

Ring of Honor TV – January 24, 2018: Get Them Some Butter

Ring of Honor

Date: January 24, 2018

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana, Cheeseburger

After last week's fairly strong show, we're back in Philadelphia for more fallout from Final Battle and the return of the Young Bucks to ROH TV. Other than that, it's hard to say where we're going, though some more information on the Women's Title tournament would be nice. They've talked about the division for so long now but we still need some actual development. Let's get to it.

We open with a look at what happened after last week's show with Matt Taven and the Kingdom beating World Champion Dalton Castle down. Taven said he did that because he's Matt Taven...and that's about it. They're building Taven well and if he's more serious in his promos, I think I can live with this.

Opening sequence.

Tag Team Titles: The Dawgs vs. Motor City Machine Guns

The Guns are defending and it's Shelley vs. Ferrara to start. Alex runs Ferrara over early on as Cabana wants to know where Cheeseburger is keeping his fries. Hopefully away from any actual matches. Sabin gets in a running kick from the apron and it's Titus getting caught in the middle of some hard strikes to the face. Sabin adds a dive through the ropes and it's off to an early break.

Back with the Dawgs actually in control until Shelley kicks Ferrara in the face and sends them into each other. A belly to back suplex looks to set up the tag to Sabin but Titus is there to break it up. An STO sets up

a frog splash but Rhett only hits mat, allowing Sabin to kick Ferrara in the face. Ferrara can't get a tornado DDT and the Dawgs are sent into each other again. The Guns hit the Dream Sequence, followed by a bunch of kicks to Ferrara. A Death Valley Driver/Cradleshock combo finishes Ferrara at 7:38.

Rating: C. Nice quick win for the Guns here but you can tell it's all about setting up the Briscoes as the next champions. I'm not a fan of the Dawgs whatsoever but they put in an acceptable performance here, which is a lot more than I would have expected from them. Giving the Guns a pretty easy win like this makes sense and that's all it was supposed to be.

Post match the Briscoes come out to say they're the next champs. They better be.

So Cal Uncensored pays off Shane Taylor to deal with the Bullet Club later tonight.

Kenny King is ready to get his TV Title back. I could go for that.

Josh Woods vs. Jonathan Gresham

Rematch from the Final Battle pre-show where Gresham won. They hit the mat to start with Gresham getting in a slap to the face as the announcers talk about the old Pure Wrestling Title, which Gresham seems to miss. Back up and Woods throws him into the corner, only to get caught with a running dropkick to the knee. Another kick to the face puts Woods down again and it's off to a neck hold as we take a break.

Back with Woods blocking a monkey flip but getting pulled out to the floor anyway. Gresham tries to dive back in but lands on a shot to the face, followed by Woods kicking him in the jaw to keep Jonathan in trouble. Some rolling gutwrench suplexes into a powerbomb gives Woods two so he knees Gresham in the face. Back up and Gresham grabs a rollup, knees Woods in the back, and rolls him up even more for the same move he used to win the first match at 8:49.

Rating: C. Gresham has certainly set himself apart with the crazy technical stuff and that's a good thing. There are a lot of technical

guys around Ring of Honor and having someone be the best of the group is one of the best things he could do. Being the wrestler is fine for a gimmick, especially if your name and look are both so basic.

It's time for Coleman's Pulpit, this week with Coast 2 Coast, who are splitting up if they don't win their next match. They don't want to split but they're ready to start from the bottom all over again. Neither wants to hold back people who deserve the spot more than they do but Coleman runs his mouth about Ali (who came up with the idea of splitting) being the weak link. Ali gets fired up and does a nice promo, only to be shut down when he finds out their opponents are War Machine. As usual, Coleman added nothing here and was just a person in the scene.

Here's Cody for his first comments since losing the title. He stripped everything away from Dalton Castle and left him as just a man. That man happened to be better though and he took the title at Final Battle. Cody will get a rematch and still has the official Ring of Honor but here's Matt Taven to interrupt. Taven says Cody isn't fooling anyone and he sees Cody for the little blond b**** that he is.

Matt goes to leave but Cody mocks him for actually dropping the mic. Cody talks about his hair, which got a bigger pop at Final Battle than Taven will ever get in his life. That line alone almost turns Cody face and we get a CODY'S HAIR chant. Taven actually agrees to kiss the ring but kicks Cody low. Again, I can live with this kind of Taven instead of the weird unfunny kind. Cody as a face is fine too, though it's quite the sudden turn, if that's what they're going for.

Punishment Martinez vignette.

Dragon Lee/Titan vs. Best Friends vs. Young Bucks

Two in the ring at a time. Titan and Chuckie chop it out to start with the fans enjoying the volume. Chuckie kicks him down but it turns into a battle of flips and spins, which of course goes to Titan. A springboard crossbody is dropkicked out of the air though and it's off to Barretta for a big hug. The double elbow makes up for it a bit and we hit the BEST FRIENDS chant.

Lee gets in a kick from the apron and Titan adds a hurricanrana, only to have Nick come in for some springboards of his own on Lee. A rope walk into a twisting armdrag puts Lee down but since it's only an armdrag, he's right back up with a slingshot dropkick in the corner. The Bucks both come in for some Sliced Bread and tosses into a dropkick and hurricanrana. The fans love the Bucks of course and don't mind a bit as they clear the ring for the Rise of the Terminators pose.

There's a double suicide dive onto the Best Friends, followed by Lee suicide diving onto the Bucks, who just stand there while the luchadors set it up. Titan adds a huge moonsault to the floor but the Friends (after another hug) hit stereo dives onto all four. Barretta takes too long setting up the Two Dog Night though and it's time for the superkicks. A double Sharpshooter from the Bucks takes us to a break.

Back with Lee blocking a super hurricanrana attempt and catching Nick with the Alberto Del Rio Tree of Woe stomp. It's off to Barretta so the Best Friends get their own run of double teaming. The Lawn Dirt (reverse Razor's Edge into a cutter) drops Nick but Titan is in with a springboard missile dropkick. Nick is right back up (shocking) with his suicide dive and moonsault, only to have Lee hurricanrana him off the apron.

A springboard frog splash gives Titan two on Barretta but Matt and Chuckie make a save. That means a rather awkward hug, much to Nick's shock. Of course Chuckie is so MESMERIZED that he can't avoid the incoming superkick. Lee tries a running hurricanrana but gets powerbombed onto the apron for his efforts. Nick dives onto Barretta before coming back in for the Meltzer Driver on Titan for the pin at 11:35.

Rating: C+. It helps a lot when they're not trying to do anything more than do a bunch of crazy spots, which is where the Bucks shine more than anything else. The Best Friends aren't my favorite act in the world but once they drop some of the cuteness, they're fun enough. At the same time, the CMLL guys were a lot of fun as your standard high flying lucha team and there's always a place for that in wrestling.

Post match So Cal Uncensored runs in to go after the Bucks but Hangman Page makes the save with a chair to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Ring of Honor is at its best when they're versatile and that's what they did here. They had a little bit of everything on this show and it made for a fast moving, entertaining hour. The World Title situation is getting hot in a hurry and Castle could have some very fun matches against the top talent in the promotion. Good show here and Ring of Honor is actually getting on a bit of a roll.

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NXT – January 24, 2018: Dream On

NXT

Date: January 24, 2018

Location: Center Stage Theater, Atlanta, Georgia

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson

It's the go home show for Takeover: Philadelphia and that means most of the show is already set. There's always the chance of throwing some stuff in via a backstage segment but odds are we've seen the card announced. Tonight is likely going to be heavy on talking, which isn't a bad thing

around here. Let's get to it.

With his back to the camera and purple smoke filling the room, Velveteen Dream talks about how we all dream. Everyone wants to be NXT Champion, including Johnny Gargano. Sure Johnny is a fine choice, but why would anyone pick him when they can pick Dream? Tonight, a dream will be over. Good stuff here, as Dream knows how to bring the atmosphere.

Opening sequence.

No Way Jose vs. Cezar Bononi

For once Bononi doesn't tower over his opponent. Jose shoulders him down to start and hits a quick atomic drop. Bononi fights out of an armbar and hits a pumphandle slam, followed by a chinlock. Back up and Jose scores with some punches to the jaw, followed by a powerslam. The pop up right hand (Toma, which means Take That) ends Bononi at 3:20.

Rating: D. That's quite the abrupt loss for Bononi, who has been a much bigger deal as of late and not someone you would expect to lose in such short fashion. Also, what's up with right hands becoming finishers of late? Mojo Rawley uses one and Alexa Bliss has won with them a few times as well. Are they that out of finishers? Either way, it's nice to see Jose back as I was always a fan.

Video on Adam Cole costing Aleister Black a shot at being #1 contender, setting up their Extreme Rules match at Takeover. As usual, this did a great job of making me buy into the emotion and that's exactly the point.

Bianca Belair vs. LaToya Alstott

Belair's tights say Est because she's the baddest, the best, the toughest, the smartest etc. The LET'S GO JOBBER chants begin as LaToya's rollup out of the corner is easily blocked. Belair throws her around and shrugs off some kicks to the ribs, setting up a HARD forearm to the jaw. A double chickenwing faceplant puts LaToya down but she gets in a kick to the head for a breather. LaToya goes up though and dives into the hair whip to the ribs. An Alleyoop finishes LaToya at 3:37.

Rating: D+. Belair continues to be impressive with some great athleticism

and power (though I still don't like the hair thing). She's similar to Shelton Benjamin with the awesome athletic background and that's a very good thing for her. LaToya was your standard jobber and didn't show anything of note, but she wasn't supposed to here.

Earlier today, Shayna Baszler and Ember Moon sat down for an interview. Ember talks about the code of the women's division and Shayna having no respect. Baszler laughs it off and says that it was never about hurting people but rather the end goal. She saw Moon go up against the undefeated...and lose. Moon kept going and accomplished her dream, but when she wakes up at Takeover, she'll see Baszler walking away with that dream. The one thing Baszler wants everyone to know: they'll have to get used to it.

A few things here. First of all, I know this was heavily scripted, but Baszler came off as more natural and that's because she's already got the character down. She's the bully who doesn't care about anything that came before her and just wants the title. That's it and she's nailing that character. Moon doesn't exactly have a character and that showed here, along with sounding very scripted. Also, this is almost exactly AJ Styles vs. Samoa Joe from TNA when Joe disrespected the X-Division and destroyed Christopher Daniels. Not a bad story, but it's about as copied as you can get.

We get the second part of the TM61 video, this time focusing on Shane Thorn's knee injury. It's kept him (and the team) on the shelf for about six months but now they're back to prove that they're the best team around. They know their greatness and HARLEY RACE endorses them. Well I'm certainly sold. They're back in the ring next week.

Authors of Pain vs. Chris Brown/Jason Smith

No match as the Authors destroy the jobbers and promise to do the same to the Undisputed Era. The Super Collider makes things even worse.

Next week: Nikki Cross vs. Lacey Evans.

Velveteen Dream vs. Johnny Gargano

The winner faces Andrade Cien Almas at Takeover and they have A LOT of time here. Dream wears a Johnny Wrestling shirt to the ring to play some mind games. The fans are split as they hit the mat to start with neither being able to get the advantage. Dream throws him away and poses, mocking Gargano for crying before. That earns him a Gargano Escape but Dream gets to the floor, albeit with a sore arm, as we take a break.

Back with Gargano knocking the bad arm into the announcers' table and cannonballing off the apron to take Dream down. The slingshot spear is countered with a hanging swinging neckbreaker though and Dream uppercuts him in the back. They head outside again with Dream slugging away and we take another break. Back again with Johnny hitting an enziguri but getting superkicked away.

Johnny bounces off the ropes though and clotheslines Dream down for a delayed two. Neither can hit a headscissors so Dream grabs that Sister Abigail DDT for two of his own. Johnny shoves him away again but gets crotched on top to slow things down all over again. A super Death Valley Driver plants Johnny again (and that's a MAMA MIA from Mauro) for two more with the fans hanging on these kickouts. The Purple Rainmaker hits knees (thanks to Dream's left arm being so banged up) and it's the Gargano Escape to make Dream tap at 19:14.

Rating: A-. The arm stuff was a good story and the idea of Johnny never giving up and fighting the whole way through was the perfect way to send him on to the title match. Dream losing again is somewhat questionable as he needs to win a big match, but in this case it fits the story of Johnny needing to eliminate all doubts. It should be a great match and thankfully it was set up by a great match.

Post match Andrade Cien Almas and Zelina Vega come out and drop Gargano with a shot to the head. Johnny gets tossed to the floor but comes back in with the slingshot DDT and poses with the title as Mauro plugs everything on Saturday to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This show did its job rather well, especially with the NXT Title feud. I want to see that match a lot more now as they sold me on the story they're trying to tell. They've also set it up where Ciampa

returning to screw Gargano out of his dream or Ciampa returning later to be the big challenger both work, and that's a great place to be. The rest of the show wasn't as strong, but everything else is already set for Saturday anyway.

Results

No Way Jose b. Cezar Bononi – Toma

Bianca Belair b. LaToya Alstott – Alleyoop

Johnny Gargano b. Velveteen Dream – Gargano Escape

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Monday Night Raw – August 25, 2003: It's Like the Attitude Era But Boring

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 25, 2003

Location: Convention Center, Tuscon, Arizona

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's the night after Summerslam and HAHHA HHH is still World Champion thanks to a sledgehammer to Goldberg's head. That's pretty much all we have on the less important story, but we do have Shane McMahon still wanting to fight Kane. Now though, Eric Bischoff has the Coach as his backup, which was arguably the second biggest Raw story coming out of last night's show. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Goldberg being destroyed after losing in the Chamber last night. Just in case you had forgotten that HHH and Evolution were the strongest forces in the universe you see. We even get BONUS footage of Goldberg being carried out.

Here's Goldberg to open things up. JR: "Goldberg's career was destroyed by Evolution last night." They're certainly hammering in the HHH > Goldberg idea so far and we're not even four minutes into the show. Goldberg says the title belongs to him and he wants to face HHH for said title right here tonight.

HHH takes his shirt off and Flair seems to enjoy rubbing his bicep quite a bit. He doesn't even see Goldberg as one of the top five guys in this industry. Last night HHH proved that he was the best in the world today (Flair points out the best body as a bonus). Goldberg guarantees that he's coming for the belt, whether he has to follow HHH to his home or even into his sleep.

As you make your Nightmare on Elm Street jokes, Goldberg promises to win the title. HHH lists off all the names that he's beaten and wonders why Goldberg thinks he's any better. Goldberg: "I'M GOLDBERG!" Really that's all he needs to say, but this is WWE, where Goldberg needs to have a personality.

The match is set for Unforgiven but Goldberg has to put his career on the line. That means he's done and doesn't go to "some second rate promotion like Smackdown". Goldberg quickly agrees and promises to make this HHH's funeral. They actually kept this a bit shorter and it got its point across: HHH rules the world and Goldberg is lucky enough to get to be in it for the time being.

Trish Stratus vs. Gail Kim

Gail jumps her during the entrances and chokes Trish with her coat. They get in for the opening bell with Gail breaking up a sunset flip and getting in a shot to the face for two. We hit the early chinlock and even a belly to back suplex doesn't break it up. Back up and Trish gets in a whip to the corner, only to charge into a boot.

We're back to the chinlock (I get the idea of sticking close to the veteran but this is ridiculous) so Trish rams her into the corner. Gail reverses to something like a dragon sleeper but Trish climbs the corner into a near Sliced Bread #2 for the real break. Back up and Trish wins a slugout and scores with the Chick Kick for two. The Chick Kick is enough to pin Gail.

Rating: D. The ridiculous levels of chinlocking here really held things down but it's better than Gail's variety of hurricanranas. These women still need personalities as other than Trish, we barely know anything about them. Gail is a heel now....why? Molly at least has the title but as soon as she loses that, what else is there that sets her apart? Let them talk or give them some vignettes or something but develop the division (Does three people make a division?) somehow.

Post match Molly comes in and knocks Trish down before glaring at Gail.

We look back at Eric Bischoff implying that he slept with Linda McMahon last week.

Post break Molly chokes Gail. After mentioning that she got Gail into the company (see, that's a detail that tells us ANYTHING about Gail, which is more than we've gotten to date) and they need to team up and take out Trish. Gail agrees.

Here are Teddy Long and Rodney Mack to announce the newest member of Thuggin N Buggin Enterprises. Therefore, here's the newest member to team with Mack.

Rodney Mack/Mark Henry vs. Garrison Cade/Mark Jindrak

Aside from a match on Heat, this is Henry's first WWE match since

October. Garrison shoulders Mack down to start as I still try to figure out why a wrestler is named Garrison Cade. Mack runs him over as well and grabs an early chinlock (we've seen enough of that tonight). That lasts as long as you would expect and it's off to Jindrak for the big dropkick, followed by a run up the ropes into a spinning clothesline.

That's enough for Henry, who comes in and tosses people like villagers in a King Kong movie. Jindrak gets to the top for another clothesline but gets pulled out of the air for the World's Strongest Slam and the pin. Henry was impressive here, but the longevity is all that matters. Well that and backing the Mack.

Lance Storm is annoyed at Goldust for sending him into the women's locker room and leaving a woman there for him to find (not shown on last week's show). Goldust calls something a healthy relationship and we look down at Minidust enjoying Storm's leg. Rosey of all people comes in to ask about a disturbance.

Storm doesn't have time to listen but a production worker (who is played by Jessie from Tough Enough II) mentions that there was a man in the ring with a gun. Rosey runs off to stop him but Hurricane comes in and finds out that it was a t-shirt gun. Putting the comedy together might be the right idea, though Rosey and Hurricane are much funnier.

During the break, Rosey attacked the t-shirt guy but Hurricane came in to ask him whatsupwithdat. And that's it. Quite the anticlimactic ending when we had a midget, a gun, a Tough Enough cameo and two superheroes.

Video on the Rundown (I liked that movie), which is of course edited off the Network.

Steve Austin recaps the Coach joining Bischoff last night, earning himself a beating in the process (of course altering the reality a bit, much to the fans' delight). A banged up Bischoff comes in and wants to hear the truth. Since Coach did the right thing, tonight he's going to be named Employee of the Month tonight. Austin better stay out too.

[La Resistance/Rob Conway vs. Dudley Boyz](#)

This is fallout from last night where Conway (the serviceman from last week and last night who now officially has a name) cost the Dudleys the Tag Team Titles. Lillian has a hard time keeping track of all the names because she's not the most competent announcer in the world. Before the match, Conway introduces himself and blames the Americans for being too ignorant to get why France is amazing.

This war against "terrorism" is ridiculous and the people are following him like sheep. Conway talks about how we need to pull out of Iraq and Afghanistan and treat the French with respect. See, the Americans are the REAL terrorists. As usual, this has been your moment of patriotism beating you over the head.

Spike is the only Dudley to come to the ramp as Bubba and D-Von come in from the crowd for the sneak attack. Jerry talks about how much he love France, such as Pepe Le Pew being his favorite cartoon character (Does that really surprise anyone?). Spike gets in a Dudley Dog on Conway and brings in Bubba for the house cleaning as this isn't seeming to have a ton of time. Dupree takes 3D and the Dudley Dog drops Grenier. Bubba tosses Spike onto Dupree but Conway gets in a belt shot to put Bubba away in a hurry. In other words, this story must continue. For AMERICA you see.

It's time for the Highlight Reel, now with the end of Saliva's King of My World as the theme song. Jericho is banged up but is gutting it out here. Last night he would have won but it was Goldberg getting in his way. That brings him to his guest, but first he needs to explain the rather horrible Bischoff and Linda segment from last week. We see the clip again and it's no less creepy this time around. Jericho refers to Linda's noises as she tried to get away as "hot stuff".

This week's guest is Linda McMahon, meaning that awesome old Wrestlemania theme. Jericho gets right to the point by asking if she and Bischoff "made it like two Arizona jackrabbits". Linda says security was there as soon as the cameras went off and Linda is thinking about firing Eric. Well of course she is.

Anyway here's an annoyed Vince to interrupt. Vince yells at Linda for

“deciding” to fire Bischoff without his approval so there will be no repercussions on Bischoff for what he did last week. Linda isn’t a victim because Vince is the only real victim around here. He’s a victim of their failed marriage and what came out of her demon infested womb. It’s Linda’s fault that Stephanie and Shane hate him but Linda thinks he needs psychological help. That’s laughed off but Vince agrees that he might need help dealing with the kids. He feels a lot like Kane because everyone has turned on him too.

This brings out Shane because we don’t have enough drama yet. Shane tells Vince that he can rot but Jericho cuts him off. Jericho sucks up to Vince and punches Shane for showing up without an invitation. Vince makes Jericho vs. Shane for later tonight. This was more McMahon drama and that’s the last thing WWE needs. The McMahons aren’t interesting in such heavy doses and it’s not getting any better when Vince is going back and forth between shows.

We recap the opening segment, just in case you forgot about how great HHH is.

Randy Orton vs. Maven

Shawn Michaels is in Maven’s corner. Orton takes him down without much effort as JR recaps the show to show how horrible it’s been so far. Stereo dropkicks go nowhere so it’s Orton taking over with the backbreaker. Some uppercuts keep Maven in trouble and Orton whips him into the corner so hard that he falls down. Flair gets annoyed at a two count and gets on the apron. Shawn gets up as well, allowing Ric to poke Maven in the eye.

That earns Flair Sweet Chin Music, followed by Orton missing the dropkick. The RK0 is broken up as well (with JR mentioning for perhaps the only time ever that RK0 are Orton’s initials) and a spinwheel kick takes Orton down. Maven gets shoved into the ropes though and the RK0 gets two with Orton pulling him up. Orton hits his own Sweet Chin Music for the pin. You can pencil in Orton vs. Shawn for Unforgiven, which is a win that Orton could really use.

Rating: D+. Maven is a lot better now, to the point where he’s not

embarrassing himself anymore in a five minute match. Orton is starting to get the hang of things, but this put too much attention on Flair vs. Shawn, which tends to be a common problem with Orton's matches. A win over Shawn might help, but it has to be done right.

A lot of staring ensues.

It's time for the Employee of the Month Award presentation. After a photo opportunity with the plaque (which doesn't actually say which month the award is for), Coach talks about doing what his boss said, which doesn't make him a bad guy. Bischoff is the kind of guy who recognizes talent, unlike Austin. Coach was only treated this way because he's not Austin's boy, right JR?

We see a clip of JR returning to take Coach's announcers' position, which seemed to annoy Coach at the time. Coach isn't happy that JR wasn't more thankful or professional and now he wants an apology. As for now though, Coach wants an apology from Austin for last night. Bischoff: "What the h***?" That might seem a bit random, and that would be because he says it before Christian's music hits for a surprising interruption. Is it really that hard to wait for a cue?

Christian wants an apology for not being on the show last night (preach it brother) so here's Austin with an envelope in his back pocket. Austin gets straight to the point: Coach couldn't carry JR's jockstrap, let alone his job. The envelope contains a sympathy card...in the form of Austin's middle finger. Good thing Austin had that envelope ready just in case Coach asked him for an apology and he knew what joke he wanted to do.

Coach says the King and a cowboy sound like the Village People so Lawler offers to come take care of him. Christian cuts them off though and wants to know what's going on. Austin: "You think you're special?" So the Intercontinental Title, which Austin re-introduced last year and called important, isn't special? Austin has an idea.

Intercontinental Title: Christian vs. Jerry Lawler

Christian is defending and I need my headache medicine. Coach takes

Jerry's place on commentary and the distraction lets Christian get in a cheap shot. Some right hands get Jerry out of trouble for a few seconds and let's look at commentary again (Why is that such a common thing around here?). We hit the chinlock with a knee in Lawler's back and BACK TO COMMENTARY with Coach making fun of the cowboy hat. At least get some fresh material.

JR, for about the eighth time so far: "Let's call this wrestling match. By the way folks later tonight, Shane McMahon is going to fight Chris Jericho." Christian gets punched out of the air and more right hands keep him in trouble. Coach makes fun of JR repeating words and Lawler slams Christian off the top. The fist drop has Christian in trouble but Coach leaves commentary to pull Jerry out at two. The chase allows Christian to get a rollup with tights for the pin.

Rating: F. This show is somehow getting worse. So now, the Intercontinental Champion, who is not special and not able to get on Summerslam, needs help from COACH to beat a semi-retired wrestler and full time commentator? All in the name of pushing Austin vs. Bischoff in an attempt to recreate Austin vs. McMahon? This was really, really stupid and that's becoming way too common.

Kane watches Shane come to the ring.

Christian celebrates in the back as Coach does the interview. Austin comes in to make Coach vs. Lawler for next week. Good grief it's continuing.

Shane McMahon vs. Chris Jericho

Hey look: another non-wrestler. Shane is ready for a cheap shot from behind (because he's smarter than Jericho) and hits an awkward looking backdrop. A kick to the face has Shane staggered but he's still able to avoid a charge and put Jericho on the floor. Shane puts him on the timekeeper's table but Kane's music and pyro go off for a distraction (no Kane). Jericho hits the springboard dropkick to put Shane on the floor and we take a break.

Back with Jericho chopping away in the corner but diving into a DDT.

Again, because Shane is smarter than he is. A clothesline gives Shane two but a jumping enziguri puts him down again. The Lionsault hits knees but Shane gets crotched on top, setting up a superplex. Now it's Kane coming out for real (I guess he plays mind games now) coming out to chokeslam Shane for what should be a DQ but seems to be a no contest because WWE doesn't know how wrestling works.

Rating: F. The wrestling was fine, but the booking here is a failure by definition. According to this, Shane McMahon should have been in the Elimination Chamber last night because he can go move for move with Chris Jericho. I know WWE loves Shane but can they at least make it look like he's just a brawler with some great athleticism who is getting lucky to survive? This was treating Shane like a top level wrestler on Raw, making his matches on pay per view feel a lot less important. As usual, WWE misses the point.

Kane leaves through the crowd with Shane following for a brawl in the back. The fans react to a City of Tuscon sign ("IT SAYS OUR TOWN'S NAME! YAY!") as Shane catches up with Kane, who slams him back first into a wall over and over. Naturally Kane has a bunch of gas cans ready and he starts a dumpster fire. Kane loads Shane up but gets knocked in instead as we hit the action movie trailer shot of Shane looking at the fire to end the show.

Overall Rating: W. As in wrestling. I figure I might as well make something about it because wrestling doesn't matter on this show. No, what matters around here is beating patriotism into your head, a story based around sexual assault, Minidust, a stable called Thuggin N Buggin Enterprises, the Intercontinental Champion being a worthless player on the show, burning a man alive and non-wrestlers being the most prominent people on the show.

It's like the Attitude Era without the interest or energy. The top stories are Austin vs. Bischoff, which also pulls in JR/King vs. Coach and Shane McMahon vs. Kane. Somewhere down there is Goldberg vs. HHH (who is barely a wrestler at the moment due to an injury) in a story that is continuing for reasons that I'm sure HHH can explain to you but doesn't make much sense to anyone else. This felt like they were running away in

the wrong direction and covering their ears from what people wanted to hear, which is one of the scariest things you can see in a wrestling company.

I watch wrestling to see the wrestlers and the stories they're involved in at the moment. For some reason I'm seeing commentators and a single family (including a bickering couple) dominating the shows while I'm told that the Intercontinental Champion isn't important enough to be on a show and needs help to beat Jerry Lawler. I thought getting past Summerslam might help, but this was one of the worst episodes of the show I've ever seen.

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205 Live – January 23, 2018: Here We Go All Over Again

205 Live

Date: January 23, 2018

Location: Capitol One Arena, Washington DC

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Vic Joseph

Stop me if you've heard this one before, but there's a big change to the Cruiserweight Title situation. In this case, there is no Cruiserweight Champion as Enzo Amore has been stripped of the title and released from the company. There is no word on what's going to happen to the title but for now, Sunday's Cruiserweight Title match is off. Therefore, enjoy another show with little advancement to the top storyline. Let's get to it.

Daniel Bryan informs us that Enzo is no longer champion and gone from the show. He's telling us this because of his connection to the company, mainly through the Cruiserweight Classic. Next week, there will be a General Manager announced and their first action will be to deal with this situation. No word on who that will be (Bryan said him or her).

Opening sequence.

The announcers recap what we just heard.

Kalisto/Gran Metalik/Lince Dorado vs. TJP/Ariya Daivari/Tony Nese

TJP misses an early swing at Dorado and gets taken to the mat in a headscissors. Back up and Dorado dabs at TJP before taking him down with a single chop. A little arm cranking is enough to send TJP over to Nese, who can't keep up with Metalik from bouncing off the ropes. Nese finally takes him down and sends Metalik into the corner so Daivari can come in to take over.

Nigel asks where Drew Gulak is now that the Zo Train (not named) is over. Fair question actually. It's off to Kalisto with slingshot hilo, followed by a kick to Daivari's hands (rather than his head) for two. Nese's distraction lets Daivari knock Kalisto off the ropes and out to the floor in a heap. We get to the standard beatdown in the corner, including a belly to back for two from TJP.

Nese comes back in for a chinlock but gets kicked in the head, allowing the ice cold tag to Dorado. I mean the people just did not react at all. A moonsault press gives Dorado two as everything breaks down. Kalisto and Metalik hit stereo flip dives but Dorado misses a shooting star (not a 450 as Nigel says). The Detonation Kick misses though and Dorado's

handsprings Stunner ends TJP at 9:12.

Rating: C. Pretty standard six man cruiserweight match and there's not much to say about something like that. The three luchadors as a team is fine, but much like everything else on this show, there's not much of a story to go with it. I need something more than an average match to keep my interest, especially when there's very little character work to speak of. Well, outside of TJP crying of course.

Post match TJP yells at his partners but gets shoved down and blamed for the loss.

Drew Gulak, in a suit and standing in front of an American flag, supports a new General Manager but wants it to be someone who will have none of this high flying, chanting, flipping and flopping. They need to be on board with the idea of a Drewtopia. I fully support more Drew Gulak around here, especially in a bigger role.

Jack Gallagher vs. Hideo Itami

Before the match, Itami says what happened to Brian Kendrick was an accident. He respects Kendrick but not so much with Gallagher. An early kick to the face drops Gallagher in short order but a leather shoe to the ribs slows Itami down as well. An early headlock on the mat doesn't get Gallagher very far as Itami is right back up with more kicks in the corner. With Gallagher draped over the middle rope, Itami goes up for a jumping kick to the back.

Gallagher uses a referee distraction to sneak underneath the ring and sneak up on Itami, sending him shoulder first into the buckle. Jack bends the arm around his leg and cranks on Itami's hand for good measure. We hit a double wristlock on Itami but a suplex gets Itami out of trouble.

The arm is banged up but Itami is still able to throw a knee, followed by a top rope clothesline for two. The fans are just NOT responding to this and it's kind of sad to see. A spinning fist drops Gallagher into the corner and Itami grabs a dragon sleeper, which he swings into something like a Twist of Fate Stunner with a kick to the head (it's kind of hard to describe) for the pin at 6:23.

Rating: C+. Itami needs to pick a finisher already and it needs to be something other than that one, which was more complicated than it needed to be. In theory this should wrap up their feud but since it's 205 Live, we're probably in for another five weeks between these two. At least until Kendrick gets at the latest.

Akira Tozawa thinks he could be a good boss and practices firing someone.

Cedric Alexander vs. Mustafa Ali

Cedric says the plan hasn't changed and he'll be champion soon. They shake hands to start but Cedric pulls him back and says he'll be champion. You said that already. Feeling out process to start with Ali's wristlock getting him nowhere. A hurricanrana doesn't work either as Alexander lands on his feet.

Back up and Alexander backflips into his ankle scissors for two, followed by an armbar on the mat. Ali fights up and hits a dropkick into an armbar of his own as they seem to be mirroring each other so far. Alexander breaks that up as well and shoves Ali off a springboard, sending him face first into the apron for a BAD looking crash. That's only good for two so we hit a cross arm choke to keep Ali down inside. Ali gets back up and avoids a charge in the corner, sending Alexander face first into the middle buckle.

The rolling X Factor gives Ali two but his tornado DDT is blocked and reversed into a suplex. That's reversed as well but Ali sends him into the corner. Cedric's springboard Downward Spiral gets two more and Alexander wins a slugout. Ali is right back up with a running C4 and a wicked tornado DDT gets two. The 054 misses though and it's a Neuralizer into the Lumbar Check to give Cedric the pin at 11:49.

Rating: B. That's the kind of match 205 Live has been needed for months now and I'm very glad to be away from the constant Zo Train vs. everyone else story that we've been sitting through for such a long time. This was a lot of fun with both guys working hard and showing how awesome these guys can be if they're allowed to put something together and not sit around waiting on Enzo to do his stupid lines.

They shake hands post match.

Overall Rating: B-. Strong main event aside, this was kind of a placeholder show as we wait on the GM. I'm still not sure what the point was in having this show go longer again when you probably could have cut it down to the previous week's length. Last week's shorter run time was a nice touch but the lack of Enzo does even it out. I'm very glad that they've gotten things a little more steady, but I'm not sure how strong this show can be, at least based on past experiences.

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Royal Rumble Count-Up – 2013: He Rock(s)

Royal Rumble 2013

Date: January 27, 2013

Location: US Airways Center, Phoenix, Arizona

Attendance: 13,00

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

This show was only a year ago and I can barely remember anything about

it. Aside from the Rumble the big matches are the Rock challenging CM Punk for the WWE Title in the most obvious ending ever and Alberto Del Rio defending his newly won World Heavyweight Championship against Big Show in a last man standing match. Other than that we've only got HELL NO vs. the Rhodes Scholars to complete the card. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: US Title: The Miz vs. Antonio Cesaro

Cesaro is defending. This is just after Flair passed the Figure Four to Miz, starting the worst period of his career. Miz grabs a headlock to start and gets two off an elbow to the jaw. The headlock takes Cesaro down to the mat but he fights up and grabs one of his own. Back up and Miz tries a leapfrog but gets caught in midair with a tikt-a-whirl backbreaker for two. The champion takes over and cranks on both of Miz's arms before getting two off a Michinoku Driver.

A hard European uppercut sets up the gutwrench suplex for two and it's back to the double arm. Back up again and Miz slips out of a slam and hooks the Reality Check for two. There's the running clothesline in the corner and Miz goes up but hurts his knee on the top rope ax handle. Cesaro gets caught with his feet on the ropes, allowing Miz to get two off a rollup. Antonio misses a running knee in the corner but is still able to roll away from the Figure Four. Cesar takes him to the floor and rams Miz into the metal underneath the ring. Miz is out cold so Cesaro Neutralizes him for the pin to retain.

Rating: D+. Miz just doesn't work in a lot of these matches and the Figure Four doesn't work in the slightest. Thankfully he wouldn't be featured very prominently for awhile as there was just nothing to him for the most part. Cesaro still needs to get a push as he's more talented and marketable than half the roster but instead we get people like Miz.

The opening video is about time passing and how no one has enough. This ties into Punk's time as champion with Rock saying the reign ends tonight.

Smackdown World Title: Big Show vs. Alberto Del Rio

Last man standing match, which is a rematch with the same stipulations

from when Alberto won the title a few weeks ago. Del Rio turned the announce table on top of Big Show so Big Show turned it on top of him a few weeks later. Alberto is shown in the back and he runs into Bret Hart for no apparent reason whatsoever. Bret says Alberto reminds him of a Mexican version of himself. Alberto calls Bret a Canadian Del Rio and Ricardo gushes, earning him Bret's sunglasses. What a bizarre cameo.

Some hard chops have Del Rio in early trouble and a slam gets a five count. Alberto chops away but jumps off the middle rope right into a chop to change control right back. The champion dropkicks the giant's knee out but the low superkick actually knocks Big Show up from his knees to his feet. A hurricanrana and a seated senton put Big Show down and Alberto gets a breather. It's amazing how much more interesting Del Rio is by doing this lucha stuff instead of his arm work. The arm stuff is good but this is such a nice change of pace.

Big Show blocks the armbreaker with one arm and slams Del Rio down, sending him outside. Del Rio gets back in as Big Show gets a chair but the champion dropkicks him in the ribs to knock it out of his hands. A series of chair shots (crowd: "SI! SI! SI!") has Big Show down but Alberto dives into a chokeslam for an eight count. We head outside again with Del Rio getting chopped to the floor with ease. This is a very slow paced match so far.

A pair of low blows puts Big Show down in the aisle but he's up at nine. Show hits something resembling a DDT on the floor before sending Del Rio into the set. He rips a piece of the set, resembling a light tube, and blasts Del Rio over the back. Since this is WWE there's a table readily available and Big Show takes the champion on top of the set for a chokeslam through the table. The bump looked awesome but he's again on his feet at nine.

The beating takes Del Rio back to the ring and Show loads up the WMD. Alberto sees it coming and rolls outside, only to have Big Show throw Ricardo around for fun. Big Show misses a charge through the barricade (clearly heavily padded) for five but a long series of chair shots has him down again. Del Rio crushes the arm between the steps and a chair, but Alberto follows up with a fire extinguisher blast to the face for no

apparent reason. Back in and the armbreaker goes on, but Ricardo ups the ante by duct taping Big Show's legs to the ropes. The giant can't get up and Alberto retains the title.

Rating: C-. This wasn't the worst match in the world but it was very slowly paced and the ending made Del Rio look more clever than tough. It also doesn't help that the match was the same gimmick they did less than a month ago. Face Alberto was a nice guy but they cut the cord just six months after this. Not bad, but Del Rio winning the title here would have been much better.

Send Slim Jims to the military!

Ziggler isn't worried about being in the Rumble and AJ threatens Matt Striker with Big E. Langston for implying Ziggler can't win. Langston does one of the most mind blowing imitations of an annoying reporter while asking Ziggler for his thoughts on the main event. Dolph has little of note to say but no one was hearing him after Big E.'s bit anyway.

Cesaro says he'll continue the streak of non-Americans winning the Rumble.

The Prime Time Players.....WE'RE GETTING RUMBLE PROMOS!!!! Anyway they say anyone that thinks they'll eliminate either of them is getting a penalty flag.

Orton says he's perfect for the Rumble because it's every man for himself.

Cena is ready for the Rumble because it means he can be champion again.

Intercontinental Champion Wade Barrett says he'll restore credibility to the Rumble.

Sheamus says he won the Rumble last year and he'll do it again tonight.

Ryback isn't any catchphrase and he doesn't eat Fruity Pebbles, but he'll see food every 90 seconds. Feed him more.

We recap Miz vs. Cesaro on the pre-show.

Tag Titles: HELL NO vs. Rhodes Scholars

The Scholars are challenging. Cody kicks Bryan in the ribs as Cole references Queen lyrics. Bryan spins out of a wristlock and the fans chant for Cody's mustache. Cody's leapfrog is countered into a surfboard and it's off to Kane for a low dropkick and a two count. Rhodes scores with a dropkick of his own and drives Kane into the corner for the tag off to Sandow. Kane easily powers Sandow into the corner because, you know, he's Damien Sandow and it's off to Bryan for the YES Kicks.

JBL rants about Cole and Lawler hugging as Kane kicks Sandow in the face, knocking him out to the floor. The FLYING GOAT takes out the challengers but Cody low bridges Bryan to the floor to take over. Back in and a half crab has Daniel in trouble but he reverses into a small package to escape. Damien comes in again and drops an elbow for two before dropping the Wind-Up Elbow.

After some knees to the back it's Cody in again but he charges into a boot in the corner. Sandow breaks up a hot tag attempt and Cody puts Bryan in an over the shoulder backbreaker. Daniel slides down to escape and makes the tag to Kane. Sandow is tossed around like a rag doll but a Cody distraction prevents the top rope clothesline. Kane grabs both guys by the throat and Bryan tags himself in. The Scholars double suplex Kane but Bryan shoves Cody into a chokeslam and Daniel YES Locks Sandow to retain.

Rating: C. Nothing you wouldn't see on Raw around this time which means it was fine. The Scholars were a nice idea for a team but it was clear that they had no chance at this point given how low their individual stocks were. Kane and Bryan gelled perfectly well as a team and Bryan would get far bigger very soon.

Rumble By The Numbers which I've typed many times already.

HELL NO celebrates in the back when Vickie Guerrero comes up and gives them their Rumble numbers. Daniel shows Kane his but Kane won't show Bryan.

We look at the Royal Rumble Fan Fest which is another name for Axxess.

This included a tournament of NXT wrestlers for a spot in the Rumble, won by Bo Dallas.

Royal Rumble

Ziggler is #1 which he picked (the other option was #2) after winning a Beat the Clock Challenge on Raw. Dolph says he'll win and doesn't care who he faces first, bringing out a returning Chris Jericho at #2. This was a complete shock and the roof is blown off the building. Also remember that Ziggler beat Jericho to send him out of the company to give us some history. The clock is at 90 seconds between entrants this year.

Jericho is quickly sent to the apron but comes back with a top rope ax handle. Now it's Dolph on the apron as the fans tell Jericho he still has it. When did Jericho ever come close to losing it? A superplex brings Ziggler back into the ring and Cody Rhodes is in at #3. Jericho hammers away on him but Ziggler gets in a cheap shot as the double teaming begins. Chris knocks Ziggler down and puts Cody in the Walls but Dolph makes the save.

Dolph catapults Jericho throat first into the bottom rope as Kofi Kingston is in at #4. Kofi immediately speeds things up and pounds away on Cody but can't hit Ziggy with Trouble in Paradise. Ziggler is thrown to the apron and all four guys try to eliminate each other at the same time in the same spot. Santino Marella is #5 and he sends all four to the apron before loading up the Cobra. Everybody is back in and even though Santino takes Kofi down with the sock, it's Cody backdropping Marella out.

Drew McIntyre of 3MB is #6 and gets to fight Kofi as everyone else takes a breather. Back up and it's time to lay on the ropes while trying to eliminate people. Jericho is sent over the ropes but he keeps his feet off the ground and gets back in. Titus O'Neil is in at #7 to add some power, including taking Cody and Kofi down with a double clothesline. Cole finally tells us that the bark is a shout out to his fraternity from Florida. Thank you for explaining that to us after two years.

Jericho throws out McIntyre but can't do the same to Ziggler as Goldust is #8. Cody gets ready for the showdown and the fans are WAY into this.

They trade the kneeling uppercuts and Goldie stomps on Cody for a bit. The fans chant for Goldust and it's David Otunga (remember him?) is in at #9. The announcers ignore the match to talk about the commentators being in the Rumble last year as people start to pair off.

Nothing much happens until Heath Slater is in at #10. That gives us Ziggy, Jericho, Rhodes, Kingston, O'Neil, Goldust, Otunga and Slater at the moment. Slater fires off right hands to Kofi as Jericho calls spots to Ziggy. Dolph gets stuck on the apron again and Sheamus is #11 to clear out some bodies. He destroys everyone with his usual stuff before sending Titus to the apron for the ten forearms. Otunga is thrown onto Titus to get rid of O'Neil before ten forearms and a Brogue Kick get rid of the lawyer. Tensai, still the Japanese lunthead, is #12.

Everybody goes after Tensai to make a big cluster in the corner. That goes nowhere at all so Brodus Clay comes in at #13. We get a Tons of Funk preview before Goldust backdrops Cody to the apron, only to get pulled to the apron as well. Cody gets back in and sends Goldust into the post for the elimination and a lot of booing. Rey Mysterio is #14 to make the crowd happy again. Ziggy and Jericho get quick 619s and the top rope splash crushes Jericho. Things slow down a bit until we reach the halfway point with Darren Young at #15.

A bunch of guys join forces to dump Brodus and Kofi puts out Tensai a few seconds later. Now we get to the part that everybody was waiting on as Kofi is knocked off the apron, only to land on Tensai's back. He jumps onto the announcers' table as he tries to figure this out. Why he doesn't just jump two feet to get onto the steps is beyond me. Bo Dallas is #16 as this is going on. Instead of the steps, Kofi gets JBL's office chair and pogos his way back to the ring. Kingston pulls Darren out of the ring but gets caught with the Disaster Kick for the elimination before he can get back inside.

Godfather gives us the nostalgia pop at #17 and is dropkicked out by Ziggy four seconds later. He seems ok with that and leaves with his women. The whole point was the entrance anyway so I have no issue with that. Wade Barrett is in at #18 as the ring is getting too full. Everything slows down again and John Cena is #19 to clear out some tired

people. Everybody gets ready for him so Cena comes a charging. John fights them all off and throws out Slater and Cody but can't dump Jericho.

Damien Sandow is #20, giving us Ziggler, Jericho, Sheamus, Mystério, Dallas, Barrett, Cena and Sandow. Mysteiro and Barrett fight to the apron and a big forearm puts Rey out. Sheamus goes right after Wade as Jericho tries to put Cena in the Walls. Daniel Bryan is #21 and fires off kicks to Sandow. Now it's Barrett getting the kicks as everyone else is down. Sheamus and Bryan try to put Jericho out but he slides back in under the ropes.

Antonio Cesaro is in at #22 and gets in a fight with Sheamus as the fans start the dueling Cena chants. Everybody is back up now and Great Khali is #23. It's chops all around until things calm a bit. Kane comes in at #24 to fire things up again (get it?) but the ring is too full. It gets even worse with Zach Ryder coming in at #25 but HELL NO dumps Khali. Bryan dumps Kane but Cesaro dumps Bryan into Kane's arms. Daniel: YES! Kane shouts no and drops Bryan for the elimination in a funny bit.

Randy Orton is #26 and it's powerslams all around. Ziggler and Dallas get a double Elevated DDT and it's an RKO for Ryder, followed by the elimination. Jinder Mahal gets lucky #27 as Cesaro lifts Cena up, only to be eliminated himself. Ziggler gets launched to the ropes but slides back in as Miz is #28. He gets in a fight with Cesaro in the aisle and limps into the ring to sell the ankle injury from earlier. Sheamus dumps Mahal and Sin Cara is #29.

Cara tries an enziguri on Ziggler which misses by four inches but Ziggler sells it anyway. Bo Dallas pulls Barrett out in an elimination that should have led further than it did. Miz sends Jericho to the apron as Barrett pulls Dallas out from the floor. Ryback is #30 to give us a final grouping of Ryback, Ziggler, Jericho, Sheamus, Cena, Sandow, Orton, Miz and Sin Cara. Damien is out first and Sin Cara quickly follows. Miz tries to power Ryback out and is tossed as well to get us down to six. Jericho is somehow still alive and hits a Lionsault on Cena but the springboard dropkick doesn't eliminate Sheamus.

Ziggler backdrops Jericho to the apron and superkicks him out (missed as well but he's spent at this point) but walks into an RKO. There's one for Cena as well and Sheamus gets the third. That leaves Ryback to fight Orton but the monster gets taken down with an Elevated DDT. Ryback fights off the RKO and clotheslines Randy out to get us down to four. Ziggler DDTs Cena down but a Brogue Kick puts Dolph on the floor.

It's Sheamus, Ryback and Cena with Ryback getting double suplexed down. Cena and Sheamus make things serious by LOOKING AT THE SIGN. John takes over but Ryback runs him over with a clothesline. Sheamus escapes the Shell Shock, looks at the sign, and hits White Noise on Ryback. The Brogue Kick is countered with a backdrop to eliminate Sheamus and we're down to two.

They LOOK AT THE SIGN and do their signature taunts before Ryback spinebusters Cena down. The Meathook is countered into the STF and Ryback passes out, leaving him as dead weight. Ryback fights out of the corner and Cena's head into the mat. He loads up a powerslam but Cena slips out the back and shoves Ryback out for the win and title shot at Wrestlemania.

Rating: B. It's a good but not great Rumble. That being said, there was almost no other option to win here, even though it set up the rematch that no one wanted to see. There's certainly some good stuff in it and there were no down spots, but you would expect more big moments than we got here.

Coming Home ad for Wrestlemania. That still should have been Wrestlemania XXX.

We recap CM Punk vs. The Rock. It's a basic story: Punk has been champion for 434 days and Rock is getting a title shot because he's the Rock, which was kind of a lame reason, especially when the shot was announced six months ago. That began a countdown that made everything Punk did meaningless, because there was no way it would be anyone but Rock taking the belt from him here. Yeah Punk got in some shots on Rock before the match, but this was as much of a layup as you could get. Also if Shield or anyone interferes, Punk is stripped of the title.

Rock, after waiting for them to chant his name, says he isn't worried about Shield, even though they busted up his lung recently. He goes on a rant about how many hard things he's been through, but redeems himself a bit by talking about his mom getting cancer but beating it to be here tonight. Punk has said that the people don't count but Rock says every single one of them count to him. He reaches his hand out to everyone that believes in the Rock so he can get their power, if you smell what he's cooking.

Raw World Title: The Rock vs. CM Punk

Punk of course has Heyman with him. He charges right into the brawl and actually pounds Rock down into the corner. A quick Rock Bottom is countered but Punk is sent outside. Rock follows him outside and sends the champion into the barricade before loading up the announce table. Punk comes back with a shot to the ribs and puts the table back together in a great bit. Back in and Rock scores with more right hands to knock Punk to the floor again.

Punk is whipped into the barricade one more time but he gets a boot up to stop a charging Bull. He finishes fixing the announce table instead of following up on Rock before dropping Rock ribs first on the barricade. They head inside again for a body vice from CM followed by a knee to the ribs for two. Off to a freaky looking hold where Punk pins Rock's shoulders down but pulls back on his head to crank on the shoulders and back.

More choking follows and a knee to the back has Rock on the apron, followed by a springboard dropkick to send him outside. Punk tries a top rope ax handle to take Rock down but injures his knee in the process. Rock scores with some kicks to the knee but the champion easily sends him out to the floor to stop the comeback. Back in and Punk misses the springboard clothesline and reinjures the knee, giving Rock his opening.

A DDT gets one on Punk but he fights out of the Rock Bottom. The GTS is countered into a Sharpshooter attempt but Punk counters into the Anaconda Vice in a nice sequence. Rock rolls over into a cradle, forcing Punk to let go of the hold. Back up and tries the Rock Bottom but Punk counters

into a rollup for two, only to be countered into a low seated Sharpshooter. Punk is next to the rope so naturally he takes thirty seconds to get the break.

Rock takes him to the floor and loads up the announce table again. They fight on top but Rock counters a GTS attempt into what was supposed to be a Rock Bottom but was really more like the table collapsing with Rock's arm around Punk's chest. Rock comes up holding his knee and both guys make it back in at an eight count. Punk scores with a high kick but both guys are down.

Back up and Rock wins a slugout before scoring with the spinebuster. He loads up the People's Elbow and there go the lights. Cole can see Shield pulling Rock to the floor and powerbombing him through the table. The lights come back up and Rock is laid out as the referee has no idea what's going on. The announcers try to tell Mike Chioda what happened and Punk feigns innocence.

He throws Rock back in for the pin and celebrates but here's Vince to say Punk is stripped of the title for the interference. Rock says no and to restart the match. The bell rings again and Punk stomps away as JBL threatens to put Cole through a table for playing cheerleader. The Macho Elbow gets two but the GTS is countered into a spinebuster, setting up the People's Elbow to end Punk's reign.

Rating: B. It's another good match but it felt like they were dancing around for twenty three minutes before we got to the obvious ending. The Shield stuff was a decent fake out but it really didn't need to be there. Rock winning was obvious though and that really put a ceiling on how high this was going to get.

Rock celebrates for about three minutes to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. Yeah it's a good show overall, but the major problem is obvious: there was no other possibly ending other than Rock vs. Cena at Wrestlemania 29 and almost everyone knew it. The show is definitely entertaining and actually really good at times, but it was so telegraphed up and down the card that it offers almost no excitement at all, even on the initial viewing. Still though, worth checking out if you have nothing

else to do.

Ratings Comparison

Antonio Cesaro vs. The Miz

Original: C-

Redo: D+

Alberto Del Rio vs. Big Show

Original: B

Redo: C-

HELL NO vs. Rhodes Scholars

Original: C

Redo: C

Royal Rumble

Original: C+

Redo: B

The Rock vs. CM Punk

Original: B

Redo: B

Overall Rating

Original: A-

Redo: B

That original overall rating is too high for what I gave everything else. Also I think the original last man standing match rating is closer to the accurate one. It just didn't hold up as well on a second viewing, but it

was good.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/01/27/royal-rumble-2013-by-the-book-and-still-awesome/>

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Royal Rumble Count-Up – 2012: You Go Out. No You Go Out. You Go Out!

Royal Rumble 2012

Date: January 29, 2012

Location: Scottrade Center, St. Louis, Missouri

Attendance: 18,121

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, Booker T

We wrap things up here with last year's show. The Rumble is back to the

thirty entrant variety which is probably the best move all around. The odds on favorite is Jericho who returned very recently before this show. Other than that we've got Daniel Bryan defending his newly won world title against Big Show and Henry in a cage, along with Punk defending against Ziggler. Let's get to it.

The opening video is of course about going to Wrestlemania.

Smackdown World Title: Big Show vs. Daniel Bryan vs. Mark Henry

Bryan is champion and beat Show at TLC by cashing in his MITB case in 45 seconds. Show beat Henry at the same show and ran over Bryan's girlfriend AJ on Raw to set all this up. This is one fall to a finish and it's pin/submission/escape. Bryan immediately goes for the corner but Henry pulls him down and Show runs Bryan over for two. Show crushes Henry against the cage wall but has to stop to pull Bryan back inside. Bryan tries to run up again but Show catches him by the ankle and slams him back in.

Show loads up the WMD but hits the cage wall instead. The champion fires off some kicks but gets headbutted right back down. Bryan kicks the knee out even harder and fires off some kicks to Henry to keep the other monster down. He goes for the door but you know this isn't ending that quickly. Henry makes the stop and demands that the referee CLOSE THAT DOOR. Show superkicks Henry down and it's his turn to take over for awhile.

Bryan gets slammed down but Henry is back up again. A few punches put Show down because a dozen chair shots usually can't, but a few punches can. Actually that's a great way to keep Henry looking strong. The fans are cheering for Bryan as Henry and Show collide to put all three guys down. Show gets back up and clotheslines Bryan down a few times before superkicking him in the face. The chokeslam is countered and Bryan hits a tornado DDT on Show for two.

The LeBell (NO!) Lock is put on Show but Henry breaks it up in about a second. The WMD gets two on Henry but Bryan makes the save, which ticks Show off. Bryan SPRINTS up the cage but Show chases after him and grabs Bryan before he can get out. Bryan sits on the top of the cage and pounds

away, only to be caught again. The champion is literally hanging from Show's wrist before finally letting go and falling to the floor to retain the title.

Rating: D+. This really wasn't all that great. At the end of the day, it was a lot of the same sequence over and over again with Show and Henry not having a ton of interaction at all. The ending didn't look great either and I'm not sure why Show would just hold him out over the floor like that. This falls under the category of "....really?" as it's hard to buy Bryan keeping the belt here.

Long video on Cena and all the stuff he does for WWE. The man is insanely committed to that company.

Divas of Doom/Bella Twins vs. Eve Torres/Alicia Fox/Tamina/Kelly Kelly

The Divas of Doom are Beth and Natalya. Natalya and Tamina start things off and they collide a few times. Tamina slaps her in the face before chopping Nattie down for two. Off to Eve for that bouncing moonsault for two. Since that's a pretty lame move, Natalya charges her into the corner and brings in Beth who blocks a rolling splash with knees to Eve's back.

Off to let's say Nikki for some basic stomps to the back and a quickly broken chinlock. Jerry is asked what he likes about the Bellas and he can't even get an answer out. Not hot tag brings in Alicia who is immediately sent into the corner and chinlocked as well. Alicia finally counters by flipping Nikki forward and makes the actual hot tag to Kelly. There's the screaming headscissors and a faceplant for two. Everything breaks down and almost everyone heads to the floor, where Kelly hits a HUGE dive to take everyone out. Back in and Beth SLAPS herself in to hit the Glam Slam on Kelly for the pin.

Rating: D+. This was your usual Divas match: they did their "sexy" spots, they had barely there outfits, Kelly screamed a lot, Beth beat up Kelly to end things. One interesting note from a year later: would they even be able to put together an eight Divas tag now? I'm thinking through the roster and I don't know if I can name eight girls on the main shows right now.

We recap Ryder getting hurt at the hands of Kane. This was during the period where Ryder went from one of the hottest things in the company and US Champion to a rag doll that Kane destroyed over and over and over in the span of a few weeks until his push was completely destroyed. Eve blamed Cena for Ryder having his back broken for some reason.

Ryder is wheeled in and patronized by Johnny Ace (remember him?). Ace has a private room set up for Ryder but Eve comes up to yell at Ace first. Not much here but it's setting up stuff later on tonight.

Kane vs. John Cena

This is when Kane had the welder's mask look. Brawl to start with Kane beating Cena down into the corner as the fans are split on Johnny. A clothesline puts them both on the floor where Kane is sent knees first into the steps. Back in and Cena can't hit the AA on Kane. That makes sense as after all, Kane is probably 175lbs lighter than Show who Cena throws around with near ease most of the time.

Kane kicks Cena down and gets two off an uppercut. A suplex gets the same and it's off to a chinlock. Cena fights up and is sent into the buckle for his efforts followed by Kane's stupid smother hold. John tries to counter into a Crossface but Kane comes out with a side slam. The idea here is that Cena can't get anything going at all. The top rope clothesline takes Cena's head off but Cena pops up and hits his shoulder block.

The Shuffle is countered by a grab of Cena's throat and a big boot gets two. Cena blocks a superplex and hits the Shuffle off the top. That's certainly a new one. The AA is countered by an elbow to the face and Kane kicks Cena out to the floor. Booker talks about how Cena is a good kid. I don't think I ever recall Cena being called a kid since like 2004. Kane pounds on Cena in the aisle and that's a double countout so we can do this match again next month.

Rating: D+. I know that's a common theme tonight but it fits here again. These two didn't work all that well together and the story was even worse. Then again, this was nothing more than giving Cena something to do for a few months until he could get ready for the biggest match of his

career. This didn't work for the most part.

The fight continues into the back where Kane finds a chair to lay to lay out Cena. To the shock of no one paying attention, Kane finds the door to Ryder's private room and kicks the door in. Ryder is taken to the ring and tombstoned as Eve screams. Cena comes out to try to save Eve but gets chokeslammed by Kane who walks away. Ryder does a stretcher job, but somehow it would get even worse for him in the coming weeks.

BE A STAR!

Zack is wheeled out and Cena is booed for it. That's the part of this story that never held up for me: why is this Cena's responsibility? Ryder was the United States Champion. He should be able to defend himself.

We get a video on the Rock just like Cena got earlier. It's shot in the back of Rock's car and is more like a mini documentary. It focuses on how insane Rock's life is and all of the stuff he does around the world.

Drew McIntyre vs. Brodus Clay

This is right after Brodus debuted as the Funkasaurus so he was still a new character at this point. Brodus dances a lot, Drew punches him in the corner, Brodus headbutts him and hits the cross body (called WHAT THE FUNK) for the pin in about a minute.

Buy Slim Jims! For the troops!

We recap Punk vs. Ziggler who is challenging Punk on Ace's behalf. This is during the "Ace is boring" phase where Punk made fun of him no matter what he did, so Ace helped Ziggler get a win over Punk to earn a title shot. Ace is also guest referee tonight just because. He's openly admitted he's going to screw Punk out of the title tonight, so HHH is going to evaluate his job status the next night on Raw, meaning Ace has to play nice.

Raw World Title: CM Punk vs. Dolph Ziggler

Punk is defending and Ace is referee. Johnny Ace is John Laurinitis but that's a hard name to spell. Before the match, Ace says he'll be the

outside referee. Ok then. Wait we're still not ready to go as Ace throws Vickie out as well. We finally get going and Ziggler tries a quick Fameasser which is countered into a failed GTS attempt. Punk tells Dolph it was that close. They feel each other out a bit longer until Ziggler starts strutting.

Punk finally gets his hands on Ziggler and puts on an abdominal stretch, complete with a wrapped toe and slicking back his hair ala Ziggler. Dolph heads to the floor and gets taken out by a suicide dive but shoves Punk off the top rope once they get back inside. Ziggler drops about eight elbows in a row and a jumping version gets two. We hit the chinlock with Ziggler cranking on the head way more than necessary.

The champ starts firing off chops and strikes before getting caught in the sleeper. That goes nowhere but neither does Punk's Anaconda Vice attempt. Back to the sleeper but Dolph can't get it on all the way. Instead there's a perfect dropkick for two on Punk but the Fameasser is countered into a helicopter bomb for two. A swinging neckbreaker by the champ puts Dolph into the corner where the knee/bulldog combination actually works.

The GTS is countered into a slingshot but Punk lands on the middle rope. He comes off with a spinning cross body but Ziggler rolls through for a near fall in a cool sequence. The high kick gets two for Punk as does the Macho Elbow, drawing a Randy Savage chant. The GTS is countered again and the referee goes down as per the requirement in a world title match. Punk hooks the Vice but Ace is checking on the down referee. Then Punk gets a rollup and there's STILL no referee.

Ace sends the referee back in as Punk loads up the GTS, but Ziggler's legs knock Ace to the floor. Ace sees the pin but refuses to count because he thinks Punk did it on purpose. Ziggler counters another GTS attempt into the Fameasser for two before pounding away a bit. The champ comes back with a slingshot and the GTS gets a pin from both referees to retain the title.

Rating: B+. This took awhile to get going as we were all waiting on the Ace stuff. The feud would go on for weeks until Jericho finally showed up

to give Punk someone with charisma to feud with. The near falls at the end were a lot better than Ace, but it occurs to me that this was pretty much the same match he had last year. Good stuff though.

Rumble by the Numbers:

30 Superstars

1 winner

31 Hall of Famers in the Rumble

21 main events those Hall of Famers have been in at Wrestlemania

695 entrants who have been eliminated

39 entrants eliminated by Michaels, a record (Kane is second at 35)

13 consecutive Rumbles for Kane

11 eliminations for Kane in 2001

194,107lbs that have been in the Rumble, or over 97 tons, or 430 Big Show

421,883 people who have attended the Rumble

62:12 Rey Mysterio spent in the Rumble in 2006, a record

3 wins for Austin

1 second that Santino lasted in 2009

2 women who have competed in the Rumble

1, the entrant that has produced the same amount of winners as #30 at two each

27, the entrant with more winners than any other at four

55 percent of winners that have won the title at Wrestlemania

Royal Rumble

The Miz is #1 and talks about how he's going back to the main event of Wrestlemania this year. His former apprentice Alex Riley is #2 which isn't really surprising given how RANDOM these draws are. I always liked Riley and he always got a good reaction, which is clearly why he doesn't get on TV more. Riley pounds away to start and runs Miz over with a forearm but walks into a big boot. Maybe it's the old school fan in me but I don't like a 6'0 guy using a big boot. Miz talks trash and low bridges Riley out with ease.

R-Truth, Miz's former partner, is #3. Truth fires off some kicks and avoids the Finale before hitting a kind of powerslam. Miz gets sent to the apron for the second time but Truth turns his back to watch Cody come out at #4. A quick Disaster Kick puts Truth down (Cole says it hits Miz because those two are so hard to tell apart) and Truth gets double teamed for awhile. He manages to send Cody to the apron but gets caught in the Reality Check as the clock seems to be speeding up.

Justin Gabriel is #5 and things speed WAY up. A big spinwheel kick puts Miz down before Cody goes nuts on Gabriel in the corner. Primo is #6 to keep things low key to start. Actually he speeds things up as well and hits a sweet headscissors out of the corner to take Gabriel down. Truth hits the spinning forearm on Cody, only to be dumped out by Miz a second later. Since he's still crazy, Truth pulls Miz to the floor and lays him out on the outside.

Mick Foley is #7 to fire up the crowd a little bit. He dumps Primo almost immediately before getting beaten on by Cody. Foley looks really old and slow here but to be fair, he is in fact old and slow. In a HILARIOUS bit, Ricardo Rodriguez is #8 but comes out in an old banged up, rusted out rental car. He's even got the Del Rio scarf to hide some of his hideous pale body. We get a HUGE Ricardo chant as Foley and Gabriel have no idea what to do here.

Ricardo takes Cody down and pounds away before proposing an alliance with Foley of all people. They actually do team up and toss Gabriel, allowing Ricardo to do a CM Punk knee slide. We keep the comedy going with Santino at #9 and Ricardo runs from the Cobra. Santino beats on Ricardo and literally rolls him around the ring before pulling his trunks up and

tossing Rodriguez.

Now we get my favorite spot of the match as Santino puts on the Cobra and Mick puts on Socko and it's TIME FOR A DUEL!!! Before they can collide though it's Epico at #10 but he falls to the powers of the socks and is out almost immediately. The socks COLLIDE until Miz and Cody pop back in (neither was eliminated) and dump Santino. Miz gets Socko but Cody dumps Mick. Fun comedy bit here to give us a good first act to the match.

Kofi Kingston is #11 and hits a double springboard clothesline before hitting a double Boom Drop. In at #12 is Jerry Lawler (Cole: "WHAT ARE YOU DOING???") and he causes Miz to hit Cody by mistake. Lawler speeds things up and hits the middle rope punch with the lowered strap, only to be put out by Cody. Ezekiel Jackson is #13 and gets to do the usual power moves on each guy while the others lay around.

Jinder Mahal is #14 and the fans start chanting USA, even though the only two Americans in this match are Rhodes and Miz. Great Khali comes in at #15 and Mahal panics. Everyone gets chops and Mahal is out in just a few seconds. Jackson tries to pound away and is put out almost immediately as well. Hunico is #16 on that stupid bicycle of his and hits a spinning cross body on Miz and his Angle Slam on Cody.

Khali chops Hunico down as the ring is staying relatively empty. Booker T is #17 to surprise Cole. You would think he would have noticed that the man sitting next to him for over two hours wasn't wearing pants but he never was considered that bright. Now we get the spot of the match as Miz shoves Kofi to the floor but Kofi holds himself up by his hands. Miz shoves Kofi into a handstand but Kingston WALKS ON HIS HANDS ACROSS THE FLOOR TO THE STEPS to get back in. FREAKING AWESOME MAN!

Dolph Ziggler is #18 as the ring is starting to get full. Hacksaw Jim Duggan makes his annual return at #19 to pop the crowd huge. He cleans house for a bit and we get a DOUBLE NOGGIN KNOCKER on Miz and Rhodes. Cody avoids a charge in the corner though and dumps Duggan in less than a minute. That's the best idea at the end of the day. Miz and Cody team up to put out Booker and Khali at the same time.

We complete the trio with Michael Cole at #20. At the moment we've got

Cole, Miz, Rhodes, Kingston, Hunico and Ziggler in the ring. Kharma returns at #21 in her only WWE match ever. She hits Cole so hard she knocks his headgear off so Cole eliminates himself. Well he gets to the apron where King and Booker eliminate him. Ziggler tells Kharma to get out so she DRILLS him. Kharma dumps Hunico but Ziggler sneaks up and eliminates her (Booker calls this doing the impossible. Not really Book.) to a ton of heat.

Sheamus is #22 to give us some A level star power. Well maybe B+ level. Things speed up with Sheamus destroying everyone and tossing Kofi out. There are the ten forearms in the ropes to Cody and ten to Miz as well. The Zig Zag is countered and Road Dogg is another surprise return at #23. He gets to clean house for a bit and earns a "you still got it" chant. In far less than 90 seconds, Jey Uso is #24.

Everyone pairs off until Jack Swagger is #25. After a few suplexes everything settles down into its usual brawling phase until Barrett is #26. He throws out Roadie and stomps away on a lot of people. David Otunga gets the lucky spot at #27 and poses a lot before he comes out. Not a lot happens so Orton comes in at #28 to pick things up a bit. Remember we're in his hometown so everyone goes nuts.

Cody breaks up the RK0 on Barrett so Randy hits the Elevated DDT on both Cody and Ziggler at the same time because he can. There's an RK0 to Barrett and he's out. Chris Jericho, complete with a blackout of the arena, makes his return at #29. He's still a face at this point and dumps Otunga to a good reaction. Big Show is #30 which was considered a letdown at the time. Dude, he was world champion a month ago. That's hardly Darren Young coming out.

As Show comes in he pulls Swagger out from the floor, giving us a final grouping of Miz, Rhodes, Ziggler, Sheamus, Orton, Jericho and Big Show. That's a pretty solid grouping. Show dumps Cody and Miz at the same time to get us down to five. Show tosses Ziggler as well to get us down to four. The big man cleans house but walks into an RK0, allowing Orton and Sheamus to pick him up and Randy clotheslines him out. Jericho dumps Orton immediately thereafter and we're down to two.

The fans are entirely behind Jericho here so Sheamus runs him over a few times. Jericho's bulldog is countered but Sheamus can't throw him over the corner. Jericho charges into the Irish Curse but Sheamus can't hit the High Cross. We get a great false finish with Jericho clotheslining Sheamus to the apron and then knocking him down to the point where Sheamus is hanging on by his leg. Sheamus comes back in with the slingshot shoulder but the Brogue Kick is countered into the Walls.

After the hold is broken Jericho gets knocked to the apron where he BARELY hangs on. They go to the top rope and both fall to the apron, meaning if they hit the floor they're out. Both guys get back in and there's the Codebreaker to Sheamus. Jericho gets Sheamus upside down but can't get him out. A shot to the face ticks Sheamus off and he catches a Codebreaker attempt to put Jericho on the apron. The Brogue Kick sends Sheamus to Wrestlemania.

Rating: A-. This is one of those Rumbles that is great fun as you watch it live but it loses some steam on a second viewing. They spent a bit too much time on nostalgia and funny ideas here but they were still really good ideas. The ending with Sheamus and Jericho ROCKED and I have no idea why they never got to have a long PPV match. This is a really good Rumble but it never reaches that excellent level that some of them get to.

Sheamus celebrates a lot to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. The Rumble is a unique show as it has a way to save itself from a bad first half. That's what happened here as the last two matches were certainly good enough to save it from the horrible first few matches. As usual the last two guys would both get world title shots with the winner getting the opening match instead of the real main event, but going on before Rock vs. Cena is hardly torture.

Ratings Comparison

Daniel Bryan vs. Mark Henry vs. Big Show

Original: C-

Redo: D+

Bella Twins/Divas of Doom vs. Alicia Fox/Kelly Kelly/Eve Torres/Tamina

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Kane vs. John Cena

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Brody Clay vs. Drew McIntyre

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

CM Punk vs. Dolph Ziggler

Original: B

Redo: B+

Royal Rumble

Original: B+

Redo: A-

Overall Rating

Original: B-

Redo: B

Just like last year, not much difference here.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/01/29/royal-rumble-2012/>

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1999 in e-book or paperback. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/11/22/new-book-kbs-monday-nitro-and-thunder-reviews-volume-vi/>

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Mixed Match Challenge – January 23, 2018: Too Cute For Wor...Well For Some Words

Mixed Match Challenge Episode #2

Date: January 23, 2018

Location: Capitol One Arena, Washington DC

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Beth Phoenix

Last week's show was acceptable but it's not exactly the kind of show where you can change up a lot of things. It's pretty much going to be a one off show every week until we get closer to the finals, which is fine, but it's not something that's going to blow the doors off from week to week. Let's get to it.

Before the teams come out for their matches, we see Carmella and New Day plugging their charity.

Miz and Asuka chant WE WILL WIN.

Raw and Smackdown GM's Kurt Angle and Daniel Bryan thank us for watching

last week. They're not even hiding the fact that they're trying to fill in time to stretch this out to twenty minutes.

First Round: Carmella/Big E. vs. The Miz/Asuka

Carmella has changed into a different outfit from earlier on Smackdown. Kofi Kingston and Xavier Woods are with Carmella...and wearing the same one piece swimsuit style outfits. Big E. even has a mini Money in the Bank Briefcase. Before the match, Carmella and Big E. have a bite of a pancake and you can feel Carmella wanting to run to the gym from here. We also cut to the announcers at ringside where Corey has a stack of pancakes on his head, much to his annoyance.

The men start things off as Carmella plays cheerleader on the apron. Big E. gyrates his way out of a waistlock and we're off to an abdominal stretch with Big E. throwing in a spanking (as he did to Miz in last year's Rumble). Corey isn't happy with Big E. goofing around but is a fan of Asuka coming in to face a seemingly terrified Carmella. With Carmella staying on the apron, Big E. goes to the floor and grabs a big L, so Carmella can give it to Asuka. You'll get that one in a second.

Asuka is touched by the gift...and then rips it apart. Carmella bails back to Big E. with no contact being made. Big E. wastes no time in sending Miz to the apron but the spear through the ropes is cut off with a kick to the head. A belly to belly takes Miz down though and let's look at the announcers who show us how to use social media. The Big Ending is countered into a DDT and everything breaks down on the save. Miz and Asuka drop both opponents and fire off alternating YES Kicks.

Miz's big one is of course countered into a powerbomb and let's cut to Rusev and Lana chatting with fans on Facebook. Big E. fights out of a chinlock but gets Reality Checked for two. A front facelock doesn't work either and it's off to Carmella, which goes about as well as you would expect with Asuka kicking the heck out of her. The hip attack has Carmella in trouble until she superkicks her way to freedom. The Staten Island Shuffle into the Bronco Buster has Asuka in trouble but for some reason Carmella decides to slap her in the face. A cross armbreaker makes Carmella tap in a hurry at 9:50.

Rating: C. This was more entertaining than good with Carmella being the perfect cheerleader (for all possible reasons) and then getting destroyed by Asuka in short order, as should have been the case. Big E. continues to show crazy levels of charisma and the whole thing was perfectly fun, even if I'm not sure the right team won.

Next week: Braun Strowman/Alexa Bliss vs. Sami Zayn/Becky Lynch. Strowman promises to destroy Sami and Bliss is ready for Lynch, earning herself a pat on the head.

Zayn and Lynch aren't sure who is going to be in charge but they'll fight together.

Asuka celebrates in Japanese and Miz translates to Miz has taught her more than anyone ever. Miz promises to win the tournament.

Overall Rating: C-. The time situation is kind of a positive and a negative. They certainly don't waste a ton of time here and you're in and out in about twenty minutes. On the downside though, this is definitely a show that doesn't feel important enough to watch. You really can just look at the results and maybe catch the finals, but until then there's just nothing worth seeing here.

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<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/11/22/new-book-kbs-monday-nitro-and-thunder-reviews-volume-vi/>

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Smackdown – January 23, 2018: That Actually Worked!

Smackdown

Date: January 23, 2018

Location: Capitol One Arena, Washington DC

Commentators: Corey Graves, Byron Saxton, Tom Phillips

It's the night after the Monday Night Raw 25th Anniversary so now we need to bring things back down to earth a bit. This time around though it's also the go home show for the Royal Rumble and we need to get things ready. There's also the issue of Enzo Amore, who Daniel Bryan will address for some reason. Let's get to it.

Here are Kevin Owens and Sami Zayn to open things up. They introduce each other as the future co-WWE Champions before Owens talks about being in a handicap match a few weeks back. There's no way that AJ can win a 2-1 match because they couldn't win a 3-2 match because they're already better than AJ.

This brings out AJ to say there's no way that's going to happen and if the two of them could shut their YEP holes for awhile, reality would set in. Sami says he knew that AJ would be out here with his macho act and brings up a clip from a few weeks back. Three weeks ago AJ asked for the handicap match and Owens accuses him of trying to back out of the match.

The next clip is AJ saying he would fight both of them in the same night. Owens suggests that AJ fight the two of them in a row tonight. This brings out Bryan to imply that the matches are about to be made but AJ doesn't know whose side Bryan is on. AJ makes the matches official instead.

I know we're coming up on Sunday's title match, but my goodness they need to get somewhere with this story. You can only tease Bryan being in

cahoots with Sami and Owens for so long before you need to actually go somewhere with it. They were nice enough to give AJ and his challengers some actual mic time here but they REALLY need some advancement in this story already. I'm very tired of having Bryan and/or Shane arguing with each other and using these guys as pawns and it needs to change. Oh and what's up with people working multiple matches a night? This is two weeks in a row now.

Bryan and Shane are in their office with Shane talking down to Bryan about his choice. Daniel asks if Shane believes AJ can take care of himself but Shane says AJ isn't the one he's questioning.

Jey Uso vs. Chad Gable

Gable goes for a single leg to start and takes Jey into the corner before putting him on the ground without much effort. Back up and Jey sends him outside and we take an early break. Back with Gable getting two off a northern lights suplex but missing the moonsault. Jey sends him outside and a suicide dive drops Chad again. Gable charges into a Samoan drop but the running Umaga Attack is blocked. Instead Gable Liger Kicks him and grabs Rolling Chaos Theory for the pin at 7:44.

Rating: D+. This didn't go very far but to be fair it's not like it was supposed to be anything of note. They were going with the standard singles win to set up a tag match which has worked before and it'll work again almost any time they try it. I'm not sold on a title change but just having them give us something interesting on Sunday is a good idea.

Shinsuke Nakamura's strategy for winning the Rumble: knee them all in the face. Baron Corbin comes in to say Nakamura is all hype and nothing to show for it. He doesn't care about the fans and asks what Nakamura has done. Shinsuke says he'll do something on Sunday and offers a rumble tonight. I know Nakamura is becoming one of the favorites to win the Rumble but I still don't buy it. There's not much to build off of with him and it would seem to come out of nowhere. That's been the case before but I'm not buying it here.

Tye Dillinger, still using the handheld camera style, enters the Rumble. He can't do the Perfect Ten because he only has one hand so it's two

fives instead.

Naomi vs. Liv Morgan

They fight over a backslide to start until Naomi kicks her in the face. Liv is right back with a pull into the middle buckle, followed by a cross arm chinlock. Cue Natalya, Carmella and Lana for a distraction, allowing Naomi to grab a sunset flip for the pin at 2:39.

The Riott Squad comes in to beat Naomi down but Becky Lynch makes the save. It turns into the mini Rumble with Naomi and Natalya standing tall. Becky throws Naomi to the apron for a staredown but here's Charlotte to say good luck to everyone, especially the winner. That's how a champion should talk to a bunch of challengers.

Miz and Asuka are ready to win the Mixed Match Challenge.

Carmella and Big E. are ready to win as well, but first: pancakes.

Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Baron Corbin

Nakamura drives him to the ropes for the arm swing into COME ON, with Corbin warning him not to do it. Good Vibrations sends Corbin outside with Nakamura giving chase, only to get posted. Serves him right for not listening to Corbin's request. Back from a break with Corbin holding a chinlock but Nakamura fights up and starts striking away. A running kick to the head and the running knee in the corner give Nakamura two.

Kinshasa is countered into Deep Six for a pretty hot two and Nakamura is in trouble. Corbin's slide underneath the ropes into the clothesline turns Nakamura inside out for two more. A cross armbreaker out of nowhere has Corbin in trouble but Nakamura switches to a kick to the head. Kinshasa is loaded up but RK0 OUT OF NOWHERE plants Nakamura as Randy Orton runs in for the DQ at 12:26. Well done there as they actually surprised me with the run in.

Rating: B. This was starting to cook and the run-in finish was perfect, especially as a way to keep both guys solid going into Sunday. Having Orton run in for the DQ made perfect sense and reminds us that he's in there too. It takes some time to warm Nakamura up but once he gets going,

he's as entertaining as anyone on the show. That was starting to be the case here and the match was starting to rock.

Post match Corbin takes an RK0 of his own.

We look at the media coverage of last night's show.

Video on last night's show.

Here's New Day for a six man tag but first, they all enter the Royal Rumble. It's just two of them tonight so they need a partner. That man would be the new United States Champion, with Woods singing the theme into the trombone. Roode says his goal is to be the best US Champion of all time and his reign is going to be.....Kofi: "Stupendous!" Woods: "Delicious!" Big E.: "Exuberant!" Actually it's GLORIOUS!

New Day/Bobby Roode vs. Rusev Day/Jinder Mahal

Big E. is the odd man out here and there's only one Singh Brother thanks to an ankle injury last week. Joined in progress with Rusev holding Kofi in a bearhug and hitting a running shoulder into the corner. English misses a charge though and it's Roode coming in to clean house. The Blockbuster drops English and a spinebuster does the same to Jinder. Rusev comes in and kicks Roode into a rollup for two but it's Kofi diving in to put English on the floor. Kofi's dive into the trust fall takes the other two down, leaving English to get caught with another spinebuster. Woods' top rope elbow is good for the pin at 2:38 shown.

Royal Rumble rundown.

AJ Styles vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title but hang on a minute. Shane comes out to say Sami can't be at ringside, just like Owens can't be at ringside for the next match. If either of them interfere, they're out of the title match and fired. The bickering continues into the break and we're back for the opening bell (thank you). AJ scores with a dropkick but gets his head clotheslined off. That goes nowhere and it's a Calf Crusher to make Owens tap out immediately at 1:08, likely to save himself for Sunday.

Sami runs in to beat on AJ to break the hold, which doesn't count as breaking Shane's rules because we're between matches. AJ gets beaten down in the corner as Kevin limps off. The stomping continues as we're still waiting on the opening bell. A whip sends AJ into the steps as the bosses are watching in the back.

Sami Zayn vs. AJ Styles

Non-title again with AJ saying he's ready to go. Sami charges at him again as Owens is still at ringside due to not being able to walk to the back. The stomping continues and we hit the chinlock for a bit as a stretcher is brought out for Owens. AJ fights back and hits his running seated forearm to get a breather. Sami gets sent outside for a slingshot forearm but AJ goes after Owens instead as we take a break.

Back with Sami hammering away even more and grabbing another chinlock. AJ snaps off a super hurricanrana to get a breather as we see the bosses watching in the back for the third time. The fireman's carry backbreaker gives AJ two and the Helluva Kick is blocked with a raised boot. The Pele scores on Sami for two but Sami grabs a Michinoku Driver for two. Frustration is setting in as he takes AJ to the top, only to get dropped face first onto the top turnbuckle.

AJ takes him outside where Owens is STILL being loaded onto the stretcher. That's enough for Styles as he slides into a knee to Sami's face and turns the stretcher over. Back in and the Helluva Kick connects followed by the Blue Thunder Bomb....WHICH GETS THE PIN AT 15:44????? I've been watching Sami since his WWE run started and I don't ever remember that getting a pin. I was actually surprised when that worked.

Rating: B-. I'm still trying to get over that finish as the Blue Thunder Bomb winning is so unthinkable. This was similar to Gable vs. Uso earlier in the night where you build some drama with the idea that the underdog has a chance. I don't think AJ is going to lose the title but it's nice to try to get something set up.

Owens and Zayn pose over AJ to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Bickering bosses aside, it was nice to have Smackdown

doing something good for a change. They did a solid job of setting up some stuff for the Rumble and that's what was needed after last night. They added four more names to the Rumble and made me more interested than I was coming into the show. Good night here, especially with all of the previous weeks of mess.

Results

Chad Gable b. Jey Uso – Rolling Chaos Theory

Naomi b. Liv Morgan – Sunset flip

Shinsuke Nakamura b. Baron Corbin via DQ when Randy Orton interfered

New Day/Bobby Roode b. Rusev Day/Jinder Mahal – Top rope elbow to English

AJ Styles b. Kevin Owens – Calf Crusher

Sami Zayn b. AJ Styles – Blue Thunder Bomb

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<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/11/22/new-book-kbs-monday-nitro-and-thunder-reviews-volume-vi/>

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Enzo Amore Released

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/breaking-news-amore-released/>

I can't say I'm surprised after everything that happened yesterday. This is different than your usual reasons for wanting to get rid of someone and you can't blame WWE for getting rid of him. Maybe he comes back if the allegations are proven false (as was the case with Jerry Lawler in the 90s) but otherwise, that's it for Enzo on the big stage. No word yet on what happens with the title.

Monday Night Raw – January 22, 2018 (25th Anniversary): Tug of War

Monday Night Raw 25th Anniversary

Date: January 22, 2018

Location: Manhattan Center, New York City, New York/Barclays Center, New York City, New York

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Booker T., Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

Now this is a big night with the show having been build up for several months and a slew of guest stars booked for the night. The show is also being run from two arenas, including the location of the first ever episode. I'm more excited for this than I am for Sunday's Royal Rumble so let's get to it.

JR and King welcome us from the Manhattan Center, complete with an ICOPRO sign.

The regular announcers' team welcome us from the Barclays Center.

Shane McMahon and Stephanie McMahon are in the ring to open the show with Stephanie doing that ever present growling introduction. Shane thanks us for being here along with all the people behind the scenes who make this happen. With that, Shane introduces us to the long highlight reel of Raw moments. This was released on the site's YouTube page and is very awesome with almost every major Raw moment ever.

Back in the arena, Stephanie introduces Vince, who absolutely has to be here for the opening sequence. Vince nearly dances in the ring and says twenty five years is quite the accomplishment. The fans chant THANK YOU VINCE (which Stephanie explains to him) but Vince says enough of that and we're off to the festivities. Vince goes to leave but Stephanie and Shane have a present for him.

They have a plaque commemorating his twenty five years of Raw....and he's not happy. Vince goes on a rant about it being cheap and how plaque is the horrible stuff on the people of Brooklyn's teeth. There's only one person who should be thanked for all of this and that's Vince himself. As he goes off about how great he is.....the glass shatters.

After Austin does his usual entrance, Vince praises Austin's look but says he's had his own share of health problems. His bones are broken and brittle and he has arthritis and he even lives in a retirement home. Vince: "But my son Shane is in his prime!" Austin raises Shane's hand and gives him a Stunner to the delight of the fans. Vince produces beers and the fans chant ONE MORE TIME! Vince: "I don't think Shane can take another one!" They drink their beer and hug but Austin looks at Vince, followed by one more Stunner for old times' sake. For some reason Shane gets up and takes one more Stunner.

This was just about the perfect opening as you have to have Vince there for something like this and if there's Vince, there must be Austin. All those Stunners over the years were a huge part of the show and Austin is arguably the name that more people would associate with Raw than anyone

else. This was great and the only way things should have gone to start.

Absolution/Alicia Fox/Nia Jax vs. Bayley/Sasha Banks/Mickie James/Asuka

There's a big brawl before the bell and Asuka has banged up ribs. She's still able to kick Sonya to the floor though and we take an early break. Back with Asuka hip attacking half of the villains off the apron before it's off to Jax vs. Banks. That goes fairly badly for Sasha who gets caught in Alicia's northern lights suplex for two.

We hit the chinlock until Banks gets double teamed in the corner. Everything breaks down and we take a second break because it's not like there's a lot of stuff to get to tonight. Back with Banks grabbing the Bank Statement to make Fox tap at 11:58. The stuff after the break was less than fifteen seconds long.

Rating: C-. This was fine all things considered but at the same time, there's some other stuff going on tonight that they need to cover. That's kind of the problem with having this big special on the same night as the go home show for the Rumble. They have to build things up but at the same time they have to get to the big special features. The match was fine, but probably should have been shorter.

Post match Asuka throws her partners over the top in a Sunday preview.

Kurt Angle is in the back when Jonathan Coachman comes in. Coach talks about all the faces he's seen around here, so cue Harvey Wippleman and the Brooklyn Brawler who offer cigars. Cue Teddy Long for the required dancing. Brother Love comes in (he scared me to death as a kid) and declares love for everyone until Boogeyman comes in, complete with the worms in the mouth...which he hands to Coach. A lot of staring ensues.

In the Manhattan Center, JR and King (who mentions puppies) introduce a nice video package on Undertaker's greatest Raw moments.

Here's the Undertaker, with the lights not going out for his entrance in a strange visual (flashback to his original). For twenty five years, he's buried souls who dared to challenge him and buried them in the cold dark earth. Steve Austin, Mick Foley, his brother Kane have all fallen before

the reaper and now, after all this time, they may rest in peace. JR: "Is that a warning?" The music plays again and no one interrupts. I'll believe it's over when I don't see him at Wrestlemania but that seems to be the case at the moment.

We go to the APA's office with Heath Slater losing all of his money in a poker game as Rhyno shakes his head. Someone comes in and throws some money down....and of course it's Ted DiBiase. They deal him in and we get the evil laugh. Still the greatest villain of all time for my money.

Here's are some of the all time greatest General Managers: Johnny Ace (with a red suit and blue tie), William Regal, Eric Bischoff (to a ROAR) and Daniel Bryan. Miz and the Miztourage interrupt though and it's time for one of the big matches.

Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Roman Reigns

Miz is challenging. They take their time to start until Reigns pops him with a right hand. The Miztourage offers a distraction though and Miz sends him into the steps as we take a break. Back with Reigns hitting the corner clotheslines, followed by a running big boot. The apron dropkick connects but the spear is countered into a rollup for two with the feet on the ropes. The YES Kicks keep Roman in trouble but the big kick is countered into a sitout powerbomb for two.

Another apron dropkick takes the Miztourage out and Reigns slips out of the Skull Crushing Finale for another Superman Punch. Bo Dallas grabs the foot though and Miz hits his corner clothesline. That means a double ejection but Reigns hits them one more time, allowing the Skull Crushing Finale to connect for two. Back up and Reigns tries the spear but hits an exposed turnbuckle pad. The Skull Crushing Finale makes Miz an eight time champion at 13:13. A replay shows that Miz got the pad off when Reigns was beating up the Miztourage for a nice surprise.

Rating: C. This was a booking decision more than anything else and there's nothing wrong with that. The loss lets Reigns drop the title before he wins the Universal Title at Wrestlemania (THIS TIME FOR SURE!) and the win gives Miz something else to do, especially now that he's less than three months away from the most combined days as champion (and only

one reign behind Chris Jericho's record).

Back to the poker game with the Hardys, the Usos, and MVP playing as Slater continues to lose his money.

It's time for the Peep Show with Christian. He knows a thing or two about being a Tag Team Champion so his guests are Jason Jordan and Seth Rollins. Jordan takes over for Seth and talks about what an honor it is to be here but the crowd won't let him talk. Jordan eventually talks about Kurt and asks the fans to applaud him. Cue the Bar to say that all the fans are because of them, not all the legends. They'll be getting the titles back on Sunday and it's because Jordan sucks. We hit the YOU SUCK song and the brawl is on. Sheamus gets knocked to the floor but Seth's springboard knee hits Jordan.

Alexa Bliss is annoyed at being asked if she'll still be champion at Wrestlemania. Charlotte comes in and MY GOODNESS she towers over Alexa. She says Alexa doesn't have the stature to be champion and Ric Flair himself comes in to say Charlotte is going to be champion until she decides to hang up the robe. Flair appearing was great, though they're teasing the heck out of one of these two losing before Wrestlemania.

Video on Edge, who isn't here tonight.

More people are at the poker game, now including Natalya and Titus Worldwide. Heath loses again, this time to Natalya's queen high flush in hearts. Dana has counted it up: Heath has lost a lot.

Bray Wyatt vs. Matt Hardy

In the Manhattan Center and this match takes place here? Sister Abigail is broken up in the first five seconds as JR tries to figure out what Sister Abigail is. Matt grabs a Russian legsweep and drops the middle rope elbow to the back of the head. The Twist of Fate is broken up and Bray runs him over as we take a break. Back with Matt hitting a running corner clothesline but having his bulldog broken up. The Side Effect gets two on Bray but Sister Abigail is good for the pin on Matt at 5:48. Not enough shown to rate but that's quite the abrupt loss in the first match between these two.

Back in Barclays, here are some of the greatest female talents ever: the Bella Twins, Maryse, Kelly Kelly, Lilian Garcia, Jacqueline, Torrie Wilson, Michelle McCool, Terri Runnels, Maria Kanellis and of course Trish Stratus as the big name. This group is declared as trailblazers so I have a good laugh as we cut away.

Elias is walking through the back when he runs into Chris Jericho (in an Alpha Club shirt). Chris compliments his scarves and asks if he can play a song he's written about Elias. He can't borrow the guitar but worry not because Jericho has his own. The song is about Elias being a stupid idiot and HE JUST MADE THE LIST! Jericho loads up the pen but says he's kidding. Jericho: "NO I'M NOT! YOU JUST MADE THE LIST!"

Here's Elias in the ring to talk about how amazing it is that it took Raw twenty five years to find him. WWE stands for Walk With Elias but the fans won't let him play his song. Elias wants to sing it for the fans but points out Jimmy Fallon in the front row. The song is about the various legends, including talking about how Shawn's time is passed and Undertaker is a decrepit old man. He's going to the Royal Rumble but here's John Cena to interrupt.

Cena asks the crowd if they're loud now and points out that both he and Brooklyn have balls because there they are (it's a beach ball in this case). Elias tells him to shut up because the fans are there to see Elias but Cena ruined it. Cena tells him to do something about it but Elias says no and teases leaving. The fight is on of course and Cena hits his finishing sequence but the AA is cut off by a low blow. A guitar to the back leaves Cena laying and Drift Away makes it even better. I'm pleasantly surprised here as this was a very solid rub for Elias who took some of Cena's best and left him laying. Good stuff here.

New Day is at the poker game now with Woods betting pancakes. Slater FINALLY wins a hand but is accused of cheating. A fight nearly breaks out and Bradshaw says if you want to fight, do it in the ring. Oh I can feel the Revival's death coming from here. Titus Worldwide and Slater/Rhyno leave but DiBiase wins with a royal flush. As he rakes in the chips, Ron Simmons says his catchphrase.

Mark Henry is in the back and runs into the Godfather and....some random woman. Godfather brings up Sexual Chocolate but Henry says that was a long time ago. Henry seems to hit on the woman....and it's Godfather's wife. Mark smiles and isn't sure what to think.

Titus Worldwide vs. Heath Slater/Rhyno

Titus chops Rhyno to start before it's off to Crews vs. Slater with Heath starting in on the arm. A very delayed vertical suplex puts Heath down and we take a break. IN THIS MATCH??? Back with the match being thrown out at 5:40. Again not enough to rate but this seems like a means to an end.

Cue the Dudley Boyz (including Bubba, who was named ROH GM two days ago and D-Von, who looks rather huge) as everyone bails to the floor. Slater gets thrown back inside for What's Up (with Booker commenting on D-Von's weight gain). It's table time of course (with Rhyno pulling the ring skirt back) and the 3D drives Slater through it for good measure. This was a HUGE relief as the Revival wasn't destroyed for no apparent reason.

AJ Styles is in the back and has his own interviewer: Mean Gene Okerlund. AJ does his best Hogan impression to Gene (AJ: "Sorry I've always wanted to do that.") before talking about facing Kami on Sunday. He has a small window to fight on Sunday but if he does it right, they'll hear him announced as still being champion. Gene looks confused.

Back to the Manhattan Center and here's DX for the big reunion. Well just Shawn and HHH to start. Shawn has been hearing people ask HBSizzle what his best moment in the 25 years have been. He can't remember 25 minutes ago but he does remember something about a big sausage, which HHH cuts him off. Then one time they were all in Christmas stuff but HHH says no again.

Shawn gets annoyed because he used to be the boss of this group but now HHH is the boss of everything so Shawn doesn't get to do anything anymore. All you have to do to see all those moments again though is sign up for the WWE Network. HHH talks about the fans starting the fire and now they're here because of him.

We hear about some of the history of DX, including a rare Chyna name drop. HHH talks about going to WCW in a tank (it wasn't a tank) and starting a war (which had started well over a year prior) but now they're here because the Manhattan Center is home. They're not here alone though because here are the New Age Outlaws. Maybe Road Dogg can ruin Raw now.

Dogg does his usual and here's X-Pac for another surprise (I mean, assuming you didn't see the graphics all night long). The crowd cuts X-Pac off with a 1-2-3 chant but there's one more surprise: Scott Hall. Back after a VERY abrupt break with everyone in the ring and Ramon saying Hey Yo. He calls this whole thing too sweet...and here's Balor Club. They all do too Too Sweet...and it's the freaking Revival to get the legends burial.

Revival vs. Anderson and Gallows

Revival jumps them before the bell and it's Anderson in early trouble. A headlock is broken up in short order and it's off to Gallows for the kicks to the head. The Magic Killer ends Dawson clean at 2:00.

Revival goes after DX and takes the finishers, because this worked so well for Damien Sandow. X-Factor, Shake Rattle and Roll, Fameasser, Sweet Chin Music, Pedigree and Coup de Grace, followed by Billy getting in his catchphrase. So glad they had Revival, one of the best teams in a long time, to do this. To be fair they're wrestlers and we don't have room for that around here.

Angle brings out all of the legends and people from the poker game to surround the ring for the closing segment as we go to a break at 11:03. Back with Angle bringing out Braun Strowman and Kane, who are held apart by a lot of the wrestlers. Paul Heyman comes out and introduces Brock Lesnar for a fight. Here's Brock...and everyone but Kane and Strowman bail in fear. Brock runs over Strowman and hits an F5 on Kane but Strowman is back in to knock Lesnar to the floor. The running powerslam through the announcers' table plants Lesnar to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This show was trying to do two things at once and it made them both suffer. There was actually a bit too much wrestling going on and some of those longer matches (which to be fair were only in the

first half of the show) were cutting down on time that could have been used for the nostalgia stuff. The problem is you have to do that for the Rumble, leaving less time for the big anniversary material.

The anniversary stuff was fine enough, but it really peaked at the beginning and was kind of downhill from there. Going back to the Manhattan Center was fun, though it really felt like the crowd there got screwed a bit. Other than DX and Undertaker's short appearance, almost nothing there felt important or special and that's not a great sign. Throw in the stupid, stupid, STUPID beatdown of Revival (who not only got taken out by the old guys but also lost a clean two minute match) and Terri Runnels/Kelly Kelly apparently being trailblazers and some of this stuff left a lot to be desired.

As for the Rumble build....eh. Once the big names for the Rumble are set, there's not a lot that can really be done to build to the pay per view. We know all of the main roster women in the Rumble and most of the men are already set so there's only so much you can do here. What we got was ok, though the triple threat stuff isn't doing anything for me.

Now there was a lot of good stuff as well, including Miz winning the Intercontinental Title back (thanks for keeping it warm Roman), Elias beating Cena down, the lack of Undertaker vs. Cena being made (though that could change), some of the cameos (Henry and Godfather made me laugh) and of course Austin and Vince. It wasn't the worst show, but I was expecting a lot more and didn't get really close to it, which is rather disappointing. Still though, it could have been much worse.

Results

Bayley/Sasha Banks/Mickie James/Asuka b. Absolution/Alicia Fox/Nia Jax – Bank Statement to Fox

The Miz b. Roman Reigns – Skull Crushing Finale

Bray Wyatt b. Matt Hardy – Sister Abigail

Titus Worldwide vs. Heath Slater/Rhyno went to a double DQ when all four brawled

Anderson and Gallows b. Revival – Magic Killer to Dawson

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