

Main Event – May 11, 2017: Black Out

Main Event

Date: May 11, 2017

Location: O2 Arena, London, England

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

It's the British version of the supplemental show, meaning we get to see the highlights from a pretty dull episode of Monday Night Raw. You can typically guess what you're going to get from something like this but there's always the chance, albeit somewhat unlikely, that they might throw in a curve ball. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Curt Hawkins vs. Aleister Black

Hawkins says the King of England called him on the telly and thanked him for making stars. That would be Black from NXT, which is quite the surprise. You'll normally see NXT stars at house shows but it's rare for them to be on TV like this. Black flips over him to start and the threat of a kick sends Hawkins outside. We hit the pose in the middle of the ring but Black nips up to avoid a charge, only to get punched down for a bit. Hawkins' chinlock doesn't get him very far as Black knees him in the face and uses his boot to raise Hawkins to his feet. Black Mass (spinning kick to the head) gives Black the pin at 2:02.

From Raw for the first time.

Kalisto vs. Braun Strowman

Braun says he's not wrestling this match and then kicks Kalisto in the face. Cue Roman Reigns though and we'll say it's a no contest at thirty seconds.

Three straight Superman Punches put Strowman on the floor but he still manages to kick a charging Reigns in the chest. Reigns gets the sling off the bad arm and sends it into the post over and over. A bunch of chair shots knock Strowman into the crowd.

And now, an actual match from Main Event.

Seth Rollins vs. Samoa Joe

They head straight to the floor to start the brawl with Joe throwing him around, only to have Seth catch him with a clothesline off the steps. The fight heads back inside with Joe taking over and grabbing a suplex for two. Joe gets in a hard shot to the knee though and Rollins crumbles to the floor as we take a break. Back with Joe dropping a big knee and telling Rollins not to listen to the fans. The Koquina Clutch is broken up with a jawbreaker and Joe is sent outside for back to back suicide dives. A springboard clothesline gives Seth two but he walks into the snap powerslam for two. Joe can't powerbomb him though and gets caught in the falcon's arrow. A turnbuckle pad is pulled off but Seth gets two off a superkick anyway. It's Rollins being sent chest first into the buckle behind the referee's back. Joe does it again in front of the referee's back for the DQ at 14:12.

Rating: C+. The ending hurts this a lot but these two definitely have chemistry. You can likely pencil in the third match for Extreme Rules and that could be quite the fight if they're given the right gimmick. I like that they didn't have the match end clean and after the first one ended on a fluke, there's a good chance that the third match is the real payoff.

Joe chokes him out after the match.

Gran Metalik vs. Noam Dar

They fight over the arm to start with an armdrag annoying Dar, mainly due to hair issues. The springboard armdrag sends Dar outside and a top rope Asai moonsault sends us to a break. Back with Dar kicking the leg out to send Metalik out to the floor. Dar grabs an armbar for all of a few seconds before Metalik's comeback doesn't get him very far. The Metalik Driver is countered by a kick to the ribs but Dar is dropkicked outside for a suicide dive. Not that it matters as the running kick to the chest ends Metalik at 10:15.

Rating: C-. I like both guys, especially Metalik, but this wasn't very interesting. These cruiserweight matches for the sake of having a cruiserweight match aren't great and this was no exception. You can only see these same people having the same matches so many times before it gets really old. Not bad, but old.

We'll wrap it up here.

Bray Wyatt vs. Dean Ambrose

Non-title with Miz and Maryse on commentary. Bray punches Dean in the head to start as Miz talks about wanting to return prestige to the Intercontinental Title. Dirty Deeds doesn't work so Bray suplexes him on the floor instead. Back with Bray getting two off a DDT until Dean hits a hard clothesline. Ambrose sends him outside for the running clothesline off the barricade and here are Miz and Maryse to ringside.

Sister Abigail is countered into a rollup for two and Dean hits the top rope elbow. Miz grabs the Intercontinental Title for a distraction so Dean suicide dives onto him. Bray is smart enough to go after the distracted Dean, allowing Miz to hit Ambrose in the back with the title. Sister Abigail finishes Ambrose at 15:12.

Rating: D+. This was a long match to end a very long show. I can live with a dirty finish to set up a title match next week and Miz is someone you can buy as a threat to the title. I'm surprised Ambrose has held the thing as long as he has but it's time for him to lose it. Adding Bray to the mix could be interesting as well.

Miz poses over Ambrose and hits the catchphrase to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. Just a quick show here, which wasn't all that interesting as usual. Raw was really boring this week and this didn't make things any better. Black was a VERY big surprise though and that's one of the best things that can happen on a show like this. It would be really nice to have an NXT talent appear every now and then, if nothing else just to shake things up a bit.

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205 Live Results – May 9, 2017: When Did That Happen?

205 Live

Date: May 9, 2017

Location: O2 Arena, London, England

Commentators: Corey Graves, Tom Phillips

The show goes international this week on the final part of the UK tour (at least on TV that is). The top stories continue to be Austin Aries vs. Neville for the Cruiserweight Title and Brian Kendrick vs. Akira Tozawa, which just keeps going somehow despite being fairly far past its expiration date. Let's get to it.

The opening recap looks at Neville recruiting TJP to help him against Aries and getting annoyed at TJP wanting a title shot as a result. Jack Gallagher was brought in as well but Aries had his back. They're taking their sweet time setting up a tag match out of this whole thing.

Opening sequence.

Here's Gallagher for an opening chat. The fans call him Jackie Boy, which Gallagher seems to appreciate. Jack gets to the point: he was attacked by Theodore Jeeves Perkins but this man made the save. Aries comes out to the delight of the London crowd. He's been brought out here so Jack can toast him, but there's something more important.

As a point of honor to thank Aries for his help, Gallagher is going to do whatever he can to make sure Aries makes it to his title match at Extreme Rules. It's time for the beer (Aries: "I'm more of a red wine kind of guy myself.") and Jack sings a little For He's A Jolly Good Fellow. Cue Neville with his pyro (Gallagher: "BLOODY H***!") to interrupt though because he's sick of these two.

Neville thinks Gallagher is a parody of British people but Aries calls him out for getting disqualified at Payback. The champ holds up the title for a real toast to Aries as TJP runs in from behind.

The brawl is on with Gallagher taking a beating until Aries dives over the announcers' table to take Neville out. TJP takes some beer to the face and the Fivearm puts Neville on the floor. More beer is consumed. This was quite the brawl and makes me want to see these four have a tag match so well done indeed.

Rich Swann runs into Noam Dar and Alicia Fox. Swann thinks Dar is thinking with the wrong part of his body but Fox says she'd never leave a real man (again). Dar promises that Rich will get what he deserves.

Tony Nese vs. Mustafa Ali

We hit the mat after Nese's early posing doesn't get him very far. That just earns Tony a cartwheel into a moonsault for a standoff, followed by something like an Octopus hold. Ali hits a very big flip dive to the floor as we see Drew Gulak looking distraught in the back. Thankfully we're back in the ring pretty quickly so I don't have to listen to the fans shouting TEN every time the referee counts.

They're already back on the floor though with Nese dropping him face first onto the barricade and table for a nice power display. The key to Nese is that he might not be far stronger than the rest of the division but he's strong enough that it's noticeable, which is all it needs to be. A suplex onto the top rope gives Tony two and we hit the torture rack. Nese hits the high flying for a bit with a middle rope moonsault but Ali comes back with a middle rope hurricanrana for a breather.

The rolling neckbreaker sets up another hurricanrana on the floor and Nese is in trouble. That only lasts until he gets back inside though as Tony wins a slugout and drops a knee for two. Ali flips out of a pumphandle slam though and it's a tornado DDT into the inverted 450 for the pin on Nese at 10:44.

Rating: B. The time seemed to play a major role here as these guys beat each other up for a good while until Ali got the better of it. They've got something with people like Gulak and Nese having specific styles to go against the more standard cruiserweight style. It also makes sense to have Ali, the cruiserweight, win on the cruiserweight show. Good match here and one of the better ones the show has had in awhile.

Ariya Daivari yells at the guy who shined his shoes for a sub par

job. He also runs into Akira Tozawa and yells at him for messing up a \$1500 shirt. Feud coming I'd assume.

Cedric Alexander will be back soon.

Brian Kendrick vs. Akira Tozawa

There's no handshake here (not exactly shocking) and Kendrick kicks him in the face at the bell in retaliation for last week's attack. Tozawa shrugs it off though and kicks Brian in the chest with a few shouts thrown in for good measure. They head outside though with Kendrick getting in a Sliced Bread to really take over. Tozawa dives back in at nine for a good false finish but he gets caught in a modified armbar.

A camel clutch keeps Tozawa in trouble and a cobra clutch makes it even worse. He certainly has the clutches covered. Tozawa fights up and hits a running boot to the face, followed by a Shining Wizard for two. Kendrick drops him with a dragon suplex but the Captain's Hook doesn't last very long. Things speed up until Tozawa gets in a Saito suplex, only to miss a top rope backsplash. Another Sliced Bread is broken up though and Tozawa grabs a rollup for the pin at 9:43.

Rating: B-. I liked this one too as they were again allowed time and put together a good match as a result. Tozawa getting the win is the right call as the feud has gone from Kendrick getting in every cheap shot he could until Tozawa started to turn the tide and then never looked back. Solid match here as the story continues.

Kendrick snaps post match and sends Tozawa into the steps. He gets crushed in between the steps and Kendrick says this is the last lesson: no one messes with him. Tozawa is out (with his eyes open) to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. I don't know when it happened but at some point this turned into one of the more enjoyable shows of the week. They've found a rhythm of going from story to story and making each of them work. The wrestling is good as well and they've even set up a match for next week. Good show here and it's turning into something fun, which I really didn't expect.

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Impact Wrestling – May 11, 2017: Doth My Eyes Deceive Me?

Impact Wrestling

Date: May 11, 2017

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, D'Angelo Dinero

We're back in the Impact Zone where the main event is over another promotion's title. I know GFW and Impact have officially merged so it's not as odd as it sounds but there's something weird about the Global Force Wrestling World Title match main eventing Impact Wrestling. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Alberto El Patron beating Eli Drake to earn a shot at the GFW World Title tonight. Magnus is ready.

Opening sequence.

Andrew Everett vs. Caleb Konley vs. Dezmond Xavier vs. Matt Sydal

One fall to a finish. They start with the rapid fire near falls via sunset flips and rollups until Konley and Sydal put on stereo

submissions. Neither of those go anywhere so Sydal drops a standing leg on Konley and gives Xavier a jawbreaker at the same time. Konley comes right back with a moonsault for two on Everett with Matt making a save. That's enough of the wrestling so Everett and Xavier hit back to back dives onto everyone else. Back in and Konley hits a belly to back fisherman's suplex (that's a new one) for two on Sydal, only to have Everett grab the Frankendriver for the pin on Xavier at 6:24.

Rating: C. Starting the show with a match is the right call and I'm glad that they're actually having Everett keep some of the pace instead of just having him lose and more on the next challenger. That's how you build a division instead of just a champion and a challenger, which should help things a lot.

JB pesters Josh again.

Ethan Carter III promises that we'll see the Cowboy tonight. I smell an impression.

KM orders a pizza and says his name is Billy. He takes the pizza from the delivery guy and starts eating but refuses to pay. The delivery guy says the bill says Billy but KM says that's not his name. KM doesn't like being called a liar and throws the guy out.

Here's EC3 now dressed as a rather goofy cowboy. He talks about being a SOB from Boca Raton, Florida but sounds more like Waylon Mercy. Carter rode up on his steed Sebastian and sings a modified version of Friends in Low Places. Cue the real Storm for the beatdown but Carter takes off a boot and hits him in the head. Carter manages to handcuff him to the ropes and give him a whipping with a belt. Sounds like a strap match. The beating goes on for a good while with security taking their sweet time breaking it up.

JB annoys Josh again.

Hakim Zane/Idris Abraham vs. Laredo Kid/Garza Jr.

Zane wristlocks Kid to start but Laredo puts him on his shoulders for a missile dropkick from Garza. Things speed up with Idris running the ropes until he floors Garza (who has removed his red

pants for some reason) with a hard shoulder. Idris' charge is countered with a powerbomb onto his partner though Zane is sent to the floor. A 450 gives Laredo the pin at 3:26.

Rating: C-. Sloppy match but they kept things moving fast enough to make this work. Kid and Garza are fine for your run of the mill lucha team and there's always going to be room for something like that. Abraham and Zane looked good too though and with another tournament coming up for the GFW Tag Team Titles (which can't just stay vacant and then disappear), it's nice to actually set something up.

D'Angelo Dinero wants to make Impact great.

Ava Storie vs. Laurel Van Ness

This company doesn't have a great mental health policy does it? Van Ness is still in the wedding dress and gets two off an early spear. A kick to the face and a running curb stomp is enough for the pin on Storie at 1:36.

Spud still wants to hurt Swoggle.

Here's LAX, some of whom are sporting white face paint, for a Decay funeral. Konnan wants to show their disrespect and tells the champs to pour the ashes on the mat. This company threw their best team at LAX and now you have a dead clown and a monster eating through a feeding tube. Now it's time for LAX to win the GFW Tag Team Titles for the sake of Latino pride. A fan waves an American flag and refuses to sit down. Cue the Veterans of War for the save, which is the only logical way to go. A fireman's carry flapjack into a cutter plants Ortiz and LAX runs. Good segment.

Grand Championship: Marshe Rockett vs. Moose

Moose is defending but Rockett jumps him to start and hits a Harlem side kick for no cover. A dropkick knocks Marshe off the top though and Rockett chills on the floor for the rest of the round. Moose wins the first round and wastes no time, finishing Rockett with the sitout chokeslam at 35 seconds of the second round.

Rating: D. As usual, I have no idea what the rounds are supposed to

add here. Moose could just as easily have hit the says thing for a win in about four minutes and I don't get how a brief break changes anything. Moose dominated most of the match and won clean so what's the point of the gimmick with the rounds?

Post match Tyrus comes out for a distraction, allowing Eli Drake to come in with some chair shots to Moose. Chris Adonis runs in for the Adonis Lock and more chair shots from Drake leave Moose laying.

More JB and Josh.

Dutch Mantel announces the return of Ultimate X between Trevor Lee, Andrew Everett and Low Ki for the title next week. This would feel like more of a surprise if the Ultimate X wasn't above the ring.

Angelina Love vs. Alisha Edwards

Eddie Edwards is in his wife's corner on crutches. Alisha charges at Love to start and we hear more about JB annoying Josh. Angelina's comeback is cut off by a Futureshock but Davey Richards gets on the apron. That's fine with Alisha who kicks the ropes between his legs, only to have Angelina hit Edwards in the back with a chain for the DQ at 2:32.

Eddie goes after Angelina but Davey crutches him in the knee.

Lashley will be watching the main event.

GFW World Title: Alberto El Patron vs. Magnus

Alberto is challenging and seems to have the fans behind him. An early armbreaker across the top rope has Magnus reeling and a clothesline makes things even worse. Magnus grabs a suplex and kicks away a bit as the champ is playing the de facto heel here. The back and forth continues with Patron hitting a top rope right hand to the jaw and grabbing a chinlock.

They fight to the top and both guys are knocked out to the floor as we take a break. Back with Alberto in control until he walks into a Falcon Arrow (not a sitout powerslam Josh) for two. Josh rants about Jim Ross tweeting him about how awesome he is and complains about JB some more as the guys head outside for nothing of note.

Back in and the Backstabber sets up the armbreaker on Magnus but the champ gets a rope. The Cloverleaf sends Patron to the rope as well and they head up top again. Alberto misses his top rope double stomp and hurts his knee. Magnus gets in a powerbomb but gets pulled down into the armbreaker for the submission at 18:23.

Rating: B. This felt like a main event match but the same problem persists: these two guys weren't even in the company three months ago and they're fighting over a title from a promotion that probably hasn't even held thirty shows in the three years since it was founded (including all the co-promoted ones). Just drop the GFW stuff and let the Impact title be what matters.

That being said, this was quite the main event as they've really turned up the focus on the wrestling as of late. It's not a classic or anything but I had a good time with it and the battle of the submission holds made it feel like a chess match. El Patron winning makes the most sense and should set up a rematch with Lashley at Slammiversary, which makes the most sense.

Overall Rating: C-. Not the best rating but they're certainly moving in the right direction. The wrestling is getting better and the stories are getting tighter. That doesn't mean the stories are great (or even good at times) but I'll take a focused direction over random chaos almost any day. If they can knock off some of the nonsense (Josh vs. JB, Swoggle vs. Spud, the GFW stuff), they could be in a very good place in a hurry.

Results

Andrew Everett b. Caleb Konley, Dezmond Xavier and Matt Sydal – Frankendriver to Xavier

Laredo Kid/Garza Jr. b. Idris Abraham/Hakim Zane – 450 splash to Abraham

Laurel Van Ness b. Ava Storie – Curb stomp

Moose b. Marshe Rockett – Sitout chokeslam

Alisha Edwards b. Angelina Love via DQ when Love used a chain

Alberto El Patron b. Magnus – Cross armbreaker

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New Column: Let's Think About This

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A trip through KB's mind on a Wednesday night with Tito Santana, William Regal, Kofi Kingston and Alexa Bliss.

Monday Night Raw – December 9, 2002: Three Times! THREE TIMES!

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 9, 2002

Location: Thompson-Boling Arena, Knoxville, Tennessee

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's the go home show for Armageddon and that means it's time for the HHH vs. Shawn Michaels Show (as in the official version instead of the unofficial one we've seen for weeks now). Other than that, I really can't think of anything important that Raw has to offer on Sunday but it's not like Raw cares about anyone but these two anyway. Let's get to it.

Eric Bischoff and Chief Morely are in the ring with Shawn Michaels and HHH appearing on the screen. Bischoff gets right to the point: Sunday's match is going to be 2/3 falls. That's not all though as each fall will have a special stipulation. The first fall will be a street fight, the second will be held inside a cage and the third is a ladder match. HHH and Shawn didn't say a word. So to clarify, we're likely getting THREE Shawn vs. HHH matches and HHH will get to beat Shawn in his signature match to become the champion all over again. Oh joy.

Booker T./Goldust vs. William Regal/Lance Storm

During the entrances, a four way elimination match is confirmed for Sunday with Chris Jericho/Christian defending against these two teams and the Dudley Boyz. Booker works on Storm's arm to start and let's hit the HHH talk. Goldust comes in for the yet to be named Rear View on Regal. A suplex drops Goldust though and it's off to a chinlock. That goes nowhere so it's already off to Booker as the announcers manage to talk about the match for a bit.

Booker's spinebuster gets two on Lance and it's already back to the HHH discussion. There's the ax kick for two more but Goldust tags himself in for a double clothesline. Shattered Dreams makes Regal cringe and something like a Hart Attack gets two on Storm. Lance comes right back with a Sharpshooter though and Goldust tape.

Rating: C-. This was all about the angle building but that doesn't mean much given how fast they're throwing together this weak link story for Goldust. I'm not sure why they couldn't just have Booker and Goldust go on a roll and beat some teams but why do that when you can have them lose over and over in the first place?

Goldust says he's the weak link and wants Booker to find a new partner.

Trish Stratus is reading Hulk Hogan's new book for no apparent reason when Chris Jericho comes in to read an excerpt. Apparently he made Hogan tap at one point but he'd rather talk about the sexual

tension between himself and Trish. She thinks Vitamin C sounds very nu-Trish-ous. Then again she saw him without his clothes on two weeks ago and thinks it's Vitamin Wee. These two have great chemistry together.

Rob Van Dam is on the phone in Bischoff's office when the bosses come in to hang up the call. Bischoff needs to keep the line open for his call from Scott Steiner. Van Dam leaves but tells Bischoff that he just hung up on Steiner. I would pay so much money to see Steiner and Van Dam have a five minute chat about....well anything really.

Steven Richards vs. Jacqueline

Jacqueline is in a triple threat match with Trish and Victoria on Sunday, just in case you weren't over the card already. Steven easily powers her into the corner to start but gets armdragged down. Richards gets serious and grabs a side slam for two with Jackie's foot on the ropes freaking him out. A DDT gives Jackie two more but she drops him throat first across the top rope. The StevieDT is good for the pin and I have no idea why this existed.

Victoria comes in to go after Jackie but Trish makes the save. Jackie wants nothing from Trish and the loser's music plays for some reason.

Jeff Hardy is honored to be compared to a young HBK but the real version comes in to say he's not dead. Shawn knows Jeff is going to take a beating tonight and says take advantage of HHH when he gets cocky. Jeff is grateful for the advice and says if Shawn needs help in the ladder match, let him know.

Rob Van Dam vs. Batista

Batista throws him around to start as JR gets in his regular mention of Rob's offense being "unorthodox". Choking underneath the ropes ensues until Rob gets in a few kicks to take over. Rolling Thunder gives Van Dam two but Flair grabs Rob's foot. Cue Kane for the fast DQ.

Kane and Van Dam clean house.

Morely yells at Kane, who doesn't know who Morely is. The Chief explains things so Kane does a Val Venis impression, earning himself a handicap match with 3 Minute Warning.

Christopher Nowinski/D'Lo Brown vs. Maven/Al Snow

And Brown is just a heel now. The good guys clean house to start with Snow armdragging Brown a few times. Maven comes in for some right hands of his own until Nowinski pulls him down from behind. The slow beatdown begins with the fans saying someone sucks. My guess would be the whole match but I'm too big of a Brown fan to say that. Nowinski gets dropkicked off the top and the hot tag brings in Snow. The trapping headbutts have Brown in trouble until Chris makes the save. The Sky High puts Snow away.

Rating: D. This is as low level of a feud as you can get and despite the pre-match video on the match, I have no idea why these guys are feuding. I don't know if this is still supposed to hype up Tough Enough but it's really not interesting. Also, this gets nearly two minutes longer than Batista vs. Van Dam? Is Batista really that incapable of wrestling a longer match?

Booker tries to talk Goldust out of splitting up the team. The plea is enough and they'll be a team at the pay per view. So they set up and blew off the story in about forty minutes. That might be a record even for Raw. The story is fine but could we get a bit more time to let it set in? At least have the story go on longer than two weeks to let it have some impact.

HHH vs. Jeff Hardy

HHH pulls him off the ropes during the entrances but Jeff gets in the legdrop between the legs. That's enough trouble for HHH as he takes Hardy outside for some whips into the steps. Back in and a spinebuster sets up a side slam, followed by an over the shoulder backbreaker. Jeff's comeback consists of a running forearm before two Pedigrees (because HHH can't just have one of anything) give HHH the pin.

Rating: D. Well it's not like Jeff is doing anything at this point. You knew they were going to put HHH over someone very hard to make sure you know how awesome he is before Sunday's title match. Just in case you didn't realize how completely awesome HHH was you see. Hardy was treated like a jobber here, though to be fair it's not that far from the truth.

HHH loads up a chair but Shawn comes out for the staredown as we take a break. Back with Flair saying he'd like a word with Shawn. With Shawn holding the title, Flair talks about carrying that very belt around the airports (not quite) but then someone told him that

Shawn was the new man.

Then one day Arn Anderson said Shawn was a tough act to follow and Flair had to take a look in the mirror. Ric realized that he wasn't the best in the world anymore and there was no way around it. As high as Shawn was on the pedestal though, there's a new man in town. That man's name is HHH and he's the best in the world. Shawn needs to concede the fact that he needs to pass the torch. If Shawn tries to keep going, HHH will kill him on the way to taking the most coveted prize in this business. Shawn seems to buy into the idea and walks away as HHH reiterates what Flair just said.

Great stuff here from Flair but there's no way around the fact that we're looking at three Shawn vs. HHH matches on Sunday despite no one wanting to see it. The first match was great but their promos haven't done much since then. Couple that with the fact that I can't imagine their match is going to validate crushing everyone else in their paths to get there and it's hard to imagine this is worth all the effort.

The Raw Retro for the week is Mike Tyson debuting and Steve Austin getting in his face. You can hear WCW collapsing from here.

Kane vs. 3 Minute Warning

Rico offers an early distraction so the Samoans can jump Kane from behind. Double headbutts have Kane in trouble and Rosey gets two off a legdrop. The running DDT plants Jamal and Rosey splashes his partner by mistake. The chokeslam puts Jamal down for the pin in less than three minutes. We have four teams and the Samoans are jobbing in a handicap match?

Rico helps with a post match beatdown until Van Dam makes the save. Jamal even eats a Van Terminator.

Stacy is in a rather sexy Santa outfit and debuts the Test blue ball Christmas ornament. Yes, this really is the joke they're STILL going with. Just in case you didn't get the idea, Stacy sings a Christmas carol about the testicles roasting over an open fire.

RNN BREAKING NEWS shows Randy Orton at the New York Stock Exchange. We run down the pay per view card with all four of its announced matches.

Chris Jericho wants to put Trish through a table in their six person tag. Oh and it's rather large in case you were wondering. Victoria

comes up and says she'll be the one doing that.

Shawn tells Flair that he'll be waiting for HHH in the parking lot.

Trish Stratus/Dudley Boyz vs. Chris Jericho/Christian/Victoria

Tables match. D-Von hammers Christian into the corner before it's off to Bubba for the big elbows. Why they're tagging isn't clear but I'd assume it's because they need to fill in some extra time and don't have any more matches. It's off to Victoria, who takes What's Up. Trish hits one on Jericho to make Lawler a bit envious. D-Von brings in the first table but gets knocked off the apron. That's fine though as Bubba loads up a powerbomb on Victoria...and we take a break?

Back with Bubba in a chinlock and JR apologizing for the abrupt commercial. Victoria comes in to work on Bubba as we see a clip of Jericho breaking up the powerbomb before the commercial. The referee doesn't see a tag to D-Von, who can't come in despite, as JR has mentioned more than once, there being no disqualifications. Now the announcers discuss which version of Shawn will show up on Sunday (Shawn Michaels, HBK or the Showstopper).

The Lionsault hits knees and Bubba covers out of instinct as Christian slides in a table. That table is set up in the corner and Jericho bounces off of it as this just keeps going. Bubba dives over for the hot tag to D-Von and house is cleaned in a hurry. Jericho saves Christian from being suplexed through a table but takes 3D for his efforts.

The Dudleys load Victoria up for a powerbomb but Richards comes out for the save, only to have Spike Dudley get rid of him. Christian eats a good looking double flapjack but now Regal and Storm come in to jump Bubba and D-Von. Booker T. and Goldust make it SIX RUN-INS as they go after the champs.

Jericho takes the Stratusphere for some reason and since it's just a weak hurricanrana, Chris takes Trish's head off with a clothesline. Booker saves Trish and stops for a Spinarooni but gets dropped by Storm. That earns Lance a 3D and the Dudleys finally help Trish powerbomb Victoria through the table for the win.

Rating: D. Did I mention there isn't much on this show and they don't have enough to fill in two hours? This match ran over fifteen minutes with six people running in. The tagging stuff got old in a

hurry, especially with JR mentioning more than once that there were no disqualifications. Why he didn't mention the tags not being necessary isn't clear but it might have made too much sense.

HHH and Flair head to the parking lot where Shawn hits HHH in the head with a shovel. Flair takes a shot as well (at least wait for the bar) and a trashcan shot knocks HHH into a dumpster. As you might expect, Shawn climbs the highest thing he can find (the production truck) and dives onto HHH for the big crash. Shawn rants about having heart to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. Yeah this isn't working and it's very, very clear that the red side of Armageddon is a horrible show with EVERYTHING banked on Shawn vs. HHH. I'm not even sure why the Tag Team Title match needs to be a four way when you could easily have two tags to flesh things out a bit. The long matches and bad wrestling didn't help here but above all else, Raw needs something fresh instead of HHH vs. Shawn again.

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NXT – May 10, 2017: Four

Out of Five

NXT

Date: May 10, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Percy Watson, Tom Phillips, Nigel McGuinness

With ten days to go until Takeover: Chicago, it's time to crown a new #1 contender to the NXT Title. Tonight we have Hideo Itami facing Roderick Strong for the shot at Bobby Roode in Chicago. While this should seem like a foregone conclusion, Strong was built up quite well in the back to back video packages and looks good coming into the match. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at Strong vs. Itami, which is all that needs to be focused on.

Opening sequence.

Aleister Black vs. Cesaro Bononi

The jobber is massive at probably 6'6 with a good look. A kick to the chest drops him with ease though and Black has a seat. More kicks set up a knee to the back and Black Mass puts Bononi away at 1:29. Great pop for the finish.

We look back at last week's battle royal with Asuka interfering and injuring Ember Moon. For the first time, Moon is officially ruled out, meaning it's going to be a triple threat.

Pete Dunne vs. Tyler Bate for the UK Title is also confirmed for Takeover.

Video on Dunne.

Video on Ruby Riot, including her growing up in Indiana. She has a lot of tattoos and they all tell a story. The end of the story: Ruby Riot on Women's Champion. No one has ever seen anyone like her and she's here to break the mold of the women's division. Does anyone NOT break that mold?

Earlier today we had a sitdown interview with Nikki Cross but she

couldn't sit still and refused to let a microphone be set up. She finally just grabbed the thing and said three, two, one action. Then she started messing with the boom mic while talking about Ruby. She wants to fight right now and wants her title too. This was rather disturbing in a good way.

Drew McIntyre is ready to take the NXT Title. Wesley Blake of all people comes in to say he deserves the shot. That seems to set up a match.

The Velveteen Dream is coming.

Here's DIY for a chat. They never had a fair rematch for the titles so it's high time they got their shot at the Authors of Pain. This brings out....Riddick Moss and Tino Sabbatelli? Really? They say the line starts behind them but DIY says Sabbatelli and Moss just crossed the line. The fight is on with DIY easily clearing the ring but here's a referee.

DIY vs. Riddick Moss/Tino Sabbatelli

Moss knees Ciampa down to start and it's off to Tino for a beating in the corner. The heels take turns stomping away until Sabbatelli grabs a chinlock. Ciampa throws him away though and the hot tag brings in Gargano to clean house. A kick to the head takes Moss down and the slingshot spear gets a rather delayed two (seemed like a slightly blown save). Gargano hits a dive to the floor and the Meet in the Middle ends Moss at 5:03.

Rating: C-. This was just a step above a squash with DIY looking like the polished team that they really are. Well done on bringing in Sabbatelli and Moss like this. They're way too young to win a match like this but they have to be brought to the main show again somehow and this was as good as anything else.

Post match Regal makes DIY vs. the Authors (who come out for the announcement) in a ladder match.

Kassius Ohno says he fell down against Bobby Roode and now he's in a bigger building. You take down a skyscraper brick by brick but here's Andrade Cien Almas to call Ohno a perro. NO! DON'T TRY TO BE

LIKE ALBERTO! Ohno reads him the riot act about squandering his opportunities and a match is made for next week.

Video on Tyler Bate.

Strong says this match is why he's here. His music starts playing so he has to leave.

Itami respects Strong but tonight, Roderick is going to go to sleep.

Roderick Strong vs. Hideo Itami

The winner gets the shot at Roode at Takeover. Feeling out process to start with Itami working on an early headlock. The threat of a big kick sends Strong outside and we take a break. Back with Itami forearming him in the head and grabbing a chinlock that doesn't go anywhere. Strong gets in a shot to the ribs though and the first backbreaker gets two.

Strong starts in on the shoulder and another backbreaker gets the same. It's off to a bodyscissors with Strong cranking on the shoulder even more until they fall outside. Strong doesn't waste any time by tossing Itami back first onto the apron. Back from a second break with a double clothesline putting both guys down. Itami gets his tornado DDT onto the top rope and a top rope boot gets two.

Strong is right back with an Angle Slam for two (SWEET! I can't stand that chant.) of his own but takes too long going up, allowing Itami to grab a super Falcon Arrow for a very near fall. The slugout actually goes to Strong but Itami gets all fired up and hits some running kicks in the corner to knock Strong senseless. The GTS sends Itami to Chicago at 22:59.

Rating: B+. I'm not sure what the point was in having Strong built up over the last two weeks to have him lose here but it was in a heck of a match. These guys beat the heck out of each other with Itami taking it to a level that Strong couldn't reach to finally put him away. Itami winning was the pretty obvious conclusion after the issues with Roode and the match should be really solid.

Itami helps Strong to his feet to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This show set up a lot of Takeover and that's a

good thing with so little time beforehand. At the moment we have four matches announced with a fifth likely being set up next week (a four way between Strong, Black, Ohno and McIntyre for the #1 contendership would be a good option). They did a lot of advancing this week and that's where NXT shines, making this a good show.

Results

Aleister Black b. Cesaro Bononi – Black Mass

DIY b. Riddick Moss/Tino Sabbatelli – Meet in the Middle to Moss

Hideo Itami b. Roderick Strong – GTS

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Smackdown – May 9, 2017: The British Curse Turns Blue

Smackdown

Date: May 9, 2017

Location: 02 Arena, London, England

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Byron Saxton, John Bradshaw Layfield

We're taped tonight from London as we have less than two weeks before Backlash. That means it's Jinder Mahal time tonight and we get to see more of his rapid fire build towards being a main eventer. Other than that we might get more of the Welcoming Committee, which is turning into one of the worst heel stables I can remember in years. Let's get to it.

We open with a clip of last month's Six Pack Challenge where Mahal became #1 contender. Has Mojo Rawley had a match since then? Mahal then cost Randy Orton the House of Horrors match and stole the title belt.

Opening sequence.

Here's Orton to get things going and he has the title back, thanks to Shane McMahon taking it from Jinder last week. Orton says he lost because of Mahal, not because of Wyatt or that refrigerator. Before Orton can get too far, here's Mahal to show off his promotional pictures with the title. Mahal promises to begin a new age at Backlash before speaking I believe Punjab.

Cue Kevin Owens to say no one cares about anything but him. Owens brags about ending Chris Jericho's career and, after he gets rid of AJ Styles, he wants the World Title. Now it's AJ coming out to quite the reaction to say he's the face that runs the place. Cue Baron Corbin but Sami Zayn jumps him from behind and the fights are on with the good guys cleaning house.

Becky Lynch vs. Natalya

Before the match, we get some generic "British people have bad teeth" jokes from James Ellsworth and Carmella. Naomi and Charlotte are here as Becky's seconds. The Welcoming Committee offers an early distraction so Natalya can send Becky to the floor and take over. We hit the abdominal stretch for a bit before the STRAIGHT FIRE forearm has Natalya reeling. The Bexploder looks to set up something on the top but the other women get in a fight, allowing Natalya to pull Becky off the top for the pin at 3:02. That's almost the same ending as Alexa Bliss vs. Mickie James from last night.

Rating: D+. The time and the familiar ending hurt this one but real problem was taking fifteen minutes to introduce everyone and start the match. I'm sure this sets up a six woman tag for the pay per view, which should be a good place for either someone to turn heel or at least for the Welcoming Committee to get a win. Therefore, look for Charlotte to pin Carmella.

Lana is coming soon.

Charlotte blames Naomi for Becky's loss but Lynch comes in to cool them down. A six woman tag is set for the pay per view.

It's Fashion Files time! They're at the 02 Arena this week and Fandango is dressed as Sherlock Holmes while Breeze is a standard British cop. Fandango: "Cheerio." Breeze: "No thanks. I've already had my breakfast." They find some spilled lead paint that would only be worn by Uggs. That must be a ruse so Breezango can't tell them apart but it doesn't really matter. The paint leads to a room where roaring is heard. They think something nefarious is going on in there but it's just the Ascension warming themselves up. Breeze: "I'm getting too old for this s***e." More funny stuff here as Breezango continues to look good.

Luke Harper vs. Erick Rowan

Rowan throws him to the floor to start as the announcers talk about how these two are running amuck with no one to guide them. Back in and Rowan scores with a spinning kick to the face and a splash for two. Harper suplexes his way out of the head vice but the discus lariat is blocked. Instead Erick gets two off a Side Effect and grabs the mask. The distraction (as the referee tries to figure out what the mask is supposed to look like) allows Rowan to poke Harper in the eye and grab a reverse spinning powerslam for the pin at 4:23.

Rating: D. Just a power match here but they really need to either stop pushing Harper for a few weeks and then having him lose over and over again. I mean, do they really think there's value in Erick Rowan winning with a lame powerslam? This didn't work and the booking makes my head hurt so we'll move on.

Here's Dolph Ziggler to call out Shinsuke Nakamura. He's been here for eight years (How has it only been that long?) but the fans treat him like a disease. Who do the people cheer for now? That starts a Nakamura chant as this is starting to sound like Chris Jericho vs. AJ Styles last year.

Now people are calling Nakamura an artist but Ziggler is the strongest man in WWE because he never needed the people. This brings out Nakamura to tell Ziggler to shut up. Nakamura is ready to show him so here's a referee but Ziggler says nope. Dolph says we do this on his time and wants the match at Backlash. The sneak attack earns Dolph a beating.

Sami is fired up to team with Orton and Styles. Zayn tries to run a strategy session but seems to just annoy his partners. By the time he announces their team as the winners, they've both left.

New Day is coming and we get a video game themed promo with every other team being listed on a character select screen.

Breezango vs. Ascension

Fandango chops at Konnor to start but it's off to Viktor who runs him over. A chinlock doesn't last long and it's off to Breeze for some house cleaning. Fandango makes a blind tag and it's an atomic drop into the Last Dance for the in at 2:39.

Post match the Usos come out to say twelve days over and over while listing off various things that Breezango can do to each others' backs (with Jimmy clearly trying not to crack up).

Mojo Rawley is giving some kids a tour of the backstage area but stops to tell them a story about Andre the Giant. Andre did a lot of things but Mojo switches to a story about a boy who was different growing up. He was bullied as a kid but then he used it as motivation to become a legend. Mojo pulls out the trophy and the kids are amazed. I've started to like Mojo more and more lately and I'd love to see him get some more TV time.

Rusev hasn't heard about his demand for a World Title shot but he'll be here next week to get an answer.

Randy Orton/Sami Zayn/AJ Styles vs. Jinder Mahal/Baron Corbin/Kevin Owens

Sami and Corbin get things started but a quick tag brings in Owens. There's no contact though as it's off to Mahal for some kicks to the chest. Sami grabs a headscissors and brings in Orton so Mahal tags out to Owens. The threat of an RKO sends Owens out to the floor and we take a break.

Back with Corbin working over Sami and handing it off to Owens as the eternal feud continues. Sami is tossed outside for a stomping from Mahal, drawing AJ over to stare him down. Corbin's chinlock keeps things slow so Jinder comes in for one of his own. The stomping keeps going and we take a break.

Back with AJ getting the hot tag to come in and clean house as everything breaks down. The running forearm drops a seated Corbin and Sami hits a big flip dive onto all three villains. Owens breaks up the Phenomenal Forearm though and Styles and Corbin are down. It's Mahal breaking up the tag though and dropping a knee for two on Styles.

Owens comes back in for some very aggressive stomping and a chinlock of his own. That's quite the popular move tonight and in no way a method to stretch out a long main event. The backsplash hits knees though and the hot tag brings in Orton. Everything breaks down and Owens eats the RKO, only to have Jinder's cobra clutch slam put Orton away at 22:14.

Rating: C+. The match was more long than good and the ending extended the Mahal vs. Orton feud but this felt like a way to fill in TV time instead of a match that needed to go this long. I'm not sure how much people are going to buy Mahal's cobra clutch slam as a threat to beat Orton but at least they're setting it up as a possibility.

Overall Rating: D+. This was a rough one as it felt like a shortened version of Raw. The problem is I don't watch Smackdown for a shortened version of Raw but rather something far more interesting and exciting. To be fair though, I think we can blame that on the UK

tour as those shows are almost always lifeless. Some stuff was set up for the pay per view though and that's important with just a show left beforehand.

Results

Natalya b. Becky Lynch – Natalya pulled her off the top rope

Erick Rowan b. Luke Harper – Spinning reverse powerslam

Breezango b. Ascension – Last Dance to Viktor

Jinder Mahal/Kevin Owens/Baron Corbin b. Sami Zayn/Randy Orton/AJ Styles – Cobra clutch slam to Orton

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Monday Night Raw – May 8, 2017: Wake Me When We're Back Home

Monday Night Raw

Date: May 8, 2017

Location: O2 Arena, London, England

Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T., Corey Graves

We're over in the old country tonight for a taped show. It's roughly a month away from Extreme Rules and we don't have much of a card yet. However, you can pretty much pencil in Roman Reigns and Braun Strowman coming back from severe injuries to work the show because that's how WWE works. Let's get to it.

Here's Dean Ambrose to open the show who says Kurt Angle won't be here tonight. Dean: "I heard his dog is sick or something." For tonight though, Ambrose is in charge. Before we can hear his first act, here are Miz and Maryse to interrupt. While the idea of Ambrose in charge could only lead to chaos, he has something else in mind. Before the show, Stephanie McMahon called him to say that Miz is in charge this week instead.

Ambrose says Miz is in the first match tonight and offers a handshake but here's Strowman with his arm in a sling to interrupt. He wants Reigns as soon as possible and then he wants Brock Lesnar. This brings out.....Kalisto, to say he wants Strowman tonight. Ambrose makes the match but Braun says he's injured. Dean heard Strowman say he could beat Kalisto with one arm though so the match is on. As for Miz, he can face Finn Balor next.

Miz vs. Finn Balor

Miz bails to the floor to start but comes back in to take a dropkick to the face. Another trip to the floor doesn't go as well for Miz as he gets dropkicked into the barricade. Maryse pulls her husband away from the Coup de Grace and we take a break. Back with Miz getting in a short DDT for two of his own and it's off to the chinlock. Balor comes back with the Pele, followed by another kick to the head to put Miz on the floor.

Miz is reeling but a Maryse distraction lets him shove Balor into the referee. As acting GM of the night, Miz can't tolerate referees being abused so that's a DQ at 9:57. Actually not so fast as Ambrose comes out and says we're not doing it like that. The match restarts and Balor hits a Sling Blade, followed by the Coup de Grace for the pin at 12:31 (counting the break in between the falls).

Rating: C-. I have a feeling we'll be seeing more of this going

forward but it wasn't the strongest match in the world. Then again that's what you have to expect from Miz. While I'm not wild on having the #1 contender lose a match, you have to factor in the UK crowd. Not a bad match or anything and the more they build up Balor, the better things are for them.

Nia Jax scares Alexa Bliss again but they seem to be ok.

Alexa Bliss vs. Mickie James

Non-title with Nia Jax and Bayley are the respective seconds. Cole actually mentions Bliss and James working together on Smackdown a few months back in a fact I didn't expect to hear. Bliss gets kicked around with ease to start and Bliss gets knocked out to the floor for an early break.

Back with Bliss working on an armbar and twisting Mickie down by said arm for two. Naturally Bliss gets in some trash talk but misses a knee drop onto the arm, allowing Mickie to start the comeback. The chokeslave is countered into a flapjack as Bayley and Nia get in a fight. Not that it matters as Bliss pulls Mickie off the top for a crash and the pin at 9:15.

Rating: D+. As usual Bliss' mannerisms and heel work outshine her in-ring abilities and that's a good thing. She's absolutely nailing the character right now and that's much more important than being able to do thirty different holds. Bliss vs. Bayley II should be good as they're such a natural rivalry, though you can't keep Nia away from the title forever.

Nia destroys Bayley and James post match.

Miz yells at Ambrose, who tells Miz he can go home tonight. That's not cool with Miz, who has a special MizTV later. As a bonus, Ambrose can fight Bray Wyatt.

Samoa Joe says Seth Rollins is now living on his terms. Cue Rollins for the big brawl.

Kalisto vs. Braun Strowman

Braun says he's not wrestling this match and then kicks Kalisto in the face. Cue Roman Reigns though and we'll say it's a no contest at

thirty seconds.

Three straight Superman Punches put Strowman on the floor but he still manages to kick a charging Reigns in the chest. Reigns gets the sling off the bad arm and sends it into the post over and over. A bunch of chair shots knock Strowman into the crowd. What a hero that Reigns is. I mean, assuming you believe WWE still sees him as a major face and aren't just trolling the heck out of us anymore.

Goldust fires R-Truth up before their Tag Team Turmoil match. It seems that Goldust isn't sure about the team's future.

Tag Team Turmoil

It's basically a gauntlet match with two teams starting and the winning team advancing to face a new team. The last team standing faces the Hardys at Extreme Rules. Enzo Amore and Big Cass start with Cesaro and Sheamus and it's Cass vs. Sheamus to get things going. An early Empire Elbow has Sheamus in trouble and Cass throws Enzo at both guys for good measure. A quick Irish Curse drops Enzo though (Enzo: "OW OW OW!") and we take a break. Back with Enzo catching Cesaro with an enziguri, only to have Sheamus pull Cass off the apron. A Sharpshooter makes Enzo tap at 6:45 and it's Heath Slater and Rhyno in third.

The brawl starts in the aisle with Slater and Rhyno getting the worse of it. Slater is thrown inside for a top rope clothesline from Sheamus, who also kicks Rhyno off the apron. A Brogue Kick ends Slater at 10:35. Anderson and Gallows are in fourth as we take a second break. Back again with Cesaro muscling Gallows up for a delayed suplex. Sheamus gives up the hot tag though and everything breaks down with all four being dropped in just a few seconds. White Noise gets two on Gallows and we take a third break. Back with Sheamus hitting Gallows with the Brogue Kick for the elimination at 22:33.

Golden Truth comes out as the last team and Goldust hammers on Sheamus to start. That doesn't last long though as Sheamus takes him down and works on the leg, leaving Cesaro to grab the Sharpshooter. R-Truth makes the save and hits a quick Lie Detector on Cesaro. The

ax kick gets two but Truth misses a charge and gets rolled up for the pin at 27:48.

Rating: D+. This was much more long than good and showed how dull the tag division is on Mondays. Sheamus and Cesaro are talented and WAY better than I was expecting them to be but this made them feel like faces instead of the big time heels they're supposed to be. The big problem here though is I had a hard time buying the idea that ANYONE other than Sheamus and Cesaro getting the win, especially after their interactions with the Hardys over the last few weeks. Golden Truth gets beaten down post match but the Hardys come out for the staredown.

Seth Rollins vs. Samoa Joe

They head straight to the floor to start the brawl with Joe throwing him around, only to have Seth catch him with a clothesline off the steps. The fight heads back inside with Joe taking over and grabbing a suplex for two. Joe gets in a hard shot to the knee though and Rollins crumbles to the floor as we take a break. Back with Joe dropping a big knee and telling Rollins not to listen to the fans. The Koquina Clutch is broken up with a jawbreaker and Joe is sent outside for back to back suicide dives. A springboard clothesline gives Seth two but he walks into the snap powerslam for two. Joe can't powerbomb him though and gets caught in the falcon's arrow. A turnbuckle pad is pulled off but Seth gets two off a superkick anyway. It's Rollins being sent chest first into the buckle behind the referee's back. Joe does it again in front of the referee's back for the DQ at 14:12.

Rating: C+. The ending hurts this a lot but these two definitely have chemistry. You can likely pencil in the third match for Extreme Rules and that could be quite the fight if they're given the right gimmick. I like that they didn't have the match end clean and after the first one ended on a fluke, there's a good chance that the third match is the real payoff.

Joe chokes him out after the match.

TJP vs. Jack Gallagher

Neville is on commentary. TJP chills on the corner to start so Jack headbutts the heck out of him. Back in and TJP starts in on the leg but gets dropkicked in the face for his efforts. The Detonation Kick is broken up though and TJP grabs a rollup with a handful of trunks for the pin at 3:03.

Rating: C. It was nice while it lasted but you can see how far Gallagher has fallen. He's barely getting a reaction in his home country where he should look like a star. When you lose almost every match you have though, there's only so much that the home country crowd can do for you.

TJP goes after Jack again and puts him in the kneebar until Austin Aries makes the save.

Sasha Banks vs. Alicia Fox

They slap each other in the face to start before Fox gets two off her northern lights suplex. We hit the chinlock and the fans start looking at something in the crowd. Back up and Banks hits her running knees for the pin at 2:57.

Bray Wyatt vs. Dean Ambrose

Non-title with Miz and Maryse on commentary. Bray punches Dean in the head to start as Miz talks about wanting to return prestige to the Intercontinental Title. Dirty Deeds doesn't work so Bray suplexes him on the floor instead. Back with Bray getting two off a DDT until Dean hits a hard clothesline. Ambrose sends him outside for the running clothesline off the barricade and here are Miz and Maryse to ringside.

Sister Abigail is countered into a rollup for two and Dean hits the top rope elbow. Miz grabs the Intercontinental Title for a distraction so Dean suicide dives onto him. Bray is smart enough to go after the distracted Dean, allowing Miz to hit Ambrose in the back with the title. Sister Abigail finishes Ambrose at 15:12.

Rating: D+. This was a long match to end a very long show. I can live with a dirty finish to set up a title match next week and Miz

is someone you can buy as a threat to the title. I'm surprised Ambrose has held the thing as long as he has but it's time for him to lose it. Adding Bray to the mix could be interesting as well. Miz poses over Ambrose and hits the catchphrase to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. I know this show isn't going to get glowing reviews and I certainly see why. The show really wasn't terrible but it was VERY long and drawn out. You could tell that this was all about setting stuff up for next week instead of doing anything interesting here. I was bored more than once tonight but I can always give the wrestlers a bit of a break based on the jet lag and being thrown off their games like this. It's not a bad show but it's really, really sluggish and that's not good.

Results

Finn Balor b. Miz – Coup de Grace

Alexa Bliss b. Mickie James – Bliss pulled James off the top

Kalisto vs. Braun Strowman went to a no contest when Roman Reigns interfered

Sheamus and Cesaro won Tag Team Turmoil last eliminating Golden Truth

Seth Rollins b. Samoa Joe via DQ when Rollins was sent into the exposed turnbuckle

TJP b. Jack Gallagher – Rollup with a handful of trunks

Sasha Banks b. Alicia Fox – Double knees to the chest

Bray Wyatt b. Dean Ambrose – Sister Abigail

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Ring of Honor TV – May 3, 2017: Lethal Japanese Kingdoms Are Going To War

Ring of Honor

Date: May 3, 2017

Location: William J. Myers Pavilion, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Colt Cabana, Ian Riccaboni

It's World Title time again as we need to find out who will be joining Champion Christopher Daniels and Cody in the triple threat match (because of course it's a triple threat match) at War of the Worlds. Other than that it's time to build up some Ring of Honor guys to be fed to the New Japan crew so let's get to it.

We recap the eight man tag that set up tonight's #1 contenders four way. I've still heard worse ideas.

Opening sequence.

Coast to Coast vs. The Kingdom

The Kingdom jumps Ali and St. Giovanni to start but a double belly to back slam sets up a pair of flip dives to the floor. Back from a very early break with St. Giovanni getting a hot tag to clean house. Vinny is put in the Tree of Woe for the double missile dropkicks but Taven makes the save. Marseglia's Swanton gets two but he pulls Ali up, allowing Taven to hit Angel's Wings for the pin on St. Giovanni for the pin at 6:29. Too much in the break to rate but it was fun while it lasted.

Package on the Hardys vs. the Young Bucks.

Here are the Young Bucks with something to say. Matt is very happy about getting their belts back but Nick wants to talk about Adam Cole. Everything is cool with the Bullet Club so let's have an open

challenge for next week. Matt is ready to face Demolition, the Rock N Roll Express or Billy and Chuck but certainly not the Revival. Instead here's the Spirit Squad of all people...to take stereo superkicks. Eh good for a chuckle.

Matt Sydal vs. Flip Gordon

I saw Gordon down in Orlando and thought something of him so hopefully he does well here. They trade flips (you would think Gordon would have the advantage there) to start with Gordon nipping up about ten times in a row for a standoff. Sydal grabs a rollup for two and there's a spinwheel kick to put Gordon down. Back up and Gordon gets in a kick of his own and a standing moonsault gets two. Another kick to the head doesn't do much good as Sydal scores with his own kick, followed by the Shooting Star for the pin at 5:34.

Rating: C. I haven't liked Sydal this much since his Evan Bourne singles run, which is quite the surprise after all the time I spent being bored with his ROH stuff. Gordon looked good here and I'd have much rather seen him in the Top Prospect Tournament instead of half the schmucks they had in there.

Post match Marty Scurll comes in but can't get the chickenwing.

Here's Adam Cole for a chat. The Bullet Club is the greatest faction of all time and they'll prove it again next week when Cole teams with Hangman Page to face Dalton Castle and Christopher Daniels.

We look back at Daniels vs. Cody.

Silas Young vs. Hangman Page vs. Jay White vs. Jay Lethal

Daniels is on commentary. No tags and one fall to a finish with the winner being added to the World Title match at War of the Worlds. It's a big brawl to start with everyone going after some rollups as Daniels talks about wanting to face any of them. White takes over early on and throws everyone into a pile in the corner.

Lethal comes back but it's WAY too early for the Injection, allowing Young to make a save. One heck of a clothesline drops White with Page taking over. Everyone goes to the corner for a Tower of Doom with Lethal getting the worst of it as we take a break. Back with White in control but making the rookie mistake of smacking Lethal in the back of the head. Lethal can't do anything though and we're down to White vs. Young.

Page takes White's place though and Cabana is STUNNED for some

reason. A superplex drops White again and it's Young slugging it out with Lethal on the apron. That means it's time for everyone to head outside, leaving White to flip dive onto everyone. We take another break and come back with the Lethal Combination getting two on White. Young makes another save though, only to have Lethal hit the Lethal Injection for the pin and the title shot at 15:41.

Rating: C+. This was a lot of quick one on one matches and the ending really felt like it came out of nowhere. Lethal adds some star power to the main event though and that's the best thing they could have done. Daniels vs. Cody isn't exactly thrilling so Lethal adds some much needed help and interest to the title match.

Cody comes out for the three way staredown to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. Given that we're less than two weeks away from the pay per view, there's only so much you can do to set up a pay per view. The New Japan guys sound interesting now as they've been away long enough to be an attraction again. Why that's so complicated isn't clear but at least we should have a fun pay per view. Good enough show here but it was a one match episode. At least the one match meant something though. And we've got the Spirit Squad so you know things are picking up.

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Main Event – May 4, 2017: We Need More Jinder

Main Event

Date: May 4, 2017

Location: Golden 1 Center, Sacramento, California

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

We could be in for a better Main Event this week after a better episode of Raw. Things are starting to pick up despite most of the main event scene being off for a variety of reasons. That means we've gotten a fresh set of ideas for Raw, though the question is how different can things be on Main Event. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Lince Dorado vs. Drew Gulak

Dorado headscissors and armdrags Gulak down to start, followed by another headscissors on the floor. Drew gets in a kick to the chest and works on the arm. A hard whip sends Lince into the corner but he comes right back with a moonsault press. Dorado's moonsault is blocked by some raised boots though and Gulak grabs a dragon sleeper for the tap out at 5:01.

Rating: C-. This was nothing great but I'm liking Gulak's character more every time I see him. It's a good idea and makes for a natural heel, especially when you compare it to the much more straightforward Neville style heel. Gulak could go somewhere if he's given the chance and I never would have believed that just three months ago.

And now, to Raw.

The women's division is in the ring with a pedestal in the middle and here's Alexa Bliss for her coronation as the new champion. Bliss thanks everyone for being here tonight, even if Kurt Angle forced them to be here. The Queen is gone is gone but not to worry because the Goddess is here. These women are an inspiration, including Mickie James, despite her contemporaries Mae Young and Fabulous Moolah having moved on to a better place.

As for Sasha, she's the woman that Alexa beat to get where she is

today. Sasha glares at her and Bliss backs into Nia. Bliss: "We're good. We're good." Alexa gets on the pedestal and laughs at Bayley for losing in front of all her family last night. At least now Bayley's nephews will have someone to look up to. The brawl starts in a hurry and we take a break.

Video on Braun Strowman vs. Roman Reigns.

From Raw again.

Here's Angle to talk about Reigns vs. Strowman. Last night's matches had consequences with Reigns re-injuring his ribs and Strowman tearing his rotator cuff. Kurt has been thinking about this all day but here's Bray Wyatt to interrupt. Bray is here as a savior after rising from his own ashes with burnt wings. Angle says this is his ring but Bray says it's his world.

Curt Hawkins vs. Curtis Axel

Hawkins is now calling himself the Star Factory because of all the big names that have beaten him over the years. A headscissors takes Axel to the mat but he whips Hawkins hard into the corner. It's way too early for the PerfectPlex though and Hawkins bails to the floor. A backdrop actually sends Axel outside as well and it's off to a break. Back with Hawkins getting two off an elbow drop and grabbing a chinlock as this probably isn't even exciting enough to be a nacho break match. Axel's comeback is cut off by a kick to the face but he charges into the PerfectPlex for the pin at 10:15.

Rating: D. You can only get so far with a Curtis Axel match and I think we've hit that ceiling. The fans seem to be into him but it's clear that he's going nowhere fast. Now that was the case with Jinder Mahal as well but I don't think Axel has enough unique qualities to get him anywhere. He's just a third generation wrestler with a good look and solid in-ring abilities.

We wrap things up with the last few minutes of Monday's triple threat main event.

Overall Rating: C-. As usual the hot stuff from Raw helped this one a lot but there's only so much that can be done with this show no matter what. It was nice to have Gulak advance his character a bit instead of having yet another tag match but the ship sailed on Axel a very long time ago. Not bad here but nothing the show hasn't done for months (if not years) now.

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