

Mixed Match Challenge – November 27, 2018: The Thing We've Needed To See



IMG Credit: WWE

Mixed Match Challenge

Date: November 27, 2018

Location: Target Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Michael Cole, Renee Young

It's time for the playoffs, meaning we're down to four teams left on either side. Tonight we'll get down to the final two Raw teams and given the options we have, I'm not sure what to expect here. Well other than some bad wrestling and unfunny comedy because this show isn't something anyone is taken seriously. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Raw Division Quarterfinals: Ember Moon/Curt Hawkins vs. Alicia Fox/Jinder Mahal

The women start things off with an exchange of rollups until Moon headscissors her into the corner. Mahal comes in and Moon wants to face him, knowing how worthless Hawkins really is. I mean, she's not wrong. Mahal punches him down and slaps on a headlock takeover but Hawkins

scores with a dropkick. A clothesline puts Mahal on the floor but Hawkins stops to go after the Singh Brothers, allowing Mahal to get in a shot to take over.

Back in and we hit the chinlock on Hawkins, because that's all Mahal knows how to do. Actually I sit corrected as Mahal switches off to a cravate to show some range. And never mind as it's right back to the chinlock, just to keep things comfortable. Hawkins fights up and sends Mahal outside for the hot tag off to Moon so the pace can pick up.

The spinning suplex out of the corner is broken up so Moon settles for a low superkick instead. The Eclipse connects...but Hawkins tags himself in and covers out of desperation for win. Since that doesn't count, Moon Eclipses one of the Singh's, leaving Mahal to hit the Khallas on Hawkins for the pin at 8:04.

Rating: D. Well of course we're getting more Mahal. The guy can't even win a match on Main Event but he's one of the final four options for the #30 spot in the Royal Rumble. Oh and make sure to push the heck out of Mahal and Fox, because it's so wacky to have them advance this far after being a disaster in the regular season. This felt like a way to laugh at the fans and pull the rug out from them, which seems like the goal more often than not.

Asuka and Miz are ready for Naomi and Jimmy Uso next week.

Naomi and Jimmy Uso are ready for Asuka and Miz next week.

Fox and Mahal promise to win next week. Mickie James comes in and says Fox should watch this.

Raw Division Quarterfinals: Bobby Lashley/Mickie James vs. Bayley/Finn Balor

The men start things off but Lashley tags out less than a second in. That means a lot of stalling until a Lio Rush distraction lets Mickie get in a cheap shot to take over. The way too early chinlock goes on, followed by a neckbreaker for two on Bayley. We hit the bodyscissors as they don't exactly seem interested in going full speed ahead here. Bayley gets up

and it's a double clothesline to set up the double tag.

That's a bit of overkill as only one is needed but I guess that's making up for the weaker effort. Balor tries to pick up the pace but gets knocked off the apron and into the announcers' table. Since that's only good for two, Lashley sends him outside again and mocks Braun Strowman's run around the ring, allowing Balor to hit the Sling Blade. Mickie is right there to pull Bayley off the ropes though and there's no tag.

Back up and Lashley misses a charge into the post, allowing the hot tag off to Bayley. A flapjack cuts her off in almost no time though and the top rope Thesz press gets two. Bayley fights out of the MickieDT but Rush breaks up her dive. Balor throws Rush outside and hits the flip dive onto both guys, leaving Bayley to grab the Bayley to Belly for the pin on James at 9:20.

Rating: C+. That's one of the better matches of the entire season so far for the simple reason that it felt like they were trying. Instead of having a dance off or doing something stupid, you had two teams fight each other because they wanted to advance on in the competition. That hasn't been the case for most of the season and it was very, very nice for a change.

R-Truth and Carmella are ready for Jeff Hardy and Charlotte next week.

Jeff Hardy and Charlotte are ready for R-Truth and Carmella next week.

Balor and Bayley try the Dirty Dancing lift to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. The second match was much better than the first and that's enough to make this a better show than we've had in a few weeks. If nothing else it's great to have the ending in sight, because we've sat through this whole thing for so long that there's no charm left to it. Hopefully the finals are good, because what we've gotten so far hasn't exactly been worth seeing.

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New Column: What About That One Over There?

This just came out on its own and shows how tunnel visioned things can be in WWE.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-one/>

Main Event – August 17, 2017: Who Was That Again?

Main Event

Date: August 17, 2017

Location: TD Garden, Boston, Massachusetts

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Corey Graves

It's the go home edition of Main Event and that has to be worth

something. I mean, I have no idea what it would actually be worth but there must be something there. Odds are we're looking at another batch of cruiserweight matches this week, which might not be the worst thing in the world. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Kalisto vs. Curt Hawkins

Kalisto goes with the kicks to start but eats an elbow to the jaw for his efforts. Curt gets sent outside for a teased dive, only to get kicked in the head on the way back in. A pull of the leg brings Kalisto off the ropes though and we hit the chinlock. Kalisto gets planted with a spinebuster for two but Hawkins misses a split legged moonsault of all things. Things speed up again and Hawkins gets caught by the springboard corkscrew dive, followed by the Salida Del Sol to give Kalisto the pin at 4:27.

Rating: C-. It's a shame that Hawkins is stuck as a jobber to the stars (though steady employment and TV time are nothing to sneeze at) as his entrance alone is worthy of a chuckle. Kalisto seems to have become a regular on Main Event and while that might not be the best usage of him, at least he's here instead of on the sidelines.

Package on Seth Rollins and Dean Ambrose's recent issues.

From Raw!

Here's Dean for an opening chat. Dean wants to talk to Seth in person so here's Rollins (still with the BURN IT TO THE GROUND in his music). Seth gets right to the point: they would be unstoppable as a team. He's done playing games and sticks out his fist. Dean isn't sure but then says Seth has to be kidding.

He rants about Rollins not being there for him last week but Seth says that their differences are why they work so well together. Seth goes to leave but Dean stops him and puts out the fist. It's turned down AGAIN and Dean takes him down for a fight. They fall out to the floor so here are Sheamus and Cesaro for the beatdown.

Ambrose and Rollins eventually fight them off and clear the ring, drawing one heck of a YES chant. Now Dean puts out the fist...but Seth isn't sure. Then Seth puts out the fist but Dean isn't sure. They finally put the fists out together and NOW we have the eruption that the fans have been holding in for weeks. Hang on a second though as here's Kurt Angle to make the Tag Team Title match with Rollins and Ambrose getting the shot at Summerslam.

Again from Raw.

Bray Wyatt vs. Finn Balor

Another Summerslam match coming early. They go right after each other to start with Bray doing his hop over the ropes for a kick to the head. A right hand drops Balor onto the apron but he gets in a kick to the face and we take a break. Back with Bray hitting a gutbuster for two and hitting a hard clothesline. It's off to a chinlock for a bit until Balor kicks him in the head for a breather.

Bray gets caught with another running boot for two but comes right back with his running crossbody. The backsplash gives Bray two more but Balor adds a quick double stomp to the ribs. They head outside with Finn getting the running dropkick against the barricade but the Coup de Grace is broken up. Sister Abigail gives Bray the clean pin at 11:23.

Rating: C+. That's Bray's third straight win over a former World Champion (two wins over Seth Rollins) but for some reason it feels like he's still going nowhere. That loss at Wrestlemania really did cripple him and it's going to take another big win, like winning the World Title, to bring him back. Balor losing clean is surprising here, but I really hope they don't just have him beat Wyatt again on Sunday.

Bray gives him another Sister Abigail after the match. The lights go out and come back on with Balor sitting unconscious in the corner. Bray has a bucket and pours what looks like blood (or barbecue sauce) all over Bray.

Gran Metalik/Lince Dorado vs. Ariya Daivari/Drew Gulak

Gulak charges into Dorado's knee to start and gets ankle scissored down.

Metalik gets launched into a dropkick to put Gulak down again but Drew grabs a headlock to slow things down. Back up and Metalik spins around the ropes into a wristdrag to send us to a break. Back with Dorado hurricanranaing Gulak down and getting two off a high crossbody.

Drew finally slams him head first onto the mat and puts on something like an inverted Sharpshooter. That doesn't last long either though as Metalik makes a save, allowing Dorado to hit a double handspring Stunner. Metalik dives onto Daivari, leaving Dorado to hit the shooting star to pin Gulak at 8:21.

Rating: C-. They mixed the formula up here a bit and that's a good thing after doing the same thing so many times. There wasn't even a hot tag to Metalik at the end. I have no idea why Metalik and Dorado aren't being used as a low level tag team on the main rosters. They work well together and it's not like the tecnico luchador team is a hard act to pull off. But hey, let's just let them flounder on 205 Live and Main Event instead. I'm sure nothing bad will come of it.

We'll close it out here.

Angle is in the ring, which is surrounded by security, to bring out all four participants for Sunday's Universal Title match. First up we have Brock Lesnar and Paul Heyman with Paul talking about how unfair Sunday's match is going to be. It's going to be all three challengers going after Lesnar and as a fan, Heyman thinks that concept sucks.

One day, a very long time from now, someone is going to be man enough to defeat Lesnar and become the new guy. However, it's not going to be the false Samoan Samoa Joe or the Monster Among Men Braun Strowman, or the man who conquered the Undertaker, Roman Reigns. Heyman sees two possible options for Sunday.

Option A is Lesnar having the title stolen from him, meaning you might as well put him in a cage (Heyman: "HINT HINT!"). Option B is Lesnar wins and it turns out that Heyman has been underselling him all these years. This brings out Samoa Joe to say he's putting Lesnar to sleep on Sunday.

Braun Strowman, now with his own shirt, comes out to say he's always the

last man standing. Joe takes credit for last week's win and it's FINALLY Reigns coming in as well. Roman takes Joe down but walks into the powerslam, leaving Lesnar vs. Strowman. Security comes in to break them up but are quickly dispatched. The locker room comes out and can barely hold them back to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. Pretty easy show to watch here, which is more than you can say about a lot of Main Events. This time around we had a completely watchable cruiserweight match and a forgettable singles match (I can already barely remember that Kalisto beat Hawkins) to go with recaps from a watchable Raw. I'll take what I can get though and call this one fine.

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Main Event – August 10, 2017: The Chris Jericho Tribute Match

Main Event

Date: August 10, 2017

Location: Air Canada Center, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Corey Graves

The show heads north of the border this week and there are some options for this show. Monday's Raw didn't feature several names and since no one works twice around here, there's a good chance we could be seeing some bigger names around here. Oh and Curt Hawkins. Never forget Hawkins. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Apollo Crews vs. Curt Hawkins

See, I told you there would be a Hawkins sighting. They pose at each other to start but Crews pops off a dropkick to take over. Hawkins is smart enough to choke on the ropes and grabs a belly to back suplex for two. A regular suplex gets two and we hit the chinlock. Back up and Crews hits a running kick to the face, followed by the enziguri and standing moonsault for two. Hawkins comes back with an enziguri of his own but what looks like a running right hand is countered into the Toss Powerbomb to give Crews the pin at 4:29.

Rating: D+. As usual, the best thing about a Hawkins match is his awesome entrance. It's a shame that something so funny is being wasted on someone who is nothing but a jobber to the stars. Crews continues to be insanely athletic but he still needs charisma and a character, which is only going to be done so well by Titus International.

From Raw, part one.

We start fast this week as Miz and company are in the ring for MizTV. Miz is tired of being blindsided on his own show so he wants Jason Jordan out here right now. It's Kurt Angle instead, who has his own guest for the show: Brock Lesnar. The place goes coconuts for Lesnar and Paul Heyman, but Miz cuts Paul off because this is his show. Miz talks about how it's almost a guarantee that Lesnar is losing the title because all three challengers are going to gang up on Lesnar. And remember, if Brock loses, he's gone for good. If Miz is a betting man, he's picking one of the challengers to leave as champion.

It's time for Heyman to talk and he gets straight to the point: "Do you and your wife ever role play?" Heyman loves the idea of role play so let's have Miz play Roman Reigns, Bo Dallas play Samoa Joe and Curtis Axel play Braun Strowman. Now let's preview Summerslam. Three F5's later, Lesnar calmly leaves.

And the sequel.

Here's Finn Balor for a chat. After some required T00 SWEET chanting, Balor talks about kicking Bray's teeth down his neck last week. If there's one thing Finn knows, it's that you have to kick fear in the face...and here's Wyatt to interrupt. Bray appears in the ring but Balor is on the top. They fight for a bit until Bray disappears, only to reappear on screen to say he enjoys Balor's bravery.

Before the next match, we're graced with a song from Elias about how horrible Canada is with all of its ugly citizens. Cue a well known Canadian for the save.

Elias vs. Kalisto

Kalisto says he wants to walk with Elias but settles for sending him outside for a hurricanrana off the apron. We take an early break and come back with Elias pulling Kalisto's arm down onto the apron, earning them both a series of TEN counts. The arm goes into the apron again and it's time for an armbar.

Kalisto reverses into a rollup for a quick breather but Elias kicks him in the shoulder again. A hammerlock belly to back suplex gets two and we hit the third armbar. An armdrag gets Kalisto out of trouble and he rolls over to kick Elias in the head, only to have the Salida Del Sol reversed into Drift Away for the pin at 10:02.

Rating: D-. It's hard to find a really bad Main Event match but they pulled it off here. How in the world can you have a ten minute match with three armbars included? Elias is going to be used as something special in WWE though I still have no idea what that's going to be. Kalisto is a good jobber to the stars, though I still have no idea why he beat Braun Strowman earlier in the year.

Quick look at Bayley's injury.

Finally from Raw again.

Braun Strowman vs. Roman Reigns

Last Man Standing. Reigns meets him in the aisle but gets thrown from the floor into the ring. It's too early for a Samoan drop as Strowman pounds Reigns down for an early five count. Reigns is sent outside and we take a break. Back with Strowman throwing the steps inside but Reigns slugs away for a breather. A pair of big boots stagger Strowman and a shot with the steps puts Strowman on a knee.

Reigns hits him in the face with the steps and Strowman goes down, allowing Reigns to hit him in the chest with the steps over and over. Back up at seven and Strowman blocks the Superman Punch by sending Reigns into the corner. That spinning Big Ending gives Braun a breather but Roman gets in a quick Superman Punch to put both guys down. Strowman is back up with a dropkick of all things but he misses a charge and hits the post, knocking him out to the floor.

Reigns gets in the apron dropkick and it's table time. He takes too long with it though as Strowman clotheslines him down again and sets up the table in the ring. Again it takes too long though and Reigns hits a Samoan drop through the table, only to have Strowman roll outside to get on his feet. Reigns goes after him so Strowman LAUNCHES the timekeeper's chair at him, knocking Reigns completely silly for nine. Great visual and if Strowman doesn't win, I have no idea why he didn't do it there.

They fight into the crowd and up to the announcers' table with Reigns hitting another running dropkick. Strowman is up again and throws Roman into the screen. The announcers' table is loaded up but Reigns gets to his feet for two Superman Punches. The spear is blocked with a big boot, only to have Reigns pop back up and hit the spear. Reigns pulls himself up...and Samoa Joe reaches out from the crowd to put Reigns in the Koquina Clutch. The THANK YOU JOE chant starts up and Strowman is up at nine for the win at 22:00.

Rating: B-. This got going once they brought the table in and I REALLY

like that ending. Strowman wouldn't have gotten up without the delay in the count thanks to Joe and Joe himself looks like the real winner, which makes sense considering he wasn't even on the show so far. It's not a classic or anything but the ending was the perfect call, outside of MAYBE a double knockout.

Overall Rating: D. Pretty weak show this time around and that's not the biggest surprise in the world. MizTV was fun, the Last Man Standing match was brutal, the Balor segment was stupid and the original matches ranged from "we've seen this before" to a tribute to Chris Jericho's ARMBAR list. This was one of the worst shows they've done in a good while and that's hard to do for Main Event.

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**Main Event – June 15, 2017:
It Didn't Work Before So**

Let's Do It Again

Main Event

Date: June 15, 2017

Location: Cajundome, Lafayette, Louisiana

Commentators: Corey Graves, Vic Joseph

It's back to what should be the quintessential recap show as it's not like people come here for the original wrestling content. Raw had one heck of a fight on Monday night and you have to imagine that's going to be a big focal point of this show. We're about three weeks away from Great Balls of Fire and that's not the worst thing in the world. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Curt Hawkins vs. Curtis Axel

Gah this always gets annoying with first names. Axel grabs a headlock to start and stomps away in the corner before getting two off a clothesline. That earns Curtis a knee to the back and a chinlock (with another knee to the back) as the announcers talk about these two teaming together.

Graves makes sure to mention that he and Neville used to be NXT Tag Team Champions, which is a very good idea. He wasn't in NXT very long and that was several years ago. Remind us that you have in-ring credentials and people will pay more attention to you. Axel fights up but can't get the PerfectPlex as Curt kicks away, only to get caught in it the second time to give Axel the pin at 5:12.

Rating: D+. Axel truly is the Main Event Musketeer as he never seems to leave the place. He's good in the ring, the fans react to him and he's using the perfect (See what I did there?) finisher. Just give him a story and see what he can do on the main roster because he's likely going to be more over than most of the people around here.

Long recap of the Hardys vs. Sheamus/Cesaro.

Very shortened version of the Hardys vs. Sheamus/Cesaro from Raw, showing

about three minutes of a fifteen minute match.

Also from Raw, this time in full form.

Here's Wyatt to talk about how people shouldn't deny him like Seth Rollins has done. Seth lives in a glass house and a single shout brought it all crashing down. This brings out Rollins, who says he was speaking the truth when he called Wyatt a false prophet. If Bray is that disturbed by what Seth said, do something about it. Bray says Seth is beneath him and that Rollins doesn't want this fight. The lights go out again and Bray is gone. They go out again and Bray is on the screen, saying Seth can slay a king but not a god.

Gran Metalik vs. Ariya Daivari

Metalik sends him into the corner to start and it's already time for the wristlock. A high crossbody gives Metalik two but gets tossed into the corner. We take a break and come back with Metalik walking the ropes into a dropkick for two. A running hurricanrana sends both guys out to the floor in a big crash and Metalik's top rope elbow is good for two more. Daivari goes for the mask though and it's a hammerlock lariat for the pin on Metalik at 7:53.

Rating: D+. This didn't have the time to go anywhere and I'm still wondering what Metalik did to WWE. He was on 205 Live a few weeks ago and now he's jobbing to Daivari of all people? The match was nothing to see, save for a few good dives from Metalik. I feel sorry for him though as it's like he just can't catch a break.

We look back at Samoa Joe choking out Paul Heyman.

And now, the only way this show could end.

Here are Lesnar and Heyman to get things going with Paul saying it's time for some revenge. Now last week, Samoa Joe attacked Heyman and Paul gets why that's the case. Sometimes he certainly deserves it but that wasn't true last week. Last week, Heyman saw someone that could go man to beast with Brock.

There have been a lot of Samoans in wrestling but Joe is the outcast one.

For some reason he's not treated the same and his biggest claim to fame is choking Heyman out. Heyman agrees that the Koquina Clutch was everything that Joe promised it would be. That made Heyman wonder what would happen to the title if Brock was ever caught in that hold. Then Heyman realized that's not a problem because Joe isn't man enough to get the hold on Brock Lesnar.

Cue Joe to headbutt Lesnar right in the face as the brawl is on. Security is sent out and dispatched just as fast so here's the locker room (or at least the midcard) to try again. That goes just as badly with Joe breaking away to superkick Joe right in the jaw. The fight is finally broken up and things settle down. This was an outstanding start but there's one thing: none of this matters if Brock is lazy and just does suplexes into an F5 at the pay per view. Make it a competitive match where they beat the heck out of each other and things will be fine. Just don't make it a squash, please.

Overall Rating: D-. Totally skippable show this week with only the last segment being worth seeing. This felt like one of the older episodes of the show and that's really not a good thing. It was the same cast of characters who weren't interesting in the first place and now don't do anything more than fill in a space on this show.

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

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

Smackdown

Date: November 8, 2016

Location: SSE Hydro, Glasgow, Scotland

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

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

Opening sequence.

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

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

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

Survivor Series Qualifying Match: Breezango vs. Vaudevillains

Breezango are dressed as cops for no apparent reason. Gotch immediately gives Breeze a Regal Roll and the Swanton gives English two. Everything breaks down and Fandango gives English a falcon's arrow for the pin at 1:23. That was quick.

Natalya vs. Naomi

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

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

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

Baron Corbin vs. Kalisto

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

Video on Alexa Bliss vs. Becky Lynch.

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

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

Women's Title: Alexa Bliss vs. Becky Lynch

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

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

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

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

Curt Hawkins vs. Apollo Crews

Hawkins starts fast with a jumping knee to the face and we're in the

chinlock about forty seconds into the match. Crews throws him down again though and goes up top, only to miss a high crossbody. An Oklahoma roll gives Hawkins the pin at 1:50.

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

Wyatt Family vs. James Ellsworth/Kane/Dean Ambrose

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

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

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

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

The Wyatts swarm Ellsworth but Shane runs out for the save. Before

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

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

Results

Breezango b. Vaudevillains – Falcon's arrow to English

Naomi b. Natalya – Small package

Becky Lynch b. Alexa Bliss – Disarm-Her

Curt Hawkins b. Apollo Crews – Oklahoma roll

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

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Main Event – October 25, 2016: Do Something With This Guy

Main Event

Date: October 25, 2016

Location: Resch Center, Green Bay, Wisconsin

Commentators: Tom Phillips, David Otunga

There's nothing wrong with some extra content. Besides, if I'm doing Superstars I might as well do this one for a bonus. Main Event is basically Superstars with the "Smackdown Live" roster instead of "Monday Night Raw". These should be easy shows to watch so hopefully it's a quick sit. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

American Alpha vs. Vaudevillains

Alpha can't even make the main roster anymore? Jason Jordan and Aiden English start but a blind tag brings in Chad for a monkey flip. The armbreaker over the top rope has English in even more trouble until Simon Gotch makes a save. The announcers discuss the upcoming Survivor Series tag team match as Gable and Gotch ram heads. English comes back in (through the bottom ropes) to break up the tag but Gable easily dispatches both of them for the hot tag off to Jordan. That means suplexes and throws all around before Grand Amplitude ends English at 4:10.

Rating: C. American Alpha is just fun to watch no matter what show they're on. They really are the Steiner Brothers for the new generation and that's one of the best compliments I can give them. I really could go with them on Smackdown more often but at least they're getting time

somewhere.

We go back to Raw, likely because this is released on Tuesdays due to a contractual issue with Sky Sports in England.

New Day vs. Cesaro/Sheamus

Non-title. Before the match, New Day praises Cesaro but says Sheamus shames us because no one wants to see him. Woods is the odd man out here, which is kind of surprising as they're normally defending the titles. Cesaro's backbreaker gets two on Kofi and a double back elbows shows that Cesaro and Sheamus can actually work together. New Day quickly gets it together and takes Sheamus into the corner for the Unicorn Stampede.

Back from a break with Kofi in trouble and taking the ten forearms to the chest. Cesaro misses a charge into the post and the hot tag brings in Big E. to deal with Sheamus. The Irish Curse gets two on Big E. and Cesaro's vertical suplex gets the same. The Midnight Hour is broken up but Kofi is launched straight into the uppercut. Sheamus Brogue Kicks Big E. for the pin at 11:45.

Rating: C+. Let's see. Yeah I'm checking here. Maybe...almost...nah I still don't care about Sheamus and Cesaro. They're still the same uninteresting pair that have been around since before Summerslam and still are little more than a rehash of the League of Nations having problems against New Day back in the spring. New Day needs to roll over them and give us the record in December. If you just have to give these two the belts after that then so be it but don't mess with the year plus run for this stupid idea.

Back to Raw again for the Sasha Banks vs. Charlotte contract signing.

Mick Foley is in the ring for the contract signing between Sasha Banks and Charlotte. They talk about how big of a moment this is going to be, only to have Foley go into his annual rant about how evil the Cell is. Charlotte calls Sasha an entitled second rate talent who will learn respect from the Queen this Sunday. Sasha is ready to crawl up the ramp broken and bloodied as long as she has the Women's Title. They trade insults but Foley cuts them both off to say he's their future. Dude if

the Cell is going to turn them into 6'4 men with long beards, maybe we should cancel the match.

As expected, the fans chant for Foley, thereby completely missing the point of this segment. Foley met Charlotte as a child and his kids gave Sasha their signed photo of Eddie Guerrero. More insults and a double signing FINALLY wrap this up. Charlotte vs. Sasha in a major gimmick match is fine but no one, like NO ONE, buys that the match is going to be all violent and career threatening like Foley is pushing and that kills the idea.

Apollo Crews vs. Curt Hawkins

Crews doesn't even get an entrance and this is Hawkins' main roster (re)debut. Hawkins narrates his own entrance again, which includes him saying that this match isn't about to be postponed for an earthquake here in Milwaukee (it's Green Bay in an inversion of R-Truth's mistake on Raw five years ago). No, that shaking you feel is Apollo Crews shaking in his boots.

Hawkins hides from a right hand on the floor before being put down with a headlock takeover. Crews does a front handspring into a dropkick just because he can and some armdrags send Hawkins outside. Back from a break with Hawkins in yet another armbar. Finally tired of having his arm worked over, Curt pops up and knees Crews in the back to set up a chinlock. A Michinoku Driver gets two for Hawkins, only to have Crews pop up and hit a running kick to the face. One enziguri later and it's the Toss Powerbomb to pin Hawkins at 7:04.

Rating: C. I'm not even sure where to start on this one. We've been waiting on Hawkins for over a month now and the vignettes have been awesome but he loses his first match, on Main Event of all shows, to the directionless Apollo Crews? Speaking of Crews, what the heck are they waiting on with him? He's young, he's talented, he's charismatic and he's almost never on Smackdown. Either send him down for a feud with Nakamura (that could work) or do ANYTHING with him on Smackdown. You couldn't give him a real feud over the Intercontinental Title? Or, like, anything?

We go back to Raw for the main event and post match shenanigans.

Seth Rollins vs. Chris Jericho vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title. They play keep away to start until Owens gets kicked out to the floor. A Blockbuster gets two on Jericho but Owens pulls Seth outside. The champ is sent into the barricade but Jericho throws Seth into the crowd. Back in and Owens scores with a clothesline, only to have Rollins avoid the Cannonball. The Pedigree doesn't work on either Canadian but the Lionsault hits Seth's knees.

Owens saves his buddy from a Pedigree and it's time for the double teaming. The handicap portion continues until Owens is low bridged to the floor. Jericho eats the low superkick and Rollins dives onto Kevin. Seth misses the frog splash and eats a Codebreaker for two. Owens comes back in and slaps Rollins a lot as the STUPID IDIOT chants kick in. Rollins escapes a double superplex and pins both guys at the same time with a double rollup at 10:00.

Rating: C+. The match was fun but it's WAY too late in the night to really matter. Rollins pinning the champ is appropriate as Owens has been a huge afterthought in this entire story. That also makes four straight times that Rollins has pinned Jericho so you certainly can't say he's getting too many wins.

Post match Owens and Jericho destroy Rollins by sending him hard into the steps. We're still not done though as Rollins runs up the ramp and dives at Owens, only to get beaten down again. Owens gives him the Apron Bomb and walks back up the ramp to get his title so some posing can end the show.

Overall Rating: C. Yeah this is basically Superstars with a blue look. The wrestling was a bit better here though and having Alpha and Crews are guaranteed pops from the crowd. I could have gone with them airing different clips than we got on Superstars, but I'm assuming that has to do with the broadcast issues as this show isn't immediately released on the WWE Network. Instead it airs on Hulu on Tuesdays so the best they can do is stuff from Monday night. Still though, good little show here and a great way to recap the big stories from Raw in about a third of the time.

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book, KB's Complete 2014 Raw and Smackdown Reviews Part I at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

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Smackdown – October 18, 2016: The Chin Who Got The Win(s)

Smackdown

Date: October 18, 2016

Location: Pepsi Center, Denver, Colorado

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, David Otunga, Mauro Ranallo

This is an interesting time for Smackdown as they don't really have anything to do for the next month until Survivor Series. That means some upgraded TV shows, including tonight as James Ellsworth (The Chin Who Got The Pin) challenges AJ Styles for the Smackdown World Title. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week's Ellsworth vs. Styles match to set up the title rematch.

Dean Ambrose gives Ellsworth a pep talk and his own shirt, which you can really buy at WWEshop.com.

Here's Randy Orton to open things up. Orton praises Bray Wyatt for being far more evil than Randy expected. Escaping Wyatt is like trying to get

out of quicksand: the more you pull, the tighter it becomes. Bray appears on screen from inside a coffin and says he's having so much fun messing with Orton. By the way, he's here.

Randy Orton vs. Luke Harper

Harper shoves him outside to start but his suicide dive is broken up with a forearm. Back in and Luke goes up, earning himself a superplex back down. There go the lights though and we've got Bray being brought to the ring in his coffin, carried by druids in sheep masks. We come back from a break with Orton on the floor and Bray walking around near the casket. A Michinoku Driver gets two for Harper but he can't put Orton in the casket. Instead, Orton comes back with his clothesline and powerslam but Wyatt comes in for the DQ at 7:48. Too much was spent on Bray's entrance and the commercial to rate, though it was just angle advancement.

The Wyatts load up the casket but Kane is inside. Orton and Kane clean house but the lights go out again and the Wyatts disappear. Now this is the kind of thing I can go with: the Wyatts using their supernatural powers to mess with people and stay a step or two ahead of their opponents. We don't see that enough.

AJ Styles is worried because Dean Ambrose is lurking around tonight. This could wind up being just like in WCW when David Arquette became WCW World Champion. If Ambrose tries something, AJ will find him anywhere he goes.

Naomi vs. Alexa Bliss

Alexa has Nightmare on Elm Street style attire. Naomi starts fast with right hands and those dancing kicks. Back up and Bliss eats a springboard clothesline, followed by a legdrop for two. Bliss gets sent into the buckle and heads outside as we go to a break. Back with Naomi scoring off a backbreaker and jawbreaker, only to be sent hard into the corner again. A quick Twisted Bliss gives Alexa the pin at 10:49.

Rating: D+. So what in the world was the point in having Naomi go over at the pay per view? Like really, what did that accomplish? Alexa just comes right back and wins on Smackdown like the No Mercy match never happened. This is the kind of thing that you never see on Smackdown and feels like

it belongs on Raw.

Bliss says Becky's fairy tale ends in three weeks when she becomes the champion, just like the fairest of them all.

We look back at Miz beating down Dolph Ziggler last week until Heath Slater and Rhyno made the save.

Curt Hawkins vs. Apollo Crews

Hawkins' theme music is him reciting his Curt Facts. After he wins tonight, Apollo is going to have to change his last name to LOSE. Apollo hits him in the face and that's enough for Curt, who walks out before the bell. No match.

Here's Carmella for a talk about Nikki Bella. Two months ago she was basking in the glow of her first pay per view match but heard Nikki Bella's music. Before she can get much further though, here's a ticked off Nikki. Carmella says she's stealing the spotlight again but that's not surprising since Nikki's boyfriend is John Cena. Nikki doesn't think that's much of a surprise since the relationship is featured on two TV shows and all over the internet. She's right actually.

Carmella shows us clips from Total Divas and Total Bellas with Nikki being some....well being a big bunch of stuff ranging from annoying to needy to talkative to nothing out of the ordinary. The graphic says Total Need-Freak but Nikki says she wears the pants in her relationship and fights her own battles. It's all about being fearless and all the fans know she's not afraid of anything, including a Boss, a Queen or a Princess from Staten Island. Carmella: "Did John help you come up with that?" She accuses Nikki of using her looks and relationship to become famous but leaves before Nikki can do anything.

Ellsworth can't believe this is happening and starts crying over the idea of telling his grandkids about this.

Miz/Spirit Squad vs. Dolph Ziggler/Heath Slater/Rhyno

Rhyno clotheslines Mikey down to start as Otunga talks about the Spirit Squad coaching high school cheerleading. Slater and Ziggler take turns on

Mikey as Miz looks on. Mikey finally gets in a few shots on Dolph and brings him into the corner for the tag off to Miz. The threat of a superkick sends Miz outside though and we take a break.

Back with Miz in control of Ziggler and handing it back to Kenny for two off a legdrop. The fans want Slater but have to settle for Dolph suplexing Mikey. Miz comes in and knocks Rhyno off the apron, only to walk into the superkick from Dolph. The big diving tag brings in Slater as everything breaks down. Rhyno Gores Mikey and Slater rolls Kenny up for two. A right hand from Miz gives Kenny the pin on Slater at 9:25.

Rating: C. This was fine and I guess sets up the Spirit Squad as the next challengers for the Tag Team Titles. It's not exactly the Usos or American Alpha but when you have all of five teams (since Breezango has disappeared), adding in another is hardly the worst thing you can do. At least Ziggler didn't get pinned.

Natalya comes in to see Daniel Bryan and offers her services on the Survivor Series women's team. Bryan isn't sure, even though there are only five women active at the moment. Natalya: "Are you following my cat on Instagram?"

Jack Swagger vs. Baron Corbin

Corbin says this is for everyone who says WE THE PEOPLE. A shoulder block knocks Swagger off the apron and into the barricade so Corbin can drive in a bunch of forearms to the back of the head. End of Days wraps Swagger up at 1:40.

Natalya is still showing Bryan her cats when Ambrose comes in wearing a referee shirt. Bryan says thanks but no thanks. If Dean wants to, he can be timekeeper, ring announcers or whatever. Dean: "I'll do that."

Smackdown World Title: AJ Styles vs. James Ellsworth

AJ is defending and Ambrose is at ringside to do a variety of jobs. Ambrose handles ring announcing and introduces Ellsworth as weighing about 160 or 170 and as Rocky II, III and IV rolled into one. After ringing the bell about 50 times, Ambrose grabs the mic and says to stop

the match because we have to take a break. Back with AJ hammering away in the corner as JBL loses his mind about Ellsworth being in a title match.

AJ starts taking his time but Dean says someone has left the lights on in their Corolla. With some frustration setting in, AJ throws James outside but Dean throws him back in. This is repeated about five times and the distraction lets Ellsworth get in a superkick. JBL: "DON'T DO IT! DON'T DO IT!" Otunga: "He hit him with No Chin Music!" The fans start getting behind Ellsworth...until he charges into a spinebuster. AJ hammers away in the corner...and that's a DQ at 13:15. Dean: "The loser of this match: AJ Styles!"

Rating: C. Obviously the wrestling wasn't the point here but I liked the idea. Would you rather have them advance Dean vs. AJ with the same stuff they've run into the ground for years now or with something fresh for a change? The last two weeks have been fun for a change and that's exactly the point. It's advancing the story in a different way, which is far better than seeing AJ and Dean with tag partners for a one off match.

Dean gives AJ Dirty Deeds and announces Ellsworth as the man who has more victories over Styles than John Cena. Ellsworth can't stand up to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The storytelling around here continues to feel fresh as we're getting a lot of the same stuff presented in different ways. I don't feel bored throughout this show and there's nothing as stupid as Titus Brand Rolexes. This actually works as a wrestling show and they're building to some good stuff coming up. Good little show here with a fun main event and that's all you need.

Results

Randy Orton b. Luke Harper via DQ when Bray Wyatt interfered

Alexa Bliss b. Naomi – Twisted Bliss

Miz/Spirit Squad b. Dolph Ziggler/Heath Slater/Rhyno – Rollup to Slater

Baron Corbin b. Jack Swagger – End of Days

James Ellsworth b. AJ Styles via DQ when Styles wouldn't stop attacking in the corner

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No Mercy 2016 Preview

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

Pre-Show: Jack Swagger vs. Baron Corbin

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

I'm going with Corbin here as there's really no reason to have Swagger win. Swagger is on "Smackdown Live" to lose matches to upcoming names, as

he's been stuck doing for years. Corbin is the kind of guy you could throw out there as a midcard title challenger at the drop of a hat so there's no reason to have him lose to someone like Swagger in a spot like this. Odds are there will be a third match but hopefully this wraps up their mini feud.

Curt Hawkins vs. ???

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

Tag Team Titles: Heath Slater/Rhyno vs. Usos

Here we have another case where there isn't a ton of suspense. Slater and Rhyno were never meant to be a long term solution at the top of the division so we can get to the big Usos vs. American Alpha showdown for the belts. The thing to remember is that Slater has already gotten his contract and done his big story so they can switch the titles and everything will be fine.

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

Nikki Bella vs. Carmella

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

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

Women's Title: Becky Lynch vs. Alexa Bliss

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

I'll stick with the champion keeping the title here though as Bliss just isn't ready to be the face of the division. It's pretty clear we're getting ready for a Lynch vs. Bella showdown over the belt and there's just no reason to switch the belt in Lynch's first title defense. The match should be fine and they did a good job of setting things up on Tuesday so this should be entertaining, albeit a bit predictable.

Bray Wyatt vs. Randy Orton

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

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

Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Dolph Ziggler

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

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

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

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

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

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WWE Releases 7 Names

The hits are coming fast and furious today. So far the following are gone: -Evan Bourne

- Brodus Clay
- Yoshi Tatsu
- Camacho
- Teddy Long
- Curt Hawkins
- Aksana

Most of these aren't huge shocks as Bourne, Tatsu, Camacho and Hawkins haven't wrestled a meaningful match in forever.

Aksana....is anyone going to miss her? SHE's been on TV recently but it's not like anyone is going to care.

Teddy has been around FOREVER but hasn't meant anything recently.

Brodus is surprising as he had potential but they kept screwing up his monster push.

I'll let you know if anyone else is gone. Also, so much for the news reports saying the company doesn't release people anymore.