

# New Column: We Get It Already

Looking at why Sasha vs. Charlotte is a horrible way to book a feud and why the blue women are that much better.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-we-get-it-already/>

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## Smackdown – November 29, 2016: Going Home With A Smile

### Smackdown

Date: November 29, 2016

Location: Colonial Life Arena, Columbia, South Carolina

Commentators: Tom Phillips, David Otunga, Mauro Ranallo, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's the go home show for Tables, Ladders and Chairs 2016 and Smackdown has managed to put together a pretty decent build in such a small time frame. Tonight we've got Dean Ambrose hosting the Ambrose Asylum with James Ellsworth as his guest, meaning AJ Styles is bound to get involved. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

There are tables, ladders and chairs all over the arena.

Renee Young is in the ring for a contract signing for the Women's Title match. Alexa Bliss and Becky Lynch come out with Alexa telling Renee to get out of here because they need someone with better fashion sense. They recap the feud with Becky saying Bliss has the mentality of a four year old. The champ signs but Alexa keeps talking about Becky's accent and how

this isn't the Disney Channel where you get further by being nice. Becky rips into her for not accomplishing anything in her time here other than having a loser mentality. Alexa signs as well and the fight is on with Becky actually being knocked through the table.

#### Dolph Ziggler/Kalisto vs. Baron Corbin/The Miz

Corbin knocks Ziggler down to start and we take a break less than thirty seconds in. Back with Corbin whipping Dolph hard into the corner and doing that slide underneath the bottom rope to keep Dolph in trouble. It's off to Miz, who pulls out a ladder to lean up against the steps. Ziggler gets in the running DDT on the floor, followed by a superkick to Miz.

The hot tag brings in Kalisto for his usual, including the hurricanrana driver for two on Miz. A big suicide dive sends Miz into the announcers' table. Everyone is staggered and Maryse shoves the ladder onto Ziggler. Back in and the Salida Del Sol looks to finish, only to have Corbin use a chair for the DQ at 7:31.

**Rating:** B-. For a match this short, they packed in a lot of action into the time. Kalisto could be an interesting guy if they would stop cutting his legs out from underneath him. The same is true with Corbin, who certainly has the look but I'm not sure if he has enough in ring skills yet to hang at this level.

American Alpha isn't scared of the Wyatts and are ready to levitate the Wyatts with suplexes.

The Wyatts are ready for American Alpha and don't like their positivity. Orton gives Luke Harper a pep talk for his match with Kane but Harper doesn't seem to trust Randy.

Carmella comes out for her match but first of all she has a message for John Cena. She promises to hit Nikki with a chair so hard that the real Bella Twins pop out of her back. Nikki charges to the ring and the brawl is on, meaning no match. Carmella is easily cleaned out.

We recap last week's ladder match with Ellsworth earning his contract and

a shot at Styles' World Title.

It's time for the Ambrose Asylum, complete with a single piece of carpet in the middle of the ring. Ambrose gets right to it by bringing out Ellsworth as the first guest. Dean asks how old James' boots are before letting James celebrate his win a little bit. Ellsworth offers to do anything Dean needs so Ambrose gives him money to pick up a six pack after the show. As far as James' future, he'd rather face AJ for the title after beating him three times in a row. Ambrose: "He's drunk with power ladies and gentlemen."

Cue AJ to stand on the announcers' table and make puppet jokes about Ellsworth. Dean: "So what you're saying is you lost to a dummy three times?" AJ gets in the ring and promises to get rid of Dean before dealing with the new superstar, as long as James shows up on Sunday. The brawl is on with AJ shoving both guys through the furniture. Ellsworth is hung upside down for a chair shot to the back, followed by a Styles Clash onto the steps. That should get rid of him for awhile but odds are he'll be at the pay per view.

Post break, Ellsworth is taken out on a stretcher.

#### Kane vs. Luke Harper

Harper's headlock doesn't get him anywhere as Kane comes back with his own power offense. A big boot and clothesline puts Harper on the floor and we take a break. Back with Harper kicking him in the knee and head, only to get caught with the running DDT. Harper hammers away in the corner but gets powerbombed out for two more. The swinging Boss Man Slam gives Luke two of his own and a superkick drops Kane again. Back up and Harper misses the discus lariat, setting up the chokeslam to give Kane the pin at 11:05.

**Rating:** B-. What is with the good matches on here tonight? These two beat the heck out of each other in the only kind of match they should have had. Kane has taken a backseat since the Draft but he's still fine for something like this. You can tell they're doing something with Harper so maybe he'll wind up getting a push out of the thing.

We recap the contract signing.

Becky has a sore back but doesn't care what kind of match she has with Alexa. Again, and I can't emphasize this enough: they've taken a simple idea and ran with the thing, which can often make for something very entertaining.

#### Bray Wyatt/Randy Orton vs. American Alpha

The winners get the title shot on Sunday. Orton and Jordan get things going with Jason snapping off some armdrags and working an armbar. It's off to Wyatt who throws Jordan throat first into the ropes to take over. The beatdown begins with Orton draping him over the top rope and grabbing a chinlock.

Jordan fights up and makes the tag off to Gable, who cleans house for a bit until being sent hard to the floor as we take a break. Back with Gable getting DDT'ed onto the apron for two as the beating continues. Bray hits the release Rock Bottom and Orton's awesome looking superplex has both guys down.

Unfortunately it's actually enough for the hot tag to Jordan as everything breaks down. The suplexes begin on Bray but the lights go out, revealing Harper at ringside. Gable breaks up Sister Abigail but an RK0 breaks up the Grand Amplitude. Jordan's spear hits the post and Sister Abigail sends the Wyatts to the title match at 15:29.

**Rating:** B. Heck of a match here with the right team going over. Bray almost has to win a title soon and they even protected Alpha in the loss. There's something so cool about watching Jordan fighting for all he's worth as he does the big comeback as well as almost anyone in the company right now. This was better than I was expecting and I had a good time with it.

Slater and Rhyno are ready for the challenge when Styles comes up to say no one cares about the Tag Team Titles. Ambrose runs in and beats AJ up to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** A. Now THIS is how you go into a pay per view. Smackdown

had a battle plan tonight and executed it to near perfection. I'm pretty sure every match on Sunday got some focus here and the wrestling was even good on top of that. You really can tell that there's a lot of effort put into the planning of these shows and they know exactly what they want to do on almost any given week. This was one of the better go home shows I've seen in a very long time and it was everything they needed to do and more.

### Results

Dolph Ziggler/Kalisto b. The Miz/Baron Corbin via DQ when Corbin used a chair

Kane b. Luke Harper – Chokeslam

Randy Orton/Bray Wyatt b. American Alpha – Sister Abigail to Jordan

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# Smackdown – November 22,

# 2016: I Thought Raw Was The Red Show

## Smackdown

Date: November 22, 2016

Location: Canadian Tire Centre, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, John Bradshaw Layfield, David Otunga, Tom Phillips

It's two days after Survivor Series and less than two weeks to Tables, Ladders and Chairs, meaning it's time to make up a card. Thankfully Smackdown is ready for that and has already announced a tag team turmoil match to determine who will challenge Rhyno and Heath Slater. Let's get to it.

We open with a quick recap of Smackdown winning the men's tag match.

Here's a banged up Shane McMahon to open things up. After a YOU STILL GOT IT chant, Shane praises Team Raw for bringing it as hard as they did. That being said, he's not happy with AJ Styles and Dean Ambrose, who couldn't keep it together for a single night. Shane is as close to serious as he can get but Dean keeps chuckling and brings out James Ellsworth, who took out Braun Strowman.

Apparently there's a surprise for Ellsworth but Dean jumps the gun by saying James is getting a contract. So he was working freelance until then? And he had a World Title shot? Didn't Shane learn anything from the Monday Night Wars? Dean has been given the night off and Shane wants him out of the building.

This brings out AJ Styles, who wants Dean's title shot revoked. After that goes nowhere, AJ goes to Ellsworth, who is being handed his contract. Since TLC is in two weeks, AJ needs a warmup. How about we put that contract above the ring and have a ladder match? Ellsworth actually agrees but if he wins, he wants a future title shot.

Daniel Bryan interrupts Miz and Maryse's photo shoot and Miz is ready for

Mizgiving. That's not what Daniel has in mind though as he's going to give Miz an Intercontinental Title defense against Kalisto, who was screwed out of the Cruiserweight Title on Sunday.

After a break, Shane makes sure Dean leaves the arena.

#### Intercontinental Title: Kalisto vs. Miz

Miz is defending. Kalisto goes behind to start and backflips under a clothesline. A suicide dive sends Miz down to the floor and us to a break. Back with Kalisto still in control and hitting his springboard corkscrew crossbody for two. A slingshot sitout powerbomb is countered into a hurricanrana for two more on the champ as Miz is reeling so far. Cue Baron Corbin for a distraction though and a Skull Crushing Finale retains the title at 7:15. Not enough to rate but Miz was getting squashed until the ending.

Corbin lays Kalisto out and Dolph Ziggler superkicks Miz to make up for last week. Good grief can we PLEASE go somewhere with Corbin vs. Kalisto but more importantly, MOVE ON FROM MIZ VS. ZIGGLER???

Alexa Bliss comes in to see the bosses but Bryan bails to go deal with what happened. Becky Lynch walks in ("I knocked.") and says the rematch is at TLC. Cue Natalya with the whistle and talks her way into a match with Becky. Natalya leaves so here's Dean with a pizza, much to Shane's annoyance. Becky: "I'll see you later...after I take out a PIZZA Nattie's arm!"

Video on the Wrestlemania ticket sale party.

Bryan gives Corbin a match with Kane.

#### Tag Team Turmoil

This is a gauntlet match with the last team standing getting the Tag Team Title shot at TLC. Ascension and the Hype Bros start things off with the Bros getting jumped from behind and beaten down on the floor. Things settle down with Ryder getting beaten down and chopped a lot. A double neckbreaker gets Ryder out of trouble though and it's a Hype Ryder for the first pin.

Breezango is in next and we take a quick break. Back with Breezango in control and avoiding a Broski Boot. A slingshot elbow puts Ryder away and it's American Alpha in fourth. Fandango is right on top of Gable as he comes in and Chad is in early trouble. That goes nowhere as Gable rolls Breeze up for a quick elimination. It's the Vaudevillains in at #5 and they're out in less than thirty seconds off a German suplex. That leaves the Usos vs. Alpha for the title shot but the twins aren't thrilled with getting in immediately.

We take an early break and come back with Jordan in trouble. A belly to back suplex gives Jey two and we hit the chinlock for a bit, only to have Jason pop up and make the hot tag. Gable comes in and cleans house with a snap German suplex getting two on Jey. With Jordan still down, Chad gets caught in a backbreaker/top rope knee combo for a near fall. Jason makes a blind tag and the Steiner Bulldog gets two with Jimmy making a save. Jey scores with a superkick but the Superfly Splash hits knees, setting up a small package for two. Grand Amplitude ends Jey at 21:02.

**Rating:** B-. The first half of this wasn't much to see but Alpha and the Usos tore the house down. It's a good idea to give Alpha the title shot as you can only keep them away from the belts for so long. They're just so far ahead of almost everyone else and only the Usos can really keep up with them. Check out the final fall but the rest is pretty skippable.

The Wyatts pop up on screen to say they're the final team but won't face Alpha until next week.

Ellsworth knows he's in over his head but wants to fight anyway because any man with two feet can climb a ladder. This brings in Ambrose....who is dressed as a Mountie (not THE Mountie of course). Shane comes back in and freaks out, telling Ambrose to leave again. Dean: "Don't you want to know why I'm dressed as a Mountie?" Shane leaves before he does something he'll regret. Bryan actually asks why he's dressed like that, which Dean says is because he always gets his man. JBL: "A lunatic Rougeau Brother?"

### Becky Lynch vs. Natalya

Alexa is on commentary. They hit the mat to start with Natalya getting the better of it as we take an early break. Back with Natalya in control



with an abdominal stretch. It's almost time for the Sharpshooter but Becky reverses into the Disarm-Her for the tap out at 7:12. Again not enough to rate but it did its job just fine.

Bliss jumps Becky post match.

The Hype Bros still merchandise.

Miz wants Dolph Ziggler to be suspended but gets a title match against Ziggler at TLC in a ladder match. This is their LAST match.

Nikki Bella accuses Carmella of attacking her at Survivor Series. Carmella suggests that it was Charlotte or Dana Brooke. See, Nikki has made a lot of enemies because she's not exactly Mother Theresa. There's going to be an anything goes match at TLC.

#### Kane vs. Baron Corbin

The masked one goes after him to start but walks into one heck of a right hand to stagger him into the corner. Corbin does his slide underneath the ropes but here's Kalisto to go after Baron for the DQ at 1:05.

Kane chokeslams Corbin for good measure. Kalisto grabs a chair but Corbin bails before anything can happen. For some reason Corbin charges back in and takes a Van Daminator.

#### AJ Styles vs. James Ellsworth

Non-title ladder match and if AJ wins, Ellsworth is gone for good. If Ellsworth wins, he gets the contract and a future title shot. What Ellsworth, in a neck brace, doesn't get is an entrance though as AJ comes out after a break. Ellsworth is knocked out to the floor and a kick to the face makes it even worse.

A backbreaker further damages James' bad back and AJ puts the ladder on top of him. As AJ goes up for the climb, here's Ambrose in a hockey jersey and helmet to take AJ down. The Phenomenal Forearm drops Dean but Ellsworth shoves the ladder over, sending Styles down to the floor. No Chin Music knocks AJ into the ropes and his boot is tied up in the ropes, allowing Jams to get the contract at 6:00.

**Rating:** D. This was about the story instead of the match but I'm getting tired of seeing AJ lose to Ellsworth. I know there's interference and it doesn't really matter but this is the third time we've done this same story and this time the big final shot was Ellsworth on his own. Not a good match of course but this was more of an angle than a match.

JBL does a trademark freak out to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. I really wasn't feeling this one as it felt like an episode of Raw. The matches were mostly short and featured a ton of interference, though they did set up a bunch of stuff for the pay per view. The good thing is they had most of their stuff set up in advance so this wasn't the hardest card to throw together. Not a bad show but it didn't have the Smackdown feel.

### Results

Miz b. Kalisto – Skull Crushing Finale

American Alpha won Tag Team Turmoil – Grand Amplitude to Jey

Becky Lynch b. Natalya – Disarm-Her

Baron Corbin b. Kane via DQ when Kalisto interfered

James Ellsworth b. AJ Styles – Ellsworth pulled down the contract

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# Survivor Series 2016: There Are No Words

## Survivor Series 2016

Date: November 20, 2016

Location: Air Canada Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

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

For the first time ever, Survivor Series is a four hour show with a two hour pre-show. Now some might think this is too...oh wait I'm not a real fan if I complain about shows being too long unless it's Raw when it's unquestionably too long. Pay per views can be as long as they want you see. Tonight is all about Raw vs. Smackdown and Brock Lesnar vs. Goldberg so let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Ariya Daivari/Drew Gulak/Tony Nese vs. TJ Perkins/Rich Swann/Noam Dar

Swann gets out of a suplex to start and dropkicks Nese in the jaw before handing it off to TJ. More flipping ensues and we can hear Renee Young talking to her producer and saying "nine minutes". The kneebar has Gulak in trouble but everything breaks down to send us to a break.

Back with Dar getting crotched on the middle rope and superkicked for two. A delayed vertical suplex gets two for Nese and it's back to Gulak for a leg lock. Some kicks finally get Dar out of trouble and it's off to Swann for the house cleaning. We hit the dives on the bad guys and it's Swann's standing 450 for the pin on Daivari at 11:50, or 8:57 after Renee said "nine minutes".

**Rating:** C. Standard six man tag though the pace seemed a bit faster here. Maybe giving them their own show is the solution because they still feel out of place on the main roster. They're more than talented enough but

the lack of charisma and personalities are killing them. Someone like Gulak or Nese for instance are great examples of this as there's no reason to care about anything they're doing and it shows more every week they're out there. Not a bad match but it was in one ear and out the other.

#### Pre-Show: Kane vs. Luke Harper

Feeling out process to start with both guys going after the arm. That's not the most interesting thing in the world though so it's Kane being sent outside for the suicide dive. Back in and a Falcon's Arrow gets two for Harper as we take a break. We come back with Kane in a chinlock until a belly to back suplex drops Luke on his head. As JBL makes a Walking Dead reference, Kane walks into a superkick for two. A big boot to the shoulder and the running DDT give Kane his own near fall. Harper comes back with the discus lariat but Kane grabs the chokeslam for the pin at 10:08.

**Rating:** C-. This was every match you've ever seen these two have, meaning it wasn't half bad. Harper has been a little overshadowed so it's nice to see him have a match on his own for a change. Kane winning is fine, albeit a bit unnecessary as he just pops in and out of Smackdown at will.

The opening video is pretty standard and focuses on the three elimination tags plus Goldberg vs. Lesnar.

#### Survivor Series Women's Tag Team Match: Team Raw vs. Team Smackdown

Raw: Bayley, Alicia Fox, Nia Jax, Charlotte, Sasha Banks

Smackdown: Nikki Bella, Natalya, Carmella, Naomi, Becky Lynch

Actually hang on a sec as there's no Nikki. We cut to the back where someone has attacked Nikki, meaning Natalya will be taking her place. Alicia and Carmella start things off but it's quickly off to Bayley vs. Becky. Unfortunately that doesn't get to happen as Charlotte tags herself in, leading to a big ten woman staredown with Nia breaking everything up on her own.

It settles down to Becky trying the Disarm-Her on Charlotte but Nia comes

in and runs through the Smackdown women one by one. Some double teaming finally puts her back on the apron and it's Alicia hitting an ax kick to eliminate Carmella at 6:26. Bliss pulls Alicia right back down though and Twisted Bliss ties us up at 6:47.

Everything breaks down and Naomi dives onto Jax, who sends Naomi head first into the post. That's enough for a countout at 8:46 and it's 4-3 Raw. Alexa takes Sasha into the wrong corner but Banks comes right back with the double knees without missing a beat. Alexa saves Natalya from the Bank Statement and it's a rollup from Natalya to get rid of Sasha at 10:26.

Charlotte takes Natalya down but the moonsault is countered into a sitout powerbomb. The Sharpshooter doesn't last long as Charlotte makes the ropes, allowing her to kick Natalya in the face for the elimination. So it's Becky/Alexa vs. Nia/Bayley/Charlotte but the Smackdown women get in an argument. Nia suplexes them both at the same time before falling to a horribly botched double DDT. The Disarm-Her (looks really bad as Becky can't lock it in) makes Nia tap at 13:26, leaving the match at 2-2.

Actually never mind as Charlotte boots Alexa in the face for the pin at 14:15. Becky is in trouble but comes back with clotheslines and forearms, followed by the Bex Plex. It's off to Bayley who takes a Bex Plex of her own but blocks the Disarm-Her. A quick Bayley to Belly gives Bayley the surprise winning pin at 17:49.

**Rating:** C. This was pretty sloppy and the eliminations felt like an excuse to get us to the final few people, which makes sense as they're the most interesting but it also shows the problems with this kind of match. Bayley getting the pin was a good choice though I'm not sure why they got Sasha out of there so fast. All that being said: this was so far ahead of what these matches used to be that it might as well have been a different sport entirely. Things are trending in the right way and that's a good thing.

Charlotte destroys Bayley post match to set up the next title feud.

Anderson and Gallows pick on James Ellsworth until Mick Foley comes in for the save. After talking about how much he loved seeing Foley get

beaten up as a kid, Ellsworth turns down an offer to come to Raw. Braun Strowman comes up and scares Ellsworth away.

#### Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Sami Zayn

Sami is challenging and the title can change brands. The Canadian fans are way behind Sami as he starts fast with a leg lariat and sends Miz to the floor for a breather. That's fine with Sami who moonsaults off the barricade to drop the champ again. The standard Miz distraction lets Miz take over on the leg with some kicks and a swing into the post.

Sami comes right back with a flip dive and the Michinoku Driver for two but Miz starts doing Daniel Bryan stuff again and takes over. That just means a Blue Thunder Bomb to give Sami two but the Helluva Kick only hits the buckle. The Figure Four goes on until Sami turns it over for the counter.

Miz starts in with the YES Kicks but gets pulled down into a Figure Four (which takes a bit as Sami doesn't seem to know how to do it) and the bell rings....as rung by Maryse. The distraction lets Miz grab a rollup (and tights according to Cole, even though his hand isn't grabbing anything) to retain at 14:09.

**Rating:** C+. Not the best here as the ending felt like they needed a way out and didn't want either guy to do a job. I'm really not sure what they're waiting on with Sami as he's more than over enough and ready to do something but he keeps going from one story to another (like Strowman, who didn't even have a match against Sami) without really getting anywhere.

Dean Ambrose and AJ Styles argue over what's going to happen at TLC when Shane McMahon comes in and tells them to cool it.

#### Survivor Series Tag Team Elimination Match: Team Raw vs. Team Smackdown

Raw: Enzo Amore and Big Cass, New Day, Anderson and Gallows, Shining Stars,

Smackdown: Heath Slater/Rhyno, Breezango, Usos, American Alpha, Hype Bros

When one member is eliminated, their partner is as well. Fandango and Big E. get things going but Fandango would rather give away fashion tickets. The Midnight Hour takes care of Breezango at 46 seconds but Jimmy superkicks Kofi to tie it up at 1:13. Well that's certainly a surprise. Ryder, with the old Survivor Series logo on his trunks, flapjacks Primo before it's off to Mojo (Graves: "Smackdown's resident blithering idiot.") for his bell clap in the corner. Ryder comes back in and has to deal with Anderson and Gallows, meaning it's a Magic Killer for the pin at 5:14.

We get the big moment of the match as American Alpha comes in for multiple double dropkicks but Sheamus starts stomping Gable down in the corner. The Shining Stars actually beat on Gable for a bit until the hot tag brings Jordan back in for the house cleaning. It's actually a Steiner Bulldog to get rid of the Shining Stars and tie things up.

Everything breaks down and it's Enzo being launched onto the pile. Slater hits a dive of his own, leaving Jordan to get caught in the Swing. Another Magic Killer eliminates American Alpha at 10:46 and we're down to 3-2. Slater has to fight off Anderson and Gallows but some Raw miscommunication allows a tag off to Rhyno. The Gore gets rid of Anderson and Gallows at 12:26 but the Bada Boom Shaka Lacka takes out Rhyno and Slater at 13:00.

The Usos remember they're in the match and superkick Enzo into the Superfly Splash for the elimination at 13:30, leaving us with the Usos vs. Sheamus/Cesaro. Sheamus eats a superkick but Cesaro shoves him out of the way of the second, meaning it's a Brogue Kick for two on Jimmy with Jey making the save. Cesaro comes in with the Uppercut Train followed by a 619. The high crossbody gets two on Jey and there's the Swing to make it even worse. Jimmy superkicks the knee out to set up the Tequila Sunrise but Cesaro reverses into a Sharpshooter for the tap out at 18:56 as Sheamus cuts Jey off.

**Rating:** D+. Yeah ok we get it: Cesaro and Sheamus are a thing and we'll like them already. This was REALLY disappointing as they flew through the eliminations for reasons I don't even want to try to comprehend. But hey, they got the match in and out of there as fast as they could and that's

what matters right? That's why we added an hour: so the matches that could be interesting could be short with two eliminations in less than eighty seconds.

So in theory the final Survivor Series match, which now means even less as Raw has secured the brand supremacy thing (assuming they're not counting the stupid singles matches), is going to run about forty five minutes.

Stephanie McMahon and Foley give Cesaro and Sheamus a Tag Team Title match tomorrow night on Raw.

We recap the Cruiserweight Title match, which is another non-existent feud because there's no story here. Kendrick has the title and Kalisto's job is to bring it to Smackdown.

#### Cruiserweight Title: Kalisto vs. Brian Kendrick

Kendrick is defending and Kalisto snaps off some hurricanranas to start. A running corner dropkick has Brian in trouble so he grabs the ropes to avoid getting pinned. That would be his craftiness you see and that makes him an interesting villain. Or so I'm told. Kendrick grabs a long cravate until Kalisto gets him to the apron for a Spanish Fly to the floor.

Back in and Kendrick gets flipped off the top but still grabs the Captain's Hook. The rope is finally grabbed and Kalisto starts snapping off the kicks, followed by a middle rope seated senton to the back. The Salida Del Sol gets two as Kendrick puts a boot on the rope. Kalisto heads up top...and here's Baron Corbin to hit Kendrick for the DQ at 12:19. Therefore, Raw is now 3-1, making the last Survivor Series match even less important.

**Rating:** C. I was digging this one until the end and it's amazing how much more interesting this is when you have a high flier that we've actually gotten to know a bit over the years instead of someone who was brought in without much backstory. Oh and another reason why the division hasn't worked so far: the champ's finisher is a chinlock.

Corbin gives Kalisto the End of Days.



Pre-Show recap.

### Team Raw Men vs. Team Smackdown Men

Raw: Kevin Owens, Chris Jericho, Roman Reigns, Seth Rollins, Braun Strowman

Smackdown: Shane McMahon, Bray Wyatt, Randy Orton, Dean Ambrose, AJ Styles

Ellsworth is here as Smackdown's mascot. AJ and Owens get things going to really make the smarks happy. Neither can get anywhere so the fans start a STUPID IDIOT chant (Owens: "That's you!"). The fans get the tag to Jericho, who stops to hug Owens. Chris leaves so it's off to Rollins vs. Ambrose with neither being able to hit a finisher. Jericho comes back in and hits an enziguri for two on Dean.

Shane gets the tag and does his weird punching before elbowing Jericho in the jaw with the fans telling him he still has it. The boss gets beaten down as the announcers argue over which show had higher ratings. Not THE MATCH IN FRONT OF THEM, but the TV ratings. Roman comes in for the corner clotheslines but it's back to Ambrose vs. Owens. The Pop Up Powerbomb doesn't work and we get the big showdown instead, leaving Owens to do the BIG flip dive onto everyone else.

A bunch of people go after Braun, leaving the Shield and AJ in the ring. The Smackdown guys clear the ring but get in a brawl until Shane breaks it up. A kick to Dean's head allows Strowman to powerslam Ambrose for the elimination at 15:59. Strowman shrugs off the Smackdown attack again, including a SCARY looking toss to send AJ over the top and out to the floor.

We get the Bray vs. Braun showdown with Strowman dropkicking Bray down in a not horrible visual. Orton finally gets in the RKO onto the announcers' table and Shane adds the top rope elbow for the huge crash. AJ gets Shane back inside and Strowman is counted out at 21:12 because Ellsworth grabbed his foot. James bails up the ramp but gets caught (How can you not outrun BRAUN STROWMAN?) and thrown off the stage.

Shane is still in the ring to take another beating and the Lionsault connects, only to have Shane reverse into a small package for two. McMahon and Orton both take Codebreakers and of course Shane kicks out. Question for discussion: would any other member of Team Smackdown be allowed to kick out of a Lionsault and Codebreaker in the span of thirty seconds? Naturally Shane gets in a shot on Jericho and makes the tag off to AJ. They trade submission attempts and AJ decks Owens, who comes in with the List of Jericho for the DQ at 29:28. Jericho is distraught and gets RK0'd for the pin at 30:21.

We're down to Shane/Orton/Bray/AJ vs. Reigns/Rollins. It's Seth going in first and the numbers game has him in early trouble. A superplex gets two on Seth but Orton is banged up enough to allow a tag off to Reigns. The sitout powerbomb gets two on AJ but he blocks the Superman Punch and brings in Shane. A DDT puts Reigns down and something like a spinebuster does the same to Seth.

The spear goes into the post and Shane loads up the Coast to Coast, which is speared out of the air....for two. He's officially announced as eliminated a few seconds later, presumably due to injury. Shane looks really messed up and it wouldn't surprise me if that wasn't exactly how it was supposed to go. There's a good chance that he didn't mean to kick out but had no idea where he was.

Rollins gets the hot tag to clean house and hits his rolling superplex into the Falcon's Arrow for two on AJ. Reigns has to save Seth from the Elevated DDT on the floor but AJ breaks up a DoubleBomb. Cue Ambrose to go after AJ though and we get the Shield Reunion for a TripleBomb through the table. Seth pins AJ at 46:11 and it's down to two vs. two.

Orton and Wyatt circle the ring until Luke Harper shows up for a distraction. As usual, NONE OF THIS IS A DQ because that's not what the script calls for. Rollins Sling Blades Wyatt and dives onto Harper to keep up the house cleaning. The superkick looks to set up the frog splash but Orton pulls him out of the air with an RK0 for the elimination at 49:32.

So it's Orton/Wyatt vs. Reigns with Roman starting fast to do what he

can. Reigns is sent into the barricade but scores with the apron dropkick on Bray. Harper gets a spear and the Superman Punch drops Bray. Orton shoves Bray out of the way of the spear though and Sister Abigail finishes Reigns at 52:57. JBL: "RAW WINS! RAW WINS!" Otunga: "Smackdown got one!" JBL: "RAW WINS IS WHAT EVERYONE WANTED TO SAY BUT SMACKDOWN LIVE WINS!"

**Rating:** A-. This was a lot messier than it could have been but they did exactly what they needed to do here by eating up A LOT of time (longest Survivor Series match on record and longer than multiple Royal Rumbles) and being very entertaining at the same time. Bray winning is a very, very good idea as it's now the biggest win of his career and hopefully (emphasis on that word) he can build on it. Orton taking the bullet was interesting though and that's going to mean something going forward. I had a blast with this and it's the big Survivor Series match I was hoping for, issues with eliminations aside.

We get the same Goldberg vs. Lesnar recap we've gotten for weeks now.

#### Goldberg vs. Brock Lesnar

Lesnar drives him into the corner to start but Goldberg hits two spears in the first minute. The Jackhammer beats Lesnar in ONE MINUTE THIRTY SEVEN SECONDS!!!

SCREW YOU DEAN AMBROSE, RANDY ORTON, AND ANYONE ELSE THAT LESNAR HAS KILLED BECAUSE GOLDBERG JUST BEAT HIM IN A MINUTE AND A HALF!!!

The show goes off the air before 10:30 with nothing else happening.

**Overall Rating:** C-. The show ended about five minutes ago and I'm still in shock. HOW IN THE FREAKING WORLD DOES THIS HELP ANYONE OTHER THAN GOLDBERG, WHO ISN'T EVEN STICKING AROUND??? Have Orton, Reigns, Wyatt, freaking Strowman or ANYONE else do that match. You have Orton get squashed at Summerslam and Ambrose get squashed at Wrestlemania but GOLDBERG gets to do this?

So in theory, this has something to do with Goldberg coming into the show injured. If that's the case, they knew this was going to be a short

match. But they can't even give the other two Survivor Series matches twenty minutes? This is what you extended the show for another hour? Or you can't give anything else extra time?

I know I'm rambling here but this is one of the most astounding things I've ever seen. The money in Lesnar is gone for a long time, everything Lesnar has done in recent months and years feels like a total waste and Goldberg is probably gone until his Hall of Fame induction. Throw Luke Harper out there or Kane or ANYONE BUT LESNAR and it's fine. Unless there was a major contractual issue or something big backstage, I cannot understand why this happened.

The rest of the show was up and down with the great long match helping to save it but that main event is all anyone is going to be talking about for a long time. I really could have gone for the two earlier Survivor Series matches getting more time, especially in light of what's going on here. This is going to get a lot more talk in the upcoming days because I haven't been this shocked since.....probably Shane on Nitro.

## Results

Team Raw Women b. Team Smackdown Women – Bayley to Belly to Lynch

The Miz b. Sami Zayn – Rollup

Team Raw Tag Teams b. Team Smackdown Tag Teams – Sharpshooter to Jimmy Uso

Brian Kendrick b. Kalisto via DQ when Baron Corbin interfered

Team Smackdown Men b. Team Raw Men – Sister Abigail to Reigns

Goldberg b. Brock Lesnar – Jackhammer

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## Survivor Series 2016 Preview

For only the second time in history, WWE has a pay per view series reach thirty entries as we arrive at Survivor Series 2016. In what is the most important thing a Survivor Series can do, there's actually something on the line here, albeit just bragging rights, as Smackdown faces off with Raw in a series of three elimination tag matches. It's only a six match card (for now) so it should be interesting to see what they're doing with the show. Let's get to it.

We'll start with the ladies in the first Team Raw vs. Team Smackdown match. This looks almost completely one sided on paper as Smackdown has Becky Lynch and Nikki Bella, who are nowhere near enough to counter the combined forces of Sasha Banks, Charlotte, Bayley and Nia Jax. However, never underestimate the power of WWE pushing Bella to the moon and back, meaning she has a good chance of overcoming the odds. She's fearless you know.

That being said, I really can't imagine Raw has much to worry about here. No matter how you look at it, there's just too much talent on the red show, even if they have all their in fighting. This should be a glorified layup as Carmella and Alexa Bliss are such liabilities for the Smackdown team that there's almost no way around their limitations. I'll go with Raw winning here in what shouldn't be much of a challenge for them.

On a side note since I don't have much material to talk about here with such a short card, is anyone else completely uninterested in seeing Bella vs. Charlotte treated as a huge showdown? We saw it last year and it was

nothing special but now that Charlotte has become possibly the most successful women's wrestler ever and Bella was on the shelf for months, we're supposed to care? That doesn't make sense, though again, never underestimate the powers of a reality "star" in WWE.

Next up we have a title match as Cruiserweight Champion Brian Kendrick defends against Smackdown's Kalisto. This is a little bigger than your usual title match though as the winning brand gets the entire cruiserweight division. There isn't much to the feud as Kalisto was just named #1 contender a few weeks back on Smackdown.

I'm really hoping logic takes control here because there's not much of a reason to keep the title and the division as a whole over on Raw. Tuesday night has a little more open space and is better suited for an action based division than Raw, which is almost entirely storyline driven. Couple that with the upcoming 205 Live, which is being taped after Smackdown instead of Raw and there's really no reason for Kendrick to walk out with the title. If nothing else, maybe Kalisto can breathe some life into the title instead of being another mat based cruiserweight.

We'll go back to the elimination tags as we have the tag team version, featuring a staggering twenty wrestlers in one match. This kind of match hasn't been done at this level since 1988 and the previous incarnations were borderline classics and among the best Survivor Series matches of all time. I'm not sure the talent is there to pull that off this time but at least there's a great chance for some exciting action.

Picking an accurate winner here is a lot more complicated though as neither team really stands out. Raw probably has the better lineup from top to bottom but Smackdown has American Alpha and better continuity. Unfortunately Raw has to deal with the Shining Stars and the issues between Cesaro and Sheamus. On the other hand, Heath Slater and Rhyno are playing WAY over their heads at the moment and I don't think they're going to be able to make that last against the Raw teams.

In a pick I'm not entirely confident in, I'm going to pick Smackdown to win here, if nothing else so there can be something on the line in the third match. Neither team looks great but I could certainly go for

Cesaro/Sheamus vs. American Alpha with the technique vs. clubbing power formula. This should be a lot of fun if they do it right though and that's what matters in a match like this.

We'll go back to the title matches now with Miz defending the Intercontinental Title against Smackdown's Sami Zayn in another match where the title can switch brands. Miz won the belt back from Dolph Ziggler earlier this week and Ziggler not being on the card seems like a red flag.

At the end of the day though, I can't imagine Raw losing two titles and not having a midcard title to fall back on whatsoever. As much as I'd love to see Sami get a title, this doesn't really seem like the time to pull the trigger. Miz is a great Intercontinental Champion and can pick right back up where he left off after that pesky Ziggler run.

That leaves us with one Survivor Series match to go and this one is the biggest tossup of them all. I really don't know which one to pick as you would think Smackdown would be at a disadvantage with Shane McMahon on the team but he went thirty minutes with the Undertaker at Wrestlemania. The rest of the lineups pretty much cancel each other out though and that's rather influential in a match like this.

I'll go with Smackdown as WWE has a long history of putting the blue show over when the two of them go head to head. There's nothing on the line here so it's not like this is going to mean much either way, but the bragging rights are always worth a chuckle at worst. If nothing else we don't have to listen to Matt Striker shouting "IN YOUR FACE! IN YOUR FACE! IN YOUR FACE!" when someone wins.

That leaves us with the main event, which is only somewhat interesting but is the focal point of the show. Twelve and a half years ago, Goldberg and Brock Lesnar had one of the worst major matches in wrestling history and for some reason we're supposed to forget all that and just enjoy them fighting again. It's also Goldberg's first match since that night and I'm not sure how bad this could really get.

Obviously I'll go with Lesnar, but neither guy is really a good option here. You don't have Lesnar set up as this unstoppable monster and then

have him lose but at the same time, Lesnar beating Goldberg means as much as Hulk Hogan beating the Ultimate Warrior in 1998. Lesnar wins here after Goldberg doesn't do much besides throw spears. At least there should be some energy here and Goldberg will have a better chance than Dean Ambrose had.

Overall, Survivor Series has a lot of potential but it could be good or bad. If they let these matches have a lot of time (which they should given the four hour run time) and only add one more at most, they could have the time to build into something entertaining. Unfortunately they could also build into a disaster with the fans getting bored and matches that aren't the most interesting. I've been excited for this since it was announced though and I'm going to try to keep that optimism.

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## **Smackdown – November 9, 2016: What's Scottish for Average?**

I apologize for the delay but my internet was out for a few hours during the middle of the show.



## Smackdown

Date: November 8, 2016

Location: SSE Hydro, Glasgow, Scotland

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, David Otunga, John Bradshaw Layfield, Tom Phillips

It's another night in the same building as Smackdown is in Scotland. Tonight actually has a major match announced as Becky Lynch will be defending the Women's Title against Alexa Bliss in a match that was scheduled for No Mercy but was postponed due to an injury. Other than that we're likely going to see more announced for Survivor Series. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's AJ Styles to open things up. AJ isn't in a good mood tonight and doesn't want to hear the booing or see the tweets. He wants to talk about last week's travesty, which saw that mutant turtle James Ellsworth cost him a match against Dean Ambrose. If Ambrose wanted to be champion again so badly, he never would have lost his title in the first place. That brings AJ to Survivor Series, where he doesn't need Dean's help to win.

AJ wants to bring the Survivor Series team down but Baron Corbin interrupts. Baron says he'll deliver, but not to AJ's team. Cue the Wyatts, which now includes Randy Orton. Before anything can happen, here's Dean to bring out James Ellsworth (JBL: "HOW DID YOU GET THAT THING THROUGH CUSTOMS???"), who AJ wants thrown in Loch Ness. Styles suggests that Dean and Ellsworth are outnumbered but Corbin walks out.

Cue Shane (who I wasn't sure was still alive) to talk to team blue. He wants to see the best in the world beat Raw and thinks it's going to be a clean sweep. Ellsworth has an idea: he can be the official mascot! Shane agrees and a six man tag is made for later tonight with the Wyatts vs. Ambrose/Corbin/Ellsworth.

Survivor Series Qualifying Match: Breezango vs. Vaudevillains

Breezango are dressed as cops for no apparent reason. Gotch immediately gives Breeze a Regal Roll and the Swanton gives English two. Everything

breaks down and Fandango gives English a falcon's arrow for the pin at 1:23. That was quick.

### Natalya vs. Naomi

Coach Natalya now has a whistle. Nikki Bella is on commentary and Naomi is very yellow. Natalya takes her down to start before walking into a sitout jawbreaker. There's a double crossbody to put both women down but cue Carmella to talk some trash. Natalya busts out her whistle to try and restore order but it just lets Nikki forearm Carmella. The distraction lets Naomi grab a small package for the pin at 2:02.

Corbin has walked out of the six man tag (assuming he was ever officially announced in the first place as it wasn't clear) but will face Kalisto tonight.

Ellsworth gets on Dean's nerves until Daniel Bryan comes up. Daniel has a replacement partner for them and it's....Kane. Ellsworth: "So...what's the strategy tonight?" Kane: "Don't. Tag. In."

### Baron Corbin vs. Kalisto

We actually get a flashback to their feud from three months ago that never went anywhere. Corbin jumps him before the bell and lays Kalisto out. Kalisto is sent outside but Baron slips off the apron and messes up his knee. With Corbin begging off, Kalisto dropkicks the bad knee into the steps. Corbin is in agony as referees come out to check on him. Kalisto even adds a frog splash to the bad leg. No match.

Video on Alexa Bliss vs. Becky Lynch.

Baron Corbin is officially off the Smackdown team due to the knee injury.

So at this point in the show my cable went out and didn't come back on until right before the end of Crews vs. Hawkins. I saw the rest later but there was a big gap in the middle.

### Women's Title: Alexa Bliss vs. Becky Lynch

Becky is defending and this is billed as the main event, halfway through

the show. A lockup goes nowhere to start and the Disarm-Her sends Alexa bailing to the ropes. They trade some rollups for two each before a dropkick sends Alexa into the corner. That goes badly for the champ though as she misses a charge into the post and it's off to the armbar. More armbarring is countered into a sitout powerbomb to put both women down as we take a break.

Back with Becky starting a comeback and getting two off a Bex Plex. Bliss avoids a guillotine legdrop though and hits a backflip into double knees to the ribs. The champ pops back up and crotches Alexa on top, only to get shoved right back down. They trade rollups but the Disarm-Her goes on to make Bliss tap at 14:50....with Alexa's foot on the ropes.

**Rating:** C+. This was more long than good but it also keeps them set up for another title match down the line. Becky is a good option as the first champion and they made Alexa feel like a bigger deal as she won a lot of matches coming up to this title shot. The match itself was just kind of there though with the basic arm work but the big fight feel helped a lot.

Bryan promises Shane to have a replacement chosen tonight. Miz and Maryse come in to set up some exposition. In exchange for Sami Zayn getting an Intercontinental Title shot, Brian Kendrick will be defending the Cruiserweight Title against Kalisto, and if he wins the cruiserweights come to Smackdown. As a bonus, Miz gets an Intercontinental Title shot next week.

#### Curt Hawkins vs. Apollo Crews

Hawkins starts fast with a jumping knee to the face and we're in the chinlock about forty seconds into the match. Crews throws him down again though and goes up top, only to miss a high crossbody. An Oklahoma roll gives Hawkins the pin at 1:50.

Dolph Ziggler can't wait to defend the Intercontinental Title against the Miz next week on the way to facing Sami Zayn at Survivor Series.

#### Wyatt Family vs. James Ellsworth/Kane/Dean Ambrose

AJ is on commentary, giving us a FIVE PERSON BOOTH. My goodness people, think this nonsense through. Kane and Harper do the big power showdown to start with a backdrop sending Harper flying. It's off to Dean vs. Bray with the latter running him over with a shoulder. Orton comes in and runs Dean over before stomping on the fingers. A side slam from Kane has Orton in trouble and the fans want Ellsworth.

That just earns James a throat slit, followed by Orton breaking up a chokeslam attempt on Luke. We hit the stomping for a bit before Bray nails the backplash for two. The stomping continues and we take a break. Back with the Ellsworth chants continuing, only to have Harper cut them off by dropkicking Kane. Orton grabs a headlock followed by a dropkick but Harper gets DDT'd.

The hot tag brings in Ambrose to clothesline Wyatt, only to have the top rope elbow knocked out of the air. Sister Abigail is broken countered into a rollup for two and there go Kane and Harper to the back. A double clothesline puts both guys down so Ellsworth tags himself in. No Chin Music is loaded up (JBL: "Shawn Michaels is rolling over in his grave and he's not even dead!") but Bray easily reverses into Sister Abigail for the pin at 12:55.

**Rating:** C-. The ending helped this a lot as there was no reason for it to be anything other than Ellsworth getting run over. It's similar to the old Dungeon of Doom matches where the opponents had to keep the Giant out of the ring because he was going to destroy anyone who got in the ring with him. This was all that made sense and that's fine for what they had here.

The Wyatts swarm Ellsworth but Shane runs out for the save. Before anything else can happen, Daniel comes out and says he can name anyone he wants to the Survivor Series team. Therefore, he picks.....Shane. Well of course he does because Heaven forbid a McMahon isn't involved so we can have it be about the wrestlers. This is nothing more than a way to have Shane vs. Stephanie, which is what this whole mess is all about in the first place. This actually ticks me off and that doesn't happen often on Smackdown.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This was fine, albeit a little forgettable. The bigger matches worked fine but I can't get over Shane getting the final spot on the team. Unless that gets changed, that's one heck of a stupid way to go for the sake of a surprise or whatever they're going for. I'm sick of the McMahons and all of the forced drama, but they're the stars of the show and that's all that matters.

### Results

Breezango b. Vaudevillains – Falcon's arrow to English

Naomi b. Natalya – Small package

Becky Lynch b. Alexa Bliss – Disarm-Her

Curt Hawkins b. Apollo Crews – Oklahoma roll

Wyatt Family b. James Ellsworth/Kane/Dean Ambrose – Sister Abigail to Ellsworth

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# Smackdown – November 1, 2016: It's Not Like They Had Another Choice

## Smackdown

Date: November 1, 2016

Location: Prudential Center, Newark, New Jersey

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, John Bradshaw Layfield, David Otunga

Survivor Series is coming up soon and Raw has announced a lot of the participants on its teams for the promotion vs. promotion matches. As luck would have it, tonight we'll be getting most of the announcements for the Smackdown counterparts with the help of General Manager Daniel Bryan. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's James Ellsworth to tell us goodbye. He hasn't been able to eat and sleep since he cost Dean Ambrose that match last week. Dean comes out and calls Ellsworth his pal, whose head he's been thinking about ripping off. James begs for a chance to apologize and mentions beating AJ twice but Dean just tells him to stay out of his way from now on.

Cue AJ to say he was going to take it easy on Ellsworth but Dean kept convincing him to do more. Dean says Ellsworth doesn't take the cheap way out like AJ, which means Ellsworth has to break up a fight. AJ shoves Ellsworth into Dean and kicks Ambrose in the head. The Phenomenal Forearm leaves Dean laying.

We look back at Randy Orton seemingly joining the Wyatt Family last week.

Ellsworth is near tears trying to apologize to Dean. Bryan says Dean gets AJ again tonight and if he wins, he's the new #1 contender but it's his last chance no matter what. On top of that, Ellsworth is banned from ringside.

Randy Orton vs. Kane

No DQ. Orton is in his regular gear but doesn't do his pose. Randy takes it start to the floor and has a chair less than fifteen seconds in. Kane takes it away and hits Orton in the ribs and back. It's almost time for a chokeslam but here are the Wyatts for a distraction. The RK0 doesn't work and Kane boots Orton down. Bray and Luke pull Kane to the floor but he knocks the slightly smaller monsters away. Now the RK0 connects and puts Kane away at 2:08.

Post match Harper gives Kane the discus lariat and Orton shoves Kane into Sister Abigail. Now Orton does the signature pose.

Baron Corbin vignette.

### Becky Lynch/Nikki Bella vs. Alexa Bliss/Carmella

Nikki seems to have dyed her hair black. Carmella hides from Nikki to start so it's off to Alexa, who is quickly shoved down. Stereo baseball slides have the good ones in control as we take a break. Back with Bliss getting caught in a reverse DDT but Carmella distracts the referee. A quick rake of the eyes and a DDT gives Bliss the pin on Lynch at 5:54.

Post match Carmella and Alexa brag about how awesome they're going to be in the Survivor Series match. Oh and Alexa is going to win the title next week in Glasgow. Bliss has those evil eyes that get you to notice her and it makes her seem so much better as a villain.

Bryan and Shame put Naomi on the Survivor Series team, which is officially comprised of her and the four in the tag match. Naomi leaves and Natalya comes in to say she would be a perfect leader so Bryan makes her the coach.

### Survivor Series Qualifying Match: Spirit Squad vs. American Alpha

Gable gets slammed down to start and Mikey gets two off a moonsault. We hit a chinlock before a double headbutt puts both guys down. Kenny misses the guillotine legdrop and it's off to Jordan to clean house until he misses the shoulder in the corner. The blind tag brings Gable back in though and it's Grand Amplitude for the pin on Mikey at 2:03.

Video on Goldberg's appearance last night (with the slip edited out of

course).

It's time for MizTV with special guest Daniel Bryan. Daniel gets straight to the point and announces the Survivor Series team: Randy Orton, Bray Wyatt, Baron Corbin, Dean Ambrose and AJ Styles. Miz isn't pleased and asks if he was even considered. Bryan says no, but eventually changes gears and says Miz was considered until Daniel realized Miz didn't want to fight.

If he did, he would have taken up Dolph Ziggler's challenge for an Intercontinental Title shot. Miz rants against Bryan for not wanting to fight. That's enough for Daniel who turns the set over and says Miz should stick to talking while Ziggler has an open challenge for the title right now.

#### Intercontinental Title: Dolph Ziggler vs. ???

It's Curt Hawkins answering the challenge and he gets the city wrong on the way to the ring. Bell, superkick, Ziggler retains in seven seconds.

Ziggler issues an open challenge for any wrestler on Raw to come get a title shot, presumably for Survivor Series. Miz freaks out.

The new interviewer asks Ambrose if he's confident now that James Ellis is banned from ringside. Dean corrects her but has to talk to Ellsworth. James begs to be at ringside but Dean says no way because he's done enough already.

Bray says someone like Orton is welcome in the Wyatt Family. Harper doesn't look pleased as Orton says he's done trying to fight the devil whispering in his ear. Orton's eyes light up in a bad looking effect.

#### Survivor Series Qualifying Match: Usos vs. Headbangers

Jimmy punches Thrasher in the face before the bell and of course the referee is fine with this. A Samoan drop gets two early on and we hit the choke. It's off to Mosh vs. Jey with a Downward Spiral planting Jey for two. Not that it matters as Jimmy rolls Mosh up and grabs the skirt for the pin at 1:25.



AJ isn't worried.

Dean has Ellsworth leave the arena.

### AJ Styles vs. Dean Ambrose

Non-title. If Dean wins, he's #1 contender for a match at some point in the future. Dean knocks him outside at the bell and sends AJ face first into the announcers' table. Back in and a small package gets two on AJ and it's off to a Texas Cloverleaf. A butterfly superplex gets two on AJ but he grabs the Calf Crusher to change momentum in a hurry.

That goes nowhere either so Dean takes him outside again for a crotching on the barricade. Back in and Dean misses a Blockbuster of all things, resulting in a bad knee. We come back from a break with Dean breaking up a springboard to knock AJ outside. The top rope elbow to the floor has Styles in more trouble but he suplexes Dean into the corner to get a breather. Both guys are down so here's Ellsworth at ringside.

The distraction lets AJ get in a Pele for two as Otunga wants James to take his chin and go home. Cue security to go chase Ellsworth through the crowd as the inverted DDT is countered into Dirty Deeds which is countered into the Calf Crusher. The rope is grabbed but here's Ellsworth AGAIN so AJ finally runs him over. The Phenomenal Forearm is countered into Dirty Deeds and Dean gets the pin and the title shot at 13:57.

**Rating:** B. Ellsworth aside, this was a fun match which set up the right ending while also giving us some amusing JBL ranting about Ellsworth being annoying. It wasn't the cleanest finish in the world either and none of this matters if AJ retains the title. Dean getting the belt back wouldn't be the worst thing in the world either and we probably get a big TV main event out of it sometime soon. Good match too.

Ellsworth is dragged away with a very satisfied look on his face. Dean hugs him before leaving.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This is a harder one to grade as there's only the main event to talk about. That being said, they covered a lot of stuff and added a lot of names to Survivor Series, which is something they have

to do with only a few weeks to go. I'm more interested in where things are going now and we have a new title match coming up in the near future. Good show here as they continue to get things done when they need to.

### Results

Randy Orton b. Kane – RK0

Alexa Bliss/Carmella b. Becky Lynch/Nikki Bella – DDT to Lynch

American Alpha b. Spirit Squad – Grand Amplitude to Mikey

Dolph Ziggler b. Curt Hawkins – Superkick

Usos b. Headbangers – Rollup with a handful of trunks

Dean Ambrose b. AJ Styles – Dirty Deeds

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## **Smackdown – October 25, 2016:**

# Just Like Rip and Randy

## Smackdown

Date: October 25, 2016

Location: Resch Center, Green Bay, Wisconsin

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, John Bradshaw Layfield, David Otunga

It's another big week as we have a pay per view rematch from Backlash with AJ Styles facing Dean Ambrose in a non-title match. If Ambrose wins, he gets a title shot at some point in the future. There's a good chance James Ellsworth will get involved to possibly wrap up his story. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week's AJ Styles vs. James Ellsworth title match with Ellsworth winning via DQ. After the match, Daniel Bryan made Styles vs. Dean Ambrose for this week.

Ambrose is in the back talking about his match with Styles. Ellsworth comes up and offers to help but Dean thinks it's better for him to stay in the back.

## Kane vs. Bray Wyatt

No DQ. They trade big uppercuts and clotheslines to start until Kane takes it outside and whips Bray into the steps. The chokeslam through the announcers' table is loaded up but Luke Harper appears and gives Kane the discus lariat. Back from a break with Kane fighting out of a chinlock (I thought these guys were different.) and stopping a charge with a big boot. Harper saves his boss from the chokeslam and Bray's release Rock Bottom gets two. Harper gets involved again so here's Randy Orton.....to RKO Kane and freak the heck out of Wyatt. Bray covers Kane for the pin at 10:37.

**Rating:** C-. This was much more of an angle than a match but again, the difference from Raw is this is interesting. I'm curious to see where this is going while most of the stuff on Monday comes and goes with little interest. My guess is Orton trying to get into Wyatt's head instead of a heel turn, which works for me as I've always liked Orton vs. Kane

matches.

Styles is ready to take care of Dean and warns Ellsworth to stay away. AJ also says Ellsworth looks like an action figure that melted in a microwave. That's about as accurate as you're going to get with him.

Becky Lynch makes her return from injury but is immediately cut off by Alexa Bliss. She accuses Becky of leaving out of fear of losing her precious title. The Cinderella story is ending soon and Bliss will get the title that she deserves. The fight is on but Bliss lays her out and grabs a conveniently placed can of spray paint. A yellow streak goes up the champ's back and Bliss smirks as she leaves.

### Survivor Series Qualifying Match: Ascension vs. Hype Bros

The winners are on the Survivor Series team along with Heath Slater and Rhyno, who were granted an automatic spot. Mojo, a former Green Bay Packer, is VERY popular here as he starts with Viktor. Ryder is quickly in for a dropkick to knock Konnor off the apron, only to have Ascension take over with some double teaming. Too much trash talking allows Ryder to get in a jawbreaker but a spinebuster stops a hot tag. A middle rope elbow misses though and the hot tag brings in Rawley for his corner splashes. Viktor misses a charge and the Hype Ryder sends the Bros to Survivor Series at 3:50.

**Rating:** C. Well were you really expecting anything else? Ascension might have won one tag match in a year (on Superstars in February over Fandango and Damien Sandow) so it's kind of hard to buy that they're going to win here, or anywhere for that matter. The Hype Bros are already more successful than I was expecting and that's cool to see.

Orton says if you can't beat them, join them.

Bryan is talking about the need for strong team captains when Natalya comes in. She's been thinking about the Raw women's team and thinks she should be captain. Daniel isn't sure but makes Natalya's match against Nikki Bella for the captain's spot. However, the loser is off the team entirely.

### Survivor Series Qualifying Match: Nikki Bella vs. Natalya

Nikki actually tries an Oklahoma roll to start but makes the mistake of going outside, allowing Nattie By Nature to get two. An abdominal stretch and some stomps to the ribs set up the Sharpshooter but Nikki dives over to the ropes. Natalya misses a legdrop and something like the Beautiful Disaster gets two. The surfboard goes on but Nikki powers out and grabs an STF (prepare to hear about her being a great submission wrestler) for the tap out at 6:07.

**Rating:** D+. I wasn't feeling this one but there's really no way around Nikki being the captain. Natalya is just there while Bella has been one of the top stars in the division for a long time now. The STF is a nice change of pace for Nikki and she even added a little twist by hooking the foot and chin at the same time.

Carmella attacks Nikki after the match and gives her a Bella Buster.

Ambrose is ready to win because karma is a bad thing.

Here are Miz, Maryse and the Spirit Squad to talk about the Intercontinental Title. Miz feels sorry for the legends that fought to make the Intercontinental Title so important. As Miz talks about Pat Patterson, here comes Dolph Ziggler to say he wants to fight. The Squad is ready so Heath Slater and Rhyno come out to even the odds. Maryse gets in the way and insults are exchanged. Miz suggests that the Spirit Squad get a Tag Team Title shot but thinks Heath is too scared. Rhyno accepts for the team and we're got a title match.

### Tag Team Titles: Spirit Squad vs. Heath Slater/Rhyno

Miz and Ziggler are on commentary. Slater and Rhyno are defending and this is joined in progress with Slater caught in a chinlock. The comeback is cut off and we hit another chinlock to keep the champs in trouble. Slater fights up and dives over for the tag as everything breaks down. The commentators get in the expected argument and it's Mikey being knocked off the apron onto Miz. A Gore to Kenny retains the titles at 4:03.

**Rating:** C-. This was fine and a basic tag match with Slater and Rhyno beating yet another team. I don't think anyone really considers them to be great champions but they could have been a joke and are turning into perfectly acceptable champions. Also, by having them win matches like this one, it's going to mean more when they lose the belts. It's putting in effort early for a later payoff, which is a lost art in wrestling.

Hell in a Cell preview.

Ambrose is on the way to the ring when he runs into Ellsworth. Dean: "Didn't I tell you to stay in the back and sulk?" James begs to be in Dean's corner and Ambrose eventually relents, much to the audience's delight.

### AJ Styles vs. Dean Ambrose

Non-title with Ellsworth in the corner and a win makes Dean #1 contender. Ambrose starts fast and stomps away in the corner but AJ comes right back with some shots of his own. With a look towards Ellsworth, AJ scores with the slingshot dive to take us to a break. Back with Dean hitting the suicide dive and grabbing a Fujiwara armbar of all things. AJ rolls out but gets caught in a Texas cloverleaf, sending him crawling over to the ropes. Back up and they fight over a suplex off the apron, only to have AJ suplex him out to the floor for a crash.

We come back from another break with Dean fighting up and hitting the top rope standing elbow drop. AJ's strike rush is countered into a swinging neckbreaker but he scores with the springboard into the reverse DDT. The Styles Clash is countered into a rollup for two and the rebound lariat drops both guys. AJ comes right back with the Calf Crusher but Dean grabs the champ's head and slams it into the mat for a break.

The hold goes on again but the power of Ellsworth makes Dean crawl to the ropes, just like Randy saved Rip in No Holds Barred. That's enough for AJ who takes James out with a baseball slide. The Pele looks to set up the Styles Clash but Dean backdrops AJ to the floor. Ellsworth superkicks Styles.....and that's a DQ at 19:57 with Dean nearly losing his mind.

**Rating:** B. Good match here and the ending makes sense. I'm not sure where

this leads and you have to imagine that Ambrose will get a title shot somehow down the road anyway. Above all else, Ambrose can only blame himself as he invited Ellsworth to come out to ringside. It's also a good way to protect both guys, which you also don't see enough.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This felt like another NXT show with Smackdown banners. The wrestling wasn't great at times but they advanced almost every story and treated them all like big deals. I'm curious to see where Orton and the Wyatts go, as well as finding out what's next for AJ and Dean. I don't get those feelings on Raw and that's a big reason why Smackdown is better.

### Results

Bray Wyatt b. Kane – Pin after an RKO from Randy Orton

Hype Bros b. Ascension – Hype Ryder to Viktor

Nikki Bella b. Natalya – STF

Heath Slater/Rhyno b. Spirit Squad – Gore to Kenny

AJ Styles b. Dean Ambrose via DQ when James Ellsworth interfered

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# No Mercy 2016 Preview

We're already at the second Smackdown only pay per view and the card is already stronger than the "Backlash 2016" offering. If nothing else they already have more matches set up for this show, meaning we probably won't have to sit through a ten minute opening segment and no team is going to have to work twice. Let's get to it.

## Pre-Show: Jack Swagger vs. Baron Corbin

We'll start with this rematch from earlier in the week on "Smackdown Live" where Swagger won via submission. However, it's not quite that simple as it sounds. In the first match, Corbin claimed to be reaching for the ropes instead of tapping out so there's a much more logical reason for a rematch. It's much better than having a rematch for the sake of having a rematch after one of the people wins completely clean.

I'm going with Corbin here as there's really no reason to have Swagger win. Swagger is on "Smackdown Live" to lose matches to upcoming names, as he's been stuck doing for years. Corbin is the kind of guy you could throw out there as a midcard title challenger at the drop of a hat so there's no reason to have him lose to someone like Swagger in a spot like this. Odds are there will be a third match but hopefully this wraps up their mini feud.

## Curt Hawkins vs. ???

This is the easiest call on the card as you don't bring in someone for the sake of having them lose. Hawkins has had some entertaining vignettes but I don't really see him doing much on the roster. There's nothing wrong with filling the show with warm bodies though and a quick run for Hawkins isn't the worst idea in the world. The opponent doesn't really matter here because he's going to lose to Hawkins in about five minutes.

## Tag Team Titles: Heath Slater/Rhyno vs. Usos

Here we have another case where there isn't a ton of suspense. Slater and Rhyno were never meant to be a long term solution at the top of the



division so we can get to the big Usos vs. American Alpha showdown for the belts. The thing to remember is that Slater has already gotten his contract and done his big story so they can switch the titles and everything will be fine.

In case it's not clear, I'm going with the Usos to win the belts. There's no logical reason to keep the belts on the makeshift team when Alpha is waiting in the wings after having beaten the Usos in such quick fashion in the tournament. Slater and Rhyno don't need to team together anymore after this as Rhyno can go off to be a politician while Slater can be a loveable goofball.

### **Nikki Bella vs. Carmella**

It's the first of two women's matches as we have an actual grudge match for a change. In this case, Carmella has been tormenting Bella since she returned from injury, even calling her a Kardashian wannabe, which somehow didn't seem to offend Bella in the slightest. This has been an actually well set up feud with Bella making Carmella look way better than she has any right to.

That being said, I think I'm going to go with Bella here as she hasn't had a big win since her comeback. I'm not sure you can call beating Carmella a big win but at least there's been a story to set this up. Carmella has already gotten a big boost from this feud and will be fine going forward. It would make more sense to have Carmella win here but I'll go with Bella, who just hasn't had enough publicity lately.

### **Women's Title: Becky Lynch vs. Alexa Bliss**

We might as well cover the other women's match here as Lynch is having her first title defense after winning the title last month. Bliss still isn't great but the Harley Quinn look has done wonders for her and she's gotten even better than she was at the start. Lynch is on a roll too and looks like the star of the division.

I'll stick with the champion keeping the title here though as Bliss just isn't ready to be the face of the division. It's pretty clear we're getting ready for a Lynch vs. Bella showdown over the belt and there's

just no reason to switch the belt in Lynch's first title defense. The match should be fine and they did a good job of setting things up on Tuesday so this should be entertaining, albeit a bit predictable.

### **Bray Wyatt vs. Randy Orton**

That leaves us with the big matches and we'll start with the non-title entry. This was supposed to happen last month but Orton was still out due to injury, leaving us with an uninspired yet necessary Kane vs. Wyatt match. Orton is healthy now and that means we have an interesting match to look forward to.

As much as it pains me, I'll go with Orton here, partially due to a lack of anyone else to go after the World Title after this show. With rumors of John Cena and Dean Ambrose taking time off, odds are AJ Styles retains the title (excuse me for jumping ahead of myself) and needs an opponent. There really isn't anyone left other than Orton, meaning he has to win here. I'm sure Wyatt will be fine as he loses so often that he has to be used to it by now. Even with the potential debut of Sister Abigail, Wyatt loses here and that's a shame in many ways.

### **Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Dolph Ziggler**

It's more than a title defense for Miz as Ziggler is putting up his career. I'm not going to waste your time with any sort of pretense here: I'm a big Miz fan and I wouldn't mind if Ziggler got lost at sea and turned into the king of a small island where he oversold poi burgers and coconut shakes. I'd love for Miz to win here and go on to a big story away from Ziggler and his "IT JUST MEANS SO MUCH TO ME AND I NEED TO WIN ONE MORE TIME" schtick which he's been stuck with for months now.

That being said, I think they'll actually do it here and have Ziggler lose in a big surprise. There's nothing left for Ziggler to do in WWE and I really wouldn't mind to see him leave for good. Miz has been on fire in the last few months and doesn't deserve to lose to someone as stale as Ziggler. The story has been told well but Ziggler sucks the life out of me and I have no interest in seeing him do anything at all.

### **World Title: AJ Styles vs. Dean Ambrose vs. John Cena**

Styles is defending and we've already covered the result earlier on. There's no logical reason to have Cena and/or Ambrose take the title from Styles here and if both of them are leaving for a bit, it would make even less sense. Styles has been the most consistent performer in WWE for a LONG time now and he deserves to keep the title for several months. There's not much more to this one as the ending is pretty clear and the best case scenario all around.

Overall "No Mercy 2016" is just there, though I have some optimism for the show. I'm not wild on the idea of having another pay per view this soon but at least the card looks solid. If nothing else they have eight matches this time around and "Smackdown Live" has shown the ability to set up an entertaining show. My guess is this will be a perfectly acceptable use of three hours (Repeat: THREE HOURS. Not three hours and another fifteen minutes. Three hours AT MOST.). The wrestling will be fine and they'll use the Smackdown style of setting up simple stories but paying them off well.

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# Smackdown – October 4, 2016: Where It Gets Real In A Hurry

## Smackdown

Date: October 4, 2016

Location: Valley View Casino Center, San Diego, California

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, John Bradshaw Layfield, David Otunga

It's the go home show for No Mercy because this is the new WWE where there's a go home show every two weeks. Tonight is going to focus on Dean Ambrose vs. John Cena vs. AJ Styles for Styles' Smackdown World Title in Sunday's triple threat. Other than that we're likely getting more in the Randy Orton vs. Bray Wyatt feud. Let's get to it.

The opening video promises Styles, Cena and Ambrose face to face to face tonight.

### Bray Wyatt vs. Kane

They take turns hitting each other in the face to start until Bray gets Kane down for a chinlock. A side slam and running DDT have Bray in trouble but the chokeslam is countered into a Rock Bottom. Bray does the spider walk but an upside down Randy Orton appears on the screen. This takes WAY longer than it should and the distraction lets Kane get up. Bray blocks a chokeslam but takes the countout loss at 4:15.

**Rating:** D. So let me get this straight: we're five days away from Wyatt's big match against Orton and Bray is taking a countout loss to Kane instead of, you know, squashing him like a bug? It's not a good sign when the best thing you can say about a match is Kane didn't win off the chokeslam.

Baron Corbin doesn't know why Jack Swagger was signed but if Jack wants to fight, Baron will drop him where he stands. Swagger comes up and a match is set up.

Post break, Bray is looking for Orton.

### Alexa Bliss vs. Nikki Bella

Carmella is on commentary as Nikki gets two off a facebuster that didn't come close to making contact. Nikki takes it outside and throws Bliss into Carmella, drawing her into the ring for the DQ at 1:52.

Post match here's Becky Lynch for the save and we might as well keep the referee out here for the obvious tag match.

### Becky Lynch/Nikki Bella vs. Carmella/Alexa Bliss

Joined in progress with Alexa hammering on Nikki before it's off to Carmella for some shots to the face of her own. Carmella misses a Bronco Buster though and the hot tag brings in Becky. Everything breaks down with Nikki spearing Carmella to the floor, leaving Alexa to hit Twisted Bliss for the pin on Becky at 3:14.

**Rating:** C. Basic, simple ideas to set up basic, simple matches. That's the kind of wrestling that's always going to work and you can tell they're putting WAY more thought into these things than the messes over on Raw. Becky getting pinned in a tag match is fine and gives Alexa credibility heading into Sunday. Nikki and Carmella's feud is advanced at the same time and everything is accomplished. When this stuff works, it works to near perfection.

Bray goes to look for Orton again and finds the rocking chair. Orton jumps him from behind and shuts a metal door, locking Bray in what looks like a small storage unit. Of course there's a camera inside with Bray freaking out over being locked inside.

Daniel Bryan brings out some breast cancer survivors for the Susan G. Komen presentation ala Enzo and Big Cass on Raw.

### Vaudevillains vs. Hype Bros

There's still something weird about JBL being a Mojo Rawley fan. Mojo slams Gotch to start and it's Hammer Time! Cue Ascension, now with face paint, to the stage for a distraction but Ryder dropkicks English off the apron anyway. Ryder gets kneed in the back but Gotch's chinlock goes as far as a chinlock is going to take him. The hot tag brings in Mojo a few

seconds later and a Hype Ryder ends English at 3:48.

**Rating:** C-. Not much to the match but just like the women's division and everything else around here: keep it simple but do it well. I know I harp on that a lot but Smackdown is so refreshing when you have so many wrestling shows all over the place that can't get the most basic storylines right.

The Ascension point at the Hype Bros.

It's time for MizTV with a special Dolphumentary. Ziggler comes out and the documentary is of course a career lowlight reel with stuff like Ziggler as Kerwin White's caddy and the Spirit Squad and various out of context statements from wrestlers. This Sunday, it's the feature film the Success of a Failure. Ziggler doesn't take kindly to this and says that he loves it when a Make-A-Wish kid says he's their hero but Ziggler gets to tell them that they're his hero. That's the kind of thing that makes Ziggler know he can't walk away.

Miz laughs this off and brings out two members of the Spirit Squad (Kenny and Mikey). We get a cheer with Miz saying Ziggler can join them at their \$5 autograph signing. Ziggler goes after Miz but gets jumped from behind. Dolph easily fights them off and Miz bails from the threat of a superkick. This feud is really, really growing on me despite it being Dolph Ziggler. They're nailing every single thing about this and I want to see the match, albeit with Miz winning to finally get rid of Ziggler.

Bray is still in the storage unit and says he finally sees it.

Hispanic Heritage Month video on Roberto Clemente.

### Jey Uso vs. Jason Jordan

Jey snaps Jordan's neck across the ropes to start and hammers away but a very quick rollup puts Uso away at 1:18.

The Usos send Gable into the steps and chop block Jordan for a bonus. Rhyno and Heath Slater come out to save Jordan's knee.

Bray is now singing but stops to say he missed Abigail. She's going to

take him home.

Back from a break and Orton opens the door, only to find an empty chair. There wasn't a lock on the door so this isn't exactly supernatural.

Clip of John Cena on Talking Smack last week, talking about how the Draft is a fresh opportunity for him as well. Cena's big line: "Dean Ambrose doesn't like John Cena. John Cena doesn't care about Dean Ambrose."

Curt Hawkins vignette. He's debuting at No Mercy.

### Jack Swagger vs. Baron Corbin

Corbin shoulder blocks him down to start and rains down right hands to the head, sending us to an early break. Back with Swagger favoring his knee and getting caught in a chinlock. Jack fights up and elbows Corbin in the face, followed by the Patriot Lock. Corbin dives for the ropes over and over, which the referee calls a tap out at 8:25. Replays show that Corbin was reaching for the ropes as his hand is up and it's his wrist hitting the mat when he can't reach the ropes.

**Rating:** C-. I'm not interested in the match but that's a clever way to keep the feud going as it was close enough that you could say it was a tap and call it a mistake. It's much better than having one guy win clean and then do a bunch of rematches just because. I don't really need to see them fight again but it's nice to have a feud continue logically instead of having it forced.

Here's AJ for the big closing segment. He talks about how he'll prove himself to be the best in the world on Sunday but Ambrose comes out to cut him off. Dean is serious this week and says he had the title won last week until Cena had to get involved. Cue Cena but AJ cuts him off and begs Cena to shut up for once in his life. AJ is incensed at the thought of Cena comparing himself to Flair (here we go) and begs Cena to give one of his rah-rah speeches.

Cena is ready to do just that when Ambrose cuts him off again, saying Cena is a part timer who is dying to get out of here on a private jet and go be with his people in New York. Dean is the man who works harder

around here and has wrestled more matches than anyone else in the company the last two years because he never takes days off. He'll be over here in the corner being Dean Ambrose while Cena gets to play John Cena on TV.

That's enough for Cena and the fight is on with Cena hitting an AA on Ambrose and throwing Styles outside. John holds up the title but AJ runs in and escapes an AA attempt. The Phenomenal Forearm drops Cena but Dean gives AJ Dirty Deeds onto the ramp and holds up the title to end the show. REALLY good stuff here with Dean standing up to Cena in a way no one has done since Rock. That's the kind of thing that makes him feel like a main event star, not wearing funny hats.

**Overall Rating:** B. The wrestling wasn't great here but that's not the point most of the time. The point here is a very well done structure as you move from story to start for most of the show with only Bray and Orton running throughout and never getting too much time at once. You can tell someone has actually put effort into setting this up and it makes the show fly by instead of making me wonder how we can only be an hour into it. No Mercy may not be the best show ever but it's been built up as well as it can be and that's what this show needed to do.

### Results

Kane b. Bray Wyatt via countout

Nikki Bella b. Alexa Bliss via DQ when Carmella interfered

Alexa Bliss/Carmella b. Nikki Bella/Becky Lynch – Twisted Bliss to Lynch

Hype Bros b. Vaudevillains – Hype Ryder to English

Jason Jordan b. Jey Uso – Rollup

Jack Swagger b. Baron Corbin – Patriot Lock

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