

# Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania XXXV (Original): History Has Been Made

## Wrestlemania XXXV

Date: April 7, 2019

Location: MetLife Stadium, East Rutherford, New Jersey

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Renee Young, Byron Saxton, Tom Phillips

America the Beautiful: Yolanda Adams

As long as this show is going to be, there's something special about getting to see it every year. This year's show is built around the three major matches and the question of how many happy endings we can have. You know it's not going to be all three, but which of the three doesn't go through. Those matches consist of Universal Champion Brock Lesnar vs. Seth Rollins, Smackdown World Champion Daniel Bryan vs. Kofi Kingston and the winner take all match for both Women's titles as Ronda Rousey faces Charlotte and Becky Lynch in a genuinely historic main event. Let's get to it.

### Kickoff Show: Cruiserweight Title: Tony Nese vs. Buddy Murphy

Nese is challenging after winning a tournament and wastes no time in trying a jumping knee. Murphy gets sent outside but is fine enough to drop Nese ribs first onto the turnbuckle as we go split screen for an ad. Well at least they didn't do this during the TV build. Back to full with Nese fighting out of a chinlock and suplexing the champ into the corner. Murphy gets tied in the ropes for a Lionsault but catches Nese with a superkick. A spinning faceplant gets two and some knees to the face have Nese in more trouble.

Nese is fine enough to hit a reverse hurricanrana and they trade a series of strikes to the face. Nese's kneeling over the back piledriver gets two, followed by the 450 for the same. Murphy is right back up with Murphy's Law but Nese gets a foot on the rope. With nothing else working,

Murphy tries Nese's running knee in the corner but walks into a superkick. A German suplex into the corner sets up the real running knee to give Nese the pin and the title at 10:43.

**Rating:** C+. Pretty good stuff here, even if I can't imagine Nese holding the title very long. He's the New York guy so it makes sense to have him win the title for a feel good moment. It wasn't the most surprising thing in the world but it's a good idea to open the night with a mostly short but effective match. Not bad at all, though Nese is a short term champion at best.

### Kickoff Show: Women's Battle Royal

Naomi, Lana, Nikki Cross, Asuka, Mickie James, Kairi Sane, Ember Moon, Ruby Riott, Sarah Logan, Liv Morgan, Zelina Vega, Dana Brooke, Eve Torres, Mandy Rose, Candice LeRae, Maria Kanellis, Sonya Deville, Carmella

It's a wild brawl to start with Nikki Cross chasing Maria in a circle and getting rid of her. Asuka sends Nikki out and LeRae is out as well. Ember Eclipses Lana (as Captain Marvel) and knocks out Naomi, followed by another Eclipse to Mandy. Lana manages to get rid of Ember and insists that she's #1 before kicking Sane in the face. Sane goes up and gets shoved to the apron, leaving us with a Lana vs. Logan staredown.

The Riott Squad gets together and dumps Lana but Sane is back in with the Insane Elbow on Logan. The Squad gets rid of Sane though and Logan lifts Morgan up for a flipping Stunner on Vega. Now it's Asuka taking the triple teaming but she slides back in from the apron. Dana of all people fights back against the Squad and gets rid of Ruby. Logan is out as well but Vega blocks a cartwheel elbow.

Mandy and Sonya get rid of Vega and Brooke as we're down to Logan, Rose, Deville, James and Asuka. James superkicks Mandy out but gets eliminated by Sonya to get us to three. Asuka sends Deville to the apron but Logan dumps both of them out...as Carmella slides back in, JUST LIKE LAST YEAR. Carmella knocks Logan over but Logan keeps her feet above the floor. A superkick gets rid of Logan to give Carmella the win at 10:30.

**Rating:** D. Hey, remember last year when someone snuck back in at the end and won the Women's Battle Royal in a big surprise despite doing nothing coming into the match where someone could have gotten something out of it? No particular reason for asking of course. The match was your usual deal of everyone standing around until it was time for them to be eliminated until the ending. It was shorter than last year's though and that's an improvement. Oh and so much for Lacey Evans winning the thing as a surprise.

#### Kickoff Show: Raw Tag Team Titles: Revival vs. Zack Ryder/Curt Hawkins

The Revival is defending and this wasn't announced on the Kickoff Show. Dawson takes Hawkins into the corner to start and gets two off a rollup. It's off to Ryder vs. Wilder, the latter of whom gets the loudest cheer of his career after he decked the guy who jumped Bret last night. An armbar keeps Ryder down and Dawson comes back in to rip at Ryder's face. Ryder gets in a suplex and tosses Wilder into the corner but Dawson knocks Hawkins off the apron.

We hit the chinlock on Ryder for a bit until he backdrops his way to freedom, allowing the hot tag to Hawkins. A backslide gets two on Dawson and Wilder gets knocked off the apron. The double clothesline gives us a double knockdown and it's back to Ryder. The middle rope Rough Ryder hits Dawson and Ryder suplex suplexes Wilder to the floor for a scary crash. Hawkins throws Ryder back in for the tag but Wilder breaks up the cover.

Wilder DDTs Ryder on the floor and Hawkins takes a brainbuster to put all four down on the floor. Back in Dawson is rather cocky about beating Hawkins, who seems to be a bit dead. You never want to be too cocky in wrestling though and it's a small package to pin Dawson for the titles at 13:21.

**Rating:** C. Ignoring Hawkins losing 269 matches in a row and not having a win since November 2016, Ryder not winning a non-Main Event match on TV since December 2016 and the team not winning a match together since 2008, this makes perfect sense. The love for the New York fans is strong tonight, which makes me wonder what kind of horrible things they have in mind for the main card. Just let the Revival go sit at home until their

contracts are up though because I'd rather they go out with just this humiliation rather than seeing what else WWE could think of for them.

### Andre the Giant Memorial Battle Royal

Colin Jost, Michael Che, Braun Strowman, Otis, Tucker, Kalisto, Gran Metalik, Lince Dorado, Ali, Titus O'Neil, Konnor, Viktor, Matt Hardy, Jeff Hardy, Andrade, Jinder Mahal, Harper, Bo Dallas, Bobby Roode, Apollo Crews, Bo Dallas, Luke Gallows, Karl Anderson, No Way Jose, Tyler Breeze, Chad Gable, Heath Slater, Rhino, Shelton Benjamin, EC3

Hey Harper is back. The SNL guys bail to the floor as Breeze and EC3 are both out. Shelton and Dorado are eliminated as well with Strowman throwing everyone he comes near. Harper vs. Strowman gets a big reaction but everyone piles onto them to break it up. Titus misses a charge and gets eliminated, followed by Ali tornado DDTing Jose and tossing him. Strowman gets sent into the post and goes through the ropes to the floor as Anderson is tossed.

Rhino is out as well and the Hardys get into a mini match with Roode/Gable, with Roode being eliminated. Metalik gets thrown out by Mahal and Andrade monkey flips Kalisto out. There goes Gable as the ring is clearing out in a hurry. Tucker runs the Ascension over and there's a double Caterpillar to both of them. The Ascension is thrown out but Strowman tosses Heavy Machinery.

Mahal is out next as Harper tries to suplex Ali, only to have Strowman kick them both out at the same time. We're down to Strowman, Che, Jost, Matt, Jeff, Apollo and Andrade. Apollo and Andrade go to the apron and Andrade snaps off a hurricanrana to eliminate both of them in a dumb move. The Hardys try to pull Strowman out but the SNL guys come in and fail to throw them out.

Strowman shrugs them off and dumps the Hardys, leaving him alone with Jost and Che. One of them grabs a mic and says this doesn't have to end in violence, so here's his therapist to talk Strowman through this. Strowman beats him up and gives him a chokeslam (good thing the therapist knows how to take a flat back bump) before slapping Che out. A running boot in the corner misses and Jost goes for the elimination but gets

shoved away. Strowman throws him out for the win at 10:24.

**Rating:** D. Yeah it was stupid and the SNL guys were annoying, but it was on the Kickoff Show and the right person won so I can't complain all that much. Strowman should have won something bigger than this but at least he comes away with something instead of just being tossed out like anyone else. You know, like they did with Asuka in the first match.

Yolanda Adams sings America the Beautiful.

Helicopters fly over the stadium instead of the usual planes.

The opening video features wrestlers talking about this being the biggest stage and them being the players and storytellers. We see stills of famous Wrestlemania moments as the wrestlers talk about having the chance to live forever. They switch into a regular video of everyone involved with Lynch saying that they are the storytellers. This is a great idea, but not exactly practical when you consider that this is Wrestlemania GET EVERYONE ON THE CARD.

Here's Wrestlemania host Alexa Bliss to say that Wrestlemania needs a goddess. She snaps her fingers....and here's Hulk Hogan. Well that works. Hogan: "It's great to be back here in the Silverdome brother!" Ok that was funny. Hogan: "Ok it's great to be back here in the MetLife Center!" He hits the catchphrase and poses with Bliss as Paul Heyman of all people storms out between the two of them. Heyman goes to the ring and says if they're not closing the show, they're not hanging around. They're getting their business done and going to Las Vegas where Lesnar is ULTIMATELY appreciated.

Universal Title: Brock Lesnar vs. Seth Rollins

Lesnar is defending. Rollins has a new BEAST SLAYER graphic but Brock knees him off the apron and it's an F5 on the floor before the bell rings. Lesnar throws him into various things at ringside and then over the announcers' table a few times. They get inside but the referee won't start the match because Rollins isn't ready. Lesnar tosses him outside again for another whip over the announcers' table and through the top piece of the table.

They go back inside and Rollins is mostly dead but gets to his feet for the opening bell. Three straight German suplexes let Lesnar bounce as Rollins' back is all kinds of pretty colors. The F5 is escaped and the ref is bumped, allowing Rollins to hit the low row. Rollins hits the low superkick and the Stomp connects. A second and third Stomp give Rollins the title at 2:30.

Jerry Lawler joins commentary.

### Randy Orton vs. AJ Styles

The CGI graphics are back with Orton's being a HUGE snake that made me jump. Battle over respect between the two of them as Orton has asked why it took AJ so long to get here. An early RKO attempt is blocked so Orton goes with a thumb to the eye and the Orton Stomp. AJ gets back up with the dropkick and the slingshot forearm to the floor drops Orton again. Orton is thrown back in and knocks AJ into the barricade. The chinlock doesn't last long as AJ fights up with the Phenomenal Blitz and a basement forearm.

The Styles Clash is blocked and Orton tries the hanging DDT, which is reversed into the Calf Crusher. Once the rope is grabbed AJ goes to the apron and loads up the Phenomenal Forearm but drops back down as Orton jumps for the RKO and crashes, allowing AJ to hit the springboard 450 for two. Orton is back up with the top rope superplex as the fans are interested in something else.

The hanging DDT plants AJ and Orton plays to the crowd to get their attention back. The RKO is countered with an enziguri but the second attempt connects for two. It feels like it's been awhile since anyone kicked out of that. With the regular version not working, Orton loads up a super RKO but gets kicked out to the floor. That means a Phenomenal Forearm to the outside and the regular one finishes Orton at 16:17.

**Rating:** B-. This was about what you would have expected with good action between two talented veterans. AJ knowing that the RKO counter was coming was fine and the ending was as decisive as you could get with AJ surviving the RKO and winning clean. It's a perfectly good match and it's not like the two of them have anything else to do at the moment. Expect a

rematch next month.

Lacey Evans cameo, though this time she stops to sneer at the crowd.

### Smackdown Tag Team Titles: Usos vs. Ricochet/Aleister Black vs. Shinsuke Nakamura/Rusev vs. The Bar

The Usos are defending. Jey and Black start things off but Sheamus tags himself in and low bridges Jey to the floor. Black gets taken down and it's Rusev coming in to hold Black up for a kick from Rusev. It's off to Ricochet with the springboard clothesline for two on Nakamura before spinning around Cesaro multiple times for a headscissors.

That just earns him a shot to the face and it's time to swing Ricochet while Sheamus beats on Rusev's chest. Nakamura tries to make a save so Sheamus beats on him as well, followed by the same to Jey and Black, all while Ricochet is swinging Ricochet for well over a minute. The Sharpshooter goes on with Jey making the save, earning himself a trip to the floor with his brother.

We settle down (kind of) to Black bringing in Ricochet, who gets caught by Rusev in a swinging release Rock Bottom. Everyone goes to the corner for the required Tower of Doom, with Ricochet rolling through because he's Ricochet and more awesome than you. Black knees Sheamus down and Ricochet hits the 630 for two with a bunch of people diving in for the save. We get a parade of kicks to the face with Sheamus taking the double superkick. The Double Us retains the Usos' titles at 10:05.

**Rating:** C+. The big spots helped a lot here and it felt like an amped up Smackdown match, which is one of the best things that you can have in this situation. There's no other way you can go with no story and the match being thrown together on Smackdown. Just have them do the spots and do the best they can, like Ricochet sticking the landing and that insane swing.

Recap of the Hall of Fame.

Honky Tonk Man (Long overdue)

Harlem Heat (More than deserved)

Torrie Wilson (The bar has been lowered)

Brutus Beefcake (Sure why not)

Hart Foundation (Yep, and may I add yep)

Sue Aitchison, with John Cena's 600<sup>th</sup> Make-A-Wish (Nothing wrong with that)

D-Generation X (Fine, though they feel weak for headliners)

We recap Shane McMahon vs. The Miz in the feud that WWE cares about and thinks we do too. Miz's dad is a horrible person and only cared about his son when Miz started teaming with Shane, who didn't like having to fix Miz's daddy issues. Tonight it's Falls Count Anywhere to blow it off.

#### Shane McMahon vs. The Miz

Falls Count Anywhere. Shane makes Greg Hamilton do his entrance three times, with the third being held out extra long. Miz's dad is in the front row so Shane goes straight to the floor to choke him. The chase is on but Shane gets in a monitor shot to the head. The big elbow through the announcers' table is loaded up so Miz's dad gets in the way. Still doesn't help the fact that he's a horrible father.

Dad gets in the ring and puts up his fists so Shane jumps him. The beating brings Miz back into the ring to take Shane apart and send him into the barricade before checking on his dad. With the medics taking care of Papa Miz, Miz tackles Shane over the barricade and they head into the crowd, eventually going to the tech arena near one of the towers that holds up the structure above the ring. They go into an open area of the crowd with Miz hitting Shane in the foot with a chair.

Another shot to the back lets Miz knock Shane over to the international commentators station where tables are overturned. A chokeslam puts Shane through the table for two and a monitor shot knocks Shane over a barricade and down into the shadows (cool visual). Miz follows and gets a delayed two as replays show Shane landing on top of a golf cart.

They fight up a camera tower ala HHH vs. Undertaker at Wrestlemania XVII

with Miz hitting a Skull Crushing Finale onto a metal platform for two. Shane gets in a shot to the face and climbs to the top of the tower as this isn't going to go well. Miz follows him up and gets rather stalkerish as he stares Shane down to one knee. Shane begs off so Miz hammers away and suplexes him off the tower onto a crashpad...with Shane landing on top for the pin at 15:38.

**Rating:** C-. Why not. Why not. WHY THE #\*\*#%!!@# NOT! Why shouldn't we spend five months building this up and giving Shane McMahon a title before having him win at Wrestlemania? I'm sure this will continue, because going from November until April isn't long enough for a Shane McMahon story. That's just great.

The match itself was your usual walking around the stadium fight with Miz dominating through most of it until the end. The deal with Miz's dad was a cool moment but they should have brought him out later on in the match instead of so close to the beginning. Not bad overall, but the ending was stupid.

Paige joins commentary.

Women's Tag Team Titles: Boss N Hug Connection vs. Natalya/Beth Phoenix vs. IIconics vs. Nia Jax/Tamina

Bayley and Sasha Banks are defending. The IIconics are a devil (Billie) and a black winged angel (Peyton). Natalya and Beth are in matching pink and black so here's Bret Hart to stand with them on the stage and then go to the back. It's a brawl to start with Nia being sent into the steps. We settle down to Peyton getting beaten up but Billie helps her out, allowing them to hit their superhero pose.

Beth gets bulldogged onto Billie's knee with the kickout making Peyton scream. Natalya comes in for a Hart Attack for two on Billie with Bayley making the save. It's off to Sasha, who is taken down without too much effort. Natalya and Beth lift Sasha into the air so Bayley makes the save and throws Bayley at Beth for the Bank Statement but Beth powers out as you probably expected.

Natalya puts Bayley and Sasha in the Sharpshooter at the same time until

Tamina breaks it up with a superkick. Nia gets back in and starts crushing people, setting up Nia and Tamina going up top at the same time. Beth saves Banks from death by shoving Nia off and Sasha drops the frog splash for two on Natalya. Beth is back up and takes Bayley to the top for a super Glam Slam....but Billie comes in and steals the pin and the title at 10:46.

**Rating:** D. Some of the spots were good but at the same time, there were too many people running around and it hurt things a lot. I do like the IIconics coming in and stealing the belts as it certainly fits their style better (Do they even have a regular finisher?). But yeah, just too much going on when it didn't need to be the case. Drop Beth and Natalya and it would have fit better, but I guess the Beth Phoenix fan club needed one more moment?

The helicopter pilots from earlier are here.

We recap Kofi Kingston vs. Daniel Bryan. Kingston has basically done everything there is to do in the company outside of winning the World Title. He got close in the Elimination Chamber but couldn't quite pull it off. Vince McMahon then decided to throw one challenge after another at him with Kofi coming up just short every time until Big E. and Xavier Woods won a tag team gauntlet match to get him the title shot. If Kofi doesn't win here, I don't know if he ever will.

#### Smackdown World Title: Kofi Kingston vs. Daniel Bryan

Kofi is challenging with New Day in his corner while Bryan has Rowan. Big E. has a present for Kofi, but only after he wins. They go to the mat to start with Kofi sticking the landing off a monkey flip to send Bryan outside. That means the big dive over the top as the roster is watching in the locker room again, where there is a total of one single monitor showing the match. Back in and Kofi tries to jump a little too much, allowing Bryan to pull him down into a surfboard.

Some forearm to the back of the head seem to wake Kofi up and it's a clothesline into the Boom Drop. Bryan bails outside and Kofi dives after, only to crash onto the announcers' table ribs first. Back in and we hit the waistlock for a good while as Bryan stays on the ribs. He switches

over to the Boston crab, eventually stepping to the side to make it half Liontamer. With that broken, Bryan loads up a belly to back superplex but gets elbowed down three times in a row.

Kofi drops a top rope splash to the back for two but the ribs are banged up again in the process. Trouble in Paradise misses and they go to some rollups for near falls until Kofi kicks him in the head. Bryan stops him with a stomp out of the corner and busts out the YES pose for a nice callback. The running knee is countered into a rollup and SOS gets two but Bryan reverses into the LeBell Lock in the middle of the ring.

The long crawl gets Kofi's leg on the rope and Bryan is starting to get mad. The kicks to the ribs have Kofi in trouble but he fires back kicks of his own, capped off by a reverse suplex (ok then) for a close two. Rowan goes after New Day but Kofi hits him with Trouble in Paradise, followed by the Midnight Hour on the floor. Bryan's suicide dive is countered by a right hand but Trouble in Paradise misses, allowing Bryan to hit the running knee for two, causing the fans to build a roof on the stadium and then blow it off.

Bryan has had it and starts stomping the head as Woods and Big E. watch on. The LeBell Lock goes on and the referee checks the arm...which stays up. Bryan hits him in the face and pulls again but Kofi rolls out and hammers away at Bryan, who won't let go of Kofi's hand. That lets Kofi stomp away for a change and Bryan is done, setting up Trouble in Paradise to give Kofi the pin and the title at 23:41.

**Rating:** A-. I mean...they could have gone out there and demonstrated how to make a pimento loaf and it wouldn't have mattered as long as they had that ending. That was a genuine Wrestlemania moment and you could feel what it meant to everyone. This was incredible and one of the best moments they could have had. Eleven years ago, Kofi had the worst debut match I've ever seen and now he's WWE Champion at Wrestlemania. Not too shabby.

Post match Woods pulls off the cover and unveils the non-wooden title so Kofi can pose with the right design, already complete with custom side plates. Kofi's kids come in to celebrate and now it's time to open the

present. It's a new New Day shirt with Kofi holding the title.

We recap the Andre the Giant Memorial Battle Royal.

Bliss, now in a different outfit, goes in to see Jost and Che as they're checked for injuries. She says don't worry because they're in good hands...because Scott Hall and Kevin Nash are the doctors? And giving them prostate exams? Am I missing a joke here?

Booker T. joins commentary.

#### US Title: Samoa Joe vs. Rey Mysterio

Mysterio is challenging and I believe he's dressed as Mysterio from Spider-Man. Joe goes straight at him and Rey hits a 619 in less than a minute. Rey's wheelbarrow bulldog is countered into the Koquina Clutch...and Rey is out at 1:00. So I'm thinking he's still a bit injured? Booker: "I DID ALL MY PREP WORK FOR THAT???"

Trailer for Batista's new movie.

We recap Roman Reigns vs. Drew McIntyre. Reigns is back from leukemia and needed a first singles match. Drew took out both Dean Ambrose and Seth Rollins and is promising to do the same to Reigns tonight.

#### Roman Reigns vs. Drew McIntyre

McIntyre is played to the ring by the New York Police Department Bagpipe Band. Reigns lowers his head to start and gets kicked in the face but what looked to be a powerslam is escaped. That means a legdrop to the back of the head over the middle rope but Drew is right back with the Glasgow Kiss. The chinlock has Reigns in more trouble until Drew takes him outside for a suplex, thereby upping the total amount of trouble.

The reverse Alabama Slam gives Drew two and he tells Reigns he should have said no. A flipping slam off the top has Reigns down again as Drew tells him that he broke the Shield. The Future Shock (Drew: "THIS ONE IS FOR AMBROSE!") is broken up so Drew slaps him in the face. A big boot sends Drew outside and it's a Samoan drop on the floor. Back in and the jumping clothesline puts Drew down, followed by the Superman Punch to do

it again. The spear finishes Drew at 10:10.

**Rating:** C-. Totally standard Raw main event with Drew trying but not having a prayer of winning. There's only so much you can do when everything is against you like this and Drew tried as hard as he can. Just getting this spot is Drew's big win of the night and that's not the worst place to be. He'll be back and do just fine because he's that good.

Here's Elias to play some drums rather well. Now he's at a piano (teleporting from one to the other) and does quite splendidly there too. Now he's in the middle of the ring with his guitar. Elias the drummer and Elias the piano player play him in and he continues to have chops. Piano and Drum take a bow and now guitar Elias is on his own. The fans sing a little OH WALK WITH ELIAS and Elias promises more versions of himself, including a harpsichord player. As he starts his song, a SPECIAL BULLETIN appears on screen showing...the 1932 World Series?

Babe Ruth calls his shot (yes he did) and hits a home run....and here's John Cena to Basic Thuganomics. Well you know the Yankees gear is making his skin crawl. Cena says Elias got the worst deal because John Cena is about to turn heel. He feels like he's watching one of his movies because this whole thing sucks.

Cena isn't feeling it because this is a wasted wrestling experiment. Cena: "They call me the golden shovel so I'm about to bury your push." He throws him some nuts and says there's no AA today, but here's an FU. Cena lays him out with the knuckles and plants him with the FU. This worked well as Cena is often at his best when he's making fun of himself.

We recap Batista vs. HHH. Batista wanted one more match with HHH to end their careers on his terms so he beat up Ric Flair to get HHH's attention. The match is on and it's No Holds Barred.

Shawn Michaels is on commentary.

### Batista vs. HHH

No Holds Barred with HHH's career on the line. Batista slips through the ropes on the way into the ring before heading outside to glare at Shawn.

He even walks around the ring and does his entrance again, this time without the slipping. HHH's entrance video seems to be inspired by Mad Max and shows a road race. The stage opens up and the car drives out with HHH on the back. I've seen worse.

Batista drives him into the corner to start but gets elbowed out to the floor. They fight to the floor with HHH going over the announcers' table but managing to pull out a tool box to hit Batista in the head. Now it's a chain to whip Batista in the back and choke a bit before going for some pliers. Batista's finger gets bent back and HHH stomps on the pliers to make it even worse. Now it's time for some needle nose pliers, but first he sits in a chair on Batista's throat. HHH: "THAT'S A NICE NOSE RING!" And then he rips it out with the pliers!

Graves: "Batista won't be able to be a guardian of the house like this! This guy is my boss!" Batista heads to the floor (Shawn: "His nose is bleeding!" Graves: "YOU THINK???" ) and drops HHH onto the announcers' table three times in a row without breaking the thing. Some chairs to the back keep HHH in trouble and they head back inside with Batista busting out a White Noise of all things.

Back to the floor with Batista putting the steps onto an announcers' table and clearing off a second one, complete with a point to Shawn. The Batista Bomb off the steps is countered with a backdrop and the table STILL doesn't break. Good grief where have those tables been all these years? HHH gets up, throws a crotch chop, and spears Batista through the German table. They slowly get back inside and HHH (eventually) finds a sledgehammer.

That just earns him a spear for two but a charge with the hammer is cut off by HHH's raised boot. The spinebuster connects and it's time for the Batista Bomb, with HHH dropping the hammer on his way down. That gets two and Batista brings the steps inside. He takes too long punching in the corner (right in front of the steps because wrestlers never learn) and gets powerbombed down onto the steps.

The Pedigree...only gets two as this keeps going. Batista gets in a DDT onto the steps and things stop again but here's Ric Flair (I was waiting

on him) to hand HHH a sledgehammer. HE COULDN'T DO THIS TEN MINUTES AGO??? HHH uses the steps to launch into a sledgehammer shot to the head but Batista pops back up so he can eat the Pedigree for the pin at 24:49. You know, because a JUMPING HAMMER TO THE HEAD isn't enough to pin someone.

**Rating:** D+. The first ten minutes of this was very good but, as tends to be the case for almost any HHH match anymore, it went on too long because there was way too much laying around between moves. The ending looked ridiculous as well but that's another situation. What they did early on was entertaining and brutal (that pliers thing was nuts) but I was looking at the clock near the end, which happens way too often.

Alexa Bliss (outfit #3) has the B Team model AND STILL CHAMPION Daniel Bryan shirts. Ron Simmons comes in for the cameo.

JBL joins commentary.

#### Kurt Angle vs. Baron Corbin

No Angle video package? Angle snaps off a belly to belly suplex but gets taken down early on. The rolling German suplexes give Kurt two but the Angle Slam is broken up for a big boot. The ankle lock is countered into Deep Six for two and Corbin is already getting frustrated. Kurt hits the Angle Slam for two but Corbin is right back and says You Can't See Me. That odd taunt lets Angle roll some more German suplexes...and Kurt goes up. The moonsault misses as it always does...and the End of Days gives Corbin the pin at 6:00.

**Rating:** F. The idea of Kurt Angle losing to Baron Corbin in his last match is a failure. Not because it's Angle last match. Not because the match wasn't good. Not because WHY? But because we now have to deal with more Baron Corbin on Raw as more fans' heads explode as we try to figure out what WWE sees in him. I'm sure this was Angle's decision and while I can respect that, someone named McMahon should have overridden him.

Post match Angle wants his music played one last time so we can get in one more YOU SUCK. That's exactly what he gets, as he should.

## Intercontinental Title: Bobby Lashley vs. Finn Balor

Lashley, with special contacts in, is defending and Balor is the Demon, making its Wrestlemania debut. Balor hits a spinwheel kick and ax kick to the back, followed by a dropkick to put him on the floor. There's the big flip dive but Lashley catches him with a spinebuster back inside. Lashley hits a heck of a spear through the ropes to drive Balor to the floor, followed by a regular one for two back inside. Balor gets back up and powerbombs Lashley (good one too) and the Coup de Grace gives Balor the title back at 4:04.

**Rating:** C. The spots were good (that spear was awesome) and the powerbomb looked awesome, but the problem is they didn't need to do the Demon here. I get why they did it and it makes sense to do it at Wrestlemania, but at the same time what's the point in having him do it if he can already beat Lashley and Lio Rush? It's a good enough match, but this story was them trading the title and then the Demon doing what regular Balor could do.

Alexa (#4) announces the new WWE attendance record of 82,265. She thinks we need a break though so here are R-Truth and Carmella for the world's largest dance break.

Wrestlemania XXXVI is in Tampa Bay on April 5, 2020.

We recap the women's triple threat match. Becky Lynch has become the people's champion, Charlotte is the Smackdown Women's Champion and the corporate pick and Ronda Rousey is the Raw Women Champion and the unstoppable force. Tonight is winner take all for both belts, but it's much more about the history because the match is actually headlining the show.

## Raw Women's Title/Smackdown Women's Title: Ronda Rousey vs. Charlotte vs. Becky Lynch

Ronda is Raw Women's Champion and Charlotte is Smackdown Women's Champion...and she comes in via helicopter and lands in the parking lot, where a red carpet is rolled out for her in a Horseman homage. Since she has to walk a good ways into the stadium, here are Joan Jett and the Blackhearts to play Ronda to the ring. The bell rings at 12:01am and

Becky goes straight for the Disarm-Her on Ronda but gets shoved away so they can all head outside.

That means a Piper's Pit for both of them and Ronda starts the trash talk. Charlotte gets up and sends Rousey into the barricade, setting up a showdown with Charlotte inside. The Disarm-Her to Becky is broken up and it's Ronda coming back in to kick Becky in the face. A double powerbomb over the top is countered into a double armbar on Becky and Charlotte. Becky escapes and dropkicks Ronda to the floor for a NASTY crash on her back. Charlotte Downward Spirals Becky into the buckle for two as we look at Rousey landing square on her back again.

Becky is right back with the Disarm-Her but Ronda comes back to life and makes the save. A running knee breaks up the armbar on Becky and Charlotte hits a double Natural Selection for two each. Becky gets sent outside so Charlotte chops Ronda, who tells her to bring it. That's just what Charlotte does with a backhand to the face so Ronda hits a jumping knee, which is countered into a Liontamer. Becky breaks it up with a bulldog and hits a double DDT for two each.

A super Bexploder gets two on Charlotte, setting up a double high crossbody from Rousey. The double armbar is countered with a double powerbomb Ronda is done for the moment. Becky calls Charlotte to her and avoids a charge, letting Becky kick her to the floor. The Disarm-Her goes on and Rousey uses the ropes to stand up for the break. A missed charge lets Becky get the Disarm-Her in the corner until Charlotte's big boot breaks it up.

Charlotte starts in on Rousey's knee and gets the Figure Four but Becky comes off the top with a legdrop for the save. And now, a table because that's what this match was calling for. Rousey breaks up a powerbomb through the table and turns the table over, saying tables are for b\*\*\*\*\* (at least the third time she's used that word so far). Charlotte comes back in for a double spear as Cole's voice is almost gone.

The table is set up in the corner and Charlotte gets two off a spear to Becky. Rousey gets back up and helps Becky drive Charlotte somewhat through the table to knock her outside. The fight is on and Rousey goes

with a Shining Wizard and tries Piper's Pit...but gets reversed into a crucifix to give Becky the pin and the titles at 22:27!

**Rating:** B. The ending was straight out of Angle vs. Benoit at Wrestlemania XVII with the submission attempts all match until the quick pinfall. What matters here is Becky defeated Rousey to win the titles as she should have. That was how this show needed to end and it did, even if the ending could have been a bit smoother. Charlotte will be fine and I'm curious to see who goes after Becky as the first victim.

Replays show Rousey's shoulders were WAY up so there's your story going forward (if Rousey sticks around). Cole: "Tonight will forever be known as WrestleMANia!" Oh just stop dude. Pyro and posing takes us out.

**Overall Rating:** B-. Let's get the things I got wrong out of the way first. First: this was WAY better than I was expecting after last year's near nightmare of a show. Second: they actually did give us three happy endings, which I said several times would not happen. I'm very glad to be wrong on that, but I certainly was wrong. Third: yeah HHH vs. Batista went on too long and it brought things down. I had high hopes and they didn't come through.

Now for the good stuff: the right people won (mostly) and the big matches all went to the right people. For the first time in way too long, we had something to cheer about. If that's it for Lesnar at the moment, thank goodness because he needs to go away for a long time and leave the title here. Rollins will be fine as champion for the summer before someone wins Money in the Bank and takes it from him (It's going to be Corbin isn't it?). Becky winning was the right way to go also, even if the ending was a little rushed. There's one big one left though.

Kofi Kingston is WWE Champion. That was one of the best moments I've seen WWE put on in years and might pass Bryan in New Orleans. It felt special and you don't get that often enough, mainly because there was serious doubt if they could actually pull the trigger. I loved that moment and was happier than I've been at something in a long time. I'd have loved to see it close the show, but I get why they couldn't go there. Incredible moment though.

Overall, the pacing was FAR better than what they've had in recent years and while there was a lot of stuff they needed to trim down (despite having multiple matches go less than five minutes), it didn't drag nearly as bad as it has before. It still needs to be shorter by about an hour (at least) and not everyone needs to be on the show, but for what we got, it was one of the better shows in recent memory and we got a genuine Wrestlemania moment. Well done, and it was close to being great.

### Results

Seth Rollins b. Brock Lesnar – Stomp

AJ Styles b. Randy Orton – Phenomenal Forearm

Usos b. The Bar, Aleister Black/Ricochet and Shinsuke Nakamura/Rusev – Double Us to Sheamus

Shane McMahon b. The Miz – McMahon pinned Shane after a superplex off a camera tower

Iconics b. Boss N Hug Connection, Nia Jax/Tamina and Beth Phoenix/Natalya – Super Glam Slam to Bayley

Kofi Kingston b. Daniel Bryan – Trouble in Paradise

Samoa Joe b. Rey Mysterio – Koquina Clutch

Roman Reigns b. Drew McIntyre – Spear

HHH b. Batista – Pedigree

Baron Corbin b. Kurt Angle – End of Days

Finn Balor b. Bobby Lashley – Coup de Grace

Becky Lynch b. Ronda Rousey and Charlotte – Crucifix to Rousey

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AND

[Remember to check out Wrestlingrumors.net](http://Wrestlingrumors.net) for all of your [wrestling headline needs](http://Wrestlingrumors.net).

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## Monday Night Raw – June 10, 2019: The Other Side Of The Problem



IMG Credit: WWE

### Monday Night Raw

Date: June 10, 2019

Location: SAP Center, San Jose, California

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Renee Young

They really have to go to California three days after an international trip? Anyway, it's time to start the short road to Stomping Grounds as we're finally past Super ShowDown. What's up next? Well that would be a bunch of Super ShowDown rematches as WWE probably thinks you didn't watch the show and NEED to see their brilliant ideas at work. It's turned into a bit of a game to see how bad Raw can get these days so maybe we can hit

a new low score. Let's get to it.

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

Here's Seth Rollins, carrying a chair, to get things going, but first we need to look at him retaining the Universal Title over Baron Corbin and thwarting Brock Lesnar's cash-in attempt at Super ShowDown. Rollins talks about it being a new era for the Universal Title (even though we're in the exact same place we were two weeks ago) because everyone is trying to take the title from him.

They can do it by wrestling him but no one can lace his boots, or they can try it by cashing in a contract, which earns them a beating. No one can do what he did to Lesnar but here's Corbin to interrupt. The fans boo him quite a bit as Corbin says he'll worry about Lesnar after he wins the title at Stomping Grounds. Corbin blames the referee for costing him the match at Super ShowDown and says that won't be a problem at Stomping Grounds. See, he's quite the negotiator and therefore he's going to get to pick the guest referee for the rematch.

Rollins laughs it off because no one likes Corbin but here's Sami Zayn to interrupt. Sami thinks it would be better for everyone, including Rollins, if Corbin was champion. If that was the case, we would have a champion who isn't completely obsessed with Brock Lesnar. Rollins doesn't buy this and thinks there is something in it for Sami.

It turns out that Sami might have been promised a future title shot so Rollins wants to come fight now. This brings out Kevin Owens, who thinks he might come to the ring and fight Rollins instead. The match is made for the main event. While it seems pretty clear, Sami was never officially announced as the referee. You know what might help Raw a lot? Not opening the show with a fifteen minute promo to set up tonight's main event.

[Lars Sullivan vs. Lucha House Party](#)

Elimination rules. Sullivan runs Dorado and Metalik over during the entrances so Kalisto tries some dropkicks, only to get caught in the Freak Accident for the elimination at 25 seconds. Dorado comes in but his

springboard hurricanrana is countered into a running powerbomb for the elimination at 58 seconds.

That leaves Metalik, whose handspring is countered into a toss slam. Sullivan pulls him up at two and goes outside to gorilla press Kalisto onto the steps. Back inside and the Freak Accident plants Metalik...for two as Sullivan picks him up again. Instead he tossed Dorado head first into the post, followed by the Swan Dive to finish Metalik at 3:06.

**Rating:** D+. While exactly what it should have been, this makes Friday even more frustrating. It shows they know what they're supposed to do but instead they went with the stupid decision at Super ShowDown. This was an improvement, but it made me more annoyed at Super ShowDown, which I didn't think possible.

R-Truth and Carmella get caught by the mob but they go into an elevator without the referee. The camera inside the elevator shows it stopping between floors. More on this later it seems.

Becky Lynch is getting ready for an interview. Of note: Rollins is with her and Cole acknowledges their relationship.

We get a sitdown, split screen interview with Becky Lynch and Lacey Evans. Lacey wants to go first because ladies go first, but Becky talks about making Lacey tap at Money in the bank. Sure Lacey should beat her because Lacey is bigger and stronger, but Becky isn't letting someone like her be champion.

Lacey says Becky doesn't know anything about her and she won't stop until she has everything she wants. She hears fear in Becky's voice and it's the fear of fading back down into obscurity. The stench of fear is nasty and she'll be Becky No Belts at Stomping Grounds. Becky says she'll be taking a slap upside the head and another loss. They kept this short and that's the best thing for everyone involved.

Nikki Cross asks Alexa Bliss about what happened last week but tonight Bliss is in a champions vs. challengers match tonight. Bliss accuses Bayley of being two faced and says you can only try to convince people you're something you're not for so long. She's totally Cross' friend

though.

It's time for MizTV, because having a short match in between these segments is just out of the question. This week's guest is Samoa Joe, who does not like being called the NEW United States Champion. Rey Mysterio stole his title and then Joe had the chance to win it back. Miz calls him out on being handed the title back and jumping Mysterio last week. Joe: "Yeah, so?"

On top of that, Joe brought in Rey's son Dominic, which Miz finds uncool. You don't do that to a man's family so Joe is ready to fight. This brings out Braun Strowman who wants a fight with Joe. It also brings out Bobby Lashley, who isn't done with Strowman. He wants a title shot, but here's Ricochet to add his name to the list as well. Before he can get that out though, Cesaro interrupts and punches Ricochet in the face. The brawl is on and the good guys clean house to set up the six man tag.

#### Samoa Joe/Bobby Lashley/Cesaro vs. The Miz/Ricochet/Braun Strowman

I mean, duh? Strowman starts fast with a leapfrog over Lashley and a clothesline, followed by a tag to Miz for the running corner clothesline. It's off to Cesaro but Ricochet comes in for the running flip dive to the floor. The standoff takes us to a break and we come back with Ricochet in trouble. Cesaro's uppercut sends him outside but an enziguri drops Lashley.

That's enough for the hot tag to Miz, who hits running knees and clotheslines in the corner. Joe gets kicked off the apron and a DDT plants Cesaro, setting up the YES Kicks to Lashley and Cesaro. Lashley gets up and plants Miz though, allowing the tag off to Joe. Strowman is knocked off the apron so he pulls Lashley to the floor, leaving Miz to take the Swing from Cesaro.

Miz is fine enough to kick Cesaro away though and it's off to Strowman for the running splashes in the corner. That's enough for Joe, who grabs the title and runs off. That leaves Lashley on the floor, with Miz backdropping Ricochet over the post to take him down. The Skull Crushing Finale hits Cesaro and the 630 gives Ricochet the pin at 13:40. The 630 hit Cesaro in the knee and he falls outside holding said knee.

**Rating:** C. I saw something on Twitter that was incredibly accurate: we're supposed to believe that these six men all want the US Title and that Baron Corbin is a better choice for a main eventer than any of them. That's very accurate, and yet these people are probably going to be stuck facing each other for months. It's not the worst move in the world, but it's not making me think much of Ricochet beating Cesaro or Strowman beating Lashley if those results got them to the same place.

Corbin confirms that he has not yet made his choice for guest referee. Sami comes up for a talk.

### Becky Lynch/Bayley vs. Lacey Evans/Alexa Bliss

Bayley is the hometown girl and Nikki Cross is here with Bliss. Bayley and Bliss start things off with Bayley driving her into the corner for some stomping. Bliss is right back with an arm twist to take her to the mat before it's off to Lacey vs. Becky. Lacey kicks her in the ribs and hands it off to Bliss, who has to be saved from the Bexploder. Bayley's sliding dropkick underneath the ropes barely hits Lacey as we take a break.

Back with Becky coming in off the hot tag but getting knocked down in a hurry. The slingshot Bronco Buster makes it worse but Becky sends Lacey outside for a baseball slide. A Bliss distraction lets Lacey get in a neckbreaker, setting up a backflip (from the mat) splash for two. Evans misses a springboard moonsault and that's enough for the tag off to Bayley. The Women's Right cuts Bayley off but Twisted Bliss hits knees. Evans knocks Bayley out again though and steals the pin at 10:49.

**Rating:** D+. You know, I had been thinking that this week's show was getting better because it didn't have the big eye rolling moment. But never fear, because WWE won't let you down. OF COURSE the hometown girl had to lose here because it was the only option they had. They couldn't have done a countout, a DQ, a brawl to a no contest, or done ANYTHING OTHER THAN HAVE BAYLEY GET PINNED IN HER HOMETOWN AGAIN. Have fun working in front of a dead crowd for the rest of the night people.

Sami comes in to see Shane McMahon and offers to audition as guest referee for Owens vs. Rollins tonight. Shane agrees on Sami being an

outside referee, which Sami agrees was Shane's idea.

Here's Paul Heyman to talk about how Brock Lesnar can beat up Seth Rollins every day and cash in any day. Three days ago, Rollins needed a chair to fend off Lesnar because he's a coward and a stupid coward at that. See now, Rollins is going to have to worry about Lesnar cashing in every week. It could be tonight, it could be next week or the week after that. Or Lesnar could be the guest referee at Stomping Grounds and take the title then. He'll do it one day and that's a spoiler because Lesnar is the Beast Slayer Slayer. Good for him. Now both of you go away.

The 24/7 people are STILL stuck in the elevator and Truth announces that he has a phone. Just no bars on his phone. Drake Maverick needs to get out of here because he's getting married in a few weeks. EC3: "And you didn't invite me???" Maverick: "You're my best man!" Maverick is accused of being Hornswoggle but what really matters is Heath Slater getting out because he has kids.

Here are the IIconics for a match against some hand selected opponents. They've found San Jose's finest but the two of them will never win the Women's Tag Team Titles. Just like the San Jose Sharks will never win the Stanley Cup.

#### IIconics vs. Lisa Lace/Aaliyah Mia

Non-title. The announcers crack jokes about the jobbers, with Graves having to cut himself off after a Los Conquistadors joke. Royce knees Mia in the ribs and the knee to the head is good for the pin at 1:19. And...that's it actually. Just a squash win.

Video on Shane McMahon beating Roman Reigns at Super ShowDown. Normally I would say I can't believe they did that, but I completely believe this one. After the match was over, Reigns said he was upset at the loss but was moving on to Drew McIntyre at Stomping Grounds.

They're still in the elevator.

And now, Shane McMahon's victory celebration. Drew McIntyre is with him and we have live bagpipe players to play him to the ring. Shane talks

about growing up in WWE and recognizing special things. That would apply to Roman Reigns, who is a first ballot WWE Hall of Famer. Reigns hits like a mule and has beaten the best WWE has to offer. However, Reigns does not have a victory over Shane because Shane beat him at Super ShowDown. Shane thanks Drew for his preparation but gets cut off by a BORING chant. Shane: "Get used to it. It's my celebration and I've got all night."

Drew calls Shane the Best in the World but he's the most dangerous man in the world. At Stomping Grounds, he's going to give Reigns the beating he deserves and beat him 1-2-3. Shane: "You're so intense dude." Shane drinks out of the Best in the World cup before bringing out the Revival. They can't drink though because they have a Tag Team Title match up next. They can join the party, provided they win some gold. Uh, the titles are silver Shane.

#### Tag Team Titles: Zack Ryder/Curt Hawkins vs. Revival vs. Usos

Ryder and Hawkins are defending and before the match, they talk about their backs being against the wall but it's not midnight yet. The Revival is knocked to the floor to start so the champs hit a neckbreaker for two on Jimmy. Dawson pulls Hawkins outside though and sends him into the barricade as we take a break.

Back with the Usos picking up the pace off a big dive to the floor. A high crossbody gives Jimmy two on Dawson but it's back to Ryder to take Dawson down. Jey tags himself in as everything breaks down, allowing Jey to hit the Superfly Splash on Ryder. Dawson tags himself in as well though and steals the pin and the titles at 8:19.

**Rating:** C-. I like the ending, though odds are this is just going to be a way to advance Reigns vs. McMahon even more, likely with another Usos vs. Revival match at Stomping Grounds. That being said, at least the Revival are somewhat more likely to be on TV than Hawkins and Ryder, who are the most useless Tag Team Champions in at least 64 days.

Rollins is ready for Lesnar, Corbin, Owens and Zayn.

They're still in the elevator and talk Maverick through his cold feet

about the wedding. They decide they're friends and start singing We Are Family. Then the other people outside the elevator open the door and the chase is on again. Some near falls ensue but Carmella drags R-Truth into the elevator and they get away.

Cole: "Bray Wyatt has invited R-Truth to the Firefly Fun House to stay safe." Oh...I'm not sure about this.

It's time for the Firefly Fun House. Bray posts a sign on the door saying Abandon All Hope Ye Who Exit Here as Mercy and Rambling Rabbit get in a fight. Bray threatens them with the Fiend and they shake in fear. Instead they'll let fate decide. He puts his hands on his head and things get creepy, but Rambling gets to speak his mind.

It's not cool to eat your friends but it might be time for him to expose what is really going on around here. Bray, now with a clown nose, picks him up and throws him down before CRUSHING RAMBLING WITH A MALLET. He then eats the entrails and declares them delicious. Today's show is sponsored by Rambling Rabbit's Delicious Rabbit Spread. I'll be over here talking my rabbit off a cliff.

Back in the arena and a wide shot of the arena shows a lot of empty seats on the hard camera sign.

### Seth Rollins vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title with Sami Zayn as outside referee. Sami checks Rollins, with the taped up ribs, for weapons and does a much faster check of Owens. They start slowly with Owens working on a wristlock and then an armbar. That's broken up with some spinning and flipping but Sami offers a distraction so a rollup gets a delayed two. Rollins goes to yell at Sami, allowing Owens to send him outside.

A DDT on the floor drops Rollins and we take a break. Back with Rollins jawbreaking his way to freedom from a chinlock. Owens finally wakes up and goes after the taped up ribs with a backbreaker. A dropkick and forearm to the back but the Sling Blade gets Rollins out of trouble. The ribs go out on a suplex attempt but Owens' Swanton hits knees.

An exchange of superkicks lets Rollins hit an enziguri but Sami comes in to check on Sami before the frog splash can loss. Rollins low bridges Owens to the floor and hits a suicide dive to take out both villains. The Stomp connects but Sami pulls the referee out at two. Sami takes his place so Seth grabs him by the shirt, earning a DQ at 12:01.

**Rating:** C. Just announce that Seth can lose the title via DQ at Stomping Grounds and get on with it. This was a preview for the title match that no one wants to see (again) and that's the perfect way to cap off a boring show like this one. Owens could have been just about anyone here, though at least they did some stuff with the ribs instead of looking like morons.

Post match Corbin comes in and grabs a chair but Rollins takes it away and chases him off. Sami gets chaired down with Rollins exploding as Cole talks about everything he's been through over the last few weeks. What has he been through? Beating up Lesnar, retaining the title, and then a match here? Rollins hits the Stomp on Sami to end the show with no announcement being made on the guest referee.

**Overall Rating:** D+. Actually, this was a good bit better than the previous few shows. It's a higher quality than just about anything they've done in the last few weeks and that's an improvement. Then you get to the problem: this show was really boring. We spent weeks setting up Super ShowDown and now we're getting ready for a very similar card which isn't interesting either. Between Shane McMahon's never ending reign and Baron Corbin: Yes He's Really A Main Eventer, what is interesting here?

The problem around here seems to be that we never get to the big show/match/story. Everything is always about waiting for the next one but, other than Wrestlemania, the next one never comes. Reigns beat McIntyre at Wrestlemania. So? He's still fighting him and gets to do it again at Stomping Grounds. Rollins defeated Lesnar at Wrestlemania. Well that might be continuing for the next eleven months. Becky is fighting Lacey again. The Revival got the Tag Team Titles back tonight.

It feels like we're either riding around in a circle and passing the same

things every few weeks or driving down the road with no idea where we're supposed to go. What is the big match on the horizon right now? Unless someone is suddenly brought up from the mid/upper midcard, Corbin and McMahon are the main event heels at the moment and while I expect Shane to get a title shot there, who does that leave for the other title? Maybe they're just overloaded with the amount of shows they have going on at the moment, but they need to figure something out and in a hurry because these last few months have been awful.

## Results

Lars Sullivan b. Lucha House Party – Swan Dive to Gran Metalik

Braun Strowman/Miz/Ricochet b. Cesaro/Bobby Lashley/Samoa Joe – 630 to Cesaro

Alexa Bliss/Lacey Evans b. Becky Lynch/Bayley – Woman's Right to Bayley

IIiconics b. Lisa Lace/Aaliyah Mia – Knee to Mia's head

Revival b. Usos and Zack Ryder/Curt Hawkins – Dawson pinned Ryder after a Superfly Splash from Jey Uso

Kevin Owens b. Seth Rollins via DQ when Rollins attacked the referee

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the paperback edition of KB's History Of In Your House (also available as an e-book) from Amazon. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2019/05/31/new-paperback-kbs-history-of-in-your-house/>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

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# **New Column: Hawkins And Ryder Didn't Read The Fine Print On The Lockbox Bro**

Looking at the difference between logical but boring and entertaining but Russo.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/kbs-review-hawkins-ryder-didnt-read-fine-print-lockbox-bro/>

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**Wrestlemania XXXV Preview:  
Raw Tag Team Titles:  
Revival(c) vs. Curt  
Hawkins/Zack Ryder**

Well of course this is here too.

If there's a match that felt more tacked on than this one, I can't remember the last time it happened. This match wasn't even announced on TV with the only mention being in a YouTube video. Hawkins and Ryder, who haven't won a match in years, are now getting a WrestleMania title match because WE MUST GET THE TITLES ON THE SHOW. I think you know where this is going.

Of course Revival drops the titles here and probably never get them back, because WWE doesn't get why they're unhappy with their spot in the company. This match is going to be about five minutes long and belongs on the Kickoff Show but the fans will lose their minds at the New York team winning the titles again. It would be perfectly fine on Monday Night Raw the next night, but that would mean just fifteen matches and that's not good enough.

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## 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.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the paperback edition of KB's Complete 1997 Monday Night Raw Reviews (also available as an e-book) from Amazon. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2018/11/20/new-paperback-complete-1997-monday-night-raw-reviews/>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

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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/>

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# 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 armbar. More armbaring 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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