

# Smackdown – October 25, 2013: The Main Event Needs Five

## Smackdown

Date: October 25, 2013

Location: Birmingham-Jefferson Civic Center, Birmingham, Alabama

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole

We're finally at the last show before the Cell PPV which technically has been built up for about two months now, depending on how you look at it. The main story coming out of Monday is that Big Show is indeed still around despite being in a bunch of lawsuits both for and against him which is riveting television if I've ever heard of it. This company is in desperate need of a new top story but I wouldn't look for that to change anytime soon. Let's get to it.

The opening video recaps the HHH/Big Show stuff from Raw including the Bryan vs. Orton contract signing.

We open with Cole in the ring for a sitdown interview with HHH. Hasn't he had two or three of these already recently? Cole asks HHH about Big Show's actions on Monday which HHH say caused six technical employees to be fired. There's yet another lawsuit against Big Show on charges not important enough to specify so HHH can't comment. Big Show is however fired, period. Cole asks about Big Show showing up either Sunday or tonight but HHH says he can't comment.

Cole gives up on the point and asks about Cena vs. Del Rio with HHH saying he can't wait for Cena's return. He knows what it's like to come back from a devastating injury and he can't wait to see Cena come back. That's enough Cena talk so Cole asks about the other world title, drawing a YES chant. When asked about the Shawn Michaels element, HHH says he's thrilled because Shawn is indeed his friend and will make sure the job gets done. Shawn will do the right thing at the end of the day so HHH

isn't worried. Cole asks what the right thing is but here's Bryan before he can answer.

Cole heads to the floor as Bryan asks HHH the same question: what is the right thing? Bryan thinks it's to let himself and Orton settle everything once and for all. You lock both of them in the Cell and no one gets out until there's a winner. Bryan says Shawn may be HHH's best friend but he's also his own man, so he'll do what's best for business. When everything is fair and even, Bryan is going to prove HHH wrong. A loud YES chant takes us out.

### Usos vs. Wyatt Family

Miz is on commentary. We get the full Siva Tao from the Usos which as usual gets a huge response. Miz sums up Bray's look quite well: "He looks like Charles Manson fell asleep at a Jimmy Buffet concert." Jimmy avoids a shot from the back by Harper but gets run over by Rowan just after the bell. A big boot from Harper puts him down as well and a Michinoku Driver of all things gets two.

Jimmy crawls over to make the tag to Jey and Harper is immediately caught in a Samoan drop. Everything breaks down and the Family is sent to the floor so Jimmy can hit a suicide dive but Harper breaks up Jey's with a forearm. Bray and Miz both stand up with Miz decking Wyatt in the face. Rowan chases Miz to the back, allowing the Usos to hit a double superkick to Harper for the pin at 2:35.

### AJ Lee vs. Nikki Bella

I believe this is Nikki's first singles match back since her leg injury. AJ bails to the floor to start to hide behind Tamina. The not so bright Nikki goes after her and gets her neck snapped across the top rope. A neckbreaker puts Nikki down for two and we're already in the chinlock. Nikki fights up with some clotheslines as Tamina throws Brie into the steps. The distraction lets AJ hook the Black Widow for the submission at

2:31.

We see Cena vs. Alberto Del Rio as per WWE '14.

Here's the Cena career retrospective from Raw. Based on these videos, you would think Cena had been gone for about two years instead of nine weeks.

We go to the back where Bray Wyatt wants us to follow him. He steps aside and shows us a chained up and unconscious Miz with the sheep mask on his face and the word "liar" written on his chest. This is the kind of creepy stuff they need to get back to with the Wyatts.

### 3MB vs. Los Matadores

In case the first four or five times didn't fulfill your needs for this pairing. During the entrances we see the HILARIOUS goring of Zeb Colter again. I know it's hilarious because Cole tells us that it is over and over. Before the match the Real Americans come out to watch. Mahal is the one on the floor this time.

McIntyre jumps Diego to start before it's quickly off to Slater who gets two off a knee lift. A double slingshot suplex gets two more on Diego and we hit the armbar from Drew. Diego fights up and makes the tag off to Fernando who cleans house and tags in Diego for a downward spiral/bulldog combo for the pin on Drew at 2:06.

Post match Mahal gets gored and taken down by a top rope Asai moonsault. Colter says he didn't lay face down in Cambodia so deviant men can kidnap a small person and force him into a bull costume. Apparently there's a tag match on Sunday.

### Ryback/Paul Heyman vs. CM Skunk

You read the name right. This is No DQ as a preview for Sunday. Heyman

says this will be a demonstration of the teamwork you'll see inside the Cell on Sunday. Skunk comes out to Punk's music and in a black hoodie but the fans quickly catch on to the joke. He has a skunk stripe painted into his hair. Ryback destroys him with the ease you would expect and hits two powerbombs in a row. Heyman pulls a kendo stick out from under the ring and hits about twenty shots to Skunk's back. Shell Shock ends Skunk with Heyman getting the pin at 2:42.

Heyman says that Skunk may have been a parody, but the same thing is going to happen on Sunday. Punk's face will be raked across the Cell and he'll be beaten badly enough that Heyman can get the pin again.

Vickie thinks CM Skunk is hilarious and spells out the joke for us by telling us that it sounds like CM Punk. Langston comes in and says he's ready for the main event since Miz is out. Vickie doesn't think so but Langston says he didn't realize he was talking to Brad Maddox. That's enough to get him Miz's spot in the eight man tag tonight.

Here's Alberto Del Rio for his final speech before facing Cena on Sunday. People have been telling him he's crazy but people have been building monuments to him in Mexico. Babies are being named after him because he's so amazing. On the other hand you have Americans who only have John Cena to cheer for. Alberto promises to put Cena in the cross armbreaker and never let it go no matter what the fans think of him.

R-Truth sells merchandise again but Santino comes in to try his luck. The (up to) 20% off sale is still on WWE.com if you enter the promo code COBRA.

### Great Khali vs. Fandango

Fandango chops away to start and is immediately thrown down. Khali hits his big overhand chop in the corner but Fandango hits a jumping enziguri to put Khali down in the corner. The announcers are talking about Big Show and JBL references Copernicus just like he did on NXT, saying the

world clearly revolves around Big Show instead of the sun. Summer Rae and Natalya get in a fight on the floor which stumbles into the ring for the DQ at 1:45. Can we get a match longer than three minutes tonight?

### Randy Orton/Shield vs. Daniel Bryan/Big E. Langston/Goldust/Cody Rhodes

That's quite the main event. Cody and Dean get things going with Rhodes taking the US Champion into the good corner for a tag off to Goldust. Goldie sends Ambrose out to the floor and we take an early break. Back with Rollins chopping away at Langston, only to be taken down with a belly to belly suplex. Cody comes back in and gets two off a sunset flip out of the corner, only to have Seth send him face first into the middle turnbuckle.

The fast Shield tags begin with Reigns coming in to chop away, only to have Cody pull him over to the corner for a tag off to Bryan. Daniel takes Roman down by the leg and does the double knee stomp out of the surfboard. Off to Langston for some shoulders in the corner and a tag off to Goldust. Reigns misses a charge into the corner and Goldust gets two off a top rope spinning cross body. The fans aren't exactly thrilled with the match so far.

Back to Cody who gets taken into the Shield corner for a pounding from Ambrose and an eye rake across the top rope. Orton gets his first tag and pounds away on his former Legacy teammate, only to have Cody come back with a clothesline for two. A suplex gets the same and it's back to Goldust for a few seconds before Cody comes in again and slugs on Randy some more. Randy comes back by dropping Cody ribs first over the top rope and makes the tag off to Ambrose.

Dean takes Cody to the outside and rams him into the barricade. It's quickly back to Orton who misses a knee drop but catches Cody in the backbreaker out of the corner for two. We take another break and come back with Reigns slamming Cody down for two. Back to Rollins who grabs Cody's leg to break up a hot tag attempt. Dean runs into a boot in the

corner but he makes a blind tag to Seth, only to have Cody catch him diving off the top. The hot tag brings in Goldust to wake up the crowd and he backdrops Rollins down with ease.

Reigns makes another blind tag and takes Goldust down with a clothesline. Shield takes over on Goldust in the corner with the rapid tags continuing. Orton comes back in to stomp Goldie down into the corner before Reigns and Rollins come in within about 8 seconds of each other. Goldust comes back with a double bulldog and there's the hot tag to Bryan. Daniel cleans house and sends Rollins to the outside. Reigns gets the same treatment, leaving Daniel alone with Dean.

Bryan backflips over Ambrose in the corner but instead of clotheslining Dean down it's the FLYING GOAT to take out Orton. The missile dropkick takes Dean down and here come the YES kicks. Reigns breaks up the YES Lock but Langston runs Roman over. Rollins escapes the Big Ending but a Disaster Kick takes Seth to the floor. Cody dives off the top to take out Rollins and Reigns but Bryan misses the running dropkick in the corner. Back to Orton for the Elevated DDT but Langston distracts him, allowing Bryan to hit the running knee for the pin at 15:58 shown of 22:58.

**Rating:** B. Nice main event here which got the time it needed to build up. Bryan pinning Orton to end things probably isn't a good sign leading into the PPV but at this point I'll take anything to get us to a new main event program. Everyone looked good here and I like the idea of Langston in the main event scene.

Celebrating ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. This is a tricky one to rate. The main event is solid and takes up about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the show, but the rest of it was pure filler the entire way through. I did like the Wyatts kidnapping and labeling Miz for lack of a better term. There's potential in those guys and a win over a former world champion isn't going to hurt Bray at all. The show went by quickly which is a good idea and the whole thing did a decent enough job

of building up the PPV on Sunday. Not bad here but nothing really worth seeing, other than maybe the main event if you're bored.

### Results

Usos b. Wyatt Family – Double superkick to Harper

AJ Lee b. Nikki Bella – Black Widow

Los Matadores b. 3MB – Downward spiral/bulldog combination to McIntyre

Paul Heyman/Ryback b. CM Skunk – Heyman pinned Skunk after a Shell Shock from Ryback

Fandango vs. Great Khali went to a no contest when Natalya and Summer Rae interfered

Daniel Bryan/Goldust/Cody Rhodes/Big E. Langston b. Randy Orton/Shield – Running knee to Orton

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# **Smackdown – October 18, 2013: Action Over Storytelling**

### **Smackdown**

Date: October 18, 2013

Location: Spring Center, Kansas City, Missouri

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

We're practically at a standstill here with the Cell PPV a little over a week away. Orton is still feuding with Bryan, Big Show is still a vigilante and no one cares about the Bellas as the new saviors of the Divas. However Goldust and Cody Rhodes are the new tag team champions after a great match on Monday night. We need to get to the PPV already to get us on to anything new. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the main event from Raw with Big Show costing Shield the titles.

Theme song.

After the theme song we open with Brad Maddox and Vickie Guerrero in the ring. Vickie screeches about running a tight ship here on Smackdown and guarantees that Big Show will not be causing havoc here tonight. There will be order and discipline and Brad is here to assist her in achieving those goals. Brad says he'll be keeping Big Show out of here tonight and Vickie praises the regime for their guidance. Cue Daniel Bryan who says he's glad these two are doing what's best for business.

What's best for business though is Bryan beating Randy Orton inside the Cell with guest referee Shawn Michaels. As for tonight however, there's a rumor that a 7'0 monster has gotten through security and here he is. Actually it's just Big Show's music and there is no giant. Bryan says he's just messing with the two of them, drawing a laugh from the crowd. Big Show isn't here yet but Cody Rhodes and Goldust are. Vickie yells about wanting discipline and makes Bryan/Cody/Goldust vs. Shield for tonight before cackling a lot.

Wyatt Family vs. The Miz/Kofi Kingston



Miz jumps Rowan to start and hits a quick corner clothesline to knock him into the corner. Off to Kofi to attack the arm before Harper comes in and sends Kingston into the corner. A quick cross body gets two on Luke but he dives into a big boot for two. Back to Rowan for a slam before Harper comes in for a chinlock. Kofi avoids a charge in the corner and goes to tag Miz, only to have Erick pull him off the apron. Harper sneaks in and takes Kofi's head off with the discus lariat for the pin at 4:05.

**Rating:** D+. No time to go anywhere here but it furthers the Miz vs. Wyatt feud. With Bray on the shelf we're going to have to build it up on promos but luckily that's where Bray shines more than anything else. Kofi was his usual jobbing self here but he never loses any popularity. It's also good to see the Wyatts get a win to make up for their loss last week.

Post match the Wyatts circle Kofi but Bray calls them off. It's ok that Miz is afraid because Bray is the hammer that everyone fears. Miz should enjoy his world as long as he can because the Wyatts are going to take it all away.

#### Brie Bella vs. AJ Lee

Brie has a banged up shoulder. AJ immediately bails to the floor a few times but Tamina blocks Brie from going after her. Tamina finally moves and Brie gets in a right hand before sending it back inside. AJ absorbs everything Brie throws at her and snaps the bad arm over the top rope to take over. Off to an armbar as Brie screams a lot. Brie's arm is wrapped around the middle rope and it's already back to another armbar. The twin comes back with an elbow in the corner and a middle rope missile dropkick for two. Nikki throws Tamina into the steps, allowing Brie to grab a TERRIBLE looking Bella Buster for the pin at 3:55.

**Rating:** D. If this is supposed to make me sympathize with or care about the Bellas, it's not quite working. I have a hard time caring about two beautiful women on a reality show who happen to be sleeping with two of the three top guys in the company. The whole feud started because AJ said

she was a wrestler and Brie is a reality TV personality but we're supposed to like the reality TV star on the wrestling show. Yet WWE is surprised it's not working.

Lillian is introducing a match when Big Show comes through the crowd. He gets in the ring and holds up a ticket given to him by Daniel Bryan. Big Show thanks the fans for all the support he's given to him through social media and it seems the fans want Big Show to get his job back. He holds up his fist but here are the GM's (Hanzel and Gretel according to Show) to try to throw him out. Brad says Show has nothing to lose which Show says is the worst thing you can say. There's the KO punch and Show leaves through the crowd.

#### CM Punk vs. Big E. Langston

Langston easily breaks Punk's grip and pounds him down before running Punk over with a shoulder block. A big knee lift puts Punk down again but CM fights up and slugs away at Langston before low bridging him out to the floor. Punk's slingshot plancha is caught in midair and Punk is rammed back first into the post as we go to a break. Back with Langston caught in a half crab but powering out, only to have his hurricanrana caught in another half crab.

Langston lets him go but a Warrior splash only hits knees. Punk comes back with the leg lariat to the face but the swinging neckbreaker is countered. Langston misses a charge into the post and falls out to the floor, setting up a nice suicide dive from Punk. Back in and a high cross body gets a close two. The fans are liking this. The top rope elbow gets another two count but Langston escapes the GTS and runs Punk over. Warrior Splash gets two but Punk slips out of the Big Ending and it's high kick/GTS for the pin at 7:38 shown of 11:08.

**Rating:** B-. Fun match here with Punk playing a good David to Langston's Goliath. I'm a fan of Big E. and it's annoying to see him fall through the cracks like he has in the last few months. He's more than capable of

talking and his look is enough to keep him around for years. Good match here.

Post match here are Heyman and company to congratulate Punk on his win over a marginally talented rookie. However Punk has to face a professional inside the Cell and he wants no part of that man. Punk says that makes Heyman an idiot rather than the best in the world. There are two words that Heyman needs to focus on.

The first is Cell, as in what they're going to be locked inside of. The second word is Hell, which is what Heyman and Ryback are going to go through. Heyman quotes AC/DC and threatens to come explain what he means personally. The Heyman guys head to the ring to beat down Punk but Langston makes the save. Looks like a face turn which could be intriguing.

After a break Del Rio is in the ring waving a Mexican flag. Josh introduces us to the Cena video from Raw. Alberto says that he was waving that flag because he's the champion of Mexico. Unlike himself, the people here have no passion or soul at all. John Cena is the ultimate gringo representing these people and Del Rio can't stand him.

Who does Cena think he is by coming back and being handed a world title shot? Cena has only been gone two months but his ego keeps growing day by day. After he loses to Del Rio, he'll be just like all these people: a nobody. Josh gets put in the armbreaker as an example of what's happening at the PPV.

We recap Big Show knocking out Maddox. Brad sold the heck out of that punch.

### Real Americans vs. Usos

Colter is on commentary. Cesaro gets elbowed down by Jimmy to start as

Colter rants about Los Matadores. Off to Swagger to run over Jimmy in the corner and Colter is blaming the government shutdown for the arrival of Los Matadores. Cesaro does a remarkable 27 rotation giant swing to Jimmy to one of the biggest reactions of the night.

Back to Swagger for some stomping and a double chickenwing. Colter wants to know what kind of people kidnap a little person and make them dress like a bull. Maybe they owe child support and have been passing bad checks. Cue Los Matadores so Torito can gore Colter a few times. Jey comes back with a NASTY looking superkick to set up the Superfly Splash on Swagger for the pin at 5:45.

**Rating:** D. This was a squash with a screwy ending. It's very annoying to see Cesaro get more and more over because of a great display of physical strength, only to be used to put over a worthless tag team like Los Matadores. The Usos need to get the tag titles eventually and there's a chance they can take them from the Rhodes Brothers, perhaps in a three way match.

Swagger gets beaten up post match.

Raw ReBounce shows Shawn and Orton's showdown.

### Shield vs. Daniel Bryan/Cody Rhodes/Goldust

Orton comes out after Bryan and says that Bryan can't beat him and that he's in way over his head. Goldust and Reigns get things going with the power man taking Goldie into the corner and the fast Shield tags start. Rollins stomps Goldust down and it's quickly back to Roman who gets caught in a Russian legsweep. A kick to the side of Roman's head is good for two and it's off to Cody for a springboard missile dropkick.

Rhodes gets caught in the wrong corner as well with Roman sending him into the post as we go to a break. Back with Ambrose raking Cody's eyes

on the top rope before it's back to Rollins for a modified chinlock. Reigns comes back in for a splash and a chinlock of his own before elbowing Cody down for two. Back to Rollins for some kicks to the back before Roman comes in again for a standing chinlock. There's a distinct lack of Ambrose in his match so far.

Cody sidesteps a charging Roman and sends him out to the floor. Back in and a dropkick puts Roman down again but Rollins dropkicks Goldust off the apron. Seth gets kneed in the face for his troubles and it's a double tag off to Ambrose vs. Bryan. Daniel responds to the YES chants and hits all his favorites including the moonsault out of the corner, the corner dropkick and the kick to the head. Everything breaks down and a Disaster Kick drops Rollins.

Ambrose and Bryan hit double clotheslines but Reigns' spear hits the steps instead of Goldust. A running knee to Dean's ribs puts him down but Bryan can't launch the headbutt. Dean gets two off a butterfly superplex as Cody makes a save. Cody loads up a sunset flip from the apron but Rollins counters into a powerbomb throw onto Goldust onto the announce table. Back in and Bryan almost gets the YES Lock but has to go after Rollins. The FLYING GOAT takes out Seth and Dean and the running knee is enough to pin Ambrose at 9:48 shown of 13:18.

**Rating:** B. This took time to get going but the last five minutes or so were such complete insanity that it's hard not to love. They kind of booked themselves into a corner here though as you can't have the tag champions lose four days after getting the belts and you can't have Bryan lose this close to a world title match so Shield had to go down. Still though, fun stuff.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This is what Smackdown needs to be: focused more on action than the storytelling. The main event as well as Punk vs. Langston were good matches and the rest of the matches other than the Divas weren't terrible. I liked this so much better than Raw as we didn't waste time on recapping everything and actually did stuff. Nice show tonight.

## Results

Wyatt Family b. Kofi Kingston/The Miz – Discus lariat to Kingston

Brie Bella b. AJ Lee – Bella Buster

CM Punk b. Big E. Langston – GTS

Usos b. Real Americans – Superfly Splash to Swagger

Daniel Bryan/Cody Rhodes/Goldust b. Shield – Running knee to Ambrose

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# **On This Day: August 29, 2012 – NXT: Crowning A Champion**

## NXT

Date: August 29, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, William Regal

It's time for the title match tonight and I'm actually somewhat excited. This change officially turns NXT into its own regular promotion which is what it needed for the last year and a half or so. It's Jinder Mahal vs. Seth Rollins for the inaugural title, which is a matchup I didn't think I'd like. Mahal is growing on me as a basic foreign heel and

Rollins....well he's energetic. Let's get to it.

#### Jason Jordan/Mike Dalton vs. Hunico/Camacho

Jordan/Dalton won the first match between these teams. Regal calls the fans the NXT Universe now. Great. Now we're hearing the same stupid lines from NXT that we hear on Raw and Smackdown. Jordan and Camacho start us off with Jordan getting in some basic offense before walking into a pretty good spinebuster. Camacho pounds on Jordan's face and suplexes him down to bring in Hunico.

Back to Camacho after nothing of note and the bigger guy throws Jordan around with a nice butterfly suplex. A legdrop gets two but Jordan escapes a suplex and tags in Dalton. Dalton hits a spinwheel kick and a charge in the corner, followed by a hurricanrana for two. A missile dropkick gets two on Hunico and everything breaks down. As Jordan is being put back on the apron, Camacho hits Dalton from behind, allowing Hunico to hit his version of an Angle Slam for the pin at 4:00.

**Rating:** C. This was your run of the mill tag match between four guys who aren't that interesting but they made it work well enough. Hunico and Camacho are fine for a low level tag team and giving the unknowns a win over them in the first match was a good way to give Dalton and Jordan some exposure. As is the case with almost everyone on NXT though, they need ring time.

Here are the Usos with something to say. They call out the Ascension and as the lights go out for Ascension's entrance, Ascension runs in from behind and jumps the Usos, laying them out with relative ease.

Raw ReBound is about Punk vs. Lawler. I'm still curious as to when Cena forgot how to climb a cage.

#### Big E. Langston vs. Chase Donovan

A clothesline and that falling slam thing gets the pin at 40 seconds. He really needs to change finishers. A powerslam would be fine.

The locker room comes out to watch the title match.

Langston says nothing.

Howard Finkel is doing the announcing for the main event.

Dusty comes out and JR is now on commentary.

### NXT Championship: Jinder Mahal vs. Seth Rollins

They have a ton of time for this. Fink may be fat and older now (he's only 62 so he's hardly ancient), but that voice is still perfect. Mahal won't shake Dusty's hand before the match. Rollins tries to take him to the mat to start but Mahal gets back up quickly. A dropkick puts Mahal down again and Rollins hits a hard chop. Mahal gets sent to the floor but he avoids a dive and sends Rollins face first into the apron. A suplex onto the ramp has Rollins in trouble and we head back in.

We take a break and come back with Rollins in even more trouble. Mahal stomps him down and hits a backbreaker to start setting up the camel clutch. Rollins gets choked against the ropes and the fans are behind Rollins now. He tries a comeback but gets kneed in the face by Mahal to take him back down. The camel clutch is escaped so Mahal pounds him in the back again. An enziguri out of nowhere puts Mahal down and Rollins punches Jinder down.

Mahal goes up for another knee but Rollins knocks him off the top and out to the floor. Rollins hits a HUGE dive to the floor and both guys are down. Back in and Seth goes up again, only to get crotched and superplexed from the top. We take another break and come back with the two of them slugging it out. Mahal might have a bad knee but he pulls off a sitout slam for two. A full nelson slam is countered and Rollins goes to the apron.

Seth hits an enziguri to the head and a running knee for two. The near falls are getting closer and closer here. A running forearm in the corner staggers Mahal but he manages to drop Rollins face first into the buckle. The low superkick (I think he calls it Avada Kadavra, making Rollins awesome) gets two. Phoenix Splash (moonsault into a 450) misses and Mahal hits the full nelson slam for two. Rollins gets to the rope before the clutch can go on and Rollins rolls him up for two. Rollins comes back



with the buckle bomb and the Blackout out of nowhere for the pin and the title at 14:24 shown of 21:24.

**Rating:** B. I'm still not wild on Rollins' in ring work but the fans are into him and he's not dull. He also needs a new finisher as the Blackout looks pretty forced to put it mildly. As for the match though, they did a great job of building both guys up as unbeatable and then having them go at it. The match was very good as far as making you wonder who was going to win and it turned into a good back and forth fight at the end. Not a masterpiece or anything, but for the first NXT Championship, this was more than acceptable.

Fink giving Rollins the NEEEEEEEEEEEEEW treatment makes the announcement much better. The roster puts Rollins on their shoulders to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B. This was all about the main event so I'm not going to really bother thinking about the rest of it. Rollins is a good choice for a first champion as he can defend the title for a few months and then have a big time heel beat him to take the title. This felt like a big show and I wanted to see it, which is the right idea here. I'm very pleased with this and it worked quite well.

### Results

Hunico/Camacho b. Jason Jordan/Mike Dalton – Reverse fireman's carry slam to Dalton

Big E. Langston b. Chase Donovan – Over the shoulder mat slam

Seth Rollins b. Jinder Mahal – Blackout

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# NXT – August 14, 2013: The Old Shield Ways

## NXT

Date: August 14, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tony Dawson, William Regal

Things are getting better in NXT as we now have a heel champion instead of a face champion that no one can stand. Other than that we have Shield vs. Xavier Woods/Corey Graves/Adrian Neville in what has the potential to be a solid six man tag. The crowd should love the Shield if nothing else. Let's get to it.

After the usual opening, here's Paul Heyman to get us going. He's here to look for a new Paul Heyman Guy and is thrilled by what he sees in NXT. Heyman appreciates the ECW chants but he's here to look for the future rather than to live off the past. In the back, there is the next Paul Heyman, or the next Brock Lesnar, or the next Curtis Axel, the latter of whom comes out to a mixed reaction. Paul talks about how awesome Curtis is and says there's no one in Florida who can be the next Axel.

This brings out Big E. Langston to a HUGE reaction. He says he's man enough to take down Axel for the Intercontinental Title but Heyman isn't pleased. Axel says he's got this one and agrees to face Langston at say....Thanksgiving? Or maybe Christmas? Langston cuts him off and says defend it tonight or Axel proves that he's not good enough to hang here in NXT. That's enough for Axel to accept the challenge and we're on.

Intercontinental Title: Curtis Axel vs. Big E. Langston

Axel pounds away at Langston's head and speeds things up, only to be caught in a nice looking belly to belly suplex. Curtis is sent to the floor and we take a break with Heyman yelling OH MY GOD at Langston's strength. Back with Big E. holding a chinlock and hitting five big punches to the ribs.

Axel gets in a kick to the gut and a clothesline to the back of the head to put Langston down. A quick dropkick gets no cover and a big THANK YOU PAUL chant breaks out. Another dropkick gets two and we hit the front facelock. Langston easily powers out and fires off a series of clotheslines and knee lifts before running Axel over. There go the straps but Heyman comes in for the DQ at 4:38 shown of 8:08.

**Rating:** C-. This was fine. We certainly won't going to get a title change here but the crowd was WAY into Langston and Axel got in enough offense to not look like a joke. Big E. can hold his own in the ring and is looking like a more well rounded worker every time he's out there. That's very impressive given that he's only 27 and has only been in wrestling for a few years.

Post match Langston goes after Heyman but Axel makes the save. Curtis loads up a belt shot but walks into the Big Ending for the five count.

Sami Zayn says he's got a long running issue with Bo Dallas but now he's got to deal with Cesaro and Colter accusing him of being an Arab or an evil French Canadian. He thinks the moment that tipped them off was when he spoke Arabic or when he announced himself as being from Montreal. At the same time though, he challenged Cesaro to a match over a month ago but hasn't heard back. Zayn will up the ante though: we can make it 2/3 falls.

#### Mason Ryan vs. Scott Dawson

Dawson gets in his face to start but gets crushed into the corner. As the beating continues here are Enzo Amore and Colin Cassidy for a distraction, allowing Dawson to get in some cheap shots. Not that it matters as Mason's cobra clutch slam is good for the pin at 1:30.

Ryan cleans house after the match.

### Women's Title: Paige vs. Summer Rae

This was supposed to be Emma's title shot but Summer beat her down last week and gets the shot instead. They fight over a lockup to start and Paige gets a quick two off a cross body. Paige throws her across the ring and stomps Summer down in the corner, only to be slammed face first onto the mat via a caught boot.

In a unique move, Summer puts Paige's head between her (Summer's) legs with Paige on her knees (think a victory roll position but on the mat) and slams Paige face first into the mat before turning her over into a rollup for two. A monkey flip gets two for the challenger and Summer cranks on a headlock. Paige drives her into the corner to escape and catches Summer's boot in a nice callback. The Paige Turner is good for the pin at 3:43.

**Rating:** C-. This was short but it worked well enough. I'm assuming they're setting up for Emma vs. Paige as a big match which is fine, but the bait and switch isn't NXT's normal style. Summer's in ring work isn't all that great but she's far better in the ring than someone like Aksana. Paige was her usual good self here.

AJ says she's defending the title against someone next week but she isn't sure who it's going to be. It could be anyone from the boom mic operator to her mom to Renee Young. Bayley comes up behind her and gives her a big hug. She's REALLY excited to see AJ and apparently has been following her all day. Bayley would like the title shot and thinks they're friends, but they'll be even BETTER friends after the title match. AJ gets another big hug and gives a look that says she's admitting defeat in the battle of the crazies.

Dolph Ziggler will be here next week.

During the break Emma attacked Summer Rae. A ticked off Emma could be interesting.

### Shield vs. Corey Graves/Adrian Neville/Xavier Woods

Graves vs. Rollins gets us going with Corey sending him right back into

the corner for a meeting with the Shield. Seth charges in for an armdrag but Graves keeps rolling through and armdrags Corey down instead. Off to Neville for a dropkick to the knee and one to the chest for two before the tag is made to Woods. Things speed up a bit and Woods snaps off a headscissors for two. The NXT guys keep up the frequent tags with Graves cranking away on Seth's arm. The arm is quickly dropped in favor of the leg but Rollins bails to the floor, allowing Woods and Neville to hit stereo dives on Shield as we take a break.

Back with Reigns headbutting Woods down and stomping him down in the Shield corner. Off to the US Champion for some trash talk and right hands to Woods' afro. Xavier backflips out of a belly to back suplex and there's the not yet hot tag to Graves. A quick chop block sets up Lucky 13 but Rollins makes the save. Reigns comes in to pound away and hits a great standing falcon's arrow for two. Back to Seth to crank on the arm for a bit before making a blind tag off to Reigns. Graves doesn't see the tag and tries a sunset flip on Rollins, allowing Roman to get in a hard cheap shot.

Back to Ambrose for more trash talk as the fast Shield tags continue. A snap suplex puts Graves back in the wrong corner before Reigns comes back in. Corey kicks away at Roman's knee from the mat but there's almost no effect. Graves is shoved into the corner and gets a burst of energy to fight his way out.

The hot tag brings in Neville to speed things up and an enziguri puts Dean down. He gets the knees up to block the Red Arrow though and makes a tag off to Rollins. Adrian flips out of a German suplex and tags in Woods who gets two off a high cross body. A kick to Seth's head and a quick downward spiral gets two. The It's Morphin Time clothesline gets two as well but Reigns makes the diving save.

Neville hurricanranas Reigns to the floor and Ambrose suplexes Graves to the floor. Woods loads up a superplex but Rollins counters into a sunset bomb. Xavier holds the ropes but Reigns makes a blind tag and punches Woods to break his grip on the ropes. Rollins hits the Buckle Bomb and the spear from Reigns is enough to pin Woods at 14:07 shown of 16:52.

**Rating:** B+. Cut two minutes or so out of the middle and this is a classic. This was in the old vein of Shield matches with the last second saves and perfectly planned out insanity and it's still awesome. The NXT guys got a solid rub here as they got to put Shield to a good test. The ending never really was in doubt, but they had me wondering there for a few seconds, which is a sign of a good match.

Cesaro accepts Zayn's challenge for the 2/3 falls match next week. He promises to beat Zayn so bad but Sami jumps him to start a brawl. They're pulled apart and Cesaro channels his inner James Kirk by shouting ZAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAYN to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B. Solid show here with a great main event and some good stuff leading up to it. NXT does a great job at incorporating the main show guys into the fold and the shows benefit a lot from it. At the end of the day though, the NXT guys are the stars of the show and that's the important idea. The Zayn vs. Cesaro match has the potential to be amazing so things are looking up for next week.

### Results

Big E. Langston b. Curtis Axel via DQ when Paul Heyman interfered

Mason Ryan b. Scott Dawson – Cobra clutch slam

Paige b. Summer Rae – Paige Turner

Shield b. Xavier Woods/Corey Graves/Adrian Neville – Spear to Woods

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# Monday Night Raw – July 29, 2013: Does Momentum Fear Tape?

## Monday Night Raw

Date: July 29, 2013

Location: Laredo Energy Arena, Laredo, Texas

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole

This is a rare taped episode of the show as the main guys are off in Australia at the moment for an international tour. We're only a few weeks away from Summerslam and the main event matches are set, so most of the next few weeks will be about firming things up for the big show. We also have Cena vs. Ryback in a tables match and Bryan vs. Kane in a double main event. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Bryan running the gauntlet last week and Cena saving him from Ryback to close the show.

Here are Vince and Maddox to open the show. Brad apologizes for allowing Cena to pick his Summerslam opponent. Vince talks about Brad calling Bryan a psychologically disturbed troll who doesn't have the aura of being a WWE Champion. Before Maddox can say how he REALLY feels about Bryan, here's Goat face himself. Daniel says the words might have come out of Maddox's mouth but they were dictated by Vince. McMahon says Bryan interrupted him and that's disrespectful.

Bryan says that he's worked hard for Vince over the years and hasn't gotten a bit of respect in return. The fans keep chanting and Vince can't get them to shut up. McMahon asks if Bryan respects Cena and Bryan says

he does, but Vince thinks Cena is lying. Vince calls Cena a master manipulator and says Bryan is falling for the whole thing. Bryan is lacking the ruthless aggression to launch him to the top, but Cena doesn't have it anymore either.

Vince says Cena walks around like he owns the place and Vince can't stand it. He doesn't want Cena to win at Summerslam either, but rather that both spontaneously combust, making Vince the winner at Summerslam. Bryan says it doesn't matter what Vince thinks but rather what the people think. The people want a new champion named Daniel Bryan and a HUGE YES chant strikes up as Bryan leaves.

#### Mark Henry/Usos vs. Shield

Ambrose starts with Henry but Dean is easily thrown around. Rollins gets the same treatment so here's Reigns to try his luck. Mark offers a test of strength but kicks Roman in the ribs to take over instead. Henry takes him into the corner and it's off to Jey for some speed. Reigns easily takes him down and it's time to start the Shield attack in the corner. Jey escapes and makes the hot tag to Jimmy who cleans a few rooms of the house before tagging in Henry.

A running elbow misses Ambrose and Dean goes crazy on the big man. Henry easily blocks a double suplex and sends Shield to the floor for a double suicide dive by the brothers. Back from a break with Roman holding Jey in an armbar. Ambrose comes in to work on Jey as well but a jawbreaker gets Jey out of trouble. Dean misses a charge into the post but Rollins breaks up the hot tag.

As usual the hot tag comes a few seconds later with Henry cleaning house. Ambrose gets tossed around but Reigns spears Mark down to stop him cold. Jimmy tags himself in and gets two off a high cross body to Dean. A Samoan drop looks to set up the Superfly Splash but Ambrose gets the knees up. Bulldog driver to Jimmy is good for the pin at 12:22.



**Rating:** C-. This was pretty pedestrian stuff but it picked up a bit at the end. I'm guessing the Usos were a transition from one feud to another for Shield which is fine. If nothing else we got a good match out of them at MITB. Anyway nothing to see here but they kept Henry strong which is the right idea.

Henry clears the ring post match.

We get a clip of Ryback bullying a backstage guy at catering. He keeps talking trash and throws the guy through a table. THIS is how you get him over as a heel.

Video on the Wyatts.

Kane wants the Wyatts but Maddox says they're not here yet. If Kane wants to send a message to them, go beat Daniel Bryan.

#### Rob Van Dam vs. Fandango

Feeling out process to start until Van Dam kicks Fandango out to the floor. A moonsault from the apron takes the dancer out and the fans LOVE them some Van Dam. Fandango snaps the neck across the top rope to take over and it's off to the chinlock. A kick to Van Dam's head gets two but Rob comes back with more kicks of his own and Rolling Thunder gets two. Van Dam hits the springboard kick to the face and loads up the Five Star but Fandango bails for the countout at 4:09.

**Rating:** D. We really need to protect Fandango from a former world champion? The match was nothing but Van Dam's return continues to get a strong reaction for not much substance. I don't get the point in protecting the dancer though given that there's nothing to him at the moment anyway.

AJ freaks out about fighting Kaitlyn again because Langston doesn't help

her. She accuses Big E. of liking him and Langston feels uncomfortable but AJ laughs and skips off.

### Kaitlyn vs. AJ Lee

Non-title. AJ takes over to start and has that insane look on her face the entire time. Kaitlyn throws her off and loads up the spear but a running knee to the head puts her back down. An armbar doesn't get AJ anywhere as Kaitlyn comes back with a backbreaker. AJ comes back with another armbar as we hear about Tweets from Vickie. Kaitlyn fights up and hits the spear out of nowhere for the pin at 4:51.

**Rating:** D. You remember those matches between these two that had a ton of heat and were awesome? This is the total opposite as it was just there to fill in a few minutes and set up yet another rematch. They took out all the good parts of this feud and turned it into the same exact thing that plagued the division for years.

Post match AJ freaks out and here's Ziggler to stir the pot. He suggests AJ sleep with Langston later because Ziggler wants Big E. RIGHT NOW.

### Big E. Langston vs. Dolph Ziggler

I would have thought this was a Summerslam match. Langston runs Ziggler over to start and talks a lot of trash. He throws Dolph around even more and throws on a bearhug to work on the ribs a bit as a good power man would. We hit the chinlock with a knee in Ziggler's back as the fans aren't all that interested so far. Langston talks even more trash about how it's his time (isn't that infringing on Cena's gimmick?) before missing a charge into the post. Ziggler dropkicks him to the floor but AJ runs in for the DQ at 5:29.

**Rating:** D+. ANOTHER dull match tonight with the ending being as obvious as you could ask it to be. I'm guessing the guys are tired from the

accelerated schedule but this show has almost no energy tonight at all. This match screamed Summerslam rematch to me which is probably the right idea.

Langston takes a Zig Zag post match.

Bryan comes in to see Cena and asks if what Vince said is true. Cena says Vince is trying to sell tickets and wants to know if Bryan is calling him a liar. Bryan says nothing and Cena leaves.

### Christian vs. Alberto Del Rio

Non-title again. Del Rio takes Christian to the mat with a headlock before they both what looked to be a jumping clothesline from Christian. Del Rio stomps him down in the corner and hits a snap suplex for two. Christian sends him into the middle rope and hits the uppercut, only to charge into a superkick to the ribs. Del Rio charges into the corner but gets backdropped to the floor. Christian charges at Del Rio but hits the steps, allowing Del Rio to hit a running dropkick to send the arm into the steps.

Back with Del Rio stomping on the arm and jumping from the second rope for another shot. Christian is put in the Tree of Woe but manages to fight out of the reverse superplex. A middle rope missile dropkick puts the champion down but Christian misses a charge and sends the bad arm into the post again. Del Rio pounds away for another two count and a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gets the same. Alberto misses a middle rope backsplash but runs away from a spear. Back in and the low superkick gets two but the armbreaker is countered into a rollup for the pin for Christian at 13:46.

**Rating:** C+. The match wasn't bad but it's in the middle of a very boring show. Here's the flaw with Del Rio: a win here doesn't mean much for Christian as Del Rio already lost ten days ago to Orton, so it's not like him losing is a huge surprise. Christian getting the title shot would be

fine, but it's not like he's got a chance at the title or anything.

We recap Bryan's gauntlet match last week.

### Cody Rhodes vs. Wade Barrett

Before the match we get a recap of Cody stealing Sandow's briefcase and throwing it in the Gulf of Mexico. Cody attacks to start but gets sent to the floor. Barrett rams him into the barricade and gets two off a backbreaker. Wade sends Cody chest first into the corner and hits a slingshot backbreaker for two more. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Cody starts his comeback. He mostly misses the moonsault press but hits a running knee to the jaw for two. The Disaster Kick misses but Barrett's pumphandle is countered into Cross Rhodes for the pin at 4:26.

**Rating:** D+. Notice something here: Cody is winning matches and his push is starting to work. Seriously, the solution to getting someone over is to have them win matches. I know that's completely against WWE's booking philosophy lately, but it's true: if you have someone win matches, they're more likely to get over.

Post match here's Sandow to talk about how he was the intellect of the Rhodes Scholars. "I saves the unwashed masses and you grew a mustache." Sandow says he's from a family of scholars and Cody is from a family of clowns and he doesn't associate with carny folk.

### Kane vs. Daniel Bryan

Kane kicks him down to start but gets caught in a half crab to stop the momentum. The big man easily kicks him off and kicks a charging Bryan's head off. A suplex gets two for Kane and it's off to a neck crank. The low dropkick gets two more as the fans try to wake up a bit. Back to the crank but Bryan fights up with strikes. The running clothesline can't drop Kane but Bryan escapes the chokeslam. He sends Kane to the floor for

the knee off the apron as we take a break.

Back with Bryan escaping a chinlock and firing off some kicks in the corner. A dropkick gets two and Bryan fires off the running dropkicks in the corner. Kane comes back with the side slam for two and there's the top rope clothesline. Bryan escapes the chokeslam and fires off more kicks, only to have Kane grab another chokeslam. Bryan rolls him up into a small package for the pin, like he did to Cesaro last week, at 12:46.

**Rating:** C. Not bad again here but not much to see. I'm kind of glad this happened on Raw instead of at a big PPV which is what everyone was thinking would happen. That would have been a little too by the book for me which would have hurt the match. Either way, at least Bryan gets another win.

Post match Kane chokeslams Bryan anyway but here come the Wyatts. Kane is surrounded by the monsters but he hits the floor to go right after Bray. The numbers catch up to him though as Wyatt looks on. Harper's discus lariat puts Kane down and here's Wyatt in the ring. Sister Abigail lays Kane out and Bray grabs the mic. He's heard that Kane calls himself the devil's favorite demon. Kane isn't a demon though and he needs to watch who he says those things in front of. Follow the buzzards.

#### Natalya vs. Brie Bella

Natalya hits a quick snap suplex for two but Brie grabs her in a chinlock. That goes nowhere and a slam puts Brie down. Brie charges into a boot in the corner and a discus lariat puts Brie down for two. Natalya loads up a Boston crab but here's Nikki with a duck call. The distraction lets Brie get the pin at 4:18.

**Rating:** D-. Next. That is all.

#### Curtis Axel vs. R-Truth

Non-title again. Before the match Heyman talks about how awesome Axel is like only he can. Axel pounds away but Truth hits the release front suplex. The ax kick misses and Axel stays on Truth. The cutter into the neckbreaker looks to end things but here's Punk to throw the match out at about 2:45.

Post match Heyman runs away as the other guys fight.

Vince tells HHH he's using reverse psychology on Bryan because he wants someone like HHH to beat Cena. Vince makes jokes about HHH's age but Stephanie comes in to cool things down. She recommends a corporate makeover. Oh joy.

### Ryback vs. John Cena

Tables match. This has been the house show main event for months. Ryback pounds on him to start but Cena clotheslines him out to the floor. The first table is pulled out but Ryback gets in a quick shot to stop Cena. He tries to ram the table into Cena against the post but John moves out of the way. We take a really abrupt break and come back with Ryback in control. Cena escapes the powerbomb on the floor but Ryback rams him into the post to keep momentum.

Ryback sets up the steps and bridges a table between them and the ring. Cena gets in a shot and tries to put Ryback through the table but gets caught in a snap suplex on the floor. Back in and Cena grabs a quick STF but Ryback pulls himself into the ropes, literally forcing a break. Cena throws a table out to the floor but Ryback hides under the ring. He pops out the other side and spears Cena down before setting up an identical table to steps bridge. One of them is shoved over but Cena can't get the AA.

Instead Ryback pounds Cena down and tries a gorilla press but Cena slides to the other side of the table. Ryback crushes the table with the steps so Cena picks up a set of his own. They throw the steps at each other and

amazingly enough they bounce off each other. Back inside and the ProtoBomb onto the steps puts Ryback down. There's the Shuffle but Ryback stops him from setting up a table with the over the shoulder Stunner. The table is set up in the corner and the Meat Hook puts Cena down. Ryback loads up another but Cena catches him in the AA through the table for the win at 16:30.

**Rating:** C+. Match of the night here but that's not saying much at all. The good thing about having the same match so many times on house shows is you can have a good version of it by muscle memory alone, so the result here was pretty good. A ticked off and violent Ryback works as a villain (assuming he actually wins something one day) so the result was pretty good.

Post match here's Bryan to take the belt but Cena snatches it back, saying Bryan has to earn this. A YES chant ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** D. This show never once got interesting. I'm guessing it's due to the show being taped, but there was nothing on here to get fired up about at all. It's like they threw three hours of TV out there and hoped people would get into it at some point. This was very dull and felt like it was eight hours long instead of three.

## Results

Shield b. Mark Henry/Usos – Bulldog Driver to Jimmy

Rob Van Dam b. Fandango via countout

Kaitly b. AJ Lee – Spear

Dolph Ziggler b. Big E. Langston via DQ when AJ interfered

Daniel Bryan b. Kane – Small Package

Brie Bella b. Natayla – Rollup

John Cena b. Ryback – AA through a table

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# NXT – May 29, 2013: The Low Point So Far

## NXT

Date: May 29, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Brad Maddox

Tonight we have some main event stuff to get to as it's time for the #1 contenders battle royal, with the winner getting a shot at Langston at some point in the future. Other than that it's hard to say what we'll get which is one of the most interesting parts of a show like NXT. Odds are everyone will be in the battle royal with some working other matches tonight. Let's get to it.

Welcome Home.

## Wyatt Family vs. Travis Tyler/Sawyer Fulton

Non-title. There's something very wrong about the Family having Twitter handles. Sawyer and Harper get things going with Lke running over Fulton like one half of a monster tag team running over a jobber in a squash match. Off to Rowan who pounds away in the corner with a headbutt and a chop before it's back to Harper for more chops. Tom says that the tag is off to Fulton, making me think he has no idea which is which. Not that it really matters as Harper charges at Fulton in the corner and the discus



lariat is good for the pin at 2:30.

Here's Stephanie McMahon (in a studio) for a big announcement. She says that there will be a tournament to crown the first NXT Divas Champion. The tournament starts next week.

#### Emma vs. Audrey Marie

I can't believe I'm saying this but I'm warming up to the dancing. Why this isn't a first round tournament match is beyond me but the more interesting part is the crowd going NUTS for Emma. She wants her music started again after the bell rings for more dancing but Audrey smacks her in the face. More dancing ensues but Emma gets two off a sunset flip. A bad looking gutwrench suplex gets two for Marie and they trade some backslides for two each. Emma even busts out a Tarantula, called the Dilemma. Emma hits a slingshot to set up a bridging Indian Deathlock (complete with dancing as she bends back) for the win at 2:52.

Scott Dawson and Garrett Dylan are in the back but their loud and annoying manager with a French accent. The manager isn't named but it might be that Enzo Amore guy from last week.

#### Scott Dawson/Garrett Dylan vs. Brandon Traven/Jake Carter

Apparently the manager is named Sylvester LeFort. Dawson and Dylan look like Lance Cade and Trevor Murdoch. Apparently LeFort is an eccentric French investor who travels the world looking for interesting business opportunities. That's not one you hear everyday. Carter pounds away on Dawson in the corner to start but Scott sends him out to the floor to take over. A few knee drops get two before it's off to Dylan.

Garrett hooks a chinlock on Carter for a bit as Maddox describes Dawson as someone who likely doesn't flush. I'm not touching that one. Anyway Carter fights out and crawls between Dylan's legs for the tag to Traven

who is almost immediately clotheslined down. Dawson hits a spinebuster followed by a middle rope ax handle to a laid out Traven for the pin at 4:04.

**Rating:** D+. Not much here and I'm not all that wild on Dylan and Dawson. The manager has some potential but two good old boys (Maddox's words) aren't going to make me all that interested. They're trying here, but guys named Garrett and Scott don't really sounds all that intimidating you know?

### Big E. Langston vs. Derrick Bateman

Bateman has a haircut which makes him look even more bland if that's possible. Langston doesn't have the I'm A Soldier part at the beginning of his music now. Bateman jumps Big E. to start but gets shoved down and thrown into the air to put him back down. Langston runs him over and the Big Ending ends Derrick at 58 seconds.

Another Big Ending sets up the five count post match.

The Raw ReBound is about the main event between Cena and Axel.

Next week it's Ohno/Graves vs. the Wyatt Family.

Langston is on commentary for the battle royal. This should be awesome.

### Battle Royal

Corey Graves, Sami Zayn, Bray Wyatt, Yoshi Tatsu, Kassius Ohno, Bo Dallas, Adrian Neville, Mason Ryan, Sakamoto, Briley Pierce, Alexander Rusev, Curt Hawkins, Knuckles Nelson, Baron Corbin, Aiden English, Conor O'Brien, Dante Dash, Mojo Rawley

I think I've got everyone in this listed. Ryan throws out Sakamoto and Pierce with ease and sends out Curt Hawkins and Alexander Rusev for good measure. Ohno and Wyatt keep brawling as everyone goes after Ryan. He throws them all off and screams a lot as Corbin and Nelson are tossed out. Rawley and Tatsu are out as is Dash.

English goes after Ryan and is thrown out with Zayn being thrown on top of them. Ryan has eliminated every single person so far and we're barely two minutes into this. Mason loads up a powerbomb but Neville rans him out to the floor. We're down to Neville, Ohno, Wyatt, Dallas, O'Brien and Graves as we take a break. Back with Wyatt squaring off with O'Brien and Bray being kicked through the ropes very quickly, meaning he's not eliminated.

Ohno knees Conor in the head and teams up with Graves to dump him out. Bray dumps Ohno and Graves at the same time, leaving us with three guys. Wyatt pounds on both guys in opposite corners and hits Sister Abigail on Dallas. Neville comes back with an enziguri and knocks Wyatt out before low bridging Dallas but the feet don't touch.

Dallas sends Neville over the top but only one foot touches. Both guys get back in but Neville is backdropped to the apron. Dallas charges into a kick to the head to knock him down, but the Red Arrow hits Dallas' knees. Neville is thrown out to give Dallas the win at 7:23 shown of 9:53.

**Rating:** D+. No matter how much fans loathe him, WWE has decided that Bo Dallas will be pushed to the moon in NXT and there's nothing we can do about it. Maybe the teased heel turn will help him, but at this point a Dallas push does nothing to excite me at all. The fans didn't react at all to him winning either, which is something you never see in NXT. Other than that, the only thing of note here was Ryan but it's not like he's going anywhere anytime soon.

**Overall Rating:** D+. This was probably the worst episode they've had in

Florida. It was a night of squashes and a lame battle royal with a winner that isn't the most popular guy in the world. The most interesting thing here though is the Divas Title tournament next week. Can you imagine Cole reminding us to be back next week for a Divas Title match? Dawson announced it here and it worked fine. Not an entertaining show tonight by any stretch.

### Results

Wyatt Family b. Travis Tyler/Sawyer Fulton – Discus Lariat to Fulton

Emma b. Audrey Marie – Emma Lock

Scott Dawson/Garrett Dylan b. Brandon Traven/Jake Carter – Ax handle to Traven

Big E. Langston b. Derrick Bateman – Big Ending

Bo Dallas won a battle royal, last eliminating Adrian Neville

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# Smackdown – April 12, 2013: To Fandango Or Not To Fandango

### Smackdown

Date: April 12, 2013

Location: TD Banknorth Garden Arena, Boston, Massachusetts

Commentators: Josh Matthews, John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole

It's the first show after Wrestlemania but more importantly it's the first show after Raw where Dolph Ziggler FINALLY cashed in the MITB case and won the world title from Del Rio. Therefore tonight is likely going to be dealing with the fallout from both that and Wrestlemania, which includes an appearance from HHH. Also, given the insanity of the crowd last Monday on Raw, it should be interesting to see how the crowd tonight reacts to the show. Let's get to it.

The opening video is like a movie trailer with the focus on HHH returning to Smackdown to discuss the match with Lesnar at Wrestlemania. We'll also be talking about Ziggler cashing in the briefcase for the title of course.

Big E. Langston (with no music) opens the show by introducing us to the new World Heavyweight Champion, Dolph Ziggler. Langston can hold a note about as well as Ricardo can. Dolph talks about how he's the most physically gifted athlete anyone has ever seen and that's an understatement. He's been called the future and this championship proves that the future is now. Dolph heard 80,000 people at Wrestlemania cheering his name in a match he wasn't even in. His voice sounds really hoarse here. He didn't win the title because of the fans but rather in spite of them.

Cue Swagger and Colter with the latter congratulating Ziggler for being born in Ohio and living in Florida. However, since Swagger is the one who did the damage to Alberto which allowed Del Rio to take the title. Dolph points out the obvious: Swagger blew his chance at the title at Wrestlemania so go to the back of the line. Jack goes to the ring, looks at Langston, and steps down. Colter says Swagger deserves a title shot and they go to leave, but Dolph cuts the music and keeps talking about how awesome he is.

This brings out Del Rio with a bad limp so Dolph invites him to the ring for his rematch right now. Alberto instead congratulates Ziggler on winning the title because he did the same thing in 2011. When his ankle

heals and he gets his rematch, he'll be getting the title back but until then, hasta la vista baby. Ziggler once again says cut the music because this is STILL his interview time. He's tired of being interrupted so the next person who comes out here will find out why he's the best in the world.

Cue Jericho to a big ovation with a big grin on his face. He asks Dolph to shut up because apparently Ziggler is crazy. Oh wait it's AJ that's crazy, which sends her into a bit of a fit. Jericho says he's the original showoff and says that he just came from Booker T's office. He talks about the Jerichoholics and the Dolphins (apparently Ziggler's fans) getting to see Ziggler's first match as champion against Y2J himself.

#### HELL NO vs. Prime Time Players

Non-title of course. Titus and Kane get things going with O'Neil taking him into the corner for an early advantage. Kane slugs him down and hits the top rope clothesline to take over. Young comes in but runs into the kicks of Bryan as everything breaks down. The NO Lock ends Titus at 1:39.

Shield pops up on screen and congratulates the champions on another win. Ambrose says they didn't back down on Raw but rather weren't ready to strike. Believe in the Shield.

#### Santino Marella vs. Wade Barrett

Another non-title match. Barrett runs him over with a shoulder so Santino tries to nip up, only to crash down to the mat instead of landing on his feet. Barrett kicks him in the ribs and Marella fails another nip up. Off to a chinlock by Barrett followed by a good looking Winds of Change for two. Barrett loads up the Bull Hammer but Santino finally nips up and hits his usual finishing sequence, only to get kicked in the face when he tries the Cobra. Bull Hammer ends this at 2:24.

We look at the Wrestlemania Week video from Raw.

Sheamus comes in to see Booker and is mad about everything Booker did on Raw. They get in an argument when Orton pops in. He wants to know why they were put together in a match but Teddy says calm down and don't yell at him. Booker makes Orton/Sheamus vs. Big Show in a handicap match.

#### Funkadactyls/Kaitlyn vs. Tamina Snuka/Bella Twins

Kaitlyn and Tamina start things off and Kaitlyn spears down both Tamina and I think Brie within the first thirty seconds. Off to Naomi for a cross body on Nikki and a mostly botched headscissors. The Rear View slows Nikki down but Brie trips Naomi off the top. Everything breaks down and Nikki slams the back of Naomi's head onto the mat for the pin at 1:30.

Here's HHH for his first speech since beating Lesnar. He's in sunglasses here and says he told us he'd be back. HHH had told Lesnar they weren't going to fight but rather to war....and here's 3MB. Slater tells HHH to shut up because 3MB wants to get noticed, so they're here to jump on HHH. Before they can get in the ring here's Shield of all people. They pull 3MB off the apron and destroy the Band before starting to swarm HHH themselves. Before they can do anything though, here's HELL NO for the save. No contact made just like on Raw.

Big Show comes in to yell at Teddy and Booker so Teddy ducks out. Show accuses Booker of being biased against him and threatens to walk out because he doesn't have to do what Booker says. Booker says go ahead and walk if you want, because Booker is tired of hearing about this contract.

#### Randy Orton/Sheamus vs. Big Show

Orton's ribs are taped up. During the entrances we get a video on Sheamus vs. Orton from Raw which edits out all of the chants. Orton and Sheamus

have an argument about who starts the match until it's finally Orton. Randy pounds away in the corner to start but walks into a side slam to change momentum.

Show stands on Orton's ribs and slams him down for good measure, only to miss a middle rope elbow. The hot tag brings in Sheamus to take Show down with some ax handles to the head. Show comes right back with a spear and a right hand to Orton's ribs. Orton comes back out of nowhere with an RKO and the Brogue Kick puts Show on the floor for the countout at 4:02.

**Rating:** D+. This is the first match of the night that I can rate and that's the best they can do? This was more about story development than the match, even though I'm not sure what this exactly advances. Orton vs. Sheamus would be an interesting feud and the winner would likely be the next challenger to Ziggler, assuming Orton doesn't turn heel in the process.

Sheamus and Orton are in the back after a break and seem to be fine. Orton goes to get his ribs looked at while Sheamus says that he doesn't mind that it took two people to get revenge on Big Show. He says size doesn't matter in the WWE, so here's Mark Henry to run him over and say yeah it does matter. So much for Orton vs. Sheamus I guess.

#### Antonio Cesaro vs. Kofi Kingston

Non-title yet again. Cesaro overpowers him to start and fires off some forearms, only to get caught in a sunset flip for two. Cesaro hits the gutwrench suplex and the Yodeling Uppercut in the corner for two of his own. Off to a quick reverse chinlock but Kofi fights up and hits some fast chops to take over. Antonio throws Kofi into the air for the European Uppercut to change momentum again but Kofi hits the pendulum kick in the corner. A top rope cross body is caught in a powerslam, only for Kofi to slip down the back and hit Trouble in Paradise for the pin at 3:05. Antonio looked sleepy instead of out cold.



**Rating:** C-. Wrestlemania has passed, Kofi is still Kofi and Cesaro is still Cesaro. I wouldn't care for Kingston being champion again as he's been down that road about five times before, but at least it would protect the title a bit better than Cesaro has been able to do. When did he last get a pin anyway?

We see the end of Raw with Ryback turning on Cena. I'm still not sure if that was a heel turn or not. The video seems to treat it like one.

We hear about Rock being badly injured in the main event of Wrestlemania.

Fandango comes out for the main event. Some fans sing the song but it's nowhere near Monday.

#### Chris Jericho vs. Dolph Ziggler

It's non-title again. Ziggler wears the belt backwards for a bit for his entrance and even JBL thinks that's disrespectful. Jericho hiptosses him down to start and the fans start singing Fandango's song. Ziggler sends Jericho into the corner and pounds away before charging into a boot from Jericho. Chris chokes away on the ropes but has to chase AJ off, allowing Dolph to hit a Fameasser for two.

We take a break and come back with Ziggler driving an elbow into Jericho's face. A neckbreaker gets two for the champion and we hit the chinlock. Jericho fights up and hits some shoulder blocks followed by a top rope shot to the head. Ziggler comes right back with a jumping DDT for two and both guys are down. Chris is up first and takes out Langston before getting two off a top rope cross body.

Dolph comes back with a great dropkick for two but the Zig Zag is blocked. The Walls don't work either but Jericho bulldogs Dolph down and gets two off the Lionsault. Fandango gets on the apron but gets caught by the springboard dropkick. Jericho blocks another Fameasser attempt but is

sent into Langston who blasts him a rollup by Dolph for the pin at 7:37 shown of 11:07.

**Rating:** B-. This was about what you would expect from Jericho vs. Ziggler. Dolph getting a win, even by interference, is fine as he had to get a win after winning the title on Monday. It doesn't erase nearly a year of being destroyed by everyone in sight but you have to start somewhere I guess. Anyway, fine match for Ziggler to debut with as champion.

Post match Jericho goes after Dolph but Langston lays him out.

Fandango hits the top rope legdrop on the back of Jericho's neck and poss to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This was ok, although I'm torn on the ending. Yeah Ziggler is the new world champion, but this Fandango thing has actual mainstream status at the moment. It's not going to last long though, so I'd find some way to strike while they can. At the same time it would be nice to see Dolph get the spotlight, but he did win and he won because of his enforcer and not Fandango, so at least he's got that. The crowd wasn't as interesting tonight but the show was better overall, so Smackdown is ahead of raw after Wrestlemania so far.

### Results

HELL NO b. Prime Time Players – NO Lock to O'Neal

Wade Barrett b. Santino Marella – Bull Hammer

Tamina Snuka/Bella Twins b. Funkadactyls/Kaitlyn – Mat slam to Naomi

Sheamus/Randy Orton b. Big Show via countout

Kofi Kingston b. Antonio Cesaro – Trouble in Paradise

Dolph Ziggler b. Chris Jericho – Rollup

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## **Wrestlemania 29 Preview – Tag Titles: HELL NO vs. Big E. Langston/Dolph Ziggler**

This could go more than one way. First and foremost this is one of the matches that depends on where it is on the card. If it's late in the show, I can't imagine we don't see new champions. If it's earlier on in the show, I think the champions retain and Ziggler walks out with a title later on in the form of the Smackdown big gold belt. This is also interesting because it's the in ring debut of Langston, who has had some very entertaining matches down in NXT. I'm not sure if we're going to see the fun Langston or another generic power guy, but either way it should be fun.

Now the main idea here is that one way or another, we need new tag champions. Kane and Bryan have held the belts for like six months now and it's WAY past the point where they should have dropped them. The champions aren't funny anymore, they're not really fighting, their matches are nothing special, and the joke is way past over. I don't see why we're sitting around watching them anymore when they're not doing anything of note and haven't been for months now. If Langston and Ziggler don't take the gold from them, hopefully someone does so soon.

As for the match, I'll go with the unlikely idea of new champions. It's pure instinct which is rarely right but I can't go with the champions retaining again after all these months. Ziggler has been on a very small roll so maybe they'll FINALLY give him something instead of just having him hold up a dented briefcase for nine months and hoping we think that means something. Then again there isn't much to the tag titles so it doesn't fix anything, but in WWE's eyes the gold is enough to make you mean whatever they want you to mean. The titles change here methinks.

Oh and I've heard rumors of making this a six person tag with AJ and Kaitlyn being added to make it winner takes all titles. If that's the case, I'd bet on the heels taking the belts even more. AJ is a good five months past being the best option for the title, but at least she would be better (and look better) than Kaitlyn.

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## **NXT – April 4, 2013: The Divas Could Main Event This Show**

### **NXT**

Date: April 3, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tony Dawson, Kassius Ohno, Brad Maddox

It's the final show before Wrestlemania and hopefully we get an actual NXT show here instead of the same stuff we got last week with the main

roster taking over the show and dragging it down. The only story from last week was Ohno attacking Regal at the announce table to further their feud. Let's get to it.

The opening recap talks about O'Brian earning a title shot against Langston in a three way a few weeks back

Great, an hour of Brad Maddox and Ohno's annoying way of talking.

### Bo Dallas/Adrian Neville vs. Wyatt Family

This would be Rowan and Harper. Apparently Gray is going to be out for six months but he and Neville are still champions. Bray talks about putting a mouse in a cage with a snake. While it may survive one night, it isn't going to survive in the long run. Harper and Dallas get things going with Bo being shoved into the corner. Off to Rowan for more pounding on Dallas' back.

Bo finally escapes and brings in Adrian for some quick strikes and a standing moonsault for two on Luke. Rowan interference lets Harper hit a big boot for two and control. We take a break and come back with Rowan holding Adrian in a nerve hold. Erick drops down onto Neville's head for two and it's back to Luke Harper. Off to a chinlock on Adrian followed by a hard back elbow to the face for two. Back to Rowan with a big elbow for two and it's already back to Harper.

Make that Rowan who rams Adrian head first into the corner before immediately tagging back out to Luke. The Family tags in and out very quickly. Neville avoids a big boot in the corner and it's hot tag to Dallas. A tornado bulldog out of the corner gets two on Luke but Dallas has to take out Wyatt. Adrian hits a big corkscrew dive to take out Erick and Bray, allowing Dallas to belly to belly suplex Harper for the pin at 8:28 shown of 10:28.

**Rating:** C+. Tag formula 101 here and that's all you need most of the time. You can never go wrong with a basic power vs. speed match and the crowd is going to get behind the small guys every single time. I'm hoping the Family can right the ship soon as they've been on a downward spiral of late, but history would say they're almost done at this point.

Langston defends against O'Brian tonight.

Conor says the NXT Title belongs to him tonight.

We get Rock and Cena's promos from Raw in their entirety.

Back in the arena, Regal jumps Ohno just like Ohno did to him last week.  
Fans: "THANK YOU REGAL!"

#### Summer Rae/Audrey Marie vs. Paige/Sasha Banks

Summer immediately runs from Paige so it's Audrey starting with Paige instead. Rae distracts Paige to give Marie a quick advantage but it's quickly off to Sasha for some double teaming. Banks hits a hard chop to the chest and a wrist drag out of the corner for two. Audrey pulls her back to the corner for a tag to Summer who chokes away. Back to Audrey for a chinlock on Sasha which actually gets two.

Rae comes back in and works over Audrey even more before bringing Marie back in. The tagging in NXT is quite good overall. It's already back to Rae who gets rolled up for two, but her kickout sends Sasha into the tag to Paige. Summer immediately bails and runs to the back. The Paige Turner swinging neckbreaker finishes Audrey at 3:52.

**Rating:** C+. This was mainly about telling a story and there's nothing wrong with that at all. Paige continues to be ridiculously over and the Divas are still one of the highspots of this promotion. The showdown between Paige and Rae could be a big time deal for NXT, which is nothing you would ever see on Raw or Smackdown.

Paige chases after Rae.

Regal vs. Ohno next week.

NXT Title: Conor O'Brian vs. Big E. Langston

Feeling out process to start with the champion sending O'Brian to the floor as we take a break. Back with O'Brian guillotining Langston on the stop rope to take over again. The full nelson slam gets two on Big E. and O'Brian stomps away some more. A quick shoulder block gets two more and it's off to a chinlock. The idea is that O'Brian is strong enough to hurt Langston so the offense can be really simple.

Back up and Langston starts to scream and Hulk Up. Conor can't hurt him with right hands and Big E. runs him over with some clotheslines. Langston fires off five knees to the ribs but walks into a BIG clothesline for two. Conor is stunned and shouts FIVE. He loads up the Big Ending but Langston escapes and runs the challenger over. The real Big Ending retains Langston's title at 6:03 shown of 9:33.

**Rating:** C-. This wasn't nearly as good as their brawl from a month or so ago. Langston didn't look to be in danger at all and O'Brian's offense was easily shrugged off. It's good to see Langston in some danger, but we need a new challenger now and no one seems to be on the radar. Granted that was the case when O'Brian came up so maybe it can happen again.

Langston hits another Big Ending for 5 post match.

**Overall Rating:** C+. Somewhat disappointing main event aside, this wasn't too bad. This was what NXT was supposed to be about: building up angles and setting up for next week. I'm not sure why we didn't get the last two weeks reversed as the Road to Wrestlemania show would seem to make more sense on a night like this instead of last week but whatever I guess. Good show here again.

### Results

Bo Dallas/Adrian Neville b. Wyatt Family – Belly to belly suplex to Harper

Paige/Sasha Banks b. Summer Rae/Audrey Marie – Paige Turner to Marie Big E. Langston b. Conor O'Brian – Big Ending

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Brooke tells Hulk not to worry about her. She'll have protection for her meeting with Bully tonight. No more drama.

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# NXT – March 13, 2013: Conor O'Brian Is...Delicious?

## NXT

Date: March 13, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tony Dawson, William Regal

We have a #1 contender now with O'Brian winning the triple threat last week. On top of that we had a lot of storyline development as Bo Dallas



seems to be going to war against the Wyatt Family. Last week was all about setting up the future shows which should make for some entertaining TV today. Let's get to it.

### Kassius Ohno vs. Derrick Bateman

Regal on Bateman: "If brains were elastic he wouldn't have enough to make a frog's jockstrap." Bateman quickly takes him down with an armdrag before hooking an armbar. Apparently Alberto Del Rio and Ricardo are here tonight. Bateman chops away as Regal is very focused on Ohno here. This is Derrick's return from a knee injury. Ohno is sent into the corner and slammed down for two. Almost all Bateman in the early going.

Kassius is sent to the apron where he hits a cravate Stunner onto the top rope. A running boot to Bateman's jaw puts him down and Ohno drops a pair of sentons for two. Back to the cravate on Bateman but Derrick makes his comeback with some clotheslines and shots to the face. He loads up the falling bulldog but Ohno shoves him off because it's too stupid of a move to sell. Kassius kicks him in the face for the pin at 4:20.

**Rating:** D+. Neither of these guys are anything of note and the fans weren't impressed either. Bateman is back from an injury but this everyman gimmick does nothing for me. I still don't get the appeal of Ohno, at least not in this gimmick. As best I can tell he's supposed to be a ruthless striker but his signature move is a cravate. His character isn't working for me and doesn't seem to be for the crowd either.

Post match Ohno puts Bateman in an STF with a cravate headlock until Regal makes the save. These two need to fight already.

Bo Dallas says Bray Wyatt has his attention after Wyatt cost him both the tag team and NXT Titles.

Regal apologizes for what he did.

## Emma vs. Summer Rae

Emma is the bad dancing klutz. A quick rollup gets two for Emma and Rae is frustrated. Wait, dance time. Rae is knocked into the corner for a cross body but she comes back with a snapmare to send Emma's leg into the ropes. We're told it's Dallas vs. Wyatt later tonight as Summer stays on the leg. Summer goes VERY old school with an Indian Deathlock (the version with both girls on their backs) before choking Emma with her long legs. Back up and a dropkick puts Emma down before Rae does Paige's scream. Emma comes back with a clothesline for two, only to be caught by a bad spinwheel kick to give Rae the pin at 3:51.

**Rating:** D+. Summer looks good in the outfits and has a lot of Maryse in her with the blonde bombshell look, but her stuff in the ring isn't all that great. She's a good enough antagonist though and beating up a goofy character like Emma here was a decent enough idea. They're just waiting on Paige to come back for the revenge though.

Apparently that revenge is right now because here's Paige to chase off Summer. The place went NUTS for Paige.

We recap Oliver Grey being laid out by the Wyatt Family last week.

Adrian Neville issues an open challenge to any member of the Family for next week.

Big E. Langston says that last week Conor O'Brian defeated two men to earn his title shot. However, this is Langston's first defense, so he's going to make sure it's dominant, destructive and delicious.

## Bray Wyatt vs. Bo Dallas

Wyatt talks about how in his world there are no distractions and no communication. The women take care of the young and the men aren't afraid

to make the ultimate sacrifice to protect what is theirs. He wants to know how far Dallas is willing to go to get what he wants. Wyatt takes him into the corner but then hides from a right hand. Bray starts to laugh at Dallas (his real life younger brother if you're not familiar with your family trees) before hooking a headlock.

Dallas tries a headlock of his own but Wyatt hits a hard cross body for two. We take a break and come back with Dallas in a chinlock. Back up and Bo is whipped hard into the corner and a slam gets two for Bray. In a unique submission hold, Wyatt sits on Dallas' ribs and pulls back on his head in a kind of reverse camel clutch. Dallas gets up again and tries a sunset flip but Bray drops down, only to hit the mat. The look on his face from missing is great as he looks like he was shot.

Bo starts his comeback with a forearm but gets caught in a big release Rock Bottom for two. A big splash in the corner crushes Bo and it's time to dance with Dallas' limp body. He dances a bit too long though and it allows Dallas to come out of it with a belly to belly suplex for the pin at 6:21 shown of 9:51.

**Rating:** C. This wasn't much and I'm not sure on having Wyatt lose in I believe his third singles match. Dallas has flashes of good stuff but for the most part he still doesn't do much for me. I like the belly to belly FAR better for him than the spear though, as a guy that size has no business using the same move that Goldberg or Roman Reigns uses.

Post match here's the Wyatt Family to destroy Dallas as Wyatt laughs. Dallas makes a comeback and beats them both up, only to be caught in Bray's Downward Spiral.

Justin Gabriel says he's heard of Leo Kruger before. Back when Gabriel lived in South Africa he heard of Kruger being in the South African militia and apparently it messed with his head. Gabriel wants a match with Leo next week.

Here are Ricardo and Alberto to a very nice ovation. Del Rio does his old bit of "My name is Alberto Del Rio" which draws a small SI chant. He says he's the new world champion here so this must be an old show. Del Rio talks about how there's a lot of talent in the back and someone back there will be WWE or World Heavyweight Champion someday. Instead of a new superstar though, here's Antonio Cesaro to challenge Del Rio to a champion vs. champion match. This brings out Dusty Rhodes who says that the Swedish guy in the ring doesn't make matches. Cesaro can have a champion vs. champion match, but against this guy.

### Big E. Langston vs. Antonio Cesaro

Non-title here. Langston shoves him down and we're ready to go. We take a break before there's any contact (why not just have the bell after the break? Is it really that hard?) and come back with Langston easily breaking a wristlock. A lifting wristlock has Antonio in trouble as Big E. is easily throwing him around. Langston LAUNCHES him across the ring with a beal but Cesaro comes back with the European uppercuts and a knee lift for one.

Off to a kind of cobra clutch on Big E. but the NXT Champion easily fights up. Cesaro goes up top and dries Langston down with a knee before hitting his really impressive gutwrench suplex for two. Cesaro hooks a sleeper but Langston easily fights out of it and clotheslines Cesaro down. Five knees to Cesaro's ribs have him in trouble and Big E. runs him over, but here's Corey Graves for the DQ at 5:23 shown of 8:53.

**Rating:** C. The match was ok and at the end of the day, it's a good move to not have Cesaro lose clean here. I get that it's just NXT, but you don't want to have the US Champion losing in less than ten minutes like that. Granted it never stops them on Raw but that's besides the point. I hope we don't get a triple threat with Langston defending against Graves and O'Brian, but it seems to be the only way to get the title off of Langston without hurting him.

Graves is run over post match but here's O'Brian to pound on Big E. Corey helps O'Brian and Langston is laid out to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This is NXT's bread and butter: week to week booking that makes you want to come back and see where all this stuff is going. We got some matches that were set up last week as well as some stuff that was set up for next week. That's very efficient and far better than what we get on the main shows. This show is still a treat to watch and I'm genuinely interested in where the stories are going. That's good stuff.

### Results

Kassius Ohno b. Derrick Bateman – Big Boot

Summer Rae b. Emma – Spinwheel Kick

Bo Dallas b. Bray Wyatt – Belly to belly suplex

Big E. Langston b. Antonio Cesaro via DQ when Corey Graves interfered

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