

Smackdown – December 10, 2015: Waste Of My Time

Smackdown

Date: December 10, 2015

Location: Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Jacksonville, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Jerry Lawler, Booker T.

It's the go home show for Tables Ladders and Chairs and the show isn't looking like the most interesting in the world. Most of the card is set though and that means tonight is all about the build. I have a feeling we'll be seeing more about the main event, which is a bit of a shame as Smackdown was getting good about building up the midcard. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Roman Reigns vs. Alberto Del Rio

Non-title because I don't think Del Rio has defended the thing since he won it. Swagger vs. Del Rio on Sunday is officially a chairs match. The rest of the League, Ambrose and the Usos are at ringside. Del Rio takes him into the corner for a kick to the back to start but Reigns pounds him in the head. Alberto comes back with some kicks and a way too early chinlock (Sheamus: "SQUEEZE THE LIFE OUT OF HIM!"). That doesn't exactly work as Reigns fights up, only to be greeted by what sounded like a Y2J chant.

Reigns takes it to the floor but gets in a staredown with Sheamus, allowing Del Rio to kick him in the ribs as we take a break. Back with Del Rio coming off the top with a right hand to the head for two. With the everything else not working, Del Rio puts on the armbreaker over the top rope for all of four seconds until Reigns powers him off the ropes and out to the floor. As usual, I don't know why I'm supposed to cheer for Reigns when he can do anything. Well aside from get the ratings up that is.

Reigns wins a slugout (duh) and fires off the clotheslines in the corner. The Superman Punch is countered into the Backstabber for two but Reigns does his rollup into a powerbomb for two. A Sheamus distraction lets Del Rio get in the enziguri for two of his own but there's the Superman Punch for two with the League pulling Del Rio away. The big brawl is on and it's a double DQ at 14:38.

Rating: C+. They work well together but as usual this was an obvious ending and not for the title because Reigns is programmed for the World Title and therefore doesn't care about the US Title. It's the same, standard operating procedure stuff and I'm getting really tired of it, as are most of the fans it seems.

There's going to be an eight man tag main event. That's not all though as we also get a CONTRACT SIGNING between Ambrose and Kevin Owens. Good grief this is like a Greatest Hits Smackdown.

Tyler Breeze vs. Dolph Ziggler

Speaking of the exact same things we've seen time after time, here's Dolph Ziggler in the second segment of the show for I think the third show in a row. Oh and it's in a rematch too because this was screaming for a trilogy. They fight over arm control to start until Tyler grabs a headlock. A nice running dropkick gets two for Breeze and he starts in on the leg.

Ziggler tries to roll out of a knee bar but gets caught in a half crab instead. With that broken up, Breeze tries to wrap the leg around the post but gets pulled face first into the steel instead (with no mention of this from the commentators because Lawler is reading a line about selfies). Back in and the superkick ends Breeze at 4:44. That was Ziggler's only major offensive move of the match.

Rating: D+. So let's see. Breeze arrived about a month and a half ago and already has a losing record in general and to Dolph Ziggler. I'm so glad we saw him go through all that work down in NXT, only to have him come up here and lose a feud to the perennial jobber to the stars, who TOTALLY needed to win this feud. As usual, it's the same old things that we've seen for years that don't work but they keep doing because they're sure

it's a brilliant idea.

We recap Ryback vs. Rusev. I'm assuming they'll fight on Sunday.

Here's New Day and since it's Smackdown, this is probably their only appearance for the night. Before their match, Kofi talks about LeBron James just signed a lifetime deal with Nike. Big E.: "Lifetime? As in like it and put a ring on it?" Kofi shows off his shoes as E. gives us a quick commercial. As for Sunday, they're defending their titles in a triple threat ladder match, but getting the belts off of them is harder than getting Adele to answer a phone call. Why you ask? It's because NEW DAY ROCKS of course.

New Day vs. Lucha Dragons

Again non-title and a rematch from Raw, though this time it's Big E. on the floor. Kalisto flips Kofi down to start but both guys try a dropkick to give us a stalemate. The Dragons take over again with Cara monkey flipping Kalisto onto Kofi for two. New Day finally gets it together with Kofi sending Cara to the floor as we take a break. Back with Woods stomping in the corner and Big E. not being able to master the trombone.

We get an awkward sequence where Woods misses a clothesline and then hits it a second later with Cara standing there so he can hit it. Cara lifts Kofi up into a powerbomb (ala Reigns), finally allowing the hot tag to Kalisto as things speed way up. The hurricanrana driver gets two with Kofi making the save. When that doesn't work, Kalisto kicks Xavier in the head and hits the Salida Del Sol for the pin at 8:14.

Rating: C-. This didn't have much time due to the break and was another rematch from Raw. Just like with Owens in the Intercontinental Title feud, the Usos have been completely forgotten in this whole thing and should have been in this match instead of the rematch with the Dragons where New Day loses AGAIN. In other words, they're using the same idea in the Tag Team Title feud that they're doing in the World Title feud. And people wonder why this isn't the most well received time in creative's history.

It's time for the contract signing for Owens vs. Ambrose. Dean comes out

first and has to yell at Owens' attorney. Owens has an attorney? That doesn't fit for some reason. Owens has been instructed to not show up tonight because it's not a safe working environment. Oh sweet goodness with the legal storylines. That's another trope you can check off the list for this show.

Dean says he was hoping for a quick beatdown tonight instead of having to actually do something. He goes to sign but here's Owens, blowing off the ploy a good three minutes after it started. Dean is sent into the barricade but whips Owens into the steps and takes out the attorney as a bonus. Owens bails and the attorney gets Dirty Deeds before Dean signs.

Ryback vs. Ascension

Lana and Rusev are on commentary. Ryback throws Viktor around to start and plants Konnor with a spinebuster. The Meat Hook and Shell Shock put Viktor away at 1:29.

If you're going to do that, BRING BACK JOBBERS! Good grief man. Someone explain to me the reason why we need to beat down a team that could be used somewhere else for the sake of pushing this midcard feud. If you're going to have someone lose in 90 seconds, bring in jobbers who have nothing to lose. I know Ascension doesn't have much to lose, but they COULD mean something if they're built up. Add this to the list of annoying things WWE doesn't understand that gets on my nerves because they're so obsessed with this way of thinking and no one comes in and says "hey, that's stupid."

Ryback stares at the Russians or whatever country they're from this week.

Recap of Rhyno returning Monday.

Becky Lynch vs. Paige

Paige's early headlock doesn't get her anywhere so she punches Becky in the ribs instead. Some knees to the head set up a chinlock on Becky but she comes back with some hard uppercuts. A double clothesline puts both of them down but here's Charlotte coming to the ring, complete with full music. The distraction only works on Paige (because they're feuding you

see) and the Disarm-Her makes her tap at 3:23.

Rating: D+. So instead of having the champion get beat, let's have the challenger get beat so we have even less of a reason to like her. I think they're trying to make Paige the face here but much like everything else, they have no idea how to make the women likeable either. I'm sure the solution is to have her take credit for the Divas Revolution though and then have her be catty with everyone else.

Long video on Reigns vs. Sheamus. As I've said ever since it started: it's a great Intercontinental Title feud but a lame main event.

League of Nations vs. Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose/Usos

Alberto shoulders Jimmy down to start but Jimmy (who Booker identifies as having the facepaint on the right hand side, even though they're exactly the same in the ring) comes back with a loud uppercut. Off to Jey vs. Rusev with the Bulgarian taking over as you would expect. Sheamus comes in with a kick to the head and we take a break. Back with Jey having his shirt ripped open for some forearms to the chest.

Reigns has to be held back from interfering but the distraction allows the tag to Ambrose but the fans aren't ready to react. The middle rope dropkick puts Sheamus down and the bulldog sets up the strikes against the ropes. Barrett finally does something by tripping Ambrose from the floor, allowing Rusev to come in and choke away. Del Rio comes in for another chinlock (he's a big fan of those tonight) and a Backstabber for two.

Sheamus' suplex slam gets two and it's off to another chinlock. Back to Rusev for a bearhug but Dean counters into a neckbreaker. A tornado DDT to Del Rio is enough for the hot tag to Reigns, though the crowd doesn't seem that thrilled to see him again. Everything breaks down and the Usos take out Sheamus and Del Rio with stereo dives. The spear finishes Rusev at 13:47.

Rating: D+. Totally uninteresting main event here with nothing standing out. Reigns wins again before he gets screwed over on Sunday like we're all expecting because that's what the fans want to see: more of the same

thing we've seen for a year now while we keep pedaling towards the carrot on a string that we can never reach.

Overall Rating: D-. I don't say this often but this show was a huge waste of my time. I understand that this was the same taping as Tribute to the Troops but this felt more like that "special" ("Yeah it's for the troops and totally not just us taping a house show so we can feel good about ourselves. USA!") than a regular show.

Almost every single thing that happened on this show felt like it came from the book of WWE Easy Ideas and that's not how you ever want a show to go. Between the champions losing, the contract signing and the tag team main event, I saw nothing on this show that makes me care about TLC. Nothing. Not a single thing. I'm sure the show will be fine, but this was a waste of my time.

It's very clear right now that WWE isn't trying. I know it happens every year at this time when the creative team basically puts it on autopilot and throws their feet up for the holidays, but this is the kind of show that makes me wonder why I should bother at this time of year. I never had that feeling before but it's happening almost every November and December in recent years because WWE is stuck with five hours of TV a week and nowhere near enough ideas.

They need to give me a reason to care in a hurry (hint: you can have a face hold the title for more than five minutes in fifteen months) because this is getting old. Stop having champions lose, stop treating these shows like they don't matter, stop repeating the same matches with guys trading meaningless five minute wins and stop using the same ideas every few weeks and expecting us to care. I usually give WWE the benefit of the doubt (more often than I should) but this is the kind of show that makes me feel like I've wasted my time and that's the last thing I should feel when I'm watching something that should be entertaining.

Results

Roman Reigns vs. Alberto Del Rio went to a double DQ when the League of Nations, the Usos and Dean Ambrose interfered

Dolph Ziggler b. Tyler Breeze – Superkick

Lucha Dragons b. New Day – Salida Del Sol to Woods

Ryback b. Ascension – Shell Shock to Viktor

Becky Lynch b. Paige – Disarm-Her

Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose/Usos b. League of Nations – Spear to Rusev

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of the History of Wrestlemania at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0188BJRGU>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

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

Impact Wrestling – December 9, 2015: What A Dim Light At The End Of The Tournament

Impact Wrestling

Date: December 9, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: D'Angelo Dinero, Josh Matthews

It's week #10 of the World Title Series and we're down to the final eight. In theory that means we're getting the quarterfinals tonight,

though I'm not sure if that's going to be enough to fill in a full two hour show. There's still no date announced for the finals but they have four weeks left on Destination America and only three rounds of the tournament to go. Let's get to it.

We get the double preview via voiceover and the announcers.

Video on Mahabali Shera vs. Lashley.

TNA World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Mahabali Shera vs. Lashley

The announcers can't remember the name of Shera's dance. Can't they just go outside because IT'S SWEEPING THE NATION??? Shera takes over with a hard clothesline and some stomping in the corner to start. Lashley remembers that he's fighting a guy who is only know for a lame dance that is sweeping the nation, minus the announcers' booth of course, and powerbombs him out of the corner.

Back from an early break Lashley in control on the floor and high fiving fans. Lashley tries a dive off the apron but Shera catches him in mid air (ok that's good) and slams him on the floor. They head back inside for more clotheslines from Shera before he drops Lashley off a gorilla press. The Sky High is countered though and a spear sends Lashley to the semi-finals at 10:27.

Rating: C-. Not a terrible match here and thank goodness they went with Lashley instead of the glorified rookie because they thought they were going to India before that got screwed up again because of whatever reason they're claiming. Lashley is the much better option here though I wouldn't put the title back on him again. TNA needs something fresh on top right now and being back where they were a year ago with Lashley as champion around the time they head to a new network isn't the right idea.

The announcers talk about Lashley a bit.

Video on Eric Young and Tigre Uno's paths to the final eight.

Video on Awesome Kong vs. Jesse Godderz from last week.

Godderz promises to show what the Man is capable of tonight.

TNA World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Tigre Uno vs. Eric Young

Before the match, Young calls Tigre stupid like the rest of the fans. He wants Tigre to leave like the coward that he is and Tigre teases going, only to come back in and take Eric out instead. A hurricanrana into a rollup gets two for Tigre but Eric drops him with a hard shot. There's a backbreaker for two from Eric and we take a break.

Back with Young still in control as Josh sells merchandise. A shot to the ribs gets two and Eric throws him to the floor. Young chokes some more back inside and tries a moonsault for no apparent reason, resulting in a big crash and burn. Tigre hurricanranas him down and drops a top rope legdrop between the legs for two. A top rope hurricanrana gets the same but Eric grabs the piledriver to advance at 11:42.

Rating: D+. This was another obvious ending, which is a major problem with this tournament as a whole. Young would be the worst choice of the realistic contenders for the title but he's fine as a guy to lose in the semi-finals. Tigre looked like a jobber here though, which is exactly what was expected when he fought against the adults outside of the X-Division.

The announcers recap Young winning and preview Jesse Godderz vs. Matt Hardy.

Matt Hardy is ready for Jesse, who is going to take a Twist of Fate and get pinned as one more step towards getting the title back.

Eric Young says these have been warmups for what he's going to do to everyone else in this tournament.

TNA World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Jesse Godderz vs. Matt Hardy

Matt grabs a headlock to start until Jesse shoves him away. Josh tries to explain the situation that got us to this tournament and it really still doesn't make sense. A few slams drop Jesse and it's time for Matt to pose a bit. They head outside with Jesse driving him into the steps and nailing a dropkick as we take a break.

Back with Jesse working on the back (smart) with forearms and a bearhug.

A slow motion powerslam gets two for Godderz and it's back to the bearhug on the mat with feet on the ropes. Back up and Matt hits a quick Side Effect (with very little elevation) followed by a sleeper drop. Well at least it's different than the four moves he usually uses.

A throw off the top sets up a middle rope elbow to the back of Jesse's head for two. The Twist of Fate is broken up and a dropkick gets two for Jesse. Back up and an enziguri (kind of) sends Matt into the corner but the Adonis Lock is broken up. The Twist of Fate sends Matt to the final four at 17:22.

Rating: C. They had to have one longer match like this and this was one of their best option out of the four matches they had tonight. Godderz was a glorified jobber here but it was nice to see him doing some good stuff. He's gone from a total goof to a pretty decent midcarder, which is more than most people expected from him. Good enough match here but longer than it needed to be.

The announcers talk about Matt.

It's time for a sitdown interview with Dixie freaking Carter where she gives her thoughts on the major events of the year: Drew Galloway debuting was cool, Ethan Carter III is family but he was kind of a jerk, Matt Hardy vacating the title was sad, the tournament was awesome and let the Knockouts have a chance to be the best. The big news here: the semi-finals and finals are going to be on the live show on January 5. So wait, what are they doing for the next THREE WEEKS?

Long recap of the ending of Bound For Glory and the tournament up to this point.

Next week it's Group Future 4 vs. Group X-Division in an eight man tag. Also Eddie Edwards vs. Rockstar Spud vs. Mr. Anderson vs. Bobby Roode. These will be the first non-tournament matches in nearly three months.

We recap the night so far.

Quick video on Ethan Carter III vs. Davey Richards.

TNA World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Ethan Carter III vs. Davey

Richards

Before the match, Ethan makes fun of Davey's Wolves' howl. Richards says he doesn't have a rich aunt or a bad tan, but he has a bunch of fans who are going to howl with him. Ethan grabs an armdrag to start but Davey comes back with a wristlock. A dropkick puts Ethan on the floor, only to have a Tyrus distraction cause Davey to charge into a forearm. We hit a chinlock for a few seconds and an elbow to the mat (called the face) gets two on Davey. Tyrus gets in a cheap shot on the floor (where is Eddie anyway?) and we take a break.

Back with Ethan whipping Davey hard into the corner and putting on the chinlock. Davey comes back with some kicks in the corner, only to miss a charge and crash face first into the buckle. They slug it out until Davey gets low bridged out to the floor, setting up a suicide dive to Tyrus and two in a row to Ethan. A German suplex gets two for Davey but he misses the top rope stomp, setting up a TKO for two.

Ethan goes up top for some reason but gets headbutted several times, setting up a superplex into a regular suplex for two. Both finishers are broken up and Ethan tries a rollup, only to get caught in a triangle choke. Ethan lifts him up and flips him over, giving us a weird edit into a TKO. The 1%er sends Ethan to the final four at 16:37.

Rating: B. This was the best match of the night by a mile with the hot segment right before the finish. The ending was totally obvious but at least we had a good match before we got to the ending. Richards clearly wasn't the one that was going to take Carter down but he got things moving here instead of just sitting around waiting for the obvious finish.

Here are the semi-finals:

Ethan Carter III

Lashley

Matt Hardy

Eric Young

Overall Rating: C-. This show's problem can be summed up in one line: the winners were never in doubt. Mahabali Shera, Tigre Uno, Jesse Godderz and Davey Richards are not going to be in the final four of a World Title tournament no matter how you look at it. The wrestling was fine, but the endings were never in doubt and that's rarely a good idea for a full show.

The semifinals are coming up in four weeks, but that brings us to the biggest problem: what are they going to do to fill time? Two matches were announced for next week but I have no idea what they're going to do unless it's Best Of shows. You knew these scheduling issues were coming but I didn't think it was going to be this bad. This wasn't a bad show but it felt like a lot of waiting around before we got to the obvious, which made the whole thing feel long.

Results

Lashley b. Mahabali Shera – Spear

Eric Young b. Tigre Uno – Piledriver

Matt Hardy b. Jesse Godderz – Twist of Fate

Ethan Carter III b. Davey Richards – 1%er

New Column: Heaven Help Whoever Is NXT

Looking at the problems with some of the callups and how stupid WWE looks with some of their booking.

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-heaven-help-whoever->

NXT – December 9, 2015: Trying To Get Hyped

NXT

Date: December 9, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Corey Graves, Rich Brennan

It's the go home show for Takeover: London and that means it's time for all the hard pushes before the next major show. The bit match for tonight is the always useful combining of two matches into a tag as Finn Balor and Apollo Crews face Baron Corbin and Samoa Joe. The card for next week's show looks good though and that's all that matters. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Colin Cassady/Enzo Amore vs. Corey Hollis/John Skyler

Enzo and Cass are totally serious for once. Hollis and Skyler actually get an entrance. Cass pounds Hollis into the corner for some hard elbows to start before easily tossing him across the ring. Enzo comes in for some trash talk and a nice dropkick before it's back to Cass, who throws his partner at Hollis in the corner. The East River Crossing sets up the Rocket Launcher for the pin on Hollis at 2:40.

Enzo says that's how they feed their family and Dawson/Wilder aren't messing with that. They've been doing this longer than any team in NXT and the champs had the nerve to try and take out Cass. That jeopardized their futures and the only people who get to determine their futures are in this ring right now. Cass isn't standing for those two taking them out

either and they're getting retribution and the titles in London. Where in the world did that come from? For their first ever serious promo, this was excellent and I was loving it.

Dana Brooke and Emma are ready for Asuka and want her to remember that this isn't Japan. Emma was the one that paved the way for the Divas Revolution (can we PLEASE find a new plot device for the Divas?) and they imply interference in Asuka's match tonight. Dana is annoyed at Tom Phillips for being too tall to pat on the head.

Video on Tye Dillinger.

Asuka vs. Deonna Purrazzo

They circle each other for a bit until Asuka grabs the hammerlock. After going over to a wristlock, Asuka snaps on an armbar to send Deonna into the ropes. A hip strike drops Deonna again and here are Emma and Dana on the stage. Deonna tries to use the distraction and gets KICKED IN THE FACE for a knockout win at 2:55. The gasp from Emma and Dana made the whole thing even better.

Mojo Rawley talks about Blake and Murphy not being successful in the club and Zack Ryder has no idea what he's talking about. They're sure they'll win tonight though.

Alexa Bliss yells at Blake and Murphy for losing recently but they promise that the Hype Bros will be broken.

Another long song by who appears to be Elias Sampson.

Hype Bros vs. Blake and Murphy

Blake, Murphy and Bliss are wearing what look like Freddie Kruger shirts that were run over by lawnmowers. Even the fans call them Freddie Kruger. Mojo dances a lot to start and Ryder facepalms on the apron. Blake works on a wristlock to start as Graves wants to go to prison instead of watching the Hype Bros. Blake and Murphy are sent to the floor, leaving Mojo to declare that none of them are hyped. Ryder baseball slides both of them and drops Blake with a flapjack to set up the Broski Boot.

Murphy comes in for the first time and takes Ryder down before it's back to Blake for a chinlock. That goes nowhere so it's Murphy coming in with a chinlock of his own. Ryder fights up and kicks them into each other before diving over to tag in Mojo. Rawley cleans house (Corey: "It's like someone shaved a Tasmanian devil.") and everything breaks down. Blake's superkick only gets two and it's the Hype Ryder for the pin on Blake at 6:24.

Rating: C. Totally fine match here between two teams that aren't the most interesting in the world. Blake and Murphy don't seem to have much of a future aside from being a midcard team here in NXT while the Bros look like they've been thrown together for the sake of giving them something to do. Still though, not a bad little match here.

Baron Corbin doesn't like Apollo Crews because he's a rookie who doesn't deserve anything. Joe is still mad about Finn Balor not giving him the title shot he deserved. Tonight, Crews and Balor get their warmup beatings.

Peyton Royce vs. Bayley

Non-title. Royce is clearly a heel here as she's a sexier character than the majority of the roster. Peyton starts with an armdrag (Fans: "BETTER THAN EVA!") and Bayley doesn't look to be 100% coming in. A running knee gets two for Royce and there's that annoying Bayley chant again. We hit the chinlock on Bayley but she comes back with some right hands, only to walk into a spin kick for two. The middle rope elbow staggers Royce though and the Bayley to Belly is good for the pin at 4:07.

Rating: C+. Not a great match or anything but this is the kind of match that Royce needed to look like a future player in the division. If there's one thing NXT is great at, it's setting up someone as a threat after they start off looking like any other wrestler. She might not go anywhere, but this was a really good performance from someone who hadn't shown much potential otherwise.

Post match Eva Marie and Nia Jax come out. Eve is booed out of the building until Jax takes the mic and says she doesn't need Eva to do the talking for her. Bayley is lucky that Nia didn't get here earlier because

Bayley has been lucky so far but that ends in London. I still see no reason why Nia has Eva with her.

Apollo has been trying to get in touch with Balor all week but Finn hasn't answered. Balor says he's ready and that's all that matters. Crews is fine with that but promises to come for the title after London. Balor doesn't seem cool with that.

Video on Sami Zayn getting hurt back in May and his return next week.

Finn Balor/Apollo Crews vs. Samoa Joe/Baron Corbin

Joe immediately tags out to avoid fighting Balor. Finn tries to bring in Apollo so Corbin tags out as well. Apollo slams Joe down and we take a way too early break. Back with Crews in the wrong corner and Corbin flipping him to the mat for two. Joe comes in for an armbar and a big elbow to the jaw. It's back to Corbin but he misses a charge and hits the post, allowing the hot tag to bring in Balor.

The champ hammers away on Joe in the corner but Joe reverses him and tries the Muscle Buster. Finn reverses into a sunset flip for two, followed by the Sling Blade. Baron shoves Balor off the top and into a Death Valley Driver (I haven't seen one of those in a long time), setting up the Koquina Clutch to knock Balor out at 9:46.

Rating: C+. Again this wasn't great but it set up the two matches quite well. I could have gone for more interaction between Crews and Corbin here as their match isn't the most interesting in the world but it's good enough so far. Joe vs. Balor has gone from what felt like a filler feud to a match I want to see so they're certainly clicking there. Good stuff here and it accomplished its goal.

Joe poses with the title over the unconscious Balor to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Above all else a go home show is supposed to make me want to see the big show more than I did coming in and that goal was accomplished here. Other than that we had some good wrestling and a solid promo from Enzo and Cass, but I'm not as hyped up for London as I've been for recent Takeovers. The show is going to be awesome because that's how

Takeovers work but I'm not as interested as I could be. Still though, another good show this week as you should expect.

Results

Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady b. Corey Hollis/John Skyler – Rocket Launcher to Hollis

Asuka b. Deonna Purrazzo via knockout – Kick to the face

Hype Bros b. Blake and Murphy – Hype Ryder to Blake

Bayley b. Peyton Royce – Bayley to belly

Samoa Joe/Baron Corbin b. Finn Balor/Apollo Crews – Koquina Clutch to Balor

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of the History of Wrestlemania at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0188BJRGU>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

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

The WWE Network Categories Are A Mess

I went to watch the Legends With JBL interviews about Undertaker and was stupid enough to think they would be in the Legends With JBL section. No

no, they're in the Undertaker 25 Years section, meaning the only thing in the JBL section is the Bischoff interviews. This is like where Raw 1999 isn't in the Raw section, but rather the Attitude Era section.

Right now in the Originals section, there are twenty seven categories, some of which haven't been updated in over a year. I'm not sure how you go about doing it, but there has to be a way to make this easier to navigate. I shouldn't have to go on a hunt every time I want to see a special that they keep touting as great.

Monday Nitro – July 18, 2000: The Way To Make Russo Work

Monday Nitro #249

Date: July 18, 2000

Location: Palace of Auburn Hills, Auburn Hills, Michigan

Commentators: Mark Madden, Stevie Ray, Tony Schiavone

As is so often the case in WCW 2000, I can barely remember what happened last week. It took me a bit before I could remember that Jeff Jarrett won the #1 contenders match while Scott Steiner is on a rampage. I really shouldn't forget the whole story in the span of just a week but almost nothing has a lasting impact around here. Let's get to it.

This show is on a Tuesday because of a TV movie. It's not even the NBA anymore.

We open with a recap of Scott Steiner being all insane lately, including the attack on Tenay which we can't see in full (though we can see a package of stills which show you everything you need to know). Apparently Steiner has been suspended again.

Cut to Scott Steiner in the parking lot, attacking Booker T.'s new car

with a pipe until Rick Steiner talks him down.

Nitro Girls. I didn't know they were still a thing.

Here's the Cat to open things up and he brings the Nitro Girls with him. Cat gets right to the point by announcing a one night tournament for the US Title. He runs down the brackets but before we can get to the first match, there are some rules for the fans. They can't get too loud and the fat people need to stay in their seats to make sure people behind them can see.

We see the Steiners ripping up everything in the back on the way to the ring, sending the Girls running off. Here are Rick and Scott (who walk past the Girls, whose hiding place was RIGHT NEXT TO THE ENTRANCE) with Scott choking Cat and demanding a title shot. Booker hits the ring so here are Rick and Stevie to follow, triggering a huge brawl. Security breaks it up and Cat makes Scott vs. Goldberg for tonight.

Buff and Judy Bagwell are here with Judy in a neck brace. Why did Buff bring her again? Can't he make his sandwiches by himself already?

The announcers talk until Jeff Jarrett jumps the barricade and guitars Stevie. Jeff calls that a warning shot.

US Title Tournament First Round: Positively Kanyon vs. Mike Awesome

During the entrances, Madden dubs Awesome the Fat Chick Thriller. So much for Awesome ever meaning anything again. The Bagwells come out to do commentary as Awesome takes over to start with a top rope clothesline. A nice fireman's carry flapjack puts Mike down but he punches Kanyon out to the floor for a big plancha over the top. Guys his size should not be able to do that. Like....they just shouldn't. It's already table time but Kanyon drives him through it with a Kanyon Cutter off the apron.

Kanyon goes over to Buff though, allowing Judy to go after Kanyon instead. She gets thrown down again (more man on woman violence so you know Russo is back in charge), allowing Buff to grab a quick Blockbuster and letting his mom just deal with the attack on her own. That's STILL not enough for the pin though so Awesome grabs a release German suplex

and the Awesome Bomb for the pin to advance.

Rating: D. Under five minutes and we had guest commentators, a table spot (which wasn't a DQ of course), Kanyon beating up Judy Bagwell again, interference, and a near fall off the interference. Oh and it's in a tournament. This is back to WCW's old stuff back in the spring because.....yeah I'm tired of ripping on Russo for the same stuff. I'm sure you get it by this point.

Post match some large underwear are thrown into the ring for Awesome. This is sad. So sad.

Pamela Paulshock hits on Lance Storm but he is too focused on the tournament.

Buff sends Judy away with his brother, who doesn't ask why she's here in the first place.

US Title Tournament First Round: Buff Bagwell vs. Lance Storm

Before the match, Storm yells at the fans for not respecting his national anthem and not understanding that Canada is just better than the United States. Buff won't stand for this Canadian national anthem nonsense and jumps Storm from behind to start. Storm comes back with an elbow but quickly gets backdropped down again. The Blockbuster is loaded up but we cut to the parking lot where Judy is being helped into her car. Lance uses the distraction to grab the Maple Leaf for the win. I won't say submission as Bagwell didn't tap and he didn't look to say he gave up but whatever.

Buff limps to the back as we hear screaming, despite the video not airing on the video screen.

Cat has one of the Nitro Girls in his office when the Jung Dragons appear again. Stevie Ray comes in to help but Cat says they're friends. As confused as that makes him (how can you tell with Stevie though?), Stevie just wants Jarrett tonight. Cat says ok, as long as Stevie lets him play with the Dragons.

We see security footage of Kanyon Cutting Judy Bagwell in the parking

lot. Well grabbing her and dragging her off camera but you get the idea.

Scott Steiner is sitting by the door with a pipe in his hand.

US Title Tournament First Round: Great Muta vs. Vampiro

We actually see some clips from Muta's run in the early 90s, which continues to make me wonder how WCW reached this point. They used to be awesome. Speaking of things that used to be awesome, this in no way applies to the Insane Clown Posse who return with Vampiro here. Muta kicks all three of them down to start but the numbers, including the Demon, are too much for him and it's Vampiro taking over with some kicks.

A top rope flip dive misses though and it's Muta coming back with the Power Drive elbow. Muta starts in on the arm and shrugs off a quick Rock Bottom. There's the dragon screw leg whip but Muta has to deal with Demon. The distraction doesn't work though and the moonsault puts Vampiro away.

Rating: C-. It's hard not to like Muta at least a little bit as the guy is just good at any age. Vampiro was better here as he kept things moving instead of doing all his stupid over the top nonsense that doesn't go anywhere because Undertaker and Kane haven't done enough lately for Russo to copy. This was another match too short to mean much but that's what you have to expect when there are seven tournament matches plus other stuff to get through in two hours.

Post match Vampiro and the Clowns beat up the Demon. So they're split again?

Scott beats up Norman Smiley and Ralphus. Steiner: "TAKE IT LIKE A MAN!"

US Title Tournament First Round: Shane Douglas vs. Billy Kidman

Before the match, Shane says he and Torrie (in lingerie here) have been getting to know each other lately and he's exhausted. Shane asks if it's worse to have a woman like Torrie and lose her to a franchise or never have one at all. Torrie feels sorry for Kidman because she had to fake it every night and then she played him for everything he had. Wait what did he have? She played him for some undershirts?

Shane takes over to start with a gordbuster and reverse Hennig neck snap. Kidman comes right back and baseball slides him into the barricade but stops to go after Torrie. Back in and Torrie trips Kidman to set up the Pittsburgh Plunge for two. Kidman sends Shane into Torrie for the same, followed by Torrie hitting Kidman in the head with a chair for two more (and with Kidman's leg being halfway under the rope).

Shane tries a gorilla press and Kidman was supposed to turn it into a bulldog but Kidman mostly missed his head. To be fair though, Shane's head only got about a foot away from the mat anyway so both are at fault. Back up and a quick Franchiser gets.....the pin after the referee wasn't sure if it was three or not.

Rating: D+. Again, way too much stuff going on here but at least some of the near falls were good and Torrie looked amazing. Kidman continues to be one of the best gems on the roster who unfortunately isn't going anywhere because WCW has no idea what to do with anyone right now.

Here are the updated brackets:

Mike Awesome

Great Muta

Lance Storm

Shane Douglas

Torrie and Shane make out in the ring but we cut to 3 Count carrying a ladder, followed by cutting to Goldberg arriving. This happened in the span of ten seconds.

Steiner is still waiting for Goldberg.

Here's Tank Abbott to say N'Sync is playing to no one down the road in the Silverdome because the real deal is here. 3 Count brings out their ladder and there's a gold record hanging above the ring. Tony: "At New Blood Rising, 3 Count is signed to face the Jung Dragons in a ladder match." 3 Count dances but the Dragons climb the ladder and a match is on.

3 Count vs. Jung Dragons

Yeah remember the ladder match announced for the pay per view? Well here it is almost a month before the show. 3 Count puts the ladder on the top rope but Yang dropkicks it out from under Shannon for a big crash. Shannon gets superplexed off the ladder, setting up a top rope splash from Jamie.

Shane comes in with a top rope Fameasser for Jamie and now it's Evan with the ladder around his head for the helicopter spot. Tank wants the match to be over so it's time to dance. He can't wait any longer and goes to get his square. Evan goes up but the ladder gets shoved over, landing him right next to Tank for a bad looking crash. In the melee, Jamie goes up and gets the gold record for the win.

Rating: C-. Unless TNA broke it later, that's the shortest ladder match in history, clocking in at 3:18. What am I supposed to say about a ladder match that doesn't even break 200 seconds? There were some good looking high spots (nothing approaching what the WWF had been doing in the past 11 months of course) but what can you do in less than three and a half minutes? Oh well, maybe the rematch in a month will be better.

Goldberg comes into the building and Steiner misses a pipe swing. The fight is on until security and wrestlers break it up.

Back from a break and Scott is ticked off with Rick trying to calm him down.

US Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Mike Awesome vs. Great Muta

Awesome runs him over to start and pounds away in the corner until he misses a charge. Muta dropkicks Awesome out to the floor as Madden says these two are very similar. A trip to the announcers' table goes nowhere but Muta sprays the mist in Awesome's eyes. Back inside and Mike gets kicked into the corner again, followed by a top rope hurricanrana. A quick clothesline and the Awesome Bomb send Mike to the finals in a finish as quick and sudden as it sounded.

Rating: C-. Another not great match here due to the amount of time it

had. Muta vs. Awesome could be good if they were allowed to do something but instead they had to fly through it and put WAY too much attention on Madden being freaked out over the brawling at the announcers' table.

Madden wobbles off to change his shirt.

Bagwell goes after Smooth for helping with the attack on his mom but Kanyon jumps him from behind.

Madden tries to get Kiwi to clean his shirt but Kiwi is too busy. Paisley comes in and tries to get her skirt repaired but again Kiwi is too busy.

US Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Shane Douglas vs. Lance Storm

This would be the heel vs. heel match after the face vs. face match in the other semi-final. Storm backdrops him to the floor to start so Torrie jumps on Lance's back to give Shane an opening. An atomic drop into a low blow has Storm in trouble and a neck snap gets two. Madden is back on commentary as Shane gets two more off two suplex into a falcon's arrow.

Kidman is watching on the stage as Storm kicks at the leg to make his comeback. Lance gets two off a superkick but walks into a belly to belly. The knee gives out though and Shane's delayed cover only gets another two. Storm pokes him in the eye (that's rather out of character) and grabs the Maple Leaf (and a rope) for the submission.

Rating: C. What is with Shane having back to back good (in WCW terms) matches here? Storm going forward is the right call and it's cool to see him cheat like that so he can brag about being such a great pure wrestler. Shane and Kidman are likely going to have a bad match at the pay per view but if it means I have to look at Torrie more and more, so be it.

Post match Kidman comes down with a chair and tries to spank Torrie but has to dropkick the chair into Storm's face instead.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Stevie Ray

Stevie is halfway down the aisle by the time his music starts. A powerslam puts Jeff down and Stevie hammers away in the corner. He's

still wearing the NWO colors, likely because he's barely had a singles match since his version of the team split up. They head to the floor for a bit with Jeff taking over and punching him down back inside. Stevie comes back but here's Rick Steiner for a distraction, allowing Midajah to come in and dive on Stevie, allowing a quick Stroke to give Jeff the pin.

Booker comes out to save his brother. Now in a smart world, we would get Steiners vs. Harlem Heat one more time out of this.

US Title: Lance Storm vs. Mike Awesome

Awesome breaks up the national anthem by calling O Canada a censored name. They start in the aisle with Awesome whipping Storm into the barricade about five times in a row. There's a chair to Storm's back and Awesome smiles at the overweight women in the front row. They get in and Storm hits a chair shot of his own to take over. Storm chops away in the corner but Awesome no sells, only to have Storm poke him in the eye (that's straight out of Sting vs. Flair).

Storm's hurricanrana is countered into a sitout powerbomb for two but the Awesome Splash hits knees. Mike grabs the rope (I think) to block a tornado DDT and loads up a super Awesome Bomb. Since that might kill Storm, he counters into a superplex for two. The regular Awesome Bomb is countered into the Maple Leaf to give Storm the title completely clean.

Rating: C+. Best match of the show by far and also the longest, though I'm sure there's absolutely no connection there whatsoever. Storm winning clean is interesting as it lets him look like the better man instead of having him cheat to win. Then again, that could be due to Russo not knowing how to write characters.

Mike's women come in to help him up, making sure the focus is completely off Storm and the title for the sake of unfunny comedy.

Goldberg vs. Scott Steiner

Cat is guest referee and Booker comes out to do commentary. Steiner knees him into the corner to start and drops Goldberg with a single clothesline to a big reaction. Back up and Goldberg suplexes him into the corner but

has to put the brakes on when Steiner avoids the spear. Instead a flying shoulder drops Steiner, followed by the gorilla press into the powerslam for no cover. An overhead belly to belly sets up the Recliner but Steiner punches Cat instead of sticking with the hold. We'll say that's enough for a no contest, leaving this too short to rate but fun while it lasted.

This draws in Booker to go after Steiner but Goldberg spears Scott down. Booker kicks Goldberg in the face and here's Kevin Nash in his big return. There's a Jackknife to Goldberg and another one for Steiner. Booker stares Nash down to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This is proof that a few tweaks to Russo's formula could have made something happen. In this case, it was cutting down on the amount of stories and ideas that he had going on every show and only focusing on a handful of things. With the tournament and the impending Goldberg vs. Steiner showdown, I could focus on a few ideas and they actually sunk in for a change instead of flying from one story to the next with nothing making an impact. The show still isn't good, but this was the kind of thing that could work with some more fine tuning.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of the History of Wrestlemania at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0188BJRGU>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

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

Raw Ratings Still Suck

<http://www.wrestlezone.com/news/650007-wwes-ratings-decline-continues-this-weeks-raw-draws-near-record-low-viewership>

In this case, it's really not hard to figure out why. Last night was all about trying to keep the fans watching during the start of Monday Night Football, but why would I keep watching for a brawl, as in not a match, as the big showdown at the end of the show? The Wyatts interrupting the League was really interesting and then the Wyatts were out first at the hands of Tommy Dreamer, thereby ending the Wyatts' interaction with the League for the night.

In other words: potential at the start, then back to the same boring stuff they've done for weeks now.

Coca Cola Sponsoring the Slammy Awards and Tribute to the Troops

<http://411mania.com/wrestling/ww-news-company-scores-major-sponsorship-signs-new-toy-deal/>

That's big. Like that's REALLY big. Coca Cola is one of the biggest brands in the world and having them say WWE is worth sponsoring is a hugely positive sign for WWE going forward. That means some serious advertising money coming in from more companies that want to be part of WWE because it's worth the investment. Raw may be boring these days, but if it gets them

stuff like this, that's not going to change anytime soon.

Monday Night Raw – December 7, 2015: One on the Brake And Two on the Gas

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 7, 2015

Location: North Charleston Coliseum, Charleston, South, Carolina

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

It's the go home show for TLC and the big story continues to be Roman Reigns and company vs. the League of Nations. There's still a lot of the card to be set for Sunday but as usual, you can see most of it from here. The show isn't looking bad and if they put enough violent gimmicks on the card, everything should be fine. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Sheamus vs. Reigns and last week's main event. Thankfully Reigns beating them on his own on Smackdown is omitted.

Here's the League, now with their own music. Sheamus says he can't look stupid if he's the World Champion. As for this Sunday, how can he be afraid of defending the title against Reigns if he already beat him in 5:15? The WWE has entered the International Era and Sheamus lists off the four countries represented in the League. You'll notice there are no Americans, because in 2015, America just isn't good enough anymore. Sheamus says they're the best of the best.....and we've got the Wyatts?

The fans immediately chant YES for the Wyatts. Bray says they haven't been introduced because the League of Nations just lives in Bray's world. They're here for the chaos but here are the Dudley Boyz and Tommy Dreamer to interrupt. That was close. They almost had something interesting there

before we get ANOTHER ECW reunion. Bray says they're not getting the message that they're outnumbered. Actually they're multiplying because here's Rhyno to even things up. Dang I was hoping for Dudley clones. Before they can get to the ring, here are Reigns, Ambrose and the Usos to make it sixteen people at once.

Dudley Boyz/Tommy Dreamer/Rhyno vs. Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose/Usos vs. League of Nations vs. Wyatt Family

Elimination tag with one man from each team in the ring at once. Harper is quickly sent to the floor as Del Rio takes down Ambrose. It's off to Jimmy beating on Rusev as D-Von is down in the corner and Harper tags in Bray. There are basically two matches going on at once. D-Von tags in Rhyno for some clotheslines and a suplex to Jimmy.

Strowman comes in to clean house and it's off to Dreamer, wearing some Dusty Rhodes polka dot pants. Braun is knocked to the floor, allowing Rusev to take Dreamer down. The Usos load up a double superplex on Rusev but Strowman makes it a Tower of Doom with Dreamer being taken out in the process. Rowan tags himself in and takes a quick DDT from Dreamer for the elimination as we take a break. Thank goodness they got rid of the more interesting team so quickly.

Back with Del Rio beating up Jey and Dreamer until Tommy grabs a neckbreaker on the now legal Sheamus. Bubba comes in with a Rock Bottom for two on Sheamus but all twelve come in for a huge brawl. We get down to Rhyno vs. Reigns for a showdown but Rusev and Sheamus break it up. Rusev walks into a 3D and the Dudley Boyz set for What's Up, only to have Sheamus Brogue Kick Bubba for the second elimination.

Things settle down to Sheamus vs. Ambrose but Rusev tags himself in before anything can happen. Dean goes off on Rusev with strikes (Saxton: "Ambrose is a different piece of toast), followed by the standing elbow drop for two. Back from another break with Sheamus firing off the ten forearms to Jey's chest until Reigns makes the save.

It's off to Rusev for a bearhug before Barrett misses a charge in the corner, allowing for the hot tag to Reigns. The fans are WAY behind Roman here (it's an old NWA town so faces are popular and heels are hated) as

he powerbombs Del Rio and Superman Punches Barrett and Alberto. Everything breaks down with a big series of dives and Del Rio gets Reigns in the armbreaker. Jimmy comes in with a Superfly splash for the save and it's a spear to Sheamus for the pin at 21:36.

Rating: B-. Fun brawl here but the League of Nations is now 0-2 as a four man team and the already weak looking World Champion got pinned when you have three others who could take the fall. Rusev doesn't even have a match on Sunday and he can't take a pin here? Another good idea (like having the Wyatts out there) with questionable booking (like having them go out first) bringing it back down a bit when it didn't need to.

Post break, Sheamus says that's the closest he's coming to losing the title. He's going to smash Reigns up and he'll give us a preview tonight.

Stardust is raving about Hollywood when Titus O'Neil comes in to say Stardust needs to get some. Well Eden is probably here tonight.....but Titus means some Stardust time, such as reading a good book and having a bottle of wine. Stardust goes on another rant and Titus leaves.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Kevin Owens

Non-Title and Tyler Breeze/Summer are here. Kevin trips him down to start and grabs a front facelock as Ambrose is in the back watching (while eating popcorn and drinking a soda). We hit the chinlock on Dolph until Ziggler counters into a rolling three quarter nelson for two. Ziggler dropkicks him down but gets clobbered in the face with an old Vader style forearm to the face.

They head outside with Ziggler's headbutt not having much effect. The fall away slam into the barricade give Kevin three straight near falls and it's time for some big right hands to the head. A kick to Dolph's face gets two as Dolph keeps pulling himself up. Owens sends him shoulder first into the post for a nine count on the floor. The backsplash gets two more and Dolph falls back to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Owens slapping on a chinlock until Ziggler fights up and avoids a charge to send Owens shoulder first into the post for a change. Kevin is just fine and sends Ziggler out to the floor to try another countout.

Dolph starts getting up again though so Owens goes outside, only to take the running DDT on the floor. Back in and Owens throws him with a release German suplex but misses the Cannonball. The Fameasser gets two and they trade superkicks with Ziggler falling on top for another near fall. Owens is right up though and it's a Pop Up Powerbomb for the pin on Ziggler 19:07.

Rating: B-. Another good match here but it felt more long than anything else. Ziggler continues to be entertaining enough but you're not going to get anything more than the same stuff every single time he's out there. I'm really not sure why Breeze needed to be out here as he was just watching instead of actually doing anything. At least we get the TRILOGY match on Sunday because that's all anyone wants to see right?

Post match Ambrose comes out and throws his popcorn and soda in Owens' face.

The Wyatts are ready to crush the ECW guys. Strowman wants to become Dreamer's nightmare later tonight.

Miz comes in to tell Neville that his offer of mentoring was serious on Smackdown. Donny Deutsch (star of a new show on USA) comes in to offer Neville a spot on his show. He gives Neville his card and tells Miz to get back to him in a few years. Miz gives Neville his card but Neville throws it away.

Alicia Fox/Brie Bella vs. Sasha Banks/Naomi

Fox and Banks start things off with Alicia grabbing a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. It's off to Naomi who takes one as well to send Team Bad out to the floor. Tamina trips Alicia to take over and it's a dropkick from Naomi for two. We hit the chinlock from Naomi, followed by another one from Sasha. Back up and Alicia rolls over for the hot tag to Brie. It's time for the YES Kicks before everything breaks down. Another Tamina distraction sets up the Rear View for the pin on Brie at 5:28.

Rating: D. I'm so sick of these matches. We've seen them do the same stuff every single week for months now and nothing has changed except for the numbers. Naomi is still doing the same "HAVING FUN" offense, Banks is

still as good as anyone in the division and Brie still has no idea if she's a face or a heel. You would think they would learn at some point but it hasn't happened in months now.

Post match New Day comes out to give Team Bad their own unicorn horns and everyone dances. Ok then.

The New Day is still in the ring after a break to talk about giving back. They've given a donation to the League of Nations and some baby names to Kim Kardashian and Kanye West for their new son. Then they have to give two different teams a Tag Team Title shot on Sunday in a ladder match. Why do they need ladders? They're not house painters and they're not saving cats from trees. We get a quick New Day Theater with Big E. playing a tree and Kofi playing a kitten. Woods says that New Day is a group of grown men and saves Kofi from the tree, end scene.

Lucha Dragons vs. New Day

Non-title, Woods is on the floor again and the Usos are on commentary. Cara and Kofi get things going with Kofi throwing him out to the floor for a suplex from Big E. Woods lays on the floor next to Cara and plays some trombone as we take a break. Back with Big E. missing a splash into the corner before it's off to Kalisto for some rapid fire kicks and the corkscrew cross body to Kofi.

The comeback is short lived though as Kofi takes him into the corner again, only to have Kalisto come back with a sloppy headscissors. The (not) hot tag brings in Cara to really take over off a standing moonsault to Big E. Kofi is legal though and kicks Cara down, only to have the Usos get in a fight with Woods (Jey: "BEAT HIM LIKE HE STOLE SOMETHING!"). The distraction lets Cara roll Kofi up for the pin at 6:36.

Rating: C. That would be the second time in an hour and a half that a champion has been pinned to set up a title match on Sunday. I beg of you WWE, please find something new. There are other ways to set up something like this and it's getting annoying to see this happen every single time.

The Usos leave with the horns and the trombone. So now they actually did steal something. SOMEONE BEAT THOSE TWO MEN LIKE THEY DESERVE!

After a recap of the opening match, Reigns says he's fine with having a lesson from Sheamus, even though he has no idea what Sheamus could teach him.

We look back at Charlotte faking an injury to beat Becky Lynch last week.

It's time for MizTV with guests Charlotte and Ric Flair. Charlotte takes over the introduction for her father and says Miz has ten minutes of Rolex time. Ric says he's so proud and promises to be in his daughter's corner at TLC this Sunday. That brings Miz to Charlotte's new attitude, which sends her off on a mini rant about Miz being sexist. Miz shakes it off and asks about the match on Sunday, bringing up Paige costing Charlotte her friendship with Becky Lynch. He stays at it by asking about Paige saying Charlotte is only here because of her father.

Ric gets up at that but Charlotte yells about Paige, promising to destroy her on Sunday. This brings out the third guest and Paige really doesn't look too upset. Ric says this is just a ploy so Charlotte goes outside. Paige slaps him in the face and does the strut. Ric: "Get her!" Charlotte charges but Paige runs to end the segment. So....am I supposed to cheer for either of these two or is this another SHADES OF GRAY story that is in no way a method to keep the writers from having to figure out who they want to turn face?

We look at Reigns pinning Sheamus again.

Ryback vs. Rusev

Rematch from last week. Rusev chills on the floor to start and gets back in at nine. Ryback shoves him right back to the floor as Rusev is holding his back from earlier. Tired of waiting, Ryback busts out a corkscrew plancha (seriously). Ryback: "WE'RE HAVING FUN!" A quick backdrop sends Ryback over the top again and Rusev snaps the arm over the top as we take a break.

Back with Rusev still on the arm by bending it around the ropes and sending it into the post. Ryback's comeback includes some shoulders followed by a flying shoulder to really mix it up. A middle rope dropkick (better than Brie Bella's) gets two for Ryback and it's time for a chase

around the ring. Ryback runs Lana over by mistake (Lana may have intentionally gotten in his way) and hurts her ankle again, freaking Rusev out. He throws Ryback in the Accolade on the floor and it's a double countout at 10:37.

Rating: C. Ryback was trying with some fresh offense out there (always appreciated) but he's fallen back through the floor in importance again. That's what happens when you build someone up on a short term basis, have him lose his two big matches and then do nothing with him for weeks. Oddly enough it's the inactivity that hurts worse than the loss to Kalisto in the tournament.

Stardust vs. Jack Swagger

Titus is on commentary and this is joined in progress after a break with Swagger putting on the Patriot Lock. Stardust makes the rope as Del Rio and Colter come out, allowing Stardust to throw the arm into the post. Some choking on the ropes has Swagger in trouble but he comes back with clotheslines and a powerslam. The Patriot Lock makes Stardust tap at 2:40.

Post match Del Rio nails Swagger. Titus yells at Del Rio to watch out for Stardust so Alberto hits Stardust with a chair. Swagger grabs his own chair and knocks Alberto's out of his hands before sending Del Rio running off. Jack asks Zeb what he's thinking but Colter drives off.

This week's Rosebush is about Miz wanting to mentor Neville. Apparently Miz wants Neville to be recast in Dumbo. Speaking of animals, we saw the return of Rhyno this week. This followed Tommy Dreamer's, now with a golden tan. He thought he had baby oil but it was really Becky Lynch's hair dye. This is still such a waste of anything Rose could do.

In the back, Del Rio yells at Colter for causing him to trip and drop the chair. Alberto says he doesn't need Colter and threatens to use the chair on him. Colter claims that Del Rio wouldn't be champion without him and drives off. So they're split now, thank goodness.

Tommy Dreamer vs. Braun Strowman

Braun throws him around to start and drives in some shoulders to the ribs. We hit the nerve hold for a bit before the standing choke puts Dreamer away at 2:46. Total squash at a slow pace.

Here's Reigns for the big showdown with Sheamus. Reigns asks where Sheamus is before talking about climbing the ladder with his Shield teammates over the years. He's on top of the ladder and calls Sheamus out for a beating again. Cue Sheamus to say that Sunday is going to be a sequel when he beats Reigns down just like he did at Survivor Series. Reigns is ready right now but of course Sheamus doesn't want to do it tonight.

Roman wants to know where Sheamus' potatoes are because all he sees are tater tots. That brings Sheamus charging but he stops in front of the three tables laid against the apron. Sheamus promises to build a castle from all the broken toys on Sunday. Reigns challenges to fight him again tonight but Sheamus knows all Roman wants to do is use the weapons. That's fine with Reigns ("Hold on a second tater tot") who throws out all the goodies, one at a time to drag this out far longer than it needs to be.

Sheamus still won't get in so Reigns keeps talking and it's FINALLY on after nearly ten minutes of talking. Reigns gets the better of it at first and loads up the announcers' table, only to have Sheamus take over and send him into a ladder (which Sheamus has to grab before it falls into the crowd). They fight into the crowd and then up to the entrance where all the tables and ladders are set up.

Sheamus blocks a powerbomb and hits him with a chair to take it back to ringside. Roman is thrown over the announcers' table but comes back with a spear through one of the many tables to end the show. WAY too long here for what they did but points for not having everyone else come out and letting this be about the two of them for a change.

Overall Rating: C-. This was one of the fastest shows I can remember in a long time. The first two hours felt like they took half an hour and the last third wasn't bad. Unfortunately the majority of the show was ok at best with the action being the biggest problem by far. The wrestling was

just ok and a lot of the booking made my head hurt. They did a good job of setting up the pay per view but it was far from an entertaining show outside of that. Not the worst or anything, but a totally forgettable show.

Results

Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose/Usos b. Wyatt Family, Dudley Boyz/Rhyno/Tommy Dreamer and League of Nations last eliminating the League of Nations

Kevin Owens b. Dolph Ziggler – Pop Up Powerbomb

Naomi/Sasha Banks b. Brie Bella/Alicia Fox – Rear View to Bella

Lucha Dragons b. New Day – Rollup to Kingston

Ryback vs. Rusev went to a double countout

Jack Swagger b. Stardust – Patriot Lock

Braun Strowman b. Tommy Dreamer – Standing choke

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of the History of Wrestlemania at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0188BJRGU>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

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

Monday Night Raw – December 25, 2000: We Need A Little Christmas

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 25, 2000

Location: McKenzie Arena, Chattanooga, Tennessee

Attendance: 7,223

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is another request due to it being Christmas recently. One night late in WCW's dying days, Raw has a show on Christmas night. If I remember right, Nitro didn't air and I don't think many people noticed. This is a few weeks after Armageddon and the 6 man Cell match so we're rolling towards New Orleans and the Rumble which was very good. Let's get to it.

And no this isn't live of course. It was taped the Saturday before.

Here's Stephanie to open the show. You know, the implants with a McMahon attached. She looks great though. The McMahons are celebrating Christmas at the moment, with Vince volunteering at a soup kitchen in Greenwich and HHH sending Steph here. Even Stephanie is getting into it, making something that reminds her of her mother: a fruitcake. We get a clip from the end of Smackdown, which is Rock and Undertaker arguing over something. Therefore tonight it's Rock vs. Taker.

She brings out Edge and Christian with Angle as well. Angle is in his first reign as world champion while the Canadians are tag champions. Edge wishes Stephanie a Merry Christmas but they're sorry that Foley isn't here due to being fired last week. Christian insults Chattanooga for a bit and talks about Smackdown, which we see a clip from showing Edge pinning Rock to win the tag titles.

Angle does the same but with his own brand of humor. He's given himself a Christmas gift and has flown out his family. Here's an army of people

that all look like Kurt. He introduces all of his family and all of their accomplishments. He talks about hitting Foley with a chair so the fans chant for Foley. Stephanie reminds us that he's fired and the fans boo Kurt's family. They sing Walkin In A Winter Wonderland until Jericho FINALLY cuts them off.

He tells Angle to shut up. Jericho liked the singing but instead it should have been the Twelve Days of Christmas. We have six Angles who will never be a laying, two valley girls and Stephanie, who gets all of her usual insults, in a a pear tree. For Christmas, Jericho wants the world title, and he wants it tonight. Angle yells but Stephanie cuts him off. The title shot is denied but instead it's a six man: Angle/Canadians vs. Jericho/whatever team Chris wants. Jericho says that's nice but he didn't get anything for Stepahanie. What do you get for someone who's had everyone? Jericho implies the Dudleys will be his partners.

Kurt gives his family a tour of the arena and runs into K-Kwik (R-Truth) and that's about it.

Hardy Boys vs. Dean Malenko/Chris Benoit

Benoit is IC Champion and Dean is Light Heavyweight Champion. In the back, Matt tells Lita to stay in the back because she'll get hurt. Lita goes anyway. Big brawl to start and Malenko pulls Benoit to the floor. Jeff is like cool man and hits a huge Poetry in Motion to the floor. That looked awesome. Benoit SNAPS off a dragon screw on Jeff's leg to take over. That looked sick. Malenko works on the knee a bit as well but Jeff gets a SWEET spinning leg sweep cradle for two. A double dropkick puts the Radicalz down and it's off to Matt. Everything breaks down and Lita hits Dean low. Top rope legdrop ends this.

Rating: C-. Nothing great here but the knee stuff was great. By that I mean one move but you get the idea. This would lead to Dean getting a date with Lita which wound up in a hotel room and Lita in some very nice lingerie. Anyway, not much to see here but it was nice to get the Hardys away from the Dudleys and Canadians.

Post match Matt gets put in the Texas Cloverleaf and Lita in the Crossface.

Post break Lita is being checked on when Benoit jumps Matt again.

Rock arrives and doesn't care to hear about his match with Taker.

Debra is still Lieutenant Commissioner but it's not fun without Foley anymore. She makes a triple threat Hardcore Title match with Raven, Blackman and Holly.

Vince calls Stephanie on voicemail and likes the match. He says he has to do something real quick at the soup kitchen but Trish's voice is heard giggling.

We get a clip of Austin getting chokeslammed by Kane and then Austin demanding a match with him, which he gets tonight. Austin says he'll beat Kane up tonight.

Hardcore Title: Hardcore Holly vs. Raven vs. Steve Blackman

Blackman is champion. Raven and Holly get into it before Steve gets there. I'm not sure what you want me to say here as it's your usual one guy gets knocked down, the other two fight, the third makes the save. The challengers fight into the crowd but Blackman beats them both down out there. They go under the stage and into the back where Raven beats up what appears to be some stagehands. They go outside and Raven is thrown down some stairs. Holly finds a random 2x4 and swings at Blackman. He misses though and Blackman hits a German onto the hood of a car to retain.

Rating: D+. As I've said before, once you've seen one of these matches, you've seen them all. It's just basic brawling with weapons that goes nowhere and then they have the ending. They had beaten this so far into the ground but by keeping it down to like three minutes per match, I think it's ok.

Blackman is walking back to the locker room but Raven hits him with a board and steals the title.

The XFL is coming. OH YEAH!

Here's Regal who is European Champion. Little trivia for you: he's one of

only two Europeans to hold that title. He blasts Americans for awhile until Kane comes out for his match. Ok then.

Kane vs. Steve Austin

Brawl to start with Austin hammering him into the corner. Regal is on commentary. A clothesline puts Kane down and another puts him on the floor. Austin gets pulled out there and Kane takes over. Regal gets up for some reason and Austin takes him down as well. Austin stomps on both of them as this is a total brawl. Back in the ring a big boot puts Austin down and they slow down.

A second boot is blocked and Austin goes for the knee. Kane fights back and wraps Austin's leg around the post. Lawler says Kane is the official first entrant in the Rumble. Back in the top rope clothesline gets two. After a suplex gets two it's a bearhug. Austin comes back with the Thesz Press and the elbow. Chokeslam, Stunner and Tombstone are countered until a Stunner hits. Regal pops up on the apron and Kane gets up. Regal finally gets in for the DQ.

Rating: C. This was fine. It was just a brawl that ran about <http://kamagrawiki.org> seven and a half minutes and that's all it really needed to be. The interesting thing is you could easily compare this to a lot of Cena's matches on Raw today. There wasn't anything to it for the most part and there wasn't supposed to be. However Cena gets blasted for it and Austin is one of the most popular stars ever. Go figure.

Regal tries to bring in a chair but Austin clocks both guys with it instead.

Taker says he isn't surprised by having to fight Rock later. He says Rock has the bark but he has the bite. Taker is still face here.

Cue The Kat in a robe. She has a gift with her. She gets in front of the announce table and grabs a mic. The gift is for JR and it's the latest Divas video. As for King, Kat gets on the table and pulls the robe open to reveal some red lingerie. She shows the crowd too. Jerry gets a kiss also.

Stephanie barges in on T&A who says Trish isn't here. She leaves and they imply Trish is with Vince.

Angle calls his parents as his brothers/cousin watch. Well that was pointless.

Too Cool vs. T&A

Grandmaster vs. Test to start. Stephanie comes out to watch, probably because of the jokes T&A made after she left. Sexay hits a middle rope dropkick and it's off to Scotty so he can get beaten up for awhile. Albert comes in and Scott can't do anything. Baldo (Albert) Bomb gets two as Grandmaster makes the save. Scotty gets in some kicks and a forearm to set up a double tag. Everything breaks down and Scotty sets for the Worm. Test kicks Scotty's head off after it hits. He sets for the ending but Stephanie distracts him, allowing Grandmaster to roll up Test for the win.

Rating: D. Didn't like this one at all. This whole show has felt like it's just a labor to get through and that's not good. To be fair though it's Christmas night so it's not like anyone is watching. Stephanie came in to mess with them, presumably to cost Trish's team, but this went nowhere.

Post break, Albert comes in to talk with Stephanie. He offers his services to Stephanie for whatever she needs.

Chris Jericho/Dudley Boys vs. Kurt Angle/Edge/Christian

Jericho and Christian start things off. The fans want tables and Jericho tries a quick Walls attempt but settles for a slingshot into a rollup for two instead. D-Von and Edge come in and things speed up. Bubba comes in and does his always funny yelling. What's Up to Edge. It's Table Time already and everything breaks down on the outside. Edge hammers on Bubba but it's quickly off to Christian.

The beating goes on for about 20 seconds before it's off to Jericho and Angle. Jericho gets in a fight with Angle's family who is all in the front row. The Dudleys put one of them through a table. The Dudleys and

the Canadians fight up the ramp and Jericho hits a missile dropkick for no cover but the Lionsault eats knees. Angle Slam (and a good one too) beats Jericho.

Rating: C. This was going on so fast that it was hard to tell if it was good or bad. It certainly wasn't boring and the big stuff looked pretty good. I liked it for the most part but much like the rest of this show and the show overall, it came and went and that's all there really is to say about it.

The Angle family beats him down but the Dudleys make the save.

Edge and Christian say they'll get the Dudleys for what they did.

Right to Censor vs. APA

It's Buchanan/Godfather this time. Buchanan gives a very southern promo, talking about how evil the Dudleys are. Bradshaw starts with Godfather and the beating begins. Farroq and Buchanan come in and the bald one takes a spinebuster. Bradshaw comes in and runs people over, including a top rope shoulder. Ivory interferes and Jackie runs her over. They get in the ring because Jackie has to get on my nerves at least once a year. Val Venis uses the distraction to run in and DDT Bradshaw. A Buchanan legdrop ends this. The match was nothing.

We get a video of Chyna taking a spike piledriver and injuring her neck. She had an MRI so we get a sitdown interview with her. Short version: I'm hurt, I'm sad, I'm successful outside the ring, I don't like RTC, I'll be back but not against men. Somehow that took six minutes.

Rock is in the back and cuts Kevin Kelly off because they are chanting his name. He gives his version of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer and sings to Undertaker a bit too.

Undertaker vs. The Rock

I've never really seen these two have a good match so maybe this is the exception. Taker pounds him down and knocks Rock to the floor with one punch. Rock gets dropped onto the barricade and the table as JR is running out of room to run. Back in the ring Rock fires off a few rights

and the jumping clothesline to take over. Swinging neckbreaker gets no cover but a Russian legsweep gets two.

Taker gets in a big boot and pounds away on the back. They mess up something so Taker hits a side slam for two. DDT by Rock gets two. More back work by Taker and this match isn't breaking the streak these two have. Oh joy: it's a bearhug. Rock fights out and now Taker hits a DDT of his own for two. Chokeslam and Rock Bottom are countered but a chokeslam hits. No cover though because he wants a Last Ride. And here's Rikishi to interfere. Spinebuster to Taker but Rikishi pulls the top rope down and Rock wins by REALLY LAME DQ.

Rating: D-. What a boring match. They walked around, punched each other a lot, and that's about it. The really bad ending didn't help anything at all but hey, Rikishi is a top heel right? They don't really give a reason or a thought as to whether or not it would work, but he was the next guy to feud with Rock I believe. Give me a break.

Rikishi stands tall to end the show.

Overall Rating: F+. OH MAN thank goodness it's over. This was one of the least interesting shows I've seen in longer than I can remember. Nothing happened here, no one cared, no one wanted to be on the show it seemed, and nothing here would have seemed to have mattered. That being said, it's unlikely anyone watched it but if one person did, it beat Nitro that night. Horrible show though.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of the History of Wrestlemania at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0188BJRGU>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

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