

# Reviewing the Review – Monday Night Raw: November 23, 2015

It's been a bit since I've done one of these for Raw but the show has been so pitiful lately that I figured it was time to take another look at it. The show's ratings are pathetic and it should be interesting to look at how screwy the show has been to see why they're in such a horrible place (even though they're making bank with the sponsors etc.). We're fresh off Survivor Series, meaning Sheamus just cashed in Money in the Bank because of reasons. Let's get to it.

The show starts and it immediately goes off a cliff. Here's the problem: Sheamus is Seth Rollins with pale skin and an annoying accent. The Authority came down to gloat, the new champion came out to say I TOLD YOU SO, the hero challenger came to the ring and issued a challenge, which was eventually accepted for the hardcore based gimmick pay per view.

In other words, it's the exact same thing that Rollins did when he set up his match with Randy Orton at Extreme Rules 2015. That's bad storytelling all around because you could call out every single thing that was going to happen in the opening twenty minutes of this show from the second that Sheamus kicked Reigns in the face the night before.

That's where Raw is having its biggest issues right now: it's so predictable. They have been using this same format for so many years and you can just swap in the characters you want. Why should I care that Sheamus is now going to be HHH and Stephanie's lapdog instead of Rollins? Now we get to see Sheamus go out and work really hard in a match so he can get the Authority's praises and go see them like a four year old that wants his dad's approval. You could see the Authority talking down to everyone again with Stephanie ripping Reigns' balls off because that's all she does these days.

Of course there will be no repercussions because the Authority is on a higher plane than everyone else so they can't be touched. HHH might do a match at Wrestlemania and put someone over (Unless they're Brock Lesnar

because then the fans needed to see HHH get his precious win back. Or if they're Sting and the fans weren't absolutely certain who won the Monday Night Wars, which the match was about because Stephanie said so.) but it's happening once a year because HHH is too busy doing wacky fun stuff like dancing to make the crowd cheer or bequeathing the Pedigree to Rollins so Seth can get a rub.

The Authority taking one loss every few months doesn't change anything about them. It makes them look like they're treating a top star like a charity case. If Rollins or Reigns beat them at Wrestlemania, it would change absolutely nothing because HHH would go into war mode for a big rematch that no one would care about because the Authority will be right back to normal with their charity of the month and doing nice things for the crowd because they're faces one week and serious businessmen the next week. As long as those two stay over though, Raw has accomplished its main goal. Until that changes, Raw isn't getting better.

As for the actual story of the night, Rusev came down and attacked Reigns to set up the main event. Yeah after all that, we get a match that has no real drama and will only end in a DQ or Reigns getting a pin. There's also nothing on the line and the new champion isn't in action. Therefore, there's no reason to watch. Reigns is part of the problem here but it's much more that it's a predictable story. The fans have learned that this kind of story isn't going anywhere until at least after TLC because we're going to have the Authority interfere and let Sheamus keep the title, setting up the Rumble. Why watch until then at the earliest?

The Dudley Boyz beat the Wyatts via DQ in a quick match. This seems to set up a feud, which makes me shake my head even more. If you were moving the Wyatts into a feud with the Dudleyz, do a Survivor Series match the night before with the Dudleyz, Bray and Strowman getting counted out or disqualified, leaving you to do the same finish that you did with Harper taking the final fall. It sets up the feud and protects Bray while still giving us the Undertaker moment. Everyone wins, but as usual we got the lamer idea because that's how WWE works.

Sasha Banks pinned Becky Lynch with a handful of trunks (which Cole was too busy schilling stuff to notice). After that WAY too long opener and

all the Undertaker videos, this got four minutes. "Yeah we want you to revolutionize the division. Here's four minutes with no mic time or a character for either of you. Go rock it!"

Then the New Day came out and made fun of country music for about ten minutes. This was supposed to include an open challenge but New Day canceled it when the Lucha Dragons tried to accept. The Usos came out as well and it seemed to be setting up a three way match (possibly with a ladder and probably the Ascension) at TLC, but there was nothing tonight. In other words, more time being wasted on something that doesn't really go anywhere.

However, there's one more major thing here: Kofi said that he hated country music and it wasn't even his character talking because he REALLY hated country music. How do you even respond to that? I understand the kayfabe is dead, but this is running out there and holding up a big sign that says "HEY! YOU DO KNOW THIS IS ALL FAKE RIGHT??? LIKE, KOFI KINGSTON IS TOTALLY A NICE GUY AND YOU DON'T NEED TO GET ANNOYED AT US OVER HIM!"

This screamed of trying to make it seem like Kofi was a jerk instead of just having him play one and letting us get immersed in it. The idea has worked for years but now we have to tinker with it for some reason because the fans are too smart. Yeah there are smarter fans, but there are also a lot of fans who either aren't smartened up (they're called kids) or a bunch of fans that like to be swept up in the whole idea (they're called the majority). Stop trying to reinvent the wheel.

Neville pinned Mark Henry in a quick match. Henry showed him respect after the match and that was that. This might be the start of a Henry retirement angle but as of now it seems like another match that didn't mean much. I like that actually as it's nice to just have a match for a change instead of having an angle and a story involved in every single thing that happens.

The Prime Time Players and Goldust beat the Ascension and Stardust. It was short and it was meaningless, but in this case it was boring. Not everything can work.

Del Rio and Colter did their weekly thing and no one cares. Like

seriously, no one cares. It's the most boring thing on the show every week and I have no idea where it's supposed to go. Colter is awesome on the mic but he's got NOTHING to work with here. Oh and then Swagger came down and went after Del Rio again. This brings up another problem for WWE: they give someone a gimmick and that's what they're stuck with for good. This feud could have gone to anyone that they make into a patriot but instead we're getting Swagger, who will lose in the end because that's what Swagger does.

Charlotte and Paige had a much better rematch than the mess they had the previous night. They actually acted like they wanted to hurt each other instead of having a lame wrestling match, which made for a much better story. The ending helped as well with a double countout to likely set up a big brawl at TLC. It makes you wonder what they were thinking at the first pay per view match, but it was probably them letting them calm down after the whole Reid Flair fiasco.

Ryback beat up Heath Slater in another filler segment. Not a match of course, but a segment.

Ambrose/Ziggler beat Owens/Breeze in ANOTHER midcard tag match that barely went anywhere. This was to help set up Owens vs. Ambrose for the title, so of course Breeze had to take yet another pin. Breeze is another great example of a guy that has been crippled coming out of the gate because he's a fresh name for the bigger stars to beat and since they only know a few ways to build up a challenger (beat the champ or beat the same guy over and over), this is what we're stuck with.

Then Reigns beat Rusev via DQ in a long, dull main event with King Barrett interfering. Did this mean that Reigns was fighting more adversity? Of course not as he cleaned out Sheamus, Barrett and Rusev AFTER they beat him down. That's how the show ends: with Reigns looking like he's about to deal with even more midcard goons who aren't going to beat him before he gets to fight for the title, where I'm sure he'll get ripped off again before he wins the Rumble and likely fights Lesnar and wins the title at Wrestlemania XXXII.

In other words, we're going another few months before Reigns finally gets

there. The problem is we've been doing that same story for over a year now and the fans are on the verge of giving up on him. There's a large group of fans that want to see Reigns, but so many of them are just fed up with having him lose and then deal with some midcard feud before going after the title again and then starting another midcard feud when he gets screwed over. They need to do something and do it soon because this stuff is really old.

Overall Raw was a total mess. In addition to the completely predictable opening and main event developments, we have the huge gaping holes due to all the injuries. Since this is WWE, we certainly can't give the other Divas match more time or bring in some people from NXT for a showcase match or an angle that changes things up a bit. No instead we're getting Heath Slater and New Day making fun of country music because it makes Vince laugh.

The big idea here is that the show is stale. It's the same formula and the same ideas that we've seen forever but there's no indication that they're going to switch it up. We're at the point where Raw opening with a match is considered shaking things up. How am I supposed to get excited for a show when I have to wait twenty minutes to get to the first match because HHH needs to say "I told you so" and Stephanie needs to screech at whoever she's adding to her collection this year? How is that good television?

Apparently a lot of people don't think it is either and the ratings are showing it. Another bad show this week and something they need to fix in a hurry before it gets even worse. It's something they could fix easily too, which makes the shows that much more frustrating. Just stop doing the same stuff over and over and the show will feel better, which is half the battle already.

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# Survivor Series Count-Up – 2014 (2015 Redo): Save Us Team Cena

## Survivor Series 2014

Date: November 23, 2014

Location: Scottrade Center, St. Louis, Missouri

Attendance: 12,000

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

Now this is going to be an interesting one as the whole show is built around one match and that one match's big surprise. Last year they made no secret about the show being entirely built around one single match, which wound up making the way to make the whole thing work. That one match is Team Cena vs. Team Authority for Cena and company's jobs vs. the Authority having power. The jobs were thrown in at the last minute to really hammer home who was going to win but that's not always the worst thing. Let's get to it.

## Pre-Show: Fandango vs. Justin Gabriel

This is the NEW AND IMPROVED Fandango, meaning he has Rosa Mendes and now wears a white shirt. We're ready to go after the dance sequence that kills even more time. They slowly punch each other to start with Gabriel, who has skeleton tights for no apparent reason (JBL: "The leftovers from Giant Gonzalez."), getting knocked to the floor.

Back in and Justin breaks out of a chinlock and gets two off a

springboard kick to the face. For someone who flies around as much as Gabriel, the fans are almost totally silent. A suplex slam (as in a suplex where Fandango never left his feet) takes Gabriel down and the guillotine legdrop is good enough to put Justin away at 3:10.

**Rating:** D-. You know how Fandango still hasn't done anything since his "rebirth" here? After this match it really surprises me that he still has a job as this was so horribly boring. Naturally they did the same match again the next night on Raw because maybe they just didn't get the point across here. Really boring match.

#### Pre-Show: Cesaro vs. Jack Swagger

The battle of the former Real Americans. On the way to the ring, Cesaro talks about the history of Swiss neutrality before picking Team Authority. He proclaims his allegiance in various languages (which is NOTHING that could ever be capitalized in around the world) until Swagger and Colter come in to pick Team Cena. Swagger gets a quick rollup for two to start, earning himself a gutwrench suplex.

The Patriot Lock has Cesaro in early trouble but he's still able to throw Swagger down with a German suplex. More suplexes set up a chinlock. Back up and Swagger grabs a German of his own, followed by a chop block to stay on the leg. The Vader Bomb is blocked but Swagger grabs the Patriot Lock. That goes nowhere and more Germans are rolled, only to have Swagger counter into the Patriot Lock again for the submission at 5:23.

**Rating:** C-. They crammed a lot of suplexes into just five minutes. This also shows you how much better a match can be if you have interesting people in there. Swagger isn't the best in the world but there's at least a reason to care about him and more than one note to his character. I'll take Cesaro being all serious and speaking different languages over HE'S A DANCER IN A WHITE SHIRT any day.

The opening video recaps the main event, which was set up on Vince's whim. That's the problem with so much of what the Authority does: whatever happens can be changed by either the two of them or Vince because they're the ultimate powers. No matter how the story goes, someone with power can come in and change anything at the drop of a hat.

Why hasn't Vince come back and changed something else on a whim? Eh no real reason other than the plot hasn't called for it. That's really bad writing.

Here's Vince to open things up with talking. Vince talks (see, I told you that's what he was going to do) about how epic this is really going to be and brings out the Authority because we haven't heard from them in the first five minutes. The sucking up begins immediately but Vince cuts them off to bring out Cena.

Vince recaps the main event as we're just burning through pay per view time here. Cena asks if the Authority will leave on their own accord if they lose tonight. HHH says that Cena is going to have a bad holiday because four men's responsibilities will be on his head after tonight. Those four men are going to be forgotten about because they're the ones with everything to lose. Cena will keep his job because he's such a big star, but he'll have that on his head forever.

Stephanie suggests that someone on Team Cena will turn on him because they have to think of themselves. She says the Authority will still have their jobs at headquarters and run things from afar, but Vince says not so fast. They'll still have desk jobs and be in charge of different departments but they'll have no authority on screen.

One more thing: if the Authority does lose tonight, only Cena can bring them back. That's the moment where they gave away the ending and everyone knew the Authority would be back by the end of the year at the latest. Stephanie goes into full STEPHANIE IS SHOUTING mode but Cena says the Authority will lose tonight.

So to recap the recap (which took us to fifteen minutes into the show): the Authority will still have jobs and huge salaries but they just don't have to deal with the headaches of running the show. On top of that, Cena can bring them back because FOREVER means until Cena says otherwise. This is all stuff that could have been done on Raw but why not waste pay per view time on it. I know their line is "But it's a free month on the Network!" That's not an excuse to do something stupid like this as it's a really bad way to get the show going when this could have been done in



five minutes on any given TV show.

### Tag Team Titles: Usos vs. Miz/Damien Mizdow vs. Los Matadores vs. Goldust/Stardust

Goldust and Stardust (villains here) are defending and Mizdow is one of the most popular guys on the roster because of how hard he's been working with the stunt double character. Diego and Stardust start things off as Cole reads Stardust's latest riddle. A quick rollup gets two on Stardust before it's off to Miz who is stopped by OLE! Mizdow does his stunt double stuff on the floor as JBL talks about Papa Shango putting a curse on Mizdow years ago. This isn't a rousing start to the commentary tonight.

Miz won't tag out, again missing the point of having a stunt double. Jey comes in to chop Diego but Goldust tags himself in and chinlocks the Samoan. The fans continue to want Mizdow but Stardust waves them off and uppercuts Jey instead. This time it's Miz tagging himself in but Fernando tags Jey and flips off the top and onto Miz.

It's FINALLY off to Mizdow, only to have Goldust tag himself in ten seconds later to bring the crowd back to silence. Lawler brings up a great point: if Mizdow comes in and Miz is on the apron, shouldn't Mizdow just stand there? Stardust comes in and stomps Fernando before cranking on both arms to slow things down a bit. Goldust stomps Fernando on the floor (brothers think alike) and we hit the chinlock. Things stay slow as we hear about Grumpy Cat appearing on Raw. I had been trying to forget that guys.

Stardust loads up what looks like a Tombstone but Fernando spins out into a tornado DDT (good one too) and it's off to Jimmy. Now we pick things up a bit with the Usos cleaning house with Umaga attacks and superkicks (and a shaking camera, which has happened multiple times tonight). Goldust powerslams Jimmy down for two but the double Uso dive takes down a few people.

There's the Falling Star from Stardust, giving us this brilliant exchange: Cole: "That's the Falling Star!" JBL: "I have no idea what that is!" Cole: "It's the Falling Star!" JBL: "I know!" Torito gets

thrown onto the pile and Diego does the same. Back in and a quadruple Tower of Doom takes down Los Matadores and the champs, allowing Mizdow to tag himself in and pin Goldust for the titles at 15:25.

**Rating:** C. This was a big longer than it needed to be but the payoff was exactly what it needed to be. There was no reason to wait any longer on giving Mizdow something and this opens the door for some new possibilities in the story. The match was fun but they could have cut out a few minutes to make it flow better. It's fun enough though (annoying commentary aside) and a good way to open the show, after the long talking of course.

Miz takes both titles and Mizdow keeps posing.

Larry the Cable Guy is guest hosting Raw. As usual, WWE is about ten years behind the pop culture times.

Vince will be on the Steve Austin Show. Now that could be entertaining and it kind of was if I remember correctly.

Adam Rose and the Bunny do a toy commercial until Heath Slater and Titus O'Neil come in to set up a match for later. Fans: "NO! NO! NO!" Is it bad that I miss the Bunny and wanted to see more of him?

#### Team Paige vs. Team Team Fox

Paige, Cameron, Summer Rae, Layla

Alicia Fox, Natalya, Emma, Naomi

Natalya is accompanied by Tyson Kidd, who clearly doesn't care in a great short run character. Paige and Natalya start things off on the mat and we hit the King's Court reference which turns into a discussion of Lawler having a foursome. Paige is sent to the floor for a quick spank from Natalya (because of course) before it's off to Layla vs. Emma, neither of whom are still on the main roster. Lawler: "Emma could trip over cordless phones." That's not very hard to do King.

It's back to Paige for a headbutt and THIS IS MY HOUSE. How can she afford this many houses? Cameron comes in to break up a tag attempt and

this could go badly. The fans want Mizdow again and good grief it's the Daniel Bryan story all over again. You just had him for fifteen minutes when he won a title. Be happy with what you got and shut up already. Emma rolls over and tags Naomi for the big showdown that no one wanted to see. Naomi runs through Cameron and a bad looking wheelbarrow Stunner gets two.

Everything breaks down and Cameron does an awful bulldog, allowing Naomi to roll her up for the elimination at 6:12. Summer kicks Naomi down to take over, only to miss a splash. Fox comes in as the announcers ignore the match to talk about old Survivor Series teams. The heels bail so Fox tries to get a CHICKEN chant started. It's off to Layla for her bouncy cross body but a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gives Alicia the elimination at 9:29.

Summer comes in and misses a charge, allowing Natalya to dropkick her down. It's off to Paige who takes over, only to have Summer do Paige's scream and get decked as a result. Emma comes in for the Dilemma, a forearm to Paige on the apron and the Emma Lock for the submission on Summer at 12:04. So Paige is all alone and starts with Emma, who quickly faceplants her down. Natalya eats a superkick so it's off to Naomi for the Rear View and the headscissors DDT for the final pin at 14:16.

**Rating:** D-. Oh sweet goodness the Divas Revolution needed to happen soon. This match felt like it was going on forever with almost none of them looking like they should have been out there this long. Between "CHICKEN! CHICKEN!" and Layla's face offense under the guise of a heel and Cameron being the disaster that only she can be, this was horrible with Paige and Natalya not being able to hold it together.

Kidd, who didn't do a thing all match, celebrates more than anyone else in a great touch. That's the highlight of the last fifteen minutes.

We recap the pre-show, which also included the return of Bad News Barrett. As usual, Cesaro gets left out. The best part: Renee Young with long hair. I had forgotten about that and it says a lot that she's just as beautiful with her hair hacked off.

The panel talks for a bit.

We recap Bray Wyatt vs. Dean Ambrose, which started when Wyatt targeted Ambrose in October for whatever reason Bray picks his next target. There was something about Dean's dad being in prison but it was never really explained. Ambrose said he didn't care why Wyatt did it anyway so it didn't really matter. Tonight is the first match.

### Dean Ambrose vs. Bray Wyatt

They slug it out to start (shocking) before heading outside (even more shocking) where Dean takes over with some clotheslines. Back in and Bray runs Dean over before knocking a dive out of the air with a right hand. I can never get used to Bray's blood red tattoos as they always fool me. We hit a seated full nelson on Dean (always nice to see them mix up the rest holds) before he fights up for a double cross body.

They go outside for the third time for a double clothesline and both guys are down again. Back in and Dean takes over before doing Bray's lean upside down out of the corner in a nice touch. Dean ties him in the ropes and kisses Bray on the head before a dropkick and legdrop get two. Bray counters the Rebound Lariat into a release Rock Bottom for two as this match really hasn't taken off yet.

The middle rope backsplash misses because it would have killed Dean and the top rope elbow gets two for Ambrose. Back up and Bray EXPLODES with a clothesline and he makes it even worse with another Rock Bottom onto the steps. That's only good for two so Bray grabs a mic and says they could have ruled the world together. Dean has chosen his path though so Bray grabs a chair and drops to his knees like he did with Cena at Wrestlemania. Dean isn't Cena though and he hits Bray with the chair for the DQ at 14:00.

**Rating:** C+. Much like the Cena match at Wrestlemania, this felt a lot more like it was designed to set up something else (which it was) instead of being a big showdown. Bray's babbling gets to the point where you stop caring what he's talking about and that doesn't make for the most interesting matches. No matter how you look at it, the whole thing always feels like you're waiting on the next big thing, which gets repetitive in a hurry. It's still a fun brawl though and got going after the first few

minutes.

Post match Dean lays Bray out and elbows him through a table. That's not enough for him as he buries Bray under another table and a pile of chairs. That's only T and C though so why not pull out a ladder? Dean climbs the ladder but is all like "this is the free month so you have to pay to see me dive off." Referees won't let him shove the ladder onto the pile either.

The Authority gives their team a long pep talk, including Stephanie crying at the thought of only having a huge salary and working in an office. This is one of the problems of having such a big main event: there's so much time to fill which certainly couldn't have been filled with another Survivor Series match. This talk eats up WAY too much time and is summed up as "we're betting everything we have tonight so win or else."

#### Adam Rose/The Bunny vs. Heath Slater/Titus O'Neil

Slater and the Bunny get things going but Rose tags himself in quickly. Heath gets him on the mat before it's off to Titus for some forearms to the back. Rose dives over and makes the tag. Lawler: "Maybe we should explain why there's a bunny in the ring." Cole: "Well it's actually a man in a bunny suit." Good grief just start speaking gibberish to us since they clearly think we're that stupid. The Bunny pins Slater off a middle rope dropkick.

The Rosebuds leave with the Bunny.

More commercials. Counting the opener, the pep talk and all these commercials, there's probably been seventeen minutes wasted, or about the same amount of time spent on a quick Survivor Series match.

The injured Roman Reigns has a satellite interview where he talks about wanting to be here punching people. We'll make it nineteen minutes of filler. Reigns will be back in a month.

Team Cena says they're ready.

#### Divas Title: Nikki Bella vs. AJ Lee

AJ is defending and Nikki has Brie as her unwilling assistant. After the big match intros and Brie gets on the apron for a distraction, followed by kissing AJ (and launching a thousand fanfics). The Rack Attack gives us a new champion at 38 seconds in the Daniel Bryan vs. Sheamus finish. Allegedly this was the way the match was going the entire time and it wasn't cut down, making me shake my head even more.

Of course the sisters are back together with an eventual explanation of "we're sisters."

Ambrose vs. Wyatt is announced for TLC in the namesake match.

We recap the main event. The Authority is all corrupt so Vince came in and said let's put their power up against Team Cena. John put together a team of the few people who would fight with him so the Authority made them as miserable as they could. It's a simple story but they've made this feel like a legitimately huge match.

#### Team Cena vs. Team Authority

John Cena, Big Show, Ryback, Dolph Ziggler, Erick Rowan

Seth Rollins, Kane, Rusev, Mark Henry, Luke Harper

Cena's partners' jobs vs. the Authority's authority. Harper is Intercontinental Champion and Rusev is the undefeated US Champion. The eleven entrances eat up even more time but in a good way this time. They've done a really good job at making this feel like a big deal and it's working well here. Henry and Show start but HHH has to get in one last pep talk, allowing Show to knock him out for the elimination at 50 seconds.

It's Rollins in next but Show chops him down to the floor. Kane comes in but Show drags him into the corner for the tag off to Cena, who pounds on Kane even more. Now we get a showdown that the fans find bigger than it probably is with Rowan vs. Harper. This was during that short period where Rowan was a genius, which has been completely forgotten since. Rollins tags himself back in before anything can happen and is immediately caught in the wrong corner.

Ryback comes in to join in on the fun but Rollins tags out to Harper. That's fine with Ryback as he grabs a vertical suplex, only to get punched in the face by Kane. The big bald is beaten down as well so we'll try Rusev. A spinebuster ends the slugout but Shell Shock is broken up. Everything breaks down and it's a Curb Stomp from Rollins and the jumping superkick from Rusev to eliminate Ryback and tie us up.

Show comes back in but Rusev escapes a quick chokeslam attempt and brings in Harper. A dropkick of all things puts Show down and it's back to Kane for some stomping. Kane follows Harper's suit with a (basement) dropkick, followed by the Gator Roll (he's stopped using that) from Harper. Show throws Harper away too so it's off to Ziggler, who Harper beat (through some shenanigans) to win the title.

The heels start taking over on Ziggler with Kane's sidewalk slam getting two. A comeback is stopped by a boot to the face and it's off to Rusev for some knees to the ribs. Ziggler tries to punch Rollins in the face but gets caught in a downward spiral into the corner. We hit the chinlock for a bit before the running DDT plants Rusev. Everything breaks down again and we hit the parade of finishers (always a favorite).

Rollins is thrown onto a pile but Rusev throws Ziggler onto that pile. It's time to load up the announcers' table but Rusev misses Ziggler and splashes through the table instead, leading to a countout at 21:02 to make it 4-3. Cole: "COUNTOUTS ARE A FACTOR! COUNTOUTS ARE A FACTOR! COME ON DOLPH! COME ON DOLPH! ZIGGLER'S IN! ZIGGLER'S IN! RUSEV IS OUT! RUSEV IS OUT!" Get the parrot a cracker and shut him up already.

Back in and the exhausted Ziggler tags Cena for a quick AA to Kane. Rollins makes the save with a Curb Stomp and everyone is down. A double tag brings in Harper and Rowan with Erick cleaning house. Kane's chokeslam is broken up but the springboard knee from Rollins sets up Harper's discus lariat to put Rowan out at 24:14. So it's Show/Cena/Ziggler vs. Rollins/Kane/Harper and we get a big six man staredown...until Show KO's Cena, turning heel again to fill his quota for the year. Rollins steals the pin to eliminate Cena at 25:11. Now THAT is a shock.

Show stares down at the Authority and then walks out at 26:30, leaving Ziggler down 3-1. Ziggler can barely stand after the long beating he took but it's now the Shawn formula in 2005. The fans want Orton (who was put out by Rollins a few weeks ago but why have the hometown boy here to make the save when you can have him on a movie set instead? To make it worse, Stephanie chants "OH YEAH! OH YEAH! OH YEAH!" in what was supposed to be cheerleading.

Kane throws Ziggler into the barricade and Rollins drags him over to the corner for some tags to the eliminated partners. Kane's superplex is broken up though and a quick superkick and Zig Zag make it 2-1 at 29:35. Harper is right in though and kicks Ziggler's head off to send him outside, followed by a nice suicide shove. A great sounding superkick gets two on Ziggler and the sitout powerbomb amazingly only gets the same. Ziggler somehow grabs a rollup (and jeans) for a fast elimination at 31:35, leaving us one on one.

Dolph can barely stand but he still grabs a DDT for two. Rollins has way more gas though and hammers Ziggler down, only to miss a top rope knee. The Fameasser gets two out of nowhere as HHH and Stephanie are losing their minds on the outside. Noble and Mercury are dispatched and the Zig Zag connects but HHH pulls the referee out at two.

The J's are dispatched again and Stephanie is knocked off the apron (onto HHH of course because Heaven forbid she not have a soft landing). Another Curb Stomp misses and there's a second Zig Zag for two with HHH breaking up the pin one more time. HHH beats on Ziggler for a bit and hits a Pedigree....and there's a crow.

In one of the biggest surprises of all time, STING makes his WWE debut (with JBL listing off his resume to make sure you know this was planned in advance) and HHH is in shock. Sting decks HHH's crooked referee and does the big staredown with HHH, setting up the Death Drop (sold really well too). Sting pulls Ziggler on top of Rollins (who hasn't moved in over six minutes) for the final pin at 44:07.

**Rating:** A. I liked this even better knowing what was coming. They did a really good job of setting up the story here as both teams were in enough



trouble at different points to keep it interesting with the Cena elimination being the biggest of them all. I was genuinely surprised when that happened and it holds up well enough as a moment today. The near falls near the end were great as well, making this a really great match. This should have been a total star making performance for Ziggler but since WWE is in charge, it was pretty much forgotten in about a month.

HHH looks like reality sets in while Stephanie shows her horrible acting skills one more time. For once I'm fine with the focus being on them but good grief that screeching is killing it. On top of that, everyone knew they would be back sooner than later and it didn't even last a month.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This is the definition of a one match show and thankfully that one match delivered because the rest of this show was pretty horrible. Everything from the end of Ambrose vs. Wyatt to the start of the main event was a waste of time or boring, as was so often the case in WWE at this point. The main event bails the show out, but that's the ONLY thing worth watching on here.

#### Ratings Comparison

Fandango vs. Justin Gabriel

Original: D

2015 Redo: D-

Cesaro vs. Jack Swagger

Original: C-

2015 Redo: C-

Usos vs. Miz/Damien Mizdow vs. Goldust/Stardust vs. Los Matadores

Original: C+

2015 Redo: C

Team Paige vs. Team Fox

Original: D-

2015 Redo: D-

Dean Ambrose vs. Bray Wyatt

Original: B-

2015 Redo: C+

Slater Gator vs. Adam Rose/The Bunny

Original: N/A

2015 Redo: N/A

AJ Lee vs. Nikki Bella

Original: N/A

2015 Redo: N/A

Team Cena vs. Team Authority

Original: B+

2015 Redo: A

Overall Rating

Original: C

2015 Redo: B-

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2014/11/23/survivor-series-2014-i-believe-it/>

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# Survivor Series Count-Up – 2013: Building The Empire

## Survivor Series 2013

Date: November 24, 2013

Location: TD Garden, Boston, Massachusetts

Attendance: 13,500

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

While those two matches aren't the most interesting in the world, there is one match that had people's interest. Daniel Bryan and CM Punk have both been having issues with the bizarre cult leader Bray Wyatt and his Family. The two will pair up tonight to face the Family (Luke Harper and Erick Rowan), though the real story will pick up when Bray himself gets involved. Let's get to it.

## Pre-Show: Kofi Kingston vs. The Miz

Miz turned on Kofi in a tag match on Raw to set this up. He offers a handshake to start but Kofi is too smart for that. We get a surprisingly fast start with Kofi trying to get a grip on Miz but settling for a rollup for two. They trade about three rollups each for three in a very nice chain wrestling sequence until we reach a stalemate. Miz goes for the Figure Four but has to duck Trouble in Paradise. Kofi sends him to

the floor for a nice dive and we take a break. Back with Kofi holding a chinlock before getting two off a cross body.

Kingston pounds away in the corner but Miz sneaks underneath him and scores with a big boot to the face. Kofi fights out and hits a double stomp to the chest followed by some nice dropkicks. The Boom Drop looks to set up Trouble In Paradise but Miz ducks, only to get caught in the SOS for two. Another Figure Four attempt is countered into a small package for two and Kofi's high cross body gets the same. Two low knees to the face/chest put Miz down but he ducks the third and grabs a rollup for the pin.

**Rating:** B-. This was one of the better opening matches they've had in a long time. The reversal sequences were very fast paced and other than a few moments here and there, the action barely stopped. Kofi losing here doesn't hurt him at all and Miz gets a win to help boost his heel turn. Everybody wins. Well except Kofi but you get the idea.

The opening video talks about how survival is a must before transitioning to your usual hype video for the World Title matches.

### Rey Mysterio/Usos/Goldust/Cody Rhodes vs. Real Americans/Shield

Elimination rules of course and the Real Americans are Jack Swagger and Cesaro. The Usos are twin Samoan high fliers. Ricardo Rodriguez is on Spanish commentary. Colter (a VERY proud American who wants all non-Americans to leave the country) does his usual routine before the match before attempting to twerk because what would a wrestling show be without that?

Cody and Ambrose get things going as this is the anniversary of Shield's debut. They trade waistlocks to start but Cody takes over with some right hands, only to have Ambrose pound away in the corner. Rhodes comes back with even more punches as Cole tells us that Friday is Lawler, Colter and JBL's birthday. Ambrose pounds away in the corner but gets in an argument with the referee, allowing Cody to get a quick rollup for the elimination.

Everything breaks down with the Usos cleaning house and hitting dives to

take out all of their opponents. We settle down with Goldust vs. Rollins but it's quickly off to Swagger to drive Goldust into the corner. Jack takes him down and Cesaro comes in with a knee drop for two. Cole messes up his history by saying Andre the Giant was the sole survivor of the first Survivor Series match (that would be the main event of the first Survivor Series and the fourth match ever).

Goldust gets a backslide for two on Cesaro and scores with a powerslam. A jawbreaker puts both guys down but Cesaro is able to tag first. Swagger comes in but misses the Vader Bomb, allowing for the hot tag off to Mysterio. He easily takes Swagger down to set up the 619 and it's a superkick from Jimmy followed by the Superfly Splash from Jey to eliminate Swagger.

Cesaro immediately comes in with an uppercut to Jey to set up the Cesaro Swing. The fans count along with the swings but it's only 15 revolutions. He must be tired tonight. Jimmy comes in without a tag and gets a swing of his own 19 revolution swing. Cody gets the tag and scores with a sunset flip out of nowhere for the elimination, leaving us with Rollins/Reigns vs. all five members of the other team.

Reigns comes in to work on Cody's arm but it's off to Jey instead. Roman easily tags him into the Shield corner and the two remaining members take over with the alternating tags. Rollins comes in with a top rope fist to Jey's jaw and we hit the chinlock. Jey fights up and backdrops Rollins over the top rope, allowing for the tag off to Jimmy. A Samoan Drop gets two on Reigns and the running Umaga attack in the corner keeps him in trouble. Jimmy goes up top but has to headbutt Reigns down. He jumps down but the spear is enough for a quick elimination.

Cody comes in with a missile dropkick followed by the moonsault press for two on Rollins. Cross Rhodes connects but Reigns made a blind tag, allowing him to spear Cody in half for the elimination, leaving us at 3-2. Jey comes in and takes Reigns to the floor, sending him into the barricade and post. Back in and Rollins makes a quick tag to set up the Black Out (running one foot curb stomp) to eliminate Jey, leaving us with Reigns/Rollins vs. Goldust/Mysterio.

It's Rey vs. Rollins with Mysterio getting in a quick dropkick, only to go up top and get caught in the Tree of Woe. Back to Reigns who sends Mysterio out to the floor but Rey makes it back in at 9. Reigns' spear goes into the post by mistake but Rollins knocks Goldust to the floor to prevent the hot tag. Rey grabs a rollup out of nowhere to get rid of Rollins and make it 2-1.

Rollins stomps on Mysterio a bit before leaving, giving Roman a big advantage. Rey slides through Reigns' legs and catches him with an enziguri before sending him into the corner with a drop toehold. There's the hot tag to Goldust who gets two off a spinebuster. He pounds down right hands to Roman in the corner before a powerslam gets two. Reigns comes right back by countering the bulldog into a spear and it's one on one. Rey tries the 619 but gets speared in half as well, giving Reigns his star making performance with his fourth elimination for the win.

**Rating:** B-. Total star making performance by Reigns as he was completely unstoppable out there. Save for a meaningless fall over an Uso, Reigns literally got every elimination for his team. They're clearly setting him up to be something special, though the results since have been very mixed.

Orton interrupts an Authority meeting and wants to make sure they're all on the same page to start. The Authority talks down to him before telling him to go prove his worth on his own.

#### Intercontinental Title: Curtis Axel vs. Big E. Langston

Langston, defending here, is a powerlifter and incredibly strong. This is the rematch from when Axel lost the title on Monday before why change the title here? Axel grabs a headlock to start but Langston easily powers out. They trade leapfrogs until Langston runs him over with ease. Axel sends him to the apron and forearms Langston down to the floor for his first advantage.

The fans chant You Can't Wrestle, presumably at Axel, though the same chant at Langston wouldn't surprise me. Axel hits a Hennig neck snap and puts on a chinlock only to have Langston power out and suplex Axel down. There's the Warrior Splash but Axel kicks the knee and gets two off a

PerfectPlex. Not that it matters as Big E. grabs Curtis for the Big Ending to retain.

**Rating:** D+. Well at least it was short. This was one of the least important title matches I can think of in a long time as I don't even think Axel believed he was taking the title here. Nothing to see here and basically it was an extended squash for Langston. That's all it should have been too since they couldn't do the title change here due to reasons.

Post match Langston cuts a promo that would make Mick Foley proud, mentioning Boston three times in about 20 seconds.

AJ gives a semi-maniacal speech to her teammates which they take as her saying she's better than them. AJ says yeah she's better because they're just here because they're not good enough to be on Total Divas. The promo basically buries the entire division by pointing out how worthless all of them are. Rebellion is imminent even though AJ gets a great line: "Get your own show by stealing this one."

#### Team AJ vs. Total Divas

AJ Lee/Tamina Snuka/Summer Rae/Alicia Fox/Rosa Mendes/Kaitlyn/Aksana

Bella Twins/Funkadactyls/JoJo/Eva Marie/Natalya

This is the result of a reality show on the E Network called Total Divas. The show resulted in Divas Champion AJ Lee going on an incredible rant about how she was a wrestler and not a reality star, setting up a feud. The Funkadactyls (Cameron and Naomi) are Brodus Clay's former dancers. Eva Marie and JoJo were hired only to be on Total Divas. Aksana is Lithuanian and not very good. Rosa Mendes is even worse, Summer Rae is the dance partner of a wrestler named Fandango and Kaitlyn is the anti-Diva.

The Total Divas come out in a big line to the show's theme song because they're SO close on that show. Naomi starts with Alicia and rolls her up for a pin in just over a minute. Rosa avoids a Rear View but gets caught in a double suplex by the Funkadactyls. Mendes comes back with a quick

kick to the face to eliminate Cameron, only to be taken out by a Bella Buster from Naomi.

It's 6-5 now and here's Summer to dance a bit. Nikki does the Worm and we're in a dance off. Another Bella Buster gets rid of Summer and it's time for Eva Marie who is booed out of the building. Kaitlyn only needs the gutbuster to get rid of Eva and it's off to Naomi again. Another gutbuster takes Naomi out as we aren't even five minutes into the match. Brie avoids a spear from Kaitlyn and takes her out with a missile dropkick.

Aksana comes in and pins Brie after an AJ cheap shot and a spinebuster. Nikki comes in and puts Aksana in a Torture Rack backbreaker for a pin. I'm not skipping anything between these falls by the way. Tamina headbutts Nikki down a few times but the Bella comes back with an enziguri. Natalya was taken down by something the camera missed so it's off to JoJo vs. Tamina.

Snuka toys with her but gets rolled up for two, only to kick JoJo in the face. There's a Samoan drop for no cover because AJ wants and gets the pin. Natalya is driven into the corner by Tamina but the monster misses a charge and gets caught in the Sharpshooter. AJ tries a save but can't get there in time and Tamina taps. Natalya reverses a quick AJ rollup into the Sharpshooter for the submission, leaving her and Nikki as the dual sole survivors.

**Rating:** D-. Other than their looks, nothing was good about this. The whole thing was a way to show us that Total Divas are AWESOME while making it clear that most of them are models who look good in little outfits but have no business EVER being in a ring. AJ continues to be exactly right about everything she says but WWE has decided that the reality "stars" are the heroes, no matter what.

Orton tries to get Charles Robinson on his side to no avail.

The expert panel looks to talk a bit but Ryback cuts them off. He says he's the talent here and issues an open challenge to anyone on the roster. Here's his answer.



## Mark Henry vs. Ryback

Henry is shaved bald now and shoves Ryback around with ease. Ryback is thrown around again but gets taken down by a shot to the knee. Henry shoves Ryback to the floor for a six count but Ryback comes back in with a headbutt. Some JYD all fours headbutts get two for Henry but Ryback takes the knee out again. We hit the chinlock on Mark before he fights up with relative ease. The World's Strongest Slam is countered and Ryback spinebusters him down. The Meathook is countered with something resembling a cross body and the World's Strongest Slam gets the pin.

**Rating:** D. This was as stereotypical of a power match as you could have ever asked for. Henry didn't look good here and was way too aloof out there rather than being the monster that got him over for good. Ryback is desperately in need of a change after all these losses he's suffered in the last year.

Now the panel talks a bit.

We recap Cena vs. Del Rio. Nothing special to say here: Cena won the title last month and this is the rematch. Cena opts for no arm brace despite having to take a few months off for elbow surgery.

## World Heavyweight Championship: John Cena vs. Alberto Del Rio

Cena is defending. After some big match intros we're ready to go. Cena grabs a waistlock which gets him nowhere so Del Rio puts on a headlock to take him down to the mat. Del Rio fights free and gets two off a snap suplex before going to an armbar. They head outside for a bit with Cena going shoulder first into the steps. Back in and a top rope forearm to Cena's shoulder gets two and we hit the armbar again. This is a really slow pace so far with Del Rio talking a lot of trash and not following up on most of his offense.

Cena starts a comeback but misses a shoulder block to keep things right where they have been all match. They head outside again with Cena being sent into the steps again, allowing Del Rio to do You Can't See Me. Back inside and we hit the armbar again as we're somehow approaching ten minutes into this match. Cena tries a comeback with his finishing

sequence but gets caught in the Backstabber for two.

Del Rio goes up top again but gets dropkicked out of the air to put both guys down again. Cena's finishing sequence is broken up again by a thumb to the eye and Alberto gets two off a DDT. Alberto is sent to the floor and has to dive in to beat the count. Cena does the finishing sequence at triple speed but the AA is countered into a German suplex for two but the corner enziguri misses.

The STF is countered so Cena grabs a tornado DDT for another near fall. Del Rio takes him down again and stands around a lot before putting John in the Tree of Woe. That goes nowhere as Cena avoids a charge to send Del Rio into the post. The top rope Fameasser gets two but the STF is broken by a rope. Del Rio's low superkick gets two and a neckbreaker from Cena gets the same. Del Rio grabs the armbreaker out of nowhere but Cena counters into a powerbomb to escape. Another armbreaker is countered and the AA retains Cena's title.

**Rating:** D+. The lack of drama crippled this one for me. There was zero doubt for me as to who was going to win and the only question was whether it would be the AA or the STF. Del Rio just isn't a threat to Cena at all and he never has been. Why WWE insists on going with that match time after time is beyond me. Put Alberto against Langston for a while to give Big E. a rub or whatever, but keep him away from Cena.

Santino and R-Truth play with toys. Los Matadores (Primo and Epico as bullfighters), Fandango and John Laurinitis come in for some unfunny comedy. Ok Ace was funny at least.

We recap the Wyatts vs. Punk/Bryan. Not much to this one either. The good guys are heroes and that's not cool with Bray so he's sent his monsters to show the world that there are no heroes.

### Wyatt Family vs. CM Punk/Daniel Bryan

Before the match Bray talks about Sister Abigail telling him how tough Bryan and Punk would be. They're the reapers though, so Punk and Bryan should run. Bray's promos have always been strange. Bryan and Rowan get things going with Daniel firing off kicks to the leg. Rowan easily throws

him down but Daniel takes him into the corner for a tag off to Punk which doesn't get a huge reaction.

Harper comes in and charges into a boot in the corner, only to rip away at Punk's face and chop him down. Back to Rowan for a bearhug but Punk fights out very quickly. Punk escapes a suplex and Bryan comes in to try a double suplex, only to have Rowan suplex both guys down. Bryan drives Rowan into the corner for some double kicks to the ribs to put Erick down. The crowd doesn't seem interested in this match.

Back to Harper who is taken into the hero corner as well before a double dropkick puts both guys down. Bryan fires off the kicks and plays Bret to Punk's Neidhart in a Hart Attack. Rowan tries to come in and the distraction lets Harper kick Punk's head off for two. Rowan cranks on Punk's neck for a bit before getting two off a backbreaker. Back to Harper for an uppercut followed by a quickly released Gator Roll. Rowan gets caught talking to the sheep mask which Cole finds strange for some reason.

Harper gets two off a Michinoku Driver before it's back to Erick for some more neck cranking. Punk gets a boot up in the corner to stagger Rowan and a running DDT puts both guys down. A double tag brings in Bryan to face Harper and Daniel starts up his usual sequence. Luke gets low bridged to the floor and the FLYING GOAT (suicide dive) takes Harper out, possibly injuring the monster's knee.

A missile dropkick gets two and there are the YES Kicks. The running dropkick in the corner staggers the big man but Harper counters a top rope hurricanrana into a super sitout powerbomb for two. The fans think this is awesome as Bray yells at the Family. Rowan splashes Bryan for two and the second heat segment begins. Harper comes in with some forearms to the back but Punk kicks him in the back of the head to give Bryan a breather.

There's the hot tag off to Punk who takes Harper down but he dives on Rowan and Bray instead of Luke. Now the Macho Elbow connects on Harper for two and everything breaks down. The running knee takes Rowan down and Punk counters the discus lariat into the GTS for the pin on Harper.

**Rating:** B. This was the old school tag team formula and it worked perfectly well. Punk and Bryan are good choices for matches like this and there's nothing wrong with the Wyatts getting pinned. The money in the feud is Bray in the ring with either of them and that's certainly coming in the future.

Bray teases getting in but stays on the floor.

Cena is talking to the Authority about something when Orton comes in to glare at them. The Viper sounds jealous.

We recap Big Show vs. Randy Orton. Orton is supposed to be the face of the WWE but the Authority isn't very confident in him. Big Show has weaseled his way into a title match tonight due to the threat of a lawsuit which could take over the entire company because that's what heroes do. They've been brawling for a few weeks and Big Show looks dominant while Orton has no backup tonight. I wonder what's going to happen.

#### WWE Championship: Randy Orton vs. Big Show

Orton is defending and is on the floor about a second after the bell rings. He trips getting back inside to show how confused he is tonight and gets chopped LOUDLY by Big Show. More slow offense sets up more chops by Big Show but Orton comes back with a dropkick and some kicks to the head. A knee drop gets two for the champion and we hit a sleeper. Big Show loudly says "two clotheslines" before hitting two clotheslines and calling for the chokeslam, sending Orton running to the floor.

Back in and Big Show slams him down before going to the top rope, only to be crotched on the top rope. The Elevated DDT out of the corner puts Big Show down and Orton poses a lot. Show grabs a chokeslam out of nowhere for two and loads up the KO punch but Orton bails to the floor. The big man follows him to the floor and throws Orton at the ropes, taking out the referee in the process. Randy finds a chair but gets it slapped out of his hands before they go into the crowd.

That goes nowhere so they head back to ringside where Orton tries the Elevated DDT again, only to have Show escape and hit the KO punch. Back

inside and the Authority comes out for a distraction, allowing Orton to hit a quick RKO. The annoying crowd chants for Daniel Bryan as Orton hits the Punt to retain.

**Rating:** D-. What the heck was that? Unfortunately, it was exactly what most people were expecting. Big Show was trying but there's only so much you can do when Orton spends a third of an eleven minute match running, not counting the interference at the end. Horrid main event but I guess it sets up HHH vs. Big Show.

Post match here's Cena to hold up the World Heavyweight Championship while Orton holds up the WWE Championship. That's Wrestlemania it would seem, but it would actually be next month.

**Overall Rating:** D+. This show had its moments but they totally lost me around the time of the Henry match. The card was about the same as it felt like it was going to be with a few good matches but little to care about in the main event scenes. Orton vs. Big Show was as nothing of a match as it could have been and the interference was just predictable. This show just didn't feel necessary though it wasn't the worst effort ever.

### Ratings Comparison

The Miz vs. Kofi Kingston

Original: B-

Redo: C

Real Americans/Shield vs. Cody Rhodes/Goldust/Rey Mysterio/Usos

Original: B-

Redo: C

Curtis Axel vs. Big E. Langston

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Total Divas vs. True Divas

Original:D-

Redo: F

Mark Henry vs. Ryback

Original:D

Redo: D

Alberto Del Rio vs. John Cena

Original:D+

Redo: B

Wyatt Family vs. CM Punk/Daniel Bryan

Original:B

Redo: B-

Big Show vs. Randy Orton

Original:D-

Redo: D

Overall Rating

Original:D+

Redo: C-

Dang I hated Del Rio back then.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/11/24/survivor-series-2013-they-had-me-for-a-bit/>

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## **Reviewing the Review – Monday Night Raw: September 21, 2015**

We're coming up on Hell in a Cell and again the main event has been set far in advance with Undertaker vs. Brock Lesnar. That's one of those matches that really doesn't need a lot of direct build so we can focus on everything else for a change. Tonight we get fallout from Rollins going 1-1 at Night of Champions because that's what World Champions do these days. Let's get to it.

They mixed things up this week by starting with the Wyatts coming out to talk instead of Rollins or the Authority. It's amazing how much of an improvement this was and how refreshing it felt to have ANYTHING different starting things off. It's not like they even started with a match or anything really different. Just seeing some new faces out there was a nice touch.

Anyway, Bray bragged about winning until Reigns came out to challenge Bray one on one. That's where this feud is likely destined to end and it's the most logical story they could tell. Eventually Strowman and Harper came in to save their boss but Ambrose came out to help even

things up. The big deal here was Randy Orton running out to help the Shield guys, which is likely your next six man at Hell in a Cell.

I could get behind the idea of constantly replacing the third man on the team until it's Rollins for the obvious big match, but I'm hoping they don't turn Reigns heel in the process. At least not until the end that is, as he really doesn't need to switch until the war with the Wyatts is over, at least for now because that one could go on for years to come. That's not a bad thing either.

Now we get to the big story of the night with Rollins going in to see the Authority but finding Corporate Kane, who has no memory of what Demon Kane did last night. I like the idea of a split personality and neither one remembering anything the other has done as at least it's something different than the normal Kane. The idea here is that Kane has made Rollins, who is still banged up from last night, vs. Cena (again) for the US Title tonight. The Authority would talk to Kane later and bring up that they haven't talked to Kane in weeks. They do nothing to change the match and let Kane's decision stand of course.

The Lucha Dragons/Neville beat Ascension/Stardust in a match where the announcers kept trying to figure out what to call Ascension/Stardust. Basically the same match as last night.

Ryback squashed Bo Dallas and got attacked by Owens post match. There isn't much to say here but I'm digging the idea of having the feud continue. Above all else: Owens initiated the violence, which is a strong ground for my false hope about Kevin going somewhere with the title instead of being another coward champion.

Now we get to the other big story of the night as Charlotte came out to celebrate the title win but Paige eventually turned heel and did her best AJ Lee doing her best CM Punk impression with a pipe bomb. This is at least a good idea and had the great line of "Nattie doesn't even seem to work here anymore." Paige as the secondary heel is an idea, but I have a bad feeling they're just going to have the Bellas back on top by the end of the year anyway. I mean, they're on that reality show and that's totally more important than Paige being on that reality show.



I'm not sure where they're going here. It would seem that Paige/Natalya might hook up which would be fine, but I'd really like to see one of the Divas on their own for a bit. We've spent two and a half months on the team battle series and now we're possibly getting Paige/Natalya as the overlooked ones to fight the Bellas and Charlotte/Becky. Paige is interesting, but she needs to change her style up a bit.

Brie Bella came out almost immediately and lost to Charlotte in a match very similar to the one from last night. I'm not understanding this idea of having Charlotte play Randy Savage from 1995, but it's defeating the purpose of her entire character/style so far. She's awesome in the ring but the idea seems to be to have her sell forever and then hit one big move. As usual, they set up something cool on NXT and then "fix" it on Raw.

Sheamus squashed Henry to remind us that he's here.

New Day/Rusev beat the Dudleyz/Ziggler in a long match. This worked quite well and it's still mainly due to Xavier Woods being allowed to do whatever he wants out there. The idea of letting an entertaining guy be entertaining is very foreign around here but this is what happens when it's given a chance. I mean, BULGARIAN TRICEP MEAT? How can you not love that? The Ziggler vs. Rusev story has hit its peak and the problem now is what to do with them since Lana is out for months. You know, because a wrist injury makes it so hard to appear on TV.

Remember how Natalya was brought up for the first time in forever? Well she lost to Naomi thanks to a Sasha distraction. It does seem like she and Paige might hook up and I don't know why I'd be interested in seeing another team story.

Big Show squashed Cesaro to build himself up for the Lesnar match. This is one of those rare cases where I completely understand the logic behind what WWE does and find it to be the dumbest idea in years. Do they really think that in NEW YORK CITY the fans are going to treat Lesnar vs. Big Show like a normal match? Having Lesnar squash Big Show (which he will) is fine but don't waste someone with potential on the way. Use Swagger in this spot or something but stop using Cesaro to put over someone like Big

Show who is 43 and has done the same stuff for years now.

John Cena beat Seth Rollins again to retain the US Title in a good match. I like seeing them fight because they have good chemistry, but enough already. We don't need to see them fight once a month, especially when Cena beats the World Champ every time and never gets back in the World Title hunt. It's pretty clear that Kane is getting the next shot, which makes these pinfalls all the less logical. Why have someone pin the champion and then never follow up on it? Ah yes, because you have Kane, who to be fair did start this story with Rollins months ago and deserves to be able to finish it. Just nix the champ losing all the time.

Demon Kane pulled Rollins through a hole in the ring because we're really going there again.

Overall, Raw worked for the most part but there are some major flaws in there that are hard to cover up. Chief among them: having the World Champion get pinned twice by the same guy in 24 hours when there seems to be no intention of having that guy go after the title. Is it any wonder why no one wants to watch Rollins as champion? He's a loser at this point and it takes a lot of work to get rid of that kind of stigma. The wrestling was good but a lot of the booking fell short.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of Complete 1997 Monday Night Raw Reviews at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

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# Monday Night Raw – September 21, 2015: Running On Empty Again

## Monday Night Raw

Date: September 21, 2015

Location: Laredo Energy Arena, Laredo, Texas

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

It's the night after Night of Champions and it seems that we're heading for Kane vs. Rollins for the World Title at Hell in a Cell. On the same show we'll be seeing Undertaker vs. Brock Lesnar for the last time in a match that was a potential Wrestlemania headliner. As for tonight, there's also a chance we'll see the return of the US Open Challenge as John Cena regained the US Title last night. Let's get to it.

We open with the Wyatts instead of the traditional recap. Bray tried to warn Roman Reigns with words but he just didn't speak loudly enough. Then he tried to warn Roman with actions but he just didn't hit hard enough. Then last night he choked the golden idol by the throat and showed that he was right about everyone falling down.

Cue Reigns to say he wants to finish this with Bray, one on one, right now. This doesn't even need to be a match because they can just have a fight. Harper and Strowman head to the floor and Bray is ready to fight. Reigns takes over with right hands and the corner clotheslines, followed by the Superman Punch.

This brings Strowman and Harper back in but Ambrose charges out, runs by Strowman in a smart move, and fights Harper. A pair of suicide dives have almost no effect on Braun but Reigns gets back up. Unfortunately so does Bray and the Wyatts' numbers game takes over. This brings out Randy Orton to even things up and the combined forces of a bunch of right hands, a missile dropkick and the Superman Punch finally knock Strowman to the floor, though never off his feet. How nice was it to open with a fight and a return instead of a lot of talking that will only be repeated 95

times later in the night?

We recap Rollins' two title defenses from last night, as well as Sheamus not being able to cash in due to masked Kane's return.

Rollins comes in to the Authority's office and finds a very perky Corporate Kane. The monster says he's back and asks if Seth got the e-mail. The Authority isn't here yet but Kane has arranged for Seth to have his rematch for the US Title tonight. This was the most entertaining Kane has been since HELL NO.

### Lucha Dragons/Neville vs. Ascension/Stardust

Rematch from last night's pre-show. Sin Cara and Konor starts with Cara slipping off the top on a springboard attempt. It was just a slip and not a horrible botch but it looked bad. After some stomps from the villains it's time for a chinlock from Konor. Stardust comes in for a cartwheel, allowing the tag off to Neville. Viktor tries to break up a Red Arrow attempt like he did last night but Neville jumps over him, only to get Disaster kicked out to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Neville in the wrong corner with Konor being launched at him for two. Off to the chinlockery for a bit before Stardust puts Neville into an inverted Gory Stretch of all things. Neville finally kicks Konor in the head and makes the tag off to Kalisto. Everything breaks down with Cara running back in for a suicide dive on Konor. Stardust gets dropkicked to the floor and the Salida Del Sol pins Viktor at 10:32.

**Rating:** C-. The botches really hurt things here and dragged down what could have been a fun six man tag. Sometimes things can get dicey when you try to move too fast. This could have been a lot worse but the Cara botch set the stage for the match. I'm not sure where the feud goes from here, but maybe they both add a fourth for some Survivor Series action.

The limping Rollins comes up to the Authority to ask what they're thinking about reinstating Kane. They have no idea what he's talking about, but apparently Kane was allowed to make Cena vs. Rollins again tonight.

Stills of Kevin Owens winning the Intercontinental Title last night.

### Ryback vs. Bo Dallas

Owens comes out to do commentary. Bo congratulates Kevin on his win and is thrown across the ring by Ryback. Dallas gets shoved down and a suplex gets two. Cole asks about Owens raking Ryback's eyes to win the title last night. Owens tells Cole not to believe everything he reads on the internet. Dallas comes back with a kick to the face and a chinlock but Ryback shrugs him off. The Meat Hook and Shell Shock put Dallas away at 3:40.

**Rating:** D. Just a plot device here and another good use of a jobber. I'm fine with Dallas losing because his character is the kind of person who can pop right back up with a single obnoxious promo. Owens vs. Ryback is a feud that has potential if they go somewhere, which hopefully seems to be a possibility.

Owens goes after Ryback post match but has to run away from a Shell Shock attempt.

Here's Ric Flair to talk about how proud of a father he is. The fans start chanting THANK YOU RIC but Flair quickly thanks the fans to get this back on Charlotte. The proudest moment of his life wasn't all his World Titles but rather last night when his daughter won her first Divas Championship. This brings out Team PCB to celebrate. Charlotte has to fight back tears because she's a Flair.

She's fought a long way to get here and gained two best friends on the way. Becky makes her laugh every day and Paige is the woman whose footsteps she followed in. Paige takes the mic and says that this is all because of her. Yeah Charlotte won the title last night but Paige won it on her first night. The first time Charlotte defends the title, the Bellas will win it back and everything goes back to normal.

There is no Divas Revolution because Becky is irrelevant, Charlotte is just a placeholder and Team Bad is all flash and no substance. Then you have Summer Rae and Lana who are trying to figure out who to climb on top of next. There's Nattie, who doesn't seem like she works here anymore.

Everyone knows why the Bellas are where they are (implying relationships with Cena and Bryan but not actually saying it because Nikki and Cena aren't a thing outside of Total Divas). Paige says that Charlotte is where she is because of her old man and walks off. Cue the Bellas with Nikki saying that Charlotte is going to lose because she can't handle the pressure of being Divas Champion. The Bellas really should have been saved for later because the turn didn't get the chance to sink in but it still worked very well.

### Brie Bella vs. Charlotte

Non-title. Brie starts fast with a middle rope dropkick and knocks the champ to the floor. The bad knee from last night gets sent into the steps and Charlotte is in early trouble. There's a dragon screw leg whip followed by a leg lock as Becky plays cheerleader. A dropkick to the ribs gets two and a chop block puts Charlotte back down again. Off to a half crab for a bit until Charlotte comes up with an enziguiri. The neckbreaker and spear set up the Figure Eight to make Brie tap at 6:24.

**Rating:** D+. Can someone explain the logic of having Charlotte on defense for about 90% of her title win and first match as champion? I mean, she's considered awesome for her abilities on offense and athleticism so you have her on the mat holding her knee most of the time? Brie is the less talented Bella, which really should tell you most of what you need to know about this match.

### Sheamus vs. Mark Henry

Henry runs him over to start and it's time for a breather on the floor. A clothesline does the same but Sheamus comes back with the ten forearms. Mark breaks it up at about six or seven but the Brogue Kick puts Mark away at 2:26.

Sheamus says it's a matter of time until he's World Champion.

The Authority comes in to see Kane. Instead of asking why they waited an hour to come talk to him, they ask why they didn't hear from him since he got hurt. Kane brushes it off and says he wanted to make a big impact tonight by making Cena vs. Rollins for the US Title. Stephanie wants Kane

to give it back and holds her hand out. Kane high fives her but Stephanie wants the mask. The mask is gone from its case and Kane accuses Stephanie of losing it. Kane is happy to help her look for it though and smiles a lot.

Natalya comes up to see Paige and says Paige isn't the only one who has been frustrated. The only person standing in Paige's way has been Paige herself.

### New Day/Rusev vs. Dolph Ziggler/Dudley Boyz

Before the match, Woods holds up a piece of table in a bag which was apparently removed from his.....shall we say nether region. Kofi asks how many tables must be destroyed. Big E. suggests building a wall around Dudleyville to keep those Dudleys away from our people, our values, and our tables. Kofi and Ziggler get things going with Kingston grabbing a top wristlock. Kofi's leapfrogs set up a monkey flip but Dolph lands on his feet.

Off to D-Von for a legdrop and right hands, followed by the belly to back neckbreaker on Big E. Rusev scampers to the floor and we take a break. We come back with Ziggler dropkicking Big E. but having to scare Woods off the apron, allowing E. to score with a clothesline. Rusev stomps away and it's time for the rotating stomps, complete with trombone accompaniment.

Rusev comes in so Xavier plays Rusev's theme music as we hit the chinlock on Ziggler. A back elbow to the jaw drops Ziggler (Woods: "BULGARIAN TRICEP MEAT! WHY DOES ZIGGLER HAVE ZIPPERS AND NO POCKETS???" ) and Big E. comes in for an abdominal stretch. Kofi breaks up the hot tag attempt and dropkicks Kofi down for two. It's back to Rusev for choking as he shouts that Lana is his.

The running DDT finally allows a diving tag to Bubba and everything breaks down. A big boot puts E. down and it's off to Ray vs. Rusev. Well for all of five seconds as D-Von comes in for a double suplex, followed by Dolph playing D-Von in What's Up. Ziggler superkicks the trombone out of Woods' hands (thankfully Summer makes the catch) but turns into a superkick from Rusev for the pin at 14:12.

**Rating:** B-. Oh man Woods gets better every week. This is what I've been talking about with comedy in wrestling: you can tell that these guys have been told to go out there and do whatever they think is funny and they're running with it. It's a different style than what WWE decides is funny and it makes for something much more entertaining. The day that trombone (seriously, they got a trombone over. I can't get past that.) gets broken, which better not be for at least another four months, is going to be glorious.

We recap Kane's odd antics throughout the night.

### Natalya vs. Naomi

Both girls flip up to their feet to start until Naomi kicks Natalya in the face for two. We hit an early chinlock as Paige is shown watching in the back. Back up and Natalya makes her comeback, including a discus lariat (Me: "JBL is going to say shades of her daddy." JBL: "SHADES OF HER DADDY!") but a Sasha distraction lets the Rear View end Natalya at 3:46.

**Rating:** D. I'm so glad we got Natalya back for this mess. There's a chance this leads to her teaming with Paige under their common issue of being held back. It's worked for less talented people before so why not these two also. The match was nothing special but it's cool to see at least one team sticking around.

Rollins asks the Authority about the plan for tonight. HHH gets all serious and tells Seth to worry about Cena because they'll take care of Kane. This has been another moment where HHH's emotions change on a dime and it's considered totally normal.

### Cesaro vs. Big Show

Rematch from Smackdown which isn't important enough to mention. Cesaro gets chopped out of the air to start and runs him over with a shoulder. Show launches him across the ring as this is a total squash so far. The Final Cut sets up a chinlock until Show misses an elbow. Cesaro starts his comeback and breaks up the chokeslam. Show is knocked to the floor for a European uppercut, only to catch Cesaro's cross body off the



announcers' table and drive Cesaro into the post. Back inside and Cesaro suplexes Show from the apron back inside, only to have Show KO Cesaro for the pin at 6:30.

**Rating:** D. I know WWE says they're making movies. This must be where they show the trailers over and over again (because this is the same ending as the Smackdown match) and then expect us to see a movie where we know the ending because it's a sequel to the wreck of last year's Royal Rumble and EVERY MATCH THESE SHOW AND LESNAR HAVE HAD IN LIKE TEN YEARS. Of course there was no one in the back that you could have take this loss instead of Cesaro too. No one. Not Swagger or anyone, who is even more like Lesnar than Cesaro. Typical WWE.

Post match Show says he's going to knock Lesnar out and pin him like he did in 2002. For some reason this takes like three minutes.

We recap the Wyatt Family/Orton/Ambrose/Reigns segment from earlier.

Harper says he hears Bray's voice in his head. Bray taught him to learn from his mistakes but Orton never learned that lesson. Strowman talks about skinning a snake and drinking its blood. Bray says Randy will fall like everyone else. It's amazing how much better this team is when Bray isn't losing every other week.

#### US Title: John Cena vs. Seth Rollins

Cena is defending. Rollins jumps the champ during the intros and gets an early two. Some right hands have Cena in trouble. Like, way more trouble than a sneak attack and some right hands should have him in. The Pedigree is countered and an enziguri gets two. Cena comes back with that big clothesline that he uses when he needs to make a comeback but the announcers are too busy talking about the Kane story to notice. Seth escapes the AA and scores with a DDT for two.

Back with Seth putting on a chinlock, followed by a shot to Cena's face. Cena comes back with the usual but Rollins bails to the floor after the Shuffle. John throws him back in but a superplex is broken up, allowing Rollins to get two off a low superkick. We hit the STF on Cena but he muscles his way up for the counter.

The Pedigree is countered with a catapult into the corner and Cena pulls him off the middle rope with an electric chair. They counter finisher attempts until the Buckle Bomb sets up a Falcon's Arrow for two on Cena. Cena grabs a quick STF but Rollins grabs a rope even faster. A Five Star Frog Splash gets two on Cena but he rolls through into the AA for the pin to retain at 15:38.

**Rating:** B. I would have had a lot more fun with this match if I hadn't seen it a day ago. Also if there was any sort of a chance that Cena was going to lose. Thirdly, was it really necessary to have the World Champion lose a second match clean in two days? I know it's Cena, but stop having that happen. Now let's get to the obvious Demon Kane moment.

Post match Corporate Kane pops up on screen and says everyone is coming for the title. People Rollins wouldn't even imagine. Like the people from his worst nightmares. Cue the demon Kane through a hole in the ring to drag Seth under. Yes they're REALLY doing this again.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This show started off with so much promise and then, as is way too often the case, it died about halfway through. Raw runs out of steam way too often these days and it really is just because of that third hour. The night after a pay per view is really rough because you're looking at six hours of TV in just over a day. It's too much and drains way too much out of the fans when they're asked to watch it. The first hour carries this show, but they need to find a way to make this three hour work, because the fans are going to go away more and more with this much TV time to sit through.

### Results

Neville/Lucha Dragons b. Ascension/Stardust – Salida Del Sol to Viktor

Ryback b. Bo Dallas – Shell Shock

Charlotte b. Brie Bella – Figure Eight

Sheamus b. Mark Henry – Brogue Kick

New Day/Rusev b. Dolph Ziggler/Dudley Boyz – Superkick to Ziggler

Naomi b. Natalya – Rear View

Big Show b. Cesaro – KO Punch

John Cena b. Seth Rollins – Attitude Adjustment

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## **Reviewing the Review – Monday Night Raw: September 7, 2015**

Alas it's a holiday show and that means they're really not going to be putting in much effort. I get the idea behind it, but it gets really tiring watching them out there on a show that means nothing and clearly just filling in time before next week's special episode where for some reason they try to fight off a Monday Night Football doubleheader instead of having a nothing show that night and then doing a major show after Night of Champions and starting the build from there. Then again, when has WWE ever done something that makes sense? Let's get to it.

Rollins opened the show with his weekly address where he talks to the fans like they've never seen an episode of Raw before by recapping his entire title reign. I'm always of the mindset that each episode is someone's first time watching, but recapping the fact that you beat Brock

Lesnar really doesn't mean anything when you're fighting Sting and John Cena while Lesnar is nowhere in sight. It's recapping for the sake of filling in time and for the sake of WWE thinking its fans are stupid which gets old fast.

This brought him to Sting and the statue, which needs to get destroyed already and be done with it. Sting had the statue with him in front of a dark background, which is certainly just a corner of the arena somewhere and not in front of something that will be a big surprise later on.

Sheamus came out as well to tease the Money in the Bank cash-in at Night of Champions because it's the fall and therefore time to start teasing the cash-in like they do EVERY SINGLE YEAR BECAUSE THAT'S THE STORY THEY CAME UP WITH AND IT HAS TO BE THE SAME STUPID THING EVERY TIME SINCE WE JUST HAVE TO HAVE THAT STUPID BRIEFCASE FLOATING AROUND ALL THE FREAKING TIME! Just cash it in, let Sheamus lose or have a month long title reign and be done with it already so we can have a break before the whole thing starts over again in July.

After a break, Rollins came in to see Mama and Papa Helmsley, who have the whole thing covered because Seth can't handle an old man without them. Of course no one ever says "hey, let's go find the cameraman and ask him where he was. Like, there has to be a cable leading to his camera somewhere right?" That's heresy in WWE though, because we need to praise HHH and Stephanie in their cameo while they're not really in the arena because not even they watch Raw on Labor Day. Rollins gets two wrestle twice tonight because the Authority treats like like a child.

Paige and Sasha had their same decent match that ended with Naomi distracting Paige so Sasha could get a small package pin. I think this leads to a Paige heel turn, which could be interesting once we get done with the never ending team feuds.

Now we get to the part of the show that actually got on my nerves, which almost never happens: Ambrose and Reigns squashed the Ascension, who had been put together with Stardust in a group on Smackdown. However, since the people who put Raw together don't seem to watch Smackdown, none of that mattered because Reigns and Ambrose needed opponents for a squash.

I have no problem with Ambrose and Reigns beating someone up, but if they're trying to do something with Ascension, don't put them out there to get squashed. You could put any two goofs out there and have them lose in three minutes. You have how many people who haven't done anything important in months (Heath Slater, Curtis Axel, Damien Sandow, Adam Rose, Fandango etc) but why use any of them?

Instead you put out a team that needs to be rebuilt in the worst way after WWE screwed them up in the first place by having Booker and JBL treat them like idiots and then having the Outlaws and APA, two mostly retired teams, attack them for a nostalgia segment. I've said this many times before, but WWE has no idea how to use its roster. They focus on a handful of people and forget everyone else. Put up a big board of everyone on your roster and label it "PEOPLE WE CAN USE" or something, but stop wasting a team that could go somewhere for a spot that any two jobbers could use.

Oh and again, this is what NXT fans are always afraid of: why bother bringing people up if they're going to be completely wasted for the sake of whatever stupid idea the main show has for them? What does that develop and how is it a good use of the system they have in place? It's because the people who put together the main show can't stop and pay attention for five seconds, because the match was less than three minutes long. Any two warm bodies could have done this job as well as Konor/Viktor, but that's who we get and we're just supposed to go with it on Smackdown when they're featured again. Thank you WWE.

Ryback and Owens continue to stare at each other and their feud (is it even a feud yet? Don't you have to do more than look at and insult each other to constitute a feud?) is still intriguing.

We get a long recap of Ziggler/Summer/Lana and it's so cheesy that it's getting awesome. Embrace the fact that it's a soap opera and it's a lot easier to bear.

Ryback beat Rollins in the first long match of the night. I still really like Ryback at the moment and it's cool to see him get a big win, even if it was due to a Sting distraction. They're building a good

Intercontinental Champion with Ryback, and above all else there's one key: he's treating the title like it matters. Couple that with actually defending the thing and he's one of the better champions in a long time.

Rollins (who I'm sick of from this show alone) runs into New Day, who he's teaming with later. The Dudleyz come in, as do Edge and Christian for a cameo. This turns into the trombone vs. the kazoo, which are both totally awesome. This was great.

Summer Rae/Rusev/Ziggler did some stuff, with only Summer referring to Rusev as Ru Ru being noteworthy.

Orton, Sheamus, RK0, sixteen minutes. I need to get away from this match before I nod off.

The Wyatts beat up Orton for hanging out with Reigns/Ambrose earlier. I like this idea the more I think about it and they're setting the stage for an outsider to be there to save the Shield boys.

The Dudleyz squashed Los Matadores so they could turn on El Torito. Didn't they do this before and nothing came of it?

Big Show caused Miz vs. Cesaro to go to a double countout. I guess they're just swapping Cesaro for Ryback in this feud? That's their best idea?

The Bellas and PCB had your standard build to next week's title match where Nikki tapped to the Figure Eight.

John Cena, with the Prime Time Players, beat New Day. This was nothing special and was really just there to fill in some time.

Sting threw the statue into a garbage truck to end the show. He did a little dance around it, which was actually cool because I've always loved how Sting moves. It's different enough from everyone else to make it look cool.

This show wasn't the worst they've ever done but there was a distinct lack of energy to the show all night. The only major thing was the destruction of the statue, which we've been waiting weeks for now. It was

clear that they were trying to fill in time though, which has to happen every week but it's a lot harder to sit through when they're being so blatant with it. The "season premiere" next week should be better, but a bit of energy is all it would take.

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## **Monday Night Raw – August 24, 2015: Feel The Heat. I'm Sure It's There Somewhere.**

### **Monday Night Raw**

Date: August 24, 2015

Location: Barclays Center, New York City, New York

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, John Bradshaw Layfield

Summerslam has come and gone and we have two main event fallout stories to deal with. Jon Stewart, the host of Summerslam, cost John Cena the US Title by interfering to help Seth Rollins last night. In addition, Brock Lesnar made Undertaker tap out but the referee didn't see it, allowing Undertaker to hit Brock low and make him pass out in the Hell's Gate, likely setting the stage for a third match between the two. Let's get to it.

Earlier today, HHH praised Seth Rollins for making Summerslam live up to its hype last night. Rollins, holding both titles, is officially the man in WWE and it's time for him to take his place among the legends of this industry with a statue.

Opening sequence.

We open with Heyman and a ticked off Lesnar. Heyman gets right to it and says Brock isn't happy. How did we go from Brock being the first man to make Undertaker tap out to the history books showing Undertaker won the match? Last night the Undertaker went to Suplex City and was then locked in a Kimura and Undertaker tapped out, which we see clear video of him doing. Heyman is a father and knows what it's like to have to break your kid's heart by telling him fairy tales aren't real.

After explaining what it means to tap, Heyman says Brock doesn't blame the referee or timekeeper. The fans boo the timekeeper so Heyman takes a jab at them for booing compassion. Undertaker collapsed on the way to the back again but we don't need to talk about that just yet. Imagine last night when someone had to pull Brock off of Undertaker to save him from a beating. Once Undertaker knew he had a reprieve, he went low on Brock and made him pass out in Hell's Gate.

It was Undertaker's last bullet as the gunslinger, but it turns out that Undertaker can't shoot with Brock. Lesnar wants Undertaker one more time, but not at Wrestlemania, Survivor Series or the Royal Rumble. Brock wants Undertaker right here TONIGHT. Instead he gets Bo Dallas. Even Heyman looks stunned by this one.

Dallas says Brock passed out last night but at least he probably had a sweet dream of beating Undertaker. Those dreams can come true if he just BOLIEVES! It's Suplex City time and Brock eventually leaves, only to go back for one more German. He leaves again but Heyman wants one more. Dallas is out cold so Lesnar makes it easy on him with an F5.

New Day vs. Lucha Dragons

Non-title and the Prime Time Players are on commentary. Big E. introduces Woods as the feature presentation so here's Xavier playing a trombone. E.



sings a modified version of New York, New York about how awesome they are as champions. Just when you think these guys are running out of ideas they have the singing gimmick to fall back on. As usual, these three are hilarious together. Kofi and Cara get things going before it's quickly off to Kalisto who flips Kingston to the floor. Big E. gets kicked out to the floor but is able to catch a diving Kalisto in midair. Cara adds a dive and we take an early break.

Back with New Day in control and Woods playing the trombone. Cara backflips over E. into the tag to Kalisto as things speed up. A sunset bomb gets two on Kofi as everything breaks down. E. pulls Cara to the floor and the distraction lets Kofi grab Kalisto in a reverse suplex. Woods plays some Taps as the Midnight Hour puts Kalisto away at 6:19. Too much was in the break to rate it but the match was great fun.

Post match New Day celebrates but the DUDLEY BOYS return and clean house. Woods gets What's Up and the place is just coming unglued. Bubba isn't done yet because it's table time. Kofi and Big E. are nowhere to be found and the 3D puts Woods through the table. The Dudleys aren't done yet as they go outside to yell at the Prime Time Players a bit before posing on the ropes and soaking in the thunderous cheers.

Stills of Jon Stewart costing John Cena the US Title.

Video on John Cena granting his 500<sup>th</sup> Make-A-Wish, the most of anyone in history. Like him or not, these things are just cool.

The Authority is looking at Rollins' statue when Rollins comes in to brag about receiving one.

#### Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose vs. Bray Wyatt/Luke Harper

Rematch from last night. Dean takes everyone out to start but eats a suicide dive from Harper. Reigns comes over to help and it's an apron boot to Harper to take us to a commercial. Note that we saw Dean and the Wyatts' entrance plus less than two minutes of action between breaks. Back with Bray clotheslining Dean for two before it's off to Harper for a catapult into the middle rope.

Bray gets two more off a DDT and plants Dean with a gutbuster before it's off to Harper, who eats a tornado DDT. A double tag brings in Reigns and Wyatt with Roman cleaning house with some nice throws followed by a corner clothesline. See how much better it is when you mix stuff up instead of just doing the same clotheslines over and over? Everything breaks down and Dean sends Bray to the floor for a suicide dive.

Roman does something like a Jackhammer on Wyatt but Harper comes in with superkicks (JBL: "Superkick party!"). Sister Abigail is broken up and Reigns nails a Superman Punch. Ambrose dives on Harper and we've got...a third Wyatt. This guy is massive, even bigger than Reigns, and wearing a black sheep mask. Roman tries the Superman Punch, only to get pulled out of the air for the DQ at 10:39.

**Rating:** C+. Fun brawl here but obviously this was just about introducing the new monster. Adding in someone new is a good idea as the Wyatts work best when Bray has a few minions to throw at people, meaning he gets to stay safe instead of taking falls all the time. Good match here but it didn't have time to go anywhere like last night.

The guy beats Ambrose down and chokes Reigns out as the fans ask WHO ARE YOU. Ambrose comes back with a kick to the head for no effect and the monster chokes him out as well. Bray poses next to him as we take a break. Apparently the new guy is a former strongman competitor who wrestled in NXT under the name Braun Stowman.

It's time for MizTV with Team PCB as guests. Charlotte says her dad was part of the greatest faction in WWE history. No not Evolution, which is really the only faction he was ever part of in WWE, but the Horsemen. To be fair, WWE is convinced they are wrestling at this point so it's close enough in their eyes. Miz brags about himself but Paige says they're not into him. The trio says they'll fight any woman, man, dinosaur or cyborg.

Paige talks about being all dominant so here's Team Bella. Nikki makes a Donald Trump joke and Brie says they empower women all over the world. Fox and Becky yell at each other a bit over how long Alicia has been around. Nikki: "Wins and losses, who cares?" Miz says cool it and says he sees a bunch of women who fight like girls. PCB gets in his face but Team

Bella jumps them from behind and knocks PCB to the floor.

### Team Bella vs. Team PCB

This is joined in progress in case you haven't seen it enough yet. Becky drops a leg on Brie before it's off to Charlotte for the Charlotte's Web on Nikki for two. PCB starts taking turns on the champ and Becky gets two off a backslide. The Bellas take over for a bit before Becky and Charlotte clean house with dropkicks to send them out to the floor. Charlotte dives on all three and we take a break.

Back with Charlotte in trouble and Nikki throwing her out to the floor. Nikki sends the leg into the post and everyone starts working on Charlotte's leg. The fans are doing the wave as Paige gets the hot tag. Fox takes her down as well and now it's a WE ARE AWESOME chant. Everything breaks down and Nikki hits Paige with the big forearm, followed by the ax kick from Fox for the pin at 14:30.

**Rating:** D. I'm done with the Divas Revolution for now and they're right back to where they were before. When the star of your division flat out says "wins and losses don't matter", what's the point of watching the matches anymore? I had hope that they were going somewhere new with this division, but tonight proves that it's just about making the Bellas look good and we've already spent the last year doing that with Nikki vs. Brie which wound up going nowhere. Well done WWE on screwing up something so promising again for the sake of the Bellas.

King Barrett and Stardust are here for a tag match but Stardust beats Barrett up before the match. This brings out Neville to go after Stardust as the referee gets out of the ring. Stardust rolls away before the Red Arrow can launch though.

Here's Jon Stewart for an explanation. He understands that some people are mad at him, but some people are also happy with him. Some people had to comfort their children last night and explain who the little old man who attacked John Cena was. Well here's why he did it: it wasn't to help Rollins retain or to do what's best for business. Instead, it was because he couldn't let John Cena tie Ric Flair's record because the champ is Flair.

This brings out Flair himself and Stewart loses his mind. Flair says he appreciated Stewart's sentiments last night but he was pulling for Cena. The record is going to fall someday and Flair would like it to fall to someone he respects. Ric says Stewart messed up everything but here's Cena to freak Stewart out in a completely different way. Cena says he's at peace for what happened last night, but Stewart kept the title on Rollins as a result, in addition to making him the US Champion.

That was the title that Cena used to give everyone an opportunity, from names like Cesaro to Kevin Owens to Sami Zayn. Stewart freaks out and tries to backpedal but Cena says the titles are in the hands of the Authority. This is a chance for Cena to win the titles back and there's an AA to Stewart. Flair just stands there as all this happens and then leaves.

Post break Cena says he was doing what he thought was right. Later tonight, he'll have another talk with Seth Rollins.

#### Dolph Ziggler/Randy Orton/Ryback/Cesaro vs. Kevin Owens/Big Show/Rusev/Sheamus

Ziggler is now in tights. Ryback and Rusev get things going before it's off to Cesaro for a headlock. Ziggler gets the tag and tries a superkick but Rusev bails to the floor. It's about to explode on the floor as we take a break. Back with Show telling Ziggler to bring it on before chopping him down. Show: "I'M A GIANT!" It's off to Owens to wake the fans up a bit but that ends when Sheamus gets the tag for a release suplex.

Sheamus puts Ziggler in the Brock Lock, followed by an Irish Curse for no cover. Back from another break with Ziggler DDTing Big Show but Rusev breaks up the hot tag attempt. Summer slaps Dolph so Lana tackles her down and the distraction lets Ziggler scores with the Fameasser. Ziggler finally dives over for the tag to Cesaro, who uppercuts the heck out of Owens.

Rusev comes in and takes the Swing, leaving Ryback and Owens to slug it out. The Cannonball is broken up by a spinebuster and there's the Meathook. Kevin breaks up the Shell Shock though and a double clothesline

drops both of them. It's Orton coming in off the hot tag and cleaning house, but Show makes his job easier by KO Punching Sheamus by mistake, setting up the RKO for the pin at 17:55.

**Rating:** C+. So I'm guessing this means it's time to make Show face again because we haven't done something with him in long enough. I mean, it's not like you can have him take the fall here. Why do that when you have Sheamus to do it for him? The match was much more long than good, which is all you can expect here.

Owens and Rusev beat Show down post match before walking out. The winners come in with Ziggler superkicking Show, followed by Cesaro and Ryback lifting Show up for an RKO. For once the camera team made sure to hide the fact that it barely connected.

We look at Lesnar vs. Undertaker from last night.

Recap of the new Wyatt Family member.

Bray says he tried to warn Roman. As long as there is breath in Reigns' body, Bray will be there to stop him. Look at Reigns' so called brother. Roman pulled him into this war and now Dean is just a pawn. Last night was Roman's moment of glory but now it's over. Tonight you witnessed her greatest gift. Bray introduces us to Braun Stowman, Abigail's black sheep.

The Authority stops Cena in the back and has security escort him out of the arena.

It's time for the Rollins statue unveiling, but the statue is under a curtain, despite us seeing it earlier in the night. First up though, Stephanie leads us in singing Happy Birthday to her dad, who turns 70 today. HHH talks about what you want in a man to immortalize in bronze. The three qualities you would want in such a man are hustle, loyalty and respect. There's only one man in this company who deserves that, so here's Seth Rollins. The champ brags about how amazing this is because so few people receive this honor.

Last night he won this match and became a legend. Rollins goes on for a

LONG time about how awesome he is and promises to retain the title at Wrestlemania after Wrestlemania after Wrestlemania. They finally pull the curtain and instead of a statue, it's Sting. Why his facepaint is already chipped off isn't clear but maybe it melted off while he was waiting so long for Rollins to finish talking. Sting cleans house and holds up the title as Rollins panics to end the show. Why? It's an old guy who has never won a match in this company.

**Overall Rating:** C-. This show was rolling along after the first hour and then the Divas killed it deader than dead. That segment and match were so bad and just destroyed everything the show had built up in the first hour. Other than that, the show was watchable enough but the Cena segment really didn't do it any favors. As usual I'm more interested in NXT this week, but you knew WWE was going to do something to screw up what they had going for it.

### Results

New Day b. Lucha Dragons – Midnight Hour to Kalisto

Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose b. Luke Harper/Bray Wyatt via DQ when an unknown man interfered

Team Bella b. Team PCB – Ax kick to Paige

Randy Orton/Cesaro/Ryback/Dolph Ziggler b. Sheamus/Big Show/Rusev/Kevin Owens – RKO to Sheamus

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# Monday Night Raw – July 27, 2015: On The Middle Of The Road To Summerslam

## Monday Night Raw

Date: July 27, 2015

Location: Chesapeake Energy Arena, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, John Bradshaw Layfield

Summerslam is still coming and tonight's big question is what is going to co-headline the show alongside the showdown between Brock Lesnar and Undertaker. Seth Rollins vs. John Cena in a champion vs. champion match has been teased, but it would be interesting to see if Cena holds onto the title until Summerslam. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week's big brawl between Undertaker and Lesnar with the entire roster trying to keep them apart.

Here's the Authority and Seth Rollins to open the show. HHH says this is a night of firsts and we're going to start with a major announcements. For the first time ever, Summerslam is going to be a special four hour event, of course with Undertaker vs. Brock Lesnar as the main event. Tonight is going to be something special tonight as well as Big Show goes one on one with Dean Ambrose. That's uh, quite the announcement there Trips.

On top of that we have Paige vs. Sasha Banks and Kevin Owens vs. Randy Orton. Stephanie brings up the Divas Revolution with Alicia Fox/Nikki Bella vs. Becky Lynch/Charlotte. Rollins takes the mic and brags about how amazing he is, calling himself one of the greatest WWE Champions of all time, but here's John Cena to disagree. Cena doesn't like the idea of Rollins calling himself the greatest of all time because Rollins is a joke. On a night like tonight, we need to find out which one of them is

right.

If tonight is a night of firsts, we need to find out if Seth Rollins really is a man, so how about Cena vs. Rollins for the World Title tonight? Seth says Cena needs to earn a shot but Stephanie wants to put it up to the people because she can't remember if she's a face or a heel. The fans love the idea and even start a YES chant so Stephanie says NO, complete with a little dance. HHH thinks the idea has merit though so instead it's going to be a US Title match with Rollins having the chance to be a dual champion.

The Austin Podcast returns next week with.....Paige? That's not quite Taker or Sting but at least they look better in leather shorts.

### Dean Ambrose vs. Big Show

This is actually fallout from two weeks ago on Smackdown where Ambrose countered Big Show's chokeslam through a table with a DDT. Miz is on commentary, almost guaranteeing Ambrose loses because WWE doesn't think stuff through. Show takes him into the corner to start and rips Dean's shirt open before running him over with a shoulder. The fans aren't pleased and it's nice to see that last week's promo wasn't meant to be yet another face turn.

Dean low bridges him to the floor and a baseball slide sets up a suicide dive but dives into a chop as we take a WAY too early break. Back with Show working on the leg but has to stop to tie his boot. Miz rants about Ryback missing time, because he could beat up a staph infection.

Ambrose's sleeper has as much effect as anyone's sleeper has on Big Show (we need the tranquilizer dart that Angle used) and Show goes old school with the Alley Oop for two. Another chokeslam is countered with another DDT but the rebound lariat is countered with the chokeslam for two.

Show does the smart thing by just chokeslamming him again but Dean rolls to the floor to lay in the light of the video screen because THE RING SKIRT IS A VIDEO SCREEN. Yes I know it has been for a long time but it looks stupid. Dean gets back in but a superkick puts him on the floor again, setting up a spear to flatten Dean one more time. Ambrose dives in at nine, only to be thrown outside for a third time in two minutes. This



time Show throws him inside but Dean kicks him away for a suicide dive. Show is waiting for him with the KO Punch though and it's a countout at 10:30.

**Rating:** D+. WHAT??? Did we really just watch Dean Ambrose get beaten up by Big Show for ten minutes before they finally just let Big Show knock him out? Are we really back to the annual Big Show push that no one but WWE wants to see? I mean, at least it's not a pin but my goodness WWE: stop doing this. The guy is 43 years old and going over Dean Ambrose on Raw.

Dean still won't stay down so Show loads up a spear, which goes right through the barricade instead. Ah so he's a smart loser.

### Neville vs. Fandango

Fandango tries a powerbomb but opts for a clothesline instead. JBL: "When in doubt, hit your opponent really hard." A Gory Stretch of all things has Neville in trouble but he comes back with his series of quick strikes. Having never watched a Neville match, Fandango heads outside in front of the ramp, setting up the big flip dive. Back inside and the Red Arrow is good for the pin on Fandango at 1:54.

Post match, Stardust comes on screen and rips up a comic book while talking about wining and dining with kings and queens. No one wants to talk about the strange but don't worry because he'll rescue the WWE Universe and there is nothing Neville can do to stop him.

Paige gives Charlotte and Becky Lynch a pep talk when Team Bad comes in to trade insults. Paige wins by saying she was the first NXT Women's Champion.

### Sasha Banks vs. Paige

Non-title. Sasha's Sky's The Limit theme makes its Raw debut here. Their lockup goes to the mat and then out to the floor without a break. Back in and Paige fires off her elbows in the corner, followed by a fall away slam for two. We hit the hammerlock (nice little change of pace) before Paige drives Banks down into a Fujiwara armbar. Sasha tries to fight up

but eats a superkick to put her on the floor with Paige diving on all of Team Bad as we take a break.

Back with Sasha holding a chinlock as everyone else has been ejected from ringside. The double knees to the chest in the corner get two and it's back to the chinlock with Paige in trouble. That doesn't last long though as Paige fights up and fires off a series of knees in the corner and the trio of clotheslines. A superkick looks to set up the PTO but instead it's another knee to Sasha's chest for two. Sasha hits a charge in the corner for two of her own, followed by a sloppy Bank Statement for the clean tap at 13:57.

**Rating:** B-. It's not a classic or anything, but this was the first time in a LONG time that a women's match on Raw actually felt serious instead of WWE trying to make it feel serious. This felt like a wrestling match between two very talented women and that's not something you get from the Divas. This is a positive sign going forward and a huge win for Banks.

Rollins says he'll win tonight because he beats the best that WWE throws at him every single time. Tonight, the future passes Cena by.

The Terminator (yes that Terminator) is in WWE 2K16.

Here are Rusev and Lana for a chat. Rusev says he's smitten with her and wants to give Summer a present. First up: a puppy, who is so ugly that they have to name him Dog Ziggler. The second present is....a headless fish. It's a cold fish, so let's name it Lana. Cue the real Lana who rants about Rusev trying to humiliate her. She should be ranting about how her accent slips a bit as she talks faster.

Lana goes on about Summer being a Lana ripoff and how Rusev is just trying to replace the real thing. Lana kicks Summer in the leg and put on an armbar while ripping at Summer's hair. Summer goes face first into the fish and Lana leaves. This was, in a word, really stupid.

We see the same recap the opened the show. Saxton says Lesnar is back next week in the city that hosted last year's Wrestlemania: San Jose, California.

## Lucha Dragons vs. Los Matadores

The Prime Time Players are on commentary and this match is to move up the tag team rankings. Cara and Diego flip around to start before the Dragons double team Diego down for two. Kalisto slaps on an armbar as Titus makes fun of Darren's shyness on commentary. It's Diego coming back with a running clothesline to take over but Kalisto grabs the arm again to stop the comeback.

Cara's springboard cross body is caught in midair and they drop him face first onto the post. Even Torito gets in some cheap shots (Titus: "THAT'S BULL!") as Titus and JBL argue over Puerto Rican bullfighters. Fernando's chinlock has Cara in more trouble and the slow offense continues with a front facelock. Who thought it was a good idea for a lucha team to wrestle a slow paced mat style?

Cara gets in a belly to back for a breather and the hot tag brings in Kalisto for a springboard tornado DDT. Cara swantons onto Diego on the floor but we've got New Day, with a sign saying Kofi is the REAL Mega Dad of the Year. Kalisto grabs a huricanrana for the pin on Diego at 8:05.

**Rating:** D+. So not only was it slow, but they're basically saying that match last week where the champions lost means nothing because they just lost clean to another team. New Day vs. the Players isn't much of a feud but it's finally feeling like a story instead of just two teams having matches because the script says they should be.

Here are Wyatt and Harper with something to say. Well one of them with something to say at least. Bray thinks everyone here has a family and thinks most people here love their family. There's this idea that if a family stays together, they can survive anything. That's a lie though man. It's a shame that people won't tell their family the truth.

It's in your house, your government and your places of worship: those that trust you the most are the ones you should fear the most. The truth shall set you free, but freedom comes at a very hefty price. A long time ago, Bray had a pet. It wasn't the most charming one but Bray loved him all the same. That pet wanted to know what was over the hills and across the train tracks, so one day Bray loosened his chains and the pet ran

away.

One day he came back, but the pet was different, partially because of a scar alongside his eye. The pet never left his side, but it would never be the same. That brings him to Harper, who was a damaged man that Bray picked up from the dirt and fixed him like a broken toy. One day, Bray knew he would have to set Harper free, but now Harper has come home. Harper says he didn't know why he existed or why he was here, but his family found him.

Bray showed him the truth: this is all the people's fault. They made him what he is when they shunned him but Bray saved him. When you pray for the rain, you best be prepared for the mud. Harper is ready to give his life for Bray, and Bray says he knows Harper would go through anything for him. That brings Wyatt back to Roman Reigns, who was told that this was just the beginning. If Reigns really cared for Dean Ambrose, he would tell Dean that he was in danger. This is Reigns' hill to die on and Bray himself will seal Reigns' fate. We're here. Follow the buzzards.

#### Alicia Fox/Nikki Bella vs. Becky Lynch/Charlotte

Becky runs Nikki over to start before it's off to Charlotte for a twisting rollup (Charlotte's Web) for two. Off to Fox who has similar success as Charlotte drops a knee to the head. Nikki offers a distraction so Fox can get two off a northern lights suplex. Nikki comes back in for her pushups and some laughter before it's off to Fox for a double arm crank with her feet in Charlotte's back. She pulls on it so hard that Charlotte flips over onto her for two, allowing for the tag off to Becky. A t-bone suplex sends Fox flying as everything breaks down. Lynch's Disarm-Her armbars makes Fox tap at 6:10.

**Rating:** C. Totally fine match here with no one really standing out. Again, the problem here is the lack of any reason for these matches to be taking place as no one can challenge for the title until AJ's record comes down. The problem is we don't really have a reason for the title to be a non-factor, but that's life in WWE for you.

Look back at last week's Tough Enough elimination and a list of the remaining competitors.

## Randy Orton vs. Kevin Owens

Sheamus is on commentary. Owens jaws a lot to start and they slug it out with Randy knocking him outside early on. Back in and Orton rakes his boot over Kevin's face but Owens rolls right back to the floor. It's Orton being sent face first into the post and a fall away slam to launch him into the barricade as we take a break. Back with Owens getting two off the backplash but walking into Orton's backbreaker to even things up.

It's Owens staying in control though and slugging away in the corner, setting up the Cannonball but Orton rolls away. The powerslam plants Owens and the t-bone suplex does the same (Orton must have been watching the Divas tag). They fight to the floor again and it's a Brogue Kick to Orton for the DQ at 11:06.

**Rating:** C. I wasn't really feeling this one but at least Owens looked like someone who could go toe to toe with a guy on Orton's level. I don't think he's going to be back to the level he reached when he debuted for a good while, but there's a big difference between being forgotten/buried and what we're seeing here.

Post match Sheamus goes after Orton but Cesaro runs in to get his hands on Owens. Sheamus offers a distraction though and Owens powerbombs Cesaro and spits on him.

Cena says he's been defending this title for months now but tonight he's up against the golden boy and the WWE World Heavyweight Champion. If Rollins is as good as he says he is, then he can shock the world.

## US Title: John Cena vs. Seth Rollins

Cena is defending and for the sake of simplicity, I'll only refer to Cena as the champion. A quick shoulder puts Rollins on the floor and things slow right back down. Back in and an AA attempt is countered, allowing Rollins to kick him down to take over. Rollins slaps on a chinlock and we take a break. Back with Cena fighting out of the chinlock (dang that must have been a dull commercial break) but missing a charge in the corner.

Cena comes back and tries his finishing sequence, only to have Rollins kick him in the head/shoulder for two. The Shuffle is broken up by another kick to the head but Cena avoids a corner dive of his own, setting up a tornado DDT for two on Seth. The top rope knee to the head gets two on the champ but Cena catches him in an electric chair for two. Another knee to the nose puts Cena in the corner but we stop to check for blood (which is flowing from his nose. It could be broken).

Thankfully Cena will have none of that but Rollins kicks him in the head, setting up the buckle bomb for two. The doctor comes in to look at the nose but Cena is right back up with the springboard Stunner. Rollins flips out of the AA though and the low superkick gets a very close two. Fans: "THIS IS AWESOME." Not really guys.

An AA gets two (that should be a drinking game) and Cena gets his nose looked at again. A closeup shows that the nose is definitely broken as it's off to one side. Cena gets superplexed off the top and Rollins floats over into a falcon's arrow for two. The fans are getting way into these kickouts. Rollins misses the Phoenix Splash and it's off to the STF for the tap at 17:05.

**Rating:** B. Well there's the Summerslam co-main event. I'm guessing they'll go with Rollins saying he had nothing to lose which is about as acceptable as you can get but I'm never a fan of these endings. Cena vs. Rollins for the World Title at Summerslam is fine as there isn't really anyone else to go for the belt, but I'm hoping Cena drops the US Title before the show. Good but not great main event here.

**Overall Rating:** C+. I'm kind of split on this one. The wrestling isn't bad and the show flew by, but there's really nothing worth talking about. This really was a show that didn't do anything bad (Big Show beating Ambrose aside) and started setting up stuff for Summerslam. We've already got Brock vs. Taker set so you really don't need to focus on it all that much. It's a pretty middle of the road show but it went by quickly and got some things done so we'll say it's a good week.

## Results

Big Show b. Dean Ambrose via countout

Neville b. Fandango – Red Arrow

Sasha Banks b. Paige – Bank Statement

Lucha Dragons b. Los Matadores – Hurricanrana to Diego

Becky Lynch/Charlotte b. Nikki Bella/Alicia Fox – Disarm-Her to Fox

Randy Orton b. Kevin Owens via DQ when Sheamus interfered

John Cena b. Seth Rollins – STF

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# Monday Night Raw – July 20, 2015: The Old and the Beautiful

## Monday Night Raw

Date: July 20, 2015

Location: Sprint Center, Kansas City, Missouri

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, John Bradshaw Layfield

As uneventful as Battleground seemed going into last night, a lot changed

in the final moments. The Undertaker of all people returned to end the World Title match by attacking Brock Lesnar. The interesting point was that Rollins just disappeared after basically being squashed by Lesnar for the entire match. It should be interesting to see what happens as we head towards Summerslam. Let's get to it.

The opening recap looks at the end of the main event.

Here's Undertaker to open things up with the announcers listing off all of his accomplishments and making the entire moment feel like anything else. The fans don't seem to mind Undertaker's rather heelish actions last night, as anyone with a functioning brain could have predicted. Undertaker starts with a big line: streaks are made to be broken.

However, Lesnar has gone on for months about his greatest accomplishment. Ever since he broke the Streak, Lesnar has bragged about it. You can't kill what won't die, and Undertaker will conquer what has yet to be conquered. Just like everyone else, be they man or beast, Brock Lesnar will rest in peace. This definitely wasn't a heel promo and it didn't need to be.

Since we haven't talked about them enough yet, we cut to the Authority who brags about how big a main event they have. Stephanie is ready to market things, but HHH thinks Brock should take the night off.

Cena/Orton/Cesaro vs. Rusev/Owens/Sheamus for the main event. Cesaro and Rusev getting those spots is a great sign.

### Charlotte vs. Brie Bella

Team Bad is on commentary but before the match we have to get a quick recap of how Stephanie saved us all. Feeling out process to start with Charlotte knocking Brie to the floor but misses a dive. Back from a break with Brie working on the arm and kicking Charlotte square in the jaw. We get the YES Kicks to fire up the crowd, followed by a low dropkick for two. Brie hooks a chinlock for a good while before Charlotte starts firing off chops and a big boot to the face. Nikki's distraction doesn't work and a spear sets up the Figure Eight for the submission for Charlotte at 9:02.



**Rating:** C. Brie is fine if you keep things simple but Charlotte winning is definitely the right idea. It's starting to feel like the new girls are becoming a thing and that's a very good sign this early in their run. It's going to get annoying just sitting around waiting on the title match though, which seems to be what we're going to be doing until Nikki breaks the record.

HHH is on the phone with Heyman and tells Lesnar to take the night off. Heyman needs to grow a set and tell Lesnar to not show up tonight. Miz tries to interrupt and gets Big Show as a result.

### Prime Time Players vs. Los Matadores

Non-title. Darren takes Diego into the corner to start and blasts him with a spinning forearm. The masked men take over, despite the fans not sounding all that interested. Young snaps off a belly to belly suplex and it's off to Titus to clean house. Cue New Day for a distraction though, allowing Diego to hit a Backstabber on Titus for the pin at 4:04.

**Rating:** D. So not only is the feud continuing, but now we're getting the old distraction into a pin finish again? Also, can we please stop giving people wins over champions when it's not going to lead anywhere? This happened a few years back when Kofi pinned WWE Champion Randy Orton and then it went nowhere. If that's what you're going for, just have the champs win and then let it be a post match attack. Finally, if you want to build a team up, STOP HAVING THEM LOSE TO A NOTHING TEAM LIKE LOS MATADORES! That's not how you build up a match, especially when they're not even in the feud.

### Big Show vs. Miz

Show chops Miz in the corner to start, as only Big Show can do. A slam sets up the middle rope elbow for the pin on Miz at 1:27. And he was supposed to get a title shot last night?

Show rants about how he's still around and tells Ryback to show up on Tough Enough tomorrow night for a brawl.

HHH and Stephanie want artwork made up for Lesnar vs. Undertaker when

Heyman arrives. He's here to give Lesnar's response and nothing more, but the Authority isn't interested.

Back from a break with the roster meeting with the Authority. They want the entire locker room to keep Lesnar and Undertaker apart because they have to protect the Summerslam main event. There is WAY too much Authority tonight.

Here's Heyman to address the Summerslam main event. Brock isn't the World Champion right now, but why isn't he? It's not because Rollins out wrestled or out fought him or because Rollins survived a trip to Suplex City. It was all because of a yet again resurrected Undertaker, who can't get over losing the Streak to Brock Lesnar. Of course Heyman has hyped up the Streak being broken because why wouldn't he?

It's the biggest accomplishment of his career because no one else could ever do it. The Undertaker wants to face Brock Lesnar again at Summerslam, so let's make this personal. Heyman goes into full on promoter voice to rant about the Streak being broken. Undertaker may have sold his soul to the devil to get revenge but he belongs to Brock Lesnar. There goes the gong and the look on Heyman's face is priceless.

Brock hits the ring and the fight is on with the fans being behind a ticked off Brock. Security has as much success as you would expect so HHH sends a bunch of midcarders out until there must be twenty five guys trying to break this up. The announcers bail so it's up to the audience to tell us how awesome this is (and they're right for a change). Undertaker gets to him on the floor again as even main eventers are out there to break it up now.

We come back from a break and they're fighting in the back again with the entire roster not being able to hold them back. Brock finally steps back and says he's done, allowing the police to tie his hands.

Rollins comes in to laugh at what just happened but promises the Authority that he'll be in the arena later.

Bray Wyatt says he's never alone because his family stands by his side. They know that he is the revolution and the fans need to learn it. The

people have annointed Roman Reigns and it's time for them to burn for it. Harper says this is just the beginning and they will take Reigns apart brick by brick. Anyone but you.

### Luke Harper vs. Roman Reigns

The fans sound like they're chanting for Wyatt so Byron says it's for Reigns. Roman shrugs off a clothesline and fires off chops, only to have Harper go after Roman's left arm. That earns him a suplex though and we take a quick break. Back with Roman stuck in a chinlock before Harper wisely goes back to the arm. A charge doesn't work for Reigns as Harper tosses him outside, injuring the arm again.

The match keeps going as Harper cranks on the arm while also working on a chinlock. That's dedication to your craft. Harper misses a big boot and crashes to the floor, allowing Reigns to start his comeback. Roman and Bray get into it with both Wyatts taking apron kicks. Wyatt pulls Reigns outside though and that's a DQ at 13:00.

**Rating:** C-. Harper trying some psychology was a good idea but it's pretty clear that we're headed for a tag match at Summerslam. I like the idea of Ambrose and Reigns as the best friends/brothers who will fight back to back until the end and anything with Wyatts vs. Shield vibes is a good thing.

Everyone brawls post match and the Wyatts run.

We get the same recap from the opening.

Here's Rollins to brag about surviving with the title. He's sorry to announce this to the people but Lesnar didn't get the job done. Being champion is so much harder than people think it is because Rollins has to put so much effort into it. After last night, he's still exactly where he promised he would be, but he never got to hear his name announced last night. Therefore, Lillian Garcia is invited in for the official announcement.

That's exactly what we get...and here's Cena to interrupt. Rollins cuts him off by saying this isn't about him because no one cares about what he

does, but Cena talks about how a champion is supposed to be ready to fight no matter what. The brawl is about to be on but, as you would expect, Rollins bails. That might be the co-main event at Summerslam.

Hey! Remember when Stephanie TOTALLY saved the Divas' division? Well here it is again.

### Paige/Becky Lynch vs. Naomi/Sasha Banks

The Bellas/Alicia are on commentary this time. Sasha and Becky get things going, which is almost guaranteed to be awesome. Some armdrags and an armbar have Sasha in early trouble so it's off to Naomi. That's fine with Becky who drops a leg (where's Xavier Woods to rate it though?) as the heroes stay in control.

Sasha gets kicked in the head a few times and we take a break. Back with Naomi cranking on a front facelock as JBL brings up WCW and the NWO because it's just so fun to make fun eighteen years later. Back from a break with Naomi kicking Becky in the face for two. Sasha comes back in to yell at Paige, allowing Naomi to get in some shots from the apron.

Becky rolls away and DIVES for a tag but Sasha makes a save, only to have the hot tag bring in Paige a second later. Paige cleans house but the PTO on Naomi is broken up at the last second. Everything breaks down as the Bellas just keep chattering like they do in everything they say. The Bank Statement makes Paige tag at 13:05.

**Rating:** C+. Less Bella means a better match. It's so adorable hearing them talk about themselves like that and imagining that people care for them. I'm sure they'll still be around because that's the nature of the beast, but at least there's some fresh blood to change things up around here.

Southpaw preview, which is tied into a Tough Enough plug.

Long Undertaker vs. Lesnar recap.

We look back at Rusev's ankle being fine and the ensuing Ziggler beatdown.

Lana says Ziggler will be fine when Summer Rae comes up in a Lana outfit. Rusev comes in to kiss Summer, who then slaps Lana in the face.

### Randy Orton/John Cena/Cesaro vs. Kevin Owens/Rusev/Sheamus

After the entrances take their sweet time, we start things off with Cena vs. Owens. Why? The feud (should have at least) ended last night and it's off to Rusev before any contact. An early fall away slam gets two and Rusev opts for the stomping away in the corner. That goes badly for the Russian so it's back to Owens, who has to dive to the ropes to break up an STF attempt. A DDT plants Cena but he rolls away from the Cannonball for the hot tag.

Everything breaks down and Cesaro loads up the Swing, only to eat a jumping superkick to send the match to a break. Back with Owens holding Cesaro down until Cesaro powers up with a nice suplex. Cesaro gets to play face in peril for a bit as all the heels get in their shots. Sheamus and Owens wind up hitting each other though and the fight is on with Sheamus getting the worse of it.

Sheamus walks out on the match and Owens does the same a few moments later, leaving Rusev down 3-1. This goes about as you would expect it to with the parade of finishers putting Rusev down. Cue Lana to spear Summer down, leaving Cesaro to catapult Rusev into an RKO for the pin at 14:21.

**Rating:** C. Totally Smackdown six man until the cool ending move. I'm not sure what the point of this was as it just came and went without having much going on, but at least Rusev doesn't look bad in defeat and the other two looked fine as well. This was such a strange ending to Raw as everything was wrapped up and none of these guys seem to have a match set for Summerslam.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This is about as much of a two idea show as you can have as they set up the main event of Summerslam and pushed the heck out of the Divas revolution. How amazing is it that the Divas could arguably be the more interesting story of the two? You can see that they've turned it on for Summerslam and that's one of the best things you can get in WWE.

## Results

Charlotte b. Brie Bella – Figure Eight

Los Matadores b. Prime Time Players – Backstabber to O’Neil

Big Show b. Miz – Middle rope elbow

Roman Reigns b. Luke Harper via DQ when Bray Wyatt interfered

Sasha Banks/Naomi b. Paige/Becky Lynch – Bank Statement to Paige

John Cena/Randy Orton/Cesaro b. Rusev/Kevin Owens/Sheamus – RKO to Rusev

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# Monday Night Raw – July 6, 2015: Well Of Course Brock Smash

## Monday Night Raw

Date: July 6, 2015

Location: Allstate Arena, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

The big story coming out of last week: product placement and lame action. The shows really aren't lighting the world on fire right now, but a lot of that has to do with a lack of the Authority and Brock, because without the two of them, the show comes off as a glorified Smackdown. Get to the point already or get rid of the Authority as the main focus of the show because otherwise, a show without them on it isn't going to go anywhere. Let's get to it.

The opening recap covers last week's product placement and Rollins reuniting the team.

We open with Heyman and Lesnar coming out to the exact reaction you would expect for them in a smark paradise like Chicago. Heyman talks about how the Authority thinks Brock is still in Tokyo, because they allowed him to show up tonight. Lesnar is a god and hallowed be his name, but he isn't a god of love or charity or kindness. No, Lesnar is a god of violent retribution and the sword that will pierce Seth Rollins' shield.

Heyman brings up the Streak but points out that it wasn't because of any malice towards Undertaker. Heyman: "This one you'll cheer." When Brock took John Cena to Suplex City, it was just because Lesnar wanted the title and not out of disrespect. The same was true for Reigns at Wrestlemania, but it's not the case for Seth Rollins.

No, Rollins has broken the 11<sup>th</sup> commandment by cashing in Money in the Bank, running away from a rematch and having his Authority buddies attack him two weeks ago. Heyman's job is to sell us on Battleground in St. Louis, but the beatings and the suplexes begin tonight in Chicago. The Beast of Battleground is waiting for the champ tonight, so Rollins better be ready.

Kane is in Hawaii and we have badly photoshopped and unfunny photos to prove it.

The Stooges have taken a road trip and we're going to get pictures later. That....could work?

Big Show vs. Ryback

Non-title and Miz is at ringside in director's chair with a microphone. In an inset interview, Ryback says he is one of the few who can manhandle Big Show and Big Show doesn't like that. Well not many people would but Ryback never was very insightful. Miz starts shouting into the mic but only tells the big guys to hit each other.

The fans really don't seem pleased with this one and Show chops Ryback in the corner. Miz: "ONE MORE TIME! ONE MORE TIME!" Ryback kicks him in the face a few times but Show knees Ryback into the corner. This is a very slow and lumbering match so far which isn't a great choice for the opening match. Miz distracts Ryback so Show can slam him down as we take a break.

Back with Show holding a leg lock and Miz telling Show that he should never retire (WOO!). Ryback powers out and takes out the knee as well before dropping Show with three straight shoulders. The Meat Hook and a splash get two but the top rope version misses. Show hits a chokeslam and middle rope elbow, drawing in Miz for the double DQ (he was smart enough to hit them both at once) at 9:24.

**Rating:** D-. I have tried and tried to defend this three way feud but my goodness Big Show is dragging it down. Ryback is trying to become a more interesting character but there's only so much you can do with Big Show as the power moves against him look cool, but once you've seen them a few times (over the last fifteen years or so) they lose a lot of their impact. Let him do comedy again or something, because Show as the big, strong monster is WAY past its expiration date.

Miz attacks both guys and then begs both guys to wait for Battleground. Ignore the large gap behind him where he could run at any time of course. Miz takes a Shell Shock and chokeslam and another Meat Hook drops Show again. At least the champ stood tall.

More Kane hysterics.

The Stooges went to Wrigley Field and weren't impressed. They could at least take the price sticker off the window. That car better bite the dust before the end of the night.



## Brie Bella vs. Paige

Paige gets backdropped to the apron to start and the announcers are already on the amount of days Nikki has held the title. So we're just stuck with nothing interesting until we get to AJ because Nikki is interesting or something. Nikki: "BRIE MODE!" You can hear the crowd dying for this one, which could be because this story hasn't changed in weeks now. Fox gets in a cheap shot but Brie knees down her sister/friend at the same time by mistake. Paige sidesteps the middle rope dropkick ala Samoa Joe but the other girls get involved, setting up the Bella Buster for the pin at 3:12.

**Rating:** D. This story needs to go somewhere already, and by somewhere I don't mean having Naomi and Tamina come in to help Paige. This story has been set up for something major and the same Divas being rotated in one more time certainly isn't it. The Bellas are long past interesting at this point and while Nikki is better than she was, this story needs a rest but we're pretty much confirmed for the next few months because AJ MUST DIE or something.

Paige gets beaten up post match.

Recap of Wyatt vs. Reigns from last week.

## Sheamus vs. Roman Reigns

Get your countouts ready now. Reigns shoves the briefcase out of Sheamus' hands before we start and the brawl is on with a devastating headlock. Sheamus knees him in the ribs to take over but Reigns pulls him off the middle rope and knocks Sheamus outside. They're still firmly in first power gear at this point.

Sheamus actually wins a slugout on the apron and sends Reigns face first into the post as we go to a break. That looked (and sounded) good at least. Back with Sheamus holding a chinlock and a nice loud CM PUNK chant keeping the crowd from being bored. Reigns' best way around this is a bunch of clotheslines, followed by a BIG clothesline in the corner. Feel the intensity!

The Irish Curse is countered and a Samoan drop connects. The Superman Punch is countered into another Irish Curse for two but Reigns Superman Punches him out of the air...and here's Bray. Roman charges up the ramp and Superman Punches...somebody, as Bray pops up on the screen and says anyone but you. Sheamus wins by countout at 11:20.

**Rating:** C. Decent enough power brawl here but like I said, it was no secret that we were going to get a countout or some kind of wonky finish. It wasn't anything of note, but there's only so much you can do with power brawls, especially when we just had one about forty minutes ago. WWE REALLY needs to work on alternating their styles because you keep getting the same styles of matches over and over and they get old fast.

Post match Randy Orton comes out for an RKO. I had been wondering where he was.

The WWE Network is in Italy. Uh...yay.

Rollins comes in to see HHH, who wants to know what Seth is going to do about Brock Lesnar. The champ thinks he has Battleground in the bag, but HHH is worried about tonight. Rollins needs to do the unthinkable tonight: have him laid out by the Authority like they did two weeks ago. To be fair, that is pretty unthinkable. Imagine the Stooges and Rollins being a real threat to Brock.

Here are Rusev and Summer Rae to keep this mess going. Rusev loves having a submissive Summer around but gets annoyed at the fans wanting Lana. He rambles on about being better than Dolph Ziggler until Summer tells the fans to give Rusev the respect he deserves. Rusev: "Thank you hot Summer." Is she a radio chick now?

Cue Ziggler and Lana with the former saying Rusev achieved everything he has in WWE because of Lana. Dolph says Lana is his now and it's time for kisses. The girls tease a fight but Rusev blasts Ziggler with the crutch before taking off the boot. This goes on for nearly five minutes with the only highlight being Summer attacking Lana. Ziggler's comeback didn't work and the beating just kept going.

This was WAY too long and my goodness Ziggler sucks in this role. After

all the years of being with whatever girl can get him somewhere he's all gaga over yet another good looking blonde because...she likes him? Is there any other reason for these two to be together? Rusev needs to murder Ziggler and then do something bad to Lana and then never speak of this whole mess again.

Post break they actually do the big serious talk about Ziggler being attacked. Ziggler even did a stretcher job. This story SUCKS and there is no need to ever talk about it again. Figure out how your characters work and then don't screw with them because going against established characters is one of the worst things you can do in wrestling or any other form of entertainment.

### Bo Dallas vs. Dean Ambrose

Before the match, Dallas talks about how that was a bad thing happening to a bad person. Good things happen to people like him though, as long as you BOLLIEVE! The dueling WE BOLLIEVE/LET'S GO AMBROSE chants start up as Bo gets two off a clothesline before hitting the chinlock. Bo misses a knee drop and gets bulldogged down, setting up Dirty Deeds for the pin at 2:59. This was WWE saying "yeah Ambrose is still a thing after losing Thursday. Oh you didn't know he lost Thursday? Well then never mind."

The Stooges got stuck in traffic. Seriously.

### R-Truth vs. King Barrett

No entrance for either guy as this feud just keeps going. Barrett stomps him down in the corner to start and a clothesline takes them out to the floor. Truth is sent into the post a few times and we hit the chinlock. A big boot gets two for Barrett and we take a break. Oh freaking joy we get to see more of this match. Barrett hammers away but runs into a series of clotheslines (WAY too popular tonight and in general). Winds of Change is countered into a crucifix for two but a low blow drops Truth. Truth goes up and dives into the Bull Hammer for the pin at 9:37.

**Rating:** D. So? Barrett has knocked Truth out a few times already, so what difference does it make if he does it again? Why should this horribly uninteresting feud that has made Barrett look even less important than he

was when he was Intercontinental Champion? Barrett could be doing ANYTHING else and it would be better but we're stuck with this. The match was boring too, just like everything else they've done.

Back from a break with another look at Zigler being beaten down. This is treated as way too big of a deal after the mess they've made of this feud.

Here's Rollins with an ax handle and the Stooges with their car and their own ax handles. Oh come on man. No one could possibly be that stupid. Rollins is going to burn Suplex City to the ground before going on about how awesome he is a bit longer. He finally asks if Lesnar is just Heyman's....uh....I think you can figure this out, so here's Brock. All three are ready for him so Brock thinks better of it and tells Heyman to bring him something. Heyman brings over an anvil case containing a pair of axes. Oh this is going to be good.

Brock smashes the ax into the car door and can't even get it out, so he breaks a few windows and tears off a door. The door goes flying into the crowd (apparently hitting a fan, who was ok) and now it's time for the Stooges to come save their car. Noble winds up with a broken arm and Mercury gets suplexed onto the hood, much to the delight of the crowd. Brock chases Rollins out of the ring and holds up the title to wrap things up.

THIS is what Brock should have been doing for the last six months. Just have him break stuff and be a freak of nature. Don't have him get beaten down by Kane and the Stooges like EVERY OTHER FACE EVER. That was the problem with the HHH feud: anyone could have played Lesnar's role. Here, there isn't anyone else that Rollins hasn't already beaten or has any real reason to be afraid of anymore so only Brock really fits.

### Lucha Dragons vs. New Day

Woods is the odd man out here and the Players are on commentary, with a shirt for Cole. The Dragons speed things up to start but Kofi comes back with a kick to the ribs (devastating!) before it's off to Big E. Titus goes on about some kind of fungus that Big E. has (maybe he could use a washcloth to clean it up. It didn't make sense when they said it for

weeks on end (and yes I know what it is) so why not say it again here?) before the Dragons clean house and dive on all three New Day guys as we take a break.

Back with Kofi getting two on Kalisto before it's off to Big E. for more clubbing forearms. The abdominal stretch with the slaps set up a chinlock from Kofi as we hear about where everyone went to college. The hot tag brings in Cara and Titus takes over on commentary, doing a pretty awesome old school play by play, including a quick rant about how he should have JBL's salary. Everything breaks down and the Midnight Hour ends Cara at 10:16.

**Rating:** C. This was fine and a nice way to set up the title match at Battleground. Neither of these teams are exactly lighting the world on fire at the moment but it's nice to see something other than the team fighting over and over again. Titus continues to be WAY more charismatic than half the roster and deserves the success he's having.

Steve Austin is on the cover of WWE2K16.

It's Open Challenge time but first we get a package on Owens losing the NXT Title in Tokyo over the weekend. Cena says have no fear because the champ is here, meaning there will be a title match right here on Raw. Again Owens interrupts and says this is the worst part of the show every week because the people have to listen to Cena saying the same garbage over and over again. The bell is about to ring but here's Cesaro one more time. Cesaro says he deserves another shot because he had Cena ready to tap out but Owens cost him the title shot. Owens walks away from the threat of violence and it's time for a rematch.

US Title: Cesaro vs. John Cena

Cena is defending of course. A quick uppercut puts Cena down on the floor and we take a very early break. Stop doing that nonsense and just have the bell after the break. We got maybe 40 seconds of "action" and then miss three and a half minutes. I hate that way of thinking. Back with Cesaro stomping away as he almost has to play the heel here, even though he's turned face for all intents and purposes.

A one arm delayed vertical suplex with a squat gets two but Cena shrugs it off (because it's a suplex) and drops Cesaro with a front face electric chair drop. The AA is countered into a DDT for two and it's off to the chinlock. That's good for a second commercial in about five minutes of actual match time because they're really trying to fill in time. Back with Cesaro catching Cena's shoulder in a backbreaker and countering the Shuffle with a crossface.

That's countered into an AA attempt but Cena has to settle for the STF instead. A rope is grabbed so Cesaro rolls some gutwrench suplexes for two of his own. That was a cool looking spot, as always. Cena blocks the Swing by doing a big situp into a DDT for two of his own and the fans are starting to buy into this. Cena rolls through a cross body into the AA but Cesaro lands on his feet.

Swiss Death is countered into a hurricanrana for two and both guys are down. The fans officially think this is awesome so they've won over one of the tougher crowd. Cesaro makes it even more awesome with a spinning springboard uppercut for an even closer two. They fall to the floor with Cena backdropping him into the timekeeper's area but the referee takes his time counting. Well to be fair that's not really a main event level finish so you can't go there again.

Cena shoves Cesaro off the top for two off the Fameasser and then tells him to hold the ropes, which Cesaro does to counter another AA. A HUGE Swiss Death connects for two more but a quick AA gets the same. Both guys are spent so Cesaro is able to grab the Swing, setting up the Sharpshooter which he transitions into another crossface, but Cena slips out and puts on the STF.

Cesaro powers out of THAT and lifts Cena up into the air for a snap suplex. That is just scary, scary power. The Springboard Stunner misses so badly that Cesaro just Neutralizes Cena for two instead of going down. Cena's tornado DDT is stopped in midair and Cesaro slaps him down into another crossface, sending Cena into the ropes for a chorus of boos.

The apron superplex (with EASE) gets two but Cena pops back up and floats over into a Batista Bomb (the sign of Cena being desperate) for a sloppy

two, as called out by the announcers. Cena takes him to the corner but almost gets caught in a super Neutralizer, only to be countered into a super AA to retain the title at a mind blowing 30:10.

**Rating:** A-. Yo Vince, I think the guy can connect to the fans. Cesaro is basically where Dolph Ziggler was a few years ago: having really entertaining matches but never being able to show what else he can do because he's never given the chance. Cesaro is one of the rare cases where he nails every single thing he's asked to do and almost everyone is begging for him to move up to the next level, but something about a superhuman freak with a good look who can speak five languages fluently and has nearly fifteen years experience doesn't click with Vince and for some reason the guy never gets the push he deserves.

At least there was this though, which is somehow better than last week's near classic. Cena and Cesaro are guys with incredible chemistry and yet another example of someone going out there and having maybe the match of their lives against Cena. I'm hoping that when Cena retires, people look back at him in awe because this is a once in a generation kind of talent and we take him for granted.

Owens runs in and eats an AA to close the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. It took a lot to bail this show out but thankfully the main event is awesome and eats up well over half an hour to close things out. Other than that and the awesome BROCK SMASH segment, there really wasn't much to see here. The wrestling in the first hour was horribly lame and the Rusev vs. Ziggler stuff has to end with Ziggler getting eaten like a Russian stew or the whole thing is an even bigger disaster than I was expecting. The main event leaves this on a very positive note, but there's a lot for it to overcome here.

### Results

Big Show vs. Ryback went to a double DQ when Miz interfered

Brie Bella b. Paige – Bella Buster

Sheamus b. Roman Reigns via countout

Dean Ambrose b. Bo Dallas – Dirty Deeds

John Cena b. Cesaro – Middle rope Attitude Adjustment

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