

Monday Night Raw – June 19, 2017: Hedunit, Lackeys as Bears and ROAR

Monday Night Raw

Date: June 19, 2017

Location: Ford Center, Evansville, Indiana

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Booker T.

As you might have heard before, tonight is all about Roman Reigns, who is going to be announcing what he wants to do at August's Summerslam. While this is likely wanting a World Title shot, I'd be stunned if it didn't actually end with Braun Strowman interrupting and getting the match with Reigns at Great Balls of Fire instead. Let's get to it.

Here's Roman Reigns to open things up. Roman says the fans won't like to hear this, but he can't be beaten one on one. Ask Bray Wyatt, Finn Balor, Seth Rollins and Braun Strowman. Oh and remember he main evented his third Wrestlemania in a row, where he retired the Undertaker. Reigns doesn't care who he faces but he's getting the Universal Title shot at Summerslam.

This brings out Samoa Joe to say he didn't hear his name mentioned on that list of people Reigns has beaten. Joe introduces himself but Reigns says he agrees with Paul Heyman: Joe will never be Samoa Joe, but rather Just Joe. As in the guy that Brooklyn Brawler beat clean once? The fight is on with Joe being Superman Punched to the floor. This was VERY heelish from Reigns, especially the main eventing Wrestlemania line.

Hardys vs. Anderson and Gallows

The brothers take turns on Gallows' arm and Poetry in Motion gets two. Jeff gets sent hard into the corner though and we take an early break. Back with Jeff getting kicked in the face and armbarrred. Jeff kicks Anderson away but Gallows is right there to break up the hot

tag attempt.

The hog tag works a few seconds later and it's Matt coming in to clean house. Everything breaks down with Anderson rolling Matt up for two. A right hand to Matt's jaw sets up the Boot of Doom for a close two, leaving Jeff to dropkick Anderson. The Twist of Fate into the Swanton gives Jeff the pin at 10:31.

Rating: C. I'm not sure how many more times these two teams plus Sheamus and Cesaro can trade wins but I have a feeling we'll be finding out for weeks to come. Hopefully the Revival gets into the title picture soon as they're easily the best tag team around today. The match was about as good as you would expect it to be from these guys but at least the fans care about the Hardys.

Goldust challenges R-Truth for next week.

Here's Elias Samson to tune his guitar but it's Finn Balor making a quick interruption for his match.

Finn Balor vs. Bo Dallas

Dallas jumps him before the bell and chokes away on the ropes, followed by a running knee to the head for two. Balor comes back with the Pele and a series of strikes, including the kick from the apron. Dallas is sent hard into the barricade a few times and it's the Sling Blade into the Coup de Grace for the pin at 3:40.

Rating: D+. Balor was showing some aggression there and it's always nice to see him get a win. That being said, it's not like he has anything going on at the moment because WWE is focusing on Samoa Joe at the moment while Seth Rollins and Bray Wyatt have Bray's latest lame feud. I'm sure they'll find something for Balor, but he's not getting the title back until after Wrestlemania, which makes a lot of the commentary about how he's almost there sound stupid.

Corey Graves has to run off and deal with something.

Video on Seth Rollins being the cover star for WWE2K18.

The announcers discuss Carmella winning the Money in the Bank briefcase with help from James Ellsworth.

Corey comes in to see Kurt Angle and says he knows he had a bad Father's Day. Angle looks taken aback but Graves says he got the same message. Enzo and Big Cass come in with Angle wanting to know why Enzo tweeted something to Conor McGregor. That goes nowhere so they talk about who has been attacking Enzo and Cass. It might have been Revival, Enzo himself or Big Show. Angle promises to find out who did it tonight.

Here's Seth Rollins to talk about being on the cover of the game. He brings up his heel turn from a few years back and everything it brought him. The problem was he couldn't look in the mirror. Now he's on the cover of the game and it's his second chance. This cover belongs to both himself and the fans because it's THEIR cover.

Cue Bray Wyatt to talk about how he feels the struggle in Seth's soul. Seth is still conforming to whatever the people want and he's just not that man. Rollins says he's THE man and lists off some accomplishments. Bray says he's here and blows out the lantern before coming out to the ring. Thankfully Seth is smart enough to dive on Bray as he walks very slowly to the ring.

Graves praises Angle's job as GM and stands by him during his personal issues.

Balor wants the Universal Title back and thinks Roman is tough enough to take down Joe tonight. Samson jumps Balor from behind and tells him to never upstage him again. D-Von Dudley (an agent if that wasn't clear) chases Samson off.

Akira Tozawa vs. TJP

Rematch from 205 Live. Hang on a second as Titus O'Neil comes out to say we need to really hype the match up, meaning he'll handle the introductions. TJP flips over Tozawa to start but gets rolled up for two. A top rope dive misses Tozawa again but the backsplash hits knees. Cue Neville to say neither of these two are the next Cruiserweight Champion as we take a break.

Back with TJP keeping Tozawa on the mat, followed by the springboard forearm into the nipup. We hit an arm trap chinlock before Tozawa

sends him to the floor for a suicide dive. Back in and TJP grabs a double chickenwing gutbuster but gets kicked in the face, setting up the top backplash for the pin at 10:39.

Rating: C+. Thanks for taking away my only reason for watching 205 Live people. I know the show doesn't mean anything but if I just have to wait six days before seeing the same match on Raw, I really don't need to watch the thing in the first place. At least Tozawa vs. Neville, which will likely happen on pay per view and not 205 Live, will be good.

Post match Titus talks about how awesome his Brand is and how Tozawa will be the next Cruiserweight Champion. Neville is tired of hearing about it so Tozawa needs to tread lightly.

R-Truth accepts Goldust's challenge.

Curtis Axel tries to cheer Bo up when Miz comes in to talk about how bad they've been lately. They were in the Marine 5 together and Miz made them stars. He can do it again here on Raw.

Samoa Joe thinks Reigns needs to learn his name because Joe beat him in his Raw debut.

Samoa Joe vs. Roman Reigns

They trade shoulders to start with no one going anywhere. Joe gets punched to the floor through and stays outside for a breather. Back in and Joe knocks him to the floor for a change, followed by a few headbutts with shouts of WHAT'S MY NAME. They head outside yet again with Reigns being sent into the post and barricade as we go to a break.

Back with Joe dropping an elbow and grabbing a chinlock. A backplash hits knees though (meaning ANOTHER crowd reaction shot, which have been on steroids tonight) and Reigns makes his comeback with the ten clotheslines in the corner. The Superman Punch is countered into an atomic drop into the boot, followed by a backplash for two. Joe gets back up and eats a Superman Punch for two more but still manages to block the spear.

There's the Rock Bottom for another near fall so Joe is tired of the

messing around. The Koquina Clutch has Reigns in trouble but he backs into the corner and hits the spear to send Joe outside. Roman loads up another spear but he's an ambulance backing into the building. Naturally Braun Strowman is inside for one heck of a face pop and the distraction lets Joe grab the Koquina Clutch for the tap at 18:37.

Rating: B. Good, solid heavyweight slugfest here and that's what the show needed. Strowman returning is a good idea, though that face pop is likely just going to annoy Vince even further and give Reigns more of a push. The match was fun and a good example of the right way to end a match. Reigns looks strong and gets his feud with Strowman advanced while Joe still gets the win.

Post match Strowman comes out and gives Reigns a reverse chokeslam. Fans: "ONE MORE TIME!" Strowman challenges Reigns to an ambulance match at Great Balls of Fire pay per view. As opposed to Great Balls of Fire: a Spike Lee Joint.

It's time for MizTV with Miz apologizing to Maryse. He has two bears and a big present for her, plus champagne. Maryse comes out with Miz guaranteeing her that he's checked the bears out and they're fine. The present is the restored grandfather clock, which he repaired in their garage when she made him sleep on the couch. Maryse seems to forgive him when Dean Ambrose comes out.

Miz hides behind her, sending the champagne onto Maryse's face. Dean keeps going by sending Miz into the clock to break it again. That's enough for Maryse who slaps Miz and storms off, only to have the bears attack Ambrose. Naturally they're Dallas and Axel and the beatdown is on with Miz helping out via a Skull Crushing Finale.

Sheamus/Cesaro vs. Apollo Crews/Titus O'Neil

Non-title. Crews dropkicks Cesaro down to start but eats a right hand for his efforts. Apollo takes a bit of a beating in the corner until an enziguri drops Cesaro. Titus comes in and clotheslines Sheamus in the corner, followed by Apollo's standing moonsault for two. A cheap shot sets up the assisted White Noise to put Crews away at 4:11.

Rating: D. At this point, we're just filling in time instead of putting the women on this show for some reason. The match was about what you would expect, though I'm still not sure if Titus is a face or a heel. Giving Cesaro and Sheamus a win like this isn't the worst idea in the world though as it gave us something fresh, which is definitely something good at this point.

Long video on Samoa Joe vs. Brock Lesnar with both guys talking about the amount of violence we'll be seeing at the pay per view. Good stuff.

Sasha Banks vs. Nia Jax

Alexa Bliss comes out for commentary and we're joined in progress with Banks hitting the knees to the back. Cue Emma to yell at Bliss and then chase her into the ring. Bliss hides behind Jax so Emma kicks her in the ribs for the DQ at 1:11.

It's a big brawl with Mickie James and Dana Brooke coming in as well. Bayley finally comes in and really cleans house, including a middle rope bulldog to Jax. The good women, as in Bayley/Banks/Brooke/James in this case, stand tall.

Here's Angle to announce the attacker. He brings out Enzo, Cass, Revival and Big Show to really set the stage. Angle starts with Big Show, who says he'd fight someone face to face. If Angle thinks he did it, maybe he doesn't need to be on Raw anymore. Show leaves and Cass is very happy until Kurt cuts him off to talk about Revival. Angle says it wasn't them because enough referees and agents saw the two of them elsewhere.

Corey Graves says he has some information though. A few moments ago Cass said he had a golf ball sized lump on the back of his head, but the medical team said they never treated him. Cass starts backtracking but Graves has security footage. We see Cass staging the scene of the crime and laying on the ground like he's unconscious. Cass admits he did it and yells about how tired he is of Enzo running his mouth about whatever he's always talking about. No one behind the curtain likes Enzo and Cass felt bad for him.

Cass finally snapped and it felt good to lay Enzo out from behind. He unloads on Enzo for all the years of having to put up with him and wanted to see how smart Enzo really was. It turns out that Enzo is even dumber than he looks and nothing but dead weight holding Cass down. All Enzo does is have his mouth write checks that he can't cash but now Cass isn't behind him anymore. Enzo gets kicked in the head to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This show didn't do much to hide the fact that Great Balls of Fire is just a placeholder show. When they're already setting up stuff for Summerslam and we're still nearly three weeks away from Great Balls of Fire, you can tell the show means absolutely nothing. Now that being said, some of the stuff they've set up is interesting enough, but don't waste your time believing that this is going to mean anything long term. That's been the case for years in WWE but it doesn't make things any easier to get through.

Results

Hardys b. Anderson and Gallows – Swanton Bomb to Gallows

Finn Balor b. Bo Dallas – Coup de Graces

Akira Tozawa b. TJP – Top rope backslash

Samoa Joe b. Roman Reigns – Koquina Clutch

Sheamus/Cesaro b. Apollo Crews/Titus O'Neil – Assisted White Noise to Crews

Nia Jax b. Sasha Banks via DQ when Emma interfered

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Main Event – April 13, 2017: The Hometown Version

Main Event

Date: April 13, 2017

Location: Nassau Coliseum, Uniondale, New York

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

I've spent months asking for some kind of a shakeup around here and now that the rosters have been tossed around, WWE might actually have to offer us something fresh around here. It should be interesting to see who replaces Jinder Mahal, who was one of the Main Event regulars. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Big Cass vs. Titus O'Neil

Please don't let Titus be the new guy. Enzo does a big entrance, talking about how he and Cass came here from New Jersey by way of some New York roads. Titus goes straight for him and gets tossed to the floor off a fall away slam. A right hand staggers Enzo and Titus follows up with some running splashes in the corner. We're already in the chinlock before Cass pops up, hits the Empire Elbow and kicks Titus in the face for the pin at 3:22.

Rating: D+. The match was nothing to see but it was a really smart idea to have Enzo and Cass out there to start the night. The fans are going to go nuts for them every week but putting them out there in front of their hometown crowd is the best thing they could have done. Cass getting a singles win is nice too as that's probably his

future.

First Raw moment.

Here's Seth Rollins for a chat. He didn't know if he would ever be in this ring again because he gave everything he had to get ready for Wrestlemania. Last week he woke up after a war with HHH and his knee had never been in so much pain. All he knew was that he had never felt so good because at Wrestlemania, he slayed the King.

There are a lot of things Rollins wants to do around here ("The name Samoa Joe comes to mind."), including wanting to get his hands on the Universal Title. However, something happened at Wrestlemania that might prevent it from happening. We see a clip of Stephanie being knocked through a table, which means she'll be out for a while. Then she'll be back though and Rollins becomes public enemy #1. Therefore, it's probably easier for him to go to Smackdown. That's not what's going to happen though as Seth took the easy way out once and he's not doing it again.

Cue Angle to say that yes, Stephanie made it clear she wants him gone. Angle watched Wrestlemania though and saw Seth win a fight on one leg. Stephanie's opinion aside, as long as Angle is in charge, Seth has a home here on Raw. Angle goes to leave but Samoa Joe comes in for the fight. Rollins superkicks him to the floor though and Joe bails.

To Raw again.

In the back, Michael Cole has a sitdown interview with Roman Reigns. Roman says the win over Undertaker was the biggest win of his career but it was bittersweet. He's had great guidance but he's not sure how you retire someone you respect so much. Braun Strowman comes in and the fight is on with Reigns being destroyed.

Reigns gets powerslammed onto an anvil case and Braun crushes him by wheeling another case into Reigns' head. Fans: "THANK YOU STROWMAN!" Reigns is taken out on a stretcher. Fans: "YOU DESERVE IT!" Strowman shoves the stretcher down a flight of stairs, drawing the pop of the night. Reigns is wheeled into the ambulance. Braun: "I'M NOT THROUGH

WITH YOU YET BOY!" Strowman beats him up even more and TURNS THE AMBULANCE OVER with Reigns inside.

Post break Reigns is loaded into a new ambulance and finally gets to leave.

Gran Metalik/Lince Dorado vs. Drew Gulak/Tony Nese

Nese gets a very nice pop from his hometown crowd. Metalik does all of his flips on Gulak to start before getting pulled down into a dragon sleeper with a bodyscissors (Remember when that was a dangerous move in the Cruiserweight Classic?). We hit some dives before it's off to an early break.

Back with Gulak and Metalik trading chops in the corner until a springboard elbow drops Gulak. The hot tag brings in Dorado and everything breaks down. Dorado grabs a handspring double Stunner (cool), leaving Metalik to walk the top rope for a moonsault onto Gulak. Nese crotches Dorado on top though and the running knee to the jaw is enough for the pin at 8:42.

Rating: C. Totally average cruiserweight tag here and that doesn't mean much. I still really like Metalik and the whole King of the Ropes thing has potential, though he's stuck here because of one botch and there's not much changing that. Nese continues to be just one step away from being awesome but I'm not sure what that step is. We'll wrap it up with this.

Dean Ambrose vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title. An early Dirty Deeds attempt sends Owens bailing to the floor but Dean whips him into the barricade. Dean scores with a dive and we take a break. Back with Dean caught in a chinlock. Owens: "I could do this all night baby!" Dean fights up and gets sent outside in a crash, followed by a ram into the post. Back in and Ambrose gets in a good shot to knock Owens outside, setting up a suicide dive.

That's not enough for Dirty Deeds though but Owens misses a Cannonball. Dean clotheslines him down but Kevin bails outside. That's fine with Dean, who hits the top rope elbow. Back in and

Owens hits the package piledriver slam for two as the fans want Jericho. The Pop Up Powerbomb is countered but Owens escapes Dirty Deeds as well. A superkick blocks the rebound lariat but Dean rolls through into Dirty Deeds for the clean pin at 14:15.

Rating: B. Lack of caring from the crowd aside (yeah fans aren't that interested in a match with nothing on the line after a three and a half hour taping and no story in sight), this was a good back and forth fight between two people with underrated chemistry. I liked it more than I was expecting to but it was missing something to take it to the next level.

Post match Chris Jericho comes out to hit Owens with a Codebreaker to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This show had the Braun Strowman segment and that alone makes it amazing. If WWE somehow doesn't capitalize on what they did with that, they're actually more of a mess than I thought they were. On top of that, if Reigns is seen on TV at any point before Payback (and even then), they're fools. Good show this week, though it's mainly due to the Raw stuff.

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Wrestlemania XXXIII

Previews: Raw Tag Team

Titles: Enzo Amore/Big Cass

vs. Cesaro/Sheamus vs.

Anderson/Gallows

Gimmickery for the sake of gimmickery.

Anderson and Gallows are defending and for reasons purely of “it’s Wrestlemania”, this is a ladder match. Instead of having Amore and Big Cass win the titles for one of the loudest pops of the night the following day, let’s cram a gimmick into this match that isn’t interesting in the first place. The key to this match is Amore, who can be a javelin with Big Cass throwing him all over the place. Assuming he doesn’t suffer another horrible injury, everything should be fun.

That being said, I can’t imagine Anderson and Gallows keep the titles if DIY is on the way up. Those guys taking the titles on Monday would be a better option, though I have a bad feeling we’ll get Amore and Big Cass winning them here when it’s crammed onto the opening match and forgotten an hour later. I’ll take Big Cass and Amore winning, but I’m far from confident in this one.

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Roadblock: End of the Line: Feel Free to Try Something

Roadblock: End of the Line

Date: December 18, 2016

Location: PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

We'll wrap up the pay per view calendar with this show, our third pay per view in about a month. This isn't the hottest card in the world with a fairly lame main event of United States Champion Roman Reigns challenging Kevin Owens for the Universal Title. There's also an Iron Man match as Sasha Banks defends the Women's Title against Charlotte. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Rusev vs. Big Cass

This is over Big Cass defending Enzo Amore, who tried to sleep with Rusev's life. Before the match, Enzo says something about Lana owing him money and Rusev playing Jumanji in the hotel room. Enzo puts on a red nose and Cass lists off the eight reindeer. Cass kicks Rusev in the face and we take a break less than thirty seconds in.

Back with Cass hammering away and dropping the Empire Elbow for no cover. They head outside Rusev taking him out into the crowd, leaving Enzo to go after Lana. Rusev defends his wife while Cass checks on Enzo, leaving Rusev to beat the count at 4:33. Not enough for a rating but this was rematch bait.

The opening video has a police chase theme with the idea being that everything ends at the end of the line.

Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Cesaro/Sheamus

New Day is defending. Big E. is confused about what the show is called because he thinks it's a rather different, very un-PG kind of

blocking. I'll let you figure out what the joke there is. Woods suggests that the challengers should be called Swing Low Irish Chariot. Cesaro dropkicks Kofi at the bell for two and it's already time for the uppercut train. It's too early for the Swing so Sheamus clotheslines Kofi instead.

The slingshot shoulder gets two on Kingston and Swiss Death is good for the same. This has been completely one sided so far. Kofi breaks up the ten forearms and brings in Big E. for the spear off the apron. The Warrior Splash gets two on Sheamus and everything breaks down. Sheamus kicks Cesaro by mistake and Woods kicks Cesaro by design, setting up the Big Ending for a very close two.

The Midnight Hour is broken up and Big E. gets the Brogue Kick. Cesaro Swings Kofi into the Sharpshooter for the submission...but Woods has the referee. Cesaro lifts Kofi up into a suplex and rolls into the Neutralizer for two with Big E. making the save this time. That was some scary power, as is always the case with Cesaro.

Woods sacrifices himself to take the Brogue Kick and the SOS gets two on Sheamus. Cesaro comes in without a tag (though Sheamus was right next to him), meaning Kofi kicks Cesaro for no count. Instead Sheamus sneaks in and rolls Kofi up for the pin and the titles at 10:00.

Rating: B-. The ending was really good but I have no interest in Sheamus and Cesaro holding the belts. It's more than fine to take them off New Day now but you really couldn't do this at the Rumble against Enzo and Cass or ANYONE that might draw some interest? People didn't care about Cesaro and Sheamus at first and I doubt they will now, but this was going to happen no matter what.

New Day gets the big show of respect and we get the battle for the spotlight from the new champs.

Kevin Owens doesn't care about New Day because that will never happen to him. After insulting the interviewer, Owens flags down Chris Jericho and gives him a present. Jericho isn't impressed with his holiday scarf.

Sami Zayn vs. Braun Strowman

Ten minute time limit as Raw GM Mick Foley is scared for Sami's health. The ring announcer says Sami must last ten minutes though, which makes things a bit unclear. So can Sami not even go for wins? Sami dodges for the first thirty seconds and Braun no sells a chop. Braun gets his hands on Sami for a big toss and kicks him in the ribs for good measure.

We're down to eight minutes as Sami knocks Braun over the top, only to have Strowman come back in and hammer away with ease. The referee starts to check on Sami with about six minutes to go but Zayn wants to keep going. Braun lets Sami stumble around as we get down to five minutes. Some very hard clotheslines take us to four minutes and here's Foley with a white towel.

Sami is thrown down at Mick's feet and Braun goes outside to talk trash. Zayn grabs the towel and throws it into the crowd with two minutes left. Strowman promises to finish this himself but misses a charge into the post. Another missed charge sends Braun through the barricade but Strowman beats the count with 47 seconds left. A third missed charge hits the post and Sami gets two off a high crossbody. Sami is knocked to the floor but comes back in for the Helluva Kick as time ends at 10:00 (really 10:12).

Rating: D+. Corey sums it up perfectly: Sami didn't win anything here. He just didn't get killed. This really belonged as an angle on Raw to set up the pay per view match instead of being the match itself. Sami hitting his finisher (which didn't knock Braun down) to end the match was a nice touch but I really have no idea where this goes outside of Braun beating Sami in another match.

Package on the UK tournament.

We recap Chris Jericho vs. Seth Rollins. Jericho lost to Rollins several times but then started costing Rollins matches against Owens. This earned Jericho a Pedigree on top of a car and that means a match.

Seth Rollins vs. Chris Jericho

Jericho headlocks him to start and does the Gift of Jericho pose. Chris stops him with a raised boot and the missile dropkick gets two. A rake of the eyes slows Rollins down (he even makes like he can't see for a bit, which you almost never see anymore) but he's easily able to catapult Jericho into the buckle.

Jericho gets in a clothesline and we hit the ASK HIM chinlock. Back up and Rollins fires off some right hands followed by the Slingblade. A Blockbuster gets two and Jericho gets shoved out to the floor. Rollins' springboard knee is countered into the Walls which last about as long as you would expect them to. Now the Lionsault is good for two and Seth's Falcon's Arrow gets the same.

Rollins tries the Pedigree but Jericho powers out and gets in a hurricanrana, which transitions into the Walls. Seth counters that with a small package for two, followed by the frog splash. Cue Owens for a distraction, just as Jericho grabs a small package. The Pedigree is countered again but Jericho stops to yell at Owens, allowing Seth to get in the jumping knee. Rollins gets the Pedigree for the pin at 17:12.

Rating: B+. I really liked this one as Jericho's roll continues. You can almost pencil in Jericho vs. Owens for the Rumble and that story is going to write itself very well. Rollins getting the pin makes sense and maybe we can FINALLY do the blowoff between him and HHH so Rollins can move on with his career.

Pre-show recap. Cass vs. Rusev II is set for tomorrow night.

Cruiserweight Title: Brian Kendrick vs. TJ Perkins vs. Rich Swann

Swann is defending and Austin Aries is sitting in on commentary. One heck of a forearm puts Kendrick on the floor, leaving Perkins to take the champ down. Swann hurricanranas both guys down at the same time (Aries: "I've done it before.") but gets caught in the Captain's Hook.

Perkins makes the save with the kneebar but Swann makes a save of his own. Cole: "Who is the favorite now?" Aries: "I would be if I was in there." Kendrick gets tossed and Perkins slaps on another

kneebar, sending Swann to the ropes. That's not a break in a triple threat but Perkins lets go anyway. Back up and Swann kicks Perkins in the head to retain at 5:59.

Rating: D+. Can we please, please, PLEASE get Aries anything he wants? He was by far and away the most interesting thing about this match as he just commands respect and I completely buy him as the greatest cruiserweight of all time. I mean, I know he's not but he gives you the belief that he is and that's what matters.

Post match Neville makes his return to celebrate with Swann before turning heel (!) and destroying all three. Fans: "THANK YOU NEVILLE!" I can totally go for this, though the idea that Neville weighs under 205lbs is downright laughable.

Owens goes to Jericho's locker room but Chris won't let him in. Kevin tells him to put his name on the list but Jericho still doesn't open the door. That hurts Owens' feelings and he walks away.

Recap of Sasha Banks vs. Charlotte. They've traded the title for months and this is the final match.

Women's Title: Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks

Banks is defending and this is a thirty minute iron man match, though JoJo says the winner is the woman with the most pinfalls. I'm going to assume that's an error because nothing like that was ever mentioned before. Feeling out process to start and they hit the mat for the first two minutes. Banks headlocks her down and things stay slow to start. Some chops have Charlotte in more trouble but it's too early for the Banks Statement.

Another attempt fails just as much so Banks opts for a dropkick instead. Banks: "Your daddy loves me more!" Sasha wraps her up in something like a rear naked choke but Charlotte drops her back onto the mat for two. Charlotte heads outside and takes the double knees as we hit eight minutes in. A cross arm choke has Charlotte in more trouble but she doesn't tap out as we get to ten minutes.

Sasha throws her outside for a suicide crossbody, only to be tripped face first into the steps in a bad looking crash. We're twelve

minutes in now as the referee slows things down a bit to check on Sasha. Three straight knees get two on the champ but another one misses to give Sasha a breather. Charlotte does the figure four headscissors and we're at the halfway mark.

Something like a neckbreaker onto the knee gets two on Sasha and Charlotte seems to be getting frustrated. Natural Selection connects for two but Banks can't get the Bank Statement. Instead Charlotte is put on top, only to come back with a super Natural Selection for the first fall with 10:45 to go.

Charlotte talks a lot of trash but can't get another fall as we hit nine minutes left. Banks goes to the air and spins into a rollup for the tie with 8:43 to go. That means Charlotte needs to get aggressive, only to have Sasha grab the Bank Statement for the tap out with six minutes left. Charlotte gets smart by draping the knee over the middle rope and crashing down onto it as the clock keeps ticking.

Some cannonballs down onto the knee set up a leglock as we've got three minutes left. A not great Figure Four goes on with two minutes left and Sasha is in big trouble. The hold is turned over a few times until Sasha gets caught in the middle of the ring. We're down to thirty seconds left and Banks screams a lot. Charlotte FINALLY turns it into the Figure Eight and Banks taps with two seconds left, meaning it's a draw at 30:00.

This is the END OF THE LINE though so let's do sudden death. Charlotte gets in a shot at the bad leg before the bell rings and a small package gets two for the champ seconds into the extra period. The Bank Statement goes on but Charlotte grabs the bad leg to break the hold. It's turned into a Figure Four and Sasha (with a bloody mouth) taps to the Figure Eight at 2:58 of overtime.

Rating: B. Well that happened. I'm completely out of things to talk about with these two trading the title because WWE has no concept of how to wrap up a feud in an appropriate manner. Charlotte winning is fine, though the question now is who challenges her next. I know the obvious answer is Bayley, but do you trust them to do something that

logical?

We recap Owens vs. Reigns. Roman beat him a few weeks ago to earn another shot here tonight but the big story is about the drama between Jericho and Owens.

Universal Title: Kevin Owens vs. Roman Reigns

Owens is defending and I'll only refer to him as champion for the sake of simplicity. Kevin quickly bails to the floor but gets punched in the mouth for his efforts. Something like a spinebuster gets two for Reigns but the threat of a jumping clothesline sends Owens outside. The champ takes over on the floor and hits the backplash off the steps, followed by the chinlock back inside.

Owens wants to know why Reigns didn't put his title on the line but suspects it's a lack of testicular fortitude. A standing flip legdrop of all things gets two on Roman and it's back to the chinlock. Reigns finally powers out and drives Owens into the corner, only to have the champ throw him down with a German suplex. The Superman Punch is countered into a DDT for two more.

Reigns no sells the Cannonball and hits the Superman Punch for two of his own and both guys are down. Owens goes up top and gets Superman Punched again but still manages to grab the swinging superplex. A Swanton Bomb hits Roman's raised knees and it's spear time. It might be the big scream before the spear but somehow Owens knows to bail to the floor. Reigns gets suckered in and a splash off the apron onto the announcers' table doesn't break the table.

The second attempt works though and Reigns' ribs are hurt again. Reigns dives in at nine so Owens bolts to the top for another frog splash and the accompanying near fall. Roman's sitout powerbomb and Owens' Pop Up Powerbomb get two each and the champ doesn't know what to do. He goes outside for the title belt, earning himself a spear as he comes back inside. Cue Jericho, who looks back and forth at both guy. A Codebreaker to Owens draws the DQ at 23:33.

Rating: B. Good, though the waiting for Jericho took a little away from it. Unfortunately this shows the problem with Reigns being US

Champion coming into this match: what good does it do to tie the title up in this match with no challenger for the title in sight? Yeah Owens vs. Jericho will be fine but sweet goodness enough with the champion vs. champion nonsense.

Jericho raises Owens' hand because IT WAS A SWERVE to end the show. Uh, couldn't he just tap Reigns and get the same result? Rollins comes out and helps with the beatdown, including a DoubleBomb to put Jericho through the table. Owens goes through the announcers' table to end the show to almost no reaction.

Overall Rating: B+. I liked this a lot more than I thought I would but it's a great example of a show I'm never going to watch again. Other than Charlotte getting the title back like we've seen before, nothing was really interesting here, though I can always go for a night of good wrestling. That being said, they really, REALLY need something fresh in the main event scene on Raw because "oh wait they're still best friends who get beaten up by the Shield guys" was tired a month ago.

Results

Cesaro/Sheamus b. New Day – Small package to Kingston

Sami Zayn b. Braun Strowman by surviving the time limit

Seth Rollins b. Chris Jericho – Pedigree

Rich Swann b. TJ Perkins and Brian Kendrick – Spinning kick to the head

Charlotte b. Sasha Banks three falls to two

Kevin Owens b. Roman Reigns via DQ when Chris Jericho interfered

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Roadblock: End of the Line 2016 Preview

It's time for Roadblock and that means...no that doesn't mean we're a month away from Wrestlemania. No actually it means WWE is really stupid for using the same name twice in a year when there are plenty of other names available for this show. I mean, was Vengeance taken? Or No Way Out? Or We Really Don't Need to Have This Show But We're Doing It Anyway? It's a Raw show and that means we're likely in for an annoying cameo from one or both of the bosses. Let's get to it.

We'll start with the pre-show match between Big Cass and Rusev. This is one of the few matches on the show I'm looking forward to as Cass is clearly on the rise but Rusev isn't the kind of guy that is going to lose to someone who is making his solo pay per view debut. The match springs from the usual: someone beat up Cass' buddy Enzo Amore and the big man is out for revenge. There was also something about Amore trying to sleep with Rusev's seemingly willing wife but that detail might make Rusev seem sympathetic again so we'll ignore that part.

As much as I want to go with Cass to start his rocket push, I really can't imagine Rusev losing another pay per view match. It's also a bit early for Cass to get a win like this, though I've heard of worse ideas. This really could go either way, though they would be better off having Rusev win via a Lana distraction or the threat of Amore getting hurt again. If nothing else, I want to see a mixed tag between these four down the line, assuming man vs. woman is allowed.

We'll knock out a title match next with New Day yet again defending the Tag Team Titles against Cesaro and Sheamus. New Day set the

record on Monday (for all intent and purpose) and now they get to defend against these guys again because WE WILL RESPECT CESARO AND SHEAMUS!

I know the obvious move is to change the titles not but I think I'm going to say New Day retains yet again with the big change coming at the Royal Rumble. There's no reason to keep the belts on them any longer save for breaking the 500 day mark, which means a grand total of nothing. Maybe it's just that I'm really not a fan of Cesaro and Sheamus but I have no desire to have them be the ones that finally get the belts off New Day. There's a good chance I'm wrong and I probably am but I'll say no title change here.

In another title match, Cruiserweight Champion Rich Swann is defending the title against TJ Perkins and Brian Kendrick in a triple threat match. Swann beat Kendrick for the title and both of them have gotten into it with Perkins, who is the only other man to hold this incarnation of the title.

It would seem that they're setting up Noam Dar as the next challenger for the title and he would seem to match up best against Swann. I'll go with another title being retained with Swann overcoming the odds. He's a more interesting champion than both former champions and it would be a really bad idea to take the title off of him already. Either that or turn Perkins heel like he should have been from day one, but for some reason that seems out of the question.

We'll jump towards the main events now with Chris Jericho facing Seth Rollins in a match that should be for the US Title. Jericho keeps costing Rollins World Title matches against Kevin Owens so Rollins Pedigreed him on top of a car. Instead of assault and battery charges, we get a pay per view match as a result.

I'm going to go with Rollins here, as the big match on the horizon seems to be Jericho facing Owens in some form. Therefore, with Jericho being more than ready to turn mega face for the match, the WWE is almost guaranteed to make him lose because that's how they get people to cheer for you. So yeah, Rollins goes over and it's

Jericho vs. Owens, likely at the Rumble.

Now we'll move on to the first of two timed matches on the card with Sami Zayn facing the monster Braun Strowman in a ten minute time limit match. This is about Zayn wanting to be like Mick Foley (I'm still not sure how that works) and not wanting to have to be treated like a baby because Strowman will crush him.

I think this goes to the draw with Zayn showing that he can hang in there with Strowman but barely surviving at the end of the match. Zayn certainly shouldn't beat Strowman, who could be ready for a huge match down the line, but at the same time you don't want Zayn to be completely destroyed. Strowman has Zayn done but the time runs out and it's officially a draw.

In the other timed match we have Sasha Banks defending the Women's Title against Charlotte in a thirty minute Iron Man match. This is being billed as the final match between the two of them but the stipulation sets up the prospect of a draw, meaning they get one more match.

That being said, I think they'll put the title on Charlotte again because the big pay per view winning streak ending at Wrestlemania would be a better way to go rather than ending it at a nothing show like this. I like the Iron Man idea but it also brings up the problem of there not being much of a point to watching the first twenty five minutes of the match unless the two of them tear the house down, which of course they're capable of doing.

We'll wrap it up with the main event as Universal Champion Kevin Owens is defending against United States Champion Roman Reigns. As much as I can't stand the idea of a double champion, I have a bad feeling WWE might pull the trigger on another Reigns title run for the sake of trying to be like the UFC with Conor McGregor.

That being said, I'll actually go for the long shot and say Owens retains to set up a major title defense against Jericho at the Royal Rumble. Unfortunately that match can be done with or without the title so there's no real need for Owens to hold the belt here. I really don't need to see Reigns as champion again this soon as it

isn't exactly going to do much for making him into a bigger star.

Overall Roadblock is really just there, much like most Raw pay per views. The wrestling should be fine but WWE is going to manage to make it feel like it's overstaying its already limited welcome. The main event scene is ice cold right now as I can barely even remember why Owens and Reigns are fighting in the first place. There will be some good stuff but this is just a filler show until we get to the important stuff in January.

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Tribute to the Troops 2016: It's Just Getting Worse

Tribute to the Troops 2016

Date: December 14, 2016

Location: Verizon Center, Washington D.C.

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, John Bradshaw Layfield

I try so hard to care about this show but it feels like WWE puts in less of an effort every single year. This is the annual show for the members of the United States military, meaning almost nothing of

consequence will happen and the big main event will be Americans vs. foreigners. Let's get to it.

Shane and Stephanie McMahon welcome us to the show.

Video on the history of the series with a look back at all of the shows. The ones where they went overseas just feel so much more important.

Lillian Garcia is back to sing the National Anthem.

Cole says this is a rare occasion when the Raw, Smackdown and cruiserweight rosters are on the same show. You mean like Survivor Series?

Here's Roman Reigns to get things going. Reigns says the people in this arena are the real champions of the United States but here's Kevin Owens to cut him off. Kevin thinks he should get the praise around here because he's the longest reigning Universal Champion in history. Trash talk is exchanged with Owens saying he would take the US Title and put a maple leaf sticker on it to turn it into the Canadian Heavyweight Title. So he's a Lance Storm fan. I admire the cut of this Canadian's jib.

A challenge is issued but here's Rusev to interrupt. We get a rare kiss with Lana but Reigns wants a soldier to come out here and show Rusev how to do that properly. A brawl is about to go down but Big Cass comes out to even things up. Mick Foley comes out to make the main event, even though it's not Raw and he shouldn't have any authority.

Package on wrestlers visiting troops.

Cesaro/Sheamus vs. Shining Stars vs. Anderson and Gallows vs. Golden Truth

The winners get New Day on Sunday with one fall to a finish. Anderson punches Goldust to start before it's off to Epico who gets beaten up as well. The Shining Stars get together to put Goldust on the floor and we take a break. Back with Gallows kicking Goldust in the face because it's beat on the old man night.

An elbow drop gets two with Sheamus making the save. The hot tag

brings in R-Truth to clean house with an ax kick getting two on Primo. Cesaro comes in to clean house with his usual stuff, including the high crossbody for two more on Primo. Epico saves his cousin from the Swing but gets Brogue Kicked for the pin at 9:28.

Rating: D+. If they just have to give Cesaro and Sheamus the titles so be it, as long as New Day has the record once and for all. I'm still not a fan of the team but they're probably the only option out of these four. The tag division means nothing at the moment so they're as good an option as there is otherwise. Also, how weird is it to see storyline development on one of these shows?

More wrestlers meeting troops.

Here are Miz and Maryse for a chat with Miz calling himself an inspiration due to his role in the Marine movies. Anyway it's open challenge time so here's comedian Gabriel Iglesias to answer. They argue about who is out of their element until Iglesias brings out a friend to answer the challenge.

Miz vs. Apollo Crews

Non-title. Miz starts with the Daniel Bryan mockery fast by doing the YES pose and hitting the running corner dropkick. The running corner clothesline is countered into a belly to belly suplex as Iglesias starts taking pictures with Maryse. Neither Miz nor Maryse are pleased so Crews kicks Miz in the face, meaning another picture can be taken. The distraction lets Crews grab a rollup for the pin at 2:30.

Some troops say hello to their families.

Dolph Ziggler/American Alpha vs. Wyatt Family

Jordan immediately goes for the belly to belly on Harper but gets headlocked for his efforts. Luke is knocked out to the floor and we take a break. Back with Ziggler coming in to clothesline Orton and dropping him with a neckbreaker. The triple teaming puts Ziggler down in a hurry though and Orton's snap powerslam gets two. Ziggler gets away for the hot tag without too much effort and everything breaks down. That's fine with the Wyatts who clean house off a

release Rock Bottom to Gable. The RKO finishes Chad at 10:55.

Rating: C-. Well that was rather squashy. The Wyatts completely destroyed the three of them here and that's not a good sign for Alpha's title hopes going forward. You would think they would be the best option to eventually take the belts from the Wyatts but that really doesn't seem to be the case, at least not yet. At least they're keeping the Family strong for a change.

Bayley, Charlotte and Dana Brooke meet a rescue dog. Dana isn't impressed and a match is made for later.

Bayley vs. Dana Brooke

Charlotte and the dog are at ringside. Dana takes her down and cranks on an arm and a leg at the same time. Bayley comes back with her spinning elbow in the corner but Charlotte grabs the leg to break up the suplex. The fans want Sasha but have to settle for Bayley throwing Dana into Charlotte. Back in and the Bayley to Belly wraps Dana up at 2:24.

Bayley celebrates with the dog just in case she's not adorable enough yet.

TJ Perkins/Jack Gallagher/Rich Swann vs. Brian Kendrick/Tony Nese/Drew Gulak

Perkins and Kendrick speed things up to start with TJ sending him outside, meaning it's time for all the dives. Gallagher goes last but opts to climb through the ropes and hit an ax handle from the apron for the pop of the night. Back in and Gulak puts Perkins in something like the Edgecator to take over for the first time.

Perkins cross bodies Nese but it's not enough for the hot tag. Gulak gets kicked away and it's off to Swann as things speed up.

Everything breaks down with Jack headbutting Nese out to the floor but shaking himself up in the process. A double superkick drops Kendrick and the spinning kick to the jaw ends Gulak at 5:33.

Rating: C. This was exactly what this match needed to be with the right ending. I liked the fact that they didn't do much to set up the triple threat here as this was much more an exhibition than

anything involving storylines. They need to find some better heel jobbers than Gulak and Nese though as they've lost so many times now that it's starting to lose meaning.

HHH and Stephanie went to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier for a ceremony.

More wrestlers in Afghanistan.

New Day talks about their title defense on Sunday but instead opt to dance over breaking the record. Big E. thinks they're the greatest trio of all time when the Club comes in to laugh at the thought. They throw up the too sweet sign and here's the Shield to stare all six of them down. Reigns: "Nah." Well that worked.

Big Cass/Roman Reigns vs. Rusev/Kevin Owens

Enzo is back and we hear about how the Americans are going to beat down the bad guys for every branch of the military. Rusev and Reigns get things started with the Bulgarian actually taking over. The running splash misses though and Rusev has to bail from the threat of the Superman Punch. Instead it's the apron dropkick and the good guys stand tall as we take a break.

Back with Owens getting in a cheap shot on Reigns to give the bad guys control. Owens gets all angry with the trash talk and drops a backsplash on the floor. Reigns finally throws Rusev down and a big uppercut to Owens allows the hot tag to Cass. Everything breaks down but Lana shoves Enzo into the steps. The distraction lets Rusev get in a superkick to set up the frog splash for two. Another hot tag brings in Reigns for the spear and pin on Rusev at 12:55.

Rating: C-. Totally standard main event to end a totally standard show. Lana laying out Enzo was the highlight of the match here and actually makes me want to see them have a wacky comedy match. I'm really happy with the idea of Cass moving higher up the card and while I don't see him beating Rusev, it's a good sign to have him in that spot on a pay per view.

A quick thank you to the troops wraps us up.

Overall Rating: D. Is that really what they think of the troops?

This was basically an extra hour for Raw and Smackdown with nothing interesting whatsoever going on. In two hours we had maybe ten combined minutes of stuff on the troops, making this one of the lamest tributes ever. It used to be a show in the Middle East. Then it was a show at a military base. Then it was a glorified house show. Now it's something thrown in as a bonus when you went to Smackdown. To suggest this was about the troop is a joke and you almost have to know that just by paying attention. Totally unnecessary show, as it's been for years.

Results

Cesaro/Sheamus b. Shining Stars, Anderson and Gallows and Golden Truth – Brogue Kick to Epico

Apollo Crews b. Miz – Rollup

Wyatt Family b. Dolph Ziggler/American Alpha – RK0 to Gable

Bayley b. Dana Brooke – Bayley to Belly

Jack Gallagher/Rich Swann/TJ Perkins b. Drew Gulak/Tony Nese/Brian Kendrick – Spinning kick to Gulak's head

Roman Reigns/Big Cass b. Kevin Owens/Rusev – Spear to Rusev

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Monday Night Raw – December 5, 2016: It's All About The WOO's

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 5, 2016

Location: Frank Erwin Center, Austin, Texas

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

We've less than two weeks away from Roadblock and the top of the card seems to be set. The big story continues to be Roman Reigns vs. Kevin Owens but the big question is how to keep Sasha Banks vs. Charlotte going even longer. They've only had five title changes in about four months and that's just not enough. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of Seth Rollins/Roman Reigns vs. Kevin Owens/Chris Jericho, including everything last week that set up the Roadblock main event.

Here's Seth to get things going and he gets right to the point: he wants HHH. Life is about choices and one of the choices he made cost him a lot of his career. That was trusting HHH, but now he wants to get his hands on Chris Jericho. This brings out Owens, who doesn't want to talk about his best friend's health. Owens and Rollins don't like each other very much but Kevin wants to talk about his Christmas presents. First up is a US Title match when Jericho will challenge Reigns for the title. Other than that we have Jericho vs. Rollins at Roadblock and a third match taking place right now.

So wait. NOW we're going back to the HHH feud? I'm glad we're getting somewhere with it but this feels like your standard Raw storytelling: we don't have any reason to do it now but it has to be done so let's just do it now and hope for the best because the details will work themselves out. Is it that hard to do ANYTHING to make this feel a little more natural?

Big Show vs. Seth Rollins

Show has REALLY slimmed down and is billed at 395lbs. Show tosses him around to start but Seth dropkicks the knee. More kicks to the legs set up the springboard knee to the head but Show doesn't go down. A top rope version works a bit better but Show just shrugs it off again. Owens tries to yell at Show and gets chokeslammed for his efforts, leaving Show to walk out in what seems to be a mid-match face turn. Rollins wins by countout at 5:15.

Rating: C-. This was fine and another good use of Big Show. He and Kane both have been around for a LONG time but they're still good for something like this. The match was more over an angle (though I'm not entirely sure what that angle is) and that's fine for a five minute match.

Rollins superkicks and Pedigrees Owens.

Video on Jack Gallagher. He debuts tonight and we're all better because of it.

Jack Gallagher vs. Ariya Daivari

Gallagher does the spinning wristlock to start and makes sure to smooth out his hair for good measure. The handstand walk gets him out of a headlock as we hear about Gallagher's influences: Mankind, X-Pac and Steve Austin. Well he has good taste. The headbutt to the chest sets up the running corner dropkick and Daivari is done at 2:43. Gallagher is going to be a STAR if they give him the chance.

Daivari shakes his hand but takes out Jack's knee like a villain should.

Owens yells at Mick Foley and says this wouldn't happen if Stephanie was here. Foley really doesn't care and walks away. Owens goes up to see Jericho, who just got here. He runs the matches by Jericho but Chris says the two of them aren't good.

Enzo and Big Cass are in the back when Rusev and Lana are arguing a full fifteen feet away. Enzo goes over to defend Lana's honor so she takes her ring off and throws it away. The certified G looks stunned and sends Cass away so he can pick up the ring. He asks Lana how she is doing and Lana looks sad. I'm enjoying this idea WAY too much.

Post break Enzo and Lana are still talking and she doesn't think her husband understands her. She thinks Rusev needs to be taught a lesson. Maybe he wouldn't take her for granted if another man appreciated her. This leads to an invitation to Lana's hotel room. Wouldn't that be Rusev's room too? Lana leaves and Enzo dances.

Sami Zayn vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title as this feud just won't go away. They slug it out to start with Owens bailing to the floor. Sami follows and gets sent into the barricade, followed by a big flip dive to the outside. That's fine with Zayn as he hits one of his own, sending us to a break. Back with Sami fighting out of a chinlock and grabbing a tornado DDT onto the apron.

The dive into another DDT knocks Owens silly but he's fine enough to hit his swinging superplex for two. Back to back Cannonballs have Sami reeling so he does a third tornado DDT. The half and half suplex sends Owens flying, followed by the Blue Thunder Bomb for two. A quick Pop Up Powerbomb finishes Sami in a hurry at 10:30.

Rating: C+. That's the standard rating for these two and the question is how much higher can they take it. However, three tornado DDTs in a ten minute match isn't a good sign. You don't expect these two to seem like they're phoning it in but this was nothing out of the ordinary. Not bad of course but I wasn't feeling it.

Reigns comes in to see Jericho and the words STUPID IDIOT are uttered. Basically Reigns says don't get cocky.

Video on Sasha Banks vs. Charlotte from last week.

Sasha challenges Charlotte to an Iron Man match for Roadblock. As for Ric Flair, Charlotte doesn't deserve to live in his legacy.

We look at Charlotte yelling at her dad back in May.

Rich Swann vs. TJ Perkins

Non-title. They shake hands to start and Swann gets taken down off a shoulder. Back up and Swann scores with a dropkick and does a little dabbing. We hit a waistlock on Perkins for a bit until he dropkicks Swann's knee out. There's a running dropkick to knock Swann out of

the Tree of Woe for two. Perkins goes to the top and dives almost into the spinning kick to the face to give Swann the pin at 5:51.

Rating: C-. I don't know how to get into Perkins no matter how many times I try. He really comes off more as a heel than anything else but for some reason they're pushing him as the gamer geek. Then again I never was a fan of him all the way back in the Cruiserweight Classic but he's still one of the top stars in the division due to a lack of star power in the first place.

Bayley vs. Alicia Fox

This is over Bayley giving Cedric Alexander a Bayley Bear (yes that's a real thing) even though Fox has a thing for Alexander. Fox gets knocked into the corner to start but grabs the northern lights suplex for two. We're already in the chinlock but Bayley pops up with the Bayley to Belly for the pin at 2:20.

Enzo: "My mind is telling me no but my body is telling me bada boom go to the hotel room." Cass isn't sure but Lana texts Enzo with a picture included. Cass seems to change his mind as Enzo runs off. Rusev comes up to ask Cass where Lana is. A match is made for later. Emmalina is here next week.

Mark Henry vs. Titus O'Neil

Titus is marketing this as the Tussle in Texas. World's Strongest Slam ends Titus in 25 seconds.

Enzo is waiting on his Uber but gets a limo containing Ric Flair instead. Ric gives him the limo upon hearing about the foreign blonde.

Jericho wants Owens to stay in the back.

US Title: Chris Jericho vs. Roman Reigns

Roman is defending and is actually driven into the corner to start. The Superman Punch is countered with a dropkick and a clothesline puts the champ on the floor. A big dive to the floor takes Reigns out again and we take a break. Back with Reigns caught in a chinlock for a bit before being tossed out to the floor.

The Lionsault only gets two and the fans are getting WAY into Jericho all over again. A Samoan drop and Superman Punch get two on Jericho and the Codebreaker is countered into a sitout powerbomb. Roman goes shoulder first into the post though and we hit the Walls. As Reigns grabs the rope, cue Owens for a superkick. The Codebreaker gets two on Reigns but the Canadian argument sets up the spear to retain the title at 13:43.

Rating: B. Is there a reason why Reigns needs the US Title? Someone answer that for me. His feud is over the World Title and he doesn't have a long term challenger but he's still US Champion with no real prospects for a title feud anytime soon. Jericho vs. Rollins over the US Title could elevate the belt but Reigns is keeping it anyway. I don't think I need to explain this one being good as Jericho is still on fire.

We look at Flair and Charlotte's split again.

Rusev vs. Big Cass

And there's no Rusev because, as anyone paying attention could tell you, it was a trap. Cass mouths the word "oh crap" and commandeers someone's phone.

We IMMEDIATELY cut to Enzo at the hotel but he won't answer the phone because it's listed as unknown. Enzo knocks on the door and Lana opens up in a very short robe. Legs are shown and Enzo takes off the jacket despite being nervous. They both down some champagne and Lana rips off his shirt. Enzo eventually agrees to take off his pants and of course Lana reveals that Rusev is here. The beatdown is quickly on and Enzo is massacred. A vase to the head knocks him out and Rusev throws him out in the hall.

Anderson and Gallows vs. Cesaro/Sheamus

The winners get New Day, at ringside here, next week for the titles. Anderson and Gallows go outside and get in New Day's face to start but the Europeans run them over, sending the cereal flying. Back from a break with Cesaro fighting out of Anderson's chinlock and escaping the Magic Killer with some help from Sheamus. The hot tag

brings Sheamus in for the ten forearms to the chest but everyone winds up on the floor for the brawl with New Day and that's a no contest at 9:58.

Rating: C. This was fine though the triple threat for next week was obvious. I'm really not sure who wins the thing but it's a cool feeling to have a match where I don't know the ending. The match should be fun and I really could see it going either way. This match was just a means to an end and that's fine.

It's time for the big ending with Charlotte (who has accepted the Iron Man challenge) apologizing to her dad. We see her yelling at Flair (that makes three times tonight) but it was even harder to see Flair raise Sasha's hand last week. Charlotte says no one can imagine how hard it is to be Ric's daughter because of how big his legacy really is.

Then last week she saw her dad raise Sasha's hand and she knew she had failed as his daughter. Flair comes out and hugs her but, of course (that's a trend tonight) she slaps him in the face. Cue Sasha but Charlotte Alley Oops her face first into the post. Charlotte mocks Flair crying and walks away to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Raw is on something resembling a roll lately and a lot of that is due to them changing the way they're doing some stories. Consider Enzo vs. Rusev. It's a stupid story but it's not something we've seen done in awhile. In other words, it's something fresh, which doesn't happen nearly enough. I liked the show and I'm wanting to see the triple threat, which is more than I can say about the main event scene.

Results

Seth Rollins b. Big Show via countout

Jack Gallagher b. Ariya Daivari – Running corner dropkick

Kevin Owens b. Sami Zayn – Pop Up Powerbomb

Rich Swann b. TJ Perkins – Spinning kick to the head

Bayley b. Alicia Fox – Bayley to Belly

Mark Henry b. Titus O'Neil – World's Strongest Slam

Roman Reigns b. Chris Jericho – Spear

Anderson and Gallows vs. Cesaro/Sheamus went to a no contest when all four brawled with New Day

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Monday Night Raw – November 21, 2016: There Is Logic In What They Do

Monday Night Raw

Date: November 21, 2016

Location: Air Canada Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

We're still in Toronto as the big pay per view weekends are starting to feel like an old Raw TV cycle. The big story last night is Brock Lesnar's complete destruction at the hands of Goldberg, who beat him in a mind blowing 87 seconds. Tonight we get started towards Roadblock in about four weeks so let's get to it.

We open with stills of Lesnar vs. Goldberg because a match running less than a minute and a half needs to be clipped.

Here's Goldberg getting the full entrance to open things up. Goldberg thanks the fans for letting him be Goldberg again. He also thanks his wife and son for putting up with him and he got to be a star again one more time. Last night he ran into Stephanie McMahon who said he did have one more spear and Jackhammer in him (three spears and two Jackhammers if you're counting) but the question is does he have one more title run left in him. The fans go NUTS over that prospect and Goldberg says he's in the Royal Rumble.

Raw Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Sheamus/Cesaro

New Day is defending and talk about breaking Demolition's record for longest Tag Team Title reign in just 23 days. A powerslam gives Cesaro two on Big E. to start but Kofi escapes an early Swing attempt. Instead Cesaro sends him into the barricade and we take a break. Back with Kofi dropkicking Sheamus out of the air but getting Irish Cursed for two.

Sheamus won't tag out though and we get some heel (I think?) miscommunication with Cesaro being knocked off the apron. The hot tag brings in Big E. to clean house as everything breaks down. The Warrior Splash gets two on Sheamus but he rakes Big E.'s eyes to set up White Noise for the same.

It's back to Cesaro vs. Kofi with the Uppercut Train taking off, only to have an SOS get two. Trouble in Paradise is countered into a Cesaro Swing which goes into the Sharpshooter. The Brogue Kick puts Big E. down but Woods gets on the apron for the distraction as Kofi taps. Ever the moron, Cesaro lets the hold go and gets small packaged for the pin at 12:18.

Rating: C+. So they seem to be turning New Day heel. I think I can actually go with that as I'd much rather go there than have Cesaro and Sheamus stop them just before the record. Obviously they haven't gotten there yet and there's always the possibility that they'll switch the titles with two days to go, but at least they didn't do it here.

Chris Jericho is distraught that the List of Jericho was destroyed last night. Tonight, he's going to say who's to blame for this

travesty.

Enzo Amore is stuck outside his locker room....and he's missing his clothes. After running into the Shining Stars and Titus O'Neil with the expected results. Enzo runs into Lana and, of course, asks how she's doing. Rusev comes in to yell and Cass comes to Enzo's defense. There's no offer of a shirt for Enzo or anything but a match is set up for later.

Mick Foley and Stephanie McMahon do their standard "we're awesome" segment and talk about needing to punish the Raw stars who lost last night. Sami Zayn comes in and gets a match against Braun Strowman. So Foley is a heel too.

Ariya Daivari vs. Cedric Alexander

Before the match, Daivari says Canadians are just as bad as Americans and rants in some foreign language. Alexander armbars him before the bell but Daivari takes over as the match gets started. Cedric's springboard is broken up into a big crash but he nails a handspring into a kick to the face. Another springboard into a clothesline sets up the Lumbar Check for the pin on Daivari at 3:10.

Rating: C+. The match was fine, even entertaining at times, but as usual I have no reason to care. I'm not sure if the 205 Live show is the solution but maybe they can get the focus back and find some of that spark that made Cruiserweight Classic so entertaining. This was better than the usual stuff at least.

It's time for the Highlight Reel with a serious Jericho wanting to find out what happened with the List of Jericho. Kevin Owens cuts him off and asks when Chris upgraded to the Jeritron 6500. Jericho isn't happy with Owens for not realizing he was there when Jericho upgraded.

We see Owens saving Jericho from the Styles Clash with the List of Jericho, sending Jericho into a rant about everything that could have been seen. Owens: "Who cares???" That seems to be a breaking point for Jericho, because he cares. Owens yells at Jericho for screwing up by walking into an RKO a few seconds after he sacrificed

himself. If that's how Owens feels, maybe they don't have much of a friendship.

Owens is never there when Jericho needs him and Chris is done with him. Kevin spins him around and they both blame Roman Reigns, setting up a big hug. The ranting goes on about Reigns and Rollins (who are hair conditioner brothers) until Seth comes out, demanding his title shot tonight. The brawl is on and here's Reigns, slowly walking to the ring for the save. Cue Foley to make the title match tonight, No DQ, with Jericho and Reigns banned from ringside.

We recap the opening segment.

Enzo Amore vs. Rusev

Before the match, Enzo says if Lana wanted to see him sans clothes, she just had to hack his phone. The Accolade finishes Enzo in 58 seconds.

Anderson and Gallows vs. Golden Truth

Winners get a shot at New Day next week. Anderson and Gallows take Truth into the corner for an early beating, including a bunch of stomping and a Gallows big boot for two. A kick to the face allows the hot tag to Goldust, who tries to go up top. That just earns him a crotching, followed by the Magic Killer for the pin at 6:02.

Rating: D. This was a bit more academic than it should have been and there's nothing wrong with that. It seems that New Day is going to have to run a gauntlet to get to the record, which is kind of a cool idea as long as they don't switch the belts with two days left for a slip on a banana peel moment.

Video on the Wrestlemania tickets going on sale. This includes someone making a fourteen hour drive from Houston because Houston has never heard of an online sale.

Braun Strowman vs. Sami Zayn

Strowman jumps him before the bell and Sami is in big trouble to start. A running splash crushes Sami again and the match is almost stopped. Some hard clotheslines make things even worse. Strowman ties Sami in the Tree of Woe and Mick Foley comes out to stop the

match at 4:00.

Rating: D. You really can't rate this match fairly but it did exactly what it needed to do. Sami can sell as well as almost anyone I've ever seen and that's what he did here to almost perfection. I'm really curious to see where this goes and I didn't expect that to be the case for this kind of story.

Emmalina video.

Here are Charlotte and Dana Brooke with something to say. She looks at some stills of the postmatch beatdown on Bayley before calling herself the Wayne Gretzky of WWE. Charlotte is so happy she doesn't have to deal with the Team Raw peasants but here's Sasha Banks to interrupt.

Sasha wants her rematch tonight and Charlotte agrees with one condition: it's in her hometown next week so she can beat Sasha again. Cue Nia Jax to say she dominated the Smackdown women, unlike Sasha, the short, purple headed Barbie. Dana finds this hilarious so Sasha decks her, only to get sent into the corner for the running splash. Bayley comes out for the save, meaning Sasha is thrown out to her.

Sasha Banks/Bayley vs. Charlotte/Nia Jax

Joined in progress with Nia throwing Bayley around and bringing in Charlotte for a chinlock. A failed monkey flip allows for the hot tag to Banks, who helps out with a double suplex to Nia. The Bank Statement makes Charlotte tap at 4:37.

Rating: D+. This did exactly what it needed to do and protected Nia at the same time. Jax is going to devour someone for that title eventually and whoever gets to take it off of her is going to be a star. As long as this leads to a big match with (hopefully all of) the Four Horsewomen at Wrestlemania, everything will be fine.

We look at the opening segment for the third time.

Seth Rollins is ready for his match with Owens.

Noam Dar vs. Rich Swann vs. TJ Perkins

The winner gets Brian Kendrick, on commentary here, for the title on the debut of 205 Live. Kendrick says the new show was created for him as Dar dropkicks Perkins out to the floor, only to have Swann do the same to Noam. Perkins kicks Rich's knee out and we take a break. Back with Perkins kicking Dar in the face but getting caught in an ankle lock. Swann makes a save, followed by Dar breaking up TJ's kneebar. Another kneebar is broken up by a splash and Swann kicks Perkins in the head for the pin at 7:50.

Rating: C. Not bad here and Swann winning makes the most sense, which is a common theme tonight. Swann has already beaten Kendrick twice and it would be a big waste to not have him go anywhere with the title shot. It also helps that Rich has more charisma than most of the division combined so the fans can get behind him for a change.

Owens brags about beating AJ Styles and knows he's ready to beat Rollins, who failed him last night.

Enzo and Cass shill merchandise.

Raw World Title: Kevin Owens vs. Seth Rollins

Owens is defending and there are no disqualifications with Jericho and Reigns barred from ringside. Kevin tries to bail to the floor and gets kicked in the face for his efforts. The springboard knee to the head gets two inside thirty seconds so it's already table time. Owens grabs the package piledriver slam and we take an early break.

Back with Owens in full control and hammering Seth in the head. A Sling Blade and suicide dive take Owens out, leading to another commercial. Back again with an exchange of strikes to the face putting both guys down. The frog splash misses Owens and it's a Cannonball into a chair onto Rollins for a close two. Owens sets up a pair of chairs for a powerbomb and you can see the backdrop counter coming before it happens.

Another table is set up in the corner and the Buckle Bomb drives Owens through it for a very close two. They fight into the crowd with Rollins getting the better of it by throwing a trashcan at the

champ. Owens tries the powerbomb but Seth grabs the balcony wall and pulls himself up for a big dive. They make it back to ringside but a masked man shoves Rollins off the barricade. Of course it's Jericho and of course he gets a Pedigree on the floor. The Apron Powerbomb wipes Rollins out though and Owens throws him back in to retain at 23:07.

Rating: B+. Really good stuff here as it felt like a full on pay per view main event with high spots and near falls. The Jericho interference was a stretch and I'm kind of hoping it isn't used to set up another rematch at Roadblock as I'm pretty much over Rollins vs. Owens after this one. Really good main event though and I bought Rollins as a title threat.

Overall Rating: B. I liked this show a lot more than I was expecting to and it's mainly because of the logical booking throughout (most of) the night. You can see where they're going with so much stuff and they set up three title matches in a single show while also having two titles defended. This felt like a completely different kind of Raw and while I don't believe it's going to last, this was a lot of fun and a welcome change of pace.

Results

New Day b. Cesaro/Sheamus – Small package to Cesaro

Cedric Alexander b. Ariya Daivari – Lumbar Check

Rusev b. Enzo Amore – Accolade

Anderson and Gallows b. Golden Truth – Magic Killer to Goldust

Braun Strowman b. Sami Zayn via stoppage

Bayley/Sasha Banks b. Nia Jax/Charlotte – Bank Statement to Charlotte

Rich Swann b. Noam Dar and TJ Perkins – Kick to Perkins' head

Kevin Owens b. Seth Rollins – Apron powerbomb

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Monday Night Raw – October 31, 2016: Storytelling In A Night

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 31, 2016

Location: XL Center, Hartford, Connecticut

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

We're past the Cell but since it's a holiday, tonight might feel like an even more important show that we saw last night. In this case, that might be due to Goldberg appearing as we're now less than three weeks away from his showdown with Brock Lesnar at Survivor Series 2016. Let's get to it.

We open with Goldberg, who gets the full walking entrance. Before he can say much though, Paul Heyman interrupts. Heyman knows he isn't a physical threat to Goldberg but he's willing to get inside the ring. There's no way he would get into this ring without significant backup because Brock wants to fight tonight.

Goldberg is more than happy with this and takes off the jacket (that man just has the look that suggests he could fight anybody) as Lesnar's music starts up. Of course that's not happening tonight but Heyman realizes this could go badly for him. Cue Rusev of all people to praise Goldberg before challenging him to a fight. A few knees to the ribs and a Jackhammer later, Rusev is down. A weak spear takes Heyman down as well and Goldberg gets to pose.

We look at last night's Universal Title match.

Enzo Amore vs. Luke Gallows

This is a Trick or Street Fight, meaning there are a bunch of Halloween themed weapons at ringside. Enzo and Cass come out as Buzz Lightyear and Woody because the world is smiling on us tonight. The pre-match speech hears Enzo say that Cass has a friend in him the beating will last to infinity and beyond. Cass: "There's a snake in my boot!" Gallows throws him to the floor to start but gets beaten with a plastic skeleton. A trip to the bucket of apples has Gallows in trouble and we take a break.

Back with Gallows shoving pumpkin in Enzo's face and throwing jack o'lanterns at him for fun. A few orange kendo stick shots and a bulldog have Gallows in trouble and a pie to the face blinds Anderson. Cass kicks him through a table and puts a pumpkin (mostly) on Gallows' head. The DDG sends Gallows chest first into a pumpkin (his head might have been a foot away from the mat) for the pin at 8:00.

Rating: B. Yeah the ending was horrible but this was exactly what this match should have been. The Buzz Lightyear stuff had me rolling and the ending being that botched actually kind of worked in something like this. It's not like this match means anything so just turn your brain off and have fun with it.

Heyman leaves in an ambulance.

Cruiserweight Title: TJ Perkins vs. Brian Kendrick

Kendrick is defending and Roman Reigns says this is being pushed too hard. Before the match, Kendrick says he taught everyone that he doesn't need help to win. Kendrick: "That's psychology." Last night he played on TJ's emotions so tonight, TJ better have a plan to get the title back. Perkins starts fast with the fireman's carry enziguri for two and we take an early break.

Back with Kendrick losing control of a chinlock and getting dropkicked in the back of the head. The first kneebar sends Kendrick over to the ropes. I might buy that as a possible ending if it wasn't done in EVERY TJ PERKINS MATCH. A hurricanrana off the apron out to the floor sends both guys crashing outside...where Kendrick takes the countout at 6:30.

Rating: D+. OH MY GOODNESS STOP DOING THIS STUPID MATCH. No one

cared the first time, fewer people cared the second time, and then the last two matches have been some of the least interesting things I've ever seen. This division has been so horribly botched and now it looks like we're getting ready for Perkins vs. Kendrick V. My goodness this isn't even funny anymore.

Perkins gives Kendrick the kneebar on the floor.

Mick Foley thinks Negan got the idea for Lucille from Cactus Jack. Braun Strowman comes up and says he wants to be part of Team Raw at Survivor Series. He's tired of these lame handicap matches and now he wants real competition. Mick: "Is that a threat? Because if it is....it's working." Foley puts Braun in a battle royal for a spot on the team. That seems to please the monster for now.

Here's Foley to talk about last night's show with a focus on the Universal Title match. Everything that Owens and Jericho did last night was legal but it all left a bad taste in Foley's mouth. Jericho and Owens come out to brag about getting into the Cell last night and walking out with the title.

That win means they should be anchoring the Survivor Series team because they're the top two guys on Raw. They laugh at Foley and bring up him losing the Cell match against HHH right here in Hartford, Connecticut. Foley gets in Owens' face to yell about how much talent he has but Jericho keeps interfering. Jericho was standing there with a key around his finger and that's what people are going to see on the WWE Network in eighteen years. Jericho: "Lock it in man."

That's enough for Foley, who says Stephanie only wanted Owens for Raw. However, Foley is going to put them both on the team along with another guy he can trust. That wouldn't be just any guy, but rather THE guy. Reigns comes out and praises Foley's pumpkin shirt while saying Owens and Jericho look like Spongebob and Patrick.

Roman was going to dress up like a stupid idiot but the store was out of Jericho costumes. Jericho teases putting someone on the List but NO ONE GOES ON THE LIST TONIGHT. Chris doesn't like anyone here in the United States but he would still be a better US Champion than Reigns. That sounds good to Foley so the title match is made. To be fair that's the only title Jericho has never won.

Package on Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks.

Battle Royal

Sami Zayn, Braun Strowman, Darren Young, Curtis Axel, Bo Dallas, Titus O'Neil, R-Truth, Jinder Mahal, Goldust, Cesaro, Sheamus, Neville

The winner is on Team Raw with Reigns, Jericho and Owens. A bunch of people go after Strowman to start but he quickly eliminates Truth and Dallas. Neville and Sheamus start double teaming but the Brogue Kick knocks Braun through the ropes instead of over them and we take a break.

Back with several names having been eliminated during the break. Sheamus gets rid of Young and Sami kicks Titus out. Cesaro throws Sheamus out but gets eliminated by Strowman. Braun throws Neville out as well and it's down to Strowman and Sami. Some strikes have Braun in trouble but he throws Sami onto his shoulders. We get the Benoit/Big Show choke on the ropes with Brayn being pulled over the ropes, only to easily power Sami up and throw him out for the final elimination at 8:20.

Rating: D. This was exactly what it needed to be with Sami putting up a fight but Strowman cleaning house and basically dominating as he should have. They've done a great job of making Strowman out to be someone special and even if it's just to be fed to another monster (like Brock), it still does its job. Bad match, good storytelling.

Emmalina video.

It's New Day costume time...and all three are different variations of Charles Wright (Big E. as Kama, Woods as Papa Shango and Kofi as Godfather). They're looking ahead to the future because they're officially the captains of the Raw Survivor Series tag team. That means the power of positivity vs. the power of cheese and crackers. They're not sure about the rest of their opponents because Shane and Bryan haven't announced the rest of the lineup. Woods is a bit scared of American Alpha and they can't actually come up with any insults for them. Not that it matters because New Day ROCKS.

Rich Swann/Lince Dorado/Cedric Alexander vs. Ariya Daivari/Tony Nese/Drew Gulak

Daivari gets his arm worked over to start before it's quickly off to Nese vs. Alexander with Cedric being slammed face first into the

barricade. A chinlock doesn't last long and the hot tag brings in Rich to clean house. Swann's rolling splash gets two and everyone winds up on the floor for a double dive. Rich kicks Nese in the face and a jackknife cover gets the pin at 6:31.

Rating: D+. I'm out of ways to complain about the same problems so go read one of the old ratings and meet me at the next segment.

We look back at the opening segment.

Here's Charlotte for her address as champion. She calls the fans peasants and promises to lead the women's team to victory against Team Smackdown and its captain Nikki Bella. Charlotte is ready to take on all of the Smackdown women but thinks there's a weak link on her team and her name is Bayley.

Cue Bayley, who says she's glad Charlotte called her out here. Seeing last night's main event choked her up and she wants to congratulate Charlotte on her win. Unfortunately she's also become the biggest jerk and the kind of champion Bayley never wants to be. Charlotte says this isn't NXT anymore and she sees a glorified fan looking back at her. Therefore, tonight Bayley has a match with one of her teammates.

Bayley vs. Nia Jax

Charlotte is on commentary. Nia starts fast with a shoulder breaker and throws Bayley around a bit before grabbing a bearhug. Bayley reverses into the guillotine but Nia is a learning monster and drives her into the buckle for the break. Some kicks to the legs and a few dropkicks stagger Jax, only to have the standing Vader splash crush Bayley. Instead of the legdrop, Nia goes to the middle rope, only to have to fight out of a super Bayley to Belly. Bayley comes up holding her knee and a ram into the barricade makes it even worse. The knee seems to be fine as Nia hits the Samoan drop for the pin at 5:52.

Rating: C-. This was just a step ahead of a squash and another example of how Raw looks completely dominant against Smackdown, assuming the power of being FEARLESS overcomes Nia. Seriously would that surprise you at this point? Anyway, not bad here and a good sign that Nia keeps dominating like this.

Sheamus/Cesaro vs. Shining Stars

Epico is part of an early uppercut train as the fans call Sheamus a

shame. The cousins start taking over on Cesaro with a dropkick and sunset flip for two. That means some PUERTO RICO chants...from the cousins but they do in fact exist. The tag brings in Sheamus to throw Primo to the floor and give Epico the ten forearm to the chest. The Cloverleaf makes Epico tap at 4:06.

Rating: D. In case you didn't get the idea, Sheamus and Cesaro can work together very well but they don't like each other too much. I don't know if they've explained that just yet because they've only done the same idea for a month now. At least they didn't just give them another shot at the titles right off the bat.

Earlier today, Golden Truth went to a haunted house and shenanigans ensue.

Jericho and Owens talk about the US Title match with Chris suggesting that Kevin be out there for some help. Owens is cool with the idea and thinks they can go get.....IT.

US Title: Chris Jericho vs. Roman Reigns

Reigns is defending and we get some Big Match Intros. Feeling out process to start until Jericho gets in a shot off the middle rope. They head outside with Owens throwing the weakened champ into the post as we take a break. Back with Jericho in control until he misses a charge in the corner.

Roman hits his string of clotheslines but the Superman Punch misses. The Lionsault hits knees so Jericho opts for the Walls in the middle of the ring. Roman powers out of that (duh) and grabs a sitout powerbomb for two more. Owens' distraction doesn't work and now the Superman Punch connects. The spear looks to finish but Owens comes in for the DQ at 14:50.

Rating: C. This was fine, though the ending wasn't exactly a secret. You knew they weren't going to change the title the night after Reigns successfully defended inside the Cell but at least Jericho gave him a good match. Owens being out there telegraphed the ending but we didn't get a clean ending and that's the right call.

Post match the beatdown is on until Seth Rollins comes out for the save. Rollins and Reigns share a staredown so maybe they'll get back together for Survivor Series.

Overall Rating: C-. I always forget how absolutely draining these post pay per view Raw's are. That's over seven hours of TV in two

days, not even counting Smackdown tomorrow night. The good thing is the show wasn't really that bad and set up most of the Raw teams before we get to Survivor Series. I liked some of the matches to go with the storytelling and that's what matters at the end of the day. Not bad but more proof that the show needs to be shorter.

Results

Enzo Amore b. Luke Gallows – DDG

TJ Perkins b. Brian Kendrick via countout

Braun Strowman won a battle royal last eliminating Sami Zayn

Rich Swann/Lince Dorado/Cedric Alexander b. Ariya Daivari/Tony Nese/Drew Gulak – Spinning kick to Nese's head

Nia Jax b. Bayley – Samoan drop

Sheamus/Cesaro b. Shining Stars – Cloverleaf to Epico

Roman Reigns b. Chris Jericho via DQ when Kevin Owens interfered

Monday Night Raw – September 26, 2016: I Didn't Want It To Be This Way

Monday Night Raw

Date: September 26, 2016

Location: US Bank Arena, Cincinnati, Ohio

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

We're past Clash of Champions and this is going to be an interesting show. The key here is Raw's competition as they're up against Monday Night Football and a Presidential debate that is likely going to break a lot of viewership records. Kevin Owens is still Raw World Champion and Roman Reigns picked up the US Title from Rusev last

night it's time to start looking towards the Cell. Let's get to it.

One more note: I was in the arena for the show last night so this is my second time seeing this.

There's no intro as we're heading straight for the opening match. Translation: PLEASE DON'T CHANGE THE CHANNEL YET! I can completely accept this.

US Title: Roman Reigns vs. Rusev

Rematch from last night with Reigns defending. The fans want Lana as Rusev takes him down with a front facelock. That's going to keep the people from watching the debate. Reigns is cheered quite strongly as he kips out of a headscissors but gets double legged back to the mat.

Rusev gets one off a suplex and starts in on Reigns' back. The nine corner clotheslines get Reigns out of trouble but he can't lift Rusev up for the powerbomb because of the back injury. We take a break and come back with Rusev putting on a bearhug to keep up the simple psychology. A dropkick hits Reigns in the mouth and some gutwrench suplexes get two. Back to the waistlock as the match slows down again.

Reigns fights up with more clotheslines and a big boot but the Superman Punch is countered, sending them both falling out to the floor. We come back from another break with Reigns headbutting him off the top and hitting a middle rope clothesline. Geez man enough with the Lex Luger style offense.

Reigns still can't powerbomb him so Rusev gets in a spinwheel kick. More headbutts and another kick to the head give Rusev another two. Reigns' latest comeback is stopped with a superkick and the fans are really getting into this in a way you almost never hear for a Reigns match. The Accolade is broken up but Lana offers a distraction to break up the Superman Punch. The apron kick staggers Rusev (and gets a great reaction from the crowd) and they fight into the crowd for a double countout at 25:38.

Rating: B. The match was another good outing for the two of them and the ending sets up a rematch in the Cell, which is going to receive a divided reception depending on your taste in Cell matches. Maybe it was just the Cincinnati crowd or maybe it's because he's in the midcard instead of the main event but Reigns was getting a great

reaction here. This is the kind of role he's made for: an athletic freak who can take a beating and give out one of his own. Good match here.

Post match Rusev gets a chair and hits Reigns over the back. They get inside and Reigns gets in a spear to put Rusev down. Reigns sits in the chair and poses with the belt before hitting Rusev with the chair to even things up.

WWE2K17 ad with Ambrose's appearance getting a huge pop.

Here's Mick Foley for a chat about last night's Cesaro vs. Sheamus match. The thought of the series ending in a draw seemed to be a mathematical impossibility (not really) but that's what's happened. Foley brings out Sheamus and Cesaro with Sheamus almost immediately cutting him off to say this was about physical dominance.

Cesaro talks about doctors holding Sheamus back last night and an argument breaks out over who was more dominant. Foley cuts them off to say they're both right and they're both getting a championship opportunity....which they're getting together as they're fighting for the Tag Team Titles. Cesaro: "SAY WHAT???" Foley tells them to get over it and just team together because that's his decision.

I had a very bad feeling that this was where they were going and while it's not the worst idea in the world (Raw is dying for tag teams at the moment), it feels like the TNA way of getting here: a bunch of matches that did nothing but fill time until we get to the end result. Sheamus and Cesaro had some good matches (even one very good one) but they drove the feud into the ground to the point where I didn't care how good the matches were since I had absolutely no desire to watch them.

And now, none of that matters because they're basically saying the whole thing was a tie and we're just going to do something different. It comes off as lazy booking and a way to fill in time, which is one of the worst things you can do in wrestling. I'm sure they'll be a decent team but they better not cut New Day's title reign off this close to the record.

Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Anderson and Gallows

New Day is defending in a rematch from last night after Xavier Woods used Francesca II. The match starts fast with Kofi having to dodge a diving Anderson. It's off to Big E. for the Unicorn Stampede with

Woods blowing the trombone in time with the stomps. Gallows, apparently not a music fan, pulls Big E. out to the floor and superkicks him in the face.

Anderson adds a running kick to the face for two and the champs are in quick trouble. Gallows gets in a chokeslam and we take a break. Anderson's powerbomb gets two and we hear about Demolition's title reign being in reach. A kick to the head finally allows the hot tag to Big E. for the suplexes. Big E. misses a charge into the post though and a running boot to the face gets two.

That's enough of being on defense for Big E. so he spears Anderson through the ropes, setting up the Midnight Hour for two with Gallows making the save. Kofi is sent shoulder first into the steps and the Magic Killer gets a very close two on Big E. They had me on that near fall. A VERY bloody Kofi comes back in and hits Trouble in Paradise to pin Anderson and retain the titles at 11:03.

Rating: C+. They're doing really well at making me buy into the title changes here and that's hard to do when it comes to a regular TV title defense. Anderson and Gallows are done as challengers now and I'm really not sure where they go from here. Sheamus and Cesaro are fine for placeholder challengers but New Day really should break the record when they're this close. It would be a waste of time not to.

We look at Kevin Owens injuring Seth Rollins' ribs in their match at Clash of Champions. Stephanie McMahon sent a second referee down for the count, seconds after Rollins would have had the title won. After the show ended, HHH arrived and asked Stephanie how it went ("Great.").

Sheamus and Cesaro (back in his suit) are bickering when Foley comes in. Mick starts yelling about how much potential these two have together because they could shake up the tag division. He'll even give them a chance tonight in a tag match. Foley showed a lot of fire here, as is his custom. Remember that.

Bayley vs. Anna Fields

Fields chokes her on the ropes to start and we hit an early chinlock. Bayley comes back with her elbows and clotheslines, setting up a quick Bayley to Belly for the pin at 2:04.

Post match Bayley says she's not done with Sasha and Charlotte after

that triple threat because she wants to hug that Women's Title.

And now, the bad part of the show. Foley goes in to see Stephanie and asks about the referee issue in last night's main event and telling HHH it was great. Stephanie ERUPTS on Foley, talking about how it should have been his responsibility to get a new referee out there. Instead, he was probably with Sheamus and Cesaro because he thinks with his heart instead of his head. She hired him because of his mind as a businessman (Huh?) and wants him to be more like her. Instead of showing the fire he had earlier, Foley just stands there and takes this because she's Stephanie.

This is every problem with Stephanie rolled into one promo. Not only is it part of a story that is taking WAY too long to go anywhere (I'd be shocked if we get any real resolution before the Royal Rumble) but this is Mick Foley, a three time WWE World Champion and a WWE Hall of Famer. He's one of the best talkers with some of the best fire of all time but he's standing here cowering in front of Stephanie because that's what happens to people around her.

Brock Lesnar, Charlotte, Sting, Roman Reigns and now Mick Foley all have nothing to say back to her because she's Stephanie and the most intimidating presence of all time. Oh except for when she's fun Stephanie who dances with kids and is just a regular soccer mom. This has been going on for years now (keep in mind that Stephanie debuted SEVENTEEN YEARS AGO and first became an authority figure in 2000) and if we're lucky she gets one bit of comeuppance a year. Other than that it's all Stephanie browbeating everyone else and if you don't like it, deal with it because she's Stephanie.

Rich Swann/Cedric Alexander vs. Drew Gulak/Lince Dorado

Swann and Alexander get an inset promo talking about how they're here to have fun but they're not underestimating their opponents. This didn't air in the arena and it would have helped quite a bit. Gulak and Dorado get their Cruiserweight Classic videos and again they're better than nothing. We get the big handshake to start for a compliment to the purple ropes, which take forever to set up and take down.

Dorado and Swann trade headscissors to start and nip into a stalemate. Everything breaks down and Dorado moonsaults onto all three as we take an early break. Back with Drew holding Swann in a chinlock before it's back to Dorado for some chops. The hot tag

bring in Alexander for some forearms and a running kick to Gulak's head. A Lumbar Check sends Dorado to the floor and Swann sunset flips Gulak for the pin at 8:25.

Rating: C. This was the big popcorn break match of the night and it's still not hard to see why. Again, the wrestling is fine but the whole division is being wedged into a show that is already bloated. Swann and Alexander have some personality but Dorado and Gulak are just warm bodies in the eyes of the fans. It's better than last week but they still need some adjustments to make people care.

Cesaro/Sheamus vs. Nick Cutler/Willis Williams

Cesaro takes Cutler over with a one armed delayed vertical suplex but Sheamus drops to the floor instead of tagging in. For some reason he gets on the apron with his back to the ring so Cesaro can tag him in with a slap. The ten forearms make it even worse for Cutler and it's off to Williams, who is taken down with a hard clothesline. The jobbers actually start working on Cesaro's arm for a few seconds before Sheamus Brogue Kicks both guys. Cesaro pins the unconscious Williams at 3:33.

Rating: D+. This was exactly what it needed to be, though it's still forced and something that should have come months ago without the long feud in the first place. We haven't had a wacky partnership that went somewhere important since Kane and Daniel Bryan so this is as good as anything else they have.

Video on TJ Perkins.

TJ talks about wanting to be here for eighteen years but here's Brian Kendrick to interrupt. Kendrick says it's his title to win because Perkins owes him for his career. A brawl is teased and they'll fight at some point in the future.

Here are Charlotte and Dana Brooke for a chat. Charlotte says last night was another chance for everyone to be disappointed because that's what she does time after time. She's not the huggable Bayley or the internet darling Sasha Banks. Cue Sasha to say that's her title because Charlotte didn't beat her last night. Sasha is owed a one on one match and she wants it right now. Charlotte tells the YESing fans to be quiet so she can tell Sasha that she'll get her rematch....next week. Sasha cleans house and the villains leave.

Rollins is on his way to the ring to interrupt the upcoming

Highlight Reel but Foley cuts him off because Seth isn't medically cleared. All Rollins can hear are Stephanie's words coming out of Mick's mouth.

TJ Perkins vs. Tony Nese

Non-title with both guys being TNA castoffs because they're dumb that way. The much stronger Nese throws Perkins around to start and he cartwheels out of TJ's ankle scissors to show off. An early kneebar attempt doesn't work for TJ as Nese sends him outside for a superkick and a big dive to take us to a break. Back with Perkins grabbing a Black Widow but getting planted with a reverse gutwrench suplex.

The fans chant for Harambe (the gorilla who was shot at the Cincinnati Zoo, which was a recurring trend all night long) and CM Punk as TJ fights back with uppercuts and a jumping neckbreaker out of the corner. A gutbuster looks to set up a tornado DDT but Perkins is draped over the top rope instead. TJ is right back up with the fireman's carry into an enziguri (Fans: "RANDY SAVAGE!") and the kneebar makes Nese tap at 8:50.

Rating: C+. I know the fans don't care but this was entertaining stuff, partially because we have a reason to care about Perkins. Something as simple as being the champion tells us more about him than we know about anyone else and the announcers did a good job of building Nese up as the perfect athlete who could take down the champ. Good little match here, though the fans really didn't care.

Hispanic Heritage Month video on Pedro Morales.

Sasha vs. Charlotte and Perkins vs. Kendrick for the respective titles next week.

Ashton Kutcher and Danny Masterson are going to be in Los Angeles next week to take care of Chris Jericho and Kevin Owens.

It's time for the Highlight Reel. Jericho tells us to be quiet about a dozen times because this is the most anticipated Highlight Reel in WWE history. Before Owens comes out here though, Jericho has a bone to pick with Masterson and Kutchner, who have the nerve to claim that they're better friends. Jericho: "THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!" That's so unthinkable that they're both about to make the List of Jericho.

It's almost time for Owens to come out but Jericho yells at the cameraman for shooting him from the wrong side, which means HE MADE

THE LIST! Rollins is on there too because he got hurt again last night. Owens comes out and praises the Jeritron 5000 but says he's not about to wear a suit for a place like Cincinnati, Ohio. What kind of town can this be when it created Dean Ambrose? Jericho: "HE STILL OWES ME \$17,000!"

Owens moves on to Rollins and says the rib injury is karma after all the people Seth injured over the last year and a half. Cue Rollins but security and Foley pull him back. Instead here are Enzo Amore and Big Cass to interrupt and ask Jericho how they're doing. Jericho says they're just fine but Enzo and Cass ARE ON THE LIST.

After Owens corrects Jericho's spelling, Cass accuses Jericho of being Santa Claus. Jericho: "Maybe I am Santa Claus! Maybe I'll come down there and sit on your lap!" Cass points out that people sit on Santa's lap but Jericho said he was going to punch Cass in the face. A fan poll makes Jericho even angrier but as it turns out, Foley just made a match between these four.

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

Jericho and Enzo start us off but first we need to pause for the scarf removal. An armdrag has Jericho so frustrated that he crawls over for a hug from Owens. Kevin comes in and gets dropped by Cass so it's time to launch another human being over the top rope as a projectile. Sidewalk slams have the Canadians in trouble but Jericho sidesteps a charge to send Cass outside as we take a break.

Back with Enzo pounding on Jericho in the corner and getting two off a high crossbody. Owens offers a quick distraction though and it's time for the villains to take over. Thankfully that means Owens doing Enzo's dance across the apron because he knows how to mock a crowd. Jericho and Owens take turns beating on Enzo with Owens handling the trash talking ("THAT'S THE LEAD SINGER OF FOZZY!").

Enzo blocks a superplex but dives into a dropkick, setting up Owens' backplash for two. Owens to the referee: "I'm the Universal Champion!" Referee: "It was two!" Owens: "But he shouldn't even be out of NXT yet!" Enzo finally gets in a right hand to make the tag off to Cass for the house cleaning. For some reason Jericho decides to slap Cass, earning himself a boot to the face. The two of them head outside and it's Enzo hitting his middle rope DDT for two on Owens. The powerbomb puts Amore away at 16:37.

Rating: C. Owens' trash talking aside, this was just your standard

main event tag. Enzo and Cass are fine for this role and it's already more entertaining than seeing them talk about buying a timeshare in Puerto Rico. They're still making sure to protect Cass and it's way too early to even think about a split so this is about as good as it's going to get for them at the moment.

The show wraps up just after the match ends. Post show, Owens and Jericho kept beating on Enzo until Sami Zayn came out for the save. Posing ensued to close out the night.

Overall Rating: D+. This show suffered had the same problem as so many others: burnout. The first half hour was a good, hard hitting match, followed by an entertaining Tag Team Title match. Then it was Stephanie treating Foley like a dog who tracked mud into her house and a cruiserweight tag match that didn't need to be on the show.

The main event was a nice pick up but they really need something to fire the crowd up in the middle. Maybe a Sami Zayn match instead of putting him on Superstars? At the end of the day, three hours is too much on TV and it's even worse when you're watching it live. The show has good stuff on it but that good stuff is dragged down by so many other things, the biggest of which is just time itself. It wasn't a horrible show but you could tell when the debate came on because the show just gave up.

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