

Summerslam Count-Up – 2018 (2019 Redo): He Got Him

Summerslam 2018

Date: August 19, 2018

Location: Barclays Center, New York City, New York

Attendance: 16,169

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton, Tom Phillips, Jonathan Coachman

This time for sure, Summerslam edition! Yes believe it or not the main event is once again Roman Reigns challenging Brock Lesnar for the Universal Title because that hasn't gotten old this year. Other than that...as usual I can barely remember anything on these shows as they run together so much. Let's get to it.

Oh and due to the recent WWE Network update, I get to watch the Kickoff Show on YouTube. Well done with that one people.

Kickoff Show: Andrade Cien Almas/Zelina Vega vs. Lana/Rusev

Rusev is on fire at this point and it's a battle of the wrestling pairs. Andrade gets Rusev to chase him and it's right into the double Tranquilo pose. Rusev and Lana shout at them but Andrade gets in a cheap shot to break up the chase. That's fine with Rusev, who stomps him down in the corner until Zelina offers a distraction. Andrade posts him like a good rudo, setting up the armbreaker over the ropes. An armbar takes us to a break and we come back with Vega pulling Lana off the apron to prevent the tag.

The reverse tornado DDT gives Andrade two and the armbar goes on again. Another reverse tornado DDT is countered with a forearm (keeping it simple can work) though and it's the hot tag to Lana. A bulldog lets Lana dance up and the neckbreaker gets two. Vega sends her face first into the buckle but Lana breaks up the running knees with a kick to the head. Andrade makes sure the Accolade doesn't go on with a well timed distraction though and Vega grabs a rollup with her feet...as close to

the ropes as she can get them for the pin at 7:02. That was pretty adorable with Vega trying to get there and not reaching.

Rating: D+. What happened with Rusev and Lana? I know I ask that a lot but egads man. They're married in real life, Rusev has more charisma than he knows what to do with and Lana is the walking definition of a blonde bombshell who can talk. A year later they've basically disappeared and I would love to know why. At least Andrade is getting a push, and with as much talent as he has, there is no reason for him not to. The fans are properly fired up now so well done on the job, even if the match wasn't great.

Kickoff Show: Cruiserweight Title: Drew Gulak vs. Cedric Alexander

Cedric is defending in the first of NINE title matches because WWE has too many times and doesn't get why that is such a problem. Gulak's friends Brian Kendrick and Jack Gallagher are barred from ringside. Feeling out process to start with Cedric taking him into the corner but having his headscissors blocked. The Gulock is broken up in a hurry and Cedric hits a dropkick to take things outside.

Gulak gets in a big boot on the way back inside and Cedric has banged up his neck. The neck crank goes on and we take a break. Back with Gulak's continued logical offense, including some clotheslines and a chinlock. Gulak throws him over his back and pulls on the neck some more (close to a Gory Special) but since that can't last long, Cedric is right back with a springboard Downward Spiral. With the wrestling not working, it's time to hammer away at the head before sending him outside.

The big running flip dive hits Gulak again but he's fine enough to break up a springboard. The Gulak over the ropes is half and half on the logical offense theme but the regular version can't go on. A hard elbow to the head rocks Gulak, who comes right back with the biggest right hand I've ever seen him throw. The Neuralizer is countered into the ankle lock but Cedric rolls into a cradle for two. Cedric's Spanish Fly is countered into a rollup for two, which is reversed into a stacked up rollup to give Cedric the pin at 10:43.

Rating: B-. This was the well done match that I was expecting, with Gulak

going after the obvious target but not being able to finish off the more well rounded Alexander. Cedric was kind of a dull character but he is more than good enough to have a fast paced match like this. Gulak winning the title here would have been a good moment, but Cedric was hardly a bad choice for champion.

Kickoff Show: Raw Tag Team Titles: B-Team vs. Revival

The B-Team is defending because WWE would rather laugh than go with a team they have invested so much in already. At least we get the B-TEAM B-TEAM GO GO GO entrance. Dallas headlocks Dawson down over but everything breaks down in a hurry with a shot to Dallas' leg. The Shatter Machine hits the illegal Axel and a missile dropkick/spinebuster (Hart Attack variation) gets three straight twos on Dallas. More leg cranking takes us to a break and we come back with more leg cranking.

Dawson puts on a spinning toehold but gets kicked shoulder first into the post. Since Axel is still down (well done on making the Shatter Machine look awesome) though, it's a backbreaker/middle rope knee for two more. Dallas grabs a hanging swinging neckbreaker on Wilder and now it's back to Axel off the hot tag. Everything breaks down with the PerfectPlex being countered into a small package. Dallas shoves Wilder into the pile though and Axel winds up on top to retain at 6:12.

Rating: D+. This was the "let's add a Raw match to the Kickoff Show because it's for a title and people will care" theme and, as usual, it didn't work very well. We're three matches in and now the four hour Summerslam gets to start. It's just one more thing added to the card that was completely forgettable and took a little bit more out of the fans. How does this make the night better?

Terry Crews is outside the Barclays Center and talks about the measure of success. You can feel the heartbeat in your chest to drive you and then you grind to find the moments that define success for you. Tonight, this is where dreams come true because all the world's a stage. So what defines success and greatness and how bad do you want it? Go ahead and take a bow because we'll let you take a bow because you're about to bear witness to another great Summerslam. The things he was saying only kind

of made sense, but sweet goodness that man can get you fired up for a show.

The CGI Empire State Building is over the ring again. You can't see it live in the arena of course and that will mess you up when you see it on a monitor and not before your eyes.

Intercontinental Title: Seth Rollins vs. Dolph Ziggler

Rollins is challenging with the freshly returned Dean Ambrose in his corner (because having him show up on Raw was far smarter than having him show up at Summerslam) to counter Drew McIntyre (because DOLPH ZIGGLER was the bigger prospect in 2018....and kind of was in 2019 as well). As a bonus, Rollins is in Thanos inspired gear while Ziggler has a picture of the title over the front of his tights.

They go with the grappling to start with Rollins being backed up to the ropes, meaning it's time for Ambrose to stare at McIntyre. The early superkick misses Rollins and Ziggler bails to the floor. That means a double staredown until Rollins throws him back in for some chops. Ziggler kicks at the leg to take over and we get a Flair Flip of all things. The chinlock goes on with Ziggler kicking the knee to keep Rollins down in a smart move.

Rollins' comeback doesn't last long as Ziggler backdrops him to the floor. Back in and Ziggler's high crossbody is pulled out of the air but they crash to the floor again off of a suplex attempt (that's always a scary looking spot). Back in again and Rollins gets two off a middle rope Blockbuster but Ziggler crotches him on top. Another superplex attempt is broken up and Rollins sends him outside for a suicide dive.

Rollins' windup knee gets two but the buckle bomb is countered into a quickly broken sleeper. They fight to the apron with Ziggler kicking him into the post and nailing the DDT onto the apron for what should be a huge knockout. Since it's this kind of a match though, it's only good for two. Rollins hits him in the face again and gets his own two off the great looking frog splash.

Ziggler goes up top but Ziggler catches him with a reverse superplex into

a reverse Falcon Arrow for a nice twist on the usual sequence. The fans give it a standing ovation so they seem to have some good taste. Hold on though as McIntyre sends Ambrose into the steps with the distraction letting Ziggler hit the Zig Zag for two. I blame the kickout on Cole declaring it over, which is the magical cure for a finisher. Rollins is busted open as he reverses a rollup into the buckle bomb. Dean gets back up and takes care of an interfering McIntyre, leaving Rollins to him the Stomp to get the title back at 22:02.

Rating: B. You don't expect the opener to get this kind of time. The match was entertaining though it wasn't quite the instant classic they were going for. It felt like the match was more of a collection of spots than a match that built on itself to get somewhere. That's a great way to get an entertaining match and for what they were going for, I can certainly live with something like this. Maybe not the highest quality but very entertaining, which more or less defines Rollins.

Rollins and Ambrose celebrate a lot.

The Bellas are here to support their bestest friend ever Ronda Rousey, and to plug all their stuff of course. They might even get back in the ring at Evolution.

Smackdown Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Bludgeon Brothers

Big E. and Xavier Woods are challenging and it's almost weird to see Kofi around a Tag Team Title match these days. Rowan wastes no time by spin kicking Woods in the face to start. Harper hits a big boot of his own and it's off to the Gator Roll into the chinlock. A running splash from Rowan sets up the head vice as it's total dominance to start. Big E. gets knocked off the apron and Woods is sent outside to join him, but Rowan can't powerbomb Woods onto the steps.

A hurricanrana sends Harper into the steps and the hot tag brings in Big E. Belly to belly suplexes on the floor abound (with Harper landing on his head and thankfully not breaking something), followed by the Warrior Splash to Harper inside. Harper is right back with a Michinoku Driver but Big E. sends Rowan into the post. Woods hits a dive onto Rowan and Big E. spears Harper through the ropes.

Rowan is back up with his own dive off the apron to Big E. and things finally settle down a notch. Woods can't complete a springboard tornado DDT as Harper reverses into a powerbomb for two, meaning it's time for Kofi to play cheerleader. Apparently not a fan of cheerleading, Rowan plants Kofi but walks into the Big Ending.

Big E. Rock Bottoms Harper off the apron into what was supposed to be a backstabber from Woods, though it was more like Harper just landed on Woods' legs. Eh can't hit them all. Woods makes up for it by dropping the big elbow off the top to the floor and Harper is actually in trouble. UpUpDownDown is loaded up but Rowan hits Woods with the hammer for the DQ at 9:27.

Rating: B-. They didn't play around here and went with the all action match, which was the right call here. Let them do whatever they wanted and have an entertaining match as a result. New Day was throwing everything they could against the unstoppable monsters and came close to getting a win. That's the kind of hope spot you need over a team like the Brothers as you have to have a reason to believe something could happen in the future. That being said, it didn't mean anything in the end as Rowan tore his bicep and New Day would win the titles in two days.

Post match the Brothers destroy New Day with the hammer.

Jon Stewart is here.

We recap Kevin Owens vs. Braun Strowman. Owens said he was on a role and tried to get Strowman's help to win Money in the Bank. Strowman didn't like it when Owens inevitably turned on him and threw him through a bunch of tables before winning the briefcase. The Strowman destroyed Owens' car and put him in a portable toilet, which he knocked off the stage. Owens "beat" Strowman in a cage match when Strowman threw him off a cage so now it's a rematch for the Money in the Bank briefcase.

Money In The Bank Briefcase: Braun Strowman vs. Kevin Owens

Strowman is defending and can lose the briefcase by losing in any way. An early pair of running splashes in the corner sends Owens outside and Strowman runs him over again. Owens' superkick just makes Strowman

angrier and it's a chokeslam onto the ramp. The running powerslam finishes Owens at 1:55. Well that worked and makes Strowman look like the monster, but HAHA if you actually thought they would put the title on him.

Clip of a Be A Star rally.

We recap the Smackdown Women's Title match. Carmella cashed in Money in the Bank at the Smackdown after Wrestlemania and has been put over one name after another, though she is still seen as in over her head. Becky Lynch has been trying to get back to the top and is getting the shot here. Then Charlotte saved Becky from a beatdown and got a match where she could be added to the match if she won. Since it's Charlotte, OF COURSE she was added in, which Becky saw as someone else trying to steal her chance. Charlotte did get in a good line with Carmella "is a Diva living in a woman's world."

Smackdown Women's Title: Becky Lynch vs. Charlotte vs. Carmella

Carmella is defending and we get the Big Match Intros, with the hometown champ not being well received. As I continue to not understand why the title belt is shown inside what looks like the Elimination Chamber during the graphic, the bell rings and Carmella starts running her mouth. Charlotte gets sent outside so Becky can hit a running legdrop but the second misses.

Carmella isn't happy with Charlotte breaking up the cover but it's time to get crafty. She slaps Becky in the head and blames Charlotte, who says she's innocent as they knock Carmella to the floor. Becky and Charlotte trade rollups and it's a standoff for some applause. An armbar puts Charlotte down for all of two seconds but Carmella is back in because she can't just go away.

Becky gets sent into the steps so Carmella can shout and dance a lot. Charlotte is whipped down as well and Carmella takes Becky inside for, you know it, more shouting. She does even things out a bit with a chinlock until Charlotte comes back in, only to be taken down by the hair. Now it's Charlotte getting chinlocked as we see the wide range of Carmella's offense. Becky makes her own save, gets dropkicked down, and

Carmella shouts about being champion again. How can she be repeating stuff that many times less than six minutes into a match?

Carmella mocks Becky's pose and ducks a shot from Charlotte, which hits Becky instead. Some fall away slams drop Carmella and Charlotte nips up but Becky knees her in the face. A double missile dropkick puts Carmella and Charlotte down again with Charlotte being sent outside. Becky gets caught on top for a hurricanrana to give Carmella two, leaving herself open to Charlotte's spear.

Since we can't go that long with Carmella being on defense, she knocks Charlotte into the corner and shouts that no one cares about her anymore. Another hurricanrana out of the corner is countered into a Boston crab (with Charlotte driving her down from the corner almost like a Styles Clash) before switching to the Figure Four. That's broken up with Becky's top rope legdrop and they're all down.

Becky gets up first and hammers on Carmella, who of course knocks her outside because SHE IS THE CHAMP. A rather hard suicide dive hits Becky but it's Charlotte coming off the top with the moonsault, which goes right between them and barely makes contact, as usual. Back in and Carmella breaks up the Disarm-Her so Becky gets two off a Rock Bottom, with Carmella making ANOTHER save.

Carmella gets two off a superkick with Charlotte making the very last second save. Charlotte gets sent outside so it's another superkick to Becky, who shrugs it off without much trouble. The Disarm-Her goes on but Charlotte dives in with Natural Selection for the pin on Becky at 14:42.

Rating: C+. The action was good but the important thing here is that Carmella can go off to do ANYTHING but be in the title picture. Her reign showed the entire problem with using Money in the Bank as a quick rise to the top: Carmella was never viewed as a serious wrestler but she won a ladder match and stole the title so now she can hang with Charlotte and Becky? It never worked and this match exposed how limited she was in the ring, with all the shouting and superkicks getting old in a hurry. She is perfectly fine as the cheerleader type character and it fits her SO much better, as time has proven.

The match itself was pretty good with a lot of saves and back and forth action, but I kept wanting Carmella to fall in a hole somewhere so the other two could have a better match. The fans wanted to see Becky and having Charlotte get the title back wasn't the most thrilling result. Becky's frustrations are proven right again and things could get interesting as a result.

Post match Becky hugs Charlotte but completely snaps, beating the fire out of her and throwing Charlotte over the announcers' table to one of the biggest face reactions in forever. WWE actually tried to treat this as a heel turn for a bit before realizing that it just wasn't working and strapped a rocket to Becky's back, leading all the way to the main event of Wrestlemania and the biggest push in women's history.

We recap AJ Styles vs. Samoa Joe. AJ has been champion for about nine months and has beaten a bunch of challengers so he issued an open challenge for Summerslam. Joe choked AJ out and signed the contract before starting his real attack. He called out AJ for neglecting his family but promised to send AJ home by ending the title reign. Then he read a letter from AJ's wife, saying that everything Joe said was true and how much she wanted Joe to win.

Smackdown World Title: AJ Styles vs. Samoa Joe

Joe is challenging and the fans certainly seem to like him, though AJ isn't exactly being booed. AJ's wife and daughter are in the crowd so Joe breaks up the Big Match Intros and says hi to both of them, promising to send daddy home tonight. An early Koquina Clutch attempt doesn't work and it's a TNA chant for a little flashback. Joe gets in a cheap shot in the corner and then bails to the ropes as the mind games continue.

AJ takes him down with a headlock as they're starting slowly (which is ok). Back up and a big shoulder sends AJ into the ropes as Graves explains the psychology in a rare bit of usefulness. They trade kicks to the leg so things can start picking up a bit. In what shouldn't be a surprise, Joe wins the battle of the strikes at first but AJ keeps going with chops against the ropes.

The drop down into the dropkick has Joe in trouble and AJ knocks him

outside. Since AJ isn't that bright, he gets his leg kicked out to send him face first into the apron. Joe hits the big suicide elbow to send AJ into the announcers' table, with Graves saying it's like a flying school bus. Can someone explain to Graves that the Magic School Bus is fiction? Back in and a clothesline gives Joe two and the chinlock goes on.

That goes nowhere so AJ fights up and sends Joe outside for the slingshot forearm. Back in and the middle rope moonsault into the reverse DDT gets two but Joe is right back up with a middle rope leg lariat. A big boot into the backsplash is good for two more as Joe keeps using the power advantage. AJ's fireman's carry gutbuster hurts his own knee so Joe is right back with the snap powerslam (great one too).

AJ is right back up and manages the Styles Clash for two and the fans bought the near fall. The Rock Bottom out of the corner gives Joe a breather but AJ is right back with the Calf Crusher (remember the leg kicks earlier). You don't put holds on Joe though and he slams AJ's head into the mat for the break, quickly followed by the Koquina Clutch. A foot on the rope breaks things up so Joe takes it outside...and talks to AJ's wife, saying AJ won't be coming home but he'll be her new daddy. You know it's on now as AJ tackles Joe over the barricade and hits him with a chair for the DQ at 22:45.

Rating: B. This is one where the DQ finish makes sense to keep the story going, though I'm not sure why Joe, who has been very calculating this whole time, would do something like that when he was in control. It came off more like he was admitting he couldn't beat AJ tonight and that's not Joe's style. What we did get was a solid back and forth match with AJ fighting his heart out and Joe using the power and size advantage to dominate the emotional champ. I'm certainly down for a rematch and that's where this is obviously going.

Post match AJ beats the fire out of Joe with the chair, drawing a WHO'S YOUR DADDY chant. With Joe gone, AJ checks on his wife and daughter, the latter of whom says he's bleeding. AJ: "I'm sorry."

Here's Elias for a song. Believe it or not, he was a child once but then he grew up and wrote a great album. That album included a song called

Elias' Words and knowing that the entire world loves you is an incredible feeling. Tonight we're getting a new song and it might be his greatest yet. This song is dedicated to all of the New Yorkers out there tonight, because all of the dirt in their ears and mind and the harsh reality of living in this city is all about to be washed away. And then his guitar breaks. Well so much for that.

Miz runs into the B-Team backstage (why they're still in their gear two hours after their match isn't clear) but he doesn't need their luck. Tonight he's proving that he's better than Daniel Bryan, but if they want to fetch the limo for the post match celebration, he's good with that. They're leaving actually because they have their own celebrating to do. They're not the Miztourage anymore because they're the B-Team. The B stands for Daniel Bryan and offer him a spot on their new reality show: "Total Fellas, but with a B, so Total Bellas!" Miz looks confused.

We recap the Miz vs. Daniel Bryan, which is eight years in the making. Miz was Bryan's NXT Pro back in the day despite Bryan being much more experienced. Bryan broke away from Miz and turned into a star but never could shake the Miz, who thought Bryan was a huge fluke. Then Bryan got hurt and had to leave for years, with Miz taunting him after he walked away and retired. Miz called him out for being a coward and started using Bryan's offense for years.

This included Miz's incredible Talking Smack promo where Bryan called Miz a coward, sending Miz into an all time rant about how Bryan was the coward for not getting back in the ring while Miz was here every day. Then one day Bryan was medically cleared and everyone saw this match coming. Now it's on the big stage as everyone is ready to see Bryan kick Miz's head off. The theme is passion vs. fame and completely different ideologies about wrestling. It's a natural rivalry and this match has more than earned a spot on this kind of a major show.

Daniel Bryan vs. The Miz

Miz's wife and daughter are in the front row (who knew AJ was so influential). Bryan has talked for months about wanting to punch Miz in the face so he immediately balls up his fist, sending Miz into the ropes.

Miz gets in the first few shots and fires off the kicks in the corner but the running dropkick is caught by the throat. Bryan gets to punch him in the face to a BIG reaction and now it's Miz getting kicked in the corner for his efforts.

Another kick to the chest gets two but Miz takes him down for a surfboard. It turns out that Bryan knows how to escape that pretty easily and puts Miz in it to even things up. More YES Kicks (Graves: "Paying homage to the Miz." Tom: "I swear to God.") connect but Miz is right back with a hard clothesline to drop Bryan again. A cravate lets Miz hit some knees to the head and Bryan is back down.

The Reality Check gets two but Miz takes too long loading up the kicks, allowing Bryan to hit the moonsault out of the corner into the running clothesline. A hurricanrana out of the corner gets two and Miz is sent outside, meaning it's the running dropkick through the ropes. The big dive to the floor drops Miz again and Bryan gets smart by tying him in the Tree of Woe for the kicks to the chest. The belly to back superplex gets two as it keeps getting worse for Miz.

Bryan misses the big YES Kick though and Miz hits a DDT for a breather. Miz's YES Kicks just wake Bryan up so he catches a kick and hits Miz in the face (as promised). It's too early for the running knee as Miz counters into a failed Figure Four attempt. The Skull Crushing Finale doesn't fail though and gives Miz his next close two. With his chest looking very banged up, Miz's running knee is countered with another kick to the head for two and they're both dazed.

As tends to be the case at this point in a match, they had to the apron, where Bryan's kick hits the post to give Miz a big target. He's smart enough to go straight to the Figure Four but Bryan eventually turns it over to reverse the pressure. Miz isn't smart enough to just unhook his leg so it's a long crawl to the rope for the break. Bryan is right back on him by tying up Miz's arm for the elbows to the face and then the YES Lock.

With Miz getting close to the rope, Bryan punches him in the back of the head for some good measure. Miz gets a boot on the rope and rolls to the

floor, where Bryan hits the running knee from the apron. As luck would have it though, he winds up next to Maryse, who slips him something made of metal. Bryan tries a suicide dive but gets knocked cold with a shot to the head, allowing Miz to get the pin at 23:45.

Rating: B. It wasn't the big, epic match they were shooting for but what we got was something that got pretty close to living up to the hype. The problem is it's nearly impossible to live up to a reality that fans had in their heads after so long, but they did very well anyway. Miz being cocky the whole time but not being able to survive against the more naturally talented Bryan made perfect sense. The cheating leaves them wide open for a rematch and since Miz's wife got involved, Bryan's should as well, right?

Super ShowDown is coming, including HHH vs. Undertaker for the last time ever.

Video on Undertaker vs. HHH, which is quite the story.

Baron Corbin vs. Finn Balor

Corbin has been a jerk to Balor so it's Demon time, thankfully in a complete surprise so we didn't have to hear THE DEMON IS FINN BALOR'S ALTER EGO for a month. The entrance shakes Corbin, possible because he's realized that he's Baron Corbin. Balor dropkicks him to the floor at the bell and hits the Sling Blade. The running flip dive hits Corbin and Balor sends him into the barricade. As Coach tries to figure out why Balor doesn't use the Demon more often, it's a top rope double stomp to Corbin's back and the Coup de Grace finishes at 1:22. Exactly what it should have been, assuming you absolutely have to have Corbin employed.

Brie Bella checks on Bryan and they're not happy with Miz and Maryse. Bryan says his comeback has been a bust but Brie calms him down.

United States Title: Jeff Hardy vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

Nakamura is defending and this is your "it just sounds cool" match of the show, as well as a rematch after Nakamura won the title in six seconds after a low blow last month. Jeff has been dealing with Randy Orton as of

late as well so you can probably pencil in the interference. There's no major contact for the first minute or so, meaning we need a COME ON from Nakamura. Hardy charges into a knee but stops to dance like Nakamura, which doesn't sit well with the champ. Neither does Hardy doing COME ON as things actually get going.

Nakamura knees him in the face and grabs an arm trap chinlock, which is broken with a rather quick jawbreaker. Some more kicks have Hardy right back in trouble and we hit another chinlock. Jeff fights up again and hits something close to a Sling Blade to put them both down again. Another kick drops Hardy again though as he can't seem to figure out that he needs to avoid the feet. He finally gets the idea as a running knee hits the buckle, allowing Hardy to nail the Whisper in the Wind for two.

Since that isn't the most high impact move, Nakamura is right back with the hard knees but the low blow misses. Jeff dropkicks him down to set up the Swanton for a delayed two. With Nakamura rolling to the apron, Hardy tries another Swanton but crashes back first onto the apron for his efforts. Kinshasa retains the title at 10:57.

Rating: D+. The chinlocks hurt this one a lot and you could feel the energy going out of the crowd. This was around the time that Nakamura was putting it in coast mode and there wasn't much that could draw him out. His charisma is more than enough to carry him, but it would be nice to see some effort into his matches. Jeff continues to drift around, which is pretty much all he does as a singles guy these days.

Post match Orton comes out but instead of going after Jeff, he just hits himself in the head and leaves without doing anything else. He can be an odd guy.

We recap Ronda Rousey vs. Alexa Bliss. Rousey had the Raw Women's Title won at Money in the Bank but Bliss cashed in her briefcase to steal the title from Nia Jax. Bliss has been WAY too confident coming into this so Rousey has been suspended several times, yet still getting her title match here. Tonight Rousey is going to destroy Bliss and get the title for the first time.

Raw Women's Title: Ronda Rousey vs. Alexa Bliss

Ronda is challenging and has Natalya, whose dad Jim Neidhart died a few weeks back (meaning she has her dad's Summerslam 1990 jacket on for a great touch). Oh and the Bellas are here too because they're stars. Bliss hides in the ropes a few times to start as she is trying to delay the inevitable for as long as she can. A cheap shot is blocked by a single right hand to send Bliss outside.

Back in and Bliss bails a second time so Rousey turns her back and sits down to let Bliss get in safely. Bliss comes in and tries a chinlock, not realizing that it leaves her arm exposed. Rousey picks her up for the yet to be named Piper's Pit and Bliss is on the floor again. The chase lets Bliss get in a few shots...and there's the stare. Rousey unloads in the corner and hits the judo throws (while talking trash), setting up the armbar (with Bliss popping the arm out of joint as only she can) for the easy tap and the title at 4:38.

Rating: C+. This is one where the presentation was all that mattered. Rousey was never in any danger and the match was a complete squash, which was the right call. There was no reason to pretend that Bliss could be a threat to her and they didn't waste their time on anything stupid. Rousey is the biggest star in the division and one of the biggest in the company, so making her champion was the obvious move, especially since she's here full time.

Post match Rousey hugs Natalya and the Bellas. Guess which two are booed. Her husband gets a big kiss as well. Rousey's husband that is, in case it's not clear.

We recap the Raw World Title match. Roman Reigns has been chasing the title and the win against Brock Lesnar for the better part of forever, having lost at Wrestlemania XXXI, Wrestlemania XXXIV and Greatest Royal Rumble. Now we're doing it again because these two are joined at the hip in an eternal chase. This time around they're presenting it as Reigns is here and Lesnar isn't, even though the fans don't seem to think much of Reigns so his attendance doesn't make much difference. They teased Heyman jumping to Reigns but it was dropped in all of ten seconds so Lesnar could beat Reigns up again.

Raw World Title: Roman Reigns vs. Brock Lesnar

Reigns' CGI entrance is a big dog head over the Shield logo, which is rather terrifying when you don't know it's coming. Lesnar is defending and Paul Heyman handles his Big Match Intro. Hold on though as Strowman comes out to say he's going to be cashing in on whomever wins. Reigns hits three Superman Punches and two spears in the first thirty seconds but the third is countered into a guillotine choke.

That's broken up with a spinebuster and we're just over a minute in. Brock grabs it again so Reigns uses the same counter. For once it makes sense to have them laying down this early as they've beaten each other up quite a bit so far. Brock takes the gloves off and counters another Superman Punch into the rolling German suplexes. The fans say the two of them suck and Reigns escapes the F5.

A missed charge sends Reigns through the ropes and into Strowman, who Lesnar plants with an F5 on the floor. Reigns is thrown back in and Strowman grabs Lesnar's leg. That earns him a beating with the briefcase, which Lesnar throws up to the stage (egads that's not normal). Lesnar unloads with a chair, walks back inside and gets speared to give Reigns the title at 6:09.

Rating: D. NOW NEVER FIGHT AGAIN! This feud went on forever and their matches were the same finisher feets over and over again. Strowman could have been anything from the Monster to a stray puppy as he only served as a distraction to cost Lesnar the title. Reigns winning here doesn't feel like some major moment, though it's nice to have Lesnar FINALLY lose the title. They should have done this at Wrestlemania at the latest though and by the time they got here, no one cared and there was no reason for them to. At least it was shorter this time around so there is one minor positive. Just get on to any other feud, please.

Reigns poses as Strowman is still down to end the show.

Overall Rating: A-. I had forgotten how good this show was as WWE managed to cut out a bunch of the nonsense and just roll with the awesome matches that have been well built up. It's so frustrating to see what they're capable of doing when they actually try because they don't put in the

effort so much of the time. This was an awesome show with nothing very bad (Reigns vs. Lesnar is more the result of everything that came before it between the two of them) and three or four matches that got time and lived up to it. Check this one out if you have the time, but completely skip the Kickoff Show.

Ratings Comparison

Zelina Vega/Andrade Cien Almas vs. Rusev/Lana

Original: D

2019 Redo: D+

Cedric Alexander vs. Drew Gulak

Original: C+

2019 Redo: B-

Revival vs. B-Team

Original: D+

2019 Redo: D+

Dolph Ziggler vs. Seth Rollins

Original: B

2019 Redo: B

Bludgeon Brothers vs. New Day

Original: C+

2019 Redo: B-

Kevin Owens vs. Braun Strowman

Original: N/A

2019 Redo: N/A

Charlotte vs. Becky Lynch vs. Carmella

Original: C+

2019 Redo: C+

AJ Styles vs. Samoa Joe

Original: A-

2019 Redo: B

The Miz vs. Daniel Bryan

Original: B+

2019 Redo: B

Finn Balor vs. Baron Corbin

Original: N/A

2019 Redo: N/A

Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Jeff Hardy

Original: C

2019 Redo: D+

Ronda Rousey vs. Alexa Bliss

Original: C+

2019 Redo: C+

Roman Reigns vs. Brock Lesnar

Original: C+

2019 Redo: D

Overall Rating

Original: A-

2019 Redo: A-

Most of them are in the same ballpark, but AJ vs. Joe and Reigns vs. Lesnar must have canceled each other out. Still a great show though and one of the better ones WWE has done in recent(ish) memory.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2018/08/19/summerslam-2018-they-can-still-d-o-a-thing-or-two/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and head over to my Amazon author page with 30 different cheap wrestling books at:

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

AND

[Remember to check out Wrestlingrumors.net for all of your wrestling headline needs.](http://wrestlingrumors.net)

Summerslam Count-Up – 2017 (2018 Redo): Four For Fighting

Summerslam 2017

Date: August 20, 2017

Location: Barclays Center, New York City, New York

Attendance: 16,128

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Booker T., Tom Phillips, John

Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

It's kind of amazing how these modern shows go in one ear and out the other. Aside from the main event, I couldn't tell you a single thing on this show, and I can tell you every match (mostly in order) from the first seventeen or so Wrestlemanias. It's the nature of the shows being built up so fast and then running so long, as the same is true of shows I've been to even this year. Let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: The Miz/Miztourage vs. Hardy Boyz/Jason Jordan

Rematch from Raw. Now this one I remember because it took place about twenty minutes into the two hour Kickoff Show and the place was embarrassingly empty with MAYBE twenty percent of the place full. It's just awful looking as the fans who aren't in yet (as in the majority of them) are going to be annoyed at missing a match and the wrestlers have to go out in front of this empty building like they're on some nothing indy show (in a huge arena for some reason). I mean, what in the world is the point?

Matt headlocks Axel to start and it's quickly off to Jeff as the dozens and dozens of fans get behind the good guys. Jordan comes in to crank on the arm to no reaction, at least partially because there aren't many people here to cheer. A dropkick gets two on Dallas and Jordan muscles him down to the mat.

Everything breaks down and Jordan directs traffic as the Hardys chop away in the corner. Axel saves Dallas from the Swanton and we take a break. Back with Jeff getting two off a basement dropkick as the crowd is now just embarrassing instead of depressing. Dallas pushed Jeff off the top though and it's time to start the stomping in the corner. Miz (oh yeah he's in this match) comes in for a reverse chinlock but Jeff kicks him away without too much effort.

Instead it's Axel coming in to twist Jeff's neck around as the fans chant for BROTHER NERO. Jeff dropkicks Miz and Dallas off the apron and knocks Axel away as well, allowing the lukewarm tag off to Matt. The middle rope elbow to the back of the neck gets two on Miz but he's right back up with the YES Kicks. Matt shrugs those off though and there's a Side Effect for

the same. Jordan comes in to throw Axel around, including a suplex for two. Everything breaks down and Miz makes a blind tag, setting up a Skull Crushing Finale to pin Jordan at 10:31.

Rating: C. The crowd killed what would have otherwise been a pretty good six man tag. When you can hear the wrestlers breathing, it's pretty clear that there isn't much going on in the arena, which isn't exactly the atmosphere you want for a show billed as a big party. The match itself was fine, and it helps to not have watched it six days earlier.

Kickoff Show: Cruiserweight Title: Akira Tozawa vs. Neville

Tozawa, part of Titus Worldwide, is defending after winning the title from Neville on Monday. He also has a banged up shoulder. You remember Neville. He was the awesome guy who turned into one of the best heels in the company but WWE decided that having him put over Enzo Amore made more sense and since there was apparently no way Neville could be a heavyweight again, he walked out a few months later.

Neville shoulders him down to start and then dropkicks the glare off of Tozawa's face. That's it for now though as Neville sends him outside and screams a lot, as is his custom. The jumping backplash crushes Neville back inside but he's able to snap Tozawa's throat across the top rope. Back from a break with Neville scoring off a missile dropkick to the back for two and stopping to sneer.

The chinlock lets Tozawa have a breather and he fights up to send Neville outside again. That means the big suicide dive and a Saito suplex but it's too early for the top rope backplash. Instead Tozawa reverses a fireman's carry into an Octopus hold as he's certainly keeping things varied. Neville makes the ropes so Tozawa hits a Shining Wizard for two.

An enziguri staggers Tozawa but he's right back with a second Shining Wizard to put both guys down. Tozawa is up first but gets pulled down by the bad shoulder. His legs are fine enough to kick Neville in the head and it's time to go up again. After knocking Neville off the top, the backplash hits knees and the champ is in big trouble. Neville jumps up top and hits the Red Arrow to the back for the pin and the title at 11:45.

Rating: C+. I get what they were going for here with the title change taking place on Summerslam but why not go with the first title change here and then switch it back tomorrow or the next week on Raw? Or, dare I suggest it, on 205 Live? Other than that it felt like they were just kind of going through the motions at times, but Neville going through the motions is still pretty good.

The crowd is fine now.

Kickoff Show: Smackdown Tag Team Titles: Usos vs. New Day

New Day is defending in what is kind of another Smackdown rematch, though it's a different New Day lineup. Tonight it's Woods and Big E., who has a huge cape. On the way to the ring, Kofi talks about how this is the place New Day first sang together and the original Francesca was born. Her sacrifice is what allowed us to have Francesca II: TURBO. Tonight they're here to tear the house down with the Usos one more time.

Woods and Jimmy start things off in a technical sequence until Woods hits a roaring elbow to knock Jimmy's block off. Some forearms in the corner have Jimmy in trouble but he gets in a shot to the face to stagger Woods. Back from a break with Jey putting on a chinlock and then slinging Woods into the corner. Woods knocks Jey off the top and avoids a charge from Jimmy. A missile dropkick has Jey in trouble but Jimmy pulls Big E. off the apron.

Thankfully the hot tag isn't just a few seconds later and a backbreaker/middle rope knee combination gets two. Woods is in big trouble but scores with a victory roll faceplant (not a bad little move), which is finally enough for the hot tag to Big E. House is cleaned, including the release Rock Bottom out of the corner for two on Jey. Big E. powerbombs Woods onto Jey as the fast tags begin.

Woods even manages to electric chair Big E. so he can splash Jey as well but Jimmy comes in for a save. The double spinebuster gets two on Big E. and there's the running Umaga attack for good measure as the pace picks up. Woods comes back in for a Rock Bottom into a Backstabber, which is somehow only good for two. That's a heck of a finisher for those two if they're ever a regular team.

Jey gets a blind tag but Woods knocks both Usos to the floor just in case. Big E.'s spear through the ropes is cut off by a superkick and a Superfly Splash while he's still stuck in the ropes. The regular Superfly Splash gets a close two on Woods but he pulls Jey into a Koji Clutch. That's broken up as well so Woods goes with a Shining Wizard for two.

A tornado DDT to the floor plants Jey and Jimmy takes the Midnight Hour, only to have Jey dive in at the last second for another save. Jimmy Samoan drops Woods to the floor and Kofi gets sent into the steps for checking on his buddy. Big E. is right back up with the spear through the ropes to take Jey down. Woods is done though and it's four straight superkicks to Big E. into the double Us to give the Usos the titles back at 19:09.

Rating: B. Is there any surprise that this was the best thing on the Kickoff Show? This took some time to get going but these four delivered, as always. They know how to work well together and the diving saves for the false finishes were great. You could run these two over and over again, which is exactly what happened for the next few months. That can only go on for so long though, and that's why the division isn't great to this day.

The opening video starts with a shot of Brooklyn before heading backstage. The bigger matches get a quick look as someone spray paints the Summerslam logo onto a wall. That's rather generic for the opening of such a big show.

John Cena vs. Baron Corbin

Corbin attacked Shinsuke Nakamura after Nakamura beat Cena, who made the save. Cena then cost Corbin his Money in the Bank cash-in to really hammer this home. The fans, ever so nice, ask Baron where his briefcase is. Cena slides outside to mock Corbin, even throwing on JBL's hat. Well that makes any adult look like a moron so Corbin gives chase but Cena slides back in.

A headlock keeps Corbin on trouble as JBL points out the Cena issue with the crowd: they're always chanting about him, whether it's positive or negative. That's not the best sign for the opponents, but at least Corbin

had the chant to start the match. Some knees to the ribs put Cena in trouble and Corbin pops him in the jaw with a right hand.

The slide underneath the corner sets up the hard clothesline for two and Corbin is already looking frustrated. A suplex gets the same so it's time to yell at the referee. Corbin hits a World's Strongest Slam and we hit the chinlock. The fans ask about the briefcase again so Corbin says it's on Cena. Another comeback starts up with the flying shoulders until Corbin slides under the ropes again, only to slide back in for a chokebreaker.

Cena blocks a superplex attempt and hits a tornado DDT, sending the fans right back into their chorus of booing. The AA is reversed into a Deep Six and Corbin can't believe the kickout. He's so serious that the shirt comes off and more slugging ensues. Cena sends him into the corner for the third slide but this time Corbin eats a big clothesline. The AA is good for the pin at 10:12.

Rating: D+. So that happened. The story wasn't great, the action was nothing to see and Cena hit all of two moves to win in the end. Cena would go on to feud with Roman Reigns for the real rub, but that's not the best way to boost Corbin. Just a complete nothing of a match here and it felt like they were getting it out of the way instead of featuring it, which is really weird to see for Cena.

Cena hugging kids and throwing his wristbands and dog tags is always cool to see. That just works.

Some wrestlers played Rocket League.

We recap Naomi vs. Natalya. Naomi won the title at Wrestlemania but Natalya thinks she's turned it into a toy. Natalya attacked Becky Lynch after a match so Naomi made the save. This qualifies for the build to a title match.

Smackdown Women's Title: Natalya vs. Naomi

Naomi is defending and gets slapped in the face at the bell but snaps off a hurricanrana to get herself out of trouble. A Blockbuster off the steps

gives Naomi two more but Natalya posts her hard to take over. Back in and Natalya stomps away but the emotional offense has never been her strong suit. James Ellsworth and Miss Money in the Bank Carmella are watching in the back (she held that thing so long that she is still champion and Ellsworth has left, returned and left again in less than a year) as Natalya hits a running clothesline.

Naomi's kicks to the legs don't have much effect so Natalya grabs an abdominal stretch. That goes nowhere so Natalya hits the discus lariat for two and loads up a superplex. Naomi slips out and hits a super Russian legsweep, which of course gets us to even despite both of them taking the same impact. A spinning kick to the head and a headscissors driver give Naomi two but the dancing kicks are shrugged off (as they should be) with Natalya dropkicking her in the face.

Natalya gets caught in the ropes though and a slingshot legdrop gives Naomi two. The reverse Rings of Saturn is countered into the Sharpshooter but Naomi pulls rolls through and sends Natalya head first into the buckle. Not that it matters though as the split legged moonsault misses, setting up another Sharpshooter to make Naomi tap at 10:50.

Rating: D+. I was bored during this as Natalya is a black hole of charisma and Naomi isn't the best at being serious. The wrestling was dull too and there was nothing happening here to draw me in. It doesn't help when the women's division on both shows have been dominated by the Four Horsewomen for so long that it's almost impossible to get invested in anyone else (though Naomi has come a long, long way in the last year).

Post match Naomi is rather depressed.

We recap Big Cass vs. Big Show. Cass and Enzo Amore have split up and Show is standing up for him. Tonight though Enzo is being locked in a cage (good start) and Show has a broken hand thanks to Cass crushing it in the shark cage.

Big Show vs. Big Cass

Before the match, Enzo makes various Brooklyn/New York City rap references. He talks about loving to talk and how his worst day is better

than Cass' best and Cass has no heart. Thankfully Cass comes out to cut off the never ending promo and Enzo goes up in the cage. Show, not being the brightest guy in the world, hits Cass with the broken hand as Enzo is already running his mouth. He dances in the cage a bit, shouting about having the best seat in the house.

Cass gets thrown around and kicked in the ribs and there's the side slam, only to have Show bang up the hand again. Enzo shouts something about Patrick the Starfish as Show misses a Vader Bomb, injuring his hand again. Cass' big boot is blocked by a weak KO punch for two but the second attempt hits Show's chest. It's time to start in on the hand even more, despite that not really doing anything that's going to let Cass pin him. Something like an armbar has Enzo jumping up and down, further making me want to see him put inside a wood chipper.

The fans call the hold boring so Cass stops, poses, and puts it on again. Show throws him down and hits a left armed clothesline, followed by the chokeslam for two. The hand goes into the post as Enzo is leaning through the cage bars. With Show down, Enzo pulls off his pants and whips out a bottle of lubricant (there's no way I'm touching that one), oils himself up, and gets out of the cage. The match completely stops until Enzo gets down so Cass can kick him in the face. A pair of big boots put Show down and the Empire Elbow is good for the pin at 10:29.

Rating: F+. What in the world was that supposed to be? This was all about the bad hand but somehow it became about Enzo, that loudmouthed idiot, and then Cass just wins clean. I have no idea how this was the best idea they had but it was an awful match and a big waste of time. If I ever see Enzo oiled up again, I'll be off in the next room gouging my eyes out.

General Manager Kurt Angle and Daniel Bryan get in a YES/NO off about which show will be better for the rest of the night.

Randy Orton vs. Rusev

Rusev jumps him from behind before the bell and Orton is in trouble. They get inside for the bell and it's the RKO in ten seconds. That would be your "well the card is huge and we have to cut something" match of the night.

Bayley wishes Sasha Banks good luck tonight. Banks is taking her place due to a shoulder injury.

Raw Women's Title: Sasha Banks vs. Alexa Bliss

Banks is challenging and has special gear that makes her look like a peacock (so she's copying Charlotte tonight). Bliss gets fired up to start and slugs away in the corner but Banks flips her around and hammers at the champ's head. One heck of a forearm drops Banks and Bliss talks some trash. With the forearms boring her, Bliss pulls Banks' hair around the ropes and crotches her on the middle rope for painful measure. We hit the chinlock as it's almost all Bliss in the early going.

A lot more trash talk sets up a choke shove to put Banks down again as the fans are trying to get behind Banks. The middle rope knees into the moonsault knees give Bliss two more and she drops Banks on the back of her head for the same. Bliss goes to the middle rope and chokes some more until Banks slams her down. A dropkick and clothesline put the champ down for two but she knees Banks in the face to take over again. Bliss' Code Red out of the corner is countered into something like an Alabama Slam, followed by just kneeing the heck out of Bliss in the corner.

The Bank Statement doesn't work as Bliss is right next to the ropes. Bliss pulls her down into the ring skirt and dumps Banks to the floor for a near countout, with Bliss freaking out when she gets back in. Twisted Bliss only gets two more and now Bliss doesn't know what to do. Since hitting it again is out of the question, Bliss picks her up and gets pulled down into the Bank Statement. Banks' shoulder gives out so she tries the hold again and Bliss taps at 13:17.

Rating: C. Nothing much to see here with Banks shrugging off everything Bliss threw at her and winning without a ton of drama. Bliss got to show off the offense here and looked very good, though there's not much she can do when Banks is on offense for all of a minute and a half and wins completely clean. Banks would lose the title just eight days later, continuing her trend of not being able to remain champion for very long.

Video on wrestlers auditioning to be the new Colonel Sanders. A fight breaks out and Shawn Michaels winds up winning in one of the most random,

bizarre things you'll ever see. Becky Lynch as the Colonel oddly works.

We recap Finn Balor vs. Bray Wyatt. Bray had targeted Balor as his latest false idol, beat him on Raw, and covered him in fake blood. Balor then decided to bring the Demon back to fight as hard as he could. This worked in NXT but not up here and that was mainly for one reason: Cole explaining/hyping the Demon EVERY TWO FREAKING SECONDS, saying over and over that "the Demon is Finn Balor's alter ego" because WWE doesn't think its fans are that bright. I don't think NXT ever actually explained it (if they did it was once) because they know how smart fans can be. And that's why the Demon has never been back.

Finn Balor vs. Bray Wyatt

Cole mentions the Demon idea again during Bray's entrance but gets cut off as He's Got The Whole World In His Hands starts playing for Finn. We get the big smoky entrance with Finn looking awesome and the camera getting an AWESOME shot of him with his back to the ring and the crowd posing with him. Balor gets to the ring and LET'S HIT THAT EXPLANATION again. Seriously it's not exactly a character that needs to be broken down and it's made worse when Cole does it.

Wyatt is hesitant to start and a right hand just ticks Balor off. Balor shows him how to throw some real right hands and Wyatt needs a breather on the floor. You don't do that to Balor, who charges around the corner to drop Wyatt again. Back in and Balor isn't phased by the upside down stare so Wyatt bails to the floor. This time it's a big flip dive as it's all Balor so far. Bray finally pulls him off the apron and hammers away, followed by something like a reverse Stunner out of the corner.

Of course that means a chinlock, because even though Bray is a cult leader, he still follows WWE wrestling tropes. Balor is right back up with a Pele kick and a baseball slide to the floor. The double stomp from the apron to Bray's back keeps him in trouble, causing Graves to drop a (failed) external occipital protuberance reference. I knew I liked him for a reason.

Bray kicks him in the face and hits the release Rock Bottom for two. The running backplash gets the same but Finn kicks him to the floor for the

shotgun dropkick against the barricade. Back in and Bray scores with a kick so it's spider walk time. Balor pops to his feet, hits a Sling Blade, another shotgun dropkick, and the Coup de Grace for the pin at 10:39.

Rating: D. This was as exciting as Bray hitting some basic offense while Balor did all of his usual stuff. The problem again is in the Demon, which was what Balor would bring out for his biggest, most violent fights. When it's just the standard wrestling match and even a pretty dominant Finn performance, the whole Demon character is pretty much a waste.

Ad for the Mae Young Classic. In other words, the modern NXT women's division.

We recap Seth Rollins/Dean Ambrose vs. the Bar, which is built around the idea of Dean and Seth not being able to trust each other. They kept offering the Shield fist until they FINALLY got back together, mainly due to having to deal with the Bar. Now they're united after a very well done series of segments that them saving each other but not being willing to trust each other. They got in a fight though and the Bar coming out to join in was FINALLY enough to get them to agree to fight together. This was actually a heck of a build and I got sucked into it, both live and again during the recap video.

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

Sheamus and Cesaro are defending and it's Sheamus getting taken down so the challengers can drop some elbows. Rollins Downward Spirals Cesaro into Dean's boot and the champs are cleared out early on. A quick distraction lets Sheamus Brogue Kick Dean so Seth tries a suicide dive onto both guys. That gets him slammed down hard as momentum changes in a hurry.

We settle down to Cesaro gutwrench suplexing Seth and the chinlock goes on. Rollins fights back and hits a Blockbuster but Ambrose is still down off what is apparently the most devastating Brogue Kick of all time. Sheamus keeps Rollins in the corner as Cesaro runs into the crowd and destroys a beach ball, because Cesaro is more awesome than you. An

enziguri gets Rollins out of trouble but this time it's Cesaro cutting him off. Seth sends him outside though and Cesaro comes up holding his knee.

Rollins goes out after him with Sheamus following, meaning it's Dean diving onto everyone at once. Back in and Rollins rolls underneath Cesaro and makes the hot tag to bring in Ambrose. Everything breaks down and Seth springboards in with a clothesline to Sheamus. There's the double suicide dive and the fans are eating up all these double team spots. We settle down again with Ambrose powering out of the Neutralizer and hitting the rebound lariat, only to have Sheamus cut off the tag.

Ambrose catches him on top with a superplex into a very fast frog splash from Rollins but Cesaro makes the save. Rollins and Ambrose are tired of this tagging stuff and unload on Sheamus in the corner but he's right back with a tilt-a-whirl slam. Cesaro swings Dean for all of two rotations and the Sharpshooter goes on, with Dean looking more surprised than in pain. With Dean getting close to the rope, Cesaro rolls over into a Crossface to change focal points.

Instead of going for the submission, Cesaro loads up a powerbomb with Sheamus adding a top rope clothesline for another close two. Rollins finally comes in and gets knocked outside just as fast. Dean tells the champs to bring it so they load up a spike White Noise. Hang on though as Rollins is right in there with a hurricanrana to send Cesaro into Dean and Sheamus for the save. The wind up knee into Dirty Deeds finishes Sheamus for the titles at 18:38.

Rating: B. This took some time to get going but there was no other way to go with the finish. Rollins and Ambrose are a great team and the fans love them so let them have a long match and take the titles for a change. There was some chemistry here and that made for a good, long match that the show desperately needed.

We recap AJ Styles vs. Kevin Owens. They've traded the US Title for a few months now and Owens is claiming a conspiracy thanks to the referee missing his shoulder being up in the most recent title match. Therefore, Shane McMahon is guest referee tonight, despite having a history with AJ

and a history of being a crooked referee.

US Title: AJ Styles vs. Kevin Owens

AJ is defending with Shane as guest referee. They get in a fight before the bell with Shane pulling them apart twice in a row, because Shane is going to be the focal point here. The bell rings and they fight out to the floor with AJ hitting a knee from the apron. Back in and AJ keeps him down, followed by a knee drop. One heck of a clothesline takes AJ's head off and the Cannonball gets two.

The backsplash gets the same and the near fall off the Edge-0-Matic has Owens yelling at Shane. AJ is right back with a belly to back faceplant and the fireman's carry into a backbreaker gives him two of his own. They're both banged up and the delay allows Owens to "accidentally" shove Shane into the ropes to crotch AJ on top. He's fine enough for a springboard 450, which hits Shane after Owens pulls him in. For reasons of storyline convenience, AJ is down after splashing Shane, allowing Owens to hit the Pop Up Powerbomb for two, thanks to a delayed count.

That means ANOTHER argument with Shane, allowing AJ to grab the Calf Crusher but Owens pokes him in the eye. Owens sends AJ into Shane to knock him to the floor, meaning there's no referee to see Owens tap to another Calf Crusher. Now it's AJ's turn to yell at Shane, who shoves AJ into a rollup for a pretty fast two. The annoyed AJ puts him on top, only to get caught in the swinging superplex for the big crash.

Owens wins a slugout but gets reversed into a Styles Clash for a clean two. The Pop Up Powerbomb gets three, though with AJ's foot on the ropes at one. Shane: "TWO!" That means another argument with Shane, who shoves Owens into a rollup for two, meaning they're not repeating spots from earlier in the match. The Phenomenal Forearm into the Styles Clash retains AJ's title at 17:23.

Rating: B-. Well of course most of the match was about Shane, because that's what a Summerslam title match should be about. The wrestling was fine but you kept waiting on Shane to do something else. I'm not sure how this was the best they could do with Styles, but at least there's an Owens vs. Shane story set up for the next eight months. That's more

important than the US Title and Summerslam right?

Video on some fans winning a sweepstakes and got to go to the show.

We recap Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Jinder Mahal and I can feel the headache coming. Mahal won the WWE Championship in a period of Vince McMahon insanity and has held it since May. Nakamura has hit Kinshasa on a bunch of people, including Cena to become #1 contender. In other words: help us Shinsuke Nakamura. You're our only hope.

Smackdown World Title: Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Jinder Mahal

Nakamura is challenging and a live violinist plays him to the ring. The fans singing the song is awesome as usual, especially when you consider it doesn't have words. Jinder grabs a wristlock to start so Nakamura spins around into a headlock, much to the crowd's delight. Nakamura puts him up against the ropes for the arm shaking and the required COME ON. Mahal bails to the floor so it's a triple COME ON, including the Singh Brothers. The fans chant for 3MB because the comedy version of Mahal is better than the main event version.

With nothing else going on, let's go to the Japanese commentary team. I don't speak Japanese so it's all Greek to me. Back in and Nakamura drops a knee and hits some Good Vibrations as Mahal has nothing. As in all together, not just so far. The Singh Brothers offer a distraction though and Mahal knocks him off the apron to take over for the first time. Some knee drops set up a chinlock, followed by Mahal doing the COME ON pose but shouting his own name.

After that brilliant display of saying his name, it's back to the chinlock. Nakamura fights up with a kick to the face and some YES Kicks to set up the running knee to the ribs. With the covers not working, Nakamura grabs a triangle choke but Mahal gets his foot in the ropes. Nakamura's running knee in the corner hits buckle and Mahal adds a jumping knee to the face for two of his own. Mahal goes shoulder first into the post but the Singh Brothers' distraction lets Mahal hit a chinlock slam (he has ONE MOVE and can't even do that right) to retain at 11:25.

Rating: D-. You know, it's been about nine months since Mahal lost the title and e-freaking-gads I had forgotten how awful his title reign really was. This felt like a bad house show main event and it's the biggest Smackdown match on the second biggest show of the year. You can feel the fans dying out there when Mahal is...well doing anything actually, but in this case I'll go with being on offense and winning. I remember watching Sami Zayn and Shinsuke Nakamura beat the living tar out of each other for twenty minutes at Takeover: Dallas. Now though, a weak/botched/terrible cobra clutch slam puts him down? Not a chance.

We recap the Universal Title match with Brock Lesnar defending against Braun Strowman, Roman Reigns and Samoa Joe. Lesnar was announced as facing all three challengers and since he wasn't happy, he's threatened to leave WWE if he loses. The three challengers all say they can be the man to take out Lesnar. There's just not much else to be said here but this is by far and away the main event.

Universal Title: Brock Lesnar vs. Roman Reigns vs. Braun Strowman vs. Samoa Joe

Lesnar is defending and it's one fall to a finish. Cole picks Reigns to win because Reigns beat Undertaker at Wrestlemania. Cole: "How can you bet against that?" You pick the guy who did it first, you nitwit. Reigns is of course booted out of the building because...oh you know the drill by now.

The brawl is on to start (well duh) with Strowman throwing Reigns to the floor and Brock hitting a belly to belly on Joe. Strowman gets posted and it's time for the Reigns vs. Lesnar showdown that no one but WWE seems to love. Booker tries to say that Lesnar knew nothing but winning in UFC, which I'll leave you to make fun of. Some suplexes put Reigns on the floor and it's Strowman time.

Now THIS gets the fans' attention but Reigns and Joe are right back in to break up the fun. That lasts all of five seconds before it's back to Strowman vs. Lesnar, meaning another YES chant. Strowman LAUNCHES Brock into the corner and hits a heck of a clothesline to put the champ on the floor. As usual, Lesnar's selling is very underrated. Everyone is on the

floor now and Joe chokes Lesnar but sidesteps a Reigns spear, sending Lesnar through the barricade. That spot will always look cool.

Strowman is back up and loads up the title (with Graves hoping he uses Saxton as a weapon), setting up a running powerslam to drive a kicking Lesnar through it. The fans REALLY like that but here's Reigns to kick Strowman in the face and kill their buzz all over again. Joe is back up with a suicide elbow to take Reigns out, meaning the fans are won right back. Thankfully Cole is doing a great job of explaining how cool it is to see people this big doing this stuff.

That's exactly what he should be doing and it's working here. Strowman throws an announcers' chair at Joe and Reigns in a cool spot, followed by a second powerslam through a table to put Lesnar down again. Heyman has a look on his face that says "well, I didn't see that one coming". Fans: "ONE MORE TABLE!" Greedy twits. To mix things up a bit, Strowman picks that one up and turns it on top of the already out Lesnar. Half a dozen people come out to get the table off of Lesnar and a stretcher is brought out as Heyman seems to be near tears.

We're not done yet though as Strowman hits Joe and Reigns in the head with the steps. With the steps in the ring, Reigns fires off the corner clotheslines and hits a good steps shot into Strowman's shoulder. Joe's rollup gets two on Reigns but he's right back up with a Samoan drop for two. The Superman Punch is countered into the Koquina Clutch but Strowman (with some blood next to his ear) is back in with a double chokeslam. Everyone is down so here comes Lesnar again.

Strowman is the only one on his feet so it's time for the big showdown. A running clothesline takes Strowman to the floor and there's a German suplex each to Joe and Reigns. Strowman comes back in and elbow his way out of a German suplex, only to get caught in the Kimura. That's broken up with a Superman Punch, with Joe and Lesnar taking one each as well. Reigns spears Lesnar for two so here's Strowman for a dropkick to Reigns, just because he can do that too.

The powerslam gets two on Joe with Lesnar pulling the referee out at the last second. A Superman Punch gets two on Strowman, whose kickout puts

Reigns on his feet. There's a powerslam to Reigns with Lesnar making the save but getting loaded up into the F5. That's broken up by a Reigns spear, drawing Joe back in for a Clutch on Lesnar. Brock reverses into the F5 but Reigns is right in there with some Superman Punches. Three in a row put Lesnar down but the spear is countered into the F5 to retain Brock's title at 20:53.

Rating: A-. What a fight and that's all it needed to be. They were making Godzilla/King Kong references here and they nailed the idea to near perfection. The best thing here was Strowman looking awesome and like the man that could beat Lesnar if he had the chance, with the bonus of Reigns taking the fall again. It's not like Reigns losing was going to hurt him (it hasn't yet) so going this way was the right call. This was all about violence and that was the story: big, strong people beating each other up for twenty minutes and all of the chaos that it caused. Well done, all around.

Lesnar can barely stand to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This show suffered from the same problem as the modern Wrestlemania. It's not the length that is the problem (the show never really did drag) but rather that almost nothing has a chance to sink in. Everything jumped from one match to the other and most of the matches didn't have a ton of time.

It was "well that happened so let's move on" time after time and that doesn't make for a special show. The show isn't terrible but aside from the main event, nothing on here felt important and that's not what Summerslam needs to be. In other words: cut some stuff out and let it breathe, which might as well be the standard operating criticism around here.

Ratings Comparison

Miz/Miztourage vs. Hardy Boyz/Jason Jordan

Original: C-

Redo: C

Neville vs. Akira Tozawa

Original: C

Redo: C+

New Day vs. Usos

Original: B+

Redo: B

John Cena vs. Baron Corbin

Original: D

Redo: D+

Naomi vs. Natalya

Original: C-

Redo: D+

Big Cass vs. Big Show

Original: D

Redo: F+

Randy Orton vs. Rusev

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Alexa Bliss vs. Sasha Banks

Original: B-

Redo: C

Bray Wyatt vs. Finn Balor

Original: C+

Redo: D

Dean Ambrose/Seth Rollins vs. The Bar

Original: B

Redo: B

Kevin Owens vs. AJ Styles

Original: B

Redo: B-

Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Jinder Mahal

Original: D+

Redo: D-

Brock Lesnar vs. Roman Reigns vs. Samoa Joe vs. Braun Strowman

Original: A

Redo: A-

Overall Rating

Original: B

Redo: C-

Time has NOT been kind to this show and aside from two (or maybe three) matches, it's not worth seeing.

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

kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/08/20/summerslam-2017-the-star-of-stars/

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Daily News Update – July 27, 2022

Make sure you check out some recent reviews.

[Monday Night Raw – July 25, 2022](#)

[NXT – July 26, 2022](#)

Major Updates On Vince McMahon Affair Scandal, May Have Used WWE Money.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/major-updates-vince-mcmahon-hush-money-payments-may-used-wwe-money/>

Take Three: New Grudge Match With Special Stipulation Added To WWE Summerslam.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/take-three-new-grudge-match-special-stipulation-added-wwe-summerslam/>

That's The Ticket! WWE Gets Some Good News About Monday Night

Raw.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/thats-ticket-wwe-gets-good-news-monday-night-raw/>

New Report On How Unhappy Vince McMahon Was With His Son Shane.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/new-report-unhappy-vince-mcmahon-son-shane/>

WATCH: WWE Teases Never Before Seen Match At Live Event.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-wwe-teases-never-seen-match-live-event/>

She's Different: Monday Night Raw Star Returns From Injury.

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It Might Help: WWE Talent Meeting Held Before Monday Night Raw, Changes Coming.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/might-help-wwe-talent-meeting-held-monday-night-raw-changes-coming/>

WRESTLING RUMOR: Interesting Name May Gain Power With Vince McMahon Gone.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/wrestling-rumor-interesting-name-may-gain-power-vince-mcmahon-gone/>

Cover Up: Why Monday Night Raw Opened With A Brawl Already In Progress.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/cover-monday-night-raw-opened-brawl-already-progress/>

The Finale: Why This Week's Monday Night Raw Was The Last Of Its Kind.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/finale-weeks-monday-night-raw-last-kind/>

It's A Call Back: WWE Hall Of Famer Cameo Leads To Titles Being Vacated.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/call-back-wwe-hall-famer-cameo-leads-titles-vacated/>

WRESTLING RUMORS: AEW And NXT May Be Going Head To Head Again.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/wrestling-rumors-aew-nxt-may-going-head-head/>

He's Back: NXT Star Makes Surprise Return From Injury.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/hes-back-nxt-star-makes-surprise-return-injury/>

He'll Be Welcomed Back: AEW Star Leaving Company For The Time Being.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/hell-welcomed-back-aew-star-leaving-company-time/>

Another One: WWE Legend Dealing With Serious Health Issues, GoFundMe Opened.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/another-one-wwe-legend-dealing-serious-health-issues-gofundme-opened/>

Backstage Details On Vince McMahon Being Edited During Production Meetings.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/backstage-details-vince-mcmahons-behavior-production-meetings-bad/>

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about what is going on and [get on the Wrestling Rumors Facebook page.](#)

NXT – July 26, 2022: Almost The Old Way

NXT

Date: July 26, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Wade Barrett, Vic Joseph

It's the first show of the new regime and I'm not sure how much of a difference that is going to make. NXT seems a bit more planned out than Raw and Smackdown so it might be a little while before the impact takes hold. Maybe they have a few surprises or at least ideas this week though so let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Here is the recently returned Zoey Stark for a chat. She is REALLY happy to be back and talks about being on the shelf since October after tearing her ACL and MCL. The doctors told her it would be over a year before she could return, but she worked in that trainer's room so hard and beat the expectations by four months. Now she is the #1 contender for the Women's Title and only has Toxic Attraction standing in her way. Cue Cora Jade on the platform to say she is already sick of Stark.

Jade was ready to be champion but Stark had to take HER MOMENT, just like Roxanne Perez did. They bicker about Jade trashing the Women's Tag Team Titles but here is Toxic

Attraction to interrupt. Mandy Rose is looking forward to becoming the fourth longest reigning Women's Champion tomorrow when she surpasses Paige. Stark wants her title shot tonight, but instead has to settle for Gigi Dolin. This was just an "I'm back" promo, with Jade being annoying to keep her presence going.

Grayson Waller is ready to take out Wes Lee.

Tony D'Angelo and Family are ready to destroy the Diamond Mine.

Wes Lee vs. Grayson Waller

Waller takes him down to start and gets two off an early rollup. Lee is back with a victory roll for two of his own and there's a double stomp to Waller's back to set in the frustration. They run the ropes until Waller kicks him in the chest. That doesn't do much to Lee, who dropkicks him to the floor and follows with a suplex.

We take a break and come back with Waller hitting a fireman's carry flipped into a sitout powerbomb for two. Waller starts slapping him in the face, which has Lee fired up and unloading with shots to the face. Lee goes up top but gets shoved off for the big crash down to the floor. Waller yells at the referee and it's Trick Williams in the crowd (in a hoodie and boxing gloves) with a shot to the back of Lee's head. Lee dives back in to beat the count but the rolling Stunner gives Waller the pin at 11:00.

Rating: C. Lee continues to be in a weird spot as he is around almost every week but doesn't ever really do anything important. Granted that is part of the "finding himself" story, but it isn't exactly making him feel like a big deal. Waller is still a rather good villain, though he doesn't come off as anything more than a midcard pest most of the time. He could also go with a better finisher than something that requires being outside to start most of the time.

The Schism talks about how Joe Gacy has opened their eyes to a new world. Now they want Cameron Grimes to join them, because Gacy can be the father figure that Grimes needs.

Arianna Grace is bragging about how much people were enjoying watching her in the battle royal last week when Indi Hartwell knocked her out. Hartwell's gear is atrocious but here she is to say Grace would have done the same thing. Grace talks about how she would never do that as a former beauty queen and can't stand this negative energy. Grace hasn't shown me anything on LVL Up and I don't see an improvement here.

Apollo Crews vs. Xyon Quinn

Crews dropkicks him down to start but Quinn is back up with some shots to the head. Quinn grabs a chinlock before elbowing Crews in the face for another knockdown. Crews fights back up but gets dropped again as he can't get anything going. An enziguri gets Crews out of trouble though and he grabs a quick spinebuster for the pin at 5:37.

Rating: C-. I like Quinn a good deal but it's becoming clear that he doesn't have much to him besides a great look. He is long past the point of feeling like he is going to be something for the time being and while that is sad, it also isn't surprising. Then you have Crews, who looks like a star and has much stronger of a resume, but the lack of personality is still holding him back. He's miles ahead of Quinn though and that didn't leave much doubt here.

Toxic Attraction isn't worried about Zoey Stark but here is Sarray to say she wants a shot. Mandy Rose is ready for her revenge next week.

We look at Von Wagner beating Solo Sikoa down last week at Smackdown.

Solo Sikoa wants a falls count anywhere match with Wagner next week. Yes more brawling/hardcore stuff, but at least they have

the slightest logical reason to go that way.

Gigi Dolin vs. Zoey Stark

The rest of Toxic Attraction is here and their early distraction lets Dolin jump her from behind. Some knees to the ribs and an elbow to the face rock Stark and we hit the bow and arrow hold. Stark fights up and hits a superkick, followed by a fireman's carry flipped into a knee to the face for the pin at 2:50. Short and to the point here.

Post match Mandy Rose goes after Stark and gets chased to the floor. Cue Cora Jade to kendo stick her down but Roxanne Perez returns to make the save.

JD McDonagh is here...as a fan.

Wendy Choo has nightmares about losing to Tiffany Stratton. She wakes up and promises that this isn't over with Stratton and next time won't be so nice. How has anything about this feud been nice???

JD McDonagh is in the crowd and tells a fan to eat his popcorn slowly because people die eating it all the time. Next up he goes to talk to the timekeeper, who has an important job and talks about how you can break a hand with a hammer. Ring announcer Alicia Taylor has a great voice, but then there is Wade Barrett. McDonagh talks about how the calcium deposits from bare knuckle boxing can hurt your joints so watch out for that.

Then we have Vic Joseph, who said some bad things about McDonagh's family last week. McDonagh thinks he could break Joseph's collarbone with his bare hands...but he won't. Instead, McDonagh gets in the ring and calls out Bron Breakker, who is happy to oblige. Breakker is ready to face him in three weeks and knocks McDonagh down, which has McDonagh smiling.

Chase U is ready for Andre Chase to face Giovanni Vinci. Thea

Hail wants to do the fighting for him but Chase himself has this. Nathan Frazer comes in and gets to be the Chase U flag bearer.

We look back at Axiom's debut with a comic book theme.

Roxanne Perez has a lot going on, including being half of the Women's Tag Team Champions. She has no partner though, and hands the belt over to Alundra Blayze. Next week, it's a fatal four way elimination match for the vacant titles.

Giovanni Vinci vs. Andre Chase

Chase armdrags him into an armbar to start and grabs a sunset flip for two. Some rollups get two each on Vinci and it's right back to the armbar. Vinci fights up but gets distracted by the flag waving, allowing Chase to send him into the post. We take a break and come back with Chase being dumped out to the floor.

Back in and Chase hammers away, setting up a belly to back suplex for the double knockdown. The spelling stomps look to set up a double underhook something but Vinci powers out. A backslide doesn't work for Vinci as Chase grabs a butterfly powerbomb for two more. The Fratliner is broken up though and Vinci clothesline him down. The sitout Last Ride finishes for Vinci at 12:24.

Rating: C+. This is a good example of how you use someone who has been built up into a little something to get a bigger prospect over. Vinci has done well in NXT so far, but he hasn't won much to make him feel like a big deal. Chase might not be a top star, but the fans love him and the charisma is impossible to ignore. Beating him feels like it matters and that is what made this better than something like the Quinn vs. Crews match.

Post match the beating continues but Nathan Frazer makes the save.

Diamond Mine is ready for the D'Angelo Family.

Yulisa Leon is talking to Valentina Feroz when Sanga comes in. Sanga gives them a pep talk for next week's Women's Tag Team Title match.

Kayden Carter and Katana Chance want the titles they have been chasing. Ivy Nile and Tatum Paxley come in to gloat and trash talking ensues. Elektra Lopez comes in to say Diamond Mine will lost to the D'Angelo Family tonight and the brawl breaks out.

Arianna Grace vs. Indi Hartwell

Hartwell takes her down by the arm to start and works on a headlock. That's reversed into a chinlock with Grace's knee in her back before Grace plants her down. A rollup with feet on the ropes gets caught, allowing Hartwell to boot her in the face for the pin at 3:59.

Rating: C-. Grace is still pretty new at this, but the former beauty queen deal doesn't exactly sound inspiring. I haven't cared for what I've seen of her so far and this didn't help make things better. At least Hartwell has a bit more star power, even if she hasn't done much lately. Not a very good match, but at least Hartwell got a boost out of the mess she has been in lately.

Mr. Stone and Von Wagner are ready for Solo Sikoa next week.

Kiana James has a PowerPoint presentation about Nikkita Lyons being terrible in the ring. We see Lyons' childhood as the daughter of a musician. Lyons doesn't even have a great vocabulary. James is going to further investigate Lyons, but she already doesn't care for her.

Video on Alba Fyre vs. Lash Legend.

D'Angelo Family vs. Diamond Mine

Tony D'Angelo drives Roderick Strong into the corner to start but gets armdragged down for his efforts. Everything breaks down and it's a huge brawl, with Brutus Creed going for an ankle lock on D'Angelo, who gets pulled outside to safety. Julius dives off the apron to take them all down though and we take a break.

Back with Kemp hitting a jumping knee on Wilde and sending him outside. A swinging slam to Del Toro is broken up with a chop block though and Kemp is down. Kemp's knee gets slammed into the mat and Stacks grabs a quickly broken half crab. Kemp kicks his way to freedom and brings in Julius Creed to clean house. Julius runs the corner to superplex Del Toro and a German suplex drops D'Angelo. Brutus comes back in to run over the Family but Cruz and Del Toro hits their Russian legsweep/big boot combination. Strong knees Brutus by mistake though and D'Angelo fisherman's suplexes Brutus for the pin at 11:38.

Rating: C+. The Diamond Mine continues to fall apart and it's hard to imagine that they're a thing much longer. This wasn't so much about the D'Angelo Family winning as much as it was about the Diamond Mine losing, so they did have the logic right. I'm curious to see where the split goes, and at least they had a pretty good match to help us get there.

Alundra Blayze doesn't know who is winning the Women's Tag Team Titles next week. Toxic Attraction comes up to say they'll win but Blayze says they have to earn them. This annoys Toxic Attraction to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. While it wasn't the best show, it was nice to see something a show that felt nice and steady again. This show touched on a variety of feuds and angles while also moving some stuff forward. They need are starting to set up their next big show so they even have a direction. Now just get things set up and pay them off at that show and they've gotten somewhere in the right way, just like NXT of old.

Results

Grayson Waller b. Wes Lee – Rolling Stunner

Apollo Crews b. Xyon Quinn – Spinebuster

Zoey Stark b. Gigi Dolin – Fireman's carry knee to the face

Giovanni Vinci b. Andre Chase – Sitout Last Ride

Indi Hartwell b. Arianna Grace – Big boot

D'Angelo Family b. Diamond Mine – Fisherman's suplex to Brutus

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Monday Night Raw – July 25, 2022: I'll Take It

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 25, 2022

Location: Madison Square Garden, New York City, New York

Commentators: Jimmy Smith, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

We're officially in an all new era as Vince McMahon is completely gone and HHH is now in charge of creative. That may sound very interesting on paper but I would give it another week before you see any major changes. There might be some surprises here and there this week though as it's the go home show for Summerslam. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

We open with Miz and Logan Paul mid-brawl in the ring with referees having to break it up. There's your fresh way of starting the show.

With that out of the way, here is the Bloodline for a chat. Roman Reigns gets to the point by having the Garden acknowledge him before handing it off to Paul Heyman. After the mic goes out (Heyman: "We have a sound guy that must be from New Jersey or something. We want your name written down. You're the next one out the door."), we hear about everything Brock Lesnar has done over the years.

Lesnar has ruined a lot of things over the years, including the Streak, but he won't do that on Saturday when Roman Reigns nears 700 days as Universal Champion. Reigns is tired of hearing about Lesnar every time you mention his name so it is time to send Lesnar back to Canada to slaughter a bunch of hogs. Heyman explains the concept of Last Man Standing, which is how Reigns is finally going to get rid of Lesnar once and for all.

Now cue Theory with the briefcase, but Reigns says that if you're going to come out here, get in the ring and acknowledge the Tribal Chief. Theory stares Reigns down, but Reigns says that Theory's daddy isn't here to protect him anymore. Fans: "WHO'S YOUR DADDY?" Reigns says it's going to be him if Theory doesn't mind himself. The Bloodline goes to leave but Jimmy Uso taps Theory on the neck. A briefcase shot to the back...actually doesn't get any reaction from Jimmy, as the

Bloodline leaves in peace.

Post break Theory is still in the ring but Drew McIntyre cuts him off.

Theory vs. Drew McIntyre

McIntyre starts fast and hammers away with the power but gets caught with a jawbreaker. Theory gets to stomp away in the corner until McIntyre blasts him with a clothesline. Futureshock connects but Theory rolls outside before the Claymore can launch. That's cool with McIntyre, who drops him chest first across the announcers' table as we take a break.

Back with Theory sending him outside and then whipping him hard into the steps. Back in and McIntyre reverses a suplex into one of his own before winning the slugout. The Claymore is loaded up again but here are the Brawling Brutes to jump McIntyre for the DQ at 9:37.

Rating: C. I liked this one well enough as you had Theory in there with a fresh opponent but he also didn't use the briefcase for the DQ. It was nice to not go with the obvious ending that Theory has been using as they actually mixed it up a bit. Now just let Theory win a match and we might be getting somewhere.

Post match the beatdown is on until Bobby Lashley makes the save. Theory has to bail before he gets wrecked as well.

Bobby Lashley/Drew McIntyre vs. Theory/Sheamus

Joined in progress with Lashley beating on theory before handing it off to McIntyre. A cheap shot from behind puts McIntyre down though and it's Sheamus coming in to choke away in the corner. The Irish Curse plants McIntyre and Sheamus hammers away but he won't tag Theory back in.

That's enough for McIntyre to get in the Glasgow Kiss and bring Lashley back in. Sheamus gets suplexed and knocked

outside, where Lashley's spear to Theory is cut off by Sheamus' knee. Butch gets in the ring for a distraction so Ridge Holland can go after McIntyre. That's fine with McIntyre, who suplexes Butch onto Holland, earning the Brutes an ejection and we take a break.

Back with Lashley fighting out of a chinlock but getting knocked down again so Sheamus can come back in. Lashley spinebusters his way to freedom and the hot tag brings in McIntyre to clean house. A Sky High gets two on Theory but McIntyre gets low bridged to the floor, leaving Lashley to hit the big spinebuster on Theory. Sheamus breaks up the cover with a top rope knee so McIntyre takes him outside. The fight is on until Sheamus hits the White Noise on the floor. Theory is back up but cue Dolph Ziggler for a distraction so Lashley can grab the Hurt Lock for the tap at 12:20.

Rating: B-. This got some more time and advanced Lashley vs. Theory a bit more. Sheamus vs. McIntyre is already set for Friday so they got a little extra time of their own here. It might not have been the best match but it was an effective bit of storytelling and there is always room for that.

Post match Theory goes up the ramp but gets superkicked by the Usos. Roman Reigns comes back out to hand Theory his briefcase.

We look back at 20 years of Rey Mysterio in WWE.

Rey arrived with his wife and kids earlier tonight.

Dolph Ziggler says he wants Theory to back up his potential. AJ Styles comes in to say he likes that idea but here is the Alpha Academy to interrupt. A tag match is set up.

Here is Rey Mysterio, with Dominik, for the 20th anniversary celebration. Rey talks about having his first match in Mexico at 14 years old and now here he is. Rey can't believe he made it here after making all kinds of legendary rivalries. As a

smaller guy and a proud Latino, he became World Champion at Wrestlemania XXII and made a lot of friends along the way.

Rey thanks Dean Malenko, Konnan, Batista, Kurt Angle and Edge, but then there is Eddie Guerrero. He thanks Eddie for always watching over him and feels truly humble for all of the support he has received for the last twenty years. Rey also thanks his family (watching backstage along with some friends) and Dominik in particular but finally he needs to thank the fans. We get some thank you's in Spanish but here is Judgment Day through the crowd for their scheduled match.

Mysterios vs. Judgment Day

Joined in progress (a theme tonight) with Dominik taking over on Balor before sending him into the corner for right hands from Rey. We get the Eddie dance in the corner as Rey hammers away, only to get sent face first into the buckle. Priest comes in for the hard whip into the corner and the toss suplex gets one.

It's back to Balor for the chinlock but Rey pops u for a quick escape. Dominik comes back in to clean house, including a dropkick to put Balor on the floor. Priest cuts off Dominik's dove and sends him into the barricade as we take a break. Back with Dominik hitting a reverse Sling Blade and bringing Rey back in for a kick to Priest's head.

A top rope seated sent on gets two on Priest, who boots Rey down for two of his own. It's back to Balor, who has to avoid the 619 and hit the Coup de Grace for two as Dominik saves. With nothing else working, Balor tries the Eddie Guerrero chair trick but Rey does the same thing right back. A double 619 sets up the frog splash to finish Balor at 11:29.

Rating: C+. This feud really needs to wrap up already because it has already run out of steam. Granted that might be due to Judgment Day being treated as a bunch of losers for so long now but I'm sure they'll stretch it out again. It was nice to

see Rey get a win on his big night, though the evening is young and ripe for something happening later.

We look at Cody Rhodes winning the ESPY Award for WWE Moment of the Year.

The Mysterios join their family and friends backstage with drinks being poured. Rey also gets what looks like his gear from Halloween Havoc 1997. Rhea Ripley comes in and pie faces Rey's daughter, meaning it's Judgment Day coming in to beat Rey down (Balor: "It's not your anniversary. It's my birthday!"), including Priest powerbombing him onto a table.

Here is Bianca Belair for a chat, but first we see how her match with Becky Lynch at Summerslam. Cue Becky but Belair cuts her off with the EST names. Becky decks her and the brawl is on with referees having to break it up. Short and to the point here.

Alexa Bliss is ready for Doudrop tonight and then is coming for the title.

Rey Mysterio is pretty banged up but Dominik has to chase off Judgment Day. The distraction lets Rhea kick Rey in his bad arm.

Doudrop vs. Alexa Bliss

Nikki Ash is here with Doudrop and her distraction lets Doudrop hit a running crossbody for an early two. The chinlock goes on to keep Bliss in trouble but she fights up and kicks away. A running basement dropkick gives Bliss two but she has to avoid a charge in the corner. Doudrop is favoring her shoulder so the referee checks on her, allowing Ash to shove Bliss off the top. Not that it matters as Bliss grabs a tornado DDT for the pin at 4:19.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see here as Bliss' offense was a bit hard to buy against a monster like Doudrop. That being said,

Doudrop hasn't meant anything in a long time so the result wasn't a surprise. At least Bliss seems to have something in mind now and her getting back into the title picture wouldn't be the biggest stretch.

Post match Bliss signs a fan's sign for a nice moment.

AJ Styles tells Logan Paul that he doesn't know much about him, but if Paul doesn't like Miz, AJ must like him.

It's time for the debut of Logan Paul's Impulsive TV and he gets straight to the point by calling Miz out. An insult to the size of Miz's testicular fortitude, here is Maryse to answer instead. Maryse can't pronounce genitalia but she does have some statistics about average size. Paul: "Who measures their testicles?" Cue Miz to say he does, as does every single man in this arena. Miz yells about how he gave Paul everything and now Paul is ruining it. Paul says Maryse has a bigger set than Miz and the brawl is on, with Ciampa running in to help beat Paul down. The Skull Crushing Finale drops Paul.

The Street Profits and the Usos have a staredown with Jeff Jarrett in the middle. Trash is talked but Jarrett says he wants peace kept tonight, because he'll remember it on Saturday.

AJ Styles/Dolph Ziggler vs. Alpha Academy

Before the match, Chad Gable praises himself and mocks Styles and Ziggler as a thrown together team. Like the New York Knicks! AJ starts fast with the drop down into the dropkick to send Gable outside. There's the big slingshot dive and we take a break. Back with Otis running over AJ, who manages to slip over for the tag to Ziggler. That's fine with Otis, who drops Ziggler with a hard elbow to the face. Gable comes in and misses the moonsault, allowing Ziggler to hit the superkick. Everything breaks down and AJ knocks Gable into a Zig Zag for the pin at 7:26.

Rating: C. Pretty much just a “there” match with Styles and Ziggler having nothing in common and now getting a tag match for whatever reason. They did need to get Ziggler something to do until Theory is freed up so maybe this is the best that they have. Then again, the Alpha Academy doesn’t mean anything anymore after so many losses so this was some decent filler and little more.

Summerslam rundown.

Bloodline vs. Riddle/Street Profits

Dawkins takes Jimmy down to start and hands it off to Ford. Jimmy pulls Ford into the corner for some choking from Jey and Reigns but Ford is fine enough to grab the arm. Riddle comes in for the rapid fire kicks and the Usos are sent outside, with Ford hitting the big flip dive.

We take a break and come back with Riddle getting stomped in the wrong corner, including some from Reigns himself. Reigns cranks on the arm and hands it back to Jimmy, who misses a splash in the corner. That’s enough for the tag to Ford, who starts the house cleaning with some kicks to the head. Reigns comes in off a blind tag though and a release Rock Bottom plants Ford hard for two. Ford got busted open somewhere in there and the Usos make it worse with something like a top rope Demolition Decapitator.

We take another break and come back with Ford managing to knock Reigns down. Riddle gets the tag to clean house and everything breaks down in a hurry. That includes a bunch of moves with the word Bro, including the springboard Floating Bro to the floor. Reigns tags himself back in and drops Riddle for two, with Ford making the save. Jimmy hits a big dive onto Ford on the floor but Dawkins takes him out. Riddle hits the hanging DDT on Reigns but the RKO is shoved off, allowing Reigns to hit the spear for the pin at 19:25.

Rating: B. This was the hard hitting and long main event tag

match that is going to work more often than not. Riddle taking the fall is a bit sad to see, but it is a fall against Reigns and the Profits have a title match at Summerslam so it could have been a worse pick. Good, long match here though and sometimes that's what you need.

Post match here is Seth Rollings to give Riddle a Stomp onto the steps to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This show wasn't a masterpiece by any means, but it was WAY better than the last few terrible weeks. There was a bit more energy to the show and while we didn't get anything significantly different, I'll take some slight changes over what we were getting and hope for more after Summerslam. Other than that, the sad part of this show is how Madison Square Garden feels like any other arena. There was little here that made the Garden feel special and that is sad for the World's Most Famous Arena. Overall though, this was a breath of fresh air and I'll take that any week.

Results

Drew McIntyre b. Theory via DQ when the Brawling Brutes interfered

Bobby Lashley/Drew McIntyre b. Theory/Sheamus – Hurt Lock to Theory

Mysterios b. Judgment Day – Frog splash to Balor

Alexa Bliss b. Doudrop – Tornado DDT

AJ Styles/Dolph Ziggler b. Alpha Academy – Zig Zag to Gable

Bloodline b. Riddle/Street Profits – Spear to Riddle

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Daily News Update – July 25, 2022

Make sure to check out some recent reviews.

[Summerslam 2011 \(2016 Redo\)](#)

[Summerslam 2012 \(2013 Redo\)](#)

[Impact Wrestling – July 14, 2022](#)

[NXT UK – July 21, 2022](#)

[Smackdown – December 14, 2007](#)

[Summerslam 2013 \(2019 Redo\)](#)

[Smackdown – July 22, 2022](#)

[Rampage – July 22, 2022](#)

[Death Before Dishonor 2022](#)

[Summerslam 2014 \(2015 Redo\)](#)

[Summerslam 2015 \(2016 Redo\)](#)

[Summerslam 2016 \(2017 Redo\)](#)

[Armageddon 2007 \(2022 Redo\)](#)

[NXT LVL Up – July 22, 2022](#)

Ouch: Nasty Injury Takes Place During AEW Dynamite Main Event.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/ouch-nasty-injury-takes-place-aew-dynamite-main-event/>

Back For More: AEW Signs Former NXT Star.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/back-aew-signs-former-nxt-star/>

You Need Them: Ring Of Honor Officially Signs Hall Of Famers To Long Term Deals.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/need-ring-honor-officially-signs-hall-famers-long-term-deals/>

They Need Them: AEW Might Have Major Return Plans For All Out.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/need-aew-might-major-return-plans/>

Office vs. Locker Room: Backstage Issues Reportedly Causing Issues In NWA.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/office-vs-locker-room-backstage-issues-reportedly-causing-issues-nwa/>

WATCH: AEW's Jon Moxley Lands Surprising Sponsorship Deal.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-aews-jon-moxley-lands-surprising-sponsorship-deal/>

Good For Them: FTR Releases A New Charity Shirt With A Great Bonus.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/good-ftr-releases-new-charity-shirt-great-bonus/>

WRESTLING RUMORS: WWE May Be Hinting At A Long Teased Match.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/wrestling-rumors-wwe-may-hinting-long-teased-match/>

BREAKING: Vince McMahon Officially Retires From WWE.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/breaking-vince-mcmahon-officially-retires-wwe/>

Brock Lesnar Reportedly Leaves SmackDown, Status For This Week Unclear.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/brock-lesnar-reportedly-leaves-smackdown-status-week-unclear/>

Upgrade: Another NXT Star Makes Official Main Roster Debut.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/upgrade-another-nxt-star-makes-official-main-roster-debut/>

Beast Switch: Brock Lesnar Does Appear On WWE SmackDown After All, What Happened.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/beast-switch-brock-lesnar-appear-wwe-smackdown-happened/>

Get Well Soon: WWE Star On The Shelf With An Arm Injury.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/get-well-soon-wwe-star-shelf-arm-injury/>

There's A Reason For That: Here's Why WWE Gave Liv Morgan Her Huge Push.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/theres-reason-heres-wwe-gave-liv-morgan-huge-push/>

He's Taking His Time: Update On Gable Steveson's Wrestling Future.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/hes-taking-time-update-g>

[able-stevesons-wrestling-future/](#)

LOOK: Former WWE World Champion In Horrible Car Wreck.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/look-former-wwe-world-champion-horrible-car-wreck/>

He's Out: WWE Star Dropped From Storyline And Already Replaced.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/hes-wwe-star-dropped-storyline-already-replaced/>

You Don't See That Often: Entire Stable Changes Hands At Death Before Dishonor.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/dont-see-often-entire-stable-changes-hands-death-dishonor/>

Multiple Titles Change Hands At ROH Death Before Dishonor.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/multiple-titles-change-hands-roh-death-dishonor/>

YES! Good News On Bryan Danielson's In-Ring Status.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/yes-good-news-bryan-danielsons-ring-status/>

Say What? There Were Already Some Changes Made To WWE In Vince McMahon's Absence.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/say-already-changes-made-wwe-vince-mcmahons-absence/>

Next In Line: Here's Who Will Be Taking Over For Vince McMahon In WWE.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/next-line-heres-will-taking-vince-mcmahon-wwe/>

That Would Be A Loss: Legendary Name May Be Gone From AEW And

ROH.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/loss-legendary-name-may-gone-aew-roh/>

Yeowch: CM Punk Reveals New Details About Injury, Worse Than Previously Reported.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/yeowch-cm-punk-reveals-new-details-injury-worse-previously-reported/>

Let Him In? Bray Wyatt Makes Reference To Vince McMahon, Hints At New Beginning.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/let-bray-wyatt-makes-reference-vince-mcmahon-hints-new-beginning/>

Two Of A Kind? Rather Odd Pairing Makes Debut At NXT Live Event.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/two-kind-rather-odd-pairing-makes-debut-nxt-live-event/>

WATCH: Darby Allin Attacked By House Of Black At San Diego Comic Con.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-darby-allin-attacked-house-black-san-diego-comic-con/>

WATCH: WWE's Top 20 Greatest Summerslam Moments (With Some Interesting Choices).

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/watch-wwes-top-20-greatest-summerslam-moments-interesting-choices/>

As always, hit up the comments section to chat about what is going on and [get on the Wrestling](#)

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New Column: Vince Is Gone

We needed a replacement this week.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/kbs-review-vince-gone-2/>

NXT LVL Up – July 22, 2022: The Underlying Problem

NXT LVL Up

Date: July 22, 2022

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Sudu Shah, Nigel McGuinness

This show has started to change a little bit in recent weeks and that is a good thing. There have been some original interviews and even a tease of some storylines. It shouldn't be that hard to do SOMETHING with this show but unfortunately that doesn't seem to be WWE's idea. Maybe they have a different idea this week though so let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Thea Hail vs. Brooklyn Barlow

Chase U is here with Hail. They fight over wrist control to start before trading some rollups for two each. A headlock takeover puts Hail down and we hit the armbar as commentary talks about how much Chase U appreciates Hail. Something like a seated abdominal stretch brings Hail back to life for a side slam. A standing moonsault into Hail Yeah (ok that's clever) finishes Barlow at 5:37.

Rating: C-. This was a lot of Barlow dominating, or at least dominating as much as you can with a headlock. Barlow continues to be little more than another blonde with an athletic background and that isn't exactly getting her very far. On the other hand you have Hail, who is a total ball of charisma and she is starting to get somewhere with Chase U.

Hank Walker isn't going to let Duke Hudson disrespect him tonight.

Ru Feng vs. Bryson Montana

Feng grabs a headlock to start and takes Montana to the mat to crank away. It works so well that Feng does it again before switching to a front facelock. Montana fights up and starts with the most generic power offense you could imagine, including right hands and shoulders to the ribs in the corner. A backbreaker into a side slam mix things up a bit and there's a Michinoku Driver for two on Feng. The chinlock doesn't last long as Feng fights up with his variety of martial arts. Montana isn't having that and hits a Sky High for the pin at 4:34.

Rating: D+. They tried to make beating Feng important but that has never been the case and probably won't for most of his time around here. Montana got my attention when he debuted and maybe he can do a little something. With that kind of power and look, there might be a chance for him and that is the point of a show like this one.

Hank Walker vs. Duke Hudson

Hudson drives him into the corner to start and puts on a quickly broken headlock. Walker powers up and slams him down for two, only to get driven into the corner for some shoulders to the ribs. A reverse DDT gets two on Walker and we hit the chinlock with a knee in Walker's back. That's broken up and Walker pulls the hair before taking off his shirt and faceplanting him for two. Back up and Hudson slips off the shoulders, setting up a big boot for the pin on Walker at 6:04.

Rating: C. Walker feels like quite the dead end gimmick, if nothing else because Brooks Jensen, Josh Briggs and Fallon Henley are already doing it and doing it better. Hudson is someone who should be able to do something of his own but for some reason it hasn't quite started yet. He feels like a bigger star than most around here and having him around does help a bit.

Overall Rating: C-. You can add in the interview (which is a good idea) and the stories from one week to another (which seems to have already been dropped) but ultimately, the wrestling just isn't that good. What are you supposed to do when the wrestling is pretty weak at best and you're lucky to get an ok match? That is LVL Up in a nutshell and I have no reason to believe it is going to change.

Results

Thea Hail b. Brooklyn Barlow – Hail Yeah
Bryson Montana b. Ru Feng – Sky High
Duke Hudson b. Hank Walker – Big boot

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Armageddon 2007 (2022 Redo) : They Need A Change

Armageddon 2007

Date: December 16, 2007

Location: Mellon Arena, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Attendance: 12,500

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler, Joey Styles, Taz

It's the final pay per view of the year and it's more or less a one match show. While there is a Raw main event of Chris Jericho challenging Randy Orton for the Raw World Title, the real main event here is Smackdown World Champion Batista defending the Smackdown World Title against Undertaker and Edge in a triple threat match. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks exactly like what you would expect from a show called Armageddon, with clips of the major matches included.

United States Title: MVP vs. Rey Mysterio

MVP is defending and gets his legs kicked out to start. A springboard armdrag sends MVP outside, where he asks for a twenty second time out. Instead he gets Rey hitting a running corkscrew dive for the next big knockdown. Back in and MVP

drops him face first onto the top turnbuckle, setting up a running boot to the head for two.

We hit the arm trap chinlock, which is quickly switched into an armbar for a rather meaningful change of pace. Rey tries to fight up and is pulled back down by the head for a clever counter. A fireman's carry doesn't work as well for MVP as Rey slips out and grabs a hurricanrana, followed by a springboard seated senton.

MVP is right back up with a shot to the face before going up top and...trying to superplex Rey to the floor. Since that is not very recommended, it's a slugout on top instead until a super hurricanrana gets two on MVP. With nothing else working, MVP boots him in the face but has to duck a quick 619 attempt. That means Rey can hit the running hurricanrana off the apron, which is enough for MVP to take the countout.

Rating: C+. Nice enough opener here though the ending hurt it a good bit. You can only get so much out of a match that gets some time and then goes nowhere because the champion walks out to save the title. They didn't have the title change to open things up but at least Rey was able to keep the fans hot.

Post match Rey gives MVP a 619 to blow off some steam.

We look at HHH and Jeff Hardy working together at Survivor Series.

Hardy knows what he has to do and it's time for him to win a big match. He doesn't believe in never.

Kane/CM Punk vs. Big Daddy V/Mark Henry

Matt Striker is here with the monsters. Henry shoves Punk around to start and it's time to think of a new strategy. Punk tries striking away at the leg and gets thrown down again. That's enough for Punk who brings Kane in to slug away at Henry for some more success. Punk comes back in but gets taken

into the wrong corner for the big chop from V. A nasty gorilla press drop puts Punk down again and it's back to Henry for some more clubbing.

Punk manages to duck a shot though and Kane comes back in for some uppercuts. V's chokebomb gets two and it's time to mount Kane, which has to be something that Vince finds hilarious. Thankfully there is no thrusting and Henry slaps on a bearhug. For some reason that doesn't last long and it's V coming back in for a clothesline. Kane manages to knock Henry down though and the tag brings in Punk for not the strongest reaction. Everything breaks down and Punk tries the springboard clothesline, which is countered into a Samoan drop to give V the pin.

Rating: C-. This felt like a big time ECW main event so they couldn't have done much better. What matters here is having V (or Henry as it could have been either) get the pin to set up Punk's next challenger. You can only have him run from the two of them for so long before it stops mattering and now V should be in line for the next title shot. Or to eat Punk, whichever comes first.

Vickie Guerrero has a victory celebration ready for Edge and says her pain and mental suffering will go away when he wins the title. A kiss for good luck ensues. On the hand that is.

Mr. Kennedy vs. Shawn Michaels

Before the match, Kennedy promises to hurt Shawn. They start fast with an exchange of shots to the face before Shawn goes to the leg to cut him down. Shawn can't grab a suplex so he takes Kennedy down by the arm instead. We hit the Fujiwara armbar before Shawn goes a little more simple with a hammerlock. Kennedy can't get out of the armbar so he drives Shawn through the ropes for a crash (and the break) instead.

That works for Shawn, who drives the bar arm into the steps and then stomps away on it back inside. They head to the apron

for a breather but this time Kennedy sends him back first into the post to take over. There's a whip into the corner to set up a running boot and a backbreaker keeps Shawn in trouble. Kennedy goes up but stops himself diving into a raised boot, instead dropping an elbow to the back for two.

The chinlock with a knee in Shawn's back goes on but Shawn fights up again. This time it's an elbow to the face and a backdrop to send Kennedy outside. Back in and it's the flying forearm into the nip up to start Shawn's real comeback. The top rope elbow looks to set up Sweet Chin Music but Kennedy reverses into a rollup for two. Kennedy sends him into the corner and the Regal Roll connects for two more. The Mic Check is blocked so Kennedy hits him so hard that he hurts his own hand. That's all Shawn needs to hit the superkick for the pin.

Rating: B-. It wasn't quite the best that Shawn is capable of doing but even just ok Shawn is still better than almost anyone else is going to be able to do. Kennedy losing is a bit of a surprise, but it isn't like WWE is going to trust him so soon after multiple missed chances anyway. As usual, Shawn can bring someone up his level though and it worked out well here.

Randy Orton isn't worried about who he is facing at the Royal Rumble, because he is going to destroy the virus that is Chris Jericho tonight. Orton has taken out all kinds of World Champions so please, don't save us, but spare us.

Jeff Hardy vs. HHH

Non-title and the winner gets a shot at the WWE Title at the Royal Rumble. The lockup goes to HHH to start as Hardy is shoved down without much trouble. Some shoulders drop hardy again and there's a clothesline to make it worse. A few armdrags work better for Hardy but they head outside where HHH knocks him down again.

Back in and HHH hits a heck of a slap, which seems to wake Hardy up a bit. It wakes him up enough that he can hit an

atomic drop into the basement dropkick for two, which might not have been the best idea. They head outside where HHH whips him hard into the steps, meaning it's time to drop elbows on Hardy's back.

Hardy gets an elbow up in the corner and goes up, only to be shoved down for the big crash into the barricade as HHH continues to be smarter/one step ahead. Back in and HHH drops another elbow for two before grabbing the abdominal stretch to stay on the ribs. Hardy slips out of a suplex and hits the enziguri, followed by a dropkick. Some running forearms put HHH down but he rolls away from the slingshot dropkick in the corner.

Hardy is fine enough to knock him outside and of course that means the slingshot dive. Back in and the Whisper in the Wind gets two but the Twist of Fate is countered into a DDT to give HHH his own two. HHH unloads in the corner but gets mule kicked into another corner, setting up the slingshot dropkick. The Swanton misses for a crash though and HHH hits the spinebuster. The Pedigree is loaded up but Hardy reverses into a rollup for the surprise pin and the title shot.

Rating: B. This was the kind of match where you could see the story they were telling throughout. HHH is the Cerebral Assassin but Hardy is more about making it up as you go, meaning HHH was going to get frustrated and ultimately caught in the end. That's good, logical storytelling and Hardy gets the biggest singles win of his career.

Great Khali is ready to destroy Finlay for saving Hornswoggle at Survivor Series. Tonight, Khali decimates both of them.

Great Khali vs. Finlay

Runjin Singh and Hornswoggle are here too. Khali starts fast with a chop and big boot to send Finlay outside early. Another chop only hits post but Khali tries it again to knock him down. Back in and we hit the nerve hold, followed by a kick to

the face to put Finlay down again. Finlay fights out of another nerve hold and grabs the rope, drawing in Hornswoggle to...get tossed down with ease. Finlay grabs the Shillelagh but gets it taken away, allowing Hornswoggle to come in with another Shillelagh for a low blow. One heck of a Shillelagh shot knocks Khali cold to give Finlay the pin.

Rating: D. Just in case Khali hadn't been damaged enough, he loses here again, albeit to someone who has become one of the stronger midcard stars on Smackdown. Finlay standing up for Hornswoggle is something anyone can get behind because he's taking care of someone who can't do it for themselves. Turning Finlay into a good guy is hard enough but they are making it work fairly well here.

We recap Chris Jericho vs. Randy Orton. Jericho came back and wanted a title shot to save WWE from Orton, so here we go.

Raw World Title: Randy Orton vs. Chris Jericho

Jericho is challenging and starts fast by dropping him ribs first across the top rope. A spinwheel kick puts Orton on the apron but he's too smart for the triangle dropkick. Instead he drops to the floor so Jericho can hit a big dive as this is one sided so far. Back in and Jericho slips out of the hanging DDT but can't get the Walls. Orton is right back with a DDT for two and the slow stomping begins.

We're already in the chinlock for a bit before Jericho fights back up with a clothesline. Jericho walks into a powerslam though and Orton sends him shoulder first into the post. There's the required superplex for two but Orton misses the dropkick, allowing Jericho to hit an enziguri.

The Lionsault hits knees though and Orton grabs that backbreaker of his. The RKO is blocked though and Jericho gets in a quick Lionsault for two more. Orton takes it outside and whips him into JBL on commentary, which doesn't sit well with the cowboy hatted one. Back in and the Codebreaker is blocked

but the Punt is countered into the Walls...so JBL comes in to kick Jericho in the head for the DQ.

Rating: C+. Not a great match but the ending was a smart enough way out of this. You don't want to beat Jericho but Orton hasn't been champion long enough. Letting JBL get physical again should open enough doors to make for some interesting options. They were trying to get into a higher gear near the end, though I never quite bought that the title was in danger.

Post match Orton hits an RK0 for a bonus.

Before the Women's Title match, here is Jillian Hall to badly sing Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas. Yeah it's a deal they do all the time, but at least they have something to promote with her (and it's kind of working).

Women's Title: Beth Phoenix vs. Mickie James

Phoenix is defending and powers Mickie around to start as you might have expected. Some knees to the back have Mickie in more trouble and we hit the quickly broken dragon sleeper. Back up and Mickie flips over her out of the corner, only to get caught in a double chickenwing. That's broken up and a hurricanrana out of the corner gives Mickie a break, setting up a basement dropkick. The MickieDT is countered into a fisherman's buster to retain the title.

Rating: C-. They had almost no time out here and there was only so much that they could do. It was basically get in, get out and do your thing without burning up time for the big matches and that is pretty limiting. They were working hard while they could and the match didn't have any problems, but Beth isn't losing the title in a match that doesn't even get five minutes on pay per view.

We recap Batista vs. Edge vs. Undertaker for the Smackdown World Title. Batista FINALLY beat Undertaker to get the monkey

off of his back but then Edge returned and got involved, attacking both of them in the process. It turns out that Edge is in cahoots (and perhaps more) with General Manager Vickie Guerrero, who got him back in the title picture. Triple threat time.

Smackdown World Title: Edge vs. Undertaker vs. Batista

Batista is defending. Edge drops straight to the floor to start, leaving Batista and Undertaker to slug it out in various places. As Edge looks on, Batista kicks Undertaker in the face and gets glared at for his troubles. Edge finally gets involved by posting Undertaker and knocking Batista down on the floor.

Back in and Batista hits a swinging Boss Man Slam, followed by the driving shoulders in the corner. Undertaker breaks up the powerslam and loads up the apron legdrop but Batista cuts him off with a clothesline. Batista plants Edge again but gets pulled outside again, leaving Undertaker to hit Snake Eyes into the big boot on Edge. That leaves Batista to get pulled into Hell's Gate...and Edge rings the bell in a clever way out.

Edge comes back in to spear Undertaker for two and grabs some chairs to make it worse. Batista breaks up the Conchairto by kicking Edge in the face and pulls Old School into a spinebuster. There's a spear to Edge to send him outside...where another Edge pops out from underneath the ring. Undertaker chokeslams the other Edge (not clear if he knows the difference or not) but has to counter the Batista Bomb. The Tombstone hits Batista but Edge is back in with a chair shot to Undertaker and steals the pin and the title.

Rating: B. The ending was a little weird as the other Edge was never identified or really shown on his own, but they had to put the title back on Edge here, just for the sake of changing things up a bit. Edge and Vickie are the top villains on the show and Batista vs. Undertaker has been done to death. Let

someone fresh get in there, especially since Edge never lost the title in the first place. They kept things moving fast enough here and the match didn't overstay its welcome, with enough action to make it a fun match with the right ending.

Overall Rating: C+. There's enough good stuff on here to make the show good, but the weaker parts really did make it clear that this was a low level pay per view. The main event and Hardy vs. HHH were both good, but you can tell that things need to pick up on the way to the Royal Rumble. It's nice that things are wrapping up here though, because the road here hasn't been the most interesting.

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Summerslam Count-Up – 2016 (2017 Redo): We Have A New

Hero

Summerslam 2016

Date: August 21, 2016

Location: Barclays Center, New York City, New York

Attendance: 15,974

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton, Mauro Ranallo, David Otunga, John Bradshaw Layfield

A year has passed since I saw this show and I can barely remember much about it. That's very telling when you look at how stacked this show really is. There are multiple top level matches here and it really wasn't clear what was going to close the show until the night of the event. Hopefully that means that this SIX HOUR show holds up. Let's get to it.

So here's a quick plug. I'm going through the pre-show and there's a three expert panel of Booker T., Jerry Lawler and Lita. Earlier this year, I met all three of them at WrestleCon. If you're ever at a Wrestlemania weekend, treat yourself to an amazing time and GO TO WRESTLECON. I met over 120 wrestlers in about four hours. Where else are you going to get to do something like that? Anyway, on with the show.

Pre-Show: American Alpha/Hype Bros/Usos vs. Breezango/Ascension/Vaudevillains

Who would have thought that Breezango would be the most entertaining out of all these teams? This is pretty much the still titleless Smackdown tag division at this point as they had to bring in the Headbangers and throw together Heath Slater and Rhyno to be able to have a tournament. This is also a rematch from Smackdown, which shows how little effort they were putting into the tag division at this point.

Gable and Breeze start things and the fans are WAY into Gable. Chad twists around as only he can to escape a wristlock and it's off to Jey, who is quickly driven into the corner. English comes in and says that he's what a man is. That earns him a right hand to the jaw and it's off to Mojo to work on a wristlock. Ryder comes in to quite the reaction as Mauro says the Hype Bros have more chemistry than the Periodic Table.

Everything breaks down (What took them so long?) and Ascension clears the ring, only to have American Alpha come off the top (the same corner) with double clotheslines (that's pure Steiner Brothers). English posts Ryder though and we take a break. Back with Gotch putting Ryder in a chinlock, followed by Viktor doing the same. The other heels take turns stomping on Ryder until Breeze grabs his own chinlock. Fandango adds a slingshot legdrop as this is going WAY longer than it needs to.

JBL thinks cold beer uniting the APA is more effective than furry selfie sticks uniting Breezango but maybe he's wrong. Ascension knocks the good guys off the apron but Viktor misses a charge in the corner, allowing Ryder to get in a neckbreaker on Konnor. The hot tag (with a limited reaction) brings in Jimmy to clean house.

Jordan gets the real hot tag and does his fired up sequence (which he really is awesome at) with a belly to belly getting two on Breeze. We hit the parade of secondary finishers as the referee is imploring them to tag. Mojo powerbombs Breeze and Viktor out of the corner and the Usos add stereo superkicks to set up stereo dives. Back in and Grand Amplitude plants Gotch, only to have Jey tag himself in for a Superfly Splash and the pin at 14:31. Gable is really not cool with that. Eh just wait until your team is split up for a pretty lame story where Jordan is Kurt Angle's son.

Rating: B-. If you cut out a few minutes from this, it's a heck of an opener. There are too many people in the match of course but they kept it moving fast enough (for the most part) to really get something fun out of it. Jordan's house cleaning spot is a heck of a way to fire the crowd up and it made the match more fun than it should have been. Tweak this a bit (eight/ten man tag or shorten the match a bit) and it's even better.

Pre-Show: Dudley Boyz vs. Sami Zayn/Neville

Sami works on D-Von's arm to start and it's off to Neville for more of the same. Both of them get in more shots as we hear about the rivalry over the NXT Title. I do appreciate the history, especially when Graves should know about that match very well. Bubba is sent outside but D-Von breaks up a springboard dive, allowing Bubba to nail Neville from behind

to take over. The fans want tables but a back elbow to Neville's jaw cuts them off in a hurry.

Back from a break with Bubba hitting his neckbreaker out of the corner. Things slow down even more as Bubba is talking even more than he usually does in a match. Bubba: "COME ON ENGLISH BOY! O-LAY! O-LAY!" The middle rope backsplash misses though and the hot tag brings in Sami. D-Von takes the Blue Thunder Bomb for two but the reverse 3D gets the same. Neville escapes the regular version though and we get some heel miscommunication. The Helluva Kick sets up the Red Arrow to put Bubba away at 7:55.

Rating: C-. That would be it for the Dudleys in WWE as they would have one more segment tomorrow night where Anderson and Gallows sent them packing. It's also pretty much it for Sami and Neville as a team, which is quite odd as you would think they would be a fine choice for a team. The match was nothing you wouldn't expect on Raw.

Pre-Show: Cesaro vs. Sheamus

You know, because two matches just weren't enough for the pre-show. This is the first match of the Best of Seven Series, which really wasn't too well received. After Cole says Cesaro is facing Cesaro and both Cole and Saxton say this is about establishing physical dominance, we're ready to go. Sheamus misses a very early Brogue Kick but the spinning springboard uppercut is blocked as well.

Cesaro charges into an uppercut but comes back with a dropkick for one. The ten forearms to the chest are broken up so Sheamus clotheslines him onto the apron instead. It's off to an armbar on Cesaro's chronically taped up shoulder but Cesaro lifts him up into that kind of reverse Angle Slam of his. They're certainly hitting each other hard here, which is pretty much the draw of the whole feud.

Sheamus hits a tilt-a-whirl slam and it's off to a break. Back with Cesaro fighting out of a chinlock because that rule even applies on pre-shows that will never end. The Irish Curse gives Sheamus two as Cole runs down the pay per view card, which only makes me think that there are FAR too many titles in WWE. They fight over a suplex and fall out to the floor in a heap. Back in and Cesaro starts firing off the running

uppercuts in the corner, capped off by a dropkick to knock him off the ropes.

The apron superplex (which wasn't from the apron) gets two but Sheamus counters the Neutralizer into White Noise for two. There's the super Regal Roll for two more and frustration is really setting in. Another Brogue Kick attempt is countered by one heck of a clothesline though and Cesaro adds a high crossbody for two of his own. Cesaro tries the Sharpshooter but Sheamus gets to the ropes. Back up and a poke to the eye sets up the Brogue Kick to give Sheamus the pin at 14:11.

Rating: B. They beat the heck out of each other and it was a fun match but it also brings up the problem: I'm not going to want to watch them fight six more times. No matter how good things are, having them happen so many times in a row over several weeks is going to get tiresome. It happens in all these series and it's happening here too.

And now, after more wrestling than you get on an average Smackdown, here's the actual pay per view.

The opening video looks at New York City, with the narrator telling you how AMAZING the city is. I'm not sure if New York City or Texas is worse about bragging about their home's greatness. As usual, this switches over to a series of quick looks at the biggest matches on the card.

Enzo Amore/Big Cass vs. Chris Jericho/Kevin Owens

Well duh. That's about as easy of a choice for an opener as you could ever find for this show. As you might expect, the crowd eats up the opening promo with a spoon and of course we hear a ton of New York City music references. Included are Frank Sinatra, Biggie Smalls and Jay-Z, plus more that probably go over my head. Cass adds in a few songs of his own as this is the only way this show could have opened. Since Graves is the best heel commentator in wrestling today though, he points out that Enzo is from New Jersey.

Jericho and Owens jump Enzo at the bell and the STUPID IDIOT chants start rolling. Enzo comes back with a crossbody and a running right hand to the jaw for two. It's off to Cass, who drags Owens inside for a beat. That's

some scary power. Enzo gets launched into the corner to crush Jericho but the Canadians bail to the floor. That's fine with Cass who tosses Enzo over the top onto them in a huge crash. I've always loved that spot as it just looks cool.

Back in and Enzo ax handles Owens but turns into a middle rope dropkick from Jericho. The Canadian violence begins with Owens kneeing Enzo from the apron and doing his dance on the apron in a rather funny visual. Owens' comedic skills aren't given enough credit more often than not. It's back to Jericho for the Arrogant Cover and a chinlock with Owens telling Jericho to do it like he taught him.

Owens comes in and adds a gutbuster for two, followed by the running start for a chinlock. It takes real talent to turn a chinlock into an art form but Owens has somehow pulled it off. Enzo finally rolls away but Jericho is there to break up the diving tag attempt. Owens drops the frog splash for two and his stunned looked on the kickout is the usual awesome visual. Enzo gets pulled off the corner to make things even worse but, after blowing a kiss to Jericho, misses the Cannonball.

That means the hot tag to Cass and everything breaks down. Jericho dives into a big boot but Owens breaks up the Bada Boom Shaka Lacka. Cass gets posted on the floor and now the Cannonball against the barricade connects. Back in and Enzo scores with his top rope DDT on Jericho with Owens making the save. A pop up Codebreaker (didn't look great as Jericho was too far away) ends Enzo at 12:09.

Rating: C+. Odd choice for an ending aside (not surprising of course but odd), this was a good way to get the crowd going. I could have gone for another hope spot from Enzo and more of Cass cleaning house but that pop up Codebreaker could have been a heck of a finisher if done right. Nice opener, though would it have killed them to put Enzo and Cass over in Brooklyn?

Smackdown bosses Daniel Bryan and Shane McMahon run into Raw General Manager Mick Foley to brag about how awesome their shows are. Former Daily Show host Jon Stewart and his son come in to ask what Foley is thinking to work with Stephanie. He rants about abuse of power but

realizes she's right behind him. Stephanie yells at him about how great it is to abuse power but thankfully New Day comes up. As the Smackdown bosses and Foley munch on cereal, New Day asks Jon if he'd like to do something. He gets out as fast as he can and Stephanie isn't amused.

We recap Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks. Sasha won the Women's Title on the first exclusive show after the Brand Split and tonight is the rematch. The other big idea here is Charlotte never loses singles matches on pay per view and Banks has to recreate the magic one more time.

Raw Women's Title: Sasha Banks vs. Charlotte

Banks is defending and we get the Big Match Intros. Some early WOOing sets up a slightly less early Bank Statement but Charlotte bails to the floor. Back in and Banks climbs the corner for a wristdrag before sending Charlotte face first into the middle buckle. Banks gets caught on top though and Charlotte basically drops her onto the ropes for a backbreaker which almost had to hurt horribly. The fact that Banks had a bad back coming in and Charlotte still did some rather sloppy moves like that got her in some hot water.

We hit a Gory Stretch on the champ for a bit but she comes back with a pair of running clotheslines. That just earns her another backbreaker and Charlotte stomps away at the back. The Figure Eight is broken up but Sasha misses a charge into the corner and gets caught in the Tree of Woe. Charlotte picks her up for a super Razor's Edge but since that would, you know, kill Sasha, she reverses into a hurricanrana to put them both down.

Back up and a WOO earns Charlotte a string of slaps before Sasha avoids a charge in the corner and hits the double knees to the back for two. Charlotte kicks her in the leg to break up a charge but gets knocked outside again, setting up the double knees from the apron. Back in and the Backstabber doesn't work but Natural Selection is countered into the Bank Statement (thankfully too as the Natural Selection clearly didn't send Sasha's head anywhere near the mat).

Charlotte makes the rope for the break and takes out the knee again. Natural Selection gives Charlotte two so she yells about being better than Sasha. Another Bank Statement goes on but Charlotte reverses into a

rollup for the pin and the title at 13:52. Saxton: "Just like that?"

Rating: B. This was just a straight match and that's the key to the whole thing. The women are getting to show that they can have a good match without the smoke and mirrors, which never would have been the case otherwise. If nothing else it got the kind of time that a title match deserves to develop the story of Banks having a bad back (which would keep her on the shelf for about a month). Strong match here and another of many to come for these two.

Doctors Anderson and Gallows (oh man I had forgotten how stupid this was) run into AJ Styles for a Club reunion. Finn Balor comes up and doesn't think much of it. Somehow, this has still never gone anywhere.

Intercontinental Title: Miz vs. Apollo Crews

Crews is defending after winning a triple threat match. Miz comes out wearing a glittery Phantom of the Opera mask while Maryse is basically in a one piece swimsuit. In a sign of the changing times, Mauro talks about Miz's look instead of Maryse. Miz stomps away in the corner and gets two off a running kick to the chest. Crews gets the same off a rollup, only to walk into the short DDT as it's almost all Miz to start. We're already in the reverse chinlock before Miz sends him into the apron to cut off a comeback. Miz takes too long coming off the top though and dives into a dropkick to put both guys down.

A crossbody into a nipup has Miz in trouble as JBL rants about Otunga calling Crews a Jackrobat (jacked acrobat). The Toss Powerbomb is countered so Crews gets two off a tilt-a-whirl powerslam. An overhead belly to belly sets up a standing moonsault, which Otunga sums up perfectly: "A man with that kind of size and that kind of muscle should not be able to do that." Miz teases taking a walk but Maryse cuts him off, allowing Miz to post Crews. The Skull Crushing Finale retains the title at 5:36.

Rating: D+. Standard Smackdown match and something that could have been cut, or at least put in the Kickoff Show in the place of the Dudleys match. Crews felt like an easy obstacle to overcome because there was nowhere near enough build to set the match up. Put some more effort into

the title already people, as it's just not working.

We recap John Cena vs. AJ Styles. They set up the first match when Styles and Cena were in the ring together, only to have Anderson and Gallows interfere to turn Styles heel. Styles went on a great rant about how Cena was a fraud who couldn't hang in the ring with someone like him. Cena went into a great speech about how he's here out of love because it never gets old. AJ beat him at Money in the Bank with assistance from Anderson and Gallows, setting up a rematch between the two here.

AJ Styles vs. John Cena

This just feels big. AJ grabs a waistlock to start but is easily knocked away. The announcers go out of the way to put over how AJ has been on big shows before but nothing this big. Oh I don't know. I remember him being at that Wrestlemania thing earlier in the year. The dueling chants begin and the AJ STYLES side is pretty clearly stronger.

Cena's headlock is countered and AJ scores with the dropkick but the bragging earns AJ a right to the jaw. A hard whip into the corner sends AJ down for a bit with Cena doing some rare trash talking. They head to the floor and the fans start belting out JOHN CENA SUCKS, only to have AJ turn it into some gasping with a suplex onto the apron. Cena is right back with a dropkick for two and it's time for some more right hands to the head.

AJ comes back with a forearm to the face, earning himself Cena's finishing sequence. It's way too early for the AA though as AJ hits a Pele, followed by the Styles Clash for a close two. The fans were actually more into the near fall than I was expecting as you would think they'd know better this early. The AA gives Cena two of his own and both guys are down again.

Styles slips out of the super AA and grabs the torture rack for the spinout powerbomb. They're trading bombs at this point and it's the only way they should be going here. Something like a Big Ending gives Cena two but he can't get the STF. Instead it's the AA neckbreaker for two on Cena (not the same as the AA JBL) but the springboard 450 only hits mat.

A faceplant puts Cena down again though and AJ can't follow up. He manages the springboard forearm but Cena reverses into the worst STF I've ever seen. Thankfully AJ slips out and grabs a Crossface, which Cena powers out of as well. That's reversed into the Calf Crusher which AJ is smart enough to twist away from the ropes. Cena reverses that into another horrible STF (AJ's face is on the mat) so AJ is quickly up with the enziguri. A tornado DDT plants AJ and there's the top rope Fameasser for two.

Cena heads up again and gets taken down with a super hurricanrana (Mauro: "MAMA MIA!"), followed by the Phenomenal Forearm for a VERY near fall (drawing Mauro to his feet). It's Cena's turn now as he takes AJ up for the super AA and...it's two. NOW the fans know it's on as I don't think anyone has ever kicked out of that before. Cena is stunned and the AA is countered into another Clash. The Phenomenal Forearm puts Cena away clean at 23:10.

Rating: A. I know it's not going to sound good but a lot of this goes to Cena. At the end of the day, the crowd completely lost it when AJ kicked out of that super AA. AJ wins here not because he got a pin but because he beat Cena clean. That's a very, VERY short list and that's what makes it feel so important. Think back to how big of a deal it was when Warrior pinned Hogan clean. That felt like an era changing win, and while this isn't quite that big, it's the same idea.

Oh yeah and it's an outstanding match and possibly the Match of the Year. This was the heavyweight slugfest formula as they beat the heck out of each other with both guys hitting everything they could until one of them couldn't get up. That's a really hard match to pull off and these two did it in an incredible match. It belonged on the grand stage and gives Cena one heck of a mountain to overcome, which he somehow did in a better match at the Royal Rumble.

Post match Cena takes off his wristband and leaves it in the ring. He would do dark matches for a few weeks and then be back wrestling on TV in less than a month so this didn't mean anything.

Some fans won a contest and got some stuff. In other words, let the fans

have a breather.

Here's Jon Stewart for your celebrity appearance. He makes fun of himself for interfering in Cena's match last year and says the big lesson he learned was to tuck your shirt in when you're taking an AA. As for tonight though, he's here to be in New Day's corner to help deal with Anderson and Gallows. In honor of the moment, he throws on a unicorn horn and does Big E.'s (out injured due to getting crotched against the post) entrance.

Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Anderson and Gallows

New Day is defending of course and unfortunately Anderson and Gallows are still doing their stupid doctor nonsense, complete with jars for Kofi, Xavier and Jon's testicles. I hear Paige can help you with one of those. Anderson headlocks Kofi down to start but he's right back up with the jumping back elbow to the jaw. Kofi flips onto his feet and gets two off the standing double stomp. You can tell the fans are still recovering from the previous match and it's off to Woods.

That goes badly as the he gets taken into the corner for a beating from Gallows. At least it does bring the fans back a bit with the rhythmic clapping. Gallows gets taken into the corner for the Unicorn Stampede (which they've kind of stopped doing in recent months) and the fans are really not responding. Woods sends him outside so Kofi can hit a running dive (while posing in the air) to take him down again. Back in and Gallows kicks Kofi in the head to take over for real this time with Anderson working on the arm.

That goes nowhere as the hot tag brings in Woods to clean house. Anderson sends him to the apron for an enziguri, setting up the rope walk elbow drop. Everything breaks down and Anderson kicks Kofi in the chest, setting up the Magic Killer. Stewart gets in though and it's time to crotch him as well. Hang on though as he has to tuck in his shirt first. Cue the returning Big E. for the save though and that's a DQ at 9:09.

Rating: D. I don't know if it was the previous match or what but sweet goodness the fans did NOT care for this one. It's not a good match in the first place as Anderson and Gallows aren't funny in the doctor roles, but

the bigger problem here was the focus being on Stewart at the end. Oh and the ending sets up a rematch, which really isn't what they need to be going with here. Bad match but Big E.'s return did wake up the crowd.

Big E. drinks the fluid in the jar holding his "testicles". Stewart dances with New Day and the fans...well they care when Big E. dances at least.

We recap Dean Ambrose vs. Dolph Ziggler. Dolph won a six way match to earn the shot and then it all went nuts. Ziggler started talking about how he was tired of being told that he always either too good or not good enough. It was time to turn up the jets and become champion for the third time. Serious Ziggler was nice but I don't think anyone was buying him as having a real chance here. You know, because he's Dolph Ziggler.

Smackdown World Title: Dolph Ziggler vs. Dean Ambrose

Dean is defending and Shane and Daniel are here for no apparent reason. The fans are behind Ziggler and they trade some grappling on the mat with Ziggler getting the better of it (not exactly a surprise). The threat of a neckbreaker sends Ambrose bailing to the floor so Dolph splashes him against the barricade.

Back in and Ziggler's jumping DDT is countered with Dean throwing him outside again. Ziggler escapes a super Dirty Deeds so Dean slaps on a half crab of all things. You can tell Dean is playing the subtle heel here as the smark crowd is always going to cheer for Ziggler. Dean heads up top and gets dropkicked out of the air but he's right back with a double chickenwing facebuster.

Ambrose tunes up the band (which is now mocking Ziggler instead of anything involving Shawn Michaels) but shakes his head and tries Dirty Deeds instead. That's reversed into the jumping DDT and both guys are down again. A double collision gives us another lay down period until Dean is up first and hammering away.

The top rope elbow gets two so Ziggler grabs the sleeper, earning them both a tumble out to the floor. Ziggler gets in the superkick on the floor but it's barely two back inside. The Zig Zag gets the same but Dean

pops back up with the rebound lariat. Ziggler catches Dean on top and pulls him back down, right into Dirty Deeds to retain the title at 15:22.

Rating: D+. And that people, is Ziggler choking again. This would lead to him saying he's never won the big one, which would turn into him never holding the World Title that long because holding the title is more important than winning it. The match was nothing all that good as we were just waiting on Dirty Deeds, which only happened so Dean could keep it warm for AJ next month. That was completely obvious the second AJ pinned Cena again and that's all this title needed to do.

Package on Summerslam weekend.

Natalya/Alexa Bliss/Eva Marie vs. Becky Lynch/Naomi/Carmella

Dang I didn't know the Glow was a year old. Actually hang on a minute as Eva Marie is suffering from exhaustion, anxiety and stress (likely brought on by reading too many Wellness Violation messages, which meant she would never wrestle again) so we have a replacement. At least we got that amazing entrance one more time.

Natalya/Alexa Bliss/Nikki Bella vs. Becky Lynch/Naomi/Carmella

So yeah, you know full well that Nikki is going to be all that matters in this match because IT'S HER BIG COMEBACK THAT EVERYONE TOTALLY CARES ABOUT BECAUSE WE LOVE HER SO MUCH! She does get one heck of a pop though, which is rather scary. During her entrance, Mauro declares her return "miraculous". Oh man this is going to be a long one.

Bliss rolls Becky up to start and gets in a hard slap for good measure. Naomi comes in to scare Alexa off so it's Natalya instead. A forearm puts Natalya down and the splits legdrop gets two. Carmella comes in for the Staten Island Shuffle before a missed charge sends Natalya outside. Back in and a powerslam out of the corner plants Carmella before it's off to Nikki, the heel, for a strong face pop.

We hit the chinlock but hang on as we need some Nikki pushups. Alexa chokeslaves Carmella down for the moonsault knees to the ribs as the crowd is dead all over again. The abdominal stretch keeps things slow

until Carmella finally rolls over and makes the hot tag to Becky. All three heels are send into the corner for the springboard kicks from Lynch, followed by a Bexploder on Natalya.

Becky's top rope legdrop gets two with Nikki making the save. A blind tag brings in Naomi for the dancing kicks with the fans just not reacting at all. Bliss' springboard splash hits knees so it's off to Nikki vs. Carmella. A bad looking Bronco Buster gets two on Nikki and everything breaks down. Nikki's big forearm sets up the Rack Attack 2.0 (Nikki: "I'm back.") for the pin at 11:16.

Rating: D. This was all about Nikki's return and that's not enough to carry a dull match. Naomi's Glow stuff wasn't over yet, Becky was stuck around people who weren't up to her level and Carmella was showing that she didn't need to be on the main roster yet. The same was true for Alexa and Natalya was her usual self. Just not a good match and it showed the lack of depth to the division.

We recap Rusev vs. Roman Reigns. Rusev and Lana were married and so Reigns interrupted for no apparent reason to insult them and shove them into a cake.

Maria Menunos interviews Rusev and Lana, who don't like her questions about Reigns. They won't stand for this and Lana is sure that her husband will destroy Reigns.

We recap the Universal Title match. Basically we need a new title due to the Brand Split and Universal Title was the best they could come up with. Seth Rollins was put into the match as Raw's #1 draft pick and Finn Balor earned his way in by winning a series of matches. Not much else to it as there's no major animosity between them but it's better than pulling the title out of a suitcase.

Seth did get in a great promo talking about how he's done everything Balor has done but he's done it a little bit better. He's not wrong, though that's not the best thing to do when you have someone so new to the main roster. Then Balor showed up as the Demon and scared Rollins to death.

Universal Title: Finn Balor vs. Seth Rollins

Anything goes and the title (which isn't that well received due to a bad case of being hideous) is vacant coming in. Unless I'm forgetting something, to date this is the only time Balor has wrestled as the Demon on the main roster. We get the Big Match Intros and the title itself receives some hearty boos. Balor dropkicks him into the corner at the bell but it's too early for the Coup de Grace.

Instead Balor hits a suicide dive to the floor, followed by some kicks to the knee back inside. They head outside again with Seth getting in his first offense via a suplex on the floor. Balor is right back with something like a Phenomenal Forearm off the barricade. Back in again and Balor hits a basement dropkick for two as this is almost one sided so far. Finn stays on the leg as the fans are singing something.

Balor jumps over the ropes but Rollins slides between his legs and powerbombs him into the barricade, completely destroying Balor's shoulder and putting him on the shelf for the better part of eight months. We're less than four minutes in though and you can see the shoulder looking all messed up. Back in and Seth gets two off a backbreaker, setting up a chinlock. The chants are still going and it sounds like THAT TITLE SUCKS to the tune of John Cena Sucks.

Seth starts the trash talk and cuts off a comeback attempt. A snapmare into a kick to the back has Finn in even more trouble but Seth would rather walk around than follow up. It's back to the chinlock for a good while until the springboard knee to the head sets up Seth's frog splash for two. What looks like a Rainmaker is countered into a DDT to give Balor his first major offense in a long time and he follows up with some forearms.

A basement dropkick sets up the Sling Blade but Seth kicks him down without much effort. An enziguri stuns Balor but he's right back with the Pele, earning a very nice round of applause. If nothing else the chants about the title have stopped. 1916 (reverse implant DDT) gives Finn two but the Coup de Grace is countered into a triangle choke of all things. Finn falls outside because rope breaks don't count (anything goes

remember) and things slow down a bit.

Back in and the buckle bomb sets up the low superkick for two on Balor with Seth looking stunned on the kickout. A small package driver gets the same count and reaction so Seth goes up, allowing Balor to hit a very loud enziguri to put him on the floor. Balor adds a shotgun dropkick to send him into the barricade, followed by a top rope double stomp to the back of the head for two. The Coup de Grace misses and it's a Pedigree for two. Finn counters a second Pedigree into a double stomp, followed by the Coup de Grace for the pin and the title at 19:23.

Rating: B+. When you factor in that shoulder injury, this is quite the impressive performance. Above all else though, how good is it that Balor won the title here? If he loses his first major pay per view match and then goes away until April, he's lucky to come back to the cruiserweight division.

This was a heck of a match with both guys beating the heck out of each other. It took some time to get built up but once they finally got there, the fans really started to accept things, which is a very positive sign. Balor is someone who is going to get a very positive reaction no matter what and giving him the title here was entirely the right call.

Balor can barely move his right arm after the match but finally holds the title up. On his WWE 24 special, he said you could feel and hear the shoulder crunching and crackling as he lifted the title and it probably did more damage to the arm.

The pre-show channel chats a bit and throws us to a KFC ad with Dolph Ziggler dressing up as Colonel Sanders to beat up Miz dressed as a chicken. It's actually dumber than you remember it being.

Here's Lana to introduce Rusev, albeit while wearing half of a wedding dress, the bottom of which looks like a diaper. She's one of the most beautiful women on the roster but she looks ridiculous here.

US Title: Rusev vs. Roman Reigns

Roman is challenging and the booing is strong with this one. Rusev jumps

him before the bell and they fight out to the floor with Roman being sent into the steps. The fans chant RUSEV MACHKA because they've given up on America over their hatred for Reigns. Roman gets in a Superman Punch as the bell hasn't rung yet. They fight over a chair with Reigns getting the better of it and destroying Rusev. Reigns finally leaves but comes back with a spear, all while the fans chant WE WANT SLATER. No match of course, likely due to time issues.

We recap Randy Orton vs. Brock Lesnar. This match was announced as Orton's return match from surgery and the build focused on Orton being able to hit the RKO anytime, including a sweet moment where Orton interrupted a Lesnar promo with an RKO. The hype video even includes some OVW clips as they came up through developmental together and debuted within a few months of each other. This had a heck of a build and felt like something important but the question was whether Lesnar would have an actual match or just do his usual Lesnar stuff.

Randy Orton vs. Brock Lesnar

Heyman handles Lesnar's introduction, saying he's conquering out of the University of Suplex City. Brock seems to get into his MMA stance to start before driving Orton into the corner for the shoulders to the ribs. Orton escapes the first German suplex attempt but can't hit the RKO.

Now the first suplex connects (with Mauro knowing that it's the 33rd Lesnar has hit at Summerslam because he's awesome that way) and Brock follows with two more. Orton is almost out on his feet so Lesnar suplexes him again. It's nothing but suplexes at this point and it's already getting dull. They head outside for a much needed change of pace with Orton being thrown over the announcers' table.

Orton gets thrown from the front row through the table as this is dominance. The other table is loaded up but whatever Lesnar is trying is countered into the RKO onto (not through) the table. The hanging DDT plants Lesnar back inside and another RKO gets two. Orton realizes he has no choice and tries the Punt, only to have it reversed into the F5 (bad one) for two more.

That's enough for Lesnar so he takes off the gloves and pads and hammers on Orton. An elbow to the head actually busts Orton open VERY badly. Lesnar just keeps hammering on him while the fans chant GOLDBERG until the referee FINALLY stops it at 11:47. I've heard a bunch of answers about what happened but I believe this was the planned ending and a hard way opening.

Rating: D. Yeah this didn't work when it happened and it didn't work again this time around. Lesnar suplexing Orton for five minutes then selling a few big moves doesn't make me think it's an awesome main event. This was everything wrong with Lesnar's current WWE run in one match and that made for a really dull match, save for the odd finish that seemed designed to protect Orton. You know, after he was basically squashed.

Lesnar keeps hammering on him until the always intimidating Shane McMahon comes out, earning himself an F5 (which thankfully didn't lead anywhere). Heyman panics as they leave to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. If you cut an hour (or more) out of this, it's bordering on the classic level. As it is, this is just a good show that runs WAY too long. At some point you have to cut something out and WWE just refuses to do that. Cut out the Dudleys match or the women's tag and give us some breathing room here because sweet goodness this show could use it.

Now that being said, there's some outstanding stuff on here with the Styles vs. Cena match as an instant classic, the Women's Title being very good, a great Universal Title match and really only the Tag Team Title match being without much value. The show is certainly good and the positives outweigh the negatives but unless the show is a masterpiece, fans are going to start losing interest near the end. It's a solid show but cut out a good forty minutes to really make it great.

Ratings Comparison

American Alpha/Hype Bros/Usos vs. Breezango/Ascension/Vaudevillains

Original: C

2017 Redo: B-

Dudley Boyz vs. Neville/Sami Zayn

Original: C

2017 Redo: C-

Sheamus vs. Cesaro

Original: B-

2017 Redo: B

Chris Jericho/Kevin Owens vs. Enzo Amore/Big Cass

Original: C+

2017 Redo: C+

Sasha Banks vs. Charlotte

Original: B

2017 Redo: B

Miz vs. Apollo Crews

Original: C

2017 Redo: D+

John Cena vs. AJ Styles

Original: A

2017 Redo: A

New Day vs. Anderson and Gallows

Original: D+

2017 Redo: D

Dolph Ziggler vs. Dean Ambrose

Original: B-

2017 Redo: D+

Natalya/Alexa Bliss/Nikki Bella vs. Becky Lynch/Naomi/Carmella

Original: C

2017 Redo: D

Finn Balor vs. Seth Rollins

Original: B+

2017 Redo: D+

Brock Lesnar vs. Randy Orton

Original: C+

2017 Redo: D

Overall Rating

Original: B

2017 Redo: B-

That's quite the drop on Ambrose vs. Ziggler and Lesnar vs. Orton. Some of them are spot on though and that's not the biggest surprise.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2016/08/21/summerslam-2016-they-didnt/>

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