moonsault for the pin.

Rating: B. This is pretty much the textbook definition for a lucha libre spotfest and there's nothing wrong with that. Other than Juvy, none of these guys have stood out but they know how to fire off all kinds of flips and dives. While not a great match from a technical standpoint or anything like that, it was fun and the dives were great. That's what you want to do with an opener too. Good stuff here.

Alex Wright vs. Psychosis

This is Wright's first match after his heel turn last week. Wright flips around to escape a wristlock but Psychosis does the exact same thing. A jumping kick to the face gives Wright control again and he pounds away in the corner. Psychosis comes back with a moonsault press for two followed by a top rope spin kick to the back of Wright's head for one. Wright bails to the floor and dances a bit, only for Psychosis to bust out a mostly missed moonsault to take both guys out. Back in and the guillotine legdrop pins Wright.

Rating: D+. This was pretty messy. Also why in the world would you have Wright lose completely clean after a heel turn last week? The announcers are pushing this as a huge upset and to be fair it probably is. The match had almost no flow or story to it at all and the big spots didn't hit. Not terrible but really messy.

Sonny Onoo still has a surprise for Chono tonight but won't say who it is. Sonny tries to sign Psychosis as he leaves and Psychosis is interested. As Sonny gloats, Madusa comes out and wants a Women's Title shot. She says she'll do anything for it and immediately regrets saying it. Sonny says she'll get the shot at the Bash but if she loses, her

career is over. She agrees and that's it.

We get a quick look at Ernest Miller and his martial arts background.

Wrath vs. Mark Starr

Total squash with Wrath throwing Starr all over the place, including out to the floor so Mortis can get in some shots. Wrath does look awesome and has a great name, but this feud went on so long that it killed whatever he had going. A top rope clothesline kills Starr and a bicycle kick sets up the double arm Rock Bottom to end the massacre. Apparently that move is called the Death Penalty.

Konnan vs. Villano IV

They're going really light on the promos tonight. Hugh Morrus talks about how he doesn't like Konnan anymore, which I think happened at Slamboree. Konnan and Villano shake hands before Konnan hits him in the ribs to start. Konnan pounds him into the corner and fires off a dropkick. He shouts VIVA MEXICO which apparently fires up Villano.

After a brief comeback, Villano shouts VIVA MEXICO as well. Not that it really matters as Konnan hits an Alabama Slam out of the corner to stop the momentum dead. Here's Morrus but security stops him in the aisle. The 187 (fisherman's DDT) kills Villano dead and Tequila Sunrise (half crab with armbar) gets the win for Konnan.

Rating: C-. Just a squash here as Konnan was a guy who had a decent place in the midcard. The next step for him of course: put him in the NWO where he got lost in the shuffle. He was a Mexican wrestler who could actually wrestle a style different from the dozen or so other luchadores they had which gave him something to offer. Then it went nowhere because the NWO didn't have enough lackeys.

Konnar runs down the Dungeon and Sullivan post match.

Masahiro Chono vs. ???

Sonny comes out to introduce the surprise: The Great Muta. Chono is NWO. We get a LONG stall at the beginning of the match, during which Larry announces that the Japanese are in fact a different race. No contact in the first minute. Or in the second minute. Muta puts on a VERY weak headlock. So weak that Chono just ducks out of it and Muta doesn't move his arms. Sonny freaks out on Muta, Muta sprays mist in his eyes, and Muta joins the NWO. Well no one had joined in a few months so I guess we needed someone else to inflate the ranks.

Hour #2 starts.

Savage talks about his feud with Page. Apparently he wants a rematch at the Bash, which may or may not already be set. The idea is that Savage was embarrassed by a guy in his first main event match at Spring Stampede and it's driving him crazier than he already is.

Here are Page and Kimberly with a rebuttal. The match is already signed apparently. Page has the crutch that was broken over his back by Hogan. He talks about how he's under Savage's skin and how he owes Hogan a Diamond Cutter. Page owes Savage even more though and he'll get that at the Bash. Kimberly says she's keeping the pieces of the crutch as a memento. She also has some of the hair that Savage pulled out of her head. Page says you don't mess with family or his wife, and Savage messed with both. See, this is how you build up a match. I want to see these two fight now.

Barbarian vs. Jim Powers

Powers fires off some basic offense to start but can't take Barbarian down. A clothesline takes Powers' head off and Barbarian sends him out to

the floor for some more beating. Back in and they chop it out with Barbie taking over. Powers gets in some boots but he doesn't jump far enough coming off the middle rope so Barbarian can catch him in a powerslam. A big boot ends Powers.

Rating: D. Powers is FINALLY done after this, not appearing on Nitro for over a year after this. Why we needed to have Barbarian get a squash win on Nitro is kind of head scratching but it was something different than they've had in the rest of the show. Meng has been doing some singles stuff around this time so maybe that's why.

Benoit comes out post match and wants Sullivan back soon. Hart says Barbarian is ready for Benoit right now so Benoit takes his jacket off and gets in the ring. Hart says next week.

The Giant vs. Jerry Flynn/Johnny Swinger/Rick Fuller

The jobbers have to tag here so what are you expecting to happen? Swinger starts and can't do anything. Flynn can't do anything so it's off to Fuller who is by far the biggest guy on the team. After Fuller gets beaten up, all three come in with Flynn and Fuller getting belly to back suplexed at the same time. There's a chokeslam to Swinger, there's one for Fuller, and there's one for Flynn. Giant pins all Swinger and Flynn at the same time.

Luger and Giant are in the ring and we hear about an open contract issued by Hogan and Rodman for the PPV Luger talks about being an NBA fan and watching Rodman. At Uncensored, Rodman came into the WCW world and Luger would like to invite them back. Luger issues the challenge for the PPV and Giant says they're ready. I'm missing something because that match wound up happening at Bash at the Beach. Maybe that's what they meant or maybe it was changed.

Lee Marshall does his road report jazz.

Here's Syxx to talk about Flair. He shows us a video from last week of him and the Outsiders beating up Flair before bringing the Outsiders out. Hall and Nash have the newer design of the tag titles which I've always liked better. They make fun of Piper and say Piper couldn't make Hogan sleep unless they showed him Piper's latest movie. To the shock of everyone, Hall and Nash offer to defend the titles. The opponents aren't the shock. It's that they're actually defending the belts. They want Piper and Flair so they can retire them once and for all.

Jeff Jarrett/Steve McMichael vs. Harlem Heat

Before the match we get a quick recap of Kevin Greene running in last week. Booker and Jeff start things off but it's off to Mongo before anything happens. Mongo runs him over but Booker won't tag out. Booker escapes a belly to back suplex but gets punched in the face and clotheslined down. Off to Jarrett as Greene is on commentary now. Stevie comes in and pounds on Jarrett in the corner before slamming him down. We cut to the commentators so we can see that Greene is in fact wearing a football jacket.

Off to Booker vs. Mongo again with the Horsemen taking over. Booker misses a charge into the corner but Stevie blasts Mongo in the back of the head to put him down. Stevie uses the power stuff to take over on McMichael before it's back to Booker for a chinlock. Harlem Heat double teams to draw in Jarrett which allows for even more double teaming.

Stevie puts on another chinlock so we cut to the announcers again. Mongo comes out of nowhere with a powerslam to Booker and it's hot (?) tag to Jarrett. Jeff fires off dropkicks to take over and everything breaks down. Mongo realizes Greene is with the announcers and walks off for a brawl. Jeff puts Booker in the Figure Four but Stevie breaks it up and a Hart Attack with Booker hitting a side kick instead of a clothesline gets the pin for the Heat.

Rating: D+. This was long and not interesting. The problem is there's no

reason for these guys to be fighting and the main story of the match was about the football players fighting, which I don't think anyone was interested in seeing. Just like last week: these matches have almost no meaning because the Outsiders never defend the belts, so these guys are all fighting for nothing.

Jarrett says that might be the last straw.

Here are Hogan and Bischoff to end the show. Hogan says the title is on the line right now if Sting wants to face him for it. Bischoff says unfortunately Sting isn't here tonight. They turn their backs to the camera and Sting pops up through the mat. And of course it's the fake one and the announcers are fooled.

The NWO Sting stays on his knees in front of Hogan and nods when asked if he's half the man Hogan is. He bows down to Hogan and the real Sting repels into the ring. There's a Death Drop for Bischoff and Hogan falls over the bowing fake Sting. The real one beats up the fake one and here come the troops. Sting flies into the rafters again to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This started off hot but slowed way down afterwards. Having Hogan around helped a lot and you can see that they're building to Sting vs. Hogan eventually. I don't think anyone expected it to take another seven months, but it was worth it in theory. As for the rest of the show, it wasn't bad but as always, the show is better when the bigger names are in play.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews

Monday Nitro – May 19, 1997: Flair Is Back

Monday Nitro #88

Date: May 19, 1997

Location: Ashville Civic Center, Ashville, North Carolina

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan, Larry Zbyszko

We're FINALLY past Slamboree and we have four weeks before the Great American Bash where the world title still won't be on the line. At least that show will have a big time grudge match in the main event but we'll get to that later on. Anyway tonight is likely going to establish the PPV main event and deal with the fallout from last night. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the ending of the show last night with the old guys winning and Tony declaring it the BIGGEST MOMENT EVER in WCW.

Here's Flair to open the show. Flair says that last night he erased everything the NWO has done with the help of Piper and Greene. This draws out Syxx who says that the wrong guy got pinned last night and that he doesn't like the idea of Flair saying he can beat Syxx. Syxx says he can beat Flair and challenges Flair to a match tonight. Flair says he doesn't know if he can beat Hall and Nash but he knows he can beat Syxx so it's on.

TV Title: Prince Iaukea vs. Steven Regal

Regal pounds the punk kid down to start and hammers him in the corner. A sunset flip gets two for Iaukea and the fans are on fire tonight. Iaukea crucifixes him down for another two but Regal counters a headscissors by slamming him down face first onto the mat. Regal kicks him in the head and suplexes him before the Regal Stretch ends this. Seeing Prince Iaukea get beaten up makes me smile.

We get some clips from last night with Mortis and Wrath beating up Glacier until Ernest Miller debuted made the save.

Masahiro Chono vs. Dave Taylor

Chono is NWO. Tenay talks about a major name debuting on June 30 on Nitro. I won't say who but if what I can find is correct, two major names would debut that night. Taylor controls early with some European uppercuts but walks into an atomic drop. Chono knocks him to the floor but back in the ring a piledriver is broken up by Taylor. Not that it matters as Taylor charges into a boot and the STF ends this quick. The STF is Chono's signature hold if you're not familiar with him.

Sonny Onoo says Chono has a debt to pay with New Japan and Onoo has someone coming in next week but won't say who.

JJ Dillon reinstates Nick Patrick.

Scotty Riggs vs. Michael Wallstreet

Wallstreet isn't allowed to be in the NWO but he's anti-WCW. Riggs speeds things up to start and hits his decent dropkick, only to have Wallstreet take him down soon thereafter. Wallstreet hooks a chinlock as the fans look at something in the crowd. A small package gets two for Riggs and Wallstreet tries to pull something out of his pocket. Nick Patrick stops him and Riggs gets a sunset flip for the pin. Another short match, but did we REALLY need to see Scotty Riggs vs. Michael Wallstreet when we had an hour for the show? I get that it's for Nick Patrick, but do we need to focus on him either? Really?

Speaking of wasting time, here's NASCAR driver Mark Martin to talk about a sweepstakes to win a racecar. The car being brought in is probably what the fans were looking at in the Riggs match. Flair comes out with Martin to try to make this look like it's important.

Time for the road report to waste some more time. This includes Lee Marshall singing some Elvis.

We get a video from last night with Page holding off Savage and the NWO with a crutch. The Giant eventually made the save when Page got in trouble.

Jeff Jarrett/Steve McMichael vs. Steiner Brothers

Jarrett and Scott start things off with Jeff being sent into the corner quickly. Jeff comes back with a neckbreaker to take over but a suplex is no sold. Scott gorilla presses Jeff down and hits a kind of Angle Slam off the top for two. Off to Rick vs. Mongo and it's a slugfest of course. Mongo takes out Rick's knee but gets caught by a suplex and what was supposed to be the middle rope bulldog but wound up being like a cravate-dog if that makes sense. Everything breaks down and Kevin Greene runs in with a briefcase shot to Mongo's back, giving Rick the easy pin.

Rating: C-. Apparently they thought last night's match with White vs. Mongo was so great that we MUST do another battle of the football players. I mean, having Mongo as a ring general is a can't miss idea right? The match was barely long enough to rate but it's the longest match of the night so far. The problem with these tag matches is there's nothing to fight for because the Outsiders weren't going to defend the titles, so why bother having the other teams fight?

We get a video from during the break where Mongo and Greene got in a fight backstage.

Ric Flair vs. Syxx

Syxx jumps Flair as he comes in but a charge into the corner misses. Flair fires away with punches and chops and here are the Outsiders for the DQ. The match wasn't even a minute long.

Flair gets destroyed because the Horsemen were escorted from the building due to the Mongo vs. Greene fight. Nash says it's about putting the old guys out of business. Syxx has flowers for some reason.

Here's Bischoff for the closing segment. He says that last week he wanted to talk to Sting but he was nowhere to be found. The NWO called him and looked for him and even sent a private detective agency after him. Sting isn't in the rafters or the locker room tonight because he's a coward. Sting will never get a match with Hogan because it would mean bad things for the Scorpion enthusiast. Bischoff says if Sting were here, he'd slap the paint off his face. Sting pops up through the ring and lays out Bischoff to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This definitely wasn't a good show but it was miles better than the previous week's. I know they only have an hour at this point, but does WCW know that? At times I'm really not sure given some of the stuff they put out there. This show felt like it had some energy to it this week which has been lacking for awhile. Maybe it's because they're coming off a PPV or maybe it's because the build to Slamboree was incredibly long, but this felt much fresher and it made the show go by a lot faster. They're back to the full two hours next week.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews

Impact Wrestling – September 20, 2012: They're Running Out Of Places To Go With This

Story

Imapct Wrestling

Date: September 20, 2012

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Taz

It's Open Fight Night again and based on the history that this concept has, not a lot is going to happen. We're on the road to Bound For Glory and with four shows left, the main story is who is the mole in TNA that is helping Aces and 8's. We might get some answers to that tonight as Joseph Park has promised to give us a major piece of evidence tonight in his investigation of the case. Let's get to it.

After the usual intro, we open with Hulk and Shaquille O'Neal in the back. Shaq says he's got Hulk's back tonight. He's leaving now but he'll be back later.

We open with Angle and Styles in the ring. Angle talks about the history he and AJ have with the tag champs and how they earned a tag title shot last week. However, Hernandez and Chavo got one as well. Since it's Open Fight Night, let's see which contenders are better. Angle sounded like he was slurring his speech here a bit.

Hernandez/Chavo Guerrero vs. AJ Styles/Kurt Angle

AJ and Chavo get things going and they immediately take it to the mat with AJ getting only a tiny advantage before they get back to their feet. Off to Angle vs. SuperMex with Hernandez easily taking Angle into the corner. He slams Kurt down and it's off to Chavo to speed things up. Chavo takes it to the mat for some reason and hooks a headlock. Angle easily suplexes him down to take over followed by a release overhead belly to belly. The tag champs are on the stage as we take a break.

Back with AJ holding Chavo in a chinlock on the mat. Apparently AJ hit the drop down/kick during the break to take over. Chavo fights up and brings in Hernandez again to start throwing around people like small villagers. Angle saves AJ from the Border Toss but Chavo takes out both his opponents with a single dropkick off the top. Chavo can't suplex AJ so Styles kicks him in the face and brings in Angle for a bunch of suplexes. Hernandez breaks up the ankle lock on Chavo but AJ kicks Hernandez's head off.

There's the ankle lock on Chavo again but he kicks Angle off. AJ comes in with the springboard forearm but Hernandez comes in with a kind of over the shoulder slam. Angle Slam takes Hernandez out but Chavo hits Three Amigos on Angle. AJ breaks up the third but takes three suplexes from Chavo instead. Chavo loads up the Frog Splash but Angle breaks it up. Hernandez breaks up the breaking up and the Frog Splash misses AJ. Pele takes Chavo down but the tag champs run in for the DQ to break up the Styles Clash at 12:22.

Rating: B. That was the only possible ending to this match as well as the only one that makes sense. When it's clear they're heading towards a triple threat at BFG, the right move is to not have one of the challenging teams go over the other. Good stuff here and the triple threat is going to tear the roof off the place.

Hogan comes out (quoting Jay Z of all people) and makes the triple threat for the PPV.

Al Snow talks about the Gut Check guy tonight but doesn't say he didn't cross the line with Joey Ryan.

Hogan is on the phone with somebody who is apparently Joseph Park. Park is five cars back but will be here with the evidence tonight.

Samoa Joe talks about BFG 08 and diving out of the sky box onto Sting.

Evan Markopolis (screw trying to spell that one right) talks about wrestling since he was 13.

Dixie yells at Bruce Pritchard about Aces and 8's being in the place they want to be. Al Snow comes in and Dixie changes the subject. Ok then.

Gut Check: Evan Markopolis vs. Douglas Williams

The fans are behind Evan even though he's taken down almost immediately. Apparently there are going to be Gut Checks at live events. Sure why not. Williams controls with ease and makes Markopolis look like he has no idea what he's doing. Evan tries a sunset flip but Williams knees him in the face. When all else fails, HIT HIM IN THE FACE! Evan hits a quick dropkick and crossbody but Williams doesn't even let him get a one count. A delayed vertical suplex puts Evan down and Doug gets ticked off. He throws Evan down and puts on an arm trap headlock for the tap out at 4:04.

Rating: D. What is the point of these things anymore? They're just squashes with guys who would be jobbers any other day of the week getting their name on TV and getting mauled by some former champion. What does this prove? These guys never get close to winning and they all have the same backstory, so why would I want to see it?

We recap the latest issues with Roode vs. Storm, these being from No Surrender.

Here's Storm to the ring to call out Bobby Roode. Storm says this is going to be a fight instead of a match and he wants the coward to come out right now. Here's Roode in a suit. Roode says that he's overdressed for a fight tonight, but it doesn't matter because Roode isn't fighting. Storm is never going to be a world champion again and Roode walks away, saying Storm can fight somebody else.

Roode goes to the back and runs into Hogan. Hogan yells about Roode bailing and says that if Roode doesn't go fight in three minutes, he's sitting home for the rest of the year.

Post break (three minutes and forty three seconds later. Hulk Hogan is a liar) Storm calls Roode out again and Bobby comes out very slowly. Storm charges up the ramp and beats on Roode with a shoe. He also chokes with a shirt as there's a referee here for some reason. They head up to the stage with Roode being rammed into the set. Storm jumps off the stage but Roode catches him with a punch to the ribs.

They head to the ring and we actually get a bell.

Bobby Roode vs. James Storm

Roode is almost immediately clotheslined to the floor but he comes back with a shot to the head. Storm sends him into the steps but Roode sends Storm into the barricade. Roode finds a beer but Storm blocks the shot to the head. They've been in the ring for about eight seconds in total so far. Roode sends him into the post but misses a chair shot. Storm sends him (you may be noticing a pattern emerging) into the boot of a fan but Roode sends him into the barricade. They're actually rolling into the ring to break counts. Storm rams him into various steel objects but has a suplex reversed onto the floor.

They FINALLY get in the ring for more than a few seconds with Roode hitting a big clothesline to take over. He shoves the referee and throws Storm right back to the floor. Storm shoves the referee away again and that's enough to throw it out at 6:24. I'm not even going to bother rating this as it wasn't anything resembling a match.

They keep fighting up to the set again and then into the back. Storm rams him into various objects and they head out the door.

Hogan talks to some guy who was sent to find Joseph Park but it hasn't worked. Hogan gets a phone call from Aces and 8's who apparently have a corporate lawyer now. Hogan says they'll play tonight and hangs up. He says he knows where Park is.

Aries goes to see Jeff Hardy about Bound For Glory. Hardy has had a Hall of Fame career and Aries wants that. He wants a bunch of sheep to follow him and he gets that by winning at BFG. Tonight, Aries is going to prove that anything Hardy can do, Aries can do better. I'd guess that means Aries vs. Ray tonight.

Here's Tara to explain why she did what she did last week. She says Tessmacher used her to get on TV and make her own career. Tara's new boyfriend, some Hollywood star who she doesn't name, opened her eyes. Tara calls out Christy for some reason. Christy very slowly gets in and Tara accuses her of babying Tessmacher. Tara demands that Christy say who her favorite Knockout is. Christy says Tessmacher, which gets her a beating until Tessmacher makes the save.

Brooke Hogan promises consequences for Tara next week.

RVD talks about his BFG matches against Jerry Lynn and Abyss at BFG.

The TV Title is decided next week. No word on who is in the match.

Here's Hogan....again. He doesn't like hearing about Aces and 8's kidnapping Park but apparently has given up something in exchange for him. Apparently Hogan will go to Aces and 8's clubhouse or whatever that is. The boss pops up on screen and says that next week it's Clubhouse Rules. They have Park's computer and break it because he figured it out. Park is in a cage and says he has the information in his head. They hit him in the head with a hammer and Hogan's jaw is shaking as we cut to a break.

Video on Hardy and how much BFG means to him.

Here's the world champ who says he's the hunter rather than the hunted at BFG. He calls out Ray to prove he can beat Ray better than Hardy did last week. Ray comes out and runs his mouth as per usual, including yelling at a fan. If the fan touches Ray again, Ray is going to hit him in the face. Aries says he'll hit the fan also, which is a pretty heelish thing to say. Ray says his catchphrase but Aries dives over the top to take him out.

Austin Aries vs. Bully Ray

After some punching on the floor by the champ, we head into the ring with Aries in control. Ray kicks Aries off the apron and into the barricade as we take a break. Back with Ray pulling on Aries' face followed by a splash for two. Ray keeps pounding away with the big and hard shots to Aries while yelling at Earl Hebner at the same time. Earl argues back as you would expect him to and Aries gets in some offense to come back.

They keep slugging it out with Aries going down every time, only to make his comeback every single time. Ray rakes the eyes to finally stop him for a bit, only to run into a discus forearm. Aries guillotines him on the top rope and hits a missile dropkick for two. Aries can't hit the brainbuster but Ray misses his drop down attempt. Ray whips him into the referee and Aries puts on the Last Chancery for the tap but there's no one to see it. Ray loads up the chain and KO's Aries with it in the corner for the pin at 12:21.

Rating: C+. This was their usual good match and I'm really hoping it sets up a threeway at the PPV (yes I just said that) as Ray has more than earned a major match at the biggest show of the year. The ending wasn't clean and there's nothing wrong with that. Ray's reaction to winning the match makes this even better.

Post match Ray hugs Hebner in a funny bit. Ray holds up the title and

goes to clock Aries with it but Hardy makes the save. Hardy holds up the title, causing Aries to freak out on him to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. I wasn't that wild on this show. There was WAY too much Hogan on here and the Gut Check thing continues to be stupid. The focus was of course on Aces and 8's again and we've reached the point where it's almost impossible to buy this anymore. The group has been around for months now and NO ONE CAN FIND THE ROOM THEY'RE IN???

Now we've got another big deal set up with the Clubhouse thing, but again it focuses on Hogan. The problem is that it's dragged on for so long now and they're running out of places to go with it. We need a reveal of some sort soon and they're running out of time before BFG. Not a great show tonight at all.

Results

AJ Styles/Kurt Angle vs. Chavo Guerrero/Hernandez went to a no contest when Daniels and Kazarian interfered

Douglas Williams b. Evan Markopolis – Arm Trap Headlock

James Storm vs. Bobby Roode went to a no contest

Bully Ray b. Austin Aries – Pin after a shot with a chain

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews

Monday Nitro – May 12, 1997:

A Horrible Go Home Show For One Of The Most Worthless PPVs Ever

Monday Nitro #87

Date: May 12, 1997

Location: 1st Mariner Center, Baltimore, Arena

Attendance: 8,058

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Bobby Heenan, Larry Zbyszko

I think this is another of those hour long shows due to the NBA Playoffs which is a good idea lately. Slamboree is this Sunday and THANK GOODNESS FOR THAT. The shows have been so insanely boring lately that they need something to be completely changed. 1997 wasn't kind to the company but everyone remembers it as being awesome for some reason. Hopefully there's more Sting and Hogan here tonight as without them, these shows suck. Let's get to it.

Michael Buffer of all people opens the show.

Here are Savage and Liz with the Macho Man on his own feet instead of crutches. He talks about Page jumping him last week and firing him up. Savage wants a fight tonight and that's it. He talked for 25 seconds max. That's kind of refreshing.

Apparently Sting wants to conduct a one on one interview with Bischoff. The source of this news: Bischoff. Naturally the announcers accept this with no questions.

TV Title: Juventud Guerrera vs. Ultimo Dragon

Dragon is defending and Regal talks about how he can outwrestle anyone

and will take the title on Sunday. Guerrera starts with a springboard cross body for two followed by a headscissors to send the champ to the floor. Back in and Dragon fires off some kicks followed by an over the shoulder backbreaker for two. Juvy kicks him in the face for two and hits a northern lights fisherman's suplex for two.

A rana is countered by a Dragon powerbomb and things slow down. Juvy rolls through a rana into a sunset flip for two before escaping a dragon and tiger suplex. They both go up top, resulting in Dragon hitting a superplex to put both guys down. Juvy gets pulled to the floor by Sonny Onoo and Dragon jumps on Guerrera from behind, saving Sonny in the process. Onoo kicks Juvy in the back and back inside, the super rana sets up the Dragon Sleeper to retain the title.

Rating: C. Not bad here but they kept starting and stopping. Juvy is a good choice for an opening act though as he can fly all over the place and do it almost as well as anyone else. That being said, he had no chance at winning the title, but for the most part that's ok. Sometimes it's fine to throw out an entertaining match even if the ending isn't in doubt.

Here are Piper/Flair/Greene to talk about Sunday. Please let this be short. Greene says that everyone pays taxes, everyone dies, and on Sunday he's going to hurt the NWO. Flair says they'll be there on Sunday. Piper says he's isn't Dorthy from the Wizard of Oz. The NWO shows up and makes fun of the guys in the ring. On Sunday, it's no DQ and no countout.

Dean Malenko vs. Steve McMichael

Dean takes him to the mat almost immediately but Mongo shoves him down almost just as fast. Malenko goes after the knee but Mongo escapes a Cloverleaf attempt. The leg lariat gets two for Dean but a Jarrett distraction lets Mongo clip Dean from behind. Mongo powerslams Dean but the referee went down during the slam.

Here's Reggie White but Jarrett distracts him too, allowing Mongo to get in a shot. White hits a clothesline and splash on Mongo (Bobby says it's not fair as Mongo has already been in there five or ten minutes. It hasn't even been three yet) giving Dean the pin. This was a mess and it set up Reggie White vs. Mongo on Sunday so if it could be rated, the grade would be very low.

Reggie says he's fighting for Wisconsin on Sunday.

Lee Marshall does his thing. Remind me again why this guy was getting a paycheck?

Scotty Riggs vs. Wrath

Even Scotty Riggs gets pyro. Man how much money did they have to burn at this point? Before the match, James Vandenberg names his monster as Wrath. As for the match, picture any squash between a small pretty boy and a monster that lasts about 40 seconds. That's the match you get here. Wrath wins it with his double arm Rock Bottom.

Here's Glacier post match. He doesn't do anything but he does in fact show up.

Konnan/Hugh Morrus vs. Alex Wright/Ice Train

Clearly a main event in any arena in the country. Tonight, it's the main event in the 1st Mariner Arena. The Dungeon team jumps Train to start with no avail at all. Train and Morrus officially start us off with Ice Train hitting a powerslam to take over. Off to Wright who is booed out of the building. Wright won't tag out and it lets Morrus take over. A clothesline puts Train down and Wright bails to the floor. Train fights back but Wright claims a knee injury and walks away. The Dungeon double teams Ice Train until the Tequila Sunrise gets the submission.

Rating: D. This was all about the heel turn and not about the match at all. This didn't lead to a match between Ice Train and Wright, at least not on Nitro. This would be Train's last match on Nitro that I can find for over three years. Nothing to see here as it was an angle instead of a match, but at least the angle seemed to be what was needed given the crowd hating Wright when he came into the match.

We recap the beatdown on DDP by the NWO last week.

We cut to the back where Piper is down and injured. To the best of my knowledge this wasn't mentioned at all on Sunday.

Here's Bischoff for the big interview with Sting. Bischoff stalls a lot and we're rapidly running out of airtime. To the shock of absolutely no one with a functioning brain, it's the NWO Sting. The fans say they want Sting. Bischoff says a bunch of things that run Sting down while praising Hogan and Sting nods in agreement with everything. The real Sting comes out and beats up the fake one. Bischoff runs to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. The only thing keeping this from being a total failure is that it was half the length of a usual show. There was NOTHING on this show of value at all and it was pretty clear that no one was interested in what they were doing out there. Slamboree would wind up being the textbook definition of a throwaway show and even though the main event wound up being decent, it didn't mean anything at all past Sunday night. This show however was horrible and thankfully we're moving towards something new now.

Here's Slamboree if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/05/03/slamboree-1997-agoobwa/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews

NXT – September 19, 2012: NXT Needs Its Spark Back

NXT

Date: September 19, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, William Regal

We have our first challenger for Rollins tonight in the form of Rick Victor, but I'm not sure if it's a title match or not. Also we're getting a workout from Kassius Ohno, which could mean a lot of things. I'm liking that they're slowly bringing in storylines instead of the random matches they were having for the first few weeks of the show. Let's get to it.

Trent Barreta vs. Johnny Curtis

Sweet. I've always liked what I've seen from Barreta so having him back is a good thing. Feeling out process to start with both guys avoiding the other through some gymnastics. A nice dropkick sends Johnny into the corner but as Trent goes up, Curtis drops him onto the top rope to take over. Johnny takes over with an armbar followed by something similar to a high angle AA for two.

Curtis loads up a superplex but Trent counters with a sunset bomb for two. An enziguri sets up a Whisper in the Wind from Trent for a close two. The crowd is silent when these guys aren't flipping and diving. Trent tries his tornado DDT but gets suplexed into the corner for two. Curtis misses his guillotine legdrop and Trent hits a running knee to the chest/face for the pin at 5:32.

Rating: C. I like Trent but man alive Curtis is worthless. His gimmick is

that he's supposed to be weird but he hasn't done anything odd in like three months, so all he has to go on is his in ring ability. The problem with that is he's so generic in the ring that there's no reason to care about him at all. Then again that's probably why he keeps getting ring time: he's as bland as you can ask for which tends to get high marks in WWE anymore.

Alicia Fox vs. Paige

We get a long lockup to start with Alicia taking her to the mat for a second without breaking the hold. A backslide gets two for Paige as do a small package and a cradle. They slap it out and Alicia hits a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for two. Paige fires off some forearms but she can't slam Alicia due to her back. A northern lights suplex gets two for Fox and it's off to a chinlock with a knee in Paige's back.

Paige tries to fight out of the hold but gets stomped in the face to break up her comeback attempt. Paige gets all fired up and beats on Alicia before they botch a rollup. Paige picks her up and hits a DDT while holding Alicia up with a leg hooked. It wasn't a fisherman's buster but it looked good and it got the pin at 4:48.

Rating: C. This was better than most Divas matches you would get on Raw or Smackdown. At the end of the day, the girls aren't going to get any better by having 90 second matches so giving them nearly five minutes isn't a terrible idea. Fox continues to be pretty much a mess in the ring while Paige is coming along pretty nicely. Not bad here.

Raw ReBound eats up some time.

Jimmy Uso vs. Conor O'Brien

It's amazing how much a good gimmick can change someone. O'Brien used to be Rat Boy in season 4 and now he's part of a team that I'd love to see

on the main shows. Jimmy hits a quick headbutt and a clothesline puts O'Brien on the floor. Conor rams Jimmy into the apron to take over and drops an elbow back in the ring for two. Off to a chinlock by O'Brien Jimmy comes back with a clothesline and a Samoan Drop but Cameron crotches him as he loads up the Superfly Splash. O'Brien hits a running boot to the face for the pin at 3:50.

Rating: C. Not as good as the match last week but it puts the teams at one and one against each other in singles matches and that's all you need to do with them at the moment. This sets up a bigger tag match down the line which hopefully leads to one if not both of them being on the main roster. The match being so short didn't do it any favors.

Ascension hits a Total Elimination on Jey post match.

Bo Dallas is about to say something when Michael McGillicutty interrupts him. Michael brags about his win last week and a fight breaks out.

It's time for Ohno's sparring session. There's a referee here and the bell rang so we'll call this a match I guess.

Kassius Ohno vs. Oliver Gray

Ohno blasts him into the corner and pounds Gray's head. Saxton wants to know how this is different from a regular match and Regal has no answer for him. Off to a reverse cravate by Ohno and it gets a tap out at 58 seconds.

Ohno gets a mic and says Gray wasn't ready. Gray gets another shot and Ohno says ring the bell. The spinning forearm and the reverse cravate get the second win at 26 seconds. Richie Steamboat runs out for the save.

Leo Kruger is psycho.

Rick Victor vs. Seth Rollins

Non-title here. Victor stalls to start before taking over with a headlock. It's a very slow paced start so far. I'm not sure why Victor is the guy they're giving the first match with Rollins but he's not a horrible choice. A suplex gets two on Rollins and Victor bites himself. We take a break and come back with Rollins in a chinlock. Regal will not stop praising Rick so maybe there's something there.

Rollins tries to speed things up but gets caught by a big knee to the face for two. Victor bites himself some more and Rollins Hulks Up. Victor slaps him in the face and the champion snaps, taking over with right hands and a kick to the head. A running boot to the face (popular move tonight) takes Victor down and the Blackout gets the pin at 6:50 shown of 10:20.

Rating: C. Not a bad match here but Victor never felt like a threat to Rollins at all. Then again maybe that's what they were going for with this. Rollins is being built up quite well as a big deal and they treated his first match as champion as something we needed to see, which is more than you can say about most new champions. This wasn't a good match or anything but it served its purpose well enough.

Overall Rating: C. This was pretty easily the weakest show they've had so far. Nothing on the show stood out at all and nothing really happened here. Rollins beating Victor is no surprise and we knew Steamboat would be coming back for revenge on Ohno, plus the tag team feud is roughly where it was before last week's show with a few more wrinkles. The show wasn't bad or boring or anything like that, but there was no spark here. The one good thing about this week though is Dusty wasn't around, which means him being on the show three times last week might have been an anomaly.

Results

Trent Barreta b. Johnny Curtis – Running Knee Smash

Paige b. Alicia Fox – Leg Trap DDT

Conor O'Brien b. Jimmy Uso – Running Boot To The Face

Kassius Ohno b. Oliver Gray – Reverse Cravate

Seth Rollins b. Rick Victor – Blackout

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews

Thought Of The Day: Why Are You Doing That?

This is something that occurs to me a lot lately and something WWE is very bad at: everything that is done should be to either make you want to watch the TV show or make you want to buy the PPV. That's the point of the company: they should be trying to make you want to see more and preferably to make you want to pay to see it. Instead, it seems to be to do whatever whim the company is on at the moment. Instead things seem to be about pushing whatever their latest endeavor is to get them publicity. It's like they're focusing on everything but their in ring product if that makes sense. How many times do you see the company pushing the in ring product or a future match on the show? Now on the other hand, how many times do you hear something pushed that is about hearing something else about the product? As in hearing about Twitter, Tout, Facebook, the App etc. As in you're not hearing about the product, but about something that is about the product. That seems to be counter productive to me.

Superstars – August 23, 2012: This Is Superstars In A Nutshell

Superstars

Date: August 23, 2012

Location: Save Mart Center, Fresno, California/Rabobank Arena,
Bakersfield, California

Commentators: Scott Stanford, Matt Striker

This is another request and in something rather different, this is from less than a month ago. People ask me to do Superstars more often but you can only do so much of the same WWE stuff over and over again. Anyway this is seemingly a random episode of the show so maybe we'll get some good action out of it which tends to be the case from this show. Let's get to it.

For the sake of context, this is four days after Summerslam.

Damien Sandow vs. Yoshi Tatsu

Sandow does his usual schtick about before the match. Yoshi's music is so catchy it's unreal. Sandow takes over to start and drops a knee for two. Off to a chinlock but Yoshi quickly breaks it up and comes back with a chop. Sandow ties Yoshi up in the ring skirt and pounds away as Tatsu can't get anything going here. The best he can get are a few rollups for two and some LOUD chops. A big kick puts Sandow down but the top rope spinwheel kick misses. The Russian legsweep sets up the windup elbow and the double arm neckbreaker for the pin.

Rating: C-. Extended squash here but that's what something like Superstars is good for. They don't need to run through a match in two minutes or so and it gives them some more ring time. The problem with that is almost no one gets extended ring time so when they're asked to do it, they don't know what they're doing and the matches usually don't work.

We get a LONG recap of Lesnar vs. HHH from Summerslam as well as the fallout on Raw.

Drew McIntyre vs. Alex Riley

Drew has a bad hand here and milks it a bit before Riley grabs the wrist. A dropkick puts Drew on the floor but Riley misses a dive. Off to an armbar from McIntyre followed by some stomps to the leg. This is going really slowly. Drew tries the FutureShock but Riley sends him into the corner. Drew heads up but gets rolled up off the top for the pin for Riley out of nowhere.

Rating: D. Drew's offense is really dull as he just stomped a bit after getting control due to Riley missing a dive. Riley is one of those guys that can't get on TV for some reason and while I've heard various reasons, most of them seem stupid when you have a guy that could do some good for a company with basically no midcard to speak of at times.

Video on the Asian tour.

Video from the end of Raw with Cena confronting Punk before Punk beat up Lawler.

Justin Gabriel vs. Cody Rhodes

This is a rematch from a few weeks ago where Cody won. There's actually a story here: Justin showed up with a chick and Cody hit on her, setting up

the first match. See how easy that is? Both guys feel each other out to start and it turns into a contest of showing each other up. Gabriel gets a rollup for two which Cody takes offense to. They trade some HARD slaps and Gabriel takes Cody down and into a freaky arm trap hold.

Cody gets sent to the floor but he moves before Justin can dive. Unfortunately he moves into position for another dive from Gabriel as we take a break. Back with Gabriel hitting what looked like a dropkick for two. Gabriel goes to the apron but gets his arm snapped across the top rope to give Cody control. He bends Gabriel's arm over the apron before hitting a gordbuster for two. Cody cranks on the arm a bit more and gets two off an uppercut.

Back to more work on the arm, this time in the form of a hammerlock. Justin starts a quick comeback but misses a top rope Lionsault to give Cody control again. Off to a short arm scissors but Gabriel gets off his back to break the hold. A monkey flip puts Cody down as does a spinning kick to the face. Justin hits a kind of sitout powerbomb for two but a slam is countered into the Cross Rhodes for the pin for Cody out of nowhere. Nice counter.

Rating: C+. Pretty decent match here with a sweet counter to end things. Gabriel is good in this kind of a role: the guy who isn't going to win a major match anytime soon but he's got enough speed and ability to keep things interesting. For a main event on Superstars, this was fine.

Overall Rating: C+. This is Superstars in a nutshell: you get some decent wrestling from guys you don't usually see on WWE TV, but for the most part there's a reason these guys aren't on the big shows. They're not bad at all but they don't have anything that sets them apart from everyone else. Still though, you won't regret watching it and if you've got roughly 45 minutes to kill and want to watch wrestling, there are far worse things you could pick.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews

Monday Night Raw – December 24, 2001: The Wrestling Equivalent Of Coal In Your Stocking

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 24, 2001

Location: Miami Arena, Miami, Florida

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's Christmas Eve so of course we're not live. We have a few weeks before HHH gets back so until then we're kind of in a holding pattern. Jericho is champion but given that they don't even have an Undisputed Title belt for him, how serious can we take his reign so far? The show is in a bad stretch and it's really only going to get worse in the next few years. Let's get to it.

In case you didn't see the link at the end of the last review, here's the December 17, 2001 show which I had done already:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/12/27/monday-night-raw-december-17-2011-nuns-groceries-and-bingo/>

We've got an eggnog match later so you can tell things aren't that serious.

Then again we have Jericho vs. Rock for the title later so maybe things won't be that bad.

Here's the hometown hero in his old Miami jersey to open the show. It's Rock if that wasn't clear. Rock says he's come back home and talks about the main event tonight against Jericho. Oh and the Hurricanes will win the Rose Bowl. I believe they did that actually. He asks for his book and is handed The Rock's Night Before Christmas. The book is exactly what you would expect with the focus being on Rock vs. Jericho.

Before he can finish though, here's Angle, thankfully with the classic version of his music instead of that bad remix. Angle accuses Santa of being a pervert for seeing you when you're sleeping. He thinks Vince is better than Mr. Claus because Vince has made the main event tonight a triple threat match. Rock doesn't really care. Somehow this segment took almost 12 minutes.

Vince is having a Christmas party with Patterson and Brisco as elves. Bubba is Santa which means Stacy as a sexy Mrs. Claus. Booker and the Big Bossman show up so it's time to bust out the strippers. Booker officially has a contract now. Vince's music is playing as this goes on.

Rikishi vs. Test

Rikishi pounds him down into the corner but Test avoids a charge and beats on Rikishi. A DDT puts Rikishi down for two and Test shoves the referee. The referee punches Test and it's a DQ win for Rikishi. This was nothing.

Test pounds on the referee but Rikishi makes the save.

Trish, looking GREAT, shows up at Flair's Christmas party. Torrie is Mrs. Claus and I think Tajiri is Santa. Big Show struts like Flair and Tajiri gives Torrie some very small lingerie. Albert and Edge try to make Kane laugh and Big Show does his Hogan impression which is still pretty good. Debra brings in cookies and says Austin is on the way. Well it's not like anyone was watching this episode anyway.

Billy and Chuck give each other matching headbands. Taz talks to Bubba because Bubba has a good looking girl on his lap and that's not Santa-like. Bubba: "You're just mad because all my elves are taller than you." That was a good line. Fink shows up and brings in Mae and Moolah as the new dancers.

Billy and Chuck vs. APA

Billy and Chuck aren't quite gay yet but they're inching towards it. The APA looks at each other and pound on Billy and Chuck from behind. Billy and Chuck double team Farroq before Chuck gets some alone time with him. Chuck gets laid....out by a DDT and it's off to Bradshaw and Billy. It's finishers a go-go and Chuck trips Bradshaw so Billy gets to be on top for the quick pin. That's good as I was running out of sex jokes.

RVD is ticked off and looking for someone. After a break he goes into Jericho's room but finds Lance Storm. I guess he got a job on Smackdown. They get in an argument and a match is made.

Show and Albert are in Kane masks talking to the Big Red Machine when Arn Anderson shows up with beer. Austin shows up too with even more beer. We get a live WHAT rendition as Austin reads off a Christmas list while sitting on Tajiri's lap.

Rob Van Dam vs. Lance Storm

It's the Barely Legal rematch that no one was asking for. They brawl to start with both guys flying around and hitting kicks to the face for two. Not that it matters as we're in a chinlock 45 seconds in. Van Dam kicks him down and hits the cartwheel moonsault for two. A superkick gets two for Storm but Van Dam backflips out of a belly to back superplex. Another kick sets up the Five Star for the pin. Another short match.

Test hits on Terri at Vince's party. That goes nowhere so Paisley

interviews Maven about Tough Enough 2. This goes nowhere until Booker yells at Maven, setting up a match later. Is it clear that it's Christmas Eve and they're not even trying? Mae is drunk.

Stacy Keibler vs. Torrie Wilson

It's an eggnog match between the Mrs. Clauses. What are you expecting here? They fight by the pool of eggnog, they go in it, they do some "wrestling" and the referee falls in as well. Torrie wins in like two minutes.

Back to Vince's party and Jericho shows up to complain about being put in a triple threat. Vince tries to soothe him but Stephanie returns, a mere FIVE WEEKS after being thrown out. She has a gift for Vince, which is a monogrammed money clip. Vince doesn't seem to care and throws her out. She would be back full time in about three weeks.

European Title: Christian vs. The Hurricane

Christian is defending and takes a shot at the Miami Hurricanes which is appropriate in more ways than one. Christian charges at him to start and is immediately clotheslined to the floor. Hurricane hits a big dive to the floor as JR suggests Pat Patterson is a fairy and not an elf. Back in and Christian kicks Hurricane low to take over.

The fans chant the Hurricanes' (the football team, not the masked dude) fight song as Christian knees Hurricane in the ribs for two. Hurricane hits a quick crossbody but can't get much more after that. Molly offers a distraction and Hurricane comes back, hitting a Blockbuster for two. Christian throws him to the floor but ducks an attack from Hurricane which takes out Molly. Christian throws him back inside and hits the Unprettier to retain.

Rating: C-. Not bad here but when this is the first match that broke

three minutes after over an hour of the show, it's kind of hard to get into it. Also the ending here was really abrupt with Christian just hitting his finisher out of nowhere for the pin. The title meant nothing at this point and was ready to be retired, which wouldn't come for almost a year.

Taz switches parties and causes a match to be made between Bubba and Tajiri for later. Austin plays the guitar for some entertainment.

Booker T vs. Maven

Booker has Bossman as a bodyguard in an angle I don't remember at all. Maven is brand new here still so this isn't going to be much in the ways of competition. Maven fires off some forearms to start followed by a few dropkicks, which was really the only move he could do well. Booker shrugs that off and kicks Maven down to take over. A superkick puts Maven down and there's the Spinarooni. An Alabama Slam gets the pin for Booker. Total squash after the first 20 seconds.

Bubba Claus vs. Tajiri Claus

Oh...why not. Tajiri knocks him to the floor and hits an Asai Moonsault. The visuals here are pretty funny and JR says this would be a main event at any arena in the North Pole. I can live with nods to Monsoon. Back in the ring the Bubba Bomb takes Tajiri down and a low blow slows him down even more. The fans of course want tables but they have to settle for a splash/elbow drop from Bubba instead.

Tajiri has lost his hat and Bubba takes his own belt off to whip Tajiri a bit. Bubba misses the middle rope splash as is his custom, which likely had to do with him doing the stereotypical Japanese bow before jumping. The look on Bubba's face is pretty great. A low dropkick gets two and Tajiri fires off some kicks to take over. He goes up but D-Von crotches him, letting Bubba hit a superplex for no cover. The Dudleys set up What's Up but Taz runs out and crotches D-Von. The distraction lets

Tajiri hit the Mist and the Buzzsaw Kick for the pin.

Rating: C. If you were looking for a serious match here, what is wrong with you? This was a fun match and I'm a Tajiri fan so I was digging this no matter what happened in it. On top of that, Bubba's facials are always great. Fun match here which is something this dull show needed badly.

Angle says he'll strip Jericho of the title tonight. Mae Young: "DID SOMEONE SAYS STRIP???" You can figure the rest out for yourself.

We recap the Undertaker vs. the Hardys feud as the team is back together again after fighting for weeks.

Apparently Mae Young has stopped Vince's party cold and she takes her pants off on stage. Austin comes in and beats up Vince and the Stooges. Patterson winds up looking up between Mae's legs.

WWF World Title: Chris Jericho vs. Kurt Angle vs. The Rock

It's a brawl to start with the heels double teaming Rock in the corner. Rock gets in a shot on Angle and avoids a save from Jericho. Angle suplexes Rock down and we head to the floor where the heels take turns ramming Rock into the table. Rock will have none of that and rams them into the table, only to get dropped onto the table chest first. A charging Angle is sent into the steps and Jericho is clotheslined down as Rock takes over again.

Back inside a spinwheel kick gets two for the champ but the Lionsault hits knees. Angle comes back in and pounds away on Rock, who backdrops Jericho to the floor. A Samoan Drop puts Angle down for two but Jericho makes the save. Rock hits a double clothesline to put both guys down but he can't follow up. The Great One gets up first and punches both guys time after time to fire up the crowd.

Angle finally gets in a shot to the back but Rock whips Kurt into Jericho on the apron. Rock drops a leg on Angle and puts on the Scorpion. Jericho tries to make a save but walks into the spinebuster and the Elbow for two. Angle puts the ankle lock on Rock but Jericho dropkicks Kurt to break it up, starting a fight between the two. The American hits a German on the Canadian but Jericho rolls through into the Walls.

Angle escapes and puts on the ankle lock, only to have Rock take his head off. Jericho's forearm hits the referee and Rock puts the champ in the Walls, making him tap to no referee. The hold is released and Angle clocks Jericho with a chair by mistake. Rock Bottom takes Angle down but there's STILL no referee. Angle DDT's Rock on the chair but Jericho steals the pin to retain.

Rating: B-. This was a good match but the problem with it is that there was no way the title was changing tonight. This would have torn the roof off the place at a house show and the live crowd was probably getting into things, but at the end of the day there was no chance Rock was winning the title here and I think most of the people knew it.

Overall Rating: D. Nothing to see here other than a main event which is just above average at best. Other than that, this is a throwaway show if there ever has been one. Then again, it's Christmas Eve so it's not like anyone was watching. I don't think I watched this one live which says a lot for me. Nothing to see here and next week is a Best of 2001 show which won't offer much, meaning this is pretty much the end of the year.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews

Cena Injured, Doesn't Seem To Matter

Cena had elbow surgery today but it doesn't seem to make a difference as he'll only be out 2-3 weeks and the PPV is in about 6 weeks. See what happens when you give yourselves some space between PPVs? Good things can happen.