

Summerslam Count-Up – Summerslam 2014 (Original): NO WAY!

Summerslam 2014

Date: August 17, 2014

Location: Staples Center, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

It's the second biggest show of the year and much like last year, the main event seems to pretty much set in stone. Brock Lesnar is challenging John Cena for the World Title and I can't see any real reason for Cena to keep the title. There's always the chance of Rollins cashing in but it doesn't seem like something that happens. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Rob Van Dam vs. Cesaro

Rob takes him into the corner to start but gets thrown into the corner himself with pure power. Cesaro charges into a boot though and they head outside with Van Dam hitting a quick Rolling Thunder. Back in and Cesaro just throws Van Dam down as we take a break. We come back with Van Dam caught in a chinlock. A knee drop to Rob's back gets two but Rob comes back with some clotheslines.

Rob gets two off the split legged moonsault before kicking Cesaro to the floor for an apron moonsault. Back in and the Five Star is broken up by a running uppercut but Rob breaks up a superplex. Another uppercut breaks up another Five Star attempt but once again Rob shoves him off. They do the sequence a third time until Rob finally gets off a cross body, only to jump into another uppercut. The Neutralizer is countered into a backdrop but Cesaro lands on his feet and levels Van Dam with a big boot for two. Not that it matters though as Rob kicks him in the face, setting up the Five Star for the pin at 7:56.

Rating: C-. Nothing special here but it's good to see Rob get a win to reestablish his credibility. I guess they can rebuild Cesaro at some

point in the future, though I feel like I've been saying that for months now. How in the world did he win a big match at Wrestlemania and fall all the way down here?

The show opens with Hulk Hogan coming out to hype up the WWE Network once again, talking about all the shows you can get for just \$9.99. Nothing wrong with Hogan opening a show.

The opening video is played like a movie trailer (from Authority Pictures and Follow the Buzzard Films), playing up everyone's nickname in a nice idea.

Intercontinental Title: Dolph Ziggler vs. The Miz

Miz is defending and talks about all the movies coming out on his way to the ring. He isn't a talking turtle or robot, but even Drax the Destroyer would be intimidated by him. Tonight he's going to turn Dolph Ziggler from a star to the WWE's version of the Lakers. Feeling out process to start with Ziggler easily taking over on the champion, only to miss a charge in the corner.

A kick to the head gets two for the champion and we hit the chinlock. The fans tell Miz that he can't wrestle so he nails a big boot to quiet them down a bit. There's the running clothesline in the corner but Dolph blocks a top rope ax handle. A facebuster gets two for Ziggler but Miz avoids the Fameasser and tries to send Dolph outside. Ziggler skins the cat and fakes Miz out on a superkick into a small package for two. The Figure Four is easily countered and a superkick nails Miz in the face for another near fall.

Miz heads outside but gets sent into the barricade, only to slap on the Figure Four back inside. The hold stays on for a good while but Dolph finally makes it to the ropes. Ziggler gets back up and hits the Fameasser out of nowhere but it hurts the knee again, allowing Miz to hit a quick Skull Crushing Finale for two. Miz is stunned, allowing Dolph to hit a Zig Zag out of nowhere for the pin and the title at 8:00.

Rating: C. It wasn't much of a match but I like the ending coming out of nowhere like that. You could see that the title was going to change as

soon as Miz's finishers didn't work, but it was still a nice finish. Ziggler getting the title is a good thing as he's needed a boost for a long time now. Granted he'll probably lose while holding it over and over, though it's still better than nothing.

We recap Brie vs. Stephanie/Megan on Raw.

Brie talks about being incarcerated on Monday and thinking about all the times Stephanie has insulted Bryan over the years or tortured Nikki week after week. She says Megan is lying and Brie isn't going to let this chance slip through her fingers. Tonight she's going to let the beast out.

Divas Title: AJ Lee vs. Paige

Paige is challenging and these two have traded the title since the night after Wrestlemania. Paige recently turned heel and injured AJ so tonight is her chance for revenge. AJ won't shake Paige's hand to start but bites the fingers instead. She pulls at Paige's hair, sending the British chick out to the floor. Back in and a ticked off Paige chokes on the ropes but AJ kicks her in the face.

Both girls head outside with Paige dropping her face first onto the barricade. Paige takes her back inside and drops I believe a piece of her own hair on AJ's face. We hit the chinlock on the champion before AJ sends her out to the floor. A BIG top rope clothesline drops Paige again before a bad looking Shining Wizard gets two back inside. Paige kicks her in the face but AJ counters the Paige Turner into the Black Widow. Again Paige counters into Rampaige (fisherman's DDT) for the clean pin and the title at 5:00.

Rating: B-. This is the physical match that the Divas have been looking for and it was worth the wait. These girls beat the tar out of each other and almost nothing missed the entire time. That Rampaige is a great looking finisher and gives Paige a third finishing move if she keeps the Paige Turner around. Good stuff as this solid rivalry continues.

Sting WWE2K15 video.

Rusev vs. Jack Swagger

This is a Flag Match, meaning a regular match with the winner's flag being displayed after the match. Lana talks about how unrealistic Hollywood is, because there will be no happy ending. Swagger comes out with a military escort and a presentation of the American flag. Rusev jumps Swagger before the bell so Swagger puts on the Patriot Lock. They're finally separated but Lana says Rusev is too injured to wrestle. The referee says ring the bell and Swagger goes after him in the corner.

Rusev is sent outside but Swagger takes him back inside and hammers away. The Russian keeps running so Swagger runs him over with a clothesline on the floor. All Swagger so far. Back inside and the Vader Bomb is countered with a kick to Jack's bad ribs. Rusev fires off some shoulders in the corner and puts on a bearhug. Jack can't belly to belly suplex him and Rusev cannonballs down onto his back again.

Swagger fights back with a running clothesline and a big boot followed by the Vader Bomb for two. The superkick is countered into the Patriot Lock but Rusev quickly rolls out. A hard kick to the ribs has Rusev in trouble and a kick to the face sets up the Accolade. Rusev can't stand on the bad ankle though so it's a one legged Accolade instead. Jack rolls over into the Patriot Lock but Rusev rolls over and kicks at the ribs. A spinwheel kick to the shoulder drops Jack again and there's a Warrior Splash, setting up the Accolade and Swagger is out at 8:53.

Rating: C+. Good match here with both guys bringing their harder games. Swagger looks good by not tapping out and the right guy wins. This should end the feud between the two though and hopefully sends Rusev after Sheamus and the US Title. Does anything else really make sense at this point?

Rusev nails Colter like a true villain would post match. The Russian national anthem is played and the flag is raised.

We recap Rollins vs. Ambrose. They were members of the Shield but Rollins turned on Ambrose and joined HHH. They were scheduled to fight last month, only to have a fight breaking out in the back beforehand. Therefore, Ambrose wanted a lumberjack match.

Seth Rollins vs. Dean Ambrose

It's a brawl to start with Dean getting the better of it. He stomps Rollins down in the corner and sends Seth outside. The lumberjacks do their job but Dean punches a few of them when he's thrown outside. Back in and Ambrose is sent face first into the middle buckle and now the lumberjacks give him a beating. Rollins drops a knee for two but runs into a boot in the corner. Seth is able to tie him into the Tree of Woe before sending him to the apron.

Dean suplexes Rollins onto the lumberjacks, including sending Seth face first onto the announcers' table. The lumberjacks have to break up the brawl on the floor until Dean backdrops Seth over the barricade and into the crowd. Dean dives onto a bunch of lumberjacks and then runs the announcers' table to get at Seth, even taking out some more lumberjacks at the same time.

They brawl into the crowd as Kane comes out to yell at the lumberjacks for not doing their job. Dean tries to suplex Rollins over a barricade but they're finally dragged back to the ring by the lumberjacks. Rollins beats up Sin Cara for no apparent reason and tries to leave, but an army is waiting for him at the entrance. They literally carry him back to the ring with Dean diving off the top to take everyone out in a big pile.

Dirty Deeds is countered into an enziguri, but it knocks Dean into the ropes for the Rebound Clothesline. Dean Curb Stomps Rollins (you read that right) but Kane comes in to break up the pin. Goldust of all people gets in Kane's face and it breaks down into a huge brawl. The referee hasn't called for the bell so the match is still going. Everyone is cleared out and Rollins hits Dean with the briefcase for the pin at 10:54.

Rating: B. It was awesome while it lasted but I could have gone for another seven or eight minutes. They kept this going very well and the lumberjacks were an interesting idea. There's no way this is over and there's a good chance this sets up a rematch for the briefcase, probably at Night of Champions.

We recap Wyatt vs. Jericho. Chris returned a few months back but was

targeted by the Wyatts for reasons not entirely clear. Jericho won last month at Battleground but the feud isn't over, setting up this rematch tonight.

Chris Jericho vs. Bray Wyatt

The Family is barred from ringside. Jericho takes over with elbows and chops to start, followed by a springboard forearm to put Bray on the floor. Back in and a cross body gets two for the Canadian but Bray sends him out to the floor. Bray drives in knees to the ribs before taking Jericho inside again for some solid shots to the head. Jericho is sent shoulder first into the posts and throat first into the ropes for good measure.

We hit the chinlock for a bit before Jericho scores with an enziguri. Bray runs him over with ease though and hits the backplash for two. A dropkick takes Bray down again but he comes back with heavy right hands. Jericho, sporting a nasty bruise on his thigh, takes Bray down into the Walls but Bray is right next to the ropes. Wyatt rolls to the apron and is able to DDT Jericho onto the apron for two.

Now it's Bray going up top but Jericho counters with a hurricanrana for two. Jericho dropskicks him down again but Bray spiders up. He shouts that he's already dead but there's the Codebreaker for two. Bray avoids a baseball slide and sends Jericho into the barricade with Sister Abigail. Back in and Sister Abigail is good for the pin at 12:18.

Rating: C. Another pretty good match here with the right ending for a change. Bray getting the pin without the Family interfering is a good sign for him and hopefully the start of something new. It wasn't a great match or anything but it's very refreshing to see Bray get a pin on pay per view for a change.

Bray says Jericho learned what it means to follow the buzzards. Singing ensues.

We recap Brie Bella vs. Stephanie McMahon. This is a complicated story but it boils down to Stephanie being mad at Brie for embarrassing her when she was trying to get Daniel Bryan to forfeit the title. Brie quit

instead and ruined Stephanie's plans. Then Brie got her job back by threatening to sue Stephanie for slapping her and set up this match. Stephanie brought up something about Bryan cheating on Brie and the whole thing is WAY more complicated than it needs to be.

Brie Bella vs. Stephanie McMahon

Stephanie is almost in a black superhero outfit. They slowly shove each other to start until Stephanie stomps away in the corner. Brie comes back with a YES Lock attempt to send Stephanie running outside, but she blocks Brie's suicide dive with a forearm. Back in and a Hennig necksnap gets two on Brie as the announcers talk about how awesome Stephanie is. She stomps on Brie's head and cranks on the arms as Brie looks mildly annoyed.

Brie finally kicks her in the face so Stephanie turns on the EVIL FACE, only to get caught by a Thesz Press. Some kicks in the ribs have Stephanie in trouble and a hair drag does the same. A middle rope missile dropkick gets two on McMahon and there are some HORRIBLE looking right hands.

Cue HHH for a distraction but Brie counters Stephanie's Pedigree attempt into the YES Lock, but HHH pulls the referee to the floor. Brie kicks HHH down and starts a YES chant as Nikki is at ringside as well. Nikki comes in and stops Stephanie from leaving before turning on Brie as almost everyone expected her to. Nikki helps Stephanie up and a Pedigree gives her the pin at 11:05.

Rating: C+. Well you knew she wasn't going to job. It's on a bit of an adjusted scale but the match was shockingly good. That being said, it was NOWHERE near enough to justify the push its been receiving. All this to set up the Bellas fighting each other? They really think this is something people are going to be interested in? Dear goodness imagine the promos we're going to have to sit through. The girls all looked good though.

JBL sums up the entire story: Nikki was fed up with having to deal with the problems Brie caused her. Unfortunately that doesn't make a lot of sense as the people she joined were the ones beating her up the whole

time, but that's WWE for you.

Package on some guy that won a contest and got to go to the Performance Center and create a character: Mama's Boy.

Randy Orton vs. Roman Reigns

Orton is mad at Roman for costing him the chance to be #1 contender. Roman pops him in the jaw to start and follows up with a headbutt. Orton is sent to the floor and into the barricade but he reverses Reigns hard into the steps. Back in and Orton slams him head first onto the mat before stomping on Reigns' hand. A big superplex gets two for Randy and we hit the chinlock.

Roman fights up into a chinlock of his own but Orton falls back to break it up. Reigns grabs it again and squeezes very hard, only to get caught in a side slam for two. Back up and Reigns nails a Samoan drop before winning a slugout. Some running clotheslines have Orton in trouble and there's the apron kick. Reigns is reversed into the post and barricade for two though and the fight goes back outside.

Randy throws him over the announcers' table but gets caught by a Stunner over the ropes. Orton fights out of a superplex attempt but Roman muscles him up into a top rope Samoan drop for two. There's the Superman Punch but the spear is countered into a very fast powerslam for a near fall. The RK0 is countered but Reigns dives into a second attempt, only to kick out at a VERY close two. I bought that as a finish for a second there. Orton misses the Punt and walks into the spear for the pin at 16:41.

Rating: C. The match was good but not really good if that makes sense. The fact that Reigns was the obvious winner didn't help, but at least the match was good on the way to the ending. Reigns kicking out of the RK0 is a big moment for him as his rise to the top of the company continues. This was by far his biggest win to date.

Summerslam is in New Jersey next year.

We recap Lesnar vs. Cena. There isn't much to say about this one. Cena beat Lesnar at Extreme Rules 2012 but Brock came back by conquering the

Streak. Tonight is Lesnar's chance at the title.

WWE World Heavyweight Title: John Cena vs. Brock Lesnar

Cena is defending and charges right at Lesnar, only to get taken to the mat and pounded. Lesnar fights up and hits an F5 for two in less than thirty seconds. Brock: "THAT WAS YOUR CHANCE JOHN!" A wicked release German suplex sends Cena flying as this is starting like the first Cena vs. Lesnar match. Another one sends Cena across the ring and John is coughing. Brock hammers on him even more and just stares at Cena.

John drives him into the corner and hammers away but a single knee to the ribs puts him back down. Lesnar cranks on a chinlock and slams him head first into the mat as this is totally one sided. He stands on Cena's hand before throwing him around with more German suplexes. The referee is looking at Cena like he wants to stop it but Cena waves him off. Lesnar hits his fifth or so German as Cena is looking like a ragdoll. The referee keeps checking so Brock suplexes Cena again.

Brock loads up another but Cena fights out with elbows and some clotheslines, only to charge into the F5. Cena escapes and hits a quick AA for two. Brock is down though and Cena has a chance to get a breather. Cena can't follow up so Lesnar does the Undertaker sit up and smiles at Cena. He even dances a bit and tells Cena to bring it on. Cena gets up and charges at him but gets pounded on the mat UFC style. The referee tells Brock to get off and Cena can barely move. Now it's rolling Germans and Cena isn't moving.

Lesnar lets him get back to his senses before rolling even more Germans. This is probably about fifteen total now. Charles Robinson won't call it off as some idiot fans say this is boring. Brock yells at the referee but Cena trips the leg and puts on the STF. There's no strength though and Brock just unloads on him. Another F5 gives Brock the Title at 16:07.

Rating: A-. This was a squash. Lesnar demolished Cena and that's exactly how the announcers are playing it up. This is the killer that Lesnar is supposed to be and the match was total dominance. I have no idea who beats Lesnar but whoever it is will get the rub of a lifetime. Awesome match though not quite as great as the 2012 version.

Overall Rating: A. It never ceases to amaze me how WWE TV can be so horribly dull at times but their PPVs have been on fire this year. Off the top of my head there might have been one show this year that wasn't somewhere between good and great. This one is on the high end though as nothing was bad and the main event was a sight to behold. Totally awesome show with everyone looking great and setting a really good standard for the coming months. Excellent show.

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Summerslam Count-Up – Summerslam 2013 (2017 Redo): Classic Double Shot

Summerslam 2013

Date: August 18, 2013

Location: Staples Center, Los Angeles, California

Attendance: 14,166

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

This is the show that was voted on for the annual redo and I can't say I'm complaining. The show was instantly revered and it held up when I watched it the second time. We've got a double main event with Daniel Bryan challenging John Cena for the World Title and CM Punk vs. Brock Lesnar in the Best vs. the Beast. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: US Title: Dean Ambrose vs. Rob Van Dam

Dean is defending and we still have the full Shield entrance (no Reigns/Rollins here) through the crowd, which is still just cool. A shoulder drops Rob to start and Dean grabs a hammerlock as it's a slow pace early on. Rob clotheslines him into a headlock but charges into a boot to the face for two. A neckbreaker gives Dean the same and we hit the neck crank as we're somehow four minutes into this.

Ambrose gets in a running dropkick and grabs a quickly broken chinlock. Rob kicks him down to set up the Five Star but Rollins and Reigns come through the crowd, rendering him completely incapable of jumping. Big Show and Mark Henry show up as well though, putting us all even as we as we take a break.

Back with Dean grabbing a chinlock and sending Rob outside. That means a staredown on the floor as Henry and Show earn those paychecks and DVD royalties. Rob drops Dean on the barricade and hits the spinning kick to the back. A rollup gives Rob two back inside but he walks into a good looking spinebuster for two. Dean misses a top rope elbow but Rob has to go after Rollins instead of Five Starring. Rolling Thunder crushes Dean and it's Five Star time, only to have Reigns spear Rob down for the DQ at 13:38.

Rating: D+. This was a pretty sad way to start the show as you would expect a lot more from these two. Ambrose was a very natural arrogant heel but Rob was just going through the motions. It didn't help that the big plot point, Show and Henry, did NOTHING here and Reigns interfered anyway. It's never a good sign when you can completely take people out of a match and it changes nothing but that was the case here. Really disappointing outing.

And now on to the mai....IT'S LESS THAN THREE HOURS!!! Oh sweet goodness

happy days are here again!

Here's the Miz, your host for the evening and still a face here, to open things up. He explains the two main events, just in case people stumbled in here expecting a free car wash. Fandango and Summer Rae (dang) cut him off and dance around him. Miz: "Really? Really?" Anyway, welcome to Summerslam.

The opening video talks about how the stars are out tonight and has a bit of a grainy look to it for a unique visual. As you might expect, the two main events receive most of the attention. Of note: the instrumental background music would become Akira Tozawa's theme.

JoJo sings the National Anthem, which was a plot point on Total Divas because Total Divas is creatively bankrupt.

Kane vs. Bray Wyatt

This is a Ring of Fire match, meaning the ring is surrounded by fire like an inferno match but you win by regular means. It's also Wyatt's in-ring debut, which is kind of gobsmaacking. Kane unloads on him in the corner to start as the arena is much darker than usual to show off the flames. A clothesline drops Wyatt and the flames go over the top rope.

Kane gets in a suplex for the same result as Luke Harper and Erick Rowan are panicking on the floor. The fact that they're there more or less guarantees they find a way to interfere, thereby making the gimmick worthless. Wyatt hits a running splash in the corner and hammers away on the mat. A big boot to the....arm maybe drops Wyatt and there's the sidewalk slam for no cover.

Harper tries to grab a kendo stick but it gets caught on fire, sending an overzealous fireman to put it out. Rowan takes his extinguisher but can't get rid of the flames. The chokeslam plants Wyatt for no cover as Kane would rather do it again, likely so Harper and Rowan can figure out a way inside. They find a fireproof....something and get inside for the big beatdown. Rowan splashes Kane and Sister Abigail gives Bray the pin at 7:48.

Rating: F+. This was WAY worse than I remember as it was literally just killing time until the ending. The ending was as telegraphed as it could have been and there was never any drama. Instead of actually having a match, this was a mental exercise for the Family and that's REALLY not how you want to debut someone with the kind of potential Wyatt has.

Post match the Wyatts crush Kane with the steps and carry him off to film See No Evil 2.

The Kickoff Show panel wastes a minute of our time.

We see a Paul Heyman promo on the Kickoff Show, talking about how in reality, David would have thrown a stone at Goliath and then taken the beating of a lifetime. As a bonus, tonight's match is No DQ.

Damien Sandow vs. Cody Rhodes

They used to be partners until Sandow won the Money in the Bank briefcase (it's still the brown one which looks like a Hershey bar) in the surprise for the sake of swerving the fans who KNEW Cody was going to win (which he was). Before the match, Sandow says he was the leader of the Rhodes Scholars and tonight, he's sending Cody back to the Rhodes Family so they can be dumb and dumber. Cole's big plug for the entrances: watch the JBL and Cole Show to find out why Cody shaved his mustache!

They start fast with Sandow shoving him into the corner but getting backdropped. The gordbuster gives Cody two but a legsweep sends him outside. Back in and some knees to the back set up a bow and arrow hold. Sandow has to fight out of an early Cross Rhodes attempt and drops the Wind Up Elbow for two. I know Sandow has the charisma but dang it's not working in the ring.

Sandow puts on a standing leglock for a few moment before switching to just rubbing Cody's face in the mat. Cody catches him on the top though and it's something like a Muscle Buster for two. A springboard missile dropkick gets two on Sandow but he comes right back with a running flip neckbreaker for the same. Cody nails the Disaster Kick for the near fall, followed by Cross Rhodes for the pin at 6:39.

Rating: C+. They were working hard out there and had a good match but it's very clear that Sandow is in WAY over his head with the briefcase. I don't think anyone really bought him as a main eventer at this point and his pretty worthless TNA run doesn't exactly change the theory that it was the stunt double gimmick that was so good and not him.

Video on Christian, who is back for one more run at the World Title.

Smackdown World Title: Alberto Del Rio vs. Christian

Christian is challenging. Del Rio has Lillian Garcia introduce him in Spanish, which isn't quite a heel move in a major Hispanic market. Alberto grabs a headlock but gets slapped for his efforts, followed by the back of the neck snap across the top rope. That's fine with him though as he puts Christian on the top for a heck of a running enziguri to put Christian in the Tree of Woe.

Del Rio starts in on the arm by sending it into the barricade and it's off to an early armbar. A top rope double stomp to the shoulder makes it even worse, but not as bad as it would be with the top rope double stomp out of the Tree of Woe. The champ misses a charge though and crashes out to the floor to give Christian a breather. Back in and Del Rio dives into a raised boot, followed by a middle rope missile dropkick for no cover. The high crossbody gets two but Christian is holding the arm.

It's too early for the Killswitch so Christian goes up, only to get pulled off the middle rope with a Backstabber in a cool spot. A middle rope backplash doesn't work for the champ but he's still able to block the spear (which Christian should NEVER use) with a dropkick. Del Rio takes down his kneepad but gets rolled up for two more. Now the spear connects, only to have the shoulder give out. That means a cross armbreaker and Christian taps (rather surprising) at 12:30.

Rating: B. I had a lot more fun with this than I was expecting, which I think is what I said when I watched this the first time around too. Christian was a great choice for a challenger at this level as he's going to have a good match no matter what. Unfortunately this was about it for him as he would only wrestle a few more matches in 2013, then come back for another short run to start the new year, ending with a concussion

that caused his retirement. It's a shame, but probably for the best as you don't want to mess with that area.

Post match Del Rio says the Mexican people need an idol and his name is Alberto Del Rio.

Clips from Summerslam Axxess, which has never come close to matching the Wrestlemania version.

Miz (oh yeah he's here) talks to Maria Menunos, who won in a tag match at Axxess. Fandango and Summer Rae dance in again but this time Miz and Maria show them up with some dancing of their own. Did you know Maria Menunos of some entertainment show is here? If you don't, you will when this is all over that show.

Natalya vs. Brie Bella

No story of note here, but Cole introduces the two of them as "some of the stars of Total Divas". Just in case you thought Summerslam was the point here. Naturally more cast members are at ringside and sweet goodness I forgot how annoying this era was for the women. Feeling out process to start as Natalya tries to do any kind of wrestling with Brie. They finally go with the slapping until Natalya sends her outside for a baseball slide. The JBL and MICHAEL COLE chants start up and there's the JERRY chant to complete the trio.

Brie grabs a chinlock and the fans want tables. A jawbreaker gets Natalya out of trouble and she grabs the Sharpshooter until Brie slips out and sends her hard into the corner. We get the required catfight on the floor and it's time for a Zack Ryder chant. The yet to be named BRIE MODE knee seems to wake Natalya up as it's the Sharpshooter to make Brie tap at 5:18.

Rating: D-. The match could have been so much worse but the story, or lack thereof, had this thing doomed from the start. This was back at the start of the Total Divas era and fans hadn't gotten sick of the show yet. They don't get along on Total Divas for whatever nonsense reason the writers have come up with so here's a short match between them. Not horrible but sweet goodness could we please get the tiniest bit of

effort?

Earlier today, Ryback poured soup on a catering worker.

We recap CM Punk vs. Brock Lesnar and I begin to smile. This is mainly about Punk vs. Paul Heyman, who had been Punk's supporter for years. Then Punk started to change his attitude and told Heyman that he wanted to do this by himself. That wasn't cool with Heyman, who cost him the Money in the Bank ladder match. Punk went after Heyman so Brock Lesnar returned to be Heyman's muscle. The match was set with the great tagline "The Best vs. The Beast." Do you need much more than that?

CM Punk vs. Brock Lesnar

No DQ. I know I say this a lot but Brock Lesnar coming down the aisle is one of the scariest sights in wrestling. Punk charges right at him and gets driven into the corner for some shoulders. A hard whip sends Punk into a different corner as the fans are trying to stay behind him. Punk's strikes have almost no effect (Punk not being able to strike with an MMA guy? I'm sure that won't be an even bigger joke three years later.) and Brock easily stomps him down in the corner.

Punk gets in a kick to the jaw and a pair of running knees knock Lesnar outside for a suicide dive. That's exactly the kind of hope spot that the fans needed to get back into this but Lesnar cuts them off by slamming the steps, which are in Punk's hands, straight into Punk's face. Punk posts him though and scores with the clothesline off the barricade, only to make the mistake of going after Heyman.

One heck of a toss sends Punk over the announcers' table as there's not much of a way around that kind of power. That's not good enough though as Brock throws him over the other table, just so it won't feel left out. Lesnar jumps into a stomp onto a piece of the table onto Punk before sending him flying off a belly to belly (leaving a big sweat stain on the floor).

Back in and Lesnar fires off more shoulders to the ribs and we hit the bearhug. An elbow to the nose staggers Brock for a bit but he knees Punk hard in the ribs to put him down again. It's back to the bearhug as

they're doing a good job with cutting off the hope spots. Punk kicks away but dives right into a fall away slam to cut him off again. A chinlock lasts for a little while until Punk fights up and bites the ear to escape.

Punk FINALLY drops him with a series of kicks and the running knee in the corner makes it even worse. Lesnar catches a running knee but Punk escapes and high kicks him down, setting up the Macho Elbow (looked awful, almost more like a sideways splash) for a pretty hot two. Neither finisher can connect so Punk kicks him in the head again and Brock goes down from a single shot. You don't see that every day.

The GTS is countered into the Kimura but that's reversed into a cross armbreaker and then a triangle choke. A powerbomb doesn't break the hold so Brock lifts him up again, shrugs off the elbows to the head and PLANTS Punk with a running powerbomb. The fans are INSANE for Punk but Brock cuts them off with the most vicious Three Amigos you'll ever see. Brock very slowly heads outside to grab a chair so Punk dives onto him, only to land on the chair, which lands on Lesnar to put both of them down.

It's Punk up first with the chair though and he wears Brock out....until Lesnar just takes it away from him. That's fine with Punk as a low blow gets him out of trouble (Punk: "WHERE'S YOUR CUP NOW UFC BOY???") and freaks Heyman out all over again. Punk takes the chair up top and drops something like a Macho Elbow for two more. A few more chair shots have Lesnar in trouble until Heyman takes it away.

Punk grabs Heyman's tie to block the F5 (smart) and it's the GTS but Heyman makes the save for the false finish of the year. Reality sets in on Heyman (as only it can) and he realizes there's no Brock to save him. Punk gives chase but runs into the F5, which he counters into a tornado DDT for two more. The Anaconda Vice goes on but Punk lets it go to cut Heyman off. A big right hand drops Paul, only to have Lesnar BLAST Punk with the chair. The F5 onto the chair finally ends Punk at 25:18.

Rating: A+. I gave this Match of the Year and I'm certainly not changing that now. This was a total war with Punk shocking the heck out of me by taking Lesnar to the limit. If nothing else, this is the textbook example

of how to book Lesnar vs. a smaller guy. You even have Punk saving some face by having Heyman interfere so often. It's an outstanding match and easily holds up four years later.

As I mentioned a few times, Punk was giving the fans just enough hope spots to keep things going. No one was going to buy Punk hanging in a fist fight with him (nor should they have bought it with HHH but that's a long issue for another time) but they could buy him getting in a few shots here and there and giving it all he had. That's wrestling storytelling in a nutshell and it was as entertaining as it could have been. If not for Punk vs. Cena in 2011, this would be Punk's WWE masterpiece.

Punk pulls himself up and gets the hero's ovation. It's a shame that he would be gone in four months.

A fan agreed to trade tickets to a house show for three tickets to Summerslam and Summerslam Axxess if he took a splash from Mark Henry. Oh and he gets to sit ringside (meaning in front of the announcers' tables for the next match). Well gee I wonder if that's a hard decision.

Big E. Langston/AJ Lee vs. Dolph Ziggler/Kaitlyn

Former partners/couple who split up and absolutely no one is interested here. The guys start things off and it's an early belly to belly to drop Ziggler. We hit an early abdominal stretch with a stomach claw thrown in as a bonus. Ziggler comes back with a dropkick and the too early to be a hot tag brings in the women. AJ spin kicks Kaitlyn down for two and it's off to a cravate.

Back to back neckbreakers give AJ...an opportunity to dance around the ring, allowing Kaitlyn to kick her away. The hot tag brings in Dolph for another dropkick and his jumping elbows. Big E. is right back up with a powerbomb backbreaker for two with Kaitlyn making a save. A charge hits post though and Kaitlyn spears AJ in half on the floor. The Big Ending is countered and the Zig Zag gives Dolph the pin at 6:42.

Rating: D+. They didn't have time to do much here and were in the death spot, which doesn't work very well when they're doing a TV match. It's

not terrible or anything and Kaitlyn spearing AJ is always entertaining. They were still getting ready to launch the Women's Revolution down in NXT so this was about as good as you were going to get from the women at this point. Big E. vs. Ziggler kept going for a good while but never went anywhere, which is why New Day was the best thing that could have happened to Langston.

Fandango interrupts Miz again and finally gets punched out.

The Kickoff Show panel goes over their main event picks and talk about some of the show.

We recap John Cena vs. Daniel Bryan. Daniel had been on the roll of a lifetime and Cena was allowed to pick his challenger for Summerslam. Cena selected Daniel Bryan but Vince McMahon was suddenly against Bryan as the top star. It was clearly Bryan vs. the establishment and as a bonus, HHH will be guest referee for the title match. I'm sure nothing will come of it.

Bryan vs. Cena was built up as a big fight as well with Bryan calling Cena a phony who wasn't here for the wrestling. Cena said he's had his share of great matches but he's had them while holding the WWE World Title. Bryan is the best competition around but the best isn't going to be good enough.

Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Daniel Bryan

Bryan is challenging, Cena has a baseball sized amount of fluid in his elbow which is going to force him to leave almost immediately after this show, and HHH is guest referee. Cena headlocks him to the mat to start but Bryan armdrags him off. The test of strength drives Bryan down again but Cena can't break his bridge in an impressive (and surprising) power display. The threat of a YES Lock sends Cena bailing out to the floor and we take a breather.

Back in and Bryan easily takes him down for a surfboard, only to have Cena kick him away without much effort. Cena kicks him into the steps and suplexes him off the steps for good measure. If quiets the YOU CAN'T WRESTLE chants for a few seconds but they're quickly replaced by the YOU

STILL SUCK chants. At least they're consistent in their hatred. Back in and Cena powers him away again before countering a hurricanrana attempt with a sitout powerbomb.

We hit the chinlock for a bit until Cena powers up and fires off some kicks in the corner. Cena fights up again and tries the finishing sequence, only to have the Shuffle broken up with a kick to the face. The second attempt works a bit better though and is good for two but Bryan kicks him in the eye again. Cena is starting to sport a black eye but Bryan wisely starts going after the arm. A quick STF attempt is countered into an STF from Bryan but Cena makes the ropes.

The AA is countered straight into the YES Lock and Cena is in trouble. He powers out again so Bryan slaps on a guillotine as Cena just can't shake him off for good. The hold is finally broken and Bryan is a bit surprised, allowing Cena to grab a quick AA for two. Cena heads up but Bryan is right there again with a superplex. Bryan hangs on and pulls himself back up for the Swan Dive and a very near fall.

The suicide dive is blocked with a hard forearm and now the top rope Fameasser is good for two. With a one and one record up top, Cena tries it again, this time loading Bryan up for a super AA. Bryan tries a super hurricanrana to counter but Cena counters into what looked like an attempt at a Styles Clash, only to drop Bryan SQUARE ON HIS HEAD with a scary sounding thud.

The STF goes on but breaks down a bit with Cena winding up on his side, allowing Bryan to flip over into the YES Lock. Cena makes the rope again so Bryan goes back to the strikes with the running corner dropkicks. That's fine with Cena, who turns Bryan inside out with the hard clothesline. NOW the fans are into both guys and there's no reason for them to not be.

They slug it out until a double clothesline puts both guys down for another breather. Cena slaps Bryan hard in the face so Bryan does the same right back but Cena powers him up for the AA. That's countered into a hard DDT though and Cena is in trouble again. One heck of a kick to the head drops Cena and Bryan debuts the running knee for the pin and the

title in a shocking finish at 26:55.

Rating: A+. Yeah this worked too. The fact that Bryan pinned him clean was the completely correct call as the win is what matters, not the title itself. Bryan looks like the biggest star in the world now and this is confirmation that WWE sees him as a top name. The fact that it was an outstanding match helps things even better, but that ending is still perfect. Bryan beat Cena down and then hit a finisher to pin him. What else could he possibly ask for? Well, save for what came at Wrestlemania of course but sweet goodness this was outstanding stuff.

Cena stares Bryan down but shakes his hand. Pyro and confetti go off....and here's Mr. Money in the Bank Randy Orton. Randy holds up the case at ringside so Bryan says bring it. Orton turns around and walks away, leaving HHH (who called the match right down the line and was a complete non-factor) to turn on Bryan and lay him out with the Pedigree.

Raw World Title: Randy Orton vs. Daniel Bryan

Faster than I can type Orton is challenging (ok not really), he wins the title at 8 seconds.

The crowd is eerily quiet as HHH hands Orton the title to end the show.

Overall Rating: A-. Everything that needed to be great was WAY beyond great and everything else was as forgettable (and thankfully short) as it needed to be. The whole thing that matters here are two matches combining for over fifty minutes (remember that it's less than three hours long) and they're both instant Match of the Year candidates. This show is an absolute classic and well worth checking out for the last great pre-Network shows.

Ratings Comparison

Rob Van Dam vs. Dean Ambrose

Original: B-

2014 Redo: B-

2017 Redo: D+

Bray Wyatt vs. Kane

Original: D+

2014 Redo: D

2017 Redo: F+

Damien Sandow vs. Cody Rhodes

Original: C

2014 Redo: D+

2017 Redo: C+

Alberto Del Rio vs. Christian

Original: B+

2014 Redo: B

2017 Redo: B

Brie Bella vs. Natalya

Original: F

2014 Redo: D-

2017 Redo: D-

Brock Lesnar vs. CM Punk

Original: A+

2014 Redo: A+

2017 Redo: A+

Big E. Langston/AJ Lee vs. Dolph Ziggler/AJ Lee

Original: C-

2014 Redo: D+

2017 Redo: D+

Daniel Bryan vs. John Cena

Original: A+

2014 Redo: A+

2017 Redo: A+

Randy Orton vs. Daniel Bryan

Original: N/A

2014 Redo: N/A

2017 Redo: N/A

Overall Rating

Original: A-

2014 Redo: A

2017 Redo: A-

What is up with that opener? I really liked it that much earlier on?

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/08/18/summerslam-2013-a-star-is-born/>

And the 2014 Redo:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2014/08/16/summerslam-count-up-2013-2014-re-do-what-a-difference-a-year-makes/>

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

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Summerslam Count-Up – Summerslam 2013 (2014 Redo): Here Begins Wrestlemania

Summerslam 2013

Date: August 18, 2013

Location: Staples Center, Los Angeles, California

Attendance: 14,500

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

This show was almost universally the Show of the Year for 2013 and I've been really interested in seeing how it holds up. There's a double main event with Cena vs. Bryan for the World Title and Lesnar vs. Punk in Punk's attempt to get revenge on Lesnar's manager Paul Heyman for screwing him over back in July. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: US Title: Rob Van Dam vs. Dean Ambrose

Dean is making a rare defense here after Rob won a battle royal or something. Feeling out process to start with Dean saying bring it on. They trade hammerlocks until Rob nails a running shoulder and a kick to

the jaw. Rob hammers away in the corner but runs into a boot to give Dean control. A neckbreaker gives Ambrose a two count and the fans are split on who they like best.

Dean hits the dropkick against the ropes and puts on a chinlock. Thankfully it doesn't last long though and Rob comes back with a quick moonsault, only to walk into a clothesline for two. The bulldog driver is broken up by some more kicks to the face but Rollins and Reigns come out to break up the Five Star. This brings out Mark Henry and Big Show to even things up as we take a break.

Back with Dean dropping an elbow for two and putting on a cross face chicken wing of all things. Rob is sent outside and the four seconds have a standoff. Dean goes out to get Rob and winds up getting caught by the spinning kick to the back for two. A spinning legdrop gets the same for Van Dam but he walks into a spinebuster. Dean misses a middle rope elbow but a Shield distraction lets him get two off a rollup. Rolling Thunder sets up the Five Star but Reigns spears Van Dam for the DQ.

Rating: B-. Good match here but the ending didn't work. What was the point of having Big Show and Henry out there if they're just going to have Reigns come in with no resistance for a DQ? It really is amazing how far Van Dam has fallen in the last year as I wouldn't expect him to have this kind of a match today if his life depended on it.

Miz, the host of the show, welcomes us to the evening and runs down the big matches. He would be kind of perfect for this role today too. Fandango and Summer Rae cut him off...and that's it.

The opening video focuses on how awesome Los Angeles is as well as the double main events. The overblown voiceover really works.

Jojo from Total Divas sings the National Anthem.

Bray Wyatt vs. Kane

This is a Ring of Fire match, meaning an Inferno match but you win by pin or submission. It's also Bray's in ring debut. Kane hammers away in the corner to start and we get the old school idea of the flames going up

whenever anyone hits the mat. Harper and Rowan keep getting closer to the ring but have to back away from the flames. Bray comes back with headbutts but can't get Kane up for a suplex.

Kane gets sent into the corner for a running splash followed by the cross body to put him down. A bunch of right hands have Kane in more trouble but he comes back with a running clothesline in the corner. There's the side slam to send the flames up even more, preventing the Family from sending Bray a kendo stick. Rowan tries a fire extinguisher but the flames don't go out. Kane hits a pair of chokeslams and calls for a tombstone, only to have Rowan and Harper cover the flames and come to beat Kane down. The yet to be named Sister Abigail gives Bray the pin at 7:45.

Rating: D. This wasn't so much bad as much as it was really stupid. Bray looks like a joke in his first match (though he would have FAR better performances in the future) and the flames are more of an annoyance than the focus of the match. The Family coming in didn't work and makes the whole thing look ridiculous.

Post match Bray sits in his chair while the Family crushes Kane's head with the steps. They carry Kane away which never went anywhere.

The expert panel (Booker T., Shawn Michaels and Vickie Guerrero) chat about what we just saw and make some main event predictions.

Earlier tonight Paul Heyman compared Punk vs. Lesnar to David vs. Goliath. He sees the battles ending a bit differently. Tonight's match is now no DQ.

Damien Sandow vs. Cody Rhodes

Sandow screwed over his friend Cody to become Mr. Money in the Bank and Rhodes is ticked off. On the way to the ring, Damien talks about famous teams and says there has always been a leader and a sidekick. Cody has recently shaved off his mustache and Cole tells us we can find out why he has done so on Friday on Youtube. Seriously.

Sandow charges at him to start and hammers away in the corner but Cody

comes back with a backdrop to take over. The release gordbuster gets two for Cody but Damien hammers away on him in the corner and cranks on the arms. The Wind-Up Elbow gets two and we hit an old school Edgecator (kneeling Sharpshooter) to Cody.

That goes nowhere either as Rhodes fights up and hits a MuscleBuster of all things for two. A springboard missile dropkick sets up the Disaster Kick but Sandow comes back with a swinging neckbreaker. Cody nails a second attempt at the Disaster Kick for two but Cody misses a charge into the post. Again it doesn't seem to matter as Cross Rhodes gets the pin on Sandow at 6:40.

Rating: D+. This could have been on any given Smackdown and really doesn't mean anything. The idea was for Cody to eventually take the briefcase from Sandow but they dropped the whole idea and hooked Cody up with Goldust, which wound up being better for everyone involved. It didn't last long but at least it was an idea. Sandow has fallen through the floor in a year and Cody is a completely different character.

Video on Christian's career.

World Heavyweight Title: Alberto Del Rio vs. Christian

Another match where both guys have completely changed course in a year. Christian is challenging after winning a triple threat a few weeks back. We're ready to go after some big match intros and some gawking at Lillian in a gray dress. They lock up and head into the corner to start with the champion grabbing a headlock. Del Rio gets him to chase him around the ring but gets his throat snapped across the top rope.

Alberto breaks up a top rope hurricanrana and ties Christian in the Tree of Woe for some stomping. Back to the floor with Christian being sent into the barricade to start the arm work. A release flapjack and a kick to the head allows Del Rio to wrap the arm around the ropes. Christian sends him back outside and hits a big plancha to take the champion down, followed by a missile dropkick back inside.

The Canadian hammers away in the corner, ducks the running enziguri, and gets two off a top rope cross body. The Killswitch is countered into a

Backstabber for two as Alberto is starting to get frustrated. There's a jumping back elbow to the jaw from Christian but Del Rio counters a sunset flip out of the corner with a right hand.

Instead a top rope hurricanrana gets two for Christian and Del Rio is in trouble. It's not enough trouble for him to get speared though as Del Rio dropkicks him in the face for a sweet counter. The low superkick gets two more for Alberto. He tries it again but gets rolled up for two. Christian finally hits the spear but injures his bad shoulder, setting up the cross armbreaker to retain Del Rio's title at 12:28.

Rating: B. Good match here with both guys going back and forth until the logical and thought out ending. I love it when you have an old injury coming back from earlier in the match to tie into the ending, even though it's not something you see often enough. It's also nice to see a high level guy tapping out to a heel submission, which you see even less often.

Del Rio says he's the Latino representative.

WWE loves the National Guard.

Video on Axxess from earlier today. Maria Menunos had a match and talks to Miz about how awesome that was. Fandango and Summer Rae interrupt with some more dancing, triggering a dance from Maria and Miz.

Natalya vs. Brie Bella

This is the Total Divas match. You can add Natalya to the list of people who have fallen through the floor in a year. She has the Funkadactyls with her while Brie has Nikki and Eva Marie. I'm not sure who has the better backup here. Feeling out process to start with both girls doing their best choreographed spots. Brie slaps her in the face but has to head to the ropes to avoid a Sharpshooter attempt.

Natalya is sent to the floor and caught with a baseball slide to the back as a JBL chant starts up. Now it's a Michael Cole chant, followed by the required Jerry version. Brie drops a leg and cranks on a chinlock as the fans want tables. Natalya fights up and puts on a quick Sharpshooter but

Brie sends her into the corner. The other Divas get into it on the floor and we hit another chinlock from Brie. Back up and a sunset flip is countered into a Sharpshooter to make Brie tap at 4:19.

Rating: D-. Well that happened. It doesn't hold up, the fans don't care, and the whole thing is a waste of time. The girls didn't even look all that great here as most of their outfits looked like they belonged in the 1950s. The fact that Total Divas didn't get the Divas Title off of AJ continues to astound me.

Ryback harassed a catering guy earlier in the day.

We recap Lesnar vs. Punk. The idea is simple: both guys are Paul Heyman Guys, but then Punk started listening to the fans and asked Heyman to stop coming out for his matches. Heyman turned on him and cost Punk Money in the Bank, so Punk swore revenge. Brock Lesnar returned and laid out Punk, with Heyman eventually revealing that he asked Brock to come back and destroy Punk, despite swearing he didn't.

Punk is out for revenge but has to go through Lesnar to get there. The title for the match was perfect: The Best vs. The Beast. I love the story behind this: yeah it's about revenge, but it won't be settled in a debate or by lawyers or something stupid like that. Instead, it's going to be scheduled in a professional wrestling match, like every feud should be.

Brock Lesnar vs. CM Punk

No DQ. Punk charges right at him but gets driven into the corner. Forearms to Brock's head have no effect and he drives shoulders into the ribs. Punk tries some knees to the ribs but Brock literally tosses him across the ring. Brock stomps him down in the corner but Punk comes back with a hard knee to the jaw and a second one to send him out to the floor. A big suicide dive has the Beast down and Heyman is starting to freak out.

Punk gets some steps but Brock just rams them back into his face to take over again. He throws Punk onto his shoulder but gets posted instead, allowing Punk to dive off the apron to drop Brock again. A clothesline off the announcers' table nails Lesnar but Punk makes the mistake of

going after Heyman, allowing Brock to blindside him. Brock picks him up again and LAUNCHES him over the announcers' table. Then he throws him over the other table and stomps on the top of the table on top of Punk.

Back in and Punk goes after the legs but Brock just levels him with a clothesline. We hit the bearhug until Punk scores with forearms, only to take a hard knee to the ribs. It's almost total dominance by Brock so far. Back to the bearhug but Punk elbows out of it again. Some kicks to the chest have Brock in trouble but he counters a high cross body into a fall away slam.

We hit the chinlock but Punk bites his ear to escape. More kicks have Brock in trouble and a top rope knee sends him sprawling across the ring. There's a pair of running knees in the corner but Brock counters the third one into the F5. Punk escapes again and nails a high kick followed by the Macho Elbow (more like a splash) for a VERY close two. The fans are totally into this.

The GTS is countered into another F5 attempt but Punk escapes and nails another high kick. He tries the GTS again but gets caught in the Kimura. Somehow he counters that into a cross armbreaker but Brock rolls over into a choke. Punk counters THAT into a triangle choke, only to have Brock lift him for a powerbomb. That doesn't break the hold either and it's back to the triangle, but Brock lifts him into another powerbomb, this time with a running start. AMAZING sequence there and the fans give it the THIS IS AWESOME chant that it deserves.

Brock busts out Three Amigos of all things for two. Punk is half dead in the ring so Brock heads outside and gets a chair. He takes too long though and Punk dives onto the chair, driving it into Lesnar in a huge crash. Now it's Punk wearing out Brock with the chair as they head back inside. Brock takes the chair away, only to get hit low before he can destroy Punk. Punk nails the Cactus Jack chair drop from the top for two as Heyman is pacing back and forth.

Punk just starts beating Brock with the chair but Heyman gets on the apron for a distraction. Lesnar lifts him for the F5 but Punk grabs Heyman for the block. He slips off Lesnar's back and hits the GTS for a

white hot near fall with Heyman making the save. After a quick chase, Punk charges into the F5 but counters AGAIN into a DDT for another two.

There's the Anaconda Vice and Lesnar is in trouble, drawing Heyman in with the chair....but Punk gets up and steps on it. There's a right hand for Heyman and a Vice of his own, but Punk is wide open for a chair shot from Lesnar. A bunch more chair shots sets up an F5 on the chair to give Brock the pin on Punk's dead body at 29:07.

Rating: A+. I said this was Match of the Year last year and a second viewing affirms that view. This was AMAZING with some great David vs. Goliath stuff, a white hot counter sequence, and then two guys just beating the tar out of each other for ten minutes to end the match. Heyman making the save made sense, but it makes Punk look like the superhero that everyone thought he was. Totally awesome match here and Lesnar looks like the monster that he's supposed to.

Oh and one more thing: SCREW YOU HHH FOR WASTING BROCK FOR A YEAR FOR YOUR STUPID EGO. Seriously, a year of this lost for that "trilogy" nonsense with HHH winning the big match on the biggest stage before letting Brock get his win back in a totally forgotten cage match. Lucky us.

Punk gets the well deserved standing ovation.

A fan gets splashed by Mark Henry for Summerslam tickets. He gets to sit in front of the announcers' table for the next match.

Dolph Ziggler/Kaitlyn vs. Big E. Langston/AJ Lee

Two feuds combined into one. The guys start with Ziggler nailing a fast dropkick for two on Big E. Langston comes right back with a belly to belly suplex and a spinning Warrior Splash for two of his own before we hit the abdominal stretch. Dolph quickly escapes and scores with another dropkick before it's off to the girls. Kaitlyn throws her around but gets caught by a big kick to the face.

A back elbow gets two for Lee and she hooks a sleeper. AJ shouts a lot but gets caught with a shoulder block. Back to the guys and there are the

ten elbow drops from Dolph. The Fameasser misses and Big E. hooks a tilt-a-while backbreaker for two. AJ takes out Kaitlyn with a Shining Wizard but Big E. hits the post. Kaitlyn spears AJ in half (I miss her selling the heck out of that move) as Big E. gets back up and runs over Dolph. The Big Ending doesn't work though and the Zig Zag gives Dolph the pin at 5:46.

Rating: D+. I feel sorry for this match as it was a glorified TV match that had to go after a thirty minute masterpiece. These four feuded for a long time and it was getting boring by this time. AJ would hold the Divas Title for a ridiculous eight more months and Kaitlyn doesn't even have a job anymore. Again, it's amazing how much a year has changed.

Miz gets cut off by Fandango and Summer again, finally causing Miz to knock him out.

The expert panel makes their World Title match picks.

We recap Cena vs. Bryan. The idea here is simple: Bryan had been on a roll and Cena was allowed to pick his opponent for Summerslam. He summed it up in four words: "I select Daniel Bryan." This was the start of Bryan being a B+ player as authority (not The Authority) figures started saying Bryan was just too small to be World Champion. HHH and Vince tried to turn him corporate but Bryan couldn't bring himself to do it because it wasn't who he was. The only person that seems to be supporting him is HHH, who is guest referee tonight.

At the same time they actually made it somewhat personal between Cena and Bryan as Daniel called Cena out for being a parody of a wrestler. Cena got very serious and said that he was a wrestler even if he wore bright t-shirts. He chose Bryan because he's the best competition in the company right now and has earned the spot. Cena also has fluid the size of a baseball in his elbow at the moment and is going to be taking time off after the match.

WWE Title: Daniel Bryan vs. John Cena

Cena is defending and HHH is guest referee. Daniel wisely goes after the bad arm to start but gets taken down with a headlock. Back up and Cena

isn't sure what to make of Bryan and his technical abilities. John easily wins a test of strength but Bryan bridges off the mat. Cena jumps down on him but can't break the bridge in a nice display of strength by the bearded one. A YES Lock attempt sends Cena out to the floor for a breather.

Back in and Cena uses the bad arm for a headlock before they hit the mat for the old Flair bridge up into a backslide from Bryan for two. It's Bryan in control now but Cena blocks the surfboard with pure power. Daniel is sent to the apron and knocked into the announcers' table with a hard shoulder. Cena is wrestling as the heel here by default as the power guy.

Bryan pops up and whips Cena into the steps but Cena sends him in as well. Fans to Cena: "YOU STILL SUCK!" Back in and Cena hammers away to get the upper hand but lets Bryan get up. A sitout powerbomb gets two for the champion and we hit the chinlock. Bryan is quickly back up with right hands as Jerry reminds us that HHH is guest referee. He hasn't meant anything yet.

Bryan backflips over Cena out of the corner and nails the running clothesline. Here come the YES Kicks but the big one misses, allowing Cena to initiate his finishing sequence. The Shuffle gets two and Bryan nails the big kick to the head for the same. Bryan finally starts going after the arm by snapping it over his own shoulder and firing off kicks to the elbow. Cena tries a quick STF but Bryan mule kicks his way out. Now it's Bryan putting Cena in the STF but he can't crank on it as well.

Cena powers up but gets caught in Rolling Germans. Cena powers out of the third suplex and tries the AA, only to be reversed into the YES Lock. Bryan can't quite get it on and Cena gets his head out of the grip to escape. That's fine with Daniel who slaps on the guillotine choke. Again I had to hear Cole say HHH's name to remember that he was the referee. Cena powers up again and drives Bryan into the buckle a few times before finally grabbing a rope for the break.

An AA connects out of nowhere for two and Cena is getting frustrated. He goes up top but Bryan breaks up the top rope Fameasser. A running

dropkick has Cena reeling and Bryan superplexes him down, only to hook his feet on the ropes to stay up top. That's kind of brilliant actually. The Swan Dive connects for two and Cena rolls outside. The FLYING GOAT is countered by a forearm to the face and the top rope Fameasser gets John another two count.

Cena goes up again but gets caught, only to try to slam Daniel down. Instead we get a TERRIFYING semi-botch as Cena almost piledrives him off the top. Thankfully Bryan's neck is in one piece (for now) as Cena puts him in the STF. He pulls back too far though and Bryan slips out to apply the YES Lock. Cena is right next to the ropes for the break though and both guys are exhausted.

It's Bryan up first with the running dropkicks but he tries one too many, allowing Cena to take his head off with a running clothesline. They slug it out again until both guys try flying shoulders and knock each other out again. Back up and they slap it out as the fans are even more into it now. Cena catches him charging and plants Bryan with a spinebuster. Allegedly Bryan countered with a DDT but it didn't come off that well on camera.

It's Daniel to his feet first and going up top, only to have Cena counter his high cross body into an AA. Daniel counters that into the small package for two, followed by a BIG kick to the head. He doesn't cover, but instead debuts the running knee to the chest for the 100% clean pin over Cena (I believe the first since Rock at Wrestlemania) for the pin and the title at 31:07.

Rating: A+. Yep this worked too. This is a totally different style of main event match and it more than holds up a year later. There was a solid story in there of Bryan being as technical as he could be and Cena just muscling his way through it, only to have Bryan knee his head off for the pin. Excellent match, but somehow it's the second best of the night and of the year.

Post match Cena is upset but hands Bryan the title and raises his hand with no violence.

Bryan celebrates for about three minutes....and here's Mr. Money in the

Bank Randy Orton. Bryan is ready for him, but not ready for HHH to spin him around for a Pedigree.

WWE Title: Randy Orton vs. Daniel Bryan

Orton is champion in 8 seconds.

The new heel forces pose to end the show.

Overall Rating: A. This won Show of the Year and it's easy to see why. The two main events are more than enough to make this awesome but you also have good stuff like Del Rio vs. Christian. Nothing was truly horrible here (the Divas match was just over four minutes so how much can it really hurt?) and two instant classics make this more than great and one of the best shows WWE ever put on.

Ratings Comparison

Rob Van Dam vs. Dean Ambrose

Original:

Redo: B-

Bray Wyatt vs. Kane

Original: D+

Redo: D

Damien Sandow vs. Cody Rhodes

Original: C

Redo: D+

Alberto Del Rio vs. Christian

Original: B+

Redo: B

Brie Bella vs. Natalya

Original: F

Redo: D-

Brock Lesnar vs. CM Punk

Original: A+

Redo: A+

Big E. Langston/AJ Lee vs. Kaitlyn/Dolph Ziggler

Original: C-

Redo: D+

Daniel Bryan vs. John Cena

Original: A+

Redo: A+

Overall Rating:

Original: A-

Redo: A

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/08/18/summerslam-2013-a-star-is-born/>

**Summerslam Count-Up –
Summerslam 2013 (Original):**

Another Classic

Summerslam 2013

Date: August 18, 2013

Location: Staples Center, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

We're finally at Summerslam and the show looks great. It's a two match show but those two matches have the potential to be masterpieces. Tonight's main events are John Cena defending the Raw Title against Daniel Bryan and the Best vs. the Beast in CM Punk vs. Brock Lesnar. The rest of the card is hit or miss but Bray Wyatt vs. Kane in a Ring of Fire match has potential. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: US Title: Dean Ambrose vs. Rob Van Dam

Dean is defending and Rob won the title shot in a battle royal on Raw. Feeling out process to start with Dean running Rob down. Ambrose does the finger point while shouting US Champion in a cute bit before taking Rob down with a hammerlock. Back up and Rob hits a quick spin kick to put Dean down and there's the real finger point. Ambrose comes back with chops and punches in the corner as the slow start continues. Dean cranks on the neck and the fans are split down the middle.

A running dropkick against the ropes gets two on Van Dam and it's off to the chinlock. They get back up and Dean avoids a charge in the corner but Rob comes back with a spinning cross body out of the corner for two. A kick look to set up the Five Star but here are Rollins and Reigns for a distraction but not a DQ. This brings out Big Show and Henry for backup as we take a break.

Back with Ambrose still in control with shots to the chest and a cross face chicken wing. An ECW chant starts up as Ambrose transitions into a sleeper. Rob is sent to the floor but the giants block Shield from interfering. Dean goes out to stare as well but gets kicked down by Van Dam, allowing Rob to put him on the barricade for the spin kick from the apron.

Back in and Rob hits a top rope front flip attack for a close two. Reigns trips Rob to break up Rolling Thunder but Rob still gets two off a cradle. A spinebuster gets two for Dean but a top rope backsplash misses. Rob loads up the Five Star but has to jump at Rollins instead. Dean get a very close two off a rollup but Rob comes back with a kick to the face. Now Rolling Thunder connects and there's the Five Star but Reigns comes in for the DQ at 14:08. So what did Show and Henry do here exactly?

Rating: B-. This was getting very good until the ending. Again what was the point in Henry and Big Show being out there if they were just going to stand around and do nothing? Dean got to hang in there against Rob but it doesn't look as good without the win. Good opener though and the fans were WAY into it.

The opening video focuses on the main events and not much more.

JoJo from Total Divas sings the national anthem. She's not bad.

Kane vs. Bray Wyatt

Wyatt and his Family debuted a few weeks ago and attacked Kane. Tonight the ring is surrounded by fire to prevent interference but you win by pin/submission. This is Bray's in ring debut. Kane pounds him into the corner to start and clotheslines him down, sending the flames shooting into the air. The Family tries to get closer to the ring and there goes the fire again. Nice touch. Bray charges right at Kane and pounds away but can't hit a suplex.

Kane suplexes him down instead, sending the fire up again. Bray avoids the low dropkick but misses a charge, sending himself into the ropes and near the flames. Wyatt crushes him in the corner with a splash and mostly misses a cross body. They're lucky that the flames are covering up a lot of these misses. Bray slugs his way out of a chokeslam but Kane "hits" a big boot. Are the flames really messing them up that badly? That's like three moves that have mostly missed. Kane side slams him down for no cover but Bray gets in a shot to take Kane down.

Wyatt asks for a weapon but as Harper loads up a kendo stick the flames go up, catching the stick on fire. Firemen put it out so Rowan steals the

extinguisher, but it has no effect. There's the chokeslam to Wyatt but Kane hits a second one for revenge. He calls for the tombstone but the Family puts a blanket over the flames, allowing the monsters to come in and beat Kane down. There's no DQ though so this is all legal. Kane is destroyed and Sister Abigail is good for the pin at 7:49.

Rating: D+. This was disappointing. The visuals were cool but just putting a blanket over the flames was a pretty lame way to have the monsters get inside. I was expecting something a bit more supernatural instead of fire safety tips with the Wyatt Family. Also what was up with those botches?

Post match Bray sits in his chair with his hat on as the Family lays Kane's head on the steps. They crush his head with the top part as Bray lights the lantern to a HUGE pop. The Wyatts take Kane with them.

The expert panel of Booker T, Shawn Michaels and Vickie Guerrero talk about the match a bit.

We get part of a Heyman promo from the pre show as the fire stuff is removed. Punk vs. Lesnar is now No DQ.

Damien Sandow vs. Cody Rhodes

They used to be partners but Sandow cheated Cody out of the MITB case last month, causing Cody to throw the case in the Gulf of Mexico. Sandow talks about great literary pairs throughout history and says there was always a leader and a follower. Cody was the sidekick of the Rhodes Scholars and tonight he's being sent back to the carnival his family came from. Cody has shaved his mustache and you can find out why on Friday on the Youtube channel. SERIOUSLY? They think people are going to check that out?

They start fast with Cody in control until Sandow takes him out to the floor. Cody is rammed back first into the apron and Sandow fires off forearms to the spine. A quick suplex gets two and it's off to a knee in Cody's back. Cross Rhodes is quickly countered but the legsweep and Wind-Up elbow get two for Sandow. Damien busts out Edge's old Edgecator submission (it's like a Sharpshooter but Damien leans forward on the legs

instead of turning over and pulling) but it's quickly broken up.

Back up and Cody catches him on the top rope in a Muscle Buster of all things for two. Damien backdrops him to the apron but Cody comes back in with a nice springboard missile dropkick. The Disaster Kick misses and Sandow hits his flip neckbreaker for two. Cody falls down on Sandow's sunset flip for two before hitting the Disaster Kick for another near fall. Damien avoids a charge into the post for two more but Cody grabs Cross Rhodes out of nowhere for the pin at 6:37.

Rating: C. This was better than I was expecting and I like that they're pushing Cody stronger. He had so much potential when he was Intercontinental Champion but it just fell apart since then. At the same time though, Sandow continues his downward spiral into nothingness, meaning he'll be world champion in a few months more than likely. Maybe we'll get a rematch for the case next month.

Video recap of Christian's career which is pretty cool stuff.

Smackdown World Title: Christian vs. Alberto Del Rio

Christian won a three way to get the shot and has pinned Del Rio twice in the last few weeks. Alberto makes Lillian do his intro in Spanish in a nice touch. Christian quickly sends Del Rio out to the floor but misses a baseball slide. Back in and Del Rio escapes a top rope rana attempt and hits an enziguri to send Christian into the Tree of Woe. Alberto fires off kicks to the chest and a running one somewhere near the shoulder.

Del Rio sends the shoulder into the barricade, meaning he has his psychology boots on tonight. Alberto sends Christian crashing down to the mat and hits a dropkick to the shoulder. King: "That'll shake your maracas." A top rope stomp to the shoulder gets two but Christian avoids a running crotch attack in the ropes to send the champion to the floor. Christian hits a BIG dive off the top to take Del Rio down again and Christian pounds away back inside.

Del Rio misses a top rope enziguri and takes a high cross body for two. Alberto begs for a breather but suckers Christian in for a headbutt to the ribs. Christian flips out of a belly to back but can't hit the

Killswitch. The sunset flip out of the corner is countered into the Backstabber (the knees clearly slid off to the side and never hit the back) for two. A rollup gets two for Christian but he gets caught by the corner enziguri for another near fall. This is MUCH better than I was expecting coming in.

The sunset flip out of the corner is blocked by Alberto but Christian hits a running enziguri of his own. A top rope hurricanrana gets a VERY close two for the challenger as the fans are way into these near falls. The spear is countered by a fast dropkick for two for the champion and the low superkick gets the same. Del Rio lowers his knee pad but another shot to the head is countered into a rollup for two. There's the spear but Christian's arm gives out (THANK YOU! Edge did the same spot in 2001 but pinned Lance Storm like it was nothing). Del Rio grabs the armbreaker out of nowhere and Christian TAPS at 12:34.

Rating: B+. I REALLY liked this match but the 50/50 booking is so stupid. Christian beat Del Rio twice clean in a few weeks but now Del Rio gets a win so we're supposed to be impressed? It doesn't work that way no matter what WWE thinks. Enough of the bad stuff though as this was a great match with both guys looking awesome out there. The crowd was totally into it and the ending was a surprise. Really good stuff here.

Post match Del Rio says he represents the Latinos and that he's the world champion. This was a tease of a cash in but nothing happened.

Axxess stuff, including Maria Menunos in a Divas tag match.

Miz (the host of this show, in his first appearance here tonight an hour in) is in the back with Menunos. Not much is said until Fandango and Summer Rae pop in. A dance off begins and that's about it.

Brie Bella vs. Natalya

This is the Total Divas match with Nikki, Eva Marie and the Funkadactyls in the corner. Feeling out process until we get to the catfight stuff, culminating in Brie having to bail from a Sharpshooter attempt. Eva and Nikki pull the ring skirt down to send Natalya to the floor, allowing Brie to take over. The fans chant for JBL and then Lawler as they

completely turn on the match. Brie cranks on Nattie's arm as the fans want tables.

After a faceplant it's right back to the hold as this match is dragging three minutes in. Natalya makes a quick comeback and puts on the Sharpshooter but Brie kicks away and no sells the pain. The girls get in a brawl on the floor and we're in the third use of the SAME hold. Someone get Fit Finlay back in this company immediately. The fans are chanting for Ryder as Natayla hits an Alabama Slam and the Sharpshooter gets the tap out from Brie at 5:20.

Rating: F. This was HORRIBLE with both girls looking bad. The Divas are horrid right now other than AJ and occasionally Layla but these reality "stars" are getting TV time because people like to see them argue and be insecure. Natalya is good in the ring but she can't work a miracle with a model out there. Horrid match and they need to win the crowd back immediately.

Ryback torments a guy at catering over a bowl of soup. I'm sure the leather vest isn't inspired by Bully Ray whatsoever. "Feed me moron."

We recap Punk vs. Lesnar which is really about Punk vs. Heyman. Punk turned face around Payback and asked Heyman not to accompany him to ringside anymore. Soon after that Lesnar returned and attacked Punk. Heyman swore that he had nothing to do with it but he turned on Punk at MITB, costing Punk the briefcase. Punk swore revenge on both of them, starting with Lesnar tonight. This is a money feud for multiple reasons, but the biggest being that's based on HATRED. Punk is furious at Heyman and wants his revenge. His method of getting it? In a professional wrestling match of course. So simple yet so effective.

CM Punk vs. Brock Lesnar

The tagline for this match is perfect: the Best vs. the Beast. It's also No DQ. I always forget how scary of a man Brock Lesnar is until he comes to the ring. Lesnar immediately drives him into the corner and no sells forearms to the head. Brock LAUNCHES him into the other corner and stomps Punk down before no selling knees to the ribs. Punk is thrown around again and rammed into another corner with raw power.

Lesnar brags a bit too much and Punk gets in a kick to the head and a pair of knees to the face to send Brock to the floor. The suicide dive takes Lesnar down and the fans go NUTS. Punk loads up the steps but Brock rams into them to knock Punk down. Brock fires off knees to the ribs but Punk posts him for a breather. A top rope dive puts Brock down again as Punk is giving this all he has. Punk dives off the announce table with a clothesline and Brock is in trouble.

CM makes the mistake of going after Heyman though and Brock gets in a shot to take over. Brock tosses Punk over the announce table in an amazing throw for an even better crash. Since he threw Punk over the table once, Lesnar has to throw him over the other side for good measure. An over head belly to belly sends Punk down onto the concrete and Punk is barely moving. Back in and Brock drives Punk into the corner with shoulders and puts on a bearhug.

Punk gets in some forearms to escape but a knee to the ribs puts him right back down. Back to the bearhug and we get a shot of the evil look on Heyman's face. Punk comes back again with shots to the head but his high cross body is caught in a fallaway slam. A backbreaker sets up a suplex for three straight near falls. Off to a chinlock but Punk BITES THE EAR to get some separation. More shots to the head stagger Brock and a top rope knee to the chest knocks him into the corner.

Two more running knees to the corner have Brock reeling but Brock catches the third in a fireman's carry. Punk drops behind Lesnar and hits a high kick, setting up the Macho Elbow (didn't look good) for two. The GTS and F5 are countered into another high kick but the GTS is countered into the kimura. Punk spins out and hooks a cross armbreaker (GIMMICK INFRINGEMENT) and then a triangle choke of all things.

Brock raises his hand but powerbombs Punk down....but the hold isn't broken! The hand is still in the air but Brock lifts Punk into the air. Punk fires off elbows to the head, only to be caught in a running powerbomb to kill Punk dead. Lesnar can't follow up though and both guys are down. A delayed cover gets two on Punk as Heyman is having a heart attack. Lesnar hits Three Amigos of all things for two before very slowly grabbing a chair. Punk gets up and dives onto Lesnar but he mostly hit

chair.

Now it's Punk with the chair and a few shots send Brock back inside. Lesnar gets the chair away but Punk goes low to stop Brock's chair shot. Punk takes the chair up top and drops an elbow (kind of) onto Brock for a closer two. More chair shots to the back have Lesnar screaming in pain but Heyman takes the chair from Punk's hands. Lesnar is up AGAIN but Punk grabs Heyman's tie to escape the F5.

The GTS connects but Heyman comes in to break up the pin. Punk gets a big smile on his face as there's no Brock to save Heyman, but the case winds up in the F5, which Punk counters into a faceplant for a VERY close two. The Anaconda Vice goes on but Heyman tries to come in with a chair, only to have Punk stand on the chair to block it.

Heyman slaps at Punk's leg in a funny bit but gets caught by the neck. A right hand puts Heyman down and now he's in the Vice but Lesnar is back up. He crushes Punk with the chair and hits him even harder the second time. A third shot knocks Punk silly and the F5 onto the chair ends this at 25:20.

Rating: A+. The storytelling and psychology alone made this a great match. I loved the idea that Punk kept taking the weapons away from Lesnar but once Brock got in the first chair shot the match was over. Punk showed he was smarter leading up to the match but his hatred for Heyman cost him in the end when he went on emotion instead of intelligence.

The action in this was incredible as well as it felt like a fight instead of a match, which is the right idea. If nothing else, this shows how bad of an idea the HHH feud was. Punk and Cena have both blown away all of the HHH matches with Lesnar by miles and miles, but we got a year of HHH and a month each of the other guys so far. Such is life in the WWE. Outstanding match here though.

We get a clip from Axxess where a fan took a splash from Mark Henry for three tickets to Summerslam.

Kaitlyn/Dolph Ziggler vs. AJ Lee/Big E. Langston

This is just a combination of two feuds which is a fine way to get both of them on the card. The guys start with Zigglar getting caught in a belly to belly suplex and a spinning splash of all things from Langston. Off to an abdominal stretch before AJ gets in a slap to Langston. Dolph comes back with a quick dropkick and it's off to the girls. Kaitlyn throws AJ around with ease but gets caught with a wicked spinwheel kick to the face. A few neckbreakers put Kaitlyn down and AJ skips around.

Off to a sleeper which doesn't last long as it's back to the guys. Zigglar speeds things up and splashes Big E. in the corner. Ten straight elbow drops to set up the jumping elbow get a two count. Langston makes a quick comeback but gets sent shoulder first into the post. AJ grabs Dolph's leg but Kaitlyn spears her down as Langston runs Dolph over for two. The Big Ending is escaped into the Zig Zag for the pin at 6:48.

Rating: C-. This was fine but it was in the death spot on the card between the two main events. It came off well enough though and the crowd was into it at times. It was a WAY better idea than putting the Total Divas match here which I thought they were going to do. Nothing great but it did its job just fine.

Fandango and Summer Rae cut off Miz again so he lays Fandango out.

Some low level celebrities are here.

The expert panel make their predictions on the main event. Bryan is the favorite.

We recap the main event. Daniel Bryan is on the roll of a lifetime and Cena selected him for the title shot tonight. The idea is simple: Bryan says Cena isn't a wrestler, Cena says he's proven everyone that has said that wrong. However there's a wildcard in all this: HHH, who is the guest referee and will likely be joining Vince to hijack the match because their storyline is SO much more important than anything else.

Raw World Title: Daniel Bryan vs. John Cena

The fans are almost unanimously behind Bryan here. Cena has a very bad elbow injury coming in and has been out of action for a few weeks.

Feeling out process to start with Cena taking him to the mat via a headlock. Bryan easily gets back to his feet and tries a test of strength of all things with Cena taking him down to the mat. He can't break Bryan's bridge though and Bryan monkey flips him down. The YES Lock doesn't work as Cena bails to the floor.

Back in and Cena tries a left arm (the bad arm) headlock but Bryan takes him down again. The double knee stomp surfboard doesn't work as Cena kicks Bryan away. Daniel goes to the apron and is knocked HARD into the announce table. Cena follows him to the floor but gets whipped into the steps. Bryan tries a suplex off the steps in a spot I've never seen before but Cena counters into one of his own to put both guys down. Fans: "YOU STILL SUCK!"

Cena wisely turns it into a brawl and punches Bryan down before hitting a Batista Bomb of all things. We hit the chinlock and HHH hasn't been a factor yet. Bryan comes back with forearms to the head and kicks to the chest in the corner but HHH yells at him. Lawler: "Don't gloat goat!" Bryan hits the running clothesline but misses the hard kick to the head. Cena tries his finishing sequence but Bryan kicks him in the head to block the Shuffle. Bryan can't hook a submission hold and gets caught in the ProtoBomb followed by the Shuffle for no cover.

Bryan flips out of the AA and catches a charging Cena in the chin with a boot. The missile dropkick connects for two and Bryan fires off the kicks to the chest. Now Bryan goes after the bad arm before slapping on the STF of all things. Cena is about to get to the ropes so Bryan pulls him back and hits two German suplexes for two each. Bryan counters the AA into the YES Lock and Cena is in big trouble. Cena counters by getting his head free (wrestling you say?) but gets pulled down into a guillotine choke.

John FINALLY powers out of it but can barely follow up. Bryan charges right at Cena but gets caught in the AA for a close two. That came out of nowhere and had the fans inhaling in unison. Cena goes up but has to knock Bryan down twice before getting caught by a running dropkick. Now Bryan gets up top and superplexes Cena down but stays on top in a cool power move. He sits up onto the top for the Swan Dive but Cena is up at two. John rolls to the floor and blocks the FLYING GOAT with a forearm to

the head.

This time the top rope Fameasser connects for two and Cena is getting frustrated. Cena tries the middle rope AA but Bryan fires off about 25 elbows to the head to break it up. Bryan can't hit a top rope rana so Cena loads up what looks like a Styles Clash but jumps down and drops Bryan o his head in a SCARY looking botch. Bryan looks ok though and Cena rolls into the STF. Bryan rolls over to his side but the hold is still on, basically making it a chinlock with a body scissors.

Daniel rolls out and hooks the YES Lock in the middle of the ring. Cena crawls over (with his arm slapping the mat in what could have been a tap if you stretched a bit) and FINALLY makes a rope. Bryan hits the running dropkick in the corner and makes it a pair for good measure. Cena comes back with a MASSIVE clothesline but he can't follow up. They slug it out and both hit shoulders at the same time for another double layout.

Now they slap each other out in the middle of the ring and it's Bryan taking over and moonsaulting out of the corner, but Cena nearly catches him in mid air. He tries a spinebuster but Bryan counters into a DDT and a lot of checking on each other. Bryan tries a high cross (popular move tonight) but Cena catches him in mid air. Bryan counters into the small package they've been building up for weeks but it's only good for two in a GREAT false finish. The big kick to Cena's head puts the champion down again and a Shining Freaking Wizard GETS THE PIN AND THE TITLE AT 26:58!

Rating: A+. WHAT A BRILLIANT FINISH! They totally fooled us all by having the standard WWE formula playing out but Bryan wins it out of nowhere with a knee to the head. Brilliant move there after a great match to boot. What more can you ask for in the main event of the second biggest show of the year? Excellent stuff and HHH did absolutely nothing at all.

Post match Cena grabs Bryan and turns him around but they shake hands. Cena leaves with no incident and Bryan celebrates but HERE'S ORTON! Bryan is looking at him though and says bring it on. Orton is standing at ringside and turns around. Bryan celebrates and HHH spins him around and Pedigrees him. Orton comes in and hands HHH the case. You know what's coming.

Raw World Title: Randy Orton vs. Daniel Bryan

Seven seconds and Orton wins.

Everyone is shocked to end the show.

Overall Rating: A-. There are definitely some bad spots on here but the main events more than make this a great show. The WWE has been on fire for the last few months and this was no exception with some great matches on top of the card and the midcard having some nice surprises with the Smackdown Title match being much better than I was expecting. The ending was what a lot of people were expecting, because screw making a new star since it's all about the McMahons. Excellent show though and well worth checking out.

Results

Bray Wyatt b. Kane – Sister Abigail

Cody Rhodes b. Damien Sandow – Cross Rhodes

Alberto Del Rio b. Christian – Cross Armbreaker

Natalya b. Brie Bella – Sharpshooter

Brock Lesnar b. CM Punk – F5 onto a chair

Dolph Ziggler/Kaitlyn b. AJ Lee/Big E. Langston – Zig Zag to Langston

Daniel Bryan b. John Cena – Shining Wizard

Randy Orton b. Daniel Bryan – Pin after a Pedigree from HHH

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Main Event – August 12, 2021: The NXT Evidence

Main Event

Date: August 12, 2021

Location: Amway Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Kevin Patrick, Byron Saxton

This show continues to vex me but the last few weeks have taken away some of the fun that it can offer. They are getting back into the funk that has a tendency to stick around for years around here and I'm not sure if we are going to see it broken up anytime soon. At least the Summerslam build should be...let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Aliyah vs. Dakota Kai

Well so much for boring. Kai is suddenly a face here, even with commentary explaining her issues with Raquel Gonzalez. They trade waistlocks to start and Aliyah doesn't seem impressed, even as she hides in the ropes. Back up and Kai takes her down by the arm, setting up a running dropkick for two. Aliyah gets in something like an Eye of the Hurricane out of the corner for two of her own and there's a toss into another corner.

The crossarm choke goes on to keep Kai in trouble but she

powers up for the break without much trouble. There's a Scorpion kick to rock Aliyah again and Kai hits the running kicks to the face in the corner. The Kaiopractor gets the same but Aliyah is back with a northern lights suplex for two more. Something like a running DDT (I think?) finishes Kai at 5:27.

Rating: D. If you needed any more proof that WWE either has no idea how NXT works or is actively trying to hurt it, here is your big exhibit. Aliyah has never meant anything in NXT but here she is beating the #1 contender in a nothing match on Main Event as both of them make their debut. Throw in the face/heel dynamic being all over and Aliyah not being very good in the ring and this is about as much of a miss as you can get. I'm not convinced it was unintentional either, and that is really sad.

We recap Sasha Banks returning, teaming with Bianca Belair and then turning on Belair, all in the span of about an hour and a half.

From Smackdown.

Bianca Belair vs. Zelina Vega

Non-title. Belair goes right after her to start but gets rolled up for a fast two. Vega gets sent to the apron but grabs Belair by the hair to take over. That doesn't seem to bother Belair, who gorilla presses Vega but here is Sasha Banks for a distraction. Vega slips out and takes Belair down as we take a break.

Back with Belair fighting out of a chinlock but Vega sends her hard into the corner. The choke goes on so Belair drives her into the corner as well for a break. Belair suplexes her down but a delayed suplex is countered into a DDT. With Belair on the floor, Vega tries a hurricanrana from the apron, only to get pulled out of the air and swung into the apron. Back in and the KOD finishes Vega at 9:50.

Rating: C. Vega got in some offense here but ultimately this was never going to be in a ton of doubt. I'm curious to see how Banks vs. Belair goes and that is the right kind of feeling as we come into a match like this. If they can live up to the hype, things are going to go rather well. Vega worked hard here but was in over her head. The problem is I'm not sure how that can change, but a lot of the skill is there.

We look at Finn Balor nearly getting to sign to face Roman Reigns for the Universal Title at Summerslam until Baron Corbin interrupted.

From Smackdown.

Finn Balor vs. Baron Corbin

Corbin has lost his music but hold on though as he has something to say. He offers Balor an apology for last week but gets punched in the face as Balor DOES NOT accept. Corbin knocks him into the corner and punches at the ribs but gets taken down again in a hurry. There's the Sling Blade to drop Corbin and the shotgun dropkick puts him into the corner. The Coup de Grace gives Balor the pin at 2:46.

Post match Balor says he wants the Universal Title match with Roman Reigns and if he has to go through John Cena to get there, name the place and the time. Cue Roman Reigns and Paul Heyman to interrupt though and, after a break, they get in the ring for a chat. Reigns talks about how he was trying to give Balor an opportunity, so keep the Head of the Table's name out of your mouth.

Reigns drops the mic and goes to leave but gets shoved out to the floor. The fight is teased (with the fans chanting for Cena) but here are the Usos to jump Balor from behind. The Superfly Splash misses though and Balor fights back, drawing Reigns back in for the brawl. Balor takes Reigns down but the Usos lay him out. Reigns guillotines Balor for the tap to end the show. Odds are Balor, perhaps as the Demon, is the fall

challenger and there is time to rehab him on the way there.

We look at Charlotte beating Nikki Ash.

From Raw.

Nikki Ash vs. Rhea Ripley

Non-title and Nikki has banged up ribs. Nikki headlocks her down to start but gets faceplanted in a hurry. Ripley sends things outside and Nikki goes ribs first into the apron. We take a break and come back with Ripley planting her down again and hammering on the ribs. A flapjack is countered into a DDT though and both of them are down. Nikki rolls her up for two and counters the Riptide into a crossbody for two. Ripley catches her on top but the superplex is broken up, only to have Charlotte come in to shoves Nikki down for the DQ at 9:20.

Rating: C. The match was starting to cook but then it was Charlotte coming in to be the big monster. I can go with the idea of neither of them losing because they both need to win something. However, maybe it would be better if we weren't at the point where the champ and former champ both need to avoid losses so desperately.

Post match Charlotte takes out Ripley with Natural Selection. Charlotte holds up the title, because she is smarter and better than everyone else.

Summerslam rundown.

Odyssey Jones vs. Austin Theory

Jones is a big monster and Theory is a bit of a prodigy you've probably seen before. Theory gets shoved around without much trouble to start and Jones knocks Theory's running shoulder out of the air with ease. It's time to get smart for a change (not exactly Theory's strong suit) as Theory hits a rolling dropkick but gets knocked outside again.

We take a break and come back with Theory grabbing a lengthy chinlock. Some knees to the ribs don't do much to Jones and an attempt at a fireman's carry proves to be a bad idea. Theory manages some shots to the face but charges into something like a scoop belly to back suplex. Jones hits a frog splash for the quick pin at 7:04.

Rating: C. It was a better match, but Jones beating an established(ish) name on NXT is a bit weird. That being said, it is clear that WWE sees a lot in Jones and they are going to push the heck out of him as a result. The match wasn't a classic or anything, but it was certainly an upgrade over the opener.

Video on the bizarre history of RKBro.

From Raw.

Here is the returning Randy Orton (now looking like Dexter Lumis with the mustache) to a heck of a face reaction. Orton grabs the mic but here's Riddle to cut him off. Riddle is REALLY happy that Orton is back because now they can be a team again. Riddle wants to know where Orton has been because his stepdad left like that too and never came home. Orton asks why Riddle thinks Orton wants to be a team with someone as goofy as Riddle. He talks about how ridiculous Riddle is, prompting Riddle to ask if that means Orton doesn't want to team with him.

Cue Omos and AJ Styles, with AJ talking about how Orton is a snake and of course he's done with the team. AJ keeps going until Orton cuts him off, saying the only thing bigger than AJ's ego is this jackass right here next to him. The challenge is thrown out for tonight and Orton uppercuts AJ. The RK0 to Omos is swatted away and Riddle's attempt doesn't go much better. A chokeslam (and not a good one) leaves Riddle laying and Orton walks away, with Riddle staggering behind him.

From Raw.

Randy Orton vs. AJ Styles

Omos is here with Styles. Orton takes him down to start and gets in the big stomp before sending Styles outside. An Omos distraction lets AJ send him into the apron though and there's the slingshot forearm to send us to a break. Back with Orton fighting out of a chinlock to start the slugout. The powerslam and backbreaker get two each but Orton comes up favoring his knee.

After blowing a kiss to Omos, Orton loads up the top rope superplex but AJ slips between the legs and pulls him down. The Calf Crusher goes on, sending Orton straight to the rope. The hanging DDT plants AJ but Omos offers a distraction to break up the RK0. Cue Riddle to post and choke Omos, who drives him into the post for the break. The Phenomenal Forearm is countered into the RK0 to give Orton the pin at 11:19.

Rating: B-. The ending alone boosts this one up as that was a heck of a finish. Orton got a heck of a face reaction here and that isn't a surprise given how long he was gone. It helps that he wrestles a style that can change so quickly and that was on display here. Good match, with the post match stuff with Riddle likely to make it even better.

Post match Orton yells at Riddle for coming out here but Riddle wants a hug. Orton tries to leave but eventually gives in to the hug. The fans love it and they pose...until the RK0 lays Riddle out. Yeah you knew it was coming, but I'm not sure if that was the team breaking up (assuming they were a team in the first place).

Overall Rating: D+. I really wasn't feeling this one and a lot of it is due to that horrible opener. WWE is in such a bad place at the moment and so much of that is due to how Raw is and how NXT is being treated. It is nice to have NXT out here for a change, but it doesn't help when it is just the NXT roster doing other things instead of having them do what got

them here in the first place. Bad show, with only a few highlights helping to carry things.

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Daily News Update – August 18, 2021

Back To The Busy Day.

RUMOR: WWE Considering Several Special Shows.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/rumor-wwe-considering-several-special-shows/>

Interesting Reason Keith Lee Has Not Been On Monday Night Raw.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/interesting-reason-keith-lee-not-monday-night-raw/>

VIDEO: Big Angle Takes Place During This Week's NXT.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/video-big-angle-takes-place-weeks-nxt/>

Another NXT Star Not Cleared To Wrestle, Pulled From This Week's Show.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/another-nxt-star-not-cleared-wrestle-pulled-weeks-show/>

VIDEO: Former WWE Star Teases Next Move In Wrestling.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/video-former-wwe-star-teases-next-move-wrestling/>

A Big Split Could Be Coming On Monday Night Raw.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/big-split-coming-monday-night-raw/>

WATCH: Nasty Injury Takes Place During This Week's NXT.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-nasty-injury-takes-place-weeks-nxt/>

WATCH: WWE Posts Outstanding "Never Stop Dreaming" Video.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-wwe-posts-outstanding-video-advertising-weekly-show/>

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NXT – August 17, 2021: Takeover Ahoy

NXT

Date: August 17, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Beth Phoenix, Vic Joseph, Wade Barrett

It's the go home show for Takeover 36 and the card is completely set. That might not be the best thing though as the show could use a few upgrades. As has been the case for a long time, Takeover has not had the sparkiest of sparks, even if the shows wind up being pretty high quality. Let's get to it.

The Diamond Mine (with Tyler Rust missing with no explanation from the team) is in the ring to start things off. Kushida isn't here tonight (due to not being cleared) to defend the Cruiserweight Title against Roderick Strong, so it's open challenge time.

Roderick Strong vs. Ilja Dragunov

Strong grabs the arm to start but Dragunov kicks him away without much trouble. Back up and Strong chops him down, only to have Dragunov hit one of his own. Dragunov goes up top but has to bail out, leaving him to run Strong over again. Strong's leg gets knocked out but he is fine enough to knock Dragunov outside. Dragunov is sent face first into the steps and there's the Rock Bottom onto the steps as we take a break.

Back with Dragunov busted WAY open but being fine enough to fight out of an abdominal stretch. The German suplexes put Strong in trouble and an enziguiri sets up a reverse t-bone suplex. Torpedo Moscow is broken up with a jumping knee but Dragunov pops back up for Torpedo Moscow and the pin at 12:09.

Rating: C+. I'd be curious to know if they went home a little

earlier than expected because of the cut. I didn't see when he got cut but there is something to be said about the added emotion that comes with seeing blood in a match. Dragunov winning here makes sense, though Strong losing is a little weird when he is scheduled for a title match whenever Kushida gets back. Still though, pretty good.

Post match, Dragunov calls out Walter but no one shows up.

It's time for the Prime Target on Adam Cole vs. Kyle O'Reilly (which I believe we've had for another match between them). They have fought before and now it is time for the big Undisputed Finale to blow the whole thing off for good. Now they hate each other and have made it personal, but they have to finish this.

Here is Hit Row for a chat. They aren't happy with Legado del Fantasma for taking the grill out of Isaiah Scott's mouth. Santos Escobar pops up on screen with the grill and says he should give it back to him. He would be there in person, but he doesn't trust Swerve's crew. Come meet him in the parking lot, where he has no one waiting with him. That's cool with Swerve, who heads to the back, where the rest of Legado pops up. Top Dolla runs in for the save but gets sent into a metal wall. B Fab makes the real save with a pipe and Legado is left laying.

LA Knight is working out in the gym with Cameron Grimes wiping him down. Knight isn't happy with him though and brings in Josh Briggs to face Grimes tonight.

Imperium, with Walter, doesn't like people like MSK and are here to get rid of people like them.

Josh Briggs vs. Cameron Grimes

Ted DiBiase and LA Knight are on commentary as Grimes, in his tuxedo, gets beaten down to start, including a heck of a big boot in the face. DiBiase throws out a \$20,000 bet on Grimes

winning as Briggs drops him with a release side slam. A splash gets two but Grimes gets a boot up in the corner. There's a running forearm to drop Briggs and the running belly to belly gives Grimes two. The Cave In finishes Briggs at 2:07.

Post match DiBiase goes to collect on his bet but Knight punches him in the face. Grimes goes for the save and walks into Blunt Force Trauma on the floor.

Indi Hartwell brags to the Way about how much she has been seeing of Dexter Lumis. Candice LeRae: "They have a shirt now!" Indi: "We went hiking." Gargano: "Ew." Indi: "We went bicycling." Gargano. "Ew." Indi: "We went up in a hot air balloon." Gargano: "Ok that's pretty cool." Dexter pops up and has the same gloves as Indi, which has Gargano and LeRae even more annoyed.

Zoey Stark and Io Shirai talk about trying to be friends but Shirai says just focus on being partners. Stark thinks this might take time.

Jessi Kamea/Robert Stone vs. Dexter Lumis/Indi Hartwell

Frankie Monet is here with Kamea and Stone. Hartwell copies Lumis' intro and walk to the ring, though she does bump into him at one point. The fans wish Hartwell a happy birthday as Stone dives at Lumis' leg to start. Everything breaks down in a hurry and Lumis and Hartwell hit stereo stomps in the corner. Monet grabs Lumis' leg and gets dragged in, which is enough for an ejection as we take a break.

Back with Hartwell fighting out of trouble and bringing Lumis in to clean house. The spinebuster plants Stone for two and Lumis sends him outside. Back in and Kamea grabs a half crab on Hartwell, who makes it over to the ropes. Everything breaks down and Stone misses a slingshot dive, landing in front of a staring Lumis. Stereo Silencers give Hartwell and Lumis the win at 9:17.

Rating: C. Total comedy match here and that is what you have to do in a situation like this. The wrestling wasn't the point at all here and Lumis/Hartwell are good in their roles. I'm curious to see where it goes from here and that is a nice feeling. I didn't expect to like this but they have made it work, which you don't get very often these days.

Post match, Beth Phoenix whispers some advice to Indi Hartwell, who pulls out a ring and proposes to Lumis. That's good for a quick nod of acceptance.

The Diamond Mine insists that Roderick Strong's loss to Ilja Dragunov doesn't count because Dragunov is not a cruiserweight. Therefore, Strong's title shot against Kushida still counts.

We get a split screen sitdown interview between Dakota Kai and Raquel Gonzalez. Kai talks about how she discovered Gonzalez but Gonzalez says she has become a superstar. How does Kai expect to win on Sunday? By bringing in the next Raquel Gonzalez? Kai says she can play all the roles she wants, but on Sunday, Kai is playing the role of champion. See you at Takeover, sidekick. This was short and to the point but you can feel the intensity.

Breakout Tournament Semifinals: Duke Hudson vs. Carmelo Hayes

The bigger Hudson goes with the headlock to start but Hayes slips out and grabs one of his own. A big shoulder drops Hayes, who is back with a springboard crossbody for two. Hudson tosses him outside in a heap and we take a break. Back with Hudson kneeing him in the face and hitting an overhead belly to belly out of the corner.

Hayes manages a quick scissors kick though and a slingshot DDT sends Hudson face first into the apron (geez that looked rough). Hudson catches him on top but the slam is countered into a small package for two. A Backstabber rocks Hudson again and Hayes goes up for the top rope Fameasser to advance at

8:57.

Rating: C+. Hayes has looked like a complete package since he debuted around here and this was no exception. This was a nice come from behind win as Hayes hung in there just long enough to pull it off, with Hudson getting a bit too cocky and not being able to keep up. The finals could go either way and Hudson has come off like a star, making this a pretty efficient tournament so far.

Post match Hayes said he called his shot to make the finals and that's what he did. That isn't enough for him though and now it is time to face the final boss. Hey Odyssey Jones, plot twist: Hayes is the final boss. Cue Jones to say the universe will sound the alarm next week. This was a perfectly fine jawing segment.

Jacy Jayne says a lot of people are just satisfied but that is not good enough for them. You have heard them silenced for too long and now it is time to break free. The plurals were strong with this one.

Ted DiBiase apologizes to Cameron Grimes in the back, with Grimes going into a rant to recap the whole thing. He dropped the ball for DiBiase but after Takeover, the two of them are going to be Million Dollar Champions going TO THE MOON! DiBiase is so impressed that he busts out the laugh. DiBiase: "THAT'S MY CAMERON!" I'm not sure how much DiBiase likes this stuff but he's the only person who would fit in this role.

Tag Team Titles: MSK vs. Imperium

Imperium is challenging. Lee takes Aichner into the corner for the slingshot dropkick, followed by the running Bronco Buster from Carter. Barthel brings himself in and armdrags Carter into a hammerlock. A hard uppercut rocks Carter but he fights out of the corner, only to get suplexed right back down. The beating doesn't last as long this time though as Carter gets over for the tag to Lee. Everything breaks down and the

champs' dives are cut off by stereo slams as we take a break.

Back with Lee fighting out of a chinlock but getting pulled into an ankle lock. Lee gets sent hard into the corner and we need a quick breather so the referee can make sure he's fine. The double dropkick in the corner gets two on Lee but he sends both of them outside. Cue Walter as the hot tag brings in Carter to clean house. The push moonsault gets two on Aichner with Barthel making the save. Walter's distraction looks to set up the European Bomb but here is Ilja Dragunov to cut Walter off. Lee makes the save and the Blockbuster Hart Attack retains the titles at 11:04.

Rating: C+. Imperium continues to be a problem for me in the tag division. They are technically sound and their gimmick makes perfect sense but I have yet to find myself invested in anything they do. They just aren't very interesting and it feels like no one can do anything to bring them up. MSK winning is the good move here, though I continue to not be sure who takes the titles off of them.

Post match the beatdown is on, with Walter destroying everyone in sight. Dragunov is taken out as well and Imperium stands tall.

Pete Dunne and Ridge Holland don't like Timothy Thatcher and Tommaso Ciampa ignoring them. Holland would fight through people just to get to a fight and he'll be seeing Thatcher next week.

Takeover rundown.

Here is Samoa Joe for the big face to face with Karrion Kross. Joe says it is time to verbally eviscerate Kross in front of the world but what's the point? He isn't here to hurt Kross' feelings because he is here to hurt Kross period. Cue Kross to say that this is about the future of this brand and Joe isn't coming in to beat him after a year off. Kross calls out security to protect Joe but Joe is ready to fight anyway. The

brawl is on, with Joe hitting the big dive to take everyone out. They fight over to the announcers' table and the big double knockdown ends the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This was a fine enough go home show, but it was far from a home run. There was nothing on here that really made me want to see Takeover, though I'm sure the show will wind up being another hit. Maybe it's the lack of anything interesting in Kross or Cole vs. O'Reilly AGAIN but I can't get myself to care about what they're doing. That being said, Walter vs. Dragunov II is going to be enough to carry a lot of the show and I'm really not worried. Good go home show, though I'm not entirely jazzed for Takeover.

Results

Ilja Dragunov b. Roderick Strong – Torpedo Moscow

Cameron Grimes b. Josh Briggs – Cave In

Dexter Lumis/Indi Hartwell b. Jessi Kamea/Robert Stone – Silencer to Kamea

Carmelo Hayes b. Duke Hudson – Top rope Fameasser

MSK b. Imperium – Blockbuster Hart Attack to Barthel

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205 Live – August 13, 2021: It's Just A Number

205 Live

Date: August 13, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

This week is going to be our first look at the new (or newer) 205 Live after the latest roster purge. I'm not sure what we are going to be seeing this week and that is kind of interesting in a way. For the life of me I do not get why this is still a cruiserweight show when there are barely any cruiserweights, but that's WWE logic for you. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Ikemen Jiro vs. Grayson Waller

Waller tosses Jiro (and the coat) around to start and it's off to an exchange of headlocks. Jiro gets the better of things and trips Waller down, followed by an enziguri to make it worse. The Tarantula is broken up though and Waller gets in a shot to the face. A snap suplex drops Jiro again and the cravate goes on, complete with knees to the head.

The chinlock with an arm trap has Jiro in trouble and Waller rolls him up, with trunks, for two. Waller stops to yell at the referee though, allowing Jiro to hit a springboard missile dropkick to the floor. A big flip dive drops Waller again but the Ikemen Slash misses. The running Stunner gives Waller two but Jiro grabs a Kimura of all things. A powerslam gives Jiro two, only to have Waller slip out and hit the running stomp for the pin at 9:11.

Rating: C+. More 205 Live goodness here with two of the few remaining roster members. Waller is still one of my favorite guys around here and Jiro is popular enough with the fans to get somewhere. I'm not sure if that is actually going to happen, but Kushida actually appearing here last week might give them a bit of hope.

Josh Briggs is angry and back around here. He doesn't care about the weight limit so he wants Joe Gacy.

Josh Briggs vs. Joe Gacy

The cruiserweight limit is thrown out for this one, as it should be. They fight over the power lockup to start and it's time for the exchange of heavy forearms. The bigger Briggs hits a running big boot to drop Gacy and it's time for some heavy elbows for two. Back up and Briggs misses a charge into the corner, only to run Gacy over for another near fall. We hit an arm/neck crank until Gacy fights up with the chops. That doesn't really bother Briggs, who runs him over with a shoulder.

The cranking ensues again but this time Gacy is up with right hands and a headbutt. A swinging Rock Bottom out of the corner plants Briggs but Gacy can't follow up. Another suplex sends Briggs flying and the standing clotheslines against the ropes keep him in trouble. Back up and Gacy hammers away with forearms, only to get blasted with a lariat to give Briggs the pin at 8:34.

Rating: C+. This was fun in a completely different way as it is nice to see some people doing something different around here. It might not be going with the spirit of the show, but it isn't like having a show based around cruiserweights has meant anything in a long time. They had a good hoss fight here and I could go for seeing more of both of them in the future, perhaps around here.

Overall Rating: C+. Above all else, this show gave me some

hope. For the life of me I do not get why this show is still based around the cruiserweight division and hopefully this is more about shifting towards an NXT supplemental show. Go with something more like this in the future, as it would be a very welcome change of pace. I have no reason to believe it stays that way, but you can always use some hope.

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Daily News Update – August 17, 2021

Today Has To Be Better.

Roman Reigns Opens Up On Jimmy Uso's DUI Arrest.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/roman-reigns-opens-jimmy-usos-dui-arrest/>

New Grudge Match Set For Summerslam.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/new-grudge-match-set-sum>

[merslam-2/](#)

So Yes? Another Title Match Added To Summerslam.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/yes-another-title-match-added-summerslam/>

RUMOR: USA Network Not Happy With Upcoming NXT Change.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/rumor-usa-network-not-happy-upcoming-nxt-change/>

Important Update On WWE Survivor Series 2021.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/important-update-wwe-survivor-series-2021/>

Update On Why Ember Moon Missed Last Week's NXT.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/update-ember-moon-missed-last-weeks-nxt/>

Group Of Released WWE Wrestlers Having Serious Visa Issues.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/group-released-wwe-wrestlers-serious-visa-issues/>

Unique Change Possible For 2022 Royal Rumble.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/2022-royal-rumble-may-first-time-ever-change/>

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Monday Night Raw – August 16, 2021: Imagine If They Didn't Want My Money

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 16, 2021

Location: AT&T Center, San Antonio, Texas

Commentators: Corey Graves, Byron Saxton, Jimmy Smith

It's the go home show for Summerslam and that means it is time for the big final push towards Goldberg vs. Bobby Lashley. That's the big focal point of this show, no matter how uninteresting it might be. Maybe they can come up with something to set up their three minute match on Saturday. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

The opening video looks at Randy Orton returning last week and attacking Riddle to end the show.

Here is Randy Orton to open things up. Orton talks about how he does not need fans but has to stop for the RK0 chants. This is still his world and tonight he promises to take Omos out with the RK....and here is Riddle to cut him off before the 0. Riddle thinks that Orton was trying to teach him something last week.

Orton isn't sure what that means, but Riddle says that he gave him the RK0 last week to show Riddle how it is really done. As Orton tries not to strangle Riddle, the offer to reform RKBro is tossed out again. Cue AJ Styles and Omos, with AJ saying how about RK NO! Tonight, no one is saving Orton from Omos but that's not enough for AJ. He wants to face Riddle right now, so Riddle, calling AJ Skipper, accepts.

AJ Styles vs. Riddle

Omos stays at ringside but Randy Orton turns his back and walks away. Hold on though as he stops on the stage as AJ grabs an early suplex. Riddle takes AJ back though and hits the quick backplash, only to have Styles come back with an abdominal stretch. With that not working, it's time to work on the leg but Riddle grabs a triangle over the ropes.

Styles gets pulled outside for a crash and the apron kick puts Styles down again. There's the springboard flip dive and we take a break. Back with Riddle grabbing a German suplex for two but another backplash is countered into the Calf Crusher. Riddle makes the rope and knocks AJ down again. The Floating Bro is loaded up but Omos offers a distraction, allowing AJ to take the leg out. The Styles Clash finishes Riddle at 10:57.

Rating: B-. Rather good match here with the story being told as it should have been. The idea of Riddle being in over his head but never giving up despite being in over his head is a good story. Now just go with whatever you want for the payoff, and either option could go just fine. The action itself was good too and that's a nice way to open the show.

Nikki Ash talks about how the outfit makes her feel confident and when you believe in yourself, you can be almost a superhero. She is so confident that she knows she can retain the title at Summerslam. These promos are getting more and more insufferable every week. As goofy as it was, just go full Hurricane with it and have some fun. This "ALMOST" a superhero deal having to be explained every week is getting worse and worse. Stop trying to have some brilliant concept and do what has worked before.

Riddle says he never gave up on RKBro, but now he's just sad.

Nikki Ash vs. Rhea Ripley

Non-title and hold on though as here is Charlotte to join

commentary. Ripley starts fast with a quick toss to send Nikki flying. Back up and Nikki sends Rhea outside, setting up the big dive off the apron as we take a break. We come back with Rhea hitting a delayed vertical suplex but missing a charge into the corner. A tornado DDT gets two on Ripley but she is right back with a suplex. The Riptide plants Nikki for the pin at 8:26.

Rating: D+. Another week, another chance for Nikki to be the most pathetic face on the roster. Ripley should be beating her but Nikki shouldn't be the champion at this point so there was no way around this. I cannot wait for this deal to be over so we can move on to whatever else they have, as bad as it might be. Just get Nikki out of this stuff already because it isn't working, at least as it is being presented.

The big brawl is on post match with Nikki kicking Charlotte to the floor.

Jinder Mahal tells Veer and Shanky to get this right, because he has given them a great opportunity. Now get rid of Drew McIntyre and his sword.

Video on Bobby Lashley.

MVP orders supper for Lashley and isn't worried about tonight's face to face with Goldberg.

Veer/Shanky vs. Drew McIntyre

Jinder Mahal is here too. McIntyre punches Veer into the corner to start so it's off to Shanky to take over. The big elbow from Veer sets up the chinlock, causing McIntyre to fight back up and take over. There's the neckbreaker to Veer and a Michinoku Driver to Shanky, setting up the Futureshock. The Claymore finishes Shanky at 3:33.

Rating: D+. I'm sure this will set up some big showdown at Summerslam where Mahal gets the win because of the sword

somehow, meaning it's time to set up a bunch of rematches. I still have no idea why this is supposed to be some hot feud, but McIntyre has a sword named Angela. That might not be interesting, but it is certainly a thing that is happening.

Post match Veer goes after the sword but McIntyre takes it away and has a message from Shanky: he wishes he could be as amazing/sexy as McIntyre and has seen the error of his ways. Now Shanky wants McIntyre to win at Summerslam. McIntyre promises to destroy Mahal and we get a quick audience poll supporting the idea.

Charlotte wants revenge for Summerslam so she can find a partner for a tag match against Nikki Ash and Rhea Ripley tonight.

We get what looks to be the same "Elias Is Dead" vignette from last week.

It's time for, I kid you not, MoistTV, with John Morrison bringing out the Miz for answers about his suddenly fine knee. Morrison asks about Miz's favorite movie, which is every time he was in the Marine. When asked if he was really hurt, Miz goes into a bit about how he would never lie to you.

Cue Damian Priest to call Miz a liar (in Spanish) and promise to win the US Title at Summerslam. Miz goes on a rant about how this is his first injury and lets it slip that he has been cleared for weeks. Morrison isn't happy and Priest talks about Miz running off last week. As Miz goes on, Morrison asks why he wasn't told about Miz being healthy. The solution is clear: Miz vs. Priest tonight, which works for Priest. It works for him so well that he shoves Miz in the kid's pool (because there is a kid's pool).

Damian Priest vs. The Miz

Sheamus comes out to join commentary and Miz is in street clothes. Miz starts fast and actually hits the top rope ax

handle but Priest punches him in the leg. Priest charges into a boot but Morrison won't give him the Drip Stick. Instead, Priest gives him a hard clothesline and it's a Brogue Kick to finish Miz at 2:40.

Post match, Sheamus shouts about this being his title. No one is ever going to take it from him, especially Priest. Sheamus does have a broken face but after Summerslam, Priest will have a bleeding head.

We look at Doudrop being scared by Lillie winking at her, giving Alexa Bliss a win.

Eva Marie doesn't want to hear it and thinks they should go to the playground. By that, she means bring her Lillie.

Alexa Bliss plays with Lillie.

John Morrison and Miz agree that things are ok, all while New Day plugs their shirts behind them. Miz and Morrison have a very wet idea for Summerslam.

It's time for Alexa's Playground with Alexa Bliss pushing a Lillie dating show. Doudrop comes in and tries to steal Lillie, stops and stares at her, and hands her back to Bliss before walking away. Bliss: "See you at Summerslam!"

Mace vs. Mansoor

T-Bar and Mustafa Ali are here too. Mace hammers away to start but misses an elbow, allowing Mansoor to make the comeback. The sidekick misses for Mace but he shoves off a Dudley Dog attempt. Mace counters a sunset flip in the corner so Ali dropkicks him down, giving Mansoor the pin at 1:57.

AJ Styles and Omos are ready to destroy RKBro.

Randy Orton vs. Omos

An early RKO attempt doesn't work and Orton has to try

something else. Right hands in the corner don't work either as Omos throws him down and grabs the neck crank. Orton fights up to knock him into the corner but Omos knees him in the ribs. A missed charge lets Orton fail at the RK0 again, with the shove sending him outside this time. AJ goes after Orton on the floor and that's good for a DQ at 3:38.

Rating: C-. That's about all you can do here as you don't want Omos to lose but you don't want him beating someone of Orton's caliber right before a title shot either. The reason for the DQ was kind of lame but it was the right way to go with a match like this one. It's also smart to leave Omos in there for a short burst instead of a long match, as he just isn't ready for anything beyond that yet.

Post match, Omos tosses Orton over the barricade with ease. AJ loads up the Phenomenal Forearm but Riddle runs in for the save, including a dropkick through the ropes to take Omos down. AJ gets kneed in the face so Omos carries him away. That leaves Riddle to help Orton up, leaving Orton to say respect is earned. He respected Riddle at one point but that does not mean he respects him today. After everything he has done in the last week though, Riddle has earned his respect. RKBro is BACK and Riddle is so happy that he throws out the title challenge for Summerslam.

We recap Jeff Hardy vs. Karrion Kross.

Jeff Hardy has spoken to his higher power and got the wrong answer. He's bringing everything against Kross tonight...and here is Kross to jump Hardy.

Karrion Kross vs. Jeff Hardy

Non-title and Hardy starts fast....but gets pulled into the Krossjacket for the tap at 42 seconds.

Eva Marie isn't happy with Doudrop for failing to get Lillie so it's a pair of slaps to the face. Doudrop is so angry that

she stands that glaring as Eva leaves.

Earlier today, Reggie went to the park and talks about how he learned to do his flips and tricks here. R-Truth, in a grass costume, and Akira Tozawa run up for the chase and fail miserably. Reggie flips over the top of the car (Reggie: "Too easy.") and drives off. Truth and Tozawa yell at each other.

Summerslam rundown.

Elias goes to his own grave. Elias is still dead.

Rhea Ripley/Nikki Ash vs. Charlotte/???

The partner is Nia Jax, who laughs at Nikki for trying to take her down. The power game has Nikki down in a hurry instead and the villains take over. Charlotte comes in for a big boot on the floor to send us to a break. We come back with Nikki hitting a bulldog out of the corner, allowing the hot tag off to Ripley. Everything breaks down and Ripley gets Samoan dropped. The Banzai Drop is loaded up but Charlotte tags herself in, knocks Nikki down, and hits Natural Selection for the pin at 7:28.

Rating: D+. Another match where Nikki is basically an afterthought, because that's all she is in the division. Ripley isn't that much better, and now it seems that we might be heading for Charlotte vs. Jax down the line. I've given up hope in this division and the title match on Saturday isn't exactly making that any better.

AJ Styles is ready to destroy Riddle and Randy Orton.

Here is Goldberg for the face to face with Bobby Lashley, but first of all, he gets to talk, because GOLDBERG is so known for his verbal dominance. Goldberg brings up MVP and Lashley talking about fatherhood, which brings Goldberg to his son Gage. It's true that Gage can see videos of Goldberg wrestling, but Goldberg wants him to see it in person (Haven't

we heard him say that like FIVE TIMES NOW?).

Lashley and MVP come out with MVP saying Goldberg has been talking a lot lately. Lashley gets in the ring and says this is his house and the house always wins. Goldberg calls that BS and spears him before posing with his son (who seems to have his high school football team with him) to end the show. This was as bad as everything else has been in this feud, because it is the same story they have told with Goldberg and his son before and it isn't exactly interesting to hear Goldberg talk (or wrestle, but that's a different problem).

Overall Rating: D-. I can't call it a complete failure because some of the wrestling was good and the AJ/0mos vs. RKBro angle is working well (more on that later). The problem is everything else, as this show has some of the worst plot devices and storytelling I've ever seen. We have feuds based on someone being ALMOST a superhero, a sword, a water gun, a sentient doll, and someone's son who needs to see his dad wrestle despite having seen his dad wrestle several times in his life.

That's where everything falls apart on Raw: the stories are not good. It also doesn't help that with those stories, we're getting (in order): more Charlotte dominance, Jinder Mahal, Miz and John Morrison every week, Alexa Bliss and Lillie the Fiend and more Goldberg main events. This show was supposed to make me want to see Summerslam, meaning this is their best foot forward stuff. This is their BEST, making me scared of what it is going to be like when they aren't trying to get me to give them money.

It's also what makes the Tag Team Title feud stand out. As out there as Riddle is (and he's out there), he's displaying a human emotion. Riddle wants Orton to be his friend, Orton won't do it, Riddle stays at it and gets what he wants through hard work. That is something people can relate to and that is what is lacking everywhere else on Raw. The rest of the

characters and stories are not things people are going to relate to and it comes off more as WWE just doing whatever they feel like instead of putting on good material. That's how we got in this situation and I have no idea how to get out of it. Another awful, horrible Raw.

Results

AJ Styles b. Riddle – Styles Clash

Rhea Ripley b. Nikki Ash – Riptide

Drew McIntyre b. Veer/Shanky – Claymore to Shanky

Damian Priest b. The Miz – Brogue Kick

Mansoor b. Mace – Sunset flip

Randy Orton b. Omos via DQ when AJ Styles interfered

Karrion Kross b. Jeff Hardy – Krossjacket choke

Charlotte/Nia Jax b. Rhea Ripley/Nikki Ash – Natural Selection to Ripley

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