

Main Event – October 19, 2017: I'm Rather Speechless

Main Event

Date: October 19, 2017

Location: Moda Center, Portland, Oregon

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

If WWE is heading towards Tables, Ladders and Chairs, Main Event is coming right along with it. This is another one of those weeks where the main show didn't do so well, meaning the short form recap version might work a little bit better. Then again, that likely includes Dash Wilder losing in a singles match. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Rhyno vs. Dash Wilder

Yes, AGAIN, for the third time in six weeks. Rhyno works on the arm to start so let's dash over to the ropes for the break. For some reason Dash tries a test of strength...and actually takes Rhyno down to his knees. Dash hammers away at the neck and gets two off a running neckbreaker.

We hit the chinlock and the fans are immediately chanting for Rhyno to fight back. I'm kind of stunned by how he stays popular but the fact that he's basically the same character he's always been has a lot to do with it. Rhyno fights up but the Gore is blocked with a knee lift. The spinebuster is countered into a sunset flip for two (Dash is learning from his previous defeats.) but the second attempt connects to finish Dash off at 5:29.

Rating: C+. You know what? Not bad at all. As repetitive as this mini feud has been, I can go for Dash learning a little about Rhyno and using that for a near fall. It's still not a great match or a great story, but for a match that was supposed to be filler, they actually put some thought into it, making for a much better performance. Call this one a pleasant surprise.

We look back at Shield Triple Bombing Braun Strowman through the announcers' table.

From Raw.

It's time for MizTV with Miz being flanked by the Bar and Curtis Axel but no Bo Dallas. Miz talked about how they're ready to destroy the Shield right now but they'll wait until Sunday night. Sheamus says the Shield will be broken into three pieces. They're ready to destroy Shield and here's tonight's guest: their partner on Sunday, Braun Strowman.

Braun says it's time to destroy the Shield forever and it starts tonight inside the cage. The fans get in a YES/REALLY battle with Miz, who has a bit of a surprise: there's going to be a fifth member of the team. The fans want Curtis Axel but here's Kurt Angle to say this isn't happening.

Kurt has a deal for Miz though: if Strowman wins tonight, the fifth man can join. If Reigns wins though, Strowman is out and it's 3-3 again. Miz says it's on but Angle says everyone is banned from ringside in both the cage match (kind of redundant) and the Tag Team Title match.

Also from Raw.

Here's Finn Balor for a chat. He talks about the Celtic festival of Sowan, which sounds like Halloween cranked up to eleven. Last week Finn say Bray's tricks but he has his own too. This Sunday, the Demon will slay a monster of his own. Finn's demon has no fear...and the Demon paint appears on his face. It disappears and Finn says his Demon dreams of nightmares (paint on and off again) and it wants to meet Sister Abigail. Run. Never let WWE get supernatural.

Drew Gulak vs. Mustafa Ali

Gulak has his NO CHANTS sign. Drew headlocks him to the mat to start and is greeted with a WE ARE CHANTING chant because this crowd is actually clever. Ali tries a drop down but Drew holds the ropes and slaps on a headlock. Back up and Ali springboards over him into a wristlock and we take a break. We come back with Ali scoring off a dropkick and getting two off the rolling neckbreaker. It's too early for the 054 as Gulak

(Drew: "NO FLY!") pulls Ali off the ropes for a crash. Not that it matters as another kick to the head sets up the 054 for the pin at 8:00.

Rating: C. I could have gone for a bit more history between the two of them (though hearing Nigel sing the Aladdin song again made up for it) but this was fine. There's something amusing about the fact that the faces ALWAYS win these matches. It's logical, but WWE doesn't do much to hide the fact that this is a glorified dark match.

Pay per view rundown.

From Raw again to wrap us up.

Roman Reigns vs. Braun Strowman

Inside a cage and Miz jumps in on commentary. Strowman sends him into the corner to start but it's way too early for the running powerslam. Reigns slips out and tries to climb, only to get pulled down. Some clotheslines have almost no effect but some big boots have a big more effect. Strowman goes shoulder first into the corner and there are the rapid fire clotheslines. One heck of a spinebuster gets two on Roman and we take a break.

Back with Reigns tasting the cage a few times. Strowman throws him at the cage so Reigns grabs the top for a climb. Now why did he think that would work with Strowman looking at him. Strowman misses a charge and hits the cage though, allowing Reigns to score with some kicks to the face. A Samoan drop gets two with a heck of a kickout so Reigns makes another escape attempt. Cue the Bar to cut Reigns off so Ambrose and Rollins are outside to cut them off. THEN WHAT WAS THE POINT IN BANNING THEM BOTH FROM RINGSIDE???

Braun gets up in time to pull Reigns back inside with a superplex off the cage. Miz: "COVER!!!" Everyone not in the match brawls up to the stage as we cut away from the match entirely. Miz joins them and the fight heads backstage. Again, we're not even looking at the CAGE MATCH WITH TWO MONSTERS FIGHTING EACH OTHER because we need to see this instead. For all we know there's a tango contest going on at the moment as Miz closes a metal door, locking the four of them in the parking lot.

Back to the ring with Reigns fighting to his feet after suffering from a bad bowl of soup as served up by Chef Strowman (prove that it didn't happen). Miz is back on commentary as Reigns goes up top, only to slip down and crotch Strowman. A Superman Punch staggers Strowman and a second puts him down. Strowman throws Reigns in the air but gets Superman Punched again for two.

It's spear time...and Kane's lights come on. Strowman splashes Reigns but eats a spear anyway. Kane comes up through the mat though and stares Reigns down, followed by a chokeslam. A second chokeslam sets up the running powerslam, followed by a Tombstone for good measure. Strowman adds another powerslam and Reigns is done at 17:24.

Rating: C-. Let me make sure I have this straight. Angle bans everyone from ringside so we have SIX PEOPLE interfere? And Reigns loses his first match after the reunion (not fairly but it's a loss)? Here's the thing: Kane was in Shield's first match and Reigns retired his brother at Wrestlemania so there's definitely a connection there. Unfortunately we didn't hear anything about that and it's basically just the idea that Miz got Kane to join for no apparent reason. Of course the announcers sold things well here, though there's a better story to tell.

Miz, on top of a ladder, announces Kane as the fifth member of the team to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The shortened version helped a bit here but that's not exactly enough to make up for a pretty one dimensional Raw. Wilder vs. Rhyno was shockingly above average (I hesitate to call it good) and the cruiserweights did their thing and that's enough to compliment a few nice things from Monday. Not bad here.

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Impact Wrestling – October 19, 2017: What Is Impact Wrestling?

Impact Wrestling

Date: October 19, 2017

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Jeremy Borash, Josh Matthews

Hopefully with more wrestling this week. We're less than a month away from Bound For Glory 2017 and that means it's time to really crank things up. The big story is Johnny Impact becoming #1 contender to Eli Drake's World Title. Well at least that's the big story on the wrestling side. On the MMA side, Moose has been joined by Stephan Bonnar to go after American Top Team. Let's get to it.

Moose and Stephan Bonnar arrive with everything they stole from the American Top Team facilities.

American Top Team is here as well. It's going to be another one of those shows.

Recap of Chris Adonis attacking Johnny Impact last week.

Chris Adonis vs. Johnny Impact

Adonis slugs away at Johnny to start but gets kicked in the ribs. We hit

the bearhug on Impact for a bit before a spinebuster gets two. The Adonis Lock goes on but Johnny is able to dive over the top for the break in a unique idea. Back in and Impact slugs away in the corner, including a kick to the head. The flip neckbreaker gives Impact two, followed by a springboard corkscrew kick to the head for another near fall and we take a break. Back with Impact breaking up a superplex attempt and hitting the countdown 450 (Countdown to Impact) for the pin at 10:15.

Rating: C. Impact looked fine here, albeit about as bored as you're going to be against Adonis. At least this match made sense for Impact as he was fighting Eli Drake's lackey instead of fighting Garza Jr. for no logical reason. The match was more about advancing the story than anything else and that's what this story needs.

Post match Eli Drake runs in but gets his pants ripped off. The double teaming takes Impact down but Garza Jr. runs in for the save because HE is the one who rips the pants off around here.

Alberto El Patron is back at Bound For Glory. Again I say: PLEASE NO!

Hijo de Fantasma vs. James Storm vs. Texano vs. Eddie Edwards vs. Ethan Carter III

This is from Cancun, Mexico, the winner goes on to a match we won't be seeing and it's one fall to a finish. It's a brawl to start with Storm being sent outside as JB talks about how Team Impact needs to work as a unit. Again, one fall and singles matches of course so let's talk about teamwork. Carter clotheslines Texano down and it's time for some triple teaming until Carter doesn't want Storm to get the pin. Fantasma crossbodies Eddie for two but it's Storm up again to take over.

That's still not cool with Carter, who says he should be getting the fall. We hit a parade of big moves until Carter and Texano hit a double clothesline to put everyone down. Back up and Texano posts Edwards, leaving Fantasma to piledrive Carter. Storm and Texano tease going after Fantasma's father at ringside but the distraction just lets Texano pin Carter at 8:22.

Rating: C-. I'm running out of ways to say I don't care about this story.

They've run the same people fighting in Orlando over the promotion invasion and now they're fighting in Mexico for a spot in a match we won't be seeing. These matches are watchable but I need more of a story to make me care whatsoever.

OVE is in Tijuana, Mexico to find Konnan, who agrees to meet with them in exchange for a title defense in the Crash promotion.

Carter, Storm and Edwards bicker about the loss in Cancun.

American Top Team yells at Jim Cornette over the stolen property. You have breaking and entering, destruction of property and theft on tape/national TV and you go to the wrestling boss?

Dezmond Xavier vs. Andrew Everett

Everett takes him down by the neck for two to start and a snap suplex gives him the same. Xavier is sent outside as we hear that Taryn Terrell won't be in the Knockouts Title match at Bound For Glory. Sounds like an injury or someone else leaving the company. That's enough talking about the Knockouts so the announcers discuss Alberto El Patron returning.

Xavier makes his comeback with some kicks and a backdrop to the floor, followed by the running flip dive to take out Everett and Trevor Lee. Speaking of Lee, he offers another distraction but Xavier misses a charge into the corner. The moonsault kick to the head gives Xavier the pin at 4:37.

Rating: D+. Yeah this happened. It was your usual flip match with the announcers ignoring the action because the X-Division doesn't mean a single thing in this promotion. As usual, it's the vaguest of issues (Lee thinks he and his boys are the best, the rest of the division disagrees) and odds are they'll be thrown into Ultimate X for the title match. That's lazy writing and I'm not a bit surprised.

Preview of Lee going to Tijuana next week to defend the title. GOOD GRIEF ENOUGH WRESTLING FROM MEXICO ALREADY! These are just matches for the sake of having matches and this is now the third story on the show set in Mexico. I get that a partnership is cool but this is taking over the

show.

Oh hey let's go to Mexico again where OVE is looking for Konnan. They'll have to defend the titles tonight.

Bonnar and Moose have the Bellator gear in the back. Yes they really brought it here with them and we're supposed to believe this is real.

Long recap of the issues between Grado and Joseph Park with Park exploiting Grado and taking his money.

Here's Grado to call out Park. Grado is ready to prosecute Park for stealing from him (or maybe just taking whatever Grado agreed to give him in the contract) and he's going to be Park's executioner. We hear a rant about how Grado has been worked ragged for Park's benefit and Grado doesn't want to hear any jokes. Park admits that the money was too tempting for him and he gave in. However, the visa keeps Grado in the country so he pretty much has nothing to say right now.

Grado wants the visa handed to him but Park has a better idea: a match at Bound For Glory for Grado's freedom. Grado immediately signs and Park is rather happy. See, Grado still hasn't learned about reading the fine print. It turns out that the match is going to be Monster's Ball and against the monster Abyss.

Recap of Moose/Bonnar vs. American Top Team. My goodness this show loves its recaps.

A panicked Grado gets in his car when someone changes the radio to Abyss' theme. It's Father James Mitchell of all people, who scares Grado away.

Tag Team Titles: OVE vs. Black Diamond/Black Danger

OVE is defending and this is in Tijuana for the Crash promotion. Jake, in most of a suit, crossbodies Diamond to start and it's OVE firing off some kicks to the ribs. We finally settle down to Danger being sent into Diamond, only to have Danger catapult Jake into a spear out of the air. Cool spot if nothing else. A superplex into a powerbomb gets two on Danger and it's a spike tombstone (with a top rope double stomp) to put Diamond away at 3:44.

Rating: C. Points for having OVE get a win but, again, the focus was this being in Tijuana than anything else. I get that the company thinks going to these other promotions is the coolest thing in the world but all it does is make me think that the Impact Zone is a joke and that the company doesn't think much of their own talent because they need to go elsewhere to make the show work.

JB is in the ring for what sounds like the Hall of Fame announcement when American Top Team interrupts. Dan Lambert says this isn't how it was supposed to be. This was supposed to be a thing with Jeff Jarrett but now he's the villain in the story, despite being a huge wrestling fan for forty years. He got into MMA through Japanese shoot professional wrestling promotions and has the biggest collection of wrestling memorabilia in the world.

Lambert pulls out Bruno Sammartino's first WWF World Title belt, the National Tag Team Titles from Georgia, the Mid-Atlantic Tag Team Titles, and Jerry Lawler's AWA World Title (which I believe Lawler said he still had on the AWA documentary). Lambert talks about Moose and Bonnar taking their stuff and showing no respect.

Therefore, at Bound For Glory, we should have a fight with the two of them facing King Mo and Lashley. That's a fight that wrestling can't win because they're not real fighters. Cue Moose and Bonnar with the Bellator titles but they're quickly beaten down. Lambert runs his mouth about how horrible wrestling is and American Top Team beats down security and the invading roster.

This was a better segment than any other from the MMA guys but EGADS the level of focus this story is receiving is getting very old. It's a bunch of guys who aren't going to wrestle plus Lashley and King Mo, who wrestled like three times and wasn't interesting. Lambert is a decent heel manager but I get really, really tired of hearing about how awesome mixed martial arts is every single week. As usual, this company has no idea what draws fans in and just goes with an idea that they like for months on end, probably leading to a tag match which should be a regular match, but that would imply that the wrestlers are the interesting ones.

OVE gets to meet Konnan and want their pay for the night. Uh, Konnan never said he'd pay them. He said he'd talk to them in exchange for them wrestling. Konnan basically says as much and here are the Crash guys to beat OVE down. Who decided to have two beatdown segments in a row?

Global Forged videos, as we continue to have ANYTHING but Impact on this show.

Recap of Taya Valkyrie vs. Rosemary.

Taya Valkyrie vs. Rosemary

Rosemary wastes no time in charging at Taya in the corner and throwing her across the ring. Taya chokes her in the corner a bit and we take a break. Back with Rosemary stomping in the corner as the announcers make a not so subtle reference to Sexy Star injuring Rosemary in Mexico. Rosemary's modified Tarantula slows Taya down but Valkyrie throws her into the corner to take over again.

A quickly broken chinlock keeps Rosemary in trouble but she grabs a release German suplex. They loudly slug it out with Rosemary screaming a lot, only to be taken down by some hard kicks to the chest. Rosemary is dropped with her legs bent underneath her, only to come back up with an Undertaker style situp. Not that it matters as Taya hits a double stomp for the pin at 10:55.

Rating: C-. Well that was surprising. I would have bet on this being saved for Bound For Glory but we got it here instead. Having Rosemary lose here shows how strong they're making Valkyrie, who will probably be Knockouts Champion when we've praised Gail Kim enough. I mean, that's been the case for years now but why change what's working so little over the years?

Post match Taya loads up the Road to Valhalla but gets misted for her efforts. Rosemary says they make each other see red so it can be a different shade of red at Bound For Glory: blood red. That sounds like a first blood challenge, though I'm more curious about why Taya's face looks completely normal after taking red mist to the face.

Overall Rating: D+. What is Impact Wrestling? I know it's supposed to be this promotion that has a bunch of international talent coming in but it feels like a place that has been taken over by that international talent and showcases it's own talent when they're given the chance. On this show, we saw the Team Impact guys, the X-Division Champions and the Tag Team Champions in Mexico, along with a woman who calls herself lucha royalty in the main event, the AAA World Champion challenging for the World Title and the main story on the show being built around something that started in Mexico.

As I've been saying for weeks now, this show is about everything other than Impact Wrestling. I'm having real issues caring about most of this stuff because I have no real reason to care about them. The MMA stuff continues to bore the heck out of me (pick a reason why, starting with the fact that it's almost ALL about the MMA people with Moose feeling wedged in there to make it a wrestling angle) and the World Title feud feels like a midcard match. This show is really frustrating as they seem to be charging in the wrong direction as we had into the biggest show of the year.

Results

Johnny Impact b. Chris Adonis – Countdown to Impact

Texano b. Hijo de Fantasma, James Storm, Eddie Edwards and Ethan Carter III – Piledriver to Carter

Dezmond Xavier b. Andrew Everett – Moonsault kick to the head

OVE b. Black Danger/Black Diamond – Spike tombstone to Diamond

Taya Valkyrie b. Rosemary – Double stomp

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New Column: My Version of Thinking Lesnar vs. Mahal is Dumb

You know, because it is.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-version-thinking-lesnar-vs-mahal-dumb/>

NXT – October 18, 2017: One Step Down the Road

NXT

Date: October 18, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson, Mauro Ranallo

It's the Undisputed night as the Undisputed Era are back in the ring this week. Tonight it's going to be the Undisputed Era vs. Sanity in a six man tag. The question though is how does this help us set up the upcoming Takeover: Houston and how the NXT Title will factor in. Let's get to it.

We open with a quick look at Sanity vs. Undisputed Era.

Opening sequence.

Sonya DeVille vs. Ember Moon vs. Ruby Riot

The winner is in the four way title match at Takeover. Riot hurricanranas Ember to start but gets lariated down by DeVille. Sonya is sent outside and it's Ruby flipping Ember around into a standoff. The springboard crossbody gets two on Sonya and a kick to the face gets the same on Riot. Ruby it sent outside and Ember gets kicked down and we take a break. Back with Sonya suplexing them both down, only to be headscissored into Ember for two more.

Riot and DeVille slug away at each other until Sonya is knocked outside. It gets even worse for DeVille when she gets kicked out of the air by Ember. Moon is down as well though, only to have Ruby dive onto the two of them. She comes up with a horrible ankle though and things slow way down. Riot is still able to get inside, only to have DeVille slap on an ankle lock. The hold stays on for a good while until Moon comes in off the top with the Eclipse on Sonya and a pin on Riot at 11:34.

Rating: C-. I wasn't feeling this one for the most part as it felt disjointed for the most part. The injury at the end was fine and it seems that Riot's ankle is fine. It's not terrible but they didn't have the best chemistry and it showed. Ember or Sane is the best option for the title at this point and it makes sense to have Moon make the title match. If nothing else it means another chance to see the Eclipse.

The Undisputed Era talked to Roderick Strong outside the Performance Center but we couldn't hear what was said.

William Regal is about to announce how the fourth participant in the Women's Title match will be chosen but the Iconic Duo comes up to interrupt. Regal gets around to saying that there will be a battle royal next week.

Aleister Black vs. Raul Mendoza

Before any contact, cue the Velveteen Dream on the apron with Black's

vest. The distraction lets Mendoza knee Black to the floor, setting up a running flip dive to the floor. A springboard Swanton gets two on Black but the rapid fire kicks take Mendoza down. Black Mass puts Mendoza away at 2:10.

Dream leaves with the vest with Black glaring at him.

Drew McIntyre had a sitdown interview and is thrilled with his title reign so far. It's everything he had hoped it was and he's been feeling pretty good. A few years back he was released from his dream job and it took him a long time to get things together. He was always a wrestler and even his father never understood things. Somewhere along the line his fire went out and now he's back here to build something special.

Cue Zelina Vega to take over the interview to say Drew and Andrade Cien Almas have a lot in common. She was Andrade's second chance and thinks Drew has been avoiding him. Drew suggests going to William Regal because he'd love to give Almas a shot. If Andrade is serious, come see the champ himself.

Kassius Ohno vs. Cezar Bononi

They strike it off to start until Bononi hits a dropkick for two. Another dropkick puts Ohno on the floor, followed by a suplex for two back inside. A third dropkick misses though and Ohno scores with his backplash. Ohno kicks him in the jaw and the rolling elbow is good enough for the pin at 3:05.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see here but Ohno is always going to get a reaction from his theme song alone. Bononi seems like someone who is ready to become a big star if he's given the right push or character. You can last a long time on a look like that and Bononi hasn't even scratched the surface yet.

Sanity vs. Undisputed Era

Fish and Wolfe start things off with Fish striking away, only to get tossed into the corner. O'Reilly has about the same level of success and it's off to Dane to uppercut Kyle in the corner. The fast tags continue

with Young adding a middle rope forearm to the chest for two. It's back to Fish, who scores with more kicks and right hands to Young as the beating takes us to a break.

Back with Cole grabbing a chinlock until his partners work on Eric's arms. O'Reilly gets two off a double suplex and some kicks keep Young down in the corner. Kyle is smart enough to kick Wolfe off the apron and bring Dain in, allowing him a chance to pull Young to the corner again. Not that it matters as Eric kicks O'Reilly away and makes the hot tag off to Dain.

That means it's time for the big man offense, including a hard running dropkick and some corner splashes. Fish and O'Reilly get tossed at the same time but Cole superkicks Dain in the back of the head for the save. A belly to back suplex/neckbreaker combination puts O'Reilly down and Cole is quickly surrounded. Sanity takes him inside...and here are the Authors of Pain to jump Sanity for the DQ at 13:31.

Rating: C+. I liked this one, though it didn't hit the level I was hoping it would. The ending is interesting as it could set up a potential three way feud, which often means a heck of a story. The Undisputed Era wasn't destroyed here as there was a reasonable chance that O'Reilly and Fish could have gotten back into it for the save. Good stuff here but it's a step on a long path.

The Authors destroy Sanity as the Undisputed Era leaves to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The main event was the most interesting part of the show but more importantly we're starting to see the card for Takeover forming. That makes for some interesting shows as we're getting ready for the rest of the card. Just let us have a good special event and the TV feels even better than it already does. Solid show this week but nothing too great.

Results

Ember Moon b. Sonya DeVille and Ruby Riot – Pin on Riot

Aleister Black b. Raul Mendoza – Black Mass

Kassius Ohno b. Cezar Bononi – Rolling elbow

Sanity b. Undisputed Era via DQ when the Authors of Pain interfered

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Monday Night Raw – May 19, 2003: One More Time

Monday Night Raw

Date: May 19, 2003

Location: BI-LO Center, Greenville, South Carolina

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

We're past Judgment Day and thank goodness for that. Unfortunately we're on the way towards Bad Blood, which is the first single branded pay per view. In other words, we're all in very serious trouble. Unfortunately we seem to be headed towards another Kevin Nash vs. HHH disaster. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's Steve Austin to open the show. He talks about how great the pay per view was (How drunk was he?) but it's a shame that Eric Bischoff can't handle his beer and food. We get a clip of Bischoff vomiting last night because that's funny you see. As for tonight though, Austin is getting ready for Bad Blood, but first up he wants to find out who tried to run Goldberg over last week. His investigation is ongoing and he will find out tonight. Whoever that is will be facing Goldberg right here tonight, which is quite the smart punishment.

Next up though is HHH, who comes out with Ric Flair but Austin CUTS OFF THE WATER SPIT! Austin doesn't like HHH making him wait and is trying very hard to maintain his composure. Last night HHH took a beating all over the building and that World Title should belong to Kevin Nash. Tonight though, the title will be on the line right here in this ring. HHH thinks Austin is drunk with power and no matter what Austin wants, HHH is still champion. Therefore, he's not wrestling tonight.

Austin disagrees, but he's feeling compassionate. HHH is wrestling tonight but he'll get to pick his opponent, assuming it's a former World Champion. That leaves him with options of Kane, Shawn Michaels, Chris Jericho or Kevin Nash. Austin certainly seems to be leaving out a large handful of names there, including himself (If Austin and Bischoff have equal power and he still wants to wrestle, shouldn't he be able to either cancel whatever Bischoff is using to keep him out of the ring or come up with a way around it?). HHH has an idea though and picks Flair to challenge him for the title tonight. Austin is mad and Flair is confused.

Dudley Boyz vs. 3 Minute Warning

They slug it out to start with Bubba actually dropkicking Jamal out to the floor. First time for everything I guess. The Samoans take over though with Rosey hitting a spinning legdrop for no cover on D-Von. Jamal gets two off a knee drop and Rosey adds something like a superkick. D-Von's right hands have almost no effect (they are Samoans after all) but Jamal's Vader Bomb hits knees.

It's off to Bubba for right hands and a backdrop for two on Rosey as everything breaks down. A double suplex sets up What's Up with Rico

accidentally distracting the referee. Rosey grabs a Samoan drop on Bubba but isn't legal for the cover. Rico throws in a table and a D-Von to go with it, only to miss the top rope splash. Rosey gets back in and walks right into 3D for the pin.

Rating: D+. Not a very good match with both teams being a bit too similar to really make it work. The Dudleys are a nice addition to the division as it certainly needs the extra (albeit familiar) help. If nothing else the 3D is always worth a look, even if it's to someone as worthless as Rosey.

Post match Rico yells at the Samoans and walks out on his own.

A very hungover Eric Bischoff is here (after Austin said he wouldn't be, making Austin an untruth teller) and says he can't do this redneck stuff. Austin's solution: drink more. Bischoff does just that and vomits again. This is really, really not my style of humor. The camera follows Austin out and he runs into Kevin Nash. Austin is proud of him for last night and makes him #1 contender of tonight's title match.

Flair is thrilled with HHH for picking him for tonight and expects a great match. HHH however is expecting him to take a dive so he can have a night off. HHH: "Just lay there and I'll do the rest."

Here's Chris Jericho for the Highlight Reel. There's a new set this week and we get the debut of the JERITRON 5000 to show a few highlights. Tonight though, Jericho wants to talk to the man who betrayed him last night, the new Intercontinental Champion, Christian. Cue the new champ, now with the short haircut that he would have for the rest of his career. Jericho likes the new look but it doesn't change the fact that Christian betrayed him last night. That brings one thing to his mind: he would have done the exact same thing. Jericho: "Our Christian is all grown up!"

Christian is the new American Idol, which Jericho loves because he's not even American. We see the end of the match (via the very expensive Jeritron 5000 of course) and Christian runs Booker T. down (Jericho: "His haircut looks like a pineapple."). Cue Rob Van Dam to interrupt and call Christian's catchphrase weak.

Maybe he should just try admitting he sucks and you know what that means from the crowd. Van Dam: "THAT TOTALLY WORKS FOR YOU!" Rob wants an Intercontinental Title shot tonight but that's a big negative. The beatdown is on until Kane makes a fast save. Austin pops up on screen to say let's have a Tag Team Title match right now. How exactly is that fair to Van Dam and Kane?

Tag Team Titles: Kane/Rob Van Dam vs Christian/Chris Jericho

Van Dam and Kane are defending and we're joined in progress after a break. Rob's stepover kick takes Jericho down for an early two. The split legged moonsault to Jericho's back gets two and Jericho screams for help. Christian, in street clothes, tries to offer that help and gets sent into the corner by Kane for his efforts. The Canadians are sent outside and Rob follows with a running flip dive to keep the champs in control.

Back in and Kane loads up the top rope clothesline but Rob tags himself in before he can go up. That didn't seem planned and Kane looks a little annoyed. Jericho's middle rope missile dropkick puts Rob down and it's Christian choking with a shirt. We're off to the chinlock for a bit before the reverse DDT into a backbreaker gets two on Rob. Christian's powerslam gets the same and it's back to Jericho to try the Walls.

Van Dam saves himself with a small package and some kicks to take the Canadian down, setting up the hot tag to Kane. The house cleaning is on with Kane throwing Christian into Jericho and getting two off a side slam. There's the top rope clothesline and Van Dam kicks Jericho down as well. Jericho breaks up the Five Star and a low blow sets up the Five Star for an even nearer fall on Kane. Some chairs are brought in and the bell rings, presumably for a DQ.

Rating: C-. Based on what's about to happen after the match, there's a chance that the ending was a bit mistimed as you could have penciled in Booker T. running in from the second the match started. Either way the title change didn't happen so it's not like who wins via DQ means anything for the most part. The wrestling was fine and the near fall off the Lionsault was good but it wasn't anything thrilling.

Booker T. comes in to beat up the Canadians, saving Kane in the process.

Lawler thinks Booker tried to run Goldberg over.

Shawn Michaels tells Flair that he can't lay down tonight because it would ruin his legacy. Flair seems to think he has a chance and is almost in tears (take a shot) at Shawn believing in him.

Here are Rodney Mack and Teddy Long to issue a FIVE MINUTE WHITE BOY CHALLENGE to any established star because they need some better competition.

Rodney Mack vs. Spike Dudley

Spike charges at him and gets kned in the ribs for his efforts. We hit a chinlock into some choking on the ropes is followed by a belly to belly for two on Spike. Another chinlock is broken up and Spike sends him outside for a good looking dive. He comes up holding his ribs but is still able to grab a rollup for two. The Dudley Dog is broken up and Mack hits a powerslam as we have less than a minute to go. The Black Out (cobra clutch) goes on for a good while and Spike FINALLY taps with one second left. As low level as this match was, the fans were completely into the ending and wanted Spike to survive.

Rating: D. So Mack needs time to beat Spike Dudley? I'm not sure how this is supposed to be interesting and that loose cobra clutch didn't do much good either. Teddy is the star of this team with his hilarious rambling on commentary and Mack isn't getting much out of this. Granted beating higher levels of competition would do him some good.

Austin yells at the hung over Bischoff via a bullhorn and bangs on a trashcan (unfortunately without drumming on a street light). He has some female company for Bischoff and, say it with me, it's Moolah and Mae Young. Eric's rant is pretty funny.

Flair has the robe on and looks ready to style and profile.

La Resistance vs. Test/Scott Steiner

It's a brawl to start with Rene getting suplexed out to the floor. Grenier sends Steiner into the steps though and Stacy Keibler goes to check on him for a good while. Test boots him way out of a double teaming

but gets shoved into Steiner, setting up a quick rollup to give Dupree the pin.

Test and Steiner argue over Stacy, who leaves alone in a huff.

Austin has set up an interrogation room to find out about Goldberg's would be assailant.

A fan poll thinks The Rock was the driver. Christian and HHH are the other top suspects.

Austin interrogates Lance Storm and asks him where he was at on June 25, 1989. Storm: "What does that have to do with anything?" Austin: "It ain't got nothing to do with anything!" Lance doesn't have much to say and Austin starts laughing. The light goes on Storm's face and Storm actually admits that he was the driver. It was an accident though as the accelerator stuck and Canadians drive on the other side of the road. Austin knows better but Storm lets it slip that it was someone else's idea. Instead of finding out who it was, Austin gives Storm Goldberg tonight.

HHH has his ribs taped up as he reads Freddie Blassie's book. Flair comes in and says he's ready to be the man again. He had a thousand matches like HHH had last night and he wrestled every single night. No one is making him lay down in Flair Country and he's coming for the title tonight, WOO! I'm not big on Flair from this era but he was feeling it on that one.

Lance Storm vs. Bill Goldberg

A powerslam and a pumphandle slam set up the spear and Jackhammer to end Storm in just over a minute. Amazingly enough, this is the best reaction Goldberg has gotten since the night of his debut.

Post match Goldberg chokes Storm until he admits Jericho was the guy who put him up to it. Never trust those Canadians.

Jericho is trying to leave but admits he was the mastermind. Next week though, Goldberg will be the guest on the Highlight Reel.

Raw World Title: HHH vs. Ric Flair

HHH is defending and has heavily taped ribs. He tells Flair to lay down but Flair just slicks backs his hair as we hit the opening bell. They WOO at each other until Flair pokes him in the eye to take over. HHH tries a suplex but the ribs give out, allowing Flair to send him outside in a heap. Ric can hit the suplex on the floor but walks into a spinebuster back inside.

The champ can't follow up though and Flair actually hits the top rope shot to the head. JR is selling the heck out of the chance Flair could win here and it's time to go after the leg. The Figure Four goes on for a good while until HHH makes the rope. The referee gets bumped though and HHH grabs the belt, only to get poked in the eye. A belt shot gives Flair a close two and you can feel the fans gasp. The Pedigree is countered with a backdrop so Flair tries one of his own, only to get countered into the Pedigree to retain the title.

Rating: C. They were starting to get going near the end but, alas, HHH needed to go over Flair in Flair Country for the sake of....I'm guessing his ego or something, even if it took away Flair's best reaction in at least a year. Throw in the fact that this was designed to help set up HHH vs. Nash II instead of what could have been a great HHH vs. Flair match in an interesting story and this is even sadder.

Post match Nash comes out to chase HHH off but here's Austin. The rematch at Bad Blood will be Hell in a Cell. Panic ensues to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. There were good things going on tonight but setting up HHH vs. Nash again sucks the life out of wherever positives the rest of the show could have. Austin as the main boss instead of Bischoff helped a lot, though they need something better to build towards. I know we're setting up HHH vs. Goldberg down the line but could we please get a few better stop gap challengers?

This could have been solved by having Booker win at Wrestlemania, lose it back at Backlash and then do a rubber match at Judgment Day. Then pick ANYONE but Nash to bridge the gap to Goldberg and Raw is already a lot better. But no, instead it's a bad match to set up a bad gimmick match

with Flair being beaten in his hometown (again) along the way.

The midcard stuff was solid with Booker vs. Christian and Goldberg vs. Jericho looking solid enough. La Resistance vs. Kane/Van Dam (which you know is coming) is fine too, though we really need another upper midcard feud to help balance things out. It's not a terrible show overall, but the holes are pretty glaring.

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Smackdown – October 17, 2017: Hug It And Hold It Close

Smackdown

Date: October 17, 2017

Location: KeyArena, Seattle, Washington

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Corey Graves, Michael Cole

It's time to start getting ready for Survivor Series and if you've seen the rumors, you know what the big match seems to be. The previews for the show suggest that A, they're announcing it tonight and that B, they're actually going through with it. Hopefully I'm wrong though and we won't

be subjected to that. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's General Manager Daniel Bryan for the big home state reception. The fans chant WELCOME HOME and Bryan finally has to say the show is only two hours long. After previewing some of the show, Bryan wants to talk about Sami Zayn. This brings out a dancing Sami to face off with Bryan. Daniel asks what happened to the Sami he's known for over thirteen years.

Sami says he's the same guy but he's taken control of his career again. Bryan gets the idea but Sami cuts him off. It's true that there are similarities, such as them being great in-ring performers. Sami: "Well, I still am." Management never liked either of them either, but Daniel had the fans. The difference is the fans never got behind Sami like they did with Bryan. They didn't uphold their end of the bargain. If Daniel had worked a little smarter instead of a little harder, he wouldn't have had to retire in this very arena.

Bryan was the performer of Sami's generation and every time Sami started catching up to him, Bryan jumped two more steps ahead. Now Sami would never want to be like Bryan: a retired housewife. Cue Kevin Owens to say the same things until Bryan says he and Shane McMahon did what was best for the fans. Owens doesn't buy this and says Bryan is doing what's best for business, which makes him the authority. Sami calls him a sellout and thanks Owens from becoming what Bryan is now. Bryan leaves, saying he's going to find a couple of dudes to punch them in the face.

We recap Charlotte's issues with Natalya.

Charlotte/Becky Lynch/Naomi vs. Natalya/Tamina/Lana

Carmella is at ringside with James Ellsworth on a leash. Naomi slaps Natalya in the face to start and it's time for a huddle on the floor. A slingshot dive takes out Natalya and Tamina as Lana looks on and yells a lot. Back in and Becky works on Natalya's arm before dropping a leg for two.

We come back from a break with Lana coming in and grabbing a suplex for

one. Naomi gets pulled into the villain corner for some stomping as Charlotte plays cheerleader on the apron. A kick to Lana's chest allows the hot tag off to Charlotte and house is cleaned with some chops (Lana has no idea how to sell them). We get the strut as everything breaks down, including a Figure Eight to make Lana tap at 8:43.

Rating: D+. Lana may be stunning but she's not a great in-ring performer. At the end of the day, you just need more ring time than she has and the only way to get that is to be in the ring. That's not going to do her much good in a place like this, which is why she needed more time in developmental. Or we can just write her off as a failure and go from there.

Post match Natalya grabs a chair but Charlotte uses one of her own to chase them off.

Bryan tells Sami and Kevin that everyone wants to punch them in the face. Therefore, tonight it's going to be Sami/Owens vs. Randy Orton/Shinsuke Nakamura. Bryan does the Nakamura pose and Owens isn't happy.

It's time for Pulp Fashion, which should be amazing to put it mildly. Ascension is now in the opening credits, along with the cast of Pulp Fiction, who will NOT be in this show. The bulletin board is full of Quentin Tarantino references, including John Cena as Mr. Orange. The Ascension is being interrogated with Fandango telling them to be cool like the Fonz. Konnor: "Like when he jumped the shark?" Viktor: "They already did."

Tyler Breeze, as Uma Thurman from Pulp Fiction, does a dance from the movie and finds a cheeseburger. After more movie quotes, Ascension says Breezango hasn't even figured out the case of 2B. Konnor: "It's obviously the Bludgeon..." Fandango cuts them off though as Breeze has fainted. Ascension still wants to be friends and offers Fandango a huge needle to save Breeze's life. That's a big negative though and Breeze wakes up, having fainted at the idea of a gluten free sandwich. In the melee, someone has stolen the briefcase from their table, meaning this story MUST CONTINUE (sweet).

Baron Corbin vs. Sin Cara

Corbin cuts off Sin Cara's entrance and says the US Open Challenge is done for good. Cara wastes no time in kicking Corbin to the floor for a suicide dive. A big dive off the top takes Corbin down again...and Cara wins by countout at 1:22.

The Usos are talking about having the tag division on lock when Chad Gable and Shelton Benjamin come up and rap about how they'll win the titles soon. The champs go for a handshake but Gable and Benjamin pull the hands away.

Video on the Bludgeon Brothers.

Video on Jinder Mahal in India.

Here are the Singh Brothers and Jinder Mahal for a big announcement about Survivor Series. When he was in India, a young boy asked him what was next. After defeating Orton and Nakamura multiple times, the question was who he would face next. Even after those wins, he doesn't receive the level of respect that he should on Smackdown Live. The fans chant YOU CAN'T WRESTLE but Mahal just holds up the title. In order to achieve respect, Mahal must defeat the undefeatable, which means he wants to face Brock Lesnar at Survivor Series. Cole: "Are you kidding me?"

This brings out AJ Styles to a rather nice reception. AJ doesn't care about Lesnar, but rather about Mahal saying he's beaten all of the worthy challengers on the show. Mahal calls him a loser, which AJ says means there should be no worries about a title defense then. AJ is called a joke so the beating is on with AJ cleaning house in short order.

Post break, Mahal demands that Bryan make AJ vs. Sumil Singh for next week. Bryan is fine with this.

Bobby Roode vs. Dolph Ziggler

Rematch from Hell in a Cell. Bobby takes it to the floor and drives Ziggler into the barricade as we take a break. Back (after one WWE2K18 ad, meaning it's not even a full commercial break) with Roode fighting out of a chinlock and grabbing a catapult into the corner for a double knockdown. A running forearm and swinging Rock Bottom get two on Ziggler.

They trade rollups with tights until Ziggler gets another and grabs the trunks for the pin at 3:55.

Rating: D. Oh my goodness this is continuing. The match being short helped a little bit but this feud (Can anyone explain what the issue here even is? Something about Ziggler thinking Roode is all flash and no substance I think?) is turning into one where they're fighting now because they've fought before and that's not a good thing.

Pay per view rundown.

Aiden English is singing and is annoyed when people aren't paying attention to him. New Day comes in with the trombone and a party breaks out. Rusev comes in to declare it his day again. Kofi: "Again? Time to celebrate!" Woods plays Rusev's theme on the trombone and New Day dances off. English starts singing that it's Rusev Day but Rusev cuts him off. I'm assuming a tag match next week.

Shinsuke Nakamura/Randy Orton vs. Kevin Owens/Sami Zayn

Sami works on Nakamura's wrist to start but gets sent into the ropes for a COME ON. Some kicks in the corner have Zayn in trouble and it's off to Orton. That goes nowhere so here's Owens for the slugout instead. Everything breaks down for a few seconds and it's Owens posting Orton, followed by a fall away slam into the barricade as we take a break. Back with Nakamura loading Owens onto the top for the running knee but Sami makes the save. The knee crashes into the buckle and Nakamura is in trouble. After a quick mocking of Orton, Owens gets two off the backsplash.

We hit the chinlock for a few seconds before Nakamura kicks him away and makes the hot tag to Orton. Everything breaks down with Orton dropping Orton onto the barricade and blocking a Zayn dive. Sami gets suplexed through the announcers' table but Owens makes a save at two. Nakamura comes back in and takes care of Owens, leaving Sami to charge into the scoop powerslam. Sami hits Orton low and the Helluva Kick is good for the pin at 13:02.

Rating: C+. Pretty standard main event tag here and that's a good thing

in this case. Sami getting the pin through nefarious means is a great way to start off the new heel run. The wrestling wasn't all that great, but at least they had a good ending with Sami being especially evil to give him the first win.

Post break Owens and Zayn laugh at Bryan, but there's a big surprise: Shane is back next week. Back in the arena, Orton and Nakamura aren't happy but Owens and Sami come back in to celebrate (Owens: "Hug me! Hold me close!") to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. I'm digging the heck out of this new Sami run, especially with he and Owens being all happy with the fact that Shane is back next week. Owens already destroyed him and I'm glad that he really wasn't all that scared. The rest of the show worked well too and it's cool to see things picking up after so many horrible weeks.

Results

Charlotte/Naomi/Becky Lynch b. Lana/Tamina/Natalya – Figure Eight to Lana

Sin Cara b. Baron Corbin via countout

Dolph Ziggler b. Bobby Roode – Rollup with a handful of trunks

Sami Zayn/Kevin Owens b. Randy Orton/Shinsuke Nakamura – Helluva Kick to Orton

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Monday Night Raw – October 17, 2017: All Your Shields In One Basket

I apologize for the delay but the in-laws are in town and I had to pick them up at the airport. They'll be around for a few weeks so things might be a bit slow. The shows will be up that night but they won't likely be on time. Sorry about that.

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 16, 2017

Location: Moda Center, Portland, Oregon

Commentators: Corey Graves, Michael Cole, Booker T.

It's the go home show for Tables, Ladders and Chairs but tonight we're focusing on a cage match with Roman Reigns facing Braun Strowman. In addition to that though we have Dean Ambrose and Seth Rollins defending the Tag Team Titles against the Bar. There's a good chance of a title change with the TLC match this Sunday. Let's get to it.

As expected, we open with a four minute recap of last week's Shield reunion.

Here's Kurt Angle to open things up. Angle hypes up Sunday's main event but here's Shield, through the crowd, to the old music and in the riot gear, drawing a VERY strong THIS IS AWESOME chant. Now why couldn't they do this last week??? Angle lets them have the ring and it's Rollins saying he can't believe they're back. It's been five years since they debuted and he couldn't be happier than to be here with his brothers again.

Ambrose, looking more fired up and charismatic than he has in years, says they divide and conquer like no one else. Maybe he got a bit ahead of himself last week when he said they could fight four, five or six guys but he'd do the same thing again all over. He wants to fight right now so here are the Bar, Miz and Strowman. Angle cuts them off though and says if this fight happens, there's no cage match later. Tensions cool, at least for now.

Elias is with the Club and has a song but the Club wants to warm up their vocal cords. Gallows sounds like a small dog barking before calling us all nerds. Anderson on the other hand clucks like a chicken...and belts out COOL COCKY BAD! Next up is a song about Jason Jordan, meaning it's time for a six man tag.

Elias/The Club vs. Jason Jordan/Titus O'Neil/Apollo Crews

Titus and Gallows start things off as we hear about Titus trying to recruit Jordan to Titus Worldwide. A big clothesline puts Gallows on the floor and everything breaks down as we take a break. Back with Gallows kicking Crews in the head and handing it off to Elias for some stomping. Crews kicks him in the face and dives over to the hot tag to Jordan so house can be cleaned. A belly to belly gets two and it's time for the running shoulders all over the place. Crews makes the tag and hits the Toss Powerbomb for the pin on Anderson at 6:48. Not enough shown to rate but this was fine.

Short pay per view rundown.

Video on Asuka.

Emma is sick of hearing about Asuka but here's Alexa Bliss to say she feels the pain. Bliss shifts the focus to Mickie James, who body shamed her last week. They're ready for a tag match later tonight.

Video on Brian Kendrick and Jack Gallagher tormenting Cedric Alexander.

Cedric Alexander vs. Jack Gallagher

Hang on a second though as here's Rich Swann to even the odds against Kendrick and Gallagher. Jack wastes no time in slugging away and drops

Cedric with a headbutt. We hit the chinlock for a bit before a dropkick to the back has Cedric in even more trouble. Another kick to the chest and it's off to another neck crank. Kendrick offers a distraction, and gets DDT'd by Swann. The distraction lets Cedric hit a Lumbar Check on Gallagher (with an outstanding sell job) for the pin at 3:21.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see until the ending, though you can see the tag match from here. I'm digging Gallagher and Kendrick as a team as of late and they're good for opponents in a match like this. Unfortunately I'm not sure if they're going to go anywhere near the title, which makes this a big of a waste of time. The sell of the ending was great though.

It's time for MizTV with Miz being flanked by the Bar and Curtis Axel but no Bo Dallas. Miz talked about how they're ready to destroy the Shield right now but they'll wait until Sunday night. Sheamus says the Shield will be broken into three pieces. They're ready to destroy Shield and here's tonight's guest: their partner on Sunday, Braun Strowman.

Braun says it's time to destroy the Shield forever and it starts tonight inside the cage. The fans get in a YES/REALLY battle with Miz, who has a bit of a surprise: there's going to be a fifth member of the team. The fans want Curtis Axel but here's Kurt Angle to say this isn't happening.

Kurt has a deal for Miz though: if Strowman wins tonight, the fifth man can join. If Reigns wins though, Strowman is out and it's 3-3 again. Miz says it's on but Angle says everyone is banned from ringside in both the cage match (kind of redundant) and the Tag Team Title match.

Sasha Banks vs. Alicia Fox

Banks made Fox tap in the elimination match last week. Before the match, Fox says she was scratching her nose last week and deserves more respect. Oh and a t-shirt! Sasha wastes no time in trying the Bank Statement but Fox is in the ropes in a hurry. Fox kicks her down and we hit the chinlock in a hurry. There's a backbreaker into a second chinlock on Banks but Sasha won't have any more of this. The comeback takes all of a moment and the Bank Statement makes Fox tap at 2:51.

Fox screeches after the loss.

Post break, Fox attacks Banks in the back and sends her into various things. More screeching ensues.

Here's Enzo Amore for a chat as Graves wants an air sick bag. He misses his title and we see Mustafa Ali costing him the belt last week. Last week, Enzo got ripped off and Kalisto robbed him of the title. This brings out Kalisto for the trash talk but Drew Gulak, Tony Nese, Noam Dar and Ariya Daivari come in for the long form beatdown. Cue Mustafa Ali for the save until the numbers game gets the better of him. This seems a little Survivor Series-ish.

Tag Team Titles: The Bar vs. Seth Rollins/Dean Ambrose

Rollins and Ambrose are defending. Sheamus starts with Ambrose with Dean stomping him down in the corner. The champs clean house in a hurry to start and the stereo dives put Sheamus and Cesaro down with little trouble. Sheamus forearm Dean down back inside and we take a break.

Back with Rollins fighting out of Sheamus' chinlock but getting caught in the Irish Curse for two. Stereo kicks to the ribs get two on Rollins and he can't power out of Cesaro's front facelock. Cesaro isn't taking the risk though and kicks Dean off the apron. The fans chant for Ambrose but settle for Seth striking away. Cesaro gets backdropped to the floor and a diving tag brings in Ambrose.

Everything breaks down and Cesaro avoids the catapult into the post ala the teeth incident. Double dives take the Bar down and the top rope elbow gets two on Cesaro. Something like a Hart Attack gets two on Dean but the double crucifix is broken up. Instead it's a pair of superkicks to the ribs, setting up Dirty Deeds to put Cesaro away and retain the titles at 12:10.

Rating: B. These teams work very well together and it's amazing how much more interested I was in seeing them fight when the Club and no one else was around to waste our time. It also helps to have Miz doing most of the talking, which was one of the major issues in the previous part of the feud. Good match here, though nothing was coming close to the previous version.

Post break Axel gives the Bar a pep talk because he wants in the main event. Strowman comes in and the pep talking continues. Axel NEEDS to be in that match and is ready to go fight Reigns right now. Strowman: "Then go find him." Axel: "You mean now?"

We look back at Bray Wyatt becoming Sister Abigail last week.

Here's Finn Balor for a chat. He talks about the Celtic festival of Sowan, which sounds like Halloween cranked up to eleven. Last week Finn say Bray's tricks but he has his own too. This Sunday, the Demon will slay a monster of his own. Finn's demon has no fear...and the Demon paint appears on his face. It disappears and Finn says his Demon dreams of nightmares (paint on and off again) and it wants to meet Sister Abigail. Run. Never let WWE get supernatural.

Emma/Alexa Bliss vs. Bayley/Mickie James

Mickie armbars Emma to start and it's quickly off to Bayley for a double back elbow and a Paisan elbow drop. Bliss comes in and takes a kind of Twist of Fate over the middle rope. Emma breaks it up at two and a bunch of yelling takes us to a break. Back with Emma sending Bayley into the buckle a few times for no effect. Emma going into the buckle has some effect though and Emma is all staggered. A knee drop gets two on Emma but she sends Bayley outside and into the barricade to take over.

Back in and Bliss hits a running slap to the face, followed by a chinlock to slow things down again. Bayley finally sends her throat first into the ropes and it's a hot tag to bring in Mickie. House is cleaned in a hurry and Mickie's top rope Thesz press gets two with Emma making the save. That's fine with Mickie who superkicks Bliss for the pin at 11:21.

Rating: C. Just a quick match to set up something for Sunday. It didn't have anything special to it of course and Mickie isn't likely to win the title but it's a simple enough story that isn't hurting anything. Mickie is great in this role and helps bridge the gap until we get to another big challenger.

Axel goes after the Shield and we cut to a break.

Miz gives his future team a pep talk but asks where Axel is. Braun tells him the news and Miz looks terrified.

Mickie is ready for revenge on Sunday. Those insults hurt but Mickie is proud of her career. She has a three year old at home and can't wait to bring the title home to him.

Sasha vs. Alicia is the Kickoff Show match.

PPV card rundown.

Miz goes looking for Axel...and finds him hanging unconscious upside down from a forklift.

The cage is lowered.

Miz isn't worried about losing his fifth man, because Axel was never in that spot.

Roman Reigns vs. Braun Strowman

Inside a cage and Miz jumps in on commentary. Strowman sends him into the corner to start but it's way too early for the running powerslam. Reigns slips out and tries to climb, only to get pulled down. Some clotheslines have almost no effect but some big boots have a big more effect. Strowman goes shoulder first into the corner and there are the rapid fire clotheslines. One heck of a spinebuster gets two on Roman and we take a break.

Back with Reigns tasting the cage a few times. Strowman throws him at the cage so Reigns grabs the top for a climb. Now why did he think that would work with Strowman looking at him. Strowman misses a charge and hits the cage though, allowing Reigns to score with some kicks to the face. A Samoan drop gets two with a heck of a kickout so Reigns makes another escape attempt. Cue the Bar to cut Reigns off so Ambrose and Rollins are outside to cut them off. THEN WHAT WAS THE POINT IN BANNING THEM BOTH FROM RINGSIDE???

Braun gets up in time to pull Reigns back inside with a superplex off the cage. Miz: "COVER!!!" Everyone not in the match brawls up to the stage as

we cut away from the match entirely. Miz joins them and the fight heads backstage. Again, we're not even looking at the CAGE MATCH WITH TWO MONSTERS FIGHTING EACH OTHER because we need to see this instead. For all we know there's a tango contest going on at the moment as Miz closes a metal door, locking the four of them in the parking lot.

Back to the ring with Reigns fighting to his feet after suffering from a bad bowl of soup as served up by Chef Strowman (prove that it didn't happen). Miz is back on commentary as Reigns goes up top, only to slip down and crotch Strowman. A Superman Punch staggers Strowman and a second puts him down. Strowman throws Reigns in the air but gets Superman Punched again for two.

It's spear time...and Kane's lights come on. Strowman splashes Reigns but eats a spear anyway. Kane comes up through the mat though and stares Reigns down, followed by a chokeslam. A second chokeslam sets up the running powerslam, followed by a Tombstone for good measure. Strowman adds another powerslam and Reigns is done at 17:24.

Rating: C-. Let me make sure I have this straight. Angle bans everyone from ringside so we have SIX PEOPLE interfere? And Reigns loses his first match after the reunion (not fairly but it's a loss)? Here's the thing: Kane was in Shield's first match and Reigns retired his brother at Wrestlemania so there's definitely a connection there. Unfortunately we didn't hear anything about that and it's basically just the idea that Miz got Kane to join for no apparent reason. Of course the announcers sold things well here, though there's a better story to tell.

Miz, on top of a ladder, announces Kane as the fifth member of the team to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Sunday really is a case of a one match card and the more they add to that, the less I'm sure it's going to work. Putting eight people into one match isn't often a good idea and it takes away a lot of what you might be able to get elsewhere. Really, what else is there? Sister Abigail vs. the Demon sounds more like a joke than anything else. The women's match feels standard and I'm not thrilled with two cruiserweight matches. There's a good chance I could be wrong, but if

that main event doesn't work, they're in major trouble.

Results

Jason Jordan/Titus O'Neil/Apollo Crews b. Elias/The Club – Toss Powerbomb to Anderson

Cedric Alexander b. Jack Gallagher – Lumbar Check

Sasha Banks b. Alicia Fox – Bank Statement

Seth Rollins/Dean Ambrose b. The Bar – Dirty Deeds to Cesaro

Mickie James/Bayley b. Alexa Bliss/Emma – Superkick to Bliss

Braun Strowman b. Roman Reigns – Running powerslam

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**Lucha Underground – October
11, 2017: That Seems**

Unnecessary

Lucha Underground

Date: October 11, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

We're closing in on the end of this season and most likely the series with two episodes left to go. It's week three of Ultima Lucha Tres and that means another big batch of matches that close out some feuds and give us some awesome moments at the same time. The first two shows have been good and hopefully this one lives up to the previous two weeks. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at all of tonight's matches, as is the custom.

Taya vs. Sexy Star

Last woman standing as Taya has cost Star a bunch of wins over the last year, meaning it's time for revenge. They both have brass knuckles to start but Taya are kicked away. Taya takes her down and slugs away but gets kicked in the face. They head outside in short order with Taya powerbombing her up against the barricade a few times in a row. Taya misses a Cannonball into the chairs though and Star sends her into a metal screen.

We cut the camera away from Star breaking something made of glass over the bloody Taya. They head up the steps as is the Lucha Underground custom but now it's table time. A slugout goes to Taya but they fight into the crowd again to chop it out. Star gets beaten up against a camera but gets in a belly to belly suplex off the balcony and through the table. That's already enough to put Taya down for ten at 9:10.

Rating: B-. They beat each other up but this felt like it was just getting started when it wrapped up. I wanted to see them fight more but the big spot at the end looked like something that destroyed Taya once and for all. The win isn't enough to make me care about Star (Matt Striker has killed her career just less than she did it to herself)

though this was entertaining while it lasted.

Trios Titles: Reptile Tribe vs. The Mack/Dante Fox/Killshot

The Tribe (Drago/Vibora/Pindar) are defending and I don't remember them either. Killshot and Fox are not only still alive but also have taped up ribs. Fox kicks Pindar in the head to start but his ribs give out, allowing Killshot to tag himself in, much to Fox's annoyance. Drago comes in with a tornado DDT and Pindar comes back in for a powerslam. A pop up cutter gets no cover as Fox makes the fast save.

Mack comes in to clean house with some running splashes in the corner but the monster Vibora comes in. Fox and Killshot can't combine to take care of him as everything breaks down. Vibora takes Killshot down with a clothesline but Mack runs him over without too much effort. Now it's Killshot and Fox hitting stereo dives, leaving Mack to Stun Pindar into a top rope double stomp from Fox for the pin and the titles at 8:02.

Rating: C. My goodness the Reptile Tribe just did not work. I could barely remember who was whom and that's a bad thing for your champions. Throwing together three guys to win them is probably an upgrade, which is really sad when you think about it. Let them have something to do with the belts and it will be quite the improvement.

Card rundown for next week.

Gift of the Gods Title: Son of Havoc vs. Pentagon Dark

The title is vacant coming in and this is a ladder match. They talk trash to start until an exchange of kicks to the face sends Pentagon outside. A big cartwheel into a flip dive takes Dark down again and it's time for the ladder. First up is a smaller version being brought inside with Pentagon sending it into his face and then over his back.

Pentagon throws in another mini ladder and three full sized ones with the big ones being set up in various corners. Naturally that's enough for Havoc to get back up for an elbow to the face before sending Dark into a chair in the corner. Dark gets crotched with a ladder in the corner plus some swings of a chair. That's not enough for Havoc to get anywhere close

to the title so let's throw in a table as a bonus.

Havoc is right back up with a belly to back superplex from a ladder through the table though and both guys are down again. It's Havoc up first but his shooting star is caught in a cutter (It's no Randy Orton and Evan Bourne but what is?) in a big spot. Havoc is up first again though and he sets up four chairs in the middle of the ring.

For reasons of general evil, they fight onto the chairs and Pentagon package piledrives him through the four of them, killing Havoc pretty much dead. There's no climbing though as Pentagon bridges a ladder up as a platform. They slug it out on said platform until Pentagon throws him through a table. That's enough to pull the title down at 14:00.

Rating: B. The ending leaves me more confused than anything else as I have no idea why they didn't just have Pentagon win after the big spot. Throwing him through a table didn't feel like a huge move and there's really no reason to have Havoc be conscious still after the piledriver, let alone be competitive. That being said, having Pentagon win anything is a great move and a cash-in next week wouldn't shock me in the slightest, which could make for a heck of a finale.

Post credits, Vampiro has Prince Puma surrounded by a circle of candles. Next week Puma can win the title back and complete the circle. Puma leaves and Vampiro hears a voice complimenting him on a job well done. Vampiro thanks the voice and calls him master. Oh I think I know where this is going and that's an awesome finish.

Overall Rating: B. Good show for the most part but nothing felt like a major moment. Granted it didn't help that the Trios Titles mean nothing and there's no way anything is topping that 2/3 falls match from the first week. The two hour finale should be awesome, but they better do something with the big story already as I'm getting a bit impatient with the thing.

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Judgment Day 2003 (2017 Redo): Judge Not Lest Ye Have To Watch This Show

Judgment Day 2003

Date: May 18, 2003

Location: Charlotte Coliseum, Charlotte, North Carolina

Attendance: 13,000

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz, Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

Let's get this over with. I don't remember a time when the TV leading up to a pay per view has been this miserable and the mere idea of this show is making me cringe. Sometimes a show can throw in a surprise or two but I can't think of a single match that actually gives me hope on this one. Let's get to it.

The opening video is a shot of gallows with kids reciting a rhyme about evil (it's the same one from the Biker Taker vignettes). Basically everything leads us here and it ends tonight.

Here's Steve Austin to open things up with an interview instead of a match. I'm so thrilled already. He's not out here to run his mouth and waste your time because there's a bunch of great matches tonight. Are we

looking at the same card? Austin is going to watch in the crowd with the fans...in a sky box, with a bunch of beer. Lawler seems to think a sky box means sitting in the cheap seats as Austin gives Tazz a beer and heads into the crowd.

John Cena/FBI vs. Spanky/Chris Benoit/Rhyno

Cena says that being he's with the FBI giving out black eyes, he'll have the people cheering the bad guys. It's Palumbo/Stamboli with Cena here as this is a bonus match. Spanky dives onto everyone but gets decked by Cena as we start fast. Cole says he knows all about rapping because he's a shoelace. The FBI plants Spanky with a double slam and cranks on his legs for good measure.

Palumbo slaps on a bearhug as Tazz and Cole discuss beer. A hard clothesline cuts Spanky off but he headscissors Palumbo into Stamboli. That's enough for the hot tag to Benoit, meaning it's time for the German suplexes. Nunzio comes in and eats a Gore but he's still able to break up Sliced Bread #2. The distraction is enough for Stamboli and Palumbo to hit the Kiss of Death (Demolition Decapitator with a legdrop instead of an elbow) for the pin.

Rating: D. The match was energetic while it lasted but that's the problem: it wasn't even four minutes long. Why in the world did we need a pay per view opener that lasts as long as a TV match? The people involved in this match deserve a little more than this, though at least they were on the pay per view card.

Austin is in the sky box having a woman make him a hot dog when Eric Bischoff comes in. Everything they have is split between them so Austin gives him the hot dog. Bischoff is annoyed that there's no scotch so he'll have a beer. In a glass that is, which Austin doesn't appreciate.

We recap La Resistance vs. Test/Scott Steiner, which is all about the Iraq War and how horrible you are if you don't completely support it.

Test/Scott Steiner vs. La Resistance

Test and Rene Dupree slug it out to start until a backdrop puts Rene

down. It's off to Steiner for some more aggressive offense, including a push-up elbow. Dupree sends him outside though and Sylvan Grenier drives him back first into the apron. The announcers debate France vs. America as Grenier's chinlock doesn't get him very far. A middle rope clothesline gives Grenier two but Steiner suplexes his way to AMERICAN freedom.

The hot tag brings in Test to clean house to silence. Test steals the beret and gets rolled up for two as everything breaks down. The pumphandle slam plants Rene but Stacy Keibler gets on the apron for no logical reason. Dupree dropkicks Test into Stacy, who lands in Steiner's arms. After putting Stacy down, Steiner tags himself in for the reverse DDT on Dupree for no cover. Test boots Steiner by mistake and gets sent outside, leaving Steiner to take the double spinebuster for the pin.

Rating: D. Another TV match here but in this case keeping it short was the right idea. This feud isn't interesting and Test vs. Steiner isn't likely to be much better. Fighting over Stacy is fine, but it would be better if they could have anything resembling a good match. The tag division needs La Resistance though, even if they're not all that interesting of a team.

Stacy stays behind to check on Steiner.

Mr. America arrives and runs into Gregory Helms, who has been told that he's Hulk Hogan. America's sources have told him that Helms is really the Hurricane. They agree that their sources are idiots. Clever idea but it's hard to buy Hogan's push meaning much when he's having a match with Roddy Piper.

Eddie Guerrero has found a replacement partner for the injured Chavo. It's Tajiri, who gets a gold medal and knows that they lie, cheat and steal.

Tag Team Titles: Team Angle vs. Eddie Guerrero/Tajiri

Eddie and Tajiri are challenging in a ladder match. The brawl starts in the aisle as the champs aren't happy with Eddie destroying their framed picture of Angle earlier in the week. Eddie gets sent into the ladder, leaving Tajiri to get double teamed inside. A gorilla press drop onto

Haas' knee has Eddie in more trouble and it's time for another ladder. Tajiri seems to mess up a dive over the top so Eddie dives over the top onto Shelton to get the focus back.

The champs go for the belts but Tajiri breaks it up with the handspring elbow. Haas gets crotched by the ladder in the corner and it's time for a second ladder. Shelton pulls Tajiri off the ladder, sending him face first into one of the rungs for a scary looking crash. Thankfully he's ok, though Eddie isn't quite as good thanks to a powerslam into the ladder in the corner. In a creative spot, Haas puts Tajiri across a ladder and bridges it over the top, leaving Shelton to jump off the ladder, over Haas, and onto Tajiri's back.

Eddie has to make a save with Haas falling out to the floor in a heap but then wedges the ladder in the corner instead of going up. Naturally he gets sent into the ladder for his efforts, satisfying wrestling rule #3. Tajiri is back up with the hard kicks to the face and he runs them over with the ladder for good measure. The Tarantula has Haas in trouble but it's Shelton making the save with a shot from the ladder.

Back in and the champs beat on Eddie but Shelton gets monkey flipped into the ladder into Haas to put everyone down again. Eddie sends Benjamin outside but the champs are back up for the save. Benjamin is knocked right back down, only to have Eddie frog splash him instead of going for the belts for no apparent reason. Charlie and Eddie go up and this time it's a sunset bomb to bring Haas right back down. Tajiri is finally back up to mist Shelton, allowing Eddie to pull down the titles for the win.

Rating: B-. Good though not a great match here. This would have been a much better match with Chavo involved (As in it would have made more sense. Tajiri's work was fine.) but as it is, it feels kind of thrown together. That's not on the wrestlers of course, but at least they made it work as well as they could.

Bischoff and Austin think they should sign Eddie but Austin makes Bischoff eat a hamburger and have another beer. Hang on though as Austin has to make fun of the way Eric drinks, including opening the box to get the crowd even more on his side. This eats up way too much time.

Chris Jericho thinks he'll win the Intercontinental Title when Roddy Piper comes in to make fun of him. They insult each other's talk shows and Chris brings up Piper ripping the kid's leg off on Thursday. That was an accident though, just like Jericho being born. They both promise to win their matches tonight and that's about it.

We get a very nice video on the history of the Intercontinental Title before the battle royal to bring it back. They cover a good chunk of the title's history and show off some great moments. As usual, WWE knows how to do its history well.

Intercontinental Title: Battle Royal

Booker T., Christian, Lance Storm, Chris Jericho, Goldust, Kane, Val Venis, Test, Rob Van Dam

The title is vacant coming in and only Booker isn't a former champion. Naturally, Pat Patterson gets to come out and hold up the title. And yes it's Venis, as the Chief Morely gimmick is officially gone. After some VERY long entrances, we're ready to go. Everyone goes after Kane to start (well duh) but he shrugs them off without much effort and gets rid of Storm. With Van Dam down, the others are able to get rid of Kane but he comes back in to beat everyone up.

Booker is up first and dumps Test, followed by Goldust doing the same to Venis. Jericho tosses Van Dam and we're down to Christian, Goldust, Booker and Jericho in about two minutes. Then why not just do a four way for the title? It turns into a glorified tag match with the good guys fighting back so Goldust can hit Shattered Dreams on both guys. Booker does a Spinarooni to celebrate but Goldust tries an elimination. That's fine with Booker, who dumps him out without too much trouble.

That leaves Booker and the Canadians and the double teaming is on in a hurry. Booker fights off an elimination attempt though and throws Jericho over, only to have him skin the cat in an always impressive move. Back in and the now bloody (not bad) Jericho forearms Booker down but Christian shoves him over the top during a Lionsault attempt.

Booker kicks Christian down and scores with a flapjack but the referee

gets bumped. If you can't book a nine man battle royal without a ref bump, you might just kind of suck at your job. As you might expect, Booker dumps Christian but no one sees it, leaving Christian to deck Patterson. Booker gets belted as well and Christian tosses him to win the title. As you might expect, Austin does nothing to fix this and the fans' chants for GOLDBERG go unrequited.

Rating: D. That ending actually made my head hurt. How in the world do you overbook a battle royal that doesn't even last twelve minutes? Christian winning is fine, but there are other ways you can make it work. Have he and Jericho as the final two and then have Christian dump Jericho out. That's not even cheating but makes him look like a villain at the same time. Why is that so complicated?

Sable and Torrie get catty before the bikini contest. I think this is supposed to be Sable hitting on her again. If Sable wants one of the Divas this badly, go after Dawn Marie who seems to be more into it.

We recap Sable vs. Torrie, which is as obvious of an idea as you can get.

Tazz is hosting, which is only slightly better than Lawler. Lillian Garcia sings Torrie to the ring as they're putting a little too much thought and effort into this. She sings the chorus three times as this is going on WAY too long already. Anyway, both get fifteen seconds to disrobe and gyrate.

They both do their thing and the fans say it's a tie, even though Sable's reaction was clearly louder. The fact that her swimsuit was smaller has no bearing on this at all I assure you. Actually hang on though as Sable takes off the swimsuit she's wearing to reveal a smaller one, which is enough for Tazz to give her the win. Torrie gives Sable a rather passionless kiss to end things.

Austin torments Bischoff with more food and beer.

Piper rants to Sean O'Haire about Jericho when Vince McMahon comes in. Roddy better be ready because it's a big night for the boss. Without Piper there would be no Hogan and now Piper is the epitome of ruthless aggression.

We look at Piper attacking the fan who Mr. America had waving the flag, resulting in the fan's artificial leg being ripped off. Piper seemed upset but Vince didn't buy it, which was all the proof he needed to send Piper after America's mask. As usual, there is so much wrong/stupid about that idea, I don't even know where to start so we'll move on.

Roddy Piper vs. Mr. America

America brings out a chair, presumably to counteract Sean. Actually it's for Zack Gowen, the fan whose leg was ripped off. So to clarify: this story is now about Vince, Stephanie, Piper, Mr. America and Gowen. After those five people is Sean O'Haire, whose lone match in this whole thing was a less than five minute match with Rikishi, where Piper had to help him win. And people wonder why this period is so loathed. America gets double teamed to start until Sean is sent outside.

Some right hands get America out of trouble and as the referee yells at O'Haire, the mask comes up to bite Piper. So I'm assuming Vince isn't watching the match and can't see 90% of Hogan's face there? O'Haire pulls America to the floor for some right hands, allowing Piper to whip him with the weightlifting belt. We hit a terrible sleeper until it's time to America up. The big boot connects but here's Vince so Piper can get in a low blow. O'Haire brings in a pipe but hits Piper instead, setting up the legdrop to give America the pin as Gowen holds Vince back.

Rating: F. Of course it was terrible but at least they kept it fairly short. As anyone could have guessed at the beginning of this thing though, it's not doing anyone other than Hogan and Vince any good. Unfortunately that includes O'Haire, who has gone from what should be a can't miss prospect to a bumbling lackey who can't do anything right.

Stephanie McMahon tells HHH to be careful.

We recap HHH vs. Kevin Nash, which is over Nash coming back and not liking HHH and Shawn Michaels fighting. HHH then attacked Nash for not picking the right side and we have a World Title match as a result, despite Nash making Roman Reigns like Hogan in the 80s.

Raw World Title: HHH vs. Kevin Nash

HHH is defending and Ric Flair and Shawn Michaels are the seconds. I'm not sure who was thinking it's a good idea to have Flair come out in his own entrance in Charlotte if they want Nash to be cheered but this show has bigger problems to deal with. The brawl is on in the aisle before the bell with Shawn and Flair fighting to the back. I doubt we'll be seeing them again.

Nash and HHH slug it out on the floor with the bell ringing shortly thereafter. A backdrop has the champ in early trouble as JR is already saying this isn't going to be the highest quality match. Nash hits a big forearm and flips the hair so you know it's serious. HHH finally gets in a neckbreaker to get us up to about five moves in the first three minutes. Nash is back with more right hands and a shove to the referee, who pulls him off by the hair. He'll never referee in this town again.

HHH gives us the required ref bump and a low blow before taking the turnbuckle pad off. Nash comes back with the usual but gets sent into the exposed buckle. The Pedigree gets two with the kickout earning a slightly disturbing positive reaction. A backdrop puts HHH on the floor and he comes back in with the sledgehammer to knock the referee down for the DQ.

Rating: F+. Only because it was slightly more watchable than Hogan vs. Piper. The match didn't even last as long as their brawl a few weeks back and now the feud gets to keep going because they're friends. Nash showed that he was washed up in 1999 and has only gotten worse in the years since. It was as bad as you would expect and a World Title match going less than eight minutes on pay per view is pretty unacceptable.

Nash beats up HHH because THIS MUST CONTINUE. He grabs the hammer and stalks HHH up the aisle, setting up a Jackknife through the announcers' table.

Austin makes Bischoff eat jalapenos and vomiting ensues.

Women's Title: Jazz vs. Victoria vs. Trish Stratus vs. Jacqueline

Jazz is defending and this is one fall to a finish. It's a brawl to start until the villains are sent outside, leaving Trish to counter an early wristlock. Victoria and Jazz come back in with with the champ hitting

some double chickenwing facebusters. Trish gets caught in the STF and Jacqueline puts Victoria in the half crab at the same time.

It's Trish getting to the rope first so Jazz can kick Jacqueline for the save. After a Matrish to avoid a clothesline (Lawler: "Trish just got reloaded!"), the Chick Kick gets two on Jazz. The Stratusfaction is broken up with Trish being thrown over the top and landing face first on the floor in a scary crash. Back in and Jacqueline suplexes Victoria, only to get DDT'd to retain Jazz's title.

Rating: D. That Trish landing looked great (and rather scary) but the time and a lack of a story killed whatever they could do here. What are you supposed to get out of a sub five minute match that you could probably see on Raw? The division is still dying for some fresh blood as these four can only fight so long. We passed that point months ago but it's still the same lineup every month.

Trish has a cut lip and stares at Jazz, again meaning this must continue.

We recap the main event. Big Show attacked Rey Mysterio at Backlash so tonight it's Brock Lesnar standing up to the monster in a stretcher match.

Smackdown World Title: Brock Lesnar vs. Big Show

Lesnar is defending and you have to put your opponent on the stretcher and get it over the finish line. During the entrances, Cole mentions that this is the first stretcher match in the company in 17 years since Andre the Giant vs. Killer Khan in 1986. You really would think he would get it right after all these weeks but alas, Cole isn't that bright (it was 1981). Also, Show brings a stretcher backboard with him with Mysterio, Benoit and Lesnar written on the back. Only Mysterio's name is crossed off, making Show look even lamer than usual.

Lesnar wastes no time in taking over and hitting Show with the board to knock him outside. A few more shots have Show in trouble and Brock sends him into the board, which is in front of the post. Show is back up and drops him across the stretcher before hitting Brock in the back with the backboard. A chokeslam plants Lesnar in the ring as I wonder why there's

a referee inside with them.

Show drops a leg onto Lesnar onto the board and it's stretcher time. The champ kicks his way off though and a few backboard shots has Show in trouble. Some choking with a camera cord and Lesnar puts Show on the stretcher as the announcers say it can't be done. Seriously it's not that big of a deal. Show fights out again so Lesnar rams the stretcher into his ribs.

A tug of war goes to Show...and he throws the stretcher down and puts its pad on another stretcher. More backboard (albeit from a different backboard) have Lesnar in trouble as this just keeps going. Back up and Brock knocks him off the apron and onto/back off of the stretcher. As Cole incorrectly says the first WWE Champion was crowned forty years ago yesterday (it was forty years ago yesterday that Bruno won the title to become the second champion), Rey Mysterio comes out to distract Show.

The distraction lets Brock drive a freaking forklift into the arena and dive off the thing with a crossbody/clothesline. A suplex into the F5 (more of an AA) allow Lesnar to throw him onto the forklift (Why can't he just put him onto the stretcher then?) and wheel him across the finish line to retain.

Rating: D+. This could have been a lot worse and it needed about five minutes cut out but it was a watchable enough main event. The problem here was the stretcher rule was completely tacked on and Show only having one of the three names crossed off made me shake my head. They should have done a last man standing match here or something like that, though it's not terrible or anything.

Overall Rating: D-. Yeah this really didn't work in the slightest. The ladder match was good and the main event was watchable but everything else was anywhere from terrible to a disaster. Aside from the America vs. Piper match and the awful World Title match, everything on here felt either unimportant or worth your time. Nothing on here felt like it needed to be on a pay per view and that scares the heck out of me considering the single branded shows start in June. Really bad here and that's not surprising when you consider the TV leading up to it.

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Smackdown – May 15, 2003: One of the Only Times WWE Has Disgusted Me

Smackdown

Date: May 15, 2003

Location: 1st Mariner Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

It's the go home show for Judgment Day and I have my notebook ready for all the questions I have regarding the Mr. America storyline. Given how little sense the whole thing makes if you listen to what everyone says, I'm likely to leave far more confused than I was when I came in. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Vince McMahon opens things up and he's SURE who Mr. America is. No one could possibly question the fact that Mr. America is Hulk Hogan. See, Mr.

America doesn't uphold traditional American values because he's deceiving everyone around here. After pausing for the WHAT chants, Vince complains about Hogan getting two checks (which would likely be signed by Vince himself, making me wonder who he signs American's checks to) and on top of that, Mr. America doesn't care that he batters women.

We see a clip of America knocking Vince into Stephanie, though Vince blames her for it just as much. He's not going to deal with Hogan himself though because we're having an open contract at Judgment Day with someone getting to deal with Hogan him/themselves. Cue the FBI of all people with Nunzio offering their services to deal with Mr. America. He even has a video resume of their greatest hits and Johnny promises to be on Hogan like baked on ziti. They'll go talk about it over coffee while Palumbo has a match.

This was WAY too long and really just established that America will have a match on Sunday and the FBI of all people are getting involved. The FBI isn't interesting and are just a step above a Three Stooges sketch. Ignoring the fact that they might make for a better match for Mr. American than Vince or Roddy Piper, this was a really long waste of time.

Chuck Palumbo vs. Rikishi

Palumbo stomps away in the corner but accidentally hits Johnny in the face. A belly to belly gives Rikishi two but Johnny trips him up again. The superkick gives Palumbo two, only to have Rikishi's version knock him into the corner. Johnny breaks up the Stinkface and gets pulled inside, allowing Palumbo to hit a second superkick (in just over three minutes) for the pin.

Rating: D-. So Rikishi is now dealing with the FBI and having bad matches at the same time. At least it's better than wasting people like Chris Benoit on them, though it would be nice if Benoit actually had anything interesting to do at the moment. At least he wouldn't use three superkicks in the same match. He's not a Young Buck after all.

Post match Brock Lesnar arrives and comes to the ring to give Palumbo an F5 in retaliation for last week.

Stephanie cuts Brock off in the back and explains a stretcher match to him in that classic Stephanie style of speech that no one ever uses in the real world. I know most wrestlers do that but no one can make it sound as robotic as she can.

Mr. America visited some wounded troops.

Torrie Wilson comes out to show us one bikini she's considering for Sunday. As usual she looks great but I still don't know why I'm supposed to want to pay to see her in another one when she's in Playboy at the moment.

Stephanie is admiring two sets of flowers (one red and yellow, the other red and white) when Vince comes in. He would have gotten Mr. America's mask off last week if not for her screwing up so he accepts her apology. She's not apologizing though because she's gotten flowers from Hogan and America. Stephanie is leaving because Vince has everything under control tonight. Vince breaks both vases.

Clip of Rey Mysterio being injured at Backlash. He's back for an interview tonight.

Cruiserweight Title: Matt Hardy vs. Tajiri

Matt, who thinks Tajiri weighs too much to be a cruiserweight and can eat more sushi than him, is defending with Shannon Moore and Crash in his corner. Tajiri snapmares him down to start but gets jumped from behind. The kicks have Matt in trouble but Tajiri has to deal with Shannon, allowing Matt to hang him over the top rope. The Side Effect sets up an abdominal stretch from the champ, only to have Tajiri kick him down again. Rapid fire strikes have Matt in trouble and there's the handspring elbow for good measure. Crash breaks up the Tarantula though and it's the Twist of Fate to retain Matt's title.

Rating: D+. Perfectly fine match here but there's only so much you can do with four minutes and three people fighting Tajiri at the same time. Tajiri continues to be one of the most consistent guys on the roster and could do a lot more if he was given the chance. At least he did well while he was out there.

Matt says he has the Mattributes to take care of Mr. America because that story is now invading the cruiserweights.

Eddie Guerrero, wearing the gold medal, is talking to a framed Kurt Angle photo and talks about Chavo being injured in a match overseas. There's no reason to worry though because he's Latino Heat. He even puts a mustache and beard on Angle's face.

Stephanie runs into Mr. America as she's leaving and asks him to thank Hogan for him. She even throws in a kiss on the cheek.

John Cena vs. Chris Benoit

Cena wants to face Mr. America so he can turn him back into the Hulk so quick you'll think his name is Bill Bixby. As for Benoit, instead of the Canadian Crippler, he'll be the crippled Canadian. Benoit wastes no time in driving him into the corner before getting one off a backbreaker. A heck of a chop has Cena clutching his chest but he's still able to send Benoit shoulder first into the post. The ensuing armbar makes sense but Benoit is right back up with a chop and a snap suplex.

Cue the FBI to distract Benoit so Cena can knock him outside, earning themselves a quick ejection. Back from a break with Cena holding a chinlock and getting two off a shoulder. Cena stomps on the leg but gets sent into the middle buckle off a drop toehold. There's the first German suplex into the Swan Dive but Nunzio runs in. Benoit gets rid of him in a hurry and reverses the FU into the Crossface, only to have Johnny the Bull come in for the DQ.

Rating: C. What does it say that this is pretty easily the best match I've seen on WWE TV this week? Above all else, it's two guys having a match and actually trying for a change, which is a lot more than you can say about almost anything that happens on Raw. Is it that much to ask for some effort in these matches?

Rhyno and Spanky come in to help Benoit clean house.

Video on the UK tour.

It's time for Piper's Pit with Sean O'Haire backing Piper again. Piper

talks about the contract because this is the biggest story in the world at the moment. Some people want to collect the bounty for their careers and some people want to do it to suck up to Vince. Well Piper is going to do it because he hates Hogan.

This brings out Mr. America, who hands the flag to a guy in the front row, which sounds like a plot point. America gets why Piper has issues with Hogan because he remembers Hogan beating Piper up when he was a kid. He's cool with the match with Piper because I guess Mr. America gets to decide who collects bounties on him. Piper says Hogan has never beaten him 1-2-3 (yes he has) and goes on a rant about the kid waving the flag. Sean goes outside to deal with the kid, allowing Piper to jump America from behind.

America fights back but Sean makes the save, only to have the fan jump the barricade and prevent the mask from being taken off. A spear takes the fan down and Piper chokes away, only to yank off his artificial leg. That freaks Piper out and the villains leave. Oh don't worry about it. Nash did it on purpose in 1996 and he's main eventing the pay per view on Sunday. Sean even yells at Piper because cheating on your wife or whatever his thing of the week was ok but attacking an adult fan who jumped you from behind? Not cool bro.

After the entrances to the next match, Vince yells at Piper and O'Haire for messing with a fan like that. Sean: "Mr. McMahon, I had nothing to do with this." YOU SPEARED HIM DOWN SO PIPER COULD BEAT HIM UP! Vince tells them to stay there while he makes up his mind about what he's going to do. Piper stands there, which is way out of character for him. Vince leaves and Sean blames Piper for what happened because his career is on the line.

Shelton Benjamin vs. Eddie Guerrero

Eddie has the picture of Angle and comes out in a sombrero. Shelton takes Eddie down and yells a lot before hitting a forearm to the face. A chinlock slows things down but Eddie is right back up with a middle rope hurricanrana. One heck of a powerbomb plants Eddie for two but also kickstarts his comeback with a couple of dropkicks. Right hands in the

corner set up the rolling suplexes but here's Charlie Haas with a ladder. The distraction lets Shelton hit a superkick for the pin. That's totally different than the finish to the opener. This one had a ladder you see.

Rating: D+. Not enough time to mean anything and having the same finish used in two out of four matches is about as pitiful as you can get. Agents should be smarter than that and able to come up with a better finish. If nothing else just ask Eddie what he thinks would work here, as I'm sure he can come up with something other than distraction into a superkick.

Eddie fights them both off and busts the picture over Shelton's head.

Piper and O'Haire haven't moved when Vince comes back in. He buys Sean caring about what happened (as the most interesting part of his character is erased) but Piper doesn't care at all. That's just what Vince wants though and that's why he's facing Hogan on Sunday. My goodness they're actually going there and Vince is actually saying Piper is better than John Cena, the Cruiserweight Champion (and his minions) or the FBI. And people wonder why the future was so bleak.

And now, the Miss Elizabeth piece from Confidential. She passed away from a cause that wasn't determined yet (because it was less than two weeks ago when this aired) and Vince says she was just a commodity in WCW. They talk about her career, the battery charges from Lex Luger, and then her death. In probably the lowest point since...oh I'd think the Melanie Pillman interview, we hear the actual 911 call of Luger saying she wasn't breathing. I'm not even sure how to respond to that so we'll move on. This is of course edited off the Network version.

And now, after hearing a 911 call of a woman dying earlier in the month, Sable comes out and shows off her own bikini. Now pay up if you want to see it again!

Pay per view rundown.

It's time for the Mysterio interview. First of all, he'll be back in the ring in a few weeks and he wants the Cruiserweight Title. He didn't think he'd be able to wrestle again and he wondered if that was it when he was

laying in the ambulance. Rey isn't sure about ever facing Big Show again...and Big Show kidnaps him.

Post break Show brings Rey out to the ring while carrying a backboard in the other hand. Rey tries to fight back and manages a 619, only to get caught in something like a Samoan drop. Lesnar runs out to save Rey from the chokeslam and beats Show down with the board. The F5 connects but Tazz sees a problem: Show is too big to be put on a stretcher! HOW WILL BROCK SURVIVE??? Rey adds in a bulldog to drop Show and then hides behind Brock to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. I only have one question this week: how did the Mr. America storyline manage to take over even more of the show??? Lesnar vs. Big Show isn't interesting but I'll take it over America vs. Piper and Vince running down most of his heels to say that Piper is the best option he has to take Hogan out. There was some passable wrestling on the show this week but the stories are just killing anything that might be seen as positive. Another bad show this week as Mr. America vs. Vince is swallowing the show alive.

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