

Attack On Wrestling Podcast Live Episode #2

I appeared on this show with Killjoy last Saturday night and completely forgot to mention it. It's the two of us talking about Wrestlemania weekend and my experiences there. There are some tech issues at the start but give it some time.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0KQBlm7jII>

Samoa Joe Wins NXT Title At House Show

<http://www.wwe.com/shows/wwenxt/article/samoa-joe-wins-nxt-championship>

I did find it interesting that they mentioned the title match on last night's show but this is a big surprise. If nothing else it frees Balor up to do other things. Like debut at Payback.

Smackdown – April 21, 2016: Miz Is Awesome

Smackdown

Date: April 21, 2016

Location: O2 Arena, London, England

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Jerry Lawler, Byron Saxton

It's the last show on the UK tour and we're in the same building we were in on Monday for Raw. These shows can range from nothing special to more interesting than usual but Smackdown tends to be just your run of the mill show. We're getting closer to Payback though and the card is looking stacked. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of AJ vs. Roman on Monday, including Luke Gallows and Karl Anderson beating Reigns down.

It's time for MizTV with Maryse handling the introduction before Miz brings out guest AJ Styles. Miz gets right to the point of asking about AJ being tight with Gallows and Anderson in New Japan, to the point that he knows them better than anyone else. Styles denies being behind the attack but he never told them NOT to attack Reigns. Miz continues being awesome at needling as AJ eventually gets annoyed at him for asking about Gallows and Anderson over and over again.

The fact of the matter is that AJ doesn't need them to beat Reigns but Miz thinks that being a better "rassler" isn't going to get it done because Roman Reigns is the guy. Miz says he can handle the truth from AJ but Maryse tells him to go Will Smith. This leads to a rather romantic moment which disgusts AJ so badly that he backfists Miz in the face.

AJ vs. Miz is set for later.

Ryback vs. Kalisto

Non-title for no apparent reason other than Kalisto loses here because the title is back to meaning nothing. Ryback runs him over in the corner

and the GOLDBERG chants begin for reasons of general annoyance. Kalisto's kicks have little effect as Ryback gorilla presses him down and sends him shoulder first into the post as we take a break. Back with Ryback doing his delayed superplex for a delayed two count.

Ryback puts him in the Tree of Woe for kicks to the ribs, only to miss a charge and go shoulder first into the post. Kalisto's kicks to the chest and corkscrew cross body stagger Ryback and the hurricanrana driver gets two. Ryback hits a quick Meathook but the Shell Shock is countered into a DDT for two more. The Salida Del Sol is countered into the Shell Shock to give Ryback the pin at 9:42.

Rating: C-. It's clear that WWE wants to put the title on Ryback and I have no idea why they just don't do it at this point. Kalisto means nothing as champion at this point as he won the belt and then did nothing with it ever since (as is so often the case) so just give it to Ryback who could be a decent monster for someone to slay later on. First though, we get a rubber match because that's how the midcard titles roll around here.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Baron Corbin

Never mind as Corbin jumps Ziggler during the entrance and beats him down on the floor as has become his custom.

The Miz vs. AJ Styles

Non-title again. Miz gets clotheslined down to start and AJ goes old school with a Muta Lock (bridging Indian deathlock with a chinlock) but Miz gets his head out and rolls to the floor. Back in and AJ gets caught with some knees to the back, only to hit a quick dropkick (Lawler: "That was a miso soup dropkick wasn't it?"). A spinwheel kick drops Miz again so he hides behind Maryse, allowing him to get in a left hand to drop AJ.

Styles gets sent into the barricade and we take a break. Back with Miz stomping away in the corner and hitting that running clothesline. We hit the chinlock (because of course) but AJ jawbreaks his way to freedom. A big boot drops Styles again (Miz can throw a nice boot) but it's a double cross body to put both of them down. AJ is up first though and gets in

the running seated forearm for two. Miz starts going after the knee before a DDT gets two more.

The Skull Crushing Finale is countered into the fireman's carry backbreaker onto the knee (which Lawler pronounces correctly for once) for another near fall but AJ dives into an atomic drop. We hit the Figure Four for a bit until AJ turns it over with Ranallo doing a great job of putting over AJ as someone who will never quit.

The Calf Crusher goes on out of nowhere but Miz is too close to the ropes. Styles hit the Pele and that's enough for Miz who tries to walk, only to run into Gallows and Anderson. Miz makes the mistake of turning around and it's a slingshot forearm to set up the Phenomenal version for the pin on Miz at 17:55.

Rating: B. I know I'm in the minority but I've been a big Miz fan for a long time now. No he's not going to get back to the main event or anything but he's more than capable of having a strong performance against someone who can walk him through a match. They're doing a really good job of setting AJ up as someone who could shock the world at Payback. That's an impressive feat, especially if they go somewhere else with this Bullet Club story after the pay per view. Oh and well done on having both midcard champions lose clean in less than an hour and a half.

We look at the end of Raw with Jericho and Owens taking out Zayn and Ambrose.

Ambrose and Zayn are ready for Owens and Jericho in tonight's main event. Spotted dick is referenced but they can't decide on a cool team name.

In what might be a dark segment that won't air on the TV show, Miz and Maryse are still in the ring after the match. Miz says he knew Gallows and Anderson were with AJ but that just showed he was right. Tonight there was an injustice and he demands an investigation on this match right here and right now. Miz doesn't care how long it takes because he wants someone to come out here.

Cue Shane McMahon to say what's up London. That's not cool with Miz because he should be a priority to everyone on any show. He pokes Shane a

bit and that's not cool with the red show boss. Miz pokes him a few more times so Shane punches him in the face and drops him with the back elbow to the jaw before clotheslining him out to the floor. Again, not likely to make the show but a cool thing for the crowd.

Post break, Gallows and Anderson say they're here to make an impact and aren't here with Styles. They'll debut on Monday against the Usos.

Paige/Natalya vs. Naomi/Tamina

Tamina and Natalya get things going but it's quickly off to Naomi for her stupid wiggling headscissors without any actual damage being done to Natalya. Seriously, the Divas era is done so stop that nonsense. Paige comes in to help with a double wishbone before it's already back to Natalya because Paige being in the ring in front of her home crowd would be a waste of time.

Naomi drops Natalya again and shouts that Natalya wants to wrestle. Well kind of yeah. We hit the chinlock from Tamina for a bit before Natalya easily gets over for the tag off to Paige. Naomi gets sent into the buckle and the Rampaige gets one with Tamina making the save. Natalya comes back in and it's a Sharpshooter to Tamina while Paige gets Naomi to tap to the PT0 at 5:33.

Rating: D+. I like that double submission ending as you let Natalya look good while Paige gets to win in front of her home country. It's really tiring to see her lose all the time but with the way the division has been realigned, maybe she has to be moved down to the lower levels. I'm still a fan of hers but she's really not up to the top level at this point.

Fandango vs. R-Truth

Goldust is guest referee and this is fallout from Goldust teaming with Fandango instead of Truth last week. They trade knockdowns and trade hip swivels. More dancing ensues with Goldust joining in until Truth lays Fandango out with the Lie Detector for the pin at 1:53. I have no idea where they're going with this but if they could get to the point already, it would be most appreciated.

Goldust and Truth dance post match with Goldust looking terrified at the thought of trying the splits.

Here are Enzo Amore and Colin Cassady for a chat about the tag team tournament final. Enzo gets through the opening spiel before the Vaudevillains cut him off. English thinks Enzo has mange so Enzo thinks the Vaudevillains are a couple of haters. Apparently the G stands for gentlemen so Enzo is going to be honest with him. That thing English said about him having rodent mange.....well Enzo really doesn't know what it means.

Gotch insults Enzo's rhyming (hater) and English says that it's going to take two real men to show what a real era should be like. After they win the tournament, Simon promises to use proper pronunciation and ask "how are you doing". Cass thinks that's SAWFT. This was a really good exchange and a much better introduction to the Vaudevillains than we've seen so far.

Greeting From Puerto Rico.

Dean Ambrose/Sami Zayn vs. Chris Jericho/Kevin Owens

Jericho and Zayn get things going with Sami doing that reverse leapfrog and armdragging Chris down into an armbar. Dean comes in and has to spin out of a Walls attempt but can't get Dirty Deeds as we head to a break. Back with Owens elbowing Ambrose in the head and slowly hammering away. Jericho can't keep Dean in the corner though and it's off to Sami for the high cross body and a near fall.

Sami loads up the corner climbing wristdrag but opts to dive onto Owens instead. Makes sense. That's fine with Owens as he pulls Sami outside and pounds away as Dean has been down WAY longer than he should have after a beating. It's back to Jericho for a chinlock followed by a Lionsault for a very calm near fall. The Blue Thunder Bomb doesn't even warrant a cover here but it's a double tag to Ambrose and Owens with the latter running into a boot in the corner.

Dean hits the suicide dive through the ropes but Owens gets in a superkick for two. The fans are having some issues getting into this one

even though it's certainly not bad. A quick Dirty Deeds and the Helluva kick have the heels in trouble but Dean goes up instead of covering, allowing Jericho to crotch him on the ropes, giving Owens a quick pin at 12:53.

Rating: C. Totally standard Smackdown main event tag match and while that's fine, it's certainly nothing you need to see. I like the idea of putting two feuds into one match but they're out of combinations to do before the pay per view, which is a common problem WWE runs into. Ambrose getting pinned via cheating is a good idea as well.

Owens is very pleased with the win to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The wrestling was stronger tonight but my goodness some of the booking decisions made my head hurt. As usual the midcard titles mean nothing because they're just midcard titles and a way to make people look good by beating midcard champions. It's so backwards compared to the way things used to go and went for years that it makes no sense but I'm sure WWE can explain it better to you than I could. They speak crazy like that you see.

Results

Ryback b. Kalisto – Shell Shock

AJ Styles b. The Miz – Phenomenal Forearm

Paige/Natalya b. Naomi/Tamina – PT0 to Naomi

R-Truth b. Fandango – Lie Detector

Kevin Owens/Chris Jericho b. Sami Zayn/Dean Ambrose – Owens pinned Ambrose after Jericho crotched him

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Lucha Underground – April 20, 2016: The Fun Stuff

Lucha Underground

Date: April 20, 2016

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Matt Striker, Vampiro

We've reached one of the biggest matches (or at least fights) in the history of Lucha Underground as Matanza will defend his Lucha Underground Title against Mil Muertes, the only one who could potentially hurt the monster champion. We'll also see some more in the trios tournament. Let's get to it.

The opening recap talks about the tournament and tonight's title match.

Dario has Fenix, Drago and Aerostar in his office and makes them a team in the trios tournament because that's the kind of guy he is. Actually not so fast though as they were in last year's tournament and lost, so this year Fenix will team with PJ Black and Jack Evans to face the Disciples of Death. Drago and Aerostar can fight over an Aztec medallion.

Aztec Medallion: Drago vs. Aerostar

They start fast (duh) with Drago's half crab being reversed into some near falls. That turns into a fight over a wristlock with Aerostar knocking the arms away a little bit more intensely than he should to a buddy. Aerostar backflips off the ropes but gets caught with a kick to

the chest, followed by a springboard wristdrag as the fans are behind Drago. Well for now at least as the Lucha Underground fans change directions faster than a fish swimming towards a funhouse mirror.

Aerostar tries a dive but crashes to the floor, allowing Drago to send him into the barricade to make things even worse. Back in and Aerostar (now being cheered) sends him outside for a big dive, only to further bang up his already injured knee. Drago throws him over the top and down onto his feet, followed by a big flip dive. Aerostar's knee is still banged up as an Orton hanging DDT gets two for Drago.

That's no sold (because lucha) and it's Aerostar popping up with a springboard dropkick, followed by the walking across the middle rope. Amazingly enough that extra time lets Drago get up and shove him away. Drago wins a quick slugout but Aerostar springboards into a Codebreaker, followed by a springboard splash (with a salute) for the pin on Drago at 6:08.

Rating: C+. This is Lucha Underground 101 with limited selling, basically no psychology and pure fun with both guys doing fun stuff and high spots to win a prize. Not everything needs to be the big epic showdown as sometimes you just need to have a fun, fast paced match that means very little for the moment.

Johnny Mundo is working out when Taya comes in to tell him he looks good. She's told Dario to give him an Aztec Medallion so Cueto has given him a match.....against Cage. That should be a lot of fun. Johnny isn't worried because Taya will be there. Actually not so fast again because it's a cage match. Johnny panics but insists he's not worried.

Trios Tournament First Round: Disciples of Death vs. Jack Evans/Fenix/PJ Black

This is the final first round match so maybe we'll get some brackets, even though only two other teams have won. Black and Trece (these guys are harder to keep straight than the Crew) start things off with PJ grabbing a wristlock. He won't tag Fenix and Jack thinks PJ is doing just fine on his own though so he superkicks Trece to stay in control. Fenix springboards in to take out Trece but Sinestro does the same to drop

Fenix as well.

That's fine with Fenix who dives over the ropes to take out Sinestro again before it's off to Evans for a kick to Trece's ribs. Well it should be at least but Sinestro crotches Jack against the post. Black gets beaten down in the corner until Sinestro lets him roll away for the hot tag off to Fenix. A sweet looking springboard dropkick sends Sinestro into the corner for a baseball slide but Catrina holds up the rock.

That sets up a big superkick for two, followed by a PerfectPlex for the same. Since these Disciples are a bunch of goons though, Fenix drops all of them with some strikes, allowing Evans to tag himself in and start with the springboard flippy kicks. Evans, ever the braggadocios one, spends too much time celebrating and gets triple kicked in the chest.

A kind of flapjack gets two for Barrio but it's off to Black for a springboard 450 and a near fall. Fenix and Black get into it for no apparent reason though, only to have Evans tag himself in and promise to show Fenix how it's done. That means a big flip dive, leaving Fenix to hit a 450 of his own for the pin on Barrio at 9:11.

Rating: B-. Better than the first match but nothing close to the awesome stuff in last week's tournament match. Evans and company are a fun trio and the Disciples are a bunch of worthless goons who can lose something like this and go nowhere as a result. Another fun match here and a good place to wrap up the first round.

Ivelisse, Son of Havoc and Angelico are in Dario's office and are informed that they're in the tournament....which is for the Trios Titles. They're already in the finals though, meaning they get to defend in a fourway title match next week.

The Disciples of Death teleport into Catrina's office where she yells at them for failing again. She wants one good reason to not destroy all of them. Now stay with me here: Sinestro REACHES INTO THE OTHERS' CHESTS AND RIPS OUT THEIR BEATING HEARTS! Barrio and Trece disintegrate and Sinestro gets some gauntlets. I'll be back in a minute as my jaw finds its way back off the floor.

Lucha Underground Title: Matanza vs. Mil Muertes

Matanza is defending and this is going to be a war. The fans are behind Muertes because it's either that or being behind a glorified serial murderer. They slug it out to start with Muertes pounding him down to the mat for the first time ever and a HUGE reaction as a result. Dario tells the champ to do it for the family so Matanza sends him into the buckle and hits a hard clothesline to drop Mil. A snap powerslam puts Matanza down again but he grabs Muertes by the throat.

Back up and Muertes fires off a string of clotheslines in the corner but Matanza stops him with a raised boot. Rolling gutwrench suplexes put Muertes down until he flips out of the third and flips Matanza over the top. A suicide dive puts Matanza down again and he's holding his knee. Dario goes after Muertes and gets choked in the air until a limping Matanza makes the save.

Catrina hits Matanza in the head with the stone and now it's Muertes making the save with a chair to the back. Some metal can shots to the back have Matanza in trouble until he takes it away and hits Mil in the head. They fight up the steps and on top of Dario's office and tease throwing each other off to no avail. Instead Mil loads up the Flatliner....AND THEY GO THROUGH THE ROOF to end this in a no contest at around 7:15.

Rating: B. Oh yeah that worked. I was totally into the fighting and battle of titans here with both guys beating the tar out of each other. I'm assuming this was cut short due to a combination of the knee injury (may or may not be legit of course) and wanting to save the required rematch for a bigger stage. The ending made my eyes bug out though and it was a lot of fun throughout. Good stuff here, as expected.

We go back to the police station where we see a DECEASED poster for Bael and MISSING posters for Alberto Del Rio, Hernandez, Big Ryck and Blue Demon. Now that's a nice touch. The captain is looking around when Councilman Delgado (as portrayed by Hollywood actor Lorenzo Lamas) comes in to tell her to stay out of his territory. He's from Boyle Heights and his employer (apparently someone much more powerful than the mayor) wants

her to drop the case against Dario.

Overall Rating: A. This show was a blast and everything I love about Lucha Underground. Here's the biggest thing about it though: those posters at the end. How many times do you see someone leave a wrestling company and then never get mentioned again? Lucha Underground just flat out said "yeah these people are gone" and then tie it into the big overarching story. That's the kind of thing that makes this promotion so much fun and it's always worth watching.

The key word for this whole place is fun. Whether it's a match like the opener or a fight like the main event, there's almost always something going on around here that is going to entertain you. I've yet to be bored by an episode of Lucha Underground and this was one of the most entertaining episodes they've ever done. I had a blast with this and I'm really interested in seeing where things are going in the rest of the season.

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Chyna Reportedly Dead At 45

[Source](#)

Assuming this is true, this is another tragedy in a long list of them this year. As I said about Mahoney, that's WAY too young no matter who it is.

NXT – April 20, 2016: All In A Day's Work

NXT

Date: April 20, 2016

Location: Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, Dallas, Texas

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

We're still down in Texas and it's a big week tonight with Apollo Crews vs. Samoa Joe and American Alpha facing Enzo Amore and Colin Cassady in a non-title match. It should be interesting to see how these now main roster stars are treated on NXT, though there's a good chance that at least one of them wasn't announced for the main roster when this was taped. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady vs. American Alpha

Non-title. Before the match, Cass says he and Enzo have been doing this longer than anyone in NXT history. Tonight they're going to find out if there's just one word to describe them. The fans immediately declare this to be awesome as Gable and Amore get things going. Gable easily takes him to the mat and it's off to Jordan to stay on the arm. The fans think this is wrestling though I could also accept a Bavarian checkers tournament.

Jordan works on a variety of armbars before it's back to Chad for a hammerlock. After at least two minutes of working on Enzo's arm, he dives over for a quick tag to Cass as we take a break. Back with Cass slamming

Enzo onto Jordan for two before we hit the chinlock. Gable tags himself in though and snaps off an over the shoulder flip to keep Enzo in trouble. A collision allows the tag to bring in Cass though and Gable actually gets beaten down for a bit longer.

Cass hits a good looking Stinger Splash before working on the arm as well but Gable finally sends him into the corner and makes the tag off to Jordan. That means it's time for the running right hands and the suplexes with Jordan ripping the straps down. Enzo gets sent into the corner for the running shoulder but Cass takes the bullet for him. Jordan puts the straps back up and takes them down again, setting up Grand Amplitude to put Enzo away at 13:30.

Rating: B-. Another good match from two teams who do little over than have good matches. Enzo and Cass have turned into one of the biggest surprises as far as in ring abilities go and it was cool to see them in one last big match before they left. Alpha is just so far ahead of everyone else though that I'm not sure who they could conceivably lose the titles to.

Apollo Crews is ready for Samoa Joe because he doesn't like bullies.

No Way Jose vs. Alexander Wolf

Jose likes to dance a lot but Graves is much more concerned about why Jose is always being denied entrance into various places. Alexander gets caught in an airplane spin and a legdrop gets two, but he's up with a chinlock on Jose because it was just a legdrop and it's not 1987. Some baseball swings to the chest sets up a baseball style punch (as in he winds up for a pitch and punches the guy in the face) for the pin on Alexander at 2:59. Jose is fun but I really don't see him lasting more than a few months without some big adjustments.

Austin Aries says he wasn't lucky at Takeover and if Baron Corbin wants to fight him again, he's not a hard man to find. There's a lot of A-level talent in NXT but there's only one man at the A-Double level.

Elias Samson is playing guitar when William Regal comes in to say Samson will be facing Shinsuke Nakamura soon.

Nia Jax vs. Deonna Purrazzo

Nia doesn't waste time and grabs a shoulder breaker to start. A big elbow drop sets up a Samoan drop and the big leg ends Deonna at 1:35.

Bayley thinks Asuka will beat Eva Marie next week but she'll be watching.

Apollo Crews vs. Samoa Joe

Fans: "PLEASE DON'T LEAVE!" I'm not sure who that's directed at but it could apply to either. Feeling out process to start as Joe can't quite get anywhere with his wristlock. Instead Apollo grabs a headlock as we actually get some NXT house show ads with the announcers saying Joe gets a title shot at a show in Massachusetts. I don't think I've ever heard them do that before. Joe comes back with the snap jabs but Crews snaps off a great looking dropkick.

We take a break and come back with Joe hitting a big chop, followed by the corner enziguri. A hard running elbow drops Crews again and it's off to the neck crank. Joe gets two more off the backplash but gets caught in a snap suplex to give Apollo a breather. The running clothesline and really quick nipup set up Crews' jumping enziguri but the standing moonsault gets two. Crews can't quite get Joe up for the lifting powerbomb though and the Rock Bottom out of the corner plants Apollo. For some reason this draws a loud NXT chant, followed by the Koquina Clutch to make Crews tap at 13:33.

Rating: B-. This was a hard hitting back and forth match with Crews being an interesting opponent for Joe. Balor is the kind of guy who can get by Joe with pure skill but Crews is someone who can match the power, requiring Joe to just beat Crews even harder for the win. Fun stuff here and a good TV main event.

Overall Rating: B+. Two big matches that both worked, matches set up for next week and a debut. I'm really not sure what else you could ask for in a show that ran forty seven minutes without commercials. It's going to be interesting when we get out of Dallas and see what's coming up but of course NXT is capable of setting up a few things like the idea of Balor vs. Joe/Nakamura or Bayley/Jax vs. Asuka. Any combination could be

entertaining and it's not clear who it's going to be, which gives you a reason to come back. Really efficient show here and that's all you should expect from something like this.

Results

American Alpha b. Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady – Grand Amplitude to Amore

No Way Jose b. Alexander Wolf – Baseball punch

Nia Jax b. Deonna Purrazzo – Legdrop

Samoa Joe b. Apollo Crews – Koquina Clutch

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New Column: There's More To It Than That

Looking at how Raw has been better lately despite a lot of things being the same.

[http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-theres-more-to-it-than-t
hat/](http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-theres-more-to-it-than-that/)

Monday Nitro – November 27, 2000: They Can't Even Get This Right

Monday Nitro #268

Date: November 27, 2000

Location: Metro Center, Rockford, Illinois

Attendance: 3,800

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Mark Madden, Scott Hudson

We're past Mayhem and on the road to Starrcade with Scott Steiner now the World Champion for the first time. It's hard to say where things are going now but hopefully things pick up a little bit after we're done with another pay per view. If nothing else it should be interesting to see how things go to get to the biggest show of the year with less than three weeks of build. Let's get to it.

We open with a special announcement over the new President...and it's Jeff Jarrett hitting the guy making the announcement with a guitar. Thanks for that topical announcement.

3 Count vs. Corporal Cajun/Lieutenant Loco

It's a brawl to start as the Misfits interrupt the singing to clean house. The announcers actually try to push last night's show as a great event and a big deal with Steiner finally winning the title. Moore gets caught in the corner for a dropkick as things settle down a bit. The band takes Cajun into the corner as Madden tries to compare Helms and Moore to the Midnight Express. It's not quite the League of Nations as the Horsemen but it's still stupid.

Cajun springboards into an X-Factor on Shannon (Hudson: "Right onto his incredibly marketable face!") Clever line but I almost laughed at the idea

of 3 Count ever being marketed.). It's off to Loco but here are Noble and Karagias with a ladder to beat up 3 Count, allowing Loco to hit a suplex (called a brainbuster) for the pin on Shannon.

Rating: C-. As usual we had what could have been a good match but it's brought down by interference to set up something else. That's WCW in a nutshell: matches don't exist to be matches because they're there to set up another match down the line. Yeah the three way ladder match is going to be fun but they need to do something with these teams down the line and that's just not going to happen.

Elix Skipper hits on Ms. Jones again so she knocks on a door to get the Cat out here. Wasn't this a one off story like a month ago? Lance Storm sneaks in and hits Cat with a chair. Storm: "That's why it's TEAM Canada!"

The announcers talk about Steiner winning the World Title last night and think Sting deserves a title shot for retaining the King of Europe Cup at one of the German shows. For those keeping track, he won it back in like 1994 and defended it six years later. Now he gets a title shot out of the thing. Such is life in WCW, as usual.

Here's Scott Steiner for his first chat as World Champion. After Hudson says this is Steiner's thirteenth year in WCW because he can't count (Steiner debuted in 1989 and wasn't around for 1993), Steiner rambles about how awesome he is and how much he wants to hurt people. He's already put Sting and Booker T. in the hospital and he's destroyed Goldberg at Fall Brawl so there's no one left for him to fight.

Cue Ric Flair so the announcers can again speculate that he'll come out of retirement to fight Steiner. Steiner is now the flagship of this company but he can't get off that easily. Flair has an opponent for Steiner at Starrcade and he's a big star. Steiner actually suggests that it's Austin or Rock and even does an imitation of the latter. Since this is WCW and they have no idea how the world works, Flair says that this star is just as big as Rock and Austin and will be around tonight.

We're still not done yet though as Stevie Ray gets up to challenge Steiner for tonight. Steiner agrees if Stevie will put his career on the

line, which is accepted. His announcing career right? I mean, it's certainly not his wrestling career as he hasn't had a match in months at this point.

The Boogie Knights don't have the money to afford Kronik tonight. Yes this is still going.

Hugh Morrus is ready for Bam Bam Bigelow tonight.

Yang vs. Lance Storm

Storm has heavily taped ribs and promises to get back at Rection later. Yang grabs a rollup for two during the Canadian national anthem before punching him in the ribs. Back up and Storm gets in a superkick, followed by a backbreaker for two. The fans chant USA, which is actually appropriate here as Yang is from California. Of course it's not likely that the fans know that so they just sound stupid.

A Rock Bottom gets two for Yang and he fires off some kicks at the ribs before elbowing Storm in the face. Yang hits a moonsault for two more but walks into a piledriver, only to have the women get into a fight on the floor. Cue the Cat to hit Storm with a chair, giving the unconscious Yang the big upset win.

Rating: D+. This worked better than some of the matches but the ending continues to defy logic. Yang isn't getting a push out of this (due to reasons of "it's WCW") and now Storm gets another loss on his record while setting up something against the Cat. Like I said before: this wasn't a match because it was a way to set up a match down the line.

Post break Storm yells at Jim Duggan for not having his back.

The Boogie Knights go to the Harris Brothers for protection tonight but still don't have any money. That's fine with the Brothers because they want.....sandwiches. Egads this company can't die fast enough.

Here's Lex Luger with something to say. It's time for a celebration because Goldberg's career is coming to an end tonight. Luger rants about how awesome his life is but none of it means anything compared to this because he did wrestling a huge favor last night. See, last night when

Goldberg speared a referee, that should have been a DQ and the end of the Streak. He's appealed to Ric Flair and demands an answer tonight. So yeah, it really does seem that we're getting Luger vs. Goldberg again at Starrcade and not THE ONLY LOGICAL MATCH WCW COULD HAVE FOR THE BIGGEST SHOW OF THE YEAR.

A limo arrives.

Jimmy Hart is still issuing challenges to DJ's.

Jeff Jarrett is talking to Gene when the Filthy Animals come up and throw eggs at him. Those boys need a role model.

Big Vito is making sure Marie is ok before she leaves. He leaves and Reno comes up to leave with her.

Jamie Noble/Evan Karagias vs. Boogie Knights

Not so fast as this isn't happening.

Jamie Noble/Evan Karagias vs. Alex Wright/Ron Harris

Let's get this over with. Ron throws Evan around to start and a slam gives Alex two. There's a suplex from Alex and it's off to Ron vs. Jamie for more squashification. Ron finally runs into a boot in the corner to give Jamie a hope spot in the form of a top rope clothesline. A big boot knocks Jamie down again to give Alex two more. Everything breaks down and a quick H Bomb puts Jamie away.

Can we PLEASE cut out this "beatdowns for hire" nonsense? It was dumb enough when Kronik was ripping off the APA but now the freaking Harris Brothers are doing this for SANDWICHES. It's not funny, it's not entertaining, it's not intelligent and it's not doing anything to mock the WWF. On top of that you have all these better teams losing to Alex and one half of the goons winning more often than not. Who does this help other than people who put it together and get a cheap laugh?

Another Glacier promo which thankfully is ripped apart again. Now that's kind of amusing.

Ric Flair says Goldberg is fine because Luger pulled the referee in the way of the spear. That should be a DQ on Luger, but since WCW is about winning and losing, there's going to be a rematch at Starrcade. So yeah, apparently winning via DQ isn't really winning so we're getting these two again because doing Goldberg vs. Steiner for the title LIKE EVERYONE THOUGHT THEY SHOULD DO is out of the question.

Here are Page and Nash with something to say. During the entrances (yes entrances because they're not even pretending that they're a real team), Hudson mentions them being partners many years ago. The fans want Hall because they love to cling to false hope as Page talks about their history, including managing Hall back in the day. The famous team is called the Outsiders but this team is called the Insiders.

Nash takes the mic but here are Sanders/Jindrak/O'Haire to the Wolfpac theme. Sanders thinks Page is trying to ride Nash's coattails so they'll defend against the Thrillers at Starrcade. Page thinks they should have a fight right now, which I guess is for the titles though it's not quite clear.

Insiders vs. Mark Jindrak/Sean O'Haire

Jindrak and Page fight to the floor while Nash beats up Sean in the ring. Well of course he does. Nash gets in the framed elbows but charges into a boot. That's fine though as Page comes in, only to take a low blow. The young guys stomp him down in the corner but Page counters a whip into a headscissors of all things. Everything breaks down and Jindrak eats a Diamond Cutter with Sanders pulling the referee out. Cue the rest of the Thrillers to beat down the champs, allowing Jindrak to pin Page. The Thrillers leave with the belts but this doesn't seem to be a title match.

Rating: D. Other than that headscissors, this was a bunch of standing around punching because that's all Page and Nash know how to do at this point. Jindrak and O'Haire getting a win, albeit a cheap one, is fine enough and about as good as they're going to get because you know Nash and Page aren't laying down for them.

Stevie Ray calls Scott Steiner a sad sack cracker jack.

Reno vs. Goldberg

The announcers basically say Reno can only win on a miracle. This one actually gets some time as Goldberg knocks Reno across the ring and gorilla presses him into a drop. A quick Roll of the Dice attempt is countered into a powerslam, followed by the two moves to make Goldberg 26-0.

Post match Luger comes in and hits Goldberg with a chair....which Goldberg eventually sells. Luger Racks him for good measure.

The Filthy Animals don't have much to say.

US Title: General Rection vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

Rection is defending. Bigelow pounds on him in the corner and rakes the eyes like a heel should. Rection works on the arm and there's just no reaction. Were you really expecting anything else here? He's a guy with a comedy name who has won his big battle against Team Canada and really doesn't have much of character outside of that. I really have no reason to care about him other than he was fighting for America but that doesn't really work when he's fighting against someone from New Jersey.

Bigelow slaps on a chinlock for a bit before some clotheslines and a suplex put him down. A top rope elbow misses so Bigelow powerbombs the champ....and goes for a table. Never mind though as here's AWALL to take it away, allowing Rection to kick Bigelow down and retain with the moonsault.

Rating: D. The crowd silence suggests that this wasn't working and again I can't say I'm surprised. At the end of the day, Rection isn't interesting and while it's nice to see them try and make a new star, this is about as far as things are going to go. It also doesn't help when you have another big power guy in there as an opponent and the stupid AWALL thing to continue that thrown together feud.

Scott Steiner steals a camera and goes to the limo to find out his opponent. Now why did no one else ever think of this? It turns out to be full of Smooth's women though because the other limo isn't here yet.

Smooth gets beaten up for general purposes.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Rey Mysterio

Before the match, Jarrett rails against Konnan for the prank earlier tonight. I mean it wasn't funny or anything but it was indeed a prank. Tygress trips Jarrett five seconds into the match and Rey gets two off a springboard bulldog. Konnan gets on the apron to distract Jarrett so Kidman can trip him as well. Dang it act like faces already. The Bronco Buster is stopped by a raised boot (as always) but Kidman grabs Jarrett to stop him again. Even the announcers are treating Rey as the heel here.

Jarrett misses his running crotch again and a Lionsault gets two for Rey. Now it's Konnan getting inside so Kidman can get in a low blow, followed by a Bronco Buster from Tygress. Rey's springboard hurricanrana is countered into a sweet powerbomb but the Animals break up the cover after the Stroke. Jeff has had enough of this and blasts Rey with the guitar for the DQ. Madden brings up the obvious point: after everything the Animals did in front of the referee, THAT'S A DQ???

Rating: D-. This is another example of the biggest problem with WCW at the moment. Jeff Jarrett vs. Rey Mysterio could be an entertaining match between two very talented guys but instead we're getting the Animals being all goofy and flat out stupid referees who either don't notice or don't care about what's right in front of them. This was an insult to the fans' intelligence and a waste of something that could have been entertaining.

Post break Jarrett challenges the Animals to a six man on Thunder.

The Starrcade opponent's limo arrives.

WCW World Title: Stevie Ray vs. Scott Steiner

Steiner is defending and Stevie's career is on the line. Stevie jumps him in the aisle to start until Midajah gets in a pipe shot to the back. Hudson tries to push the idea of a ten year feud between the Steiners and Harlem Heat because a team that formed in 1993 can have a ten year feud in just seven years.

Steiner takes it inside for the big pounding before cutting off a comeback with a shot to the ribs. After a quick trip outside to yell at some fans, Steiner plants him with a belly to belly for two. Stevie kicks him in the face and grabs a bad DDT, only to have Midajah offer a distraction.

An even worse looking Book End puts Steiner down again for no cover. We get an awkward sequence where Stevie can't get his boot up to Steiner's ribs so they head outside where Steiner is sent into the barricade. Back in and another suplex gets two for the champ but he walks into the Slap Jack for one. The announcers are just burying Stevie for being blown up here. An electric chair drop sets up the Recliner to end this mess.

Rating: F. Yeah there's no defending this and it's clear that Stevie Ray had no business being in the ring at this point. You can't be blown up five minutes into a match and drag the World Champion down in his first title defense. I get the idea behind the match but this was a disaster and one of the worst matches I've seen in a long time.

Post match Sid Vicious returns as the challenger for Starrcade. It makes sense given that he was never defeated for the title but it's December 2000 and Sid Vicious is challenging for the World Title while Goldberg has another match with Lex Luger.

Overall Rating: F. Oh yeah they've given up. It's clear that they're just setting up a bunch of rematches and/or stupid matches at Starrcade because Sid is their idea of a draw. Yeah Goldberg vs. Luger is happening again for absolutely no logical reason and it seems that we're still getting the Insiders vs. the Thrillers again, plus the three team ladder match.

WCW has given up on trying to do their best and is just throwing out whatever old names they have because for some reason it took them this long to get to Steiner. Why Goldberg, as in the guy who could conceivably draw money as the World Champion, is stuck carrying Luger to another bad match is beyond me but that's what we're getting because Steiner needs to beat up a "legend" at the biggest show of the year. This is another great example of an idea that should have been a layup but somehow WCW has

managed to screw it up because that's how things work around here.

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Impact Wrestling – April 19, 2016: Stretching Instead Of Entertaining

Impact Wrestling

Date: April 19, 2016

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, D'Angelo Dinero

It's a big night here as we have the battle of the Hardy's with the right to the last name on the line. In this case it's an I Quit match over the name, as well as a ladder match with all of the Knockouts at once for control of the division. This isn't about the title but rather about who runs the Knockouts as a whole. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the Hardy's feud and how big tonight is.

Knockouts Ladder Match

Pretty much every active Knockout is involved here. Gail goes after Jade to start as it's a bunch of brawling all over the place. The Beautiful People (still a thing because of reasons) dropkick a ladder into the Dollhouse's collective faces, only to have Jade get up and do the Terry Funk ladder around the head spot.

Gail gets pulled down and slapped by Maria, sending them up the ramp in a chase. Cue Rosemary and the Decay to blast Gail with a kendo stick and kidnap her, even further guaranteeing the winner here. The rest of the match stays broken down with Jade clearing out the ring but getting powerbombed off the ladder by Marti. Maria kendo sticks Velvet down and goes up for the contract to win control at 5:13.

Rating: D. Were you expecting anything else? Maria and Gail are the only real characters in the whole division so who else were you going to go with here? Gail being kidnapped is better than having her talk about how serious things need to be for a change and Maria is far more entertaining than the rest of the division so this is the right idea all around. Horrible match of course but Maria isn't much of a worker.

Drew Galloway is going to call out Lashley right now.

Maria and Mike Bennett are happy.

Decay has Gail in the rafters.

Here's Drew, with heavily taped ribs, to call Lashley out. Apparently the spears from last week have cracked his ribs and he's not allowed to wrestle this week. However, the TNA officials didn't say anything about him fighting tonight. Drew invites Lashley out here to finish the job but it's Rockstar Spud coming out instead.

Spud says if there was a match right now, he'd easily become the new World Champion. He's out here to warn us that tonight is the last night that we're going to see Jeff Hardy. Drew is about to beat him down when Tyrus comes out to say he told us so. Those ribs are a target and that's what Tyrus likes. He'll take that title match next week and it doesn't matter what condition Drew is in. Drew agrees and they shake hands. Spud goes after Drew and it's a double beatdown on the ribs, including a big

splash.

Reby Hardy is holding a camera to film Matt, who promises to make Jeff quit once and for all.

The Decay still has Gail, who Rosemary calls a pawn.

X-Division Title: DJZ vs. Eddie Edwards vs. Trevor Lee

Lee is defending and none of them get entrances. The champ bails to the floor to start but is almost immediately chopped by both challengers. Edwards is sent into the post so Lee hooks DJZ in a chinlock. That's broken up with a jawbreaker until Eddie comes back in with a hard shot to Lee. Shane Helms pulls DJZ to the floor but Eddie breaks up a superplex attempt. Shane gets on the apron again though, allowing Andrew Everett to run in and shove Eddie into a jumping knee to retain Trevor's title at 4:20.

Rating: D. So much for Lee doing anything with the title and all the work that Tigre Uno put into his title reign for that matter. Now it's all about Shane Helms and a boring string of matches where Lee is a glorified project instead of the focus of the division like he's supposed to be.

Everett gives Edwards a 630 post match.

Post break Shane and company says that Andrew Everett is the newest member of the Helms Dynasty.

Here are Eric Young and Bram for Eric's weekly "I'm awesome" speech. He brags about how devastating the piledriver is and says no one can beat him because everyone can try. Young is tired of TNA sucking up to these young punks like the marble mouth Scotsman Drew Galloway.

Therefore, this is the last time you'll be seeing him because he and Bram quit. Actually not so fast because Bram doesn't quit. Bram is tired of playing second fiddle to Eric and thinks that King of the Mountain Title would look better around a real man's waist. Young gets in a quick piledriver and walks off, only to come back and grab a pair of scissors to shave Bram's beard.

Jeff Hardy thinks the World Title changed Matt and he'll do whatever he has to do tonight.

Here are Mike Bennett and Maria with something to say. Mike wants all the attention on him because it's time for a fairy tale. Once upon a time there was a prince with full control over a kingdom and his name was Ethan Carter III (dang I was hoping for Adam Cole). Prince Ethan had it all until one day a white knight called the miracle arrived. Then one day the Prince decided to fight the knight, who took all of the Prince's power. This is now Bennett's Kingdom of Miracles but here's Ethan to interrupt.

Ethan wants the record to show that it was a disqualification win but then he beat Bennett down. He likes a lot of Bennett's style but at the end of the day, Ethan is just the better man. If Bennett won't fight him, Ethan will be Mike's new shadow and beat him down every chance he can. Bennett says that the two of them can fight as many times as they want and he'll beat Ethan every time because Ethan will keep coming back with another excuse. Ethan talks about how he's never been pinned or submitted around here but if Mike wants to be the man, face him next week in a No DQ match at Sacrifice. Bennett is game.

Gail wakes up and calls Decay insane.

Here's Al Snow to talk about how much he can't stand this group of fans. They'll watch every week and complain about it on the internet but then they keep watching. Back in the day, not everyone was allowed in the wrestling business and Snow would never pay to see any of these people in the ring. Tonight, he's giving Mahabali Shera a lesson in what wrestling really means.

Al Snow vs. Mahabali Shera

Al jumps Shera during the entrance and stomps him down before grabbing the mic and calling fans into the ring for a fight. Shera makes his comeback and knocks Snow outside, only to have Al crawl under the ring and come out the other side to deck Shera again. Back in and Snow shrugs off another comeback by hitting Shera in the head with a foreign object. Snow takes forever and covers for the pin at 5:35, giving us a great

overhyped cover and celebrating.

Rating: D. Snow is playing the character really well but good night there's just no hiding the fact that it's Al Snow getting this kind of time. You would think there would be someone else to take this spot and get a nice run out of it but since TNA can barely run a TV show anymore, the young guys are now doing jobs for people who barely wrestle once a year.

Decay says Gail might be sacrificed.

Eli Drake will have his own talk show next week called Fact of Life.

Here's Decay with Gail for the plan's payoff. Rosemary calls us all pawns and puppets and threatens to cut off Gail's hair. Abyss says the only thing that can save her now is Beer Money, so here are the champs for the save. Storm and Roode have to stay at ringside because Abyss has to issue a challenge for the Tag Team Titles. However, he wants the match to have no rules or regulations, which is called the Valley of Shadows. The match is on and Gail is released.

Matt Hardy vs. Jeff Hardy

I Quit for the Hardy name. Jeff headscissors him out of the corner to start and they clothesline each other a few times. Jeff can't get the Twist of Fate so he puts on a Figure Four of all things to make Matt scream no a lot. The hold is turned over twice so here's Rockstar Spud for the save, only to have Jeff powerbomb him with ease. Matt uses the distraction to knock his brother out to the floor where he pelts a chair at Jeff's head to break up a dive.

We take a break and come back with Matt bending Jeff's arm around the barricade but getting pulled into the steel for his efforts. They head into the production area with Jeff swinging a pipe to hit Matt's ring bell before going up towards the rafters. Jeff slides down the railing with a chair to the head but Matt still won't quit.

Matt gets knocked onto some cases so Jeff can climb a ladder, only to have Matt climb up and hit a Side Effect to drive him through a piece of

barricade. Back up and Jeff grabs a choke to knock Matt out without him quitting. That's fine with Jeff who goes way up on top of the set for a Swanton onto Matt through a table. The match is stopped at about 18:30 as medics take care of them both and we go off the air.

Rating: C+. So yeah, after all that, there's no finish and we're likely getting something else out of these two in weeks to come because they're the real stars of the show. The big dive looked good but I really don't need to see these two doing stuff like that anymore. It was entertaining fifteen years ago but now it feels like they're stretching instead of entertaining.

Overall Rating: C-. This show had some good stuff but it was scattered throughout a lot of weak action and far too little wrestling. You really should be able to get in more than a quick ladder match, a nothing triple threat, an Al Snow win and a main event without a finish. It really doesn't help that the focus is on Matt vs. Jeff and Tyrus is #1 contender. Yeah there's interesting stuff otherwise but I need WAY more than that to keep me entertained for two hours a week. It's a watchable enough show but parts of it are going to put you to sleep.

Results

Maria Kanellis won a ladder match by pulling down the contract

Trevor Lee b. DJZ and Eddie Edwards – Jumping knee to Edwards' chest

Al Snow b. Mahabali Shera – Foreign object to the head

Matt Hardy vs. Jeff Hardy went to a no contest

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Monday Night Raw – April 18, 2016: What's The English Word For Good Show?

Monday Night Raw

Date: April 18, 2016

Location: O2 Arena, London, England

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

It's the annual post Wrestlemania European tour so we're in England for a big change of pace. The show is also taped tonight which can often lead to some less interesting TV. We're less than two weeks away from Payback where AJ Styles will be challenging Roman Reigns for the WWE World Title. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's Dean Ambrose to open things up for the Ambrose Asylum. Dean actually treats it a bit more like a traditional talk show with a joke about a monster in the Thames River ("I didn't know Braun Strowman could swim."). He brings out Shane McMahon as his first guest and that means it's time to dance.

Dean talks about all the crazy stuff he's done over the years and then shows us a clip of Shane diving off the Cell at Wrestlemania. That made Dean ask what Shane could have been thinking, which Shane sees as a compliment. Shane's plans are about giving new talent a chance.

Names like AJ Styles, Sami Zayn and Sasha Banks (two of which had title shots at Wrestlemania before Shane was in power of course but that's just over thinking things) have gotten a chance and that's why we have

arrived. Cue Kevin Owens to ask why Shane threw him out last week. Shane brings up Owens wanting to cost Sami the title shot last week but Owens says that just means he's an honest man. Sami has been riding his coattails for years now because he's just not good enough.

This brings out Sami to accuse Owens of trying to stab him in the back, which brings out Chris Jericho for some reason. Jericho and Shane are about to get into it when Dean yells at them to be careful around the plant. Shane makes Jericho vs. Ambrose and Zayn vs. Owens for Payback and it's nearly a brawl.

Chris Jericho vs. Sami Zayn

Sami cranks on an armdrag into an armbar to start before a back elbow sends him out to the floor. Back in and Sami can't pull off the corner walk wristdrag as Jericho crotches him to keep control. A dropkick sends Sami outside again and we take a break. We come back with Jericho suplexing Sami on the floor and hitting the chinlock. Some clotheslines and a high cross body put Jericho down so he grabs the bulldog to stop Sami's comeback.

A quick Blue Thunder Bomb gets two as you can tell these two aren't exactly going at full speed. Another high cross body is dropkicked out of the air and it's off to the Walls. Sami makes the rope and gets Jericho outside for the diving tornado DDT. Back in and Jericho pokes him in the eye (becoming the top choice for heels in recent weeks) to set up the Codebreaker for the pin at 12:47.

Rating: C+. Like I said you could tell that they were just doing signature stuff here which is a trademark of these overseas shows. These two could do something very entertaining with more time and less fatigue so we'll call this more of a "what could have been" than a disappointing match.

AJ Styles is in the back for a chat when Karl Anderson and Luke Gallows come in. Apparently AJ gave them their recommendations to get jobs in WWE and he's very glad to see them. Gallows wants to go find a spot to catch up because he can't quite remember their last night in Japan.

Tag Team Tournament Semi-Finals: Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady vs. Dudley Boyz

Enzo says there's a dud in the Dudley Boyz because they're a couple of haters instead of a couple of studs. Enzo: "We're like A-cups because we're real whether you like us or not." D-Von and Enzo get things going and we take a very quick break. Back with Bubba slowly beating on Enzo before it's off to D-Von for a big slam. The middle rope backsplash misses though and the hot tag brings in Big Cass. Some splashes have Cass in control and he shrugs off the reverse 3D. A big boot sets up the Rocket Launcher for the pin on Bubba at 8:35.

Rating: D+. This was a bit disappointing but they were probably smart to just give Enzo and Cass a win. I'm really not sure if they should give Enzo and Cass the tournament as it's a big jump to have them be Tag Team Champions so soon and you don't want them to lose their first big match.

Here's Roman Reigns to a lot of booing for the "I'm the guy" line. Reigns says that anyone who thinks they're part of this new era of WWE can come out here and get punched in the mouth. The fans call him boring so here's AJ to interrupt. Styles praises Roman's talents and admits that he'll have to have the match of his life to win the title. The thing is that's what AJ has done to become a champion everywhere.

Reigns is ready to take him apart but AJ says he'll make a phenomenal champion. Styles leaves and here are Gallows and Anderson to beat Reigns down. AJ didn't see them at first but does see them lay Reigns out with a running boot/spinning flapjack combination. They leave the ring and join AJ, who doesn't seem pleased with what he just saw.

Post break Roman is walking through the back when AJ comes up to say that he had nothing to do with that attack. Roman doesn't buy it after Anderson and Gallows attacked the Usos last week. AJ admits they've been friends for a long time but he doesn't need them to win the title. That's fine with Reigns who wants it to be one vs. all.

Baron Corbin vs. Fandango

Ziggler is on commentary. Corbin shrugs off the chops and takes it outside where he throws Fandango over Ziggler. A kick to Dolph's ribs

leaves him laying, followed by End of Days to Fandango for the pin at 1:29.

Baron kicks Ziggler in the face and gives him End of Days on the floor.

Greetings from Puerto Rico.

Here are Miz and Maryse for MizTV. Miz insults Prince George, saying he's plain and simple looking while the Intercontinental Title is perfect. Cue Cesaro to say the only kind of royal that Miz would ever be is a royal pain. The fans call Miz boring so he does a modified monologue from the movie Taken where he promises to beat Cesaro at Payback. Cesaro is ready to fight now and does Roddy Piper's bubblegum line from They Live, only to have Miz say Cesaro already has a match right now.

Rusev vs. Cesaro

Cesaro sees Del Rio and Sheamus out there but it's worried because he's already had a chat with Shane McMahon. Instead, we'll be having this match.

League of Nations/Miz vs. Cesaro/New Day

To make this even better, Cesaro has a New Day shirt under his suit. We start joined in progress with Woods taking over on Miz and bringing in Kofi for a kick to the chest. The Warrior splash gets two for Big E. and it's time for some gyrating. Del Rio comes in and gets beaten down as well, setting up a little tromboning. Sheamus gets the tag and stomps Woods down in the corner before knocking him outside as we take a break.

Back with Rusev splashing Woods in the corner and knocking the other good guys off the apron. Woods gets in a tornado DDT and the hot tag brings in Cesaro for the running uppercuts. The uppercuts go outside as well, followed by a high cross body for two on Sheamus. Miz gets in a cheap shot though, allowing Sheamus to hit a sitout powerbomb (that's a new one for him) for two on Cesaro. We hit the parade of finishers with Big E. hitting the Big Ending on Miz, followed by the Neutralizer for the pin on Sheamus at 13:30.

Rating: C+. This got better at the end but again it was a lot of standing

around before we got to the entertaining stuff. New Day and Cesaro is a very fun combination though and beating up the League is an easy layup win. The League needs to go somewhere soon or just split up because you can only beat them so many times before it stops meaning anything.

Charlotte and Ric Flair laugh off Natalya making her tap out last week. Natalya comes in to say she's getting a rematch at WWE Payback (as opposed to Botswana Payback) where Bret Hart will be in her corner.

Natalya/Becky Lynch/Paige/Sasha Banks vs. Tamina/Charlotte/Summer Rae/Naomi

Charlotte is nice enough to let Summer start with Natalya, who calls Summer pathetic. It's off to Sasha, who eats an elbow tot he jaw to actually let Summer take over. Everything breaks down and the good women stand tallover the villains as we take a break. Back with Becky throwing Naomi into the corner before eating a superkick from Tamina.

Summer comes back in and chokes in the corner for a bit before handing it off to Naomi for some kicks (thankfully minus the dancing). Becky finally sends Naomi through the ropes, setting up the diving tag off to Natalya. The basement dropkick puts Summer down but she gets in a quick spinning kick to the face. Charlotte comes in as everything breaks down with Natalya getting the Sharpshooter on Charlotte for the submission at 10:45.

Rating: C-. I wasn't feeling this one but there's only so much you can do with eight people in there at a time. The key thing here though is they're keeping this serious and the matches are working much better. This feels like a division with depth instead of the normal two people fighting for the title and a minor side story going on at the same time.

We recap Anderson and Gallows laying out Reigns earlier and AJ saying he had nothing to do with it.

Styles is with Gallows and Anderson again.

Greetings From Puerto Rico.

Tag Team Tournament Semi-Finals: Vaudevillains vs. Usos

Jimmy gets beaten into the corner to start and English slaps on a chinlock. A kick to the head allows for the tag to Jey for some house cleaning. The running Umaga attack hits English and a superkick knocks him out of the air for two. Everything breaks down with Jimmy being sent into the barricade, only to have Jey dive on both of them. Jimmy's bad shoulder goes into the post though and it's the Whirling Dervish to send the Vaudevillains to the finals at 3:24.

Rating: D+. Again no time to go anywhere but Vaudevillains vs. Enzo/Cass is the best possible option so this makes sense. It's not like the Usos need the win so let one of the new teams get a title shot somewhere down the lines. The ending being mostly clean is a good sign too, especially since the Vaudevillains don't seem to have the longest shelf life.

Video on Apollo Crews.

Heath Slater vs. Apollo Crews

There's no Adam Rose in sight due to the suspension. Earlier tonight, Crews agreed to join the team if he loses here but they'll leave him alone if he beats Slater. Crews starts with the AJ Styles dropdown into a dropkick and a delayed vertical suplex for no cover. Slater sidesteps a charge into the corner though and Slater grabs a chinlock to keep control. Back up and Crews moonsaults onto the other Outcasts, followed by a jumping enziguri and the lifting powerbomb to pin Slater at 4:28.

Rating: D+. That chinlock stopped them cold so this could only be so good. Crews finishing the mini feud with the Outcasts is a good idea but now he needs to have a match that actually matters. If nothing else it might help him develop a much needed personality because right now he's just a smiling goon.

As Crews leaves, Kevin Owens comes out for his match and we get a quick staredown. That's quite the upgrade for Crews and quite the downgrade for Owens, though to be fair Owens feuds with half the roster most weeks.

Kevin Owens vs. Dean Ambrose

They start slugging it out until Owens elbows him in the face to take

over. Ambrose forearms him in the head but the fight quickly goes outside for a real brawl. Owens is sent over the announcers' table and we take a break. Back with Ambrose getting caught in a chinlock and then being sent out over the top.

A frog splash off the apron crushes Ambrose again but he somehow gets up top back inside. Owens gets knocked to the floor and there's the standing top rope elbow to put both guys down. Back in and the rebound lariat gets two, only to have Dean run into a superkick for two. The spinning superplex gets the same for Owens but his second frog splash gets two. The Cannonball misses though and Dirty Deeds gives Dean the pin at 17:21.

Rating: B-. Pretty strong main event style match here with both guys trading big shots near the end. I could go without Owens losing another big match as he should definitely lose to Sami at Payback but at least he can bounce back from losses faster than almost anyone else on the roster.

Post match Jericho comes in and gives Dean a Codebreaker to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. The youth movement continues around here and that's exactly what needed to happen after the really weak Wrestlemania build. AJ vs. Reigns took a nice step up tonight and is starting to feel like something that could be a really strong pay per view main event. The rest of the show was fun as well, despite there being a lack of energy, possibly due to traveling. Raw continues to be on a roll though and that's a good sign leading into a big pay per view.

Results

Chris Jericho b. Sami Zayn – Codebreaker

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady b. Dudley Boyz – Rocket Launcher to Bubba

Baron Corbin b. Fandango – End of Days

Cesaro/New Day b. League of Nations/Miz – Neutralizer to Sheamus

Natalya/Becky Lynch/Sasha Banks/Paige b. Charlotte/Tamina/Naomi/Summer Rae – Sharpshooter to Charlotte

Vaudevillains b. Usos – Whirling Dervish to Jimmy

Apollo Crews b. Heath Slater – Lifting powerbomb

Dean Ambrose b. Kevin Owens – Dirty Deeds

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