

Monday Night Raw – October 30, 2017: No. Moving On.

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 30, 2017

Location: Royal Farms Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Booker T.

It's time for the fallout show as we're less than three weeks away from Survivor Series and Raw is reeling from Smackdown's invasion last week. The interesting part is whether or not Smackdown will be back this week as it's time to get ready for the real battle. Hopefully it's as entertaining as last week. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of last week's invasion.

Opening sequence.

Kurt Angle is in the ring and the Raw roster is on the stage. Last week was taking friendly competition too far and that was a slap in the face of the people who work here every week. He put them in harm's way and that will never happen again. Cue the returning Stephanie McMahon to talk about how Monday Night Raw will be celebrating twenty five years on January 22. The show is still going strong and that's where she and Kurt come in. Angle has lead by example and has even earned her respect.

Stephanie pauses for the YOU STILL GOT IT but blames Angle for last week's siege. It took twenty seconds to ruin Raw's history and that's all because of Angle falling for Shane's lies. Stephanie goes on a rant about how Angle RUINED, yes RUINED, Raw's legacy last week in one incompetent moment. Therefore, Angle better hope that he still has it because he's going to be team captain at Survivor Series. If things don't go the way she wants, he's out as General Manager.

Post break Stephanie is leaving and Angle is very sorry. Stephanie mentions Mick Foley as another threat to Angle's job. As Stephanie leaves, another limo comes up, containing the Miz. Angle isn't happy with

him being late so he's defending the Intercontinental Title tonight. Miz wants to know who but Angle won't tell him for being late. Of note: Bo Dallas was back.

Angle being all apologetic and scared here does nothing for him, but it certainly makes Stephanie look like the queen of the world. You know, BECAUSE WE HAVEN'T ESTABLISHED THAT ENOUGH IN THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS!

Bayley vs. Alicia Fox

Fox comes out in an airline captain's outfit (well, the female wrestling version) and says this is your captain speaking (eh kind of clever). She has business to tend to so we have a replacement.

Bayley vs. Nia Jax

Bayley charges right at her to start and basically bounces off of the monster, landing on the floor in a heap. Back with Nia holding a chinlock, followed by a pair of running splashes in the corner. What looked to be a Vader Bomb is broken up and Nia is dumped to the floor. Bayley dives off the apron with some right hands, followed by a kick to the face for two. We hit a guillotine choke but Nia shrugs it off without much effort. A spear and the legdrop end Bayley at 7:24.

Rating: D+. You know all those times that Nia has defeated Bayley before? This is the most recent one. The match was yet another destruction of Bayley, who will be the exact same character next week. That's one of the biggest reasons characters from NXT don't work in WWE: there's no development. Bayley had that crisis of confidence over the summer, came back, changed nothing, and is right back where she was months ago. That's poor writing and a lack of storytelling, which is why Bayley (along with so many others) isn't interesting anymore.

Alicia picks Nia to be on the Raw team. Nia goes to leave but Samoa Joe of all people is back. Post break, Joe says he knows some people here missed him but he didn't miss a single one of them. Therefore, when he's beating the heck out of someone, he'll be imagining it's all of the people.

Samoa Joe vs. Apollo Crews

Joe wastes no time in chopping Crews in the corner and it's not looking good early on. Crews fights back with a good looking dropkick and some right hands in the corner but Joe isn't about to be suplexed. A kick in the corner drops Crews and Joe throws his gum at Titus O'Neil. Crews scores with an enziguri but the Toss Powerbomb is countered with a headlock takeover. The Rock Bottom out of the corner plants Crews and it's the Koquina Clutch for the tap out at 3:39.

Rating: D. Samoa Joe gave Brock Lesnar all he could handle on pay per view but he broke a sweat against Crews on Raw? Joe is one of the best monsters on Raw and for some reason they won't have him squash a jobber to the stars. This was WAY more competitive than it needed to be and it's not like this company has much credibility when it comes to making new stars at the moment (but they can push Kane of course).

Post match Joe chokes Titus out as well.

Quick look at Raw 25 coming up in January featuring Undertaker, Shawn Michaels and...Kevin Nash?

Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Matt Hardy

Matt is challenging and wastes no time in trying a small package for two. A backslide gets the same and these early pinfall attempts are working at making Miz sweat a bit. Miz bails to the floor and we take a break. Back with Matt getting crotched on top and a neckbreaker out of the corner getting two. You can tell Miz is working here as his hair is hanging off the side of his head.

Miz puts him on the apron and gets two off a kick to the head. Back in and Miz hits the corner clothesline but the top rope ax handle is blocked. Instead Miz crotches himself in the corner to put both guys down. Matt gets two off a bulldog and drops his middle rope elbow to the back of the neck.

A regular middle rope elbow (that's a new one) gets two, followed by the Side Effect for the same. Matt scores with a moonsault of all things for

two more but Miz is right back with the YES Kicks. A Twist of Fate out of nowhere plants Miz but he rolls to the apron. Back up and Miz snaps his throat first across the ropes, setting up the Skull Crushing Finale to retain at 13:02.

Rating: B. This was much better than I was expecting and a lot of that is because of Matt knowing how to make you buy into his near falls. There's no reason to really believe that Matt is going to end Miz's long title reign here but they pulled off a good match. I'm not sure who is taking the title from Miz, but he's less than two months away from the second most combined days as champion of all time so it's not happening anytime soon. More than likely at least.

We recap the opening sequence, making sure to show how amazing Stephanie is, just in case you forgot in the last 40 minutes.

Alexa Bliss comes in to see Angle and mocks the idea of Mickie James being a serious contender. Angle isn't cool with that and makes Bliss vs. James for the title in the main event.

Asuka vs. Stacie Cullen

A spinning backfist drops Cullen and it's time for some hard knees to the face. Asuka kicks her in the head and the Asuka Lock is good for the submission at 1:42.

Angle grabs a walkie talkie and says the invasion is happening again. It turns out to just be Daniel Bryan and we take a break. Back with Angle yelling at Bryan for wanting to be here to finish the job. Bryan says no but Angle threatens to have the Raw roster destroy him right now. Angle promises to come to Smackdown and even things up.

Recap of Brock Lesnar answering Jinder Mahal's challenge and Mahal's response.

Bryan is still in Angle's office for no apparent reason and sums up what happened in a phone call. The lights go out and we take a break. Back with Bryan in the dark ranting about the door being locked. He says something is wrong and Kane shows up to chokeslam him through a table

(off camera of course).

Finn Balor vs. Cesaro

Balor takes him into the corner to start and shouts BAR. That's still a stupid name so Balor headlocks him down instead. A tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gets Cesaro out of trouble though and he uppercuts Finn into the corner. Balor sends him outside though and the running apron kick to the face drops Cesaro. Sheamus gets in a cheap shot though and we take a break.

Back with Cesaro hitting the pop up uppercut for two, followed by the apron superplex (that never gets old) for the same. We hit the Sharpshooter for a bit with Balor easily powering out. That means a Sling Blade into the corner dropkick, followed by Balor hitting a good looking running flip dive onto both guys. A top rope double stomp to the back gives Balor the pin at 11:28.

Rating: B-. At least Balor got something back after that pretty ridiculous loss to Kane last week. Hopefully he gets a nice run at the pay per view as he still needs to shake off the Bray Wyatt feud. Cesaro losing in a singles match doesn't mean much as he's not likely to be getting a singles push anytime soon.

Post match Kane comes out and Tombstones Balor on the stage. HE'S KANE! DOES ANYONE THINK HE NEEDS TO BE BUILT UP TO FACE STROWMAN? And at the expense of Finn Balor? Good grief is there anyone else you want to put Kane over?

Seth Rollins vs. Kane

I WAS KIDDING!!! Cesaro and Sheamus are still at ringside along with Ambrose. Rollins just looks better in the Shield gear. Seth's early shots have little effect so he scores with some dropkicks through the ropes. The suicide dive is broken up though and Kane runs him over with a clothesline. Rollins hammers away in the corner and kicks at the knee, only to get dropped with an uppercut. You can't say Kane's offense is complicated yet it still works well. The side slam gives Kane two and we hit a chinlock.

Back up and an enziguri gets Seth out of trouble and the Blockbuster (still love that move) gets two. A suicide dive is blocked though and Rollins is down in a heap. Back in and Seth's springboard...I think clothesline is shrugged off as Sheamus and Cesaro are stomping on Ambrose. Another springboard is countered into a chokeslam for the pin on Rolling at 5:42.

Rating: D+. The problem here is obvious: pushing Kane is fine but the idea of having Kane go over Rollins and Balor in back to back weeks for the sake of setting up Kane vs. Strowman is nonsense. Kane is one of the biggest stars ever and is a monster by definition. That's not something which requires a lot of effort but for some reason we're sacrificing far more valuable wrestlers for the sake of pushing the guy.

Post match Dean hits Dirty Deeds on Kane but Sheamus and Cesaro come in to help beat him down. Ambrose and Rollins both get Tombstoned, making it THREE former World Champions Kane has decimated in the span of ten minutes. Oh and one thing missing when the Shield was being beaten down: anyone chanting for Reigns to make the save. Isn't that interesting?

We look at the opening sequence. Again.

Bryan is being stretchered out.

Miz and the Miztourage are ready to celebrate and go into their locker room. They find a bag of trash, which Miz interprets as Braun Strowman coming back. Terror ensues.

Post break Miz runs into Braun and asks him for help with Strowman. Kane says he's on his own.

Recap of Strowman being destroyed at TLC.

Heath Slater/Rhyno vs. Karl Anderson/Luke Gallows

This is a Trick or Street Fight, meaning the ring is surrounded by Halloween decorations. For costumes, we have Santa and Mrs. Claus vs. Chad 2 Bad/Tex Ferguson (from Southpaw Regional Wrestling) respectively. Slater is sent into a bucket of apples to start so Rhyno makes a save and puts pumpkins on their heads. Heath finds some candy corn kendo sticks

but it takes too long to set up a table.

Anderson and Gallows beat Slater down, including shoving pumpkin filling in Slater's face. Karl crotches himself on a skeleton (though just go with it) and there's a pie to the face. Slater makes the save with the kendo sticks but gets beaten down again. Anderson puts a pumpkin on his own head and Gallows does the same, blinding himself in the process. It takes too long though and Rhino gets off a table, setting up a spinebuster to put Anderson through said table for the pin at 4:50.

Rating: F. No. Moving on.

Cesaro and Sheamus tell Miz that Strowman couldn't possibly be back yet. They're no team though. So is this supposed to be WWE's version of a horror story? Just because it's October? It was more effective when Reigns attempted to murder Strowman and it's not exactly spooky, especially when Strowman is likely back this week or next. On a related note, is Kane getting this kind of a push because he's a monster and it's the Halloween season? If so, that's rather dumb even by WWE's limited standards.

Elias, with a new guitar, is in the ring for a song. He sings the Ballad of Jason Jordan, complete with shots of Jordan being hit with a guitar last week. Jordan comes out to clean house and breaks Elias' new guitar.

Miz and the Miztourage go to leave but Angle cuts them off, saying they're staying or else.

Here are Enzo Amore and Drew Gulak to mock Angle again. Kalisto isn't getting the title back you see and Gulak is ready to help prove that. Gulak says Kalisto is S-O-F-T, which doesn't sit well with Enzo.

Kalisto vs. Drew Gulak

Drew jumps him to start but charges into a boot in the corner. Kalisto's middle rope corkscrew dive and the handspring enziguri sets up the hurricanrana driver. The springboard Salida Del Sol ends Gulak at 59 seconds.

Post match Enzo lays Kalisto out.

Miz is trying to find a way out.

Women's Title: Alexa Bliss vs. Mickie James

James is challenging and scores early with a running kick to the chest. The hurricanrana out of the corner has Bliss reeling and a dropkick puts her outside. Back from a break with Bliss working on a neck crank before switching to a chinlock (totally different you see). Something like an STO gets two and Bliss stands on Mickie's hair for good measure.

That's enough to fire Mickie up but Bliss slams her off the top to take over again. An enziguri off the top lets Mickie score with the Thesz press for two. Some rollups are good for some two counts but Bliss punches her in the face for the pin to retain at 11:25. Seriously it was just a right hand.

Rating: D. Well that happened. This was a lot of chinlocking and not much else, which doesn't make for a strong main event. I was hoping for something like Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks here but instead I got little more than a bad women's match. James isn't the most interesting challenger and losing to a right hand is about as low as you can go.

Miz and the Miztourage go to leave and, after cutting back to Bliss celebrating, get in the car, where of course there is a camera waiting. They pull off and are immediately stopped by a waiting garbage truck. Braun comes out of the garbage as we keep cutting to Miz and company in the vein of a bad horror movie.

Strowman poses (in clean clothes despite BEING IN A GARBAGE TRUCK FOR EIGHT DAYS) and chases them out of the limo. They head into the arena, where Bliss is still posing, where Strowman throws Dallas onto the stage. The Miztourage save Miz from going through the table so Strowman takes them to the ring for FIVE running powerslams. Axel goes through the announcers' table to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. This is a show where two good matches were powerless to save the show. I'm not even sure where to begin, but we'll start with Stephanie. Yeah I know it's her character and we know that's what she does but come on: the legacy of Raw is destroyed? That's what we're

taking out of last week's show?

The same show that had Buzz Aldrin, Florence Henderson and that cowboy whose name I can't remember as "guest stars"? The same show that had a Rosie O'Donnell vs. Donald Trump minis match? The same show that had Jim Ross' unconscious head the against the back of Vince's underwear before Vince, in a cowboy hat, skipped around the ring with his pants around his ankles? NONE OF THAT compares to last week? That's what we're supposed to buy as a top story?

Ignoring the Halloween street fight (On the night BEFORE the show THAT ACTUALLY AIRS ON FREAKING HALLOWEEN!), there's the whole booking the show like a horror movie. Strowman looked like Michael Myers and Kane (who was originally based on Myers) it beating World Champions into the ground. The more I think about it, the more I think they really are pushing monsters like this for the sake of the season of the year, which is as dumb as you can get. Maybe Kane was supposed to be Wyatt, but I can't imagine Wyatt getting this kind of a push no matter how much more sense it would have made.

On top of that, as of now, we're not even getting the match that the finishing segment seems to be setting up. Based on what we saw, Strowman should be going after Miz and the Intercontinental Title. What are we getting instead? Strowman vs. Kane and Miz vs. Corbin. After Survivor Series, do you think Strowman is going to go after the title? Of course not, because he'll want revenge or something like that. That's fine once in awhile, but when is the last time you remember a feud being after the title? Let them build that thing up once in a while instead of always going for the personal stuff.

The problem here comes down to one simple thing: Kane and Stephanie McMahon came out as the dominant forces on this show. We have two weeks to go before Survivor Series and at the moment, we know one member of the Raw team. In theory people like Kane, Balor and Strowman will be included (it's not like there are many other options) but none of this has focused on the pay per view.

All we hear about is how it's Raw vs. Smackdown and champion vs. champion

but that's not enough. The titles aren't on the line and I need a lot more than bragging rights to draw my interest. There's nothing going on for this show and, other than Kane and Stephanie (and Strowman, to a lesser degree), there's no reason to care about most of what's coming up. Aside from the raid, all we have to go on is some graphics and a one off raid. Things could change, but this show was a disaster that turned me off on the pay per view.

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Tables Ladders and Chairs 2017: When a Disease is a Better Booker Than Creative

Tables Ladders and Chairs 2017

Date: October 22, 2017

Location: Target Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Booker T.

Now this one has my attention as the card has almost been thrown out the window due to a string of medical issues. AJ Styles is replacing Bray

Wyatt to face Finn Balor, but in a bigger story it's Kurt Angle's first WWE match in over eleven years as he replaces Roman Reigns in the show's namesake match. Let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: Alicia Fox vs. Sasha Banks

Rematch from Raw. Fox bails to the floor to start before taking her down and grabbing a way too early chinlock. Sasha fights up and knocks Alicia outside and we take a break without much having happened so far. Back with Fox messing with Banks' hair and shoving her off the top in a heap. Alicia pulls at her hair a bit and it's mostly one sided so far. Back in and Fox slams Sasha right back to the floor but there's no immediate count. Fox to the fans: "EVERYBODY HELP THE REFEREE DO HIS JOB!"

A backbreaker gives Fox two and Booker compares her to the Missing Link of all people. Sasha kicks her to the floor without much effort and a headscissors takes Fox down back inside. Another backbreaker has Banks in trouble but only for two, meaning Fox screeches a lot. Not that it matters as the ax kick misses and it's the Bank Statement makes Fox tap at 10:12.

Rating: D+. So we had a short match on Monday and now a longer match tonight. I still have no reason to believe that Fox is in Banks' league and it's kind of a waste of time to make this work at all. Fox isn't going to beat Banks anytime in a competitive match but the fans went nuts for Sasha's entrance, which is the point here.

The opening video looks at all of the changes to the card with a focus on Angle, as you would probably expect. The rest of the card gets a shorter look.

Emma vs. Asuka

Asuka is making her main roster debut and the fans are VERY excited for her entrance. An early cross armbreaker has Emma in early trouble and the hip attack puts her down again. Asuka can't get the ankle lock and Emma kicks her down for two, meaning it's time for the confidence to start. A hard shot to the back gives Emma two more and the fans are all behind Asuka.

Emma slaps on a seated full nelson but makes the mistake of slapping her in the face. That earns Emma a sliding knee to the face, only to have Emma hit a sliding kick of her own for two. It's time for the pain though as Asuka snaps off a German suplex, only to have Emma head outside and pull Asuka outside by the hair. Not that it really matters as Asuka kicks her in the head and slaps on the Asuka Lock for the tap out at 9:21.

Rating: B-. That's the most obvious ending of the whole match and there's nothing wrong with that. Asuka was a killer here and, despite Emma getting in more offense than I was expecting, she looks like someone who is going to be a star for a long time. Now if only I could believe that WWE won't manage to screw her up.

Miz gives the Bar a pep talk until Strowman comes in to yell at them. Kane comes in as well and promises to turn the main event into a nightmare.

Here's Elias to talk about how awesome he is and play a little song. As he's playing though, vegetables are thrown into the ring by...Jason Jordan. This goes nowhere and is as fillerish as you can get.

Jack Gallagher/Brian Kendrick vs. Cedric Alexander/Rich Swann

Kendrick has turned Gallagher evil and they targeted Alexander. Swann came in to help out his buddy. Cedric and Gallagher start things off but it's already off to Swann to speed things up (not the worst idea when you need a shot of adrenaline) with his flips. Jack is sent outside where he trips Cedric, only to be taken down by a Swann flip dive from the apron. Cedric isn't about to be outdone and hits a flip dive of his own over the top.

Back in and Kendrick cravates Swann to slow things down and Rich is sent head first into the buckle. Swann escapes a belly to back and brings Cedric in off the hot tag. Cedric cleans house, including a spinning kick to Gallagher's head. Kendrick takes him outside and scores with a northern lights suplex, to put Cedric in trouble. Back in and the Captain's Hook is broken up as Swann drops a Phoenix splash. The Lumbar Check ends Kendrick at 7:57.

Rating: C+. It was fun, but this was something you could see on almost any given episode of 205 Live. They flipped around and did their thing for about eight minutes but that doesn't make it anything too fancy. The story is standard and that's really all there is to say about it. It's not going to help 205 Live that much but these guys deserve a little spotlight.

Alexa Bliss thinks Mickie James is only mad at her over the age jokes, but the truth is that Bliss idolized Mickie growing up. Mickie has gone toe to toe with Hall of Famers, but after tonight the good old days will just be old.

Women's Title: Alexa Bliss vs. Mickie James

James is challenging and headlocks Bliss to start, much to the champ's annoyance. Bliss pulls the hair to escape a few times before snapping Mickie's arm across the top rope. That means it's time to rip at the arm and slap on an armbar for good measure. You can feel Bliss' confidence here, which is exactly how this story should go. A near fall only frustrates Bliss more and Mickie fights out of the corner with a good looking hurricanrana.

They slap it out until a forearm from Bliss and a high kick from Mickie connect at the same time. It's Mickie getting the better of it and hitting some running forearms. Bliss goes to the arm again but Mickie slugs her down and nips up. Mickie gets crotches on top but Twisted Bliss only hits mat. A bad looking missile dropkick gives Mickie two but Bliss seems to be hurt. Mickie goes for it of course and gets pulled shoulder first into the corner. Bliss adds the DDT to retain at 11:30.

Rating: B. I liked this one more than the opener and I'm only somewhat surprised by that. Bliss is getting better in the ring and she's getting that DDT over as a finisher. Of course I can't imagine her holding the title by the end of the Royal Rumble as Asuka should win the belt in the near future but we can enjoy Bliss while she lasts.

Post match Mickie says she's disappointed but she'll be back. We get a thank you to the fans and Mickie is out.

Angle is getting ready in the back when Ambrose and Rollins come in. They're ready for the match but have a gift for Angle: his own riot squad gear. Angle says he's in all the way.

Here's Elias to try his song again but one more time he's delayed by Jordan throwing vegetables, this time from a shopping cart. Even Graves mentions that we're filling time.

We recap Enzo Amore vs. Kalisto. Enzo won the Cruiserweight Title last month but Kalisto won it in a big surprise. That wasn't cool with Amore, who said that he was the only real star in the division. Tonight is the rematch.

Cruiserweight Title: Enzo Amore vs. Kalisto

Kalisto is defending. Before the match, Enzo, with a hoarse voice, does his usual shtick and says he's not going to be one of those people who stands around while everyone else gets whatever they want. Enzo bails into the corner to start and the chase is on with Kalisto grabbing a headscissors for his first big offense. Another spin sends Enzo bailing to the floor and we hit the stall button. Back in and Enzo sends him head first into the top turnbuckle to take over for the first time.

A hard kick to the ribs keeps Kalisto down and there's the baseball punch for two. We hit the chinlock with Enzo grabbing the mask to pull Kalisto right back down. Kalisto finally fights back up and sends him hard into the corner, followed by a springboard seated senton. Enzo gets two off a middle rope DDT but the Jordunzo is broken up. Not that it matters as Enzo pokes him in the eye and hits the Jordunzo for the pin and the title at 9:02.

Rating: D+. Well duh. This was only slightly less obvious than Asuka winning as they were just trying to make Enzo sweat a bit before becoming a two time champion. Hopefully they can have other people get title shots now but otherwise, we could be in for some stretchy booking to keep him defending the title. Enzo remains a necessary evil, but that doesn't make him any easier to sit through.

Post match Enzo thanks himself.

The announcers give all the preview they can for AJ Styles vs. Finn Balor. There's no story here but they had to give us a huge match with so many last minute changes. For once, this actually lives up to the term Dream Match and that's a nice change of pace.

Finn Balor vs. AJ Styles

Balor is the Demon and the fans are split here. A lockup goes nowhere so they trade shoulders for no advantage either. They try a technical sequence and it's a standoff as the fans are very pleased. Balor goes to the apron and scores with a kick to the head, setting up a kind of awkward sequence where Balor didn't seem to realize that AJ was on his stomach and tried to cover.

It's a surfboard instead though with Balor starting in on the leg. Back up and AJ catches him with a hard forearm, followed by a slingshot Phenomenal Forearm for two. The fans are split as Balor comes back with a series of shots in the corner, including a hard shot to knock AJ off the top and to the floor. That means a big flip dive, which the fans think is awesome. Back in and Balor scores with the Sling Blade but AJ grabs the fireman's carry backbreaker to cut him off.

The Styles Clash is broken up so it's a belly to back faceplant to give AJ two of his own. Now it's Balor back up and stomping away in the corner, followed by a running kick to the face. That just earns Balor the Calf Crusher until he has to grab AJ's head and slam it into the mat for the break. The Phenomenal Forearm is loaded up again but this time it's Balor shoving him off the top for a big crash to the floor.

Balor follows him up with a running dropkick to send AJ into the barricade, only to have AJ drive him over the announcers' table. They dive back in at nine and stereo crossbodies put them both down. The Phenomenal Blitz staggers Balor but he's right back with the Pele to give us another standoff. A reverse implant DDT takes AJ down but a Pele cuts off the Coup de Grace. AJ isn't about to be outdone so it's a super springboard hurricanrana. He misses the springboard 450 though and the shotgun dropkick puts AJ in the corner. The Coup de Grace ends AJ at 17:54.

Rating: B+. This was the only option they had with all the changes. WWE had to deliver something special and that's what they did with something that actually lived up to the dream match moniker. Balor winning was the right call as there's no point in not giving the Raw guy a rub on the Raw show. It's also a very good match with both guys looking like stars the whole way through. WWE did what they could here and that's very nice to see for a change.

They shake hands post match and we get the TOO SWEET that will be talked about to a completely unnecessary degree.

Elias is out here a third time and this time he's in the ring. At least there's a match this time around.

Jason Jordan vs. Elias

Bonus match. Jordan wastes no time in powering Elias down to the mat so Elias shoves him in the face. Elias bails to the floor for a breather, followed by a headlock back inside. Something like a powerslam takes Elias down but Jordan gets sent hard into the post. Elias grabs a seated abdominal stretch as Booker changes his mind on Elias in the span of a minute. A regular abdominal stretch keeps Jordan in trouble until he powers Elias into the corner.

There's the belly to belly and a swinging Saito suplex gets two more. Jordan can't hit the belly to belly superplex so Elias slams him into the corner instead. Elias tries a suplex but gets reversed into a small package. Jordan lets him go at two but the referee counts the pin anyway at 9:54. It looked like Elias' shoulder was up and Booker is borderline livid.

Rating: D. Standard Raw match here but they had to fill in the time with something. Jordan winning that way seems to set up another match down the line (by which I mean tomorrow night) but at least they seem to be pushing someone. Now of course watch them have Elias win the rematch and make this a big waste of time.

Quick video on Angle's career, followed by a recap of the main event. The Shield members were dealing with Miz and company and decided there was

strength in numbers. Ambrose made the mistake of saying the team could face three, four or five men so Miz took him up on it. Then Reigns got sick so Angle is taking his place.

Dean Ambrose/Seth Rollins/Kurt Angle vs. Miz/Braun Strowman/Kane/The Bar

Tables, ladders and chairs but you win by pinfall or submission. Angle is in Shield gear for a nice touch and it's Rollins diving on the pile, allowing his partners to grab some chairs and take over to start. Strowman gets chaired down and Kane gets the same treatment, allowing Ambrose and Rollins to hit stereo dives. Sheamus and Cesaro remember that they're in the match and save Kane from going through the announcers' table.

The Shield guys take over again though and Kane is set on the table, only to have Strowman fight back. Rollins saves Kurt from going through a table and Strowman is chaired down again. It's double ladder time with Strowman and Kane being laid on the tables, setting up a splash and elbow drop for the first big spot of the match. With everyone else down, Angle throws Miz back inside but gets met by Cesaro and Sheamus. Ambrose and Rollins get back in to break up the TripleBomb, leaving Angle to roll some German suplexes on Miz.

Cesaro and Sheamus take one each as Angle is all fired up. Speaking of fire being up, Kane sits up but gets taken right back down with an ankle lock. Strowman makes the save and it's a running powerslam through a table to knock Kurt silly. The villains come back with chair shots and it's Angle being taken to the back by medics, only to fall to his knees in the aisle. Booker actually rants about how selfish Angle was as Rollins is thrown head first into a chair in the corner.

The beating continues for a good while as the fans want Lesnar. Ambrose and Rollins try to fight back and Kane accidentally chairs Strowman. For some reason the Shield guys break it up, which is enough to end the brawl. It's table time but the double Razor's Edge sends Ambrose bouncing off the table in a SICK crash. Miz has the Bar take Rollins up the ramp and it's a garbage truck backing into the arena. Ambrose and Rollins fight out of the truck though and hit dives onto everyone but Miz in the

big hope spot.

Kane gets beaten down but Strowman is back up to stop a suplex through a table. For some reason Kane slugs away at Strowman, setting up a chokeslam through the stage. Strowman is still getting up so Kane grabs the chairs hanging from the ceiling and pulls about eight of them down, burying Strowman on the floor. Kane isn't done yet and chokeslams Ambrose and Rollins onto tables (neither breaks AGAIN). The Bar helps carry them to the truck...and Strowman is up.

Miz begs him to stop but Strowman takes out all of his partners, setting up the fight with Kane. Everyone gets together and Strowman is thrown into the truck, which turns on. Rollins is thrown back into the ring and it's Miz/the Bar doing the Shield entrance. A springboard assisted White Noise plants Seth but Dean makes the diving save at two. Kane calls for a chokeslam...and here's Angle back again.

The Bar takes Angle Slams on the floor but Kane takes him down with a clothesline. Ambrose and Rollins come back in with chairs before driving Kane through the barricade. The Skull Crushing Finale takes Angle down from behind for a heck of a near fall. The ankle lock has Miz in trouble but Miz sends Kurt outside for the break. Rollins gets back in for the wind-up knee into Dirty Deeds into the Angle Slam and Miz is basically done. The TripleBomb is good for the pin at 35:23.

Rating: A-. WOW. I'm really not sure what to say about this but I think we can call it the most ridiculous, insane, over the top and crazy entertaining match that will mean a grand total of nothing in recent history. I mean....THEY PUT A MAN IN A GARBAGE TRUCK AND CRUSHED HIM! LIKE SHREDDER IN TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES! And that's not even the first time someone has used a large truck to try and destroy him this year!

The match was a complete over the top mess and that's all they could do here. Instead of trying to have a match (which would have been ridiculous given how one sided it was on paper), the whole thing was just a chaotic mess and that's the best possible outcome. I could have gone with Sheamus, Cesaro or Kane taking the fall but at least it was after a lot of offense. Angle looked fine and I get the break he took, though it

makes me wonder if Reigns would have taken that break as well had he been in there (probably not of course but it's not out of the question). Insanely fun main event and really all they could have done.

Overall Rating: C+. I'm not sure what to think of this one, but it's safe to say that they weren't able to put forth their best show given all the last minute changes. That being said the matches we got were probably a lot better, which brings up the fact that a horrible disease is booking the pay per views better than the Raw creative team (I wish I could take credit for that but I saw it elsewhere). It's not a show that anyone needs to see again (though the last two matches were a blast in different ways) but all things considered, this was good stuff.

Oh and by the way: they added two segments, a bonus match, admitted they were filling in time and STILL MANAGED TO GO OVER! I don't know if that's really impressive or pathetic but it made me chuckle.

Results

Asuka b. Emma – Asuka Lock

Cedric Alexander/Rich Swann b. Jack Gallagher/Brian Kendrick – Lumbar Check to Kendrick

Alexa Bliss b. Mickie James – DDT

Enzo Amore b. Kalisto – Jordunzo

Finn Balor b. AJ Styles – Coup de Grace

Jason Jordan b. Elias – Small package

Kurt Angle/Dean Ambrose/Seth Rollins b. The Miz/Braun Strowman/The Bar/Kane – TripleBomb to Miz

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Tables Ladders and Chairs 2017 Preview

Let's get this in as fast as I can before another performer is taken off the card due to illness. In a rare case, two top level wrestlers scheduled to appear on this show have been taken off the card due to medical issues. That changes the whole dynamic of the show, but that doesn't mean the show is worse as a result. It should be interesting to see where the card goes from here so let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: Sasha Banks vs. Alicia Fox

So this might have been scheduled to be Nia Jax in Fox's spot but Jax not getting to face Asuka was enough to make her leave the promotion for the time being. Banks already made Fox tap out earlier in the week on "Monday Night Raw", which makes me wonder what the point is in having the match all over again. Maybe they're trying to convince us that there will be a surprise ending?

If that's what they're going for, I'm certainly not buying it. I have no reason to believe that this won't end with another Bank Statement and there's really no reason for Fox to win the thing. Fox is nothing more than a warm body for Banks to defeat and there's nothing wrong with that. Banks is someone who is going to fire the crowd up as soon as she comes into

the arena and that's exactly what you want a dark match to do. Good choice for a match, but not exactly a questionable ending.

Cruiserweight Title: Kalisto(c) vs. Enzo Amore

Over the last few weeks of "205 Live", I've been finding Amore more tolerable than I have in recent months. However, that doesn't mean he's any less annoying that he's been for the last...well ever actually. Kalisto won the title a few weeks back and it seems that we've just been counting down the time until Amore gets the title back for the sake of making "205 Live" interesting again.

In other words, of course Amore gets the title back here as Kalisto is little more than a quick way to make Amore a two time champion. It helps that they let him keep the belt for more than a few days, though it doesn't make things any better. Amore dominates any show he's on and that can get old in a hurry. I get why he's around and he's a necessary evil, though that doesn't make him getting the title back any easier. So yeah, Amore wins, much to the rise of my blood pressure.

Finn Balor vs. AJ Styles

This is the first of the two lineup changes we've had to undergo as Styles is replacing Bray Wyatt, who has been taken off the show due to medical reasons. That's a major problem as Wyatt was supposed to debut Sister Abigail and Balor was supposed to bring back the Demon character. It seems that Balor will still be the Demon in what is now a glorified dream match.

I'll take Balor to win as "Monday Night Raw" shouldn't have one of its top stars lose, especially with a potential World Title challenge in the next few months. That's a problem when Styles seems to be up next for Smackdown World Champion Jinder Mahal. However, the tie goes to the wrestler with home roster

advantage so I'll take Balor winning in a heck of a classic.

Women's Title: Alexa Bliss(c) vs. Mickie James

This is the classic "I'm young and awesome and you're old and lame" story which could very easily be set up for the sake of giving James the big feel good win, only to have Bliss get the title back in very short order. On the other hand, it could be little more than a way to give Bliss a quick win and there's nothing wrong with that.

I'll take Bliss to retain here, though the idea of giving James a win is tempting. James has been teasing tying Trish Stratus' record for the most Women's Title reigns in company history though I don't think they'll actually pull the trigger. Bliss can move on to facing someone else (hint: her name rhymes with Shaska) later on and James isn't going to lose anything if she doesn't pick up the title. So yeah, Bliss retains, even though I'm not feeling as sure as I was just a few days ago.

Asuka vs Emma

Did you now that Jesse Ventura and Roddy Piper filmed a pilot for a cop show back in the 1980s? The show was called "Tag Team" and it was looking strong to be picked up but that never quite came together. Now what does this have to do with the match? Well nothing, but what else am I supposed to talk about for the build towards this one?

Of course Asuka is going to destroy Emma and of course that's what should happen. Asuka hasn't lost since she came to WWE and Emma is little more than an appetizer before she gets on to someone more important and/or a bigger challenge. Emma was the obvious option for this as she can get destroyed and lose nothing, mainly because she has no value in the first place. Asuka wins here and it's a glorified squash at worst.

Cedric Alexander/Rich Swann vs. Jack Gallagher/Brian Kendrick

To paraphrase a certain song: "This is filler. Filler night. And no one's gonna save you from this match actually being on pay per view." Yeah there's no hiding the fact that this is taking place because the main event is featuring eight people and they need something else to fill in part of the card. It's nice that the cruiserweights are getting another spot on the card but it's the popcorn match of the night.

I'll take Alexander and Swann to win here and I'm not particularly sure why. Neither of them is interesting and while the story worked well enough, they're just showing how unimportant the rest of the division really is. There's a story to the match (revenge, basically) and that's all well and good, but if the participants feel so unimportant, the match isn't likely to be worth watching.

Seth Rollins/Dean Ambrose/Kurt Angle vs. Miz/Kane/Braun Strowman/The Bar

Hokey smoke what a match this has turned into. The original idea, and the match the entire show was built around, was the Shield vs. these five, though Roman Reigns was taken out due to another medical issue. That leaves Angle to fill in and...I have almost no idea what to think of the change. Angle is a special attraction and I'd like to see him get built up for a lot longer, but desperate times call for bad builds.

I'll definitely take Rollins/Ambrose/Angle as there's just no reason to have any other option. Angle is probably a one off appearance and there's nothing wrong with that. Hopefully he doesn't die or something in the ring, though that's almost par for the course whenever Angle gets in the ring. The match should be violent, but Kane, Cesaro and Sheamus are all there to take a fall for any of the winners and that's the way to go.

Overall Thoughts

This is an interesting show as the whole thing has been turned

upside down in the span of a few days. The top two matches have been thrown out (well only somewhat in the main event's case) yet somehow the show is even better on paper than it was just a few days ago. I could go for a long Balor vs. Styles match and Angle...well let's just hope he's ok. The show's gimmick has gone from interesting to something I only remember because of what the show is called, which isn't the best sign. This show really is a once in a long time situation and it could be interesting to see how WWE handles things.

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Main Event – October 19, 2017: I'm Rather Speechless

Main Event

Date: October 19, 2017

Location: Moda Center, Portland, Oregon

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

If WWE is heading towards Tables, Ladders and Chairs, Main Event is coming right along with it. This is another one of those weeks where the main show didn't do so well, meaning the short form recap version might work a little bit better. Then again, that likely includes Dash Wilder losing in a singles match. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Rhyno vs. Dash Wilder

Yes, AGAIN, for the third time in six weeks. Rhyno works on the arm to start so let's dash over to the ropes for the break. For some reason Dash tries a test of strength...and actually takes Rhyno down to his knees. Dash hammers away at the neck and gets two off a running neckbreaker.

We hit the chinlock and the fans are immediately chanting for Rhyno to fight back. I'm kind of stunned by how he stays popular but the fact that he's basically the same character he's always been has a lot to do with it. Rhyno fights up but the Gore is blocked with a knee lift. The spinebuster is countered into a sunset flip for two (Dash is learning from his previous defeats.) but the second attempt connects to finish Dash off at 5:29.

Rating: C+. You know what? Not bad at all. As repetitive as this mini feud has been, I can go for Dash learning a little about Rhyno and using that for a near fall. It's still not a great match or a great story, but for a match that was supposed to be filler, they actually put some thought into it, making for a much better performance. Call this one a pleasant surprise.

We look back at Shield TripleBombing Braun Strowman through the announcers' table.

From Raw.

It's time for MizTV with Miz being flanked by the Bar and Curtis Axel but no Bo Dallas. Miz talked about how they're ready to destroy the Shield right now but they'll wait until Sunday night. Sheamus says the Shield will be broken into three pieces. They're ready to destroy Shield and

here's tonight's guest: their partner on Sunday, Braun Strowman.

Braun says it's time to destroy the Shield forever and it starts tonight inside the cage. The fans get in a YES/REALLY battle with Miz, who has a bit of a surprise: there's going to be a fifth member of the team. The fans want Curtis Axel but here's Kurt Angle to say this isn't happening.

Kurt has a deal for Miz though: if Strowman wins tonight, the fifth man can join. If Reigns wins though, Strowman is out and it's 3-3 again. Miz says it's on but Angle says everyone is banned from ringside in both the cage match (kind of redundant) and the Tag Team Title match.

Also from Raw.

Here's Finn Balor for a chat. He talks about the Celtic festival of Sowan, which sounds like Halloween cranked up to eleven. Last week Finn say Bray's tricks but he has his own too. This Sunday, the Demon will slay a monster of his own. Finn's demon has no fear...and the Demon paint appears on his face. It disappears and Finn says his Demon dreams of nightmares (paint on and off again) and it wants to meet Sister Abigail. Run. Never let WWE get supernatural.

Drew Gulak vs. Mustafa Ali

Gulak has his NO CHANTS sign. Drew headlocks him to the mat to start and is greeted with a WE ARE CHANTING chant because this crowd is actually clever. Ali tries a drop down but Drew holds the ropes and slaps on a headlock. Back up and Ali springboards over him into a wristlock and we take a break. We come back with Ali scoring off a dropkick and getting two off the rolling neckbreaker. It's too early for the 054 as Gulak (Drew: "NO FLY!") pulls Ali off the ropes for a crash. Not that it matters as another kick to the head sets up the 054 for the pin at 8:00.

Rating: C. I could have gone for a bit more history between the two of them (though hearing Nigel sing the Aladdin song again made up for it) but this was fine. There's something amusing about the fact that the faces ALWAYS win these matches. It's logical, but WWE doesn't do much to hide the fact that this is a glorified dark match.

Pay per view rundown.

From Raw again to wrap us up.

Roman Reigns vs. Braun Strowman

Inside a cage and Miz jumps in on commentary. Strowman sends him into the corner to start but it's way too early for the running powerslam. Reigns slips out and tries to climb, only to get pulled down. Some clotheslines have almost no effect but some big boots have a big more effect. Strowman goes shoulder first into the corner and there are the rapid fire clotheslines. One heck of a spinebuster gets two on Roman and we take a break.

Back with Reigns tasting the cage a few times. Strowman throws him at the cage so Reigns grabs the top for a climb. Now why did he think that would work with Strowman looking at him. Strowman misses a charge and hits the cage though, allowing Reigns to score with some kicks to the face. A Samoan drop gets two with a heck of a kickout so Reigns makes another escape attempt. Cue the Bar to cut Reigns off so Ambrose and Rollins are outside to cut them off. THEN WHAT WAS THE POINT IN BANNING THEM BOTH FROM RINGSIDE???

Braun gets up in time to pull Reigns back inside with a superplex off the cage. Miz: "COVER!!!" Everyone not in the match brawls up to the stage as we cut away from the match entirely. Miz joins them and the fight heads backstage. Again, we're not even looking at the CAGE MATCH WITH TWO MONSTERS FIGHTING EACH OTHER because we need to see this instead. For all we know there's a tango contest going on at the moment as Miz closes a metal door, locking the four of them in the parking lot.

Back to the ring with Reigns fighting to his feet after suffering from a bad bowl of soup as served up by Chef Strowman (prove that it didn't happen). Miz is back on commentary as Reigns goes up top, only to slip down and crotch Strowman. A Superman Punch staggers Strowman and a second puts him down. Strowman throws Reigns in the air but gets Superman Punched again for two.

It's spear time...and Kane's lights come on. Strowman splashes Reigns but

eats a spear anyway. Kane comes up through the mat though and stares Reigns down, followed by a chokeslam. A second chokeslam sets up the running powerslam, followed by a Tombstone for good measure. Strowman adds another powerslam and Reigns is done at 17:24.

Rating: C-. Let me make sure I have this straight. Angle bans everyone from ringside so we have SIX PEOPLE interfere? And Reigns loses his first match after the reunion (not fairly but it's a loss)? Here's the thing: Kane was in Shield's first match and Reigns retired his brother at Wrestlemania so there's definitely a connection there. Unfortunately we didn't hear anything about that and it's basically just the idea that Miz got Kane to join for no apparent reason. Of course the announcers sold things well here, though there's a better story to tell.

Miz, on top of a ladder, announces Kane as the fifth member of the team to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The shortened version helped a bit here but that's not exactly enough to make up for a pretty one dimensional Raw. Wilder vs. Rhino was shockingly above average (I hesitate to call it good) and the cruiserweights did their thing and that's enough to compliment a few nice things from Monday. Not bad here.

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Monday Night Raw – October 17, 2017: All Your Shields In One Basket

I apologize for the delay but the in-laws are in town and I had to pick them up at the airport. They'll be around for a few weeks so things might be a bit slow. The shows will be up that night but they won't likely be on time. Sorry about that.

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 16, 2017

Location: Moda Center, Portland, Oregon

Commentators: Corey Graves, Michael Cole, Booker T.

It's the go home show for Tables, Ladders and Chairs but tonight we're focusing on a cage match with Roman Reigns facing Braun Strowman. In addition to that though we have Dean Ambrose and Seth Rollins defending the Tag Team Titles against the Bar. There's a good chance of a title change with the TLC match this Sunday. Let's get to it.

As expected, we open with a four minute recap of last week's Shield reunion.

Here's Kurt Angle to open things up. Angle hypes up Sunday's main event but here's Shield, through the crowd, to the old music and in the riot gear, drawing a VERY strong THIS IS AWESOME chant. Now why couldn't they do this last week??? Angle lets them have the ring and it's Rollins saying he can't believe they're back. It's been five years since they debuted and he couldn't be happier than to be here with his brothers again.

Ambrose, looking more fired up and charismatic than he has in years, says they divide and conquer like no one else. Maybe he got a bit ahead of himself last week when he said they could fight four, five or six guys but he'd do the same thing again all over. He wants to fight right now so here are the Bar, Miz and Strowman. Angle cuts them off though and says if this fight happens, there's no cage match later. Tensions cool, at least for now.

Elias is with the Club and has a song but the Club wants to warm up their vocal cords. Gallows sounds like a small dog barking before calling us all nerds. Anderson on the other hand clucks like a chicken...and belts out COOL COCKY BAD! Next up is a song about Jason Jordan, meaning it's time for a six man tag.

Elias/The Club vs. Jason Jordan/Titus O'Neil/Apollo Crews

Titus and Gallows start things off as we hear about Titus trying to recruit Jordan to Titus Worldwide. A big clothesline puts Gallows on the floor and everything breaks down as we take a break. Back with Gallows kicking Crews in the head and handing it off to Elias for some stomping. Crews kicks him in the face and dives over to the hot tag to Jordan so house can be cleaned. A belly to belly gets two and it's time for the running shoulders all over the place. Crews makes the tag and hits the Toss Powerbomb for the pin on Anderson at 6:48. Not enough shown to rate but this was fine.

Short pay per view rundown.

Video on Asuka.

Emma is sick of hearing about Asuka but here's Alexa Bliss to say she feels the pain. Bliss shifts the focus to Mickie James, who body shamed her last week. They're ready for a tag match later tonight.

Video on Brian Kendrick and Jack Gallagher tormenting Cedric Alexander.

Cedric Alexander vs. Jack Gallagher

Hang on a second though as here's Rich Swann to even the odds against Kendrick and Gallagher. Jack wastes no time in slugging away and drops

Cedric with a headbutt. We hit the chinlock for a bit before a dropkick to the back has Cedric in even more trouble. Another kick to the chest and it's off to another neck crank. Kendrick offers a distraction, and gets DDT'd by Swann. The distraction lets Cedric hit a Lumbar Check on Gallagher (with an outstanding sell job) for the pin at 3:21.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see until the ending, though you can see the tag match from here. I'm digging Gallagher and Kendrick as a team as of late and they're good for opponents in a match like this. Unfortunately I'm not sure if they're going to go anywhere near the title, which makes this a big of a waste of time. The sell of the ending was great though.

It's time for MizTV with Miz being flanked by the Bar and Curtis Axel but no Bo Dallas. Miz talked about how they're ready to destroy the Shield right now but they'll wait until Sunday night. Sheamus says the Shield will be broken into three pieces. They're ready to destroy Shield and here's tonight's guest: their partner on Sunday, Braun Strowman.

Braun says it's time to destroy the Shield forever and it starts tonight inside the cage. The fans get in a YES/REALLY battle with Miz, who has a bit of a surprise: there's going to be a fifth member of the team. The fans want Curtis Axel but here's Kurt Angle to say this isn't happening.

Kurt has a deal for Miz though: if Strowman wins tonight, the fifth man can join. If Reigns wins though, Strowman is out and it's 3-3 again. Miz says it's on but Angle says everyone is banned from ringside in both the cage match (kind of redundant) and the Tag Team Title match.

Sasha Banks vs. Alicia Fox

Banks made Fox tap in the elimination match last week. Before the match, Fox says she was scratching her nose last week and deserves more respect. Oh and a t-shirt! Sasha wastes no time in trying the Bank Statement but Fox is in the ropes in a hurry. Fox kicks her down and we hit the chinlock in a hurry. There's a backbreaker into a second chinlock on Banks but Sasha won't have any more of this. The comeback takes all of a moment and the Bank Statement makes Fox tap at 2:51.

Fox screeches after the loss.

Post break, Fox attacks Banks in the back and sends her into various things. More screeching ensues.

Here's Enzo Amore for a chat as Graves wants an air sick bag. He misses his title and we see Mustafa Ali costing him the belt last week. Last week, Enzo got ripped off and Kalisto robbed him of the title. This brings out Kalisto for the trash talk but Drew Gulak, Tony Nese, Noam Dar and Ariya Daivari come in for the long form beatdown. Cue Mustafa Ali for the save until the numbers game gets the better of him. This seems a little Survivor Series-ish.

Tag Team Titles: The Bar vs. Seth Rollins/Dean Ambrose

Rollins and Ambrose are defending. Sheamus starts with Ambrose with Dean stomping him down in the corner. The champs clean house in a hurry to start and the stereo dives put Sheamus and Cesaro down with little trouble. Sheamus forearm Dean down back inside and we take a break.

Back with Rollins fighting out of Sheamus' chinlock but getting caught in the Irish Curse for two. Stereo kicks to the ribs get two on Rollins and he can't power out of Cesaro's front facelock. Cesaro isn't taking the risk though and kicks Dean off the apron. The fans chant for Ambrose but settle for Seth striking away. Cesaro gets backdropped to the floor and a diving tag brings in Ambrose.

Everything breaks down and Cesaro avoids the catapult into the post ala the teeth incident. Double dives take the Bar down and the top rope elbow gets two on Cesaro. Something like a Hart Attack gets two on Dean but the double crucifix is broken up. Instead it's a pair of superkicks to the ribs, setting up Dirty Deeds to put Cesaro away and retain the titles at 12:10.

Rating: B. These teams work very well together and it's amazing how much more interested I was in seeing them fight when the Club and no one else was around to waste our time. It also helps to have Miz doing most of the talking, which was one of the major issues in the previous part of the feud. Good match here, though nothing was coming close to the previous version.

Post break Axel gives the Bar a pep talk because he wants in the main event. Strowman comes in and the pep talking continues. Axel NEEDS to be in that match and is ready to go fight Reigns right now. Strowman: "Then go find him." Axel: "You mean now?"

We look back at Bray Wyatt becoming Sister Abigail last week.

Here's Finn Balor for a chat. He talks about the Celtic festival of Sowan, which sounds like Halloween cranked up to eleven. Last week Finn say Bray's tricks but he has his own too. This Sunday, the Demon will slay a monster of his own. Finn's demon has no fear...and the Demon paint appears on his face. It disappears and Finn says his Demon dreams of nightmares (paint on and off again) and it wants to meet Sister Abigail. Run. Never let WWE get supernatural.

Emma/Alexa Bliss vs. Bayley/Mickie James

Mickie armbars Emma to start and it's quickly off to Bayley for a double back elbow and a Paisan elbow drop. Bliss comes in and takes a kind of Twist of Fate over the middle rope. Emma breaks it up at two and a bunch of yelling takes us to a break. Back with Emma sending Bayley into the buckle a few times for no effect. Emma going into the buckle has some effect though and Emma is all staggered. A knee drop gets two on Emma but she sends Bayley outside and into the barricade to take over.

Back in and Bliss hits a running slap to the face, followed by a chinlock to slow things down again. Bayley finally sends her throat first into the ropes and it's a hot tag to bring in Mickie. House is cleaned in a hurry and Mickie's top rope Thesz press gets two with Emma making the save. That's fine with Mickie who superkicks Bliss for the pin at 11:21.

Rating: C. Just a quick match to set up something for Sunday. It didn't have anything special to it of course and Mickie isn't likely to win the title but it's a simple enough story that isn't hurting anything. Mickie is great in this role and helps bridge the gap until we get to another big challenger.

Axel goes after the Shield and we cut to a break.

Miz gives his future team a pep talk but asks where Axel is. Braun tells him the news and Miz looks terrified.

Mickie is ready for revenge on Sunday. Those insults hurt but Mickie is proud of her career. She has a three year old at home and can't wait to bring the title home to him.

Sasha vs. Alicia is the Kickoff Show match.

PPV card rundown.

Miz goes looking for Axel...and finds him hanging unconscious upside down from a forklift.

The cage is lowered.

Miz isn't worried about losing his fifth man, because Axel was never in that spot.

Roman Reigns vs. Braun Strowman

Inside a cage and Miz jumps in on commentary. Strowman sends him into the corner to start but it's way too early for the running powerslam. Reigns slips out and tries to climb, only to get pulled down. Some clotheslines have almost no effect but some big boots have a big more effect. Strowman goes shoulder first into the corner and there are the rapid fire clotheslines. One heck of a spinebuster gets two on Roman and we take a break.

Back with Reigns tasting the cage a few times. Strowman throws him at the cage so Reigns grabs the top for a climb. Now why did he think that would work with Strowman looking at him. Strowman misses a charge and hits the cage though, allowing Reigns to score with some kicks to the face. A Samoan drop gets two with a heck of a kickout so Reigns makes another escape attempt. Cue the Bar to cut Reigns off so Ambrose and Rollins are outside to cut them off. THEN WHAT WAS THE POINT IN BANNING THEM BOTH FROM RINGSIDE???

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Back to the ring with Reigns fighting to his feet after suffering from a bad bowl of soup as served up by Chef Strowman (prove that it didn't happen). Miz is back on commentary as Reigns goes up top, only to slip down and crotch Strowman. A Superman Punch staggers Strowman and a second puts him down. Strowman throws Reigns in the air but gets Superman Punched again for two.

It's spear time...and Kane's lights come on. Strowman splashes Reigns but eats a spear anyway. Kane comes up through the mat though and stares Reigns down, followed by a chokeslam. A second chokeslam sets up the running powerslam, followed by a Tombstone for good measure. Strowman adds another powerslam and Reigns is done at 17:24.

Rating: C-. Let me make sure I have this straight. Angle bans everyone from ringside so we have SIX PEOPLE interfere? And Reigns loses his first match after the reunion (not fairly but it's a loss)? Here's the thing: Kane was in Shield's first match and Reigns retired his brother at Wrestlemania so there's definitely a connection there. Unfortunately we didn't hear anything about that and it's basically just the idea that Miz got Kane to join for no apparent reason. Of course the announcers sold things well here, though there's a better story to tell.

Miz, on top of a ladder, announces Kane as the fifth member of the team to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Sunday really is a case of a one match card and the more they add to that, the less I'm sure it's going to work. Putting eight people into one match isn't often a good idea and it takes away a lot of what you might be able to get elsewhere. Really, what else is there? Sister Abigail vs. the Demon sounds more like a joke than anything else. The women's match feels standard and I'm not thrilled with two cruiserweight matches. There's a good chance I could be wrong, but if

that main event doesn't work, they're in major trouble.

Results

Jason Jordan/Titus O'Neil/Apollo Crews b. Elias/The Club – Toss Powerbomb to Anderson

Cedric Alexander b. Jack Gallagher – Lumbar Check

Sasha Banks b. Alicia Fox – Bank Statement

Seth Rollins/Dean Ambrose b. The Bar – Dirty Deeds to Cesaro

Mickie James/Bayley b. Alexa Bliss/Emma – Superkick to Bliss

Braun Strowman b. Roman Reigns – Running powerslam

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**Monday Night Raw – October 9,
2017: Bada Boom, Send the**

Hounds After Bray For Dressing Like a Woman

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 9, 2017

Location: Bankers Life Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, Indiana

Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T., Corey Graves

It's Shield night as WWE isn't exactly being subtle with this one. Last week saw the trio standing in the same room and basically saying they were getting back together, though the question is how long they'll be able to keep this going. Your trivia for the night: the team debuted in Indianapolis, split in Indianapolis and seems to be reuniting in Indianapolis. I don't know if WWE did that on purpose but well done if they did. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of Miz/Cesaro/Sheamus beating down the former members of the Shield and the trio looking at each other to end last week's show. Again: not exactly a subtle idea here.

It's time for MizTV to start things off and we have the Mizzies II! Last week Miz went from the A-Lister to THE GUY but he can't take all the credit for the whole thing. That brings us to our first award for perseverance and the winner is Curtis Axel. The fans think he deserves it and Axel dedicates it to Bo Dallas, who is out injured this week.

Next up is Best Supporting Actors in destroying Roman Reigns and the winners in a tie are Cesaro and Sheamus. The Bar (still a stupid name) comes out to thank Reigns in their acceptance speech but Cesaro wants to remember Seth Rollins and Dean Ambrose for breaking his teeth. Miz grants himself the award for Big Dog and again the fans think he deserves it.

This brings out Reigns but Miz knows he won't come in down 4-1. Miz doesn't want to hear about these lame rumors but Roman doesn't like them being called rumors. This brings out Ambrose and Rollins with Cole saying Miz and the Bar never expected this to happen. Oh shut up Cole. The brawl is on with Miz bailing and the beatdown commences. Miz gets cornered and

a TripleBomb plants him, allowing Shield to bring back the signature pose.

This was WWE's beat you over the head booking at its finest as they made no secret of Shield reuniting. It's cool that they're back together and it gives WWE something to hype up but how much better would it have been if this was a surprise? Of course WWE wanted to hype it up, which is fine, but they took all the shock value they could out of it, which really made it a lot less fun.

Jason Jordan vs. Karl Anderson

Jordan takes him to the mat with almost no effort but gets caught in a headlock to slow things down. The first suplex looks to set up a shoulder in the corner but Luke Gallows offers a distraction and Anderson dropkicks the knee out. Back from a break with Anderson working on the arm and getting two off a spinebuster. We're right back to the armbar until Jordan fights up with some clotheslines and a drive into the corner. The first belly to belly connects but Jordan has to knock Gallows off the apron. Anderson misses a charge in the corner and it's the wheelbarrow neckbreaker to put Anderson away at 8:16.

Rating: C-. Anderson and Gallows are now on the list of people whose mere appearance sucks the life out of me. They're not funny, they're not interesting, their matches are average at best and now we're stuck with them putting over Jordan, who is only moderately acceptable in this role in the first place.

Miz is getting iced down when Kurt Angle comes in. The TLC match is officially made for the pay per view with Miz/the Bar vs. Shield.

Here's Elias to insult Titus Worldwide, which is like a car in the Indy 500: going around in circles but not going anywhere. He thinks the fans don't want to hear a song tonight but he loves his own voice too much to not do one. Actually hang on as here's Titus O'Neil plucking a banjo. Titus sings a little number about Apollo Crews being Elias up next.

Apollo Crews vs. Elias

Joined in progress with Elias stomping away and working on the arm. Elias even busts out Old School (which I don't remember anyone but Undertaker ever using outside of a match with Undertaker) but Crews fights back for a few seconds. That's about it from him though as he gets sent throat first into the ropes, setting up Drift Away for the pin at 3:14 shown.

Rating: D. This is another match that we've seen a few times now and it's not getting any better. If there's a reason for this feud (if you can call it that) to continue I'm not seeing it, as it's something where there's no drama and no real story but it keeps going anyway. Titus Worldwide is a nice little idea but with no star and barely ever winning anything, it's not exactly lighting the world on fire.

Here's Enzo Amore to talk about how awesome he is and how he has no challengers thanks to the rest of the division attacking him a few weeks back. He wants Angle out here right now for some explaining about why he's defending the title against Kalisto at TLC. Enzo pulls out a signed contract saying that if any member of the division attacked him, they would never get a title shot.

The deal is Kalisto was signed after that contract was signed so the title match is official. Enzo doesn't like it so Angle switches the title match to tonight. That's fine, as long as it's in the main event. Angle isn't done yet though and makes it a lumberjack match with the rest of the division around the ring.

We recap the opening sequence.

Matt Hardy vs. Braun Strowman

Matt slugs away and gets in a dropkick but the Side Effect is easily countered with a throw. Back from an early break with Matt hitting a Twist of Fate for one. Another attempt is countered into a chokeslam and it's the running powerslam to end Matt at 6:27. Not enough shown to rate but this was basically a squash.

Strowman carries Hardy up the ramp but gets cut off by the Shield (now in matching t-shirts). Reigns spears him down and the triple beatdown is on. The TripleBomb puts Strowman through the announcers' table. Now THAT is

the kind of return segment they needed.

Post break Shield says they're back and aren't scared of anyone. You can believe that.

Here's Mickie James with something to say. Mickie has felt something has been wrong since she came back. Maybe it's her southern accent or her country music or her age. Alexa Bliss has been the worst of them all for this because she's been doing it all behind her back. That's the kind of champion Bliss is and then she hid behind her bodyguard. Mickie has more energy in her than Bliss has cheap hair extension and pink hair dye and the only number that matters to her is seven.

This brings out Bliss to say she's not here to cause trouble. Bliss has put together a career retrospective on James' career and it's presented as an old newsreel under the title Superstars of Yesteryear in black and white. Mickie calls Bliss to the ring but the champ pulls back at the last second, calling it a move as old as Mickie is. Mickie chases her down and gets in a few shots.

Bayley and Sasha Banks are talking with Kurt Angle about getting the shot at Asuka. Alicia Fox, Emma and Dana Brooke all come in and want the shot instead.

Jack Gallagher/Brian Kendrick vs. Cedric Alexander/Mustafa Ali

Cedric attacked Kendrick's ankle last week to help set this up. Ali and Gallagher get in an argument on the floor, leaving Brian to send Cedric into the corner to take over. Jack comes in for a chinlock before hammering away in the corner. Cedric gets away and makes the hot tag off to Ali so things can speed up. The rolling neckbreaker gets two on Kendrick with Jack making a save. The distraction lets Kendrick hit Sliced Bread #2 for the pin on Ali at 3:46.

Rating: D+. As usual, aside from Enzo, the cruiserweights are treated like filler on here and that doesn't do 205 Live any favors. Why would I want to watch a show dedicated to Raw's filler talent? That's really the best thing they can do here? I know the cruiserweights were announced in the Draft over a year ago but their limited value on Raw was used up a

long time ago.

We recap Shield's actions tonight. There's no hiding the fact that this show isn't exactly covered in interesting talent.

Miz comes in to see Angle to call Shield out on their saying they can face any four or five people. Therefore, he's going to find another partner and of course it's Strowman.

Here's Finn Balor to deal with the potential that Sister Abigail is alive. Balor thinks these threats make Bray feel like he's scared. If that's what Bray is all about, bring on the whole family. We cut to Bray's empty rocking chair but Bray sits down. Bray says Finn may not be afraid of him but he'll be afraid of her. They turned her into a monster but she chose Bray with her final breath. Now, the season of the witch is upon Balor.

A shawl appears over Bray's face and a distorted voice says men are all the same. They just want to control everything but Bray is special. She's seen what Bray has done to Finn so it's time to punish him and the Demon. Abigail knows about demons and she'll turn it into a dandelion. Her touch could have saved Finn but now her kiss will burn him to the ground. Abigail laughs and Bray returns. This wasn't terrible, but none of it matters if Bray loses to Balor at TLC.

Bayley vs. Sasha Banks vs. Alicia Fox vs. Dana Brooke vs. Emma

Elimination rules and the winner gets Asuka at TLC. Dana, now with pink hair, takes Sasha to the floor and it's Alicia vs. Emma inside. Alicia pulls her away from the ropes but Dana comes back in to beat on Fox. That's it for the team up with Fox as Dana hits her cartwheel elbows to Fox and Emma in the corner, only to have Bayley break it up. The cartwheel splash gets two on Bayley but the Bayley to Belly gets rid of Brooke. The graphic before the match announced it as elimination rules but Cole said it was one fall to a finish, meaning he was surprised by the match continuing.

Fox hits an ax kick to get rid of Bayley because she's fallen below the ground since Wrestlemania. Back with Fox and Emma yelling at each other

until Sasha runs Fox over. Fox gets thrown into Emma and it's the Bank Statement to make her tap, only to have Emma roll Sasha up for the win at 9:43.

Rating: D+. This was full of botches and that's not really surprising. Most of the match is designed to be spot after spot and there's almost no way to have any kind of coherence when there's nothing in between. You can't get much of a match out of that, especially with four falls and a commercial in less than ten minutes.

Balor felt pure evil when Abigail spoke to him tonight and thinks Bray has unleashed something horrible. He knows what he has to do now.

Opening sequence for the fourth time tonight.

Strowman vs. Reigns in a cage next week.

Kalisto was inspired by people like Rey Mysterio and Eddie Guerrero (who would have turned 50 today) but now, Enzo Amore is the Cruiserweight Champion. He hopes he can make the two of them proud.

The lumberjacks come to the ring.

Cruiserweight Title: Enzo Amore vs. Kalisto

Kalisto is challenging and it's a lumberjack match. Enzo shoulders him down to start and does a dance, only to have to stare at the lumberjacks. Back up and Kalisto kicks him in the shoulder before a front facelock takes us to a break. We come back with Enzo in control and slowly stomping away until Kalisto kicks him in the head.

A springboard crossbody gets two and Enzo is knocked outside where the lumberjacks get him back inside. Enzo rolls him into the corner to take over and Kalisto is sent outside this time. The villains get in a few stomps until Ali and Alexander make the save. We hit the chinlock for a bit until Kalisto gets in a rollup for two of his own.

The lumberjacks get in a brawl until Kalisto superplexes Enzo onto the pile. Naturally this means it's time to talk about Shield again. Back in and the Salida Del Sol is countered into the Jordunzo but Ali pulls Enzo

outside because it's No DQ. Enzo drops Ali with a clothesline and crotches Kalisto on the top. Not that it matters as Kalisto reverses into a super Salida Del Sol for the pin and the title at 14:29.

Rating: C-. Well that was surprising. I can't imagine this lasting long term but it's certainly a nice surprise while it lasts. Kalisto winning opens the door for some more title challengers in the short term, though it's almost a guarantee that Enzo will not only get a rematch but likely get the title back at the pay per view. Still though, good win for the moment.

Overall Rating: C+. This show was all about a handful of ideas but those ideas were handled well enough. The ending helped as well as there was nothing wrong with giving the fans something they wanted to see to close the show. At least they got some of the card set up for TLC and there are some ways to go as we go into next week.

Results

Jason Jordan b. Karl Anderson – Wheelbarrow neckbreaker

Elias b. Apollo Crews – Drift Away

Braun Strowman b. Matt Hardy – Running powerslam

Brian Kendrick/Jack Gallagher b. Cedric Alexander/Mustafa Ali – Sliced Bread #2 to Ali

Emma b. Alicia Fox, Sasha Banks, Bayley and Dana Brooke – Rollup to Banks

Kalisto b. Enzo Amore – Super Salida Del Sol

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Main Event – October 5, 2017: Can We Get Dash Away Dash Away From This?

Main Event

Date: October 5, 2017

Location: Pepsi Center, Denver, Colorado

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

We're back to the point where you can pretty much guess what's coming for a show like this. Odds are we'll be seeing Dash Wilder losing again to go with a cruiserweight match, which isn't the most interesting stuff in the world. As usual, it all comes down to which clips we get from Monday. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Dash Wilder vs. Heath Slater

Is this some kind of a joke that I'm not getting? Wilder has now faced Rhyno, then Slater, then Rhyno, then Slater again in four straight weeks. Dash throws a shirt at Slater to start but misses a charge out to the floor as we might be in for a bit of comedy here. Back in and Slater runs him over for two before grabbing a front facelock.

A belly to back suplex gets Dash out of trouble and he tosses Heath outside for a breather. Heath comes back in and eats a hard clothesline for his efforts before we hit the chinlock. Something like Wasteland into

a backbreaker (cool) gets two on Slater but Dash charges into a rollup out of the corner for the pin at 5:33.

Rating: D+. The more I watch these matches, the more I think they're just setting up the idea that Wilder isn't much on his own but can be part of a really good tag team. Either that or they haven't put a bit of thought into this and keep throwing Wilder out there because they have nothing better to do on this show and it doesn't matter in the slightest anyway.

From Raw.

We look at Amore getting destroyed last week.

Here's Enzo Amore to talk about the beating he took last week. He's now put the cruiserweight division in the main event two weeks in a row and you're absolutely right that he deserves it. Enzo talks about all the money he makes and all of his star power, but carrying the division has made his back hurt. He brings up the No Contact clause from last week and says there's a new one tonight: if anyone attacks him, they're fired. Now he's on top of the throne but he doesn't have any opponents.

Cue the cruiserweight division to surround Amore but he insults every single one of them in turn. This brings out Angle to say that none of the cruiserweights at ringside can lay a hand on him. HOWEVER, there's a new member of the Cruiserweight division: Kalisto. The fight is on in a hurry with Kalisto easily beating the heck out of Enzo.

Also from Raw.

Seth Rollins vs. Braun Strowman

Rollins kicks at the ribs to start but has to slip out of a running powerslam attempt. For some reason Seth slaps him in the face, setting off a chase. A kick to Braun's head connects but Braun launches him into the air for a big crash. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Seth fights up and sends him outside. A suicide dive is knocked out of the air though and we take a break.

Back with Rollins getting tossed via a fall away slam but sidestepping a charge. Now the suicide dives connect, only to have the springboard knee

to the face get two. A great looking superkick drops Braun but the wind up knee is countered with a clothesline. The running powerslam ends Rollins at 10:27.

Rating: C. Not a bad little match here but there was no question about Strowman winning. Rollins is great for something like this though as he's legitimate competition for Strowman and makes him look great even in defeat. It was a fun match and a good way to open the show, which is all you can ask for.

Strowman gives him another powerslam for fun. He goes back for more but Dean Ambrose runs out for a save attempt, only to get chokeslammed for his efforts. Another running powerslam leaves both champions laying. Strowman leaves and here are Sheamus and Cesaro to pick the bones.

Lince Dorado/Rich Swann vs. Tony Nese/Noam Dar

Dorado and Dar start things off with Noam begging off in the corner early on. He goes outside to fix his hair though and quickly tags off to Nese in what is probably a smart move. It's already time to work on Tony's arm with Lince and Rich taking turns. Stereo dropkicks drop Nese but Dar trips Lince to take over.

Back from a break with Dorado grabbing a sunset flip but there's no referee to count. The handspring Stunner gets Dorado out of trouble though and the hot tag brings in Swann. A bunch of kicks have the villains in trouble and the spinning kick to the head sets up the Phoenix splash to end Dar at 8:15.

Rating: C-. This didn't have time to go anywhere when nearly half of it was spent in a break. The perk of the cruiserweights is you can throw them all out there in virtually any combination and have a watchable match. That's very valuable and something WWE knows how to exploit. That being said, what has happened to Dar? He's gone from a featured player in the division to nothing in just a few months.

And finally from Raw again.

Intercontinental Title: Roman Reigns vs. The Miz

Miz is defending and comes out ala the Shield with the Miztourage. Reigns wastes no time in bailing to the floor and beating the heck out of the Miztourage to make things even. Axel staggers through the crowd so Reigns follows him up for a chair to the back. Dallas gets one as well before Reigns just unloads on both of them with multiple chair shots. The bell rings after a break with Reigns headbutting the champ on the floor. Miz avoids a charge though and Reigns winds up in the crowd. That's only good for a nine count but Miz catches him in a short DDT for two.

We hit the chinlock for a bit before Miz switches to just choking on the ropes. Back from a break with Miz hitting the YES Kicks but getting caught in a sitout powerbomb for a very near fall. The Superman Punch is countered into the Skull Crushing Finale for the same and Miz is stunned. The second Superman Punch connects for an even closer two and it's Reigns' turn to be shocked. Reigns loads up the spear but Sheamus and Cesaro pull him out for the DQ at 10:47.

Rating: B-. This was good while it lasted but the ending hurt it a lot. They're not hiding what they're going for in the post match stuff and while there's nothing wrong with that, I could go for it not being so heavy handed. There were some awesome near falls in this one and it was really entertaining at times, but the time factor and the storyline stuff isn't great.

Reigns gets destroyed post match. The fans chant for the Shield as Reigns takes a TripleBomb. Miz, Sheamus and Cesaro do the Shield pose. That would be a heck of a lot better than Miz and the Miztourage.

Later in the show.

A banged up Reigns is in the back when Ambrose comes in. They stare at each other a bit until Rollins comes in as well. Ambrose leaves with Rollins going the opposite way. Reigns thinks things over to end the show. No one ever said or did anything more than look at the others.

Overall Rating: C. They packed in all the big stuff from Raw here and that's a nice feeling. The original content here is really getting repetitive though and they need to change things up a bit, just for the sake of not being so dull. It's ok to not have Wilder lose for a single

week or just throw in a tag match. Not a bad show here but skip the original stuff.

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Monday Night Raw – October 2, 2017: The Upside Down Egg Version

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 2, 2017

Location: Pepsi Center, Denver Colorado

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves, Booker T.

We've got a title match on the card tonight as the Miz defends the Intercontinental Title against Roman Reigns. While a title change is always possible, there's also the high likelihood that this is all helping to set up the Miztourage vs. a reunited Shield at Tables Ladders and Chairs 2017. Let's get to it.

The roster is on the stage for a moment of silence in memory of the Las

Vegas shooting. Even Vince and Shane are there.

Video on the Miztourage beating Reigns down last week and standing over him in the Shield pose.

Opening sequence.

Seth Rollins vs. Braun Strowman

Rollins kicks at the ribs to start but has to slip out of a running powerslam attempt. For some reason Seth slaps him in the face, setting off a chase. A kick to Braun's head connects but Braun launches him into the air for a big crash. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Seth fights up and sends him outside. A suicide dive is knocked out of the air though and we take a break.

Back with Rollins getting tossed via a fall away slam but sidestepping a charge. Now the suicide dives connect, only to have the springboard knee to the face get two. A great looking superkick drops Braun but the wind up knee is countered with a clothesline. The running powerslam ends Rollins at 10:27.

Rating: C. Not a bad little match here but there was no question about Strowman winning. Rollins is great for something like this though as he's legitimate competition for Strowman and makes him look great even in defeat. It was a fun match and a good way to open the show, which is all you can ask for.

Strowman gives him another powerslam for fun. He goes back for more but Dean Ambrose runs out for a save attempt, only to get chokeslammed for his efforts. Another running powerslam leaves both champions laying. Strowman leaves and here are Sheamus and Cesaro to pick the bones.

Breast cancer awareness video.

We recap Mickie James and Alexa Bliss' issues.

Mickie runs into Alicia Fox and Emma, who say there's a present in Mickie's dressing room. She goes in to find a walker and adult diapers. Mickie goes to find Alexa but she's hiding behind Nia Jax. A match is set

for later.

Bray Wyatt is in his walking chair and rocking back and forth, going over things that Sister Abigail told him. She told him to fight the man and would never lie to him. He repeats the last line over and over.

Here's Elias to tell us how horrible this town is and how much he can't stand Titus O'Neil.

Elias vs. Titus O'Neil

Elias headlocks him to start but gets shoved off for a crash. A big boot knocks Elias outside where he gets in a staredown with Apollo Crews. Back in and Drift Away ends Titus at 2:58. Nothing match.

The announcers preview Hell in a Cell.

Mickie James vs. Nia Jax

Alexa comes out to watch and the distraction lets Nia jump Mickie from behind. The beating is on in a hurry and Mickie is sent outside as we take a break. Back with Mickie slugging away but getting thrown down again, setting up a chinlock and bearhug. Nia tries a powerbomb but Mickie slips out, setting up a few running kicks. A bad looking tornado DDT (Mickie's leg was underneath Nia) plants Jax, only to have Alexa run in for the DQ at 9:45.

Rating: D+. As I've said before, Nia needs to win something at some point. That being said, I'm very happy that Mickie is in this story as she's the fresh blood the division has been needing. That being said, she's now been in stories where she's crazy, fat and old. What did she do to WWE over the years to deserve those?

Mickie kicks Alexa in the face.

Long recap of Enzo Amore winning the title and being destroyed last week.

Enzo has nothing to say.

Mickie James will get her title shot at TLC.

Matt Hardy/Jason Jordan vs. Anderson and Gallows

Jordan slugs away at Anderson to start but everything breaks down with the good guys (guys, not Brothers) cleaning house to send us to a break. Back with Anderson working over Matt in the corner but it's quickly off to Jordan. A slam is broken up via a Gallows kick to the face and Jordan is back in trouble again.

Anderson slaps on an armbar as the announcers ask Booker why he's always complaining about Jordan's relationship with Angle. That's broken up as well and the hot tag brings in Matt for a middle rope elbow. Anderson makes a save and knocks Jordan outside, leaving Matt to take the Magic Killer for the pin at 11:02.

Rating: D+. Not much to this one but were you expecting anything else? Jordan is a complete filler partner and while that makes sense in the short term, I don't see this lasting too much longer. Hardy is more than capable of a singles run and that would be the best option for everyone at the moment.

Reigns says he's keeping things simple tonight: destroy what's in front of him, break Miz's jaw, and leave with the title.

Some breast cancer survivors are brought out and presented with WWE Championships by Dana Warrior.

Intercontinental Title: Roman Reigns vs. The Miz

Miz is defending and comes out ala the Shield with the Miztourage. Reigns wastes no time in bailing to the floor and beating the heck out of the Miztourage to make things even. Axel staggers through the crowd so Reigns follows him up for a chair to the back. Dallas gets one as well before Reigns just unloads on both of them with multiple chair shots. The bell rings after a break with Reigns headbutting the champ on the floor. Miz avoids a charge though and Reigns winds up in the crowd. That's only good for a nine count but Miz catches him in a short DDT for two.

We hit the chinlock for a bit before Miz switches to just choking on the ropes. Back from a break with Miz hitting the YES Kicks but getting

caught in a sitout powerbomb for a very near fall. The Superman Punch is countered into the Skull Crushing Finale for the same and Miz is stunned. The second Superman Punch connects for an even closer two and it's Reigns' turn to be shocked. Reigns loads up the spear but Sheamus and Cesaro pull him out for the DQ at 10:47.

Rating: B-. This was good while it lasted but the ending hurt it a lot. They're not hiding what they're going for in the post match stuff and while there's nothing wrong with that, I could go for it not being so heavy handed. There were some awesome near falls in this one and it was really entertaining at times, but the time factor and the storyline stuff isn't great.

Reigns gets destroyed post match. The fans chant for the Shield as Reigns takes a TripleBomb. Miz, Sheamus and Cesaro do the Shield pose. That would be a heck of a lot better than Miz and the Miztourage.

Here's Finn Balor for a chat. He's heard Bray Wyatt's talk for weeks now and he sees Bray for the coward he is. For all of Bray's games, it boils down to him just being afraid that he can't beat Finn Balor. If Bray wants another fight, come get one right now. Bray appears on screen, again in his rocking chair and saying that she never lied to me. Finn lied to him though and hid his true face behind the Demon. Sister Abigail is alive and dying to meet Balor.

Video on Asuka.

Sasha Banks/Bayley vs. Emma/Alicia Fox

Sasha takes Emma down and does Bayley's roll over Emma's back to take over. Bayley sends her into the corner for some rams into the buckle and we take a break. Back with Fox hammering on Banks before Emma comes in for a chinlock. Emma's butterfly suplex gets two and Fox's tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gets the same.

Banks still can't get over for the hot tag as Fox pulls her back one more time. This time around though Banks sends the villains into each other and the hot tag brings in Bayley for some right hands to Alicia. A jawbreaker cuts Bayley off...but Emma drops to the floor and says she's

out. The Bayley to Belly ends Alicia at 12:58.

Rating: C-. Kind of boring with all the chinlockery but it wasn't too bad. The big problem here though was the lack of any question about who was going to win. Emma and Alicia are some of the lowest level women the division has had in a good while and there's no reason to expect that they're going to beat two of the bigger names. That made the long chinlocks feel even longer, though it wasn't the worst thing in the world.

We look at Amore getting destroyed last week.

Here's Enzo Amore to talk about the beating he took last week. He's now put the cruiserweight division in the main event two weeks in a row and you're absolutely right that he deserves it. Enzo talks about all the money he makes and all of his star power, but carrying the division has made his back hurt. He brings up the No Contact clause from last week and says there's a new one tonight: if anyone attacks him, they're fired. Now he's on top of the throne but he doesn't have any opponents.

Cue the cruiserweight division to surround Amore but he insults every single one of them in turn. This brings out Angle to say that none of the cruiserweights at ringside can lay a hand on him. HOWEVER, there's a new member of the Cruiserweight division: Kalisto. The fight is on in a hurry with Kalisto easily beating the heck out of Enzo.

A banged up Reigns is in the back when Ambrose comes in. They stare at each other a bit until Rollins comes in as well. Ambrose leaves with Rollins going the opposite way. Reigns thinks things over to end the show. No one ever said or did anything more than look at the others.

Overall Rating: C-. I'm really going to need more time to get used to this Saturday Night's Main Event style layout for the shows. For the young ones out there, Saturday Night's Main Event would load up the first third or half of the show and then the last part would be whatever else they had time to squeeze in.

That would make for a far less interesting ending, which is what WWE has been going for lately. I'm so used to Raw ending with a big moment and

now it's something that feels like it's filler. I get why they're doing it (the last hour doesn't do well anyway so don't waste big stories) but DANG it's punishing to fans who watch the whole thing.

The rest of the show was fine enough with Cesaro and Sheamus being a VERY nice upgrade over Axel and Dallas. It's made me somewhat more interested in a Shield reunion, even if they're doing such a rushed job with the whole thing. The show wasn't terrible, but aside from the Shield stuff, I'm having trouble remembering anything important on the whole thing. That's not good, especially when we're less than three weeks away from a big pay per view.

Results

Braun Strowman b. Seth Rollins – Running powerslam

Elias b. Titus O'Neil – Drift Away

Mickie James b. Nia Jax via DQ when Alexa Bliss interfered

Anderson and Gallows b. Matt Hardy/Jason Jordan – Magic Killer to Hardy

Roman Reigns b. The Miz via DQ when Sheamus and Cesaro interfered

Sasha Banks/Bayley b. Alicia Fox/Emma – Bayley to Belly to Fox

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It's Just So Darn Beautiful

Seriously, I don't need anything for Christmas now.

Monday Night Raw – September 25, 2017: Everything You Need To Know

Monday Night Raw

Date: September 25, 2017

Location: Citizens Business Bank Arena, Ontario, California

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Booker T.

We're past No Mercy and that means we have about a month to go before Tables Ladders and Chairs 2017. That means it's time to build a card, which doesn't seem likely to contain Brock Lesnar. It does however include Roman Reigns, who defeated John Cena last night and Braun Strowman, who fell to Lesnar in the Universal Title match. Let's get to it.

Here's are the Miz and the Miztourage for MizTV. After a quick look at Miz retaining the Intercontinental Title last night and bragging about his victory, Miz brings out his guest for the evening: Roman Reigns. Miz talks about Reigns' accomplishments, including retiring Undertaker. Reigns says Cena carried the company for fifteen years and even an idiot like Miz can see that Reigns is the new guy.

That brings Miz to Jason Jordan, who isn't good enough to be in the ring

with him. Reigns disagrees, and says Miz wouldn't win without the Miztourage. He tells Axel and Dallas to go get him a cold beer but Miz brings up Reigns having help in the form of the Shield. A match between the trios is teased and Reigns gets out of his chair, sending the Miztourage and company to the floor. Cue Kurt Angle to say Miz is facing Reigns tonight, but first the Miztourage will be facing Matt Hardy and Jason Jordan.

Matt Hardy/Jason Jordan vs. Miztourage

Jordan takes Dallas down without too much effort and northern lights Axel for two. It's off to Matt for a headlock before the Miztourage being cleaned out as we take a break. Back with the Miztourage in control and Axel grabbing a chinlock on Jordan. That goes nowhere as it's off to Matt for the middle rope elbow to the back of the head. Everything breaks down and Jordan does his running shoulder in the corner, followed by the belly to belly on Axel. The Side Effect into the Twist of Fate puts Dallas away at 10:25.

Rating: D+. Well that happened. What in the world am I supposed to say about this one anyway? Jordan was thrown in there because Jeff was hurt and it's not like they have any other teams to throw in there. Heath Slater and Rhyno are available but they're pretty low level, even for something like this. In other words, MAKE SOME NEW TEAMS ALREADY!

Quick video on Lesnar vs. Strowman, trying to make it far less disappointing than it really was.

Elias vs. Apollo Crews

Rematch from last night's Kickoff Show. Apollo takes him down with a headlock and Elias can't do much from there. Back up and Crews snaps off a dropkick and a clothesline, drawing a rather hard chant from the fans. Crews dives over the top onto Elias and poses with Titus, only to have Elias kick Titus' knee out. Back in and Elias runs him over, followed by Drift Away for the pin at 2:42. That was Elias' only offense.

Titus beats up Elias post match.

Finn Balor thanks Bray Wyatt for pushing him to the limit and says he wants the Universal Title match.

Here's Curt Hawkins to issue a challenge to end his losing streak.

Braun Strowman vs. Curt Hawkins

Hawkins bails before Strowman gets in the ring so Strowman chases him through the crowd. Curt gets caught without too much effort and a chokeslam puts him through a table. Strowman takes him to the stage and powerslams Hawkins through the LED wall in a big crash. No match of course.

With Hawkins pretty much dead, Strowman goes to the ring and grabs the mic. After last night, he wants a real fight right now. Cue Dean Ambrose with a taped up shoulder to answer the challenge.

Braun Strowman vs. Dean Ambrose

Strowman throws him around to start and drives Dean into the corner. Dean stumbles backwards, slaps him in the face, and then falls down. The running powerslam is countered though as Dean grabs a sleeper. They fall out to the floor with Dean posting him, only to miss a charge back inside. Strowman gets knocked outside and Dean's suicide dive into a tornado DDT plants him with a loud thud. Back in and a basement dropkick staggers Strowman for two. A missed charge sends Braun into the post but the top rope elbow is countered into the powerslam to give Strowman the pin at 6:32.

Rating: C+. This was fun and a good way to get Strowman back on his feet but for what? Where is Strowman supposed to go from here? He's fought Reigns already so maybe Balor? Is that the most interesting thing in the world? Not that it really matters as we're just waiting on Lesnar to return for his title defense at the Rumble anyway, making the whole thing a pretty big waste of time. But hey, Roman vs. Lesnar II right?

Angle is telling the referee for the Miz vs. Reigns match to keep an eye on the Miztourage. Cue Enzo Amore to say he wants a celebration for tonight. Angle doesn't think so but once he can understand Enzo, he

agrees to the idea. This is Enzo's first title so Angle asks if he'd like some advice from a Hall of Famer. Enzo: "Nah."

Seth Rollins brings Dean a bag of ice for his shoulder. Dean is still going to be at ringside for Rollins vs. Sheamus later. Seth is going to go request a match with Strowman for next week.

Here's Alexa Bliss for a chat. She considers all of the fans her friends and she has to be honest with them: she is VERY disappointed with each and every single one of them. This morning she got up and looked at some messages about her title win but everything was about Sasha, Bayley or Asuka. Alexa has cleaned out the entire women's division but here's Mickie James to interrupt.

Mickie brings up Alexa insulting her on Raw Talk after last night's show. Alexa says she's been watching her since she was a little girl and Mickie was even on her top eight on MySpace. There are still some fans who say Mickie still has it but she's worried about Mickie breaking a hip. Mickie brags about all the barriers and hearts she's broken since Alexa was still in a training bra. Mickie: "And that seems to still be working for you." Alexa calls her an old lady and gets slapped in the face, followed by a superkick for good measure.

Seth Rollins vs. Sheamus

Cesaro, even without the teeth, is here too. Sheamus throws him into the corner to start but gets sent shoulder first into the opposite post for his efforts. That means a suicide dive from Rollins, only to get caught in an Irish Curse back inside. Sheamus bends Seth's knee around his neck before getting two off a sitout powerbomb. After a Cloverleaf doesn't get him very far, Sheamus kicks the head out of Rollins' jaw for two. The Brogue Kick misses though and Rollins grabs the wind-up knee for the pin at 4:12.

Rating: C. This didn't have time to do much and felt like leftovers from last night's great match. Rollins winning makes sense when he's facing Strowman next week, though I'd like to see Rollins get back into the World Title scene. Of course, again, we need a champion around to fight and apparently we can't do that for a few months now. Eh I'm sure this

won't be a problem whatsoever.

Balor comes up to Goldust, who isn't cool with Balor taking shots at him. Goldust didn't ask for nor does he need Balor's help. Finn apologizes but Goldust hits him in the face and beats him up anyway.

Video on Reigns vs. Cena. After last night's loss, Cena talked about his role changing in WWE and how much of a weight it felt like was being lifted off his shoulders when he lost. He's not sure he can continue at this pace and while he's not done, he's transitioning.

Miz vs. Roman Reigns

Non-title. Reigns pops him in the jaw to start and knocks Miz outside without too much effort. Miz stays on the floor long enough to get Reigns to chase him, allowing a few shots as he gets back in. An Axel cheap shot lets Miz boot him in the face and we hit a chinlock. Reigns powers out but gets taken down by the Miztourage again.

Back in and Miz scores with the running corner dropkicks but Reigns pulls him out of the air with a Samoan drop. Yet another Miztourage distraction lets Miz get in the running clothesline and the YES Kicks. Reigns has finally had it and punches everyone in the face, setting up the apron dropkick. Axel offers ANOTHER distraction though and Miz's short DDT is good for two. Not that it matters as Reigns spears him down for the pin at 9:50.

Rating: C. They weren't exactly hiding what they were going for here and you can see the post-match stuff from here. However, as usual, they have no reason to have Miz job here when they could have just done a DQ. But hey, we can add Miz and the Intercontinental Title to things Reigns has conquered to the same level of reaction. Have I mentioned I'm REALLY not ok with the ending to last night's match?

Reigns tries to fight off the trio but gets laid out with a chair. The Miztourage goes to leave but comes back for some more shots, including another big one with the chair. They throw in the Shield pose to really make this one clear.

Goldust vs. Finn Balor

Goldust goes straight after him and sends Balor shoulder first into the post. Balor gets dropped onto the barricade and we take a break. Back with Goldust holding a waistlock and kicking Balor in the ribs. Balor kicks him down and stomps away, followed by the Sling Blade and the Coup de Grace for the pin at 7:24.

Rating: D+. This was as good as Finn Balor vs. Goldust was going to be. Not that I'm complaining about seeing Goldust getting some time at this stage in his career but it's not like there's any real reason to believe Balor was in any real danger here. Balor needs something to do that isn't Bray Wyatt but who else is he supposed to feud with at the moment?

Post match Bray's lights come on and what sounds like a kid sings He's Got The Whole World In His Hands. Yes, this is actually continuing for whatever reason they have this time.

Bayley and Sasha Banks are in the back before their tag match later. Bayley apologizes for costing her the title last night but says she wants to win it herself. Banks seems cool with that.

Enzo receives a no contract rule for his celebration, saying if any cruiserweight attacks him they can't have a future title shot. Angle finds him very annoying.

Emma/Nia Jax vs. Bayley/Sasha Banks

Nia and Bayley start things off with the monster knocking Banks off the apron and flattening Bayley with a clothesline. Back from a break with Nia cranking on Bayley's arm and sitting on it for good measure (Graves: "That won't just separate your shoulder. That will divorce it!"). Bayley finally kicks Emma away, sending her right into Nia. The hot tag brings in Banks to clean house with some bad dropkicks and a Regal Cutter to Emma. Everything breaks down and Nia gets double teamed on the floor, including a good posting from Bayley. Back in and the Bayley to Belly puts Emma away at 8:35.

Rating: C-. You know, at some point Nia has to actually win something and

stop getting taken down every single time. At this point we're just waiting for Asuka though as she's going to be a complete game changer for the entire division. The match wasn't bad or anything but Bayley and Banks vs. Emma isn't exactly in doubt.

Here's Enzo for the closing segment. He says that it wasn't a dream and first of all it's time to talk about his morning. This morning, he woke up and looked at the title, which made him start reflecting. Over the last few months, there have been more than a cuppa haters. Those people were jealous, just like his former partner Big Cass. From the looks of Cass' knee, Enzo was the one holding him up. He's heard the YOU CAN'T WRESTLE chants and now it's time to retire his jersey.

Enzo pulls a sheet off a framed Certified G jersey and says that he's done the impossible by making 205 Live relevant. This brings out the majority of the cruiserweight division and Enzo starts cracking jokes. Rich Swann is a bad dancer, Cedric Alexander is the man that charisma forgot, Gran Metalik has a big gut, Gulak's gear looks stupid...and here's Neville to cut him off, again looking like a zombie after he lost the title the last time.

Neville rips on Enzo for making everyone around him miserable. Enzo has been tormenting the entire roster for a year and now he's been dumped on the cruiserweights' doorstep. He's done nothing but make a joke out of everything and now it's time to pay. Neville charges the ring but Enzo brings up the no contact clause.

Enzo says that this is the first time the cruiserweights have closed the show in the last nine months and it's because of his star power. He moves more merchandise than all of them combined so he'll see everyone tomorrow night on the Zo Show. Neville kicks him low and sends him through the jersey. Enzo tries to bail but the division cuts him off so the beating can continue. The contract is put into Enzo's mouth and Neville superkicks him to applause from his fellow cruiserweights. The Red Arrow ends the show.

Overall Rating: D+. There were some good things on this show but sweet goodness it died in the last hour. That's been the idea they've been

trying in the last few weeks and it's actually not the worst move in the world. People aren't watching in the last hour so why bother wasting something bit when then audience isn't around? The lack of a big story is hurting things but I guess we're using the Shield reunion as a stopgap measure. Let me repeat that: the Shield reunion is a stopgap measure. That should sum up this show's problem in a nutshell.

Results

Matt Hardy/Jason Jordan b. Miztourage – Twist of Fate to Dallas

Elias b. Apollo Crews – Drift Away

Braun Strowman b. Dean Ambrose – Running powerslam

Seth Rollins b. Sheamus – Wind up knee

Roman Reigns b. Miz – Spear

Finn Balor b. Goldust – Coup de Grace

Sasha Banks/Bayley b. Emma/Nia Jax – Bayley to Belly to Emma

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