

# Bragging Rights 2009: Even Attempted Murderers Need Rest Periods

It was mentioned that this wasn't up so here's a bit of a bonus.

## Bragging Rights 2009

Date: October 25, 2009

Location: Mellon Arena, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Attendance: 13,562

Commentators: Todd Grisham, Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

This is back in the days of Raw vs. Smackdown meaning something but in this case there are two major matches. In addition to the Raw vs. Smackdown match, we also have John Cena vs. Randy Orton in an Iron Man match because all the other pay per view matches those two have had haven't been enough. The card really is built around those two matches and I'm not sure what else there is to mention. Undertaker is also defending his Smackdown World Title in a four way match, which means eighteen people are involved in two matches. That might explain the hour long Iron Man match. Let's get to it.

The opening video focuses on the seven on seven brand supremacy match with Orton and Cena not even being mentioned. The rest of the show is really just filler around those two and that might be better all things considered. You would think the title match would warrant a mention though.

There are three Raw vs. Smackdown matches tonight and the winner gets a trophy. Yeah the whole Team Raw vs. Team Smackdown match that the show is built around is only a third of the formula.

We recap Miz (US Champion, Smackdown) vs. John Morrison (Intercontinental Champion, Raw). This is basically a showdown that would have happened anyway as they used to be a big tag team and now they've split with an

argument over who was the Shawn and who was the Marty. In other words it's catchphrase vs. skill though Morrison was considered a much stronger prospect around this time.

### Miz vs. John Morrison

Non-title. The ropes are half blue and half red for a cool visual. Morrison takes him to the mat to start and Miz bails to the ropes like a good heel should. Miz is driven into the corner but heads outside for an early breather. Back in and Miz gets caught in a flapjack, followed by Morrison's standing shooting star for two. The Moonlight Drive is broken up so Morrison settles for a hard clothesline to the floor, only to have Morrison get thrown out as well for a much nastier crash.

Miz cranks on both arms for a bit before putting on a quickly broken chinlock. A slugout goes to Morrison (of course) and a leg lariat gets two. The Flying Chuck (springboard kick to the face) gets the same and now the fans are getting into these near falls. Miz bails to the floor and takes a corkscrew dive but he breaks up Starship Pain (split legged corkscrew moonsault) and pins Morrison at 10:54.

**Rating:** C+. The match was fine but that ending was really quite lame. The crash and burn for Morrison was fine but Miz couldn't throw in a Skull Crushing Finale? After a strong build up to this, you would kind of expect more than just what we were given here. If nothing else though, I was really glad to see Miz win here as he's worked hard after being considered a nothing guy while Morrison was rolling on charisma for a long time.

We look back at Smackdown with Team Smackdown beating defeated by another group of five, meaning the winners took their places. Both lineups had Chris Jericho and Kane as co-captains but the original lineup of:

Dolph Ziggler, Eric Escobar, Drew McIntyre and Cryme Tyme

Has been replaced by:

R-Truth, Matt Hardy, Finlay and the Hart Dynasty

It should be noted that the match match where the new team won didn't

have Shad Gaspard, who was out sick. It's also not a good sign that they switched a team out with just two days before the pay per view.

Cody Rhodes, part of Team Raw tonight, is bragging about how awesome his show is when R-Truth comes in. Rhodes berates him so Truth says the only reasons Cody is here are Dusty Rhodes and Randy Orton. Big Show comes in to say Raw (his team) will win.

### Michelle McCool/Natalya/Beth Phoenix vs. Melina/Kelly Kelly/Gail Kim

Smackdown vs. Raw. Natalya is part of the Hart Family and Kelly Kelly is a model who eventually became a pretty good worker. Michelle (who has gotten a very nice haircut since we last saw her) and Melina are the respective brand's women's champions. Beth and Gail get things going with Phoenix quickly dominating. It's off to Natalya who is quickly rolled up for two.

Natalya misses a charge in the corner so Gail can sit on the back of her head and bring in Kelly. A screaming headscissors drops Natalya but she drops Kelly across the top rope for two. Kelly gets caught in the wrong corner and it's off to Michelle for some bad looking knee drops. Beth won't let Kelly get over for the tag and Michelle comes back in for some knees to the face. A jawbreaker finally lets Kelly tag Melina in and house is cleaned. Beth stops her with a slingshot suplex and everything breaks down. Everyone else goes outside and it's the Glam Slam (double chickenwing faceplant) to put Melina away at 6:54.

**Rating:** C-. This was fine but there was absolutely no doubt who was going to win here thanks to the best of three format. It really is amazing to see how strong the division was around this time before it collapsed with the rise of the Bellas and everyone else leaving around the same time. The match wasn't bad but just filler and a way to get the women on the show.

HHH gives Team Raw a pep talk but brings up all the stuff they've made fun of Mark Henry for over the years. Jack Swagger isn't worried about the match and Shawn threatens to replace him with the first person he sees. Hornswoggle comes in and Shawn quickly changes his mind. The team eventually rallies around DX.

We recap the Smackdown World Title match with Undertaker defending against CM Punk (getting another rematch), Batista and Rey Mysterio (friends who are getting shots because they're former champions).

### Smackdown World Title: Undertaker vs. Rey Mysterio vs. CM Punk vs. Batista

Punk runs around to start and causes Undertaker to blast Batista with a clothesline. The champ sends Punk to the floor so Mysterio can dive off the apron to take him down, leaving us with a Batista vs. Undertaker showdown. Old School keeps Batista in trouble but Punk saves Mysterio from the same fate. A superplex drops Undertaker and Rey springboards in with a splash for two as Punk makes a save.

Batista comes back in to go after Punk but eats a big boot from Undertaker. Rey's springboard is countered into a Last Ride, only to have Batista spear Undertaker down for the save. Rey scores with a 619 to send Undertaker into the spinebuster but Punk makes the save again. Hell's Gate has Batista in trouble but...yeah you know who breaks it up. That just earns Punk a Last Ride for two and there's a chokeslam to Batista for two.

Punk is tossed outside so the big guys can go at it even more with Batista hitting a quick Batista Bomb for two as Mysterio makes a save of his own. That's not cool with Rey's friend Batista and they get in an argument, allowing Undertaker to chokeslam Batista for two more. A double clothesline drops both of them so Punk can cover both of them for two. Batista gets back up and tosses Rey again, only to walk into the Tombstone to retain Undertaker's title at 9:58.

**Rating:** B+. They were smart to keep this one a bit shorter as it allowed the match to be this energetic throughout. This wouldn't have been as good with the laying around and it allowed Punk to keep running in and out and Undertaker and Batista to do all the big power stuff. Strong stuff here and a good bonus, though it's not going to mean anything in the long run.

Post match, Josh Matthews goes inside to talk to Rey and Batista. Rey says it was a good try but Batista asks the fans if they were close.

Batista thinks he was close but he was tired of only coming this close and of his best friend stabbing him in the back. Batista: "I'm not playing. I'm gonna rip your head off." And he comes pretty close with a big clothesline as Smackdown has a new monster heel. Rey is thrown hard into the barricade and kicked in the head before Batista slowly walks away.

This was an EXCELLENT turn as Batista had a good reason to go after Mysterio but it still looks like a big guy treating a smaller one like a loser for his own failures. In other words, Batista looks like a jerk who is abusing his power and the fans will want to see Mysterio try and get some revenge, even if that's not likely. Really good stuff here and something I'd love to see happen more often. Not necessarily this specific thing but something character based and logical.

The fans are split on who wins here.

#### Team Raw vs. Team Smackdown

Raw – Shawn Michaels, HHH, Cody Rhodes, Big Show, Kane, Kofi Kingston, Jack Swagger

Smackdown – Chris Jericho, Kane, Matt Hardy, Finlay, R-Truth, Hart Dynasty

One fall to a finish here. The Hart Dynasty are Tyson Kidd (speed) and David Hart-Smith (power). Cody and Truth get things going and everyone is wrestling in a red or blue shirt. Well save for DX because they're special. Rhodes spins around and grabs a leg but Big Show tags himself in.

Truth isn't crazy (yet) so he brings in Kane for the giant showdown. Show quickly puts Kane down and drops a leg before bringing in Swagger for some shots to the back. It's already off to Hardy to clothesline Swagger as the announcers push the idea that the wrestlers all really want to be the best. Normally that means with titles but let's just go with bragging rights instead. They head outside to start the big showdown as Swagger loses his shirt. But how will I know which side he's on?

Hardy is dragged into the corner for some arm cranks from Henry. A big elbow misses but Mark easily throws Matt into the corner, meaning it's time for Shawn to come in. You can hear the fans get fired up now because it's starting to get serious. Shawn may be great but he allows the tag off to Finlay for some heavy shots of his own. Sweet Chin Music makes up for it but a blind tag brings in Hart-Smith who helps hit a quick springboard Hart Attack for two on Michaels, meaning it's time for some selling.

Jericho slaps on the chinlock ("ASK HIM! ASK HIM!") before bringing in Kane for one of his own. David makes it three chinlocks in a row but Tyson's springboard elbow misses and the hot tag brings in HHH. A series of spinebusters have Smackdown in tatters but Kane stops HHH with a chokeslam. HHH puts Jericho down though and it's off to Kofi as everything speeds way up.

Trouble in Paradise gets two on Chris as everything breaks down into the parade of secondary finishers. Cole: "VINTAGE BRAGGING RIGHTS!" It's been on the air for less than an hour and a half and there's a vintage era? Anyway Big Show turns on his partners (because he's Big Show) and chokeslams Kofi to give Jericho the pin at 15:40.

**Rating:** B. You can only get so far on a made up rivalry with fourteen people having to cram in all their stuff in the span of less than sixteen minutes. It certainly wasn't bad though and both teams were more than fine, albeit a bit stretched as a lot of the guys didn't quite fit the level as people like DX, Jericho and Kane. Big Show screwing over his team wasn't the most interesting thing in the world either as he does it so often but at least it makes it clear that Raw was better until Smackdown got some help. You know, in case anyone thought otherwise.

We recap Cena vs. Orton in yet another match as this rivalry cannot die. Orton attacked Cena's dad to make it even more personal and if Orton wins, Cena is off Raw. Yeah just keep pretending it's not obvious now. This is billed as the final showdown, which WWE is usually pretty good about holding up. In this case though, I give it two months at most.

Kofi and Cody argue over why Raw lost and get in a fight over it with

Kofi being left laying.

### Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Randy Orton

Orton is defending, anything goes, falls count anywhere Iron Man rules, meaning the most falls in sixty minutes wins. The introduction makes sure to point out that there will be a thirty second rest period between falls, which will come into play later. They start slow (makes sense) with Orton getting caught in a headlock, only to send Cena hard into the corner. The champ slowly stomps away but Cena grabs the STF for the immediate tap out at 3:56 (all times listed will be total and the thirty second rest periods count towards the time limit) as Orton wants to get out of the hold to avoid damage.

1-0 Cena

Orton is right back up with a powerslam for two as we're five minutes in. The very slow pace continues as we hit the chinlock on Cena. Back up and Cena initiates his finishing sequence but takes too long loading up the Five Knuckle Shuffle, allowing Orton to pop up and hit an RKO to tie things up at 9:00.

1-1

With ten minutes left, Orton knocks Cena off the apron and into the barricade. Now it's time for the anything goes aspect to take effect as Orton hits Cena in the head with a monitor for two on the floor. Back in and Orton calmly hits him in the head with a microphone for another near fall. Things slow down though as the referee has to check a cut on Cena's head and the clock is actually stopped.

Cena will have none of that and charges at Orton with right hands in the corner. They go outside again with Cena going into the steps to slow him right back down. Cena is sent into the barricade as we hit fifteen minutes in. You don't keep Cena down with just a few shots like that though and it's already time for the FU, only to have Orton catch him with an RKO to counter. That means a double pin (with Orton having to adjust his arms to get the spot right) at 16:46 to keep us tied up.

2-2

The medical staff uses the break to fix the cut in a smart use of time. Orton goes shoulder first into the post to give Cena a breather. That breather doesn't last long though as he puts Orton on the top rope for a super AA to give him the lead back at 19:23. You would think that would be a bigger spot for later in the match.

3-2 Cena

During the break, here's Legacy to beat Orton down to give Orton an easy pin to tie it up at 20:46.

3-3

Kofi runs in to chase them off, which makes sense given the segment with Rhodes earlier. Nicely done WWE. Orton and Cena are left alone and a double clothesline lets them burn off some more time. Cena takes him down by the legs and it's time to go outside again. Cena takes him up the aisle until Orton sends him into the barricade for two. They head over to the tech area and Orton sends him into the board to set off some pyro. That gives Orton an idea and this can't end well. Randy sends him through a piece of the lighting grid for a fall at 25:20.

4-3 Orton

With Cena down, Orton goes over and starts playing with the pyro board. Like a real villain, Orton throws Cena onto the stage AND TRIES TO BLOW HIM UP WITH FIREWORKS. It doesn't actually work but that's quite the heel move. You know, attempted murder and all that. They go back to the ring because there's less violence to be found there. The champ sends him into the steps and we hit halftime.

Orton throws the steps at his head for two before cracking him over the back with a chair for two. We're firmly into the "there's no reason to believe he can kick out of these things" territory. Back in and Cena grabs a small package to tie it up at 32:40. Orton beats the heck out of Cena during the break but the referee makes sure to enforce the thirty second break. TO THE ATTEMPTED MURDERER!



4-4

Cena is basically done though and Orton makes it even worse with the elevated DDT off the apron for a fall at 35:04.

5-4 Orton

Randy is smart enough to immediately go for the cover but Cena kicks out despite likely needing to be in a hospital. The beating continues back inside with Orton hammering him in the chest for two. Orton wastes a few minutes walking around (smart) and hitting Cena every now and then, which makes sense as we have twenty minutes left and they're probably running out of big spots.

Cena, with the blood flowing again, gets in a right hand to send Orton up the ramp. The chase goes nowhere so Orton pounds away back inside. The threat of an AA sends Orton running into the crowd with Cena slowly giving chase (well he walks briskly at least) as the clock keeps ticking. Cena finally catches him and hits the champ with a trashcan. See, at least Cena keeps the violence on a lower level.

The beating knocks Orton back towards the ring as we have fifteen minutes to go. Cena gets a few near falls at ringside before sending him through the barricade. The steps go into Orton's head and we have ten minutes left. Those steps are sat next to the table and an AA through the table ties it up again at 51:46.

5-5

Cena covers again after the rest period ends but only gets two. It's time for another table in the ring but Orton avoids the top rope legdrop to drive Cena through instead. Five minutes to go now and both guys are down again. They slug it out with four minutes left as they're clearly spent. The slugging continues with neither guy getting an advantage as we have three minutes left. Of course Cena's cardio is fine as he starts the shoulders but takes the referee out by mistake.

There's an RKO but there's no referee. Another one comes in and count two with two minutes left, earning himself a beating from the champ. The Punt

misses with a minute left and Cena grabs the STF with fifty five seconds to go. Orton hangs on as long as he can but as you might expect, he taps out with three seconds left to give Cena the title back at 60:00 with a final score of 6-5.

**Rating:** B. It's entertaining for the most part but you could really see them running out of things to do after awhile. Having Cena win at the very end keeps both of them looking equal, which is fine, but doesn't quite make Cena look like the big winner of the feud. There was no real reason for this to be an Iron Man match but at least there was one memorable spot with the pyro.

The biggest problem here is still the burnout between these two. The fans had seen them time after time and there's almost no reason to get interested in seeing them fight one more time, especially for an hour. They're firmly at the point where people don't want to see them wrestle no matter what happens and that's never a good thing. Oh and as for the "final" meeting: they fought again before Christmas.

A long recap for a long match wraps us up.

**Overall Rating:** B. Not a bad show for the most part but you could cut out the first two Raw vs. Smackdown matches and no one would notice. That being said, I kind of like the idea of shortening the series to just three matches instead of doing seven or nine matches to accomplish the same goal. It would have been nice to have some other stuff going on besides the two main events and the fourway helped a good bit but the show still felt like it was all about those two matches and nothing else. At least the wrestling was strong though and that's more important than so many other things.

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# **Bragging Rights 2010 – Why Does This Show Exist?**

## **Bragging Rights 2010**

Date: October 24, 2010

Location: Target Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole, Matt Striker

This is the second Bragging Rights show and not something that I'm particularly looking forward to. The elimination match more or less has no point at all on this show as Survivor Series is designed to be a match like that. The world title matches do little for me here but I guess they could be ok. This is just a throwaway PPV if there ever has been one but let's get to it.

The opening video is exactly what you would expect it to be like.

Striker says seeing someone buried alive is a once in a lifetime experience. I'm pretty sure Taker has had it happen at least twice already. Three times actually.

## **Dolph Ziggler vs. Daniel Bryan**

Standard Vickie intro for Ziggler here. Bryan tries to take it to the mat but Ziggler is fine there also as he was a college wrestler as well. To there floor where Ziggler hides behind

Vickie so Daniel just jumps over her. Well that's one way to do it I guess. Cole is a bit less pesky towards Bryan here. Reverse slam gets two for the IC Champion.

Fans are way behind Bryan here as we get a ton of fat jokes about Vickie. Almost all Ziggler here as this is a solid match although I'm not sure if it's a PPV level match. The champion vs. champion is good but at the same time, it's Dolph Ziggler vs. Daniel Bryan. Ziggler hits a semi-FU from his knees which looked wicked.

Lots of mat work here which isn't what I was expecting but it's not bad at all. I love the not so subtle jabs at Lawler's taste in younger ladies. Bryan busts out the kicks and Ziggler is in BIG trouble. We continue the wrestling tradition of not understanding the word literally. Bryan gets a top rope dropkick for a LONG two. Crowd is WAY into this.

Zig Zag is blocked and the kicks continue. Big kick gets two I think as the camera was on Vickie the whole time. Nice job there guys. We head up top for a suplex which is blocked by Bryan into a belly to back which is blocked into a cross body which is reversed into a cover for two for Bryan. Fans chant THIS IS AWESOME and they're right.

Sleeper is reversed and a double clothesline puts both guys down. Crowd is into every cover here very loudly. Pinfall reversal sequence gets another round of applause but the Zig Zag hits. Dusty Finish occurs as Bryan gets his foot on the ropes. No music though so we keep going. I've always wondered what would happen if the referee legit didn't see that happen.

Rope is grabbed as this is getting a lot of time. It's 8:23 and assuming my stream is up to speed we're about 20 minutes into this. Ziggler starts yelling at Bryan and walks into the LeBelle Lock for the tap out. VERY good opener.

**Rating:** A-. This was a very good opener and I liked it a lot.

Definitely Bryan's best match with the company so far and the fans were way into it. I'm considering bumping this up to an A- and I think I will. Some EXCELLENT counters in there but the ending was almost always clear to me which kind of hurts this.

Miz takes credit for teaching Bryan everything he knows and a big argument ensues over who the real captain is. We somehow shift over to a discussion of snacks and beverages which sound good at the moment. Santino says since we're talking about orders he'll take some Sun Chips. Dang this is making me hungry. Punk vs. Miz was the main thing here and it was an entertaining segment I thought. Miz has a plan it seems.

And here are Rhodes and McIntyre. Ok then. They cut generic promos and we get an e-mail to major heat. And here's a bonus match!

Tag Titles: Cody Rhodes/Drew McIntyre vs. David Otunga/John Cena

WOW. Well this isn't what I was expecting at all. Otunga and Rhodes start us off. It's so weird to see Cena in a match 35 minutes into the show. The champions (can't say heels I guess) control to start with very fast tags. Off to Cena who doesn't want to tag. Cena refuses to tag out so Rhodes can drill him.

LOUD dueling Cena chants with the sucking crowd winning out over the going crowd. Not a very exciting match after the legit surprising announcement. The comeback sequence is initiated as Cena still won't tag out. Futureshock is avoided but Drew gets a blind tag and Cross Roads are countered into the STF to give Nexus the belts. I don't think Otunga landed a single punch.

**Rating:** D+. This was a glorified handicap match. I get that Cena is a far bigger star than either of the champions but to beat them both in just a matter of minutes is a bit of a stretch I think. This wasn't much but I like them surprising

us for a change on PPV. It wasn't bad and I'm glad it wasn't on TV, but this wasn't much.

Cena gives Otunga an FU after the match and leaves with both belts.

We recap the Goldust vs. DiBiase feud which is an added match for the card tonight.

DiBiase is trying to talk to Josh but Maryse rants in French for a bit first. DiBiase says Goldust is weird and he doesn't like him. That's a good line actually.

### Ted DiBiase vs. Goldust

This is kind of just thrown on the card but that's fine once in awhile. If nothing else there has been an actual match story built up and now we're getting a payoff for it. That at times is all you need for success. Crowd is dead but what do you expect? Nice dropkick by DiBiase as we're talking about the wedding more than the match.

DiBiase hits the falling punch which is always something I've liked. Is there more momentum or something there? Cole and Lawler go at it over Lawler's trophy wives which is rather funny. Cole: Patented Goldust! Lawler: PATENTED? That was funny. Goldie goes for a top rope axe handle and jumps into a dropkick. This has been a somewhat better than Raw match so far.

Dream Street is blocked into a sitout spinebuster, which makes Striker say that Anderson belongs in the Hall of Fame. He's right. The girls go at it (Joey Styles reference from Striker) as both guys are down. Aksana is crying and gets checked on, allowing DiBiase to drill him with a DDT for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. Again not bad and the fact that it actually got a build is nice but at the end of the day it was Ted DiBiase vs. Goldust on PPV. It was ok but nothing more really. Not

horrible or anything but it's just kind of an eight minute filler. Granted though it could be better than some other things they could have gone with.

Aksana hits on DiBiase afterwards but it's a ruse to allow Goldust to drill him and get the belt back.

### Divas Title: Layla vs. Natalya

Laycool do jokes about how Minnesotans have stupid accents. Brett Favre joke inserted here which is awesome. Striker: That was Shockmaster bad. Nattie does squats while holding Layla in a vertical suplex. That was awesome. She gets knocked to the floor and may have hit her head, allowing the champion to take over. Man Layla's figure is impressive.

Rather boring match so far but not as bad as I was expecting. It's odd that Nattie can't beat one of them on her own as fast as she could beat both of them on her own Friday. Layla gets a nice submission hold which is more or less a Rings of Saturn with her legs. Nice one. After a Sharpshooter attempt, there goes Layla with the belt. So much for that as Natalya (I always get an image from Goldeneye when I hear that name) throws her back in. Michelle pops Natalya as she is getting back in and Layla gets the pin.

**Rating:** D. Boring match here with nothing getting going at all. The ending more or less sucked. As I said I don't get how they were going to be able to explain Natalya not being able to beat Layla who can't do much in the ring but isn't horrible. The lack of failure is mainly for Michelle as she looked good out there. Weak match and just like all over Diva PPV matches.

Ad for Survivor Series which is narrated by Barrett. Apparently at Survivor Series, you're either Nexus or against us.

Buried Alive is next. Wait what??? At ten after 9? Really?

Matthews does a basic promo from inside the grave.

Same ad that we've seen a bunch of times for this match.

### Smackdown World Title: Undertaker vs. Kane

This is the fifth ever Buried Alive match and Taker has been in them all. How many signature matches has this guy had? He's won one of them, which was a tag match with HHH helping him and Show beat the Rock N Sock Connection I believe. Taker meets him in the aisle and it's on fast. Big Undertaker chant to start us off.

The fans want BLOOD. Election isn't for 9 days people. Keep chanting. They're in the crowd now as there is no point in getting that much into this match yet, given how there's a guarantee it's going to get at least twelve minutes or so. All Taker so far as we haven't been in the ring at all. And for once that's the right thing to do.

Taker launches some chairs into the ring and Kane is more or less dead. He's all kind of fired up here. Back into the crowd again as there has been zero attempt at going for the grave. Bearer is here too. I had forgotten about him. Kane gets some chair shots in to get us to even.

Kane gets two chokeslams and the crowd is SILENT. We finally start heading to the gravesite but Taker escapes Kane's grip. Some boo/yay punches in the aisle. As this THRILLING stuff is going on, it occurs to me how weird it is that Taker is billed as being from California. Finally at the grave and Kane throws dirt in Taker's eyes to block a chokeslam.

Hell's Gate from out of nowhere makes Kane tap out next to the grave. Bearer comes up from the hill the grave is on but Kane is tossed into the grave. Taker shoves Bearer's face into the dirt and sets for a chokeslam. CUE NEXUS! What in the flying heck??? No Cena out there mind you. Kane gets back up out of the grave as the beatdown is on.



The big fried freak hits an urn shot to take down Taker and put him in the grave. Nexus does the burying (odd thing to see Taker being buried by young guys for once no?) but Kane runs them off. A bulldozer (I'm not familiar with construction so it's probably something else) buries Taker (again) to keep the title on Kane. Ah Lawler says bulldozer too so I'm happy.

**Rating:** D. Just boring for the most part with a twist at the end. The explanation for this one will be interesting and while no one saw this coming, I'm definitely scratching my head over it. It's not something I expected in the slightest but it didn't help the match. This was Taker beating on Kane for 12 minutes, a short comeback, more Taker dominance, then Nexus. I wasn't impressed at all.

Special effects follow with nothing special.

Orton says he's not concerned with Cena and will drop him in the middle of the ring if he has to. That's your main event apparently.

#### Team Raw vs. Team Smackdown

Raw: Miz (Captain), CM Punk, Sheamus, Santino Marella, Ezekiel Jackson, R-Truth, John Morrison

Smackdown: Big Show (Captain), Rey Mysterio, Jack Swagger, Tyler Reks, Kofi Kingston, Alberto Del Rio, Edge

Matching shirts for everyone here. I don't think I've ever seen Kofi in blue before. Edge's pyro allegedly messed up but I missed it. Morrison vs. Reks to start us off and remember this is elimination. Striker to Cole: does anyone really care what you think? Striker says Smackdown is now in the dictionary. Granted so is Raw but for a different usage. Why was the show called Raw anyway?

Santino in now to use the Cobra and off goes his head. Reks hits his finisher to go up 7-6. Well that didn't take long. Jackson in now as Lawler asks why no one tried to help

Santino. That's a very good question. Make that Show vs. Jackson as I like Smackdown's chances more and more. Off to Rey now who kind of drops the dime for two.

Kofi comes in and gets taken down along with Rey as Sheamus is in now. Sheamus is the biggest star in this match according to the announcers. That might be true actually. Jumping spinning Boom Drop hits Sheamus and the SOS gets two. I'm just waiting on the big old Brogue Kick to take Kofi's head off though. Ah never mind as it's the High Cross instead and we're tied at 6.

Rey vs. Sheamus now. KILL THE MIDGET! KILL HIM NICE AND GOOD! Punk comes in to a HUGE reaction and loud chant. Vince, pay attention to that. Snap powerslam gets two. Lots of tagging by Raw here and we get some actual analysis from Cole as he tells us why Miz is a better captain than Cole, which makes sense. Alberto comes in and has a brief staredown with Rey. And then he throws Rey into the barrier. Show is TICKED!

And Rey is apparently leaving which I don't think will last. It's Punk vs. Del Rio at the moment. Swagger and Morrison now as Morrison hits the Flash Kick for two. Rey is still in the match but is in the back for treatment. Sunset flip for Morrison gets two. This is an odd crowd as they go from very hot to very cold. Nice way to see how the crowd views various people.

Ankle lock is reversed and Morrison hits Starship Pain to officially go up 6-5. Reks vs. Morrison now. Striker and Lawler go at it again, this time over Lawler booking his own territory. Reks beats up Sheamus for a bit but the Brogue Kick ENDS him to bring in Show. Smackdown is in big trouble here. SHEAMUS BEATS UP HORNY! SWEET BABY! Show and Sheamus fight up the ramp and both go out via countout. Show sprints back but can't get in.

Ok so it's Edge, Alberto and technically Rey vs. Miz, Truth, Morrison, Jackson and Punk. Edge and Truth have a mini match

as Truth shouts WHAT'S UP. Spear out of NOWHERE and Truth is out to make it 4-3. Starship Pain misses and SPEAR ends Morrison. Tied up. GTS almost immediately is blocked and an Edge-0-Matic puts Punk down. Big spear chant.

It misses though and here's Del Rio. Punk's arm is bandaged heavily so look for the armbreaker. Blocked though as Punk gets a freaking backslide to put him out. Edge and technically Rey vs. Punk, Miz and Jackson. Striker offers to lace his boots up but Cole reminds him Smackdown wants to win in a funny bit. Here's Rey again as he drills Alberto on the way back to the ring.

Miz comes in and beats on Edge as we wait for the Rey hot tag. Edge vs. Miz now as Edge is in trouble. No mention of Edge and Rey being former tag champions so far. Reality Check to Edge gets two. Rey has tape up past his elbows and white tights. He looks like a mummy almost. Rey gets the tag and a seated senton to Punk. His arm is hurt badly though.

GTS is countered to set up a pinfall reversal sequence for a lot of two counts. Punk is set up in the 619 position. Connection and the springboard splash gets us down to 2-2. Jackson in now and this right here is domination. Striker is playing the home team commentator very well here. Edge is down from the corner as we get a bearhug. Ok scratch that as it's over in seconds.

There's Edge's hand as Jackson is in position but does the smart thing and just stands up. DDT counter by the masked man and there's no Edge to tag. Please, not a twist by the GM. 619 hits and the splash is semi-botched but it gets Jackson anyway to get us down to 2-1. Edge is STILL on the ground. Something is up. Riley stops the third 619 and blocks the fourth and the splash eats knees for two.

Crowd is into this now and that makes sense I guess. Why get into the parts that mean nothing at all? Skull Crushing Finale

is blocked and there's the hot tag to Edge and the spear gives Smackdown back to back wins! I KEEP THE WZPC TITLE! Striker keeps saying IN YOUR FACE to Lawler. That's awesome. Cole claims to be Team Smackdown now. Well he's smart if nothing else. Did I really just say that???

**Rating:** B-. It was definitely entertaining, that's for sure. This wasn't a classic or anything but it did fine for what it was supposed to do. At the end of the day though, what does this really prove? I get the concept of bragging rights but it's over now and won't be mentioned for another year. Fun match though.

Raw World Title recap. You know the drill.

#### Raw World Title: Randy Orton vs. Wade Barrett

Cena is with Barrett here and we hear about how Orton might be the last chance to stop the infection known as Nexus. That sounds rather WCW vs. NWOish. Big match intros. Randy looks back and sees...no one coming with him. Ok then. Barrett grabs the microphone and says if he doesn't win, Cena is fired TONIGHT. Well ok then. That leaves the door open for count out and DQ though.

Barrett hits the floor early after Orton takes over. Loud FIRE CENA chant. You can't say the crowd isn't making their voices heard. I know because I can hear them. Barrett gets on Cena for not attacking Orton when he had a chance to. This is the living definition of killing time before the big finish. Almost all Orton so far as Cena keeps avoiding any contact with Orton.

Barrett takes over as this is just boring right now. It's not bad but we know this means nothing at all as it's all about Cena and always will be. That's not his fault but the booking is just kind of stupid here. Orton makes a comeback after about five minutes on the brink of eternity. I need these odd sounding phrases to get me through this.

Elevated DDT is blocked and the referee is bumped. Well you knew that was coming. Barrett yells at Cena to come help while he can. Orton shoves Wade into Cena and down he goes. Cue the other Nexus guys and Orton is in trouble. Striker: guys Wade Barrett is going to be the new WWE Champion.

Cena comes back in and takes out Nexus with Orton adding an RK0 to Slater. Cena hits the floor and says he had to do it or you get disqualified. That's very true actually and good thinking. Wasteland is blocked and here comes Orton.

Elevated DDT connects and Orton dances into the RK0 mat slapping of awesomeness. Cena slides in and casually hits an FU on Barrett to give him the win by DQ. NICE. Cena helped Barrett win. He hands the belt to Orton but gets an RK0 for his troubles. Yep I was right about the ending. RK0 to Barrett and copious posing ends the show.

**Rating:** D. Boring as heck here but I think the ending works very well. The problem is that it took nearly 20 minutes to get us there. That's the problem here: this was all about Cena and Barrett with Orton there as a placeholder. And again, this sends us on to the next show rather than giving us anything. As Norcal and I were saying, this doesn't give us much at all but just sets up the next show. That's a very bad thing and WWE really needs to get out of that habit, meaning it'll never happen.

**Overall Rating:** D-. There is one issue with this show that kills it: NOTHING HAPPENED! Kane still dominates Taker, Cena is still a thorn in Nexus' side, Orton is still champion, Taker is beaten down by Nexus but is probably gone for awhile (Kane vs. Edge maybe?), Smackdown still has bragging rights, and that's about it.

Nothing else of note has changed here and there were all of two good matches, both of which are more or less skippable. Oh wait Cena and Otunga are tag champions, which easily could

have been done on Raw. Also, is it really intelligent to not, oh I don't know, SAY YOUR MOST POPULAR GUY WILL BE IN THE RING TONIGHT? The thing is it's not really that it was awful, but just totally not needed at all. Space out Hell in a Cell and give us a better build to Survivor Series and things would be MUCH better.

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