

New Column: Wait Wait, Don't Tell Me

Another thing WWE does to get on my nerves.

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Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania XXX: Yes X 3

Wrestlemania XXX

Date: April 6, 2014

Location: Mercedes-Benz Superdome, New Orleans, Louisiana

Attendance: 75,167

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

I haven't watched this match since I saw it the day after seeing it live in the Superdome last year. This show received rave reviews at the time (including from me) and it's going to be interesting to see how it holds up a year later. Granted, given how this year's Wrestlemania has been built up, anything is going to seem like a classic. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Tag Team Titles: Usos vs. Real Americans vs. Los Matadores vs. Ryback/Curtis Axel

Under elimination rules and the Usos are defending as part of the TWO HOUR preshow. I remember when these things were thirty minutes but that's the age we live in I guess. These entrances show you how many different paths people can take. Cesaro is in the same place but with a title, Los Matadores are in the exact same spot, the Usos are in the same match minus the belts, Ryback is rebuilding and Curtis Axel got to confront Hulk Hogan on the go home Raw for Wrestlemania. That last part still

makes my head shake.

Axel and Jey get things going with the champ grabbing a headlock. The fans chant WE THE PEOPLE as JBL says Colter is the greatest war hero in Louisiana since Andrew "Stonewall" Jackson in 1814. History geeks around the world are shaking their heads (Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson was a Civil War general who wasn't born until 1824. JBL meant President Andrew "Not A Stonewall" Jackson) as Jey and Axel chop it out. The Real Americans bail to the floor to avoid a tag attempt and Axel drops Jey with a dropkick.

Off to Ryback for some hard shots but Diego tags himself in to go after Jey. The Usos make a tag and it's Jimmy vs. Diego but they stop for an OLE! Fernando tags himself in for a dropkick to go with his cousin's legsweep for two on Jimmy. Cesaro tags Jimmy for the biggest pop of the night so far (that might change) and hammers away before bringing in Swagger for a running clothesline. A springboard back elbow scores for Fernando and, amazingly enough, no one cares.

Both Real Americans are sent to the floor with Ryback and the Usos being thrown on top of them so Los Matadores can dive on everyone. Torito gets on the top but Axel grabs him from behind and throws him inside. Axel goes up but Los Matadores catch him in a double electric chair, allowing Torito to cross body him down onto the big pile for a crash. Back in and Swagger throws Diego off the top and puts on the Patriot Lock for the submission elimination.

Jimmy comes in and jack Jack's jaw but he gets caught in the Patriot Lock as well, only to have Jimmy roll out in a hurry. Axel tags himself in and stomps on the champ before it's off to Ryback for a delayed vertical. Axel and Ryback take turns on Jimmy in the corner until Ryback slaps on a chinlock. That goes nowhere until Jimmy fights up and makes the tag to Jey as house is cleaned. The running Umaga Attack staggers Axel but Jack breaks up a charge with a belly to belly.

Ryback plants Swagger with a spinebuster but Cesaro breaks up the Shell Shock. The Meat Hook is blocked by Swiss Death and the Neutralizer eliminates Ryback to send the fans into a frenzy. We're down to the Usos vs. the Real Americans, which is pretty much what everyone was expecting

in the first place. The Usos send them to the floor for a big double dive, leaving all four on the outside.

Back in and Cesaro gets two off a backbreaker to Jey but the Swing doesn't work. Instead it's off to Jimmy but Swagger comes in off a hot tag, only to have Jey hit a Whisper in the Wind for two. Swagger, with a bloody arm, blocks the running Umaga Attack with the Patriot Lock but Jimmy breaks it up with a superkick, only to walk into Swiss Death. Cesaro and Jimmy get tags but the Americans are whipped into each other, setting up a double superkick to Cesaro, followed by the double Superfly Splash to retain the titles.

Rating: B. This was the perfect way to open a show as the fans are now way into things. It's a pretty meaningless match, proven if nothing else by how similar this year's pre-show match will be. At the end of the day, that's the benefit of a multi-team tag match: let the fans get fired up and have a great time while not wasting anything of note. It's another reason I'm amazed by how little tag wrestling is used. You can use it for something like this but for some reason it's almost never done.

Post match Swagger and Cesaro go at it with Jack putting on the Patriot Lock as Colter loses his mind. They break it up but Cesaro Swings him to blow the roof off the place again.

The opening video is set in the streets of New Orleans with a jazz band playing. There's a great opening line of "A good time occurs when we forget what time it is, and man have we lost track of time." Wrestlers fill up the streets for something like a Mardi Gras parade with shots of famous Wrestlemania entrances, such as Shawn at XII and Heenan/Andre at III, superimposed over the streets. It's a REALLY cool video and fits the theme of how big a night this really is.

There's something so amazing looking about the sea of people in the Superdome to watch the show.

We open big with the special host Hulk Hogan, which is really the only way to open a major anniversary Wrestlemania. First line: "Well let me tell you something brother!" Oh yeah he's got us in the palm of his hand and he knows it. He was there at Wrestlemania I in Madison Square Garden

but now it's thirty years later at Wrestlemania XXX, right here in the Silverdome. I thought he flubbed that line on purpose and I still think it now. Think about it: how many times has that been referenced since, meaning people keep thinking of Hogan? There's nothing wrong with it if it's true but I'm almost certain he did it intentionally.

Hogan talks about how there are Wrestlemania moments and surprises, and you never know when one of those moments is going to happen.....CUE GLASS SHATTER! I've been to a lot of wrestling shows in my day and I've never freaked out more than hearing that sound. That was the moment when you knew you were in for something very, very special that night.

Austin hits all four corners and you can tell he's fired up to be here. He says it's good to be back here at the Silverdome and asks if the fans want to see him open a can on Hogan. They were sitting next to each other at the Hall of Fame and Austin has seen every thing Hogan has done over the years, from Wrestlemania I (WHAT!) through Wrestlemania X (which Hogan wasn't at). Austin appreciates all of Hogan's accomplishments in this business and shakes his hand. He talks about how tonight is about the current stars....and here's the Rock.

After taking his sweet time getting to the ring, Rock and Austin hug for old times' sake. Fans: "THIS IS AWESOME!" Rock says all five of his senses are on fire and FINALLY he has come back.....to the SUPERdome! He looks across the ring and sees the two biggest names in the history of the WWE and he's had the privilege of facing both of them at Wrestlemania.

They've had a huge impact on his career and on everyone's in the back as well. Tonight Cena is coming out here to fight for hustle, loyalty and respect, but he doesn't do that if no one told him to say his prayers and take his vitamins 29 years ago. Tonight someone is fighting against the Authority (pause for a YES chant) but that doesn't happen unless a bald headed SOB didn't have the guts to fight against the boss.

Rock wants to know why so many babies are born just nine months after Wrestlemania? They're Rock Babies! Rock gives us a great rhyme about the history of Wrestlemania with the final line saying that everyone else

would have lost to the three of them (look it up because just reading it doesn't do it justice). Everyone hits their catchphrases, beer is consumed and all three songs are played. JBL: "My life is complete."

Overall Rating: A+. Well that was....oh dang we've got three and a half hours to go. I had my money's worth right here already.

We get the AWESOME recap video for HHH vs. Daniel Bryan. If there's one thing this show got right (and there are about a hundred of them), it's the big recap videos. This is set to Monster by Imagine Dragons and shows Bryan going from an NXT rookie up to the US Champion and then into the main event.

At Summerslam 2013, Bryan pinned John Cena completely clean but guest referee HHH knocked him out so Orton could cash in Money in the Bank. HHH didn't want Bryan as the face of WWE because he didn't fit the mold, but Bryan spent the next several months trying to prove himself and get the title back. Eventually Bryan wanted a match with HHH but couldn't get the boss to agree. With nothing else left, Bryan took Raw hostage and forced HHH to agree to let them have a match here at Wrestlemania. The winner is put into the World Title match main event.

Stephanie, showing so much leg that Stacy Keibler would tell her to tone it down, introduces HHH. Naturally HHH has a golden throne with three good looking women (played by NXT girls Charlotte, Sasha Banks and Alexa Bliss) to take off his mask and armor. To be fair, this is pretty cool.

HHH vs. Daniel Bryan

Winner goes to the main event title match. For some reason, Bryan's entrance is never actually announced, likely due to not being able to hear the announcer over the INSANE YES chants. Cole says this is a mismatch on paper, even though Bryan is a multiple time World Champion coming in. HHH would be the heavy favorite but it's not that big. Bryan is coming in with a bad shoulder after HHH attacked it a few weeks back on Raw. Stephanie kisses HHH for an awesome heel moment.

We start with a long staredown as the fans are about 300% behind Bryan. HHH's offer of a handshake is kicked away and Bryan gets a quick rollup

for two. That would be one heck of a way to open the show. The threat of a big kick sends HHH outside but he comes back in to go after the arm. Bryan flips out and hits a dropkick to the ribs before taking him down with a headlock. Stephanie: "COME ON BABY!" They hit the mat for a nice technical sequence until HHH takes him into the corner and wraps the bad arm around the ropes.

Bryan escapes an attempt at sending his arm into the post before hitting a running tornado DDT off the apron to the floor. As HHH gets up, Bryan dives off the top for a big flip dive and Stephanie is losing it. She shouts that Bryan is a B+ at best as HHH crotches him on the top, followed by a running forearm to put Bryan on the floor. It's time for the announcer's table but Bryan fights out of the Pedigree attempt, only to have HHH grab the arm and drive it into the table.

Back in again and HHH puts on an armbar as JBL shouts about how brilliant this is. He really needs to figure out proper tone. Bryan is able to low bridge HHH to the floor but a right hand stops the Flying Goat. Something like a belly to back suplex on the apron drops Bryan's arm on the apron again and he has to beat the count back in. HHH channels his inner Backlund for a crossface chicken wing before putting on a regular Crossface to make Benoit scream even more.

Bryan finally makes the rope and nails a running forearm to knock some of the smile off of Stephanie's face. The moonsault out of the corner doesn't work but Bryan uses a standing switch for some rolling Germans for rolling near falls. HHH reverses back into another chicken wing attempt before settling for a tiger suplex. They head up top for a superplex but Bryan reverses into a sunset bomb to put both guys down. Bryan starts shaking his head as he gets up for the running dropkicks in the corner, only to have HHH nail a running clothesline to stop the third. Stephanie LOSES IT on the floor in celebration.

The Pedigree is countered into a jackknife for two before the big kick knocks HHH silly. Back to the Crossface but HHH can only grab across Bryan's forehead. Bryan rolls away but gets caught in the middle of the ring ala the ending of Wrestlemania XX. Another roll lets Bryan counter into the YES Lock but again the grip isn't perfect. HHH finally makes the

ropes and you can see Stephanie breathe a sigh of relief. She's gone from all confident to having to sweat over this match.

HHH bails to the floor but Bryan gets up for two straight Flying Goats, followed by a series of kicks to the chest as they hit another gear. The missile dropkick puts HHH down but Daniel lands on his shoulder. He nips up though and the fans are right back into it. JBL is starting to panic as well as Bryan busts out the YES Kicks. The big one knocks HHH down but he kicks out at two. This is reaching epic.

Bryan sets up the running knee but it's countered into a spinebuster, followed by the Pedigree for two, sending Stephanie into shock. HHH puts him in the corner for more right hands but is smart enough to break at four. Another Pedigree attempt is countered into a backdrop for two but HHH doesn't let go of the grip. Bryan won't get up so HHH drives knees (yes, knees from HHH) to the side of the head. This time Bryan rolls out and kicks the boss in the head, only to miss a second attempt. HHH tries a belly to back but Bryan flips out and hits the running knee for the huge upset pin, sending him to the main event.

Rating: A. This was a great match with the big key of Bryan winning clean. HHH wrestled a smart match and did everything he should have, including the arm work and hitting the Pedigree but Bryan flat out beat him. This match was a Match of the Year contender all year and it's easy to see why. Really good stuff here and HHH continues to prove why he's still worth putting in the ring a few times a year.

Post match Stephanie gets in for a real challenge. She slaps Bryan in the face, allowing Stephanie to get a chair and crush Bryan's shoulder against the post. Oh man they really did stack the deck against him. Stephanie: "That's what happens when you play with the Game." Dang she's good at being evil.

New Age Outlaws/Kane vs. Shield

There isn't much to this one. Kane blamed Jerry Lawler for letting Bryan's fans in for the Occupy Raw incident but Shield wouldn't attack him. The Outlaws were added because who else was going to be put in the spot? Road Dogg's speech is cut off by Shield's intro, complete with half

masks which didn't last long. This was right before Shield turned face, even though they're insanely popular and have practically been good guys for a few weeks now. One last note before we get to the massacre: if you've never heard it, Kane's pyro is one of the loudest things you'll ever hear live.

Kane punches Ambrose into the corner to start but the US Champion (remember that?) fights back and nails a clothesline. Off to Reigns to run over Gunn before taking down Dogg and Kane for good measure. Reigns even tells the Outlaws to suck it. The Apron Kick (he hasn't done that in a while) hits both Outlaws but Kane blocks the Superman Punch. That earns him a springboard knee from Rollins and Dean breaks up the Fameasser.

The Superman Punch (which the camera misses) lays out Gunn and Billy is surrounded. He gets outside with Dogg, only to take a double dive from Ambrose and Rollins. All three villains get speared (the Outlaws get theirs at the same time) and a double Triple Bomb to the Outlaws is enough for the pin. Total and complete dominance here as you can feel the Shield's mega face push coming imminently.

Jim Duggan and Sgt. Slaughter are playing with toys in the back with EVIL Danny Davis counting the pin. Why Duggan isn't wearing a shirt isn't clear. Duggan wants another opponent so here's Ricky Steamboat. They can't play though because someone has bought the toys. Guess who that would be. On a personal note, other than Davis, I've met every person in this segment in the last year. Ron Simmons comes in for the required cameo.

Andre the Giant Memorial Battle Royal

Big Show, Cesaro, Xavier Woods, Sin Cara, Sheamus, Alberto Del Rio, Dolph Ziggler, Yoshi Tatsu, Brad Maddox, Brodus Clay, Great Khali, Zack Ryder, Kofi Kingston, Rey Mysterio, Cody Rhodes, Goldust, Darren Young, Drew McIntyre, Jinder Mahal, Heath Slater, Tyson Kidd, R-Truth, Fandango, Big E., David Otunga, Justin Gabriel, Damien Sandow, Santino Marella, Miz, Titus O'Neil, Mark Henry

In a line I can't take credit for, this should be the Andre Rousimoff Memorial Battle Royal: the ARMBAR. There are thirty one people in this

and eight of them are out of the company less than a year later. I'll give them credit for this: they snuck everyone but Big Show and Sheamus into the ring during the legends' segment and I didn't notice a thing.

Kidd goes to the apron to start and flips onto a pile of people. You can't tell what's going on to start like in most battle royals. Tatsu is out first and Cody and Kofi get in a kick off as they're hanging from the ropes. Maddox, GM of Raw at the time, is out next and Khali knocks Brodus out with a chop. A few guys dump Khali a few seconds later and you can actually see the mat now. There goes Ryder at 3MB's hands and Young gets the same treatment.

Mark Henry actually sells a punch from Slater before knocking out McIntyre and Mahal. Henry makes it a matched 3MB set by throwing Heath out but Big Show gets rid of him a few seconds later. The ring is down to a manageable number now and it's nowhere near as crowded. Show throws Titus out next but it's Cobra time. Miz tries to block it but with an assist from Xavier Woods of all people, Miz is knocked to the floor. Del Rio kicks Santino out and Sandow dumps Woods. Racist.

Cody's Disaster Kick nails Sandow and Goldust low bridges him to the floor. Intercontinental Champion Big E. powerbombs Gabriel out and throws Otunga to the floor for good measure. Fandango and Big E. get in a fight on the apron and Fandango actually kicks him out. Your champion ladies and gentlemen. The fans start Fandangoing but stop as Sheamus hits the thirty forearms to the chest and shoves the dancer out.

Show throws Truth out and we're down to Big Show, Mysterio, Sin Cara, Del Rio, Kidd, Goldust, Cesaro, Sheamus, Ziggler, Kingston and Rhodes. Sin Cara goes out off camera to get us down to ten and Del Rio enziguris Kidd off the top to make it nine. Another enziguri drops Goldust and a shove gets rid of the other Rhodes brother. Del Rio takes a 619 and Cesaro gets the same treatment, only to uppercut Rey to the floor. Ziggler gets an uppercut of his own in the middle of the ring and everyone is down.

It's Kofi up first and charging at Cesaro, who launches him over the post and down to the floor. You know it's not that simple though as Kofi's feet land on the steps and he gets back in for a HUGE top rope cross

body. I paused the video to type a bit with Kofi in the air and I couldn't believe how high he got on that thing. Kofi kicks everyone, including Big Show, down but he gets caught in the Swing that everyone had wanted to see. There's something hilarious about those braids flying around.

The Swing goes on for a ridiculous thirty seconds but Cesaro walks into a chokeslam. A Brogue Kick drops Big Show and another puts Kingston out. Ziggler DDTs Sheamus but gets superkicked to the floor but Del Rio, drawing some awesome heat. The final four are Del Rio, Big Show, Sheamus and Cesaro. There's the cross armbreaker to Sheamus, which JBL points out as a waste of time.

Sheamus powers up but both guys fall to the floor to get us down to two. You know who the fans are behind I'm assuming. Cesaro starts firing off uppercuts and clotheslines but dives into a big chop. Show loads him up but Cesaro slips down the back (ala Rock at the 2000 Royal Rumble) and casually picks him up (not like Rock at the 2000 Royal Rumble) for a slam to the floor and the win.

Rating: C+. This was a lot more fun than I was expecting and one of the more entertaining battle royals I've seen in a long time. Cesaro winning should have meant a big push but it wound up going nowhere due to the incompetence of this company. Good stuff here but they would have been better off with twenty like they're doing for the second version. That slam was freaking cool too.

Cesaro celebrates with his chest high trophy.

The next awesome recap video shows us Cena vs. Wyatt, which is based around the idea of making Cena destroy his legacy...whatever that means. Wyatt thinks Cena is lying when he talks about hustle, loyalty and respect and seemingly just wants to destroy Cena for fun. He's a weird guy like that.

John Cena vs. Bray Wyatt

Wyatt's song is played live with a bunch of burning barrels, a woman dancing like she's possessed and what looks like a bunch of junk set up

as an altar. This was CHILLING live and an absolutely amazing visual. Bray has Harper and Rowan with him here. This was before Rowan got pushed by having Big Show knock him out 19 times in a row. The fireflies are starting to become a thing at this point but it's not there yet. Cena doesn't have any kind of a special entrance, but how could he follow Bray's anyway? For some reason Roberts doesn't even announce him until he's in the ring.

Bray drops to his knees and offers Cena a free shot to finish him early but Cena tells him to get up and fight. They finally get going with Cena headlocking him to the mat as JBL has no idea what he just saw. Back up and Bray hammers him into the corner, shouting that Cena doesn't want to fight him. A headbutt drops Cena as Bray asks if this is the one the people call hero.

Bray sends him across the ring but Cena just explodes with a running clothesline. A fired up Cena takes him into the corner, only to have Wyatt laugh as Cena stomps away. John gets creative (or is it basic?) with a running big boot. The Family stares at Cena and Bray shouts that John is a monster before hitting the release suplex slam (cool move). We hit the sleeper but it's quickly just a regular chinlock.

Cena fights back and starts his finishing sequence but the Shuffle is blocked by Bray's spider walk. Cena's reaction is perfect as he falls down and gets distracted by Rowan, allowing Bray to hit a chokeslam (meant to be a Rock Bottom but it's the same move for all intents and purposes) for two. It's time for Bray to conduct the crowd but the delay lets Cena get two off a jumping tornado DDT.

Cena's top rope Fameasser is caught in the Batista neck breaking powerbomb and control switches again. Another finishing sequence has Bray in trouble but he counters the AA into a gutbuster for two. A DDT onto the apron drops Cena and his face just looks stunned. Back in and Bray's superplex attempt is countered but Cena, ever the rocket scientist, dives on the Family for no apparent reason. They weren't doing much and they'll just be ticked off now, but Cena is Cena and unquestionable right?

The wild eyed Bray sends Cena into the steps and says he's figured out

what to do. Cena kicks the steps out of his hands and picks them up instead, only to throw them down instead of giving in to the demons. Back in and Bray runs him over, says he has the whole world in his hand, but misses the backplash. AA gets two and why are people always shocked by that? If you don't see two of those it's not a major match.

Rowan offers a distraction so Harper can get in a cheap shot to give his boss two. It's about time they did something in this match. Cena goes out after Harper and spears him through the barricade, which seems to be exactly what Bray wanted. Sister Abigail is countered into the STF but the rope is quickly grabbed. Now Sister Abigail connects for two and Bray is.....happy? Scared? Shocked? You never really can tell with him.

Bray goes out and rips the top off the Spanish table. Ricardo Rodriguez is on Spanish commentary and tells him to go after the French table in a funny moment. Instead Bray gets a chair and kicks it over to Cena before kneeling in the middle of the ring. He tells Cena to finish this but Cena blasts Rowan instead, setting up Sister Abigail. The kiss is too much though and the second AA is enough to pin Bray.

Rating: C+. It's a good enough match, but what the heck was the point in having Bray lose here? The entire thing was built up as Bray being a monster and he loses the big match? Now of course this didn't end Bray's run, but it was questionable then and it doesn't get any better a year later. Cena really didn't need the win and the whole legacy thing still doesn't make a lot of sense. I don't get how Bray pinning him ended his legacy, so it seemed to be another way of saying "Hey Cena, turn heel already!" It's not explained why hitting Rowan is different than hitting Bray but this story never made the most sense in the first place.

Hall of Fame video from last night. This package aired about a million times on Sunday and Monday, to the point where I memorized half the lines. Undertaker coming out with the urn during Bearer's induction was perfect. Mr. T.'s speech on the other hand was so beyond perfect that I don't have the words to describe it. Seeing Scott Hall and Jake Roberts up there is one of the most amazing things I've ever seen and proof that Diamond Dally Page is a saint.

Here's the class of 2015 live: Jake Roberts, Mr. T., Paul Bearer, Carlos Colon, Lita (you all still would and you know it), Razor Ramon and the Ultimate Warrior, who gets a full musical entrance. The interesting thing here is that the camera guys ran backwards in case he ran to the ring but instead he just walked out after everyone else had been standing there. Knowing what happened to him less than two days later still makes my head spin. This is one of the better classes ever as it's hard to argue against any of them going in, which isn't always the case.

Medics check on Bryan's arm.

We recap the Streak match. The video about the Streak being the lone constant over the last twenty three years is really odd when you think about it as nothing else has anywhere near that lifespan. Can any man break the streak? Heyman: "Obviously the answer to this question is no. But what about a beast?" That's pretty much all you need to know. Heyman caps it off with "Eat, sleep, conquer, repeat. Eat, sleep, conquer, repeat. Eat, sleep, conquer, repeat. Eat, sleep, conquer, repeat. Eat, sleep, conquer the Streak."

Brock Lesnar vs. The Undertaker

Undertaker's theme this year is a coffin with the name of each victim, all of which are lit on fire. The latest victim is covered by smoke as luck would have it. Even Brock looks a bit shaken up by all this, but that might be due to his coffin opening up. Long staredown to start until Undertaker fires off right hands. That earns him a belly to belly overhead suplex and a clothesline to send him outside because Brock is awesome like that.

Undertaker comes back with a Stunner over the top and it's time for more punching, followed by bending Brock's arm around the rope. The arm goes into the post as well but Brock punches Old School down. That's it for Undertaker's control though as he fights back and takes it to the floor, setting up the apron legdrop. It's been about 90% Undertaker so far. The chokeslam and F5 are both escaped but Brock avoids the running boot in the corner.

It's time to go after the old man's leg and the last thing you want to give Brock is a target. Or raw meat. Or a belt that a Samoan wants to

take from him because it turns into a stupid looking tug of war. Brock slowly hammers him down and pounds away with right hands and knees in the corner. Now they head outside for another shot to Undertaker's knee before he's whipped hard into the barricade. Back in and Brock keeps hammering away as the fans are waiting on the big comeback before they hit the main event style.

Now Brock just starts punching him a lot until Undertaker catches him with the running DDT (a popular counter tonight). The running clothesline in the corner (what leg injury?) sets up Snake Eyes and the running boot, followed by a legdrop for two. The chokeslam (Heyman: "HE'S POISED!") gets two and Undertaker looks deflated. Brock counters the tombstone into the F5 (way bigger reaction than the chokeslam) for two.

Lesnar slows things down and gets pulled into a surprise Hell's Gate. That's fine with Brock who lifts him up into a powerbomb to break the hold. Power like that is just scary and Brock is terrifying enough on his own. Undertaker throws it on again but Brock counters it exactly the same way. Why change what works? It's Brock's turn for a submission as he puts on the Kimura to make Undertaker scream. We get MMA Taker as he reverses into one of his own but Brock makes it to the ropes.

Brock fires off some shoulders in the corner but Undertaker gets a boot up. We go Old School but Undertaker falls into the F5 for two. Now it's Brock's turn to be shocked for a change. Two German suplexes rattle Undertaker again and Heyman shouts that Brock is going to make it 21-1. Brock hammers away in the corner but climbs to the middle rope, setting up something called a Last Ride but more like a weak spinebuster.

Undertaker is just spent at this point so he loads up the tombstone. Brock doesn't quite get planted though as you can see St. Louis in the gap between his head and the mat, meaning the kickout doesn't have much of an impact. There's the sit up and another tombstone, but Brock reverses and muscles Undertaker into the third F5 for the pin to conquer the Streak.

Rating: D+. This is hard to watch for multiple reasons. First and foremost, the Streak ended. I'm not the biggest Undertaker fan, but

knowing what was coming actually made this hard to sit through. I mean.....the Streak just ended. It's like telling a kid there's no Santa Claus: you know it has to happen someday but you don't want to ever actually do it.

The other reason this was hard to watch is the match pretty much sucked. Undertaker apparently had a concussion early in the match and barely remembers a lot of what happened here. That can cause some severe problems, but I can't imagine that the match would have been much better had Undertaker been healthy throughout. At the end of the day, the guy is 49 years old and barely wrestles once a year. You can't expect him to be able to do it every single year.

That brings me to my last point: how can you really expect him to win here? Brock is a monster and wrestles a lot more often than Undertaker, in addition to being thirteen years younger. How can you reasonably believe that Undertaker can win? That's part of the thing that kills the fans here: the idea of the Undertaker is that one night a year, he's immortal. This match proved that he was human and that's a hard thing to admit after all those years of seeing him as a superhero. Lesnar has been a monster since, and this really is the start of something special. Granted no one knew that at the time.

Anyway, Heyman's reaction is in perfect as even he's stunned at what he just saw because all his hyperbole is proven correct. They leave as the audience is stunned. Undertaker finally sits up, albeit very slowly, and gets the big hero's sendoff. He hasn't been seen since and I'm not sure I want to see him in the ring again at this point. The reaction is even more saddening as the fans are just done at this point. I've heard the only thing to compare this to is Koloff beating Sannmartino and it's hard to disagree with that.

On top of that, Undertaker collapsed as soon as he went through the curtain and was sent to the hospital. Vince himself went with him and missed the end of the show. That's scary stuff but how lucky were they that he didn't collapse on the stage in front of all the thousands of people?

Wrestlemania XXXI ad.

Divas Title: Vickie Guerrero Divas Invitational

AJ Lee, Naomi, Aksana, Alicia Fox, Brie Bella, Cameron, Emma, Eva Marie, Layla, Natalya, Nikki Bella, Rosa Mendes, Summer Rae, Tamina Snuka

All fourteen are in at once, one fall to a finish and AJ (only one with an entrance as the others came out during the XXXI video) is defending. Vickie gets in an evil laugh before we get going. AJ and her bodyguard Tamina are sent into the middle of the circle and the brawl is on. Something tells me I won't be able to keep track of all this.

The Bellas "hit" a horrible gutbuster on Layla before Natalya tries a triple Sharpshooter on Alicia, Summer and Rosa at the same time. A quadruple suplex gets a quadruple near fall as Cameron's top has broken. That earns her an Emma Lock as this is a total mess. We hit the parade of finishers until only the Bellas are left.

Instead of fighting, they hit an admittedly sweet looking double dive to take everyone out. It's amazing how much easier they are to sit through when they don't talk. They slug it out inside and the Rack Attack gets two on Brie. Back in for a parade of secondary finishers until Naomi breaks up the Superfly Splash by shoving Tamina to the floor. Natalya powerbombs Aksana to send Naomi down in a Tower of Doom, leaving AJ to hook the Black Widow on Naomi to retain.

Rating: D. Well what else were you expecting? There's almost no way to make a huge mess like this work, especially when so many of the girls have no business inside a wrestling ring. AJ would go on to lose the title the next night to a debuting Paige, which I somehow called about two weeks out. That's probably a lot better than having her debut here and win as part of this disaster, but it's rather telling that the same girls are still on top of the division a year later.

Gene Okerlund interviews Hulk Hogan (that needed to happen tonight) when Roddy Piper and Paul Orndorff come in. Piper reluctantly tells Hogan he's doing a good job tonight but Paul says he's tired of hearing about getting pinned at the first Wrestlemania. The losers want to fight now

and here's Mr. T. for the big staredown. Pat Patterson just happens to be here in a referee shirt but they all agree to bury the hatchet and have the most awkward handshakes in years.

Bruno Sammartino, Dusty Rhodes, Harley Race, Bob Backlund and Bret Hart (by far the loudest reaction) are at ringside.

WWE World Title: Randy Orton vs. Batista vs. Daniel Bryan

Rev Theory (remember them?) play Orton to the ring. Orton is defending of course and Batista won the Royal Rumble to get here. Bryan can barely move that left shoulder and has to do a one armed YES point. After the big match intros, Bryan hits a quick running dropkick to the champion followed by the YES Kicks. Orton calmly goes to the arm and stomps away but Batista takes Randy down.

The Orton backbreaker drops Batista and Bryan gets knocked down to the floor. Batista and Orton head over to the announcers' tables before Batista whips him into the barricade. Orton backdrops out of a Batista Bomb to send Batista into the steps before going after Bryan again. The champ starts going back and forth to send both challengers into the barricade before taking Batista back inside for two.

The knee drop gets two more as the fans chant for Bryan. That's exactly what they get as well with a double missile dropkick putting down the shaved headed guys. Daniel kicks away at both of them but Orton grabs in him a high collar suplex for two. Big Dave kicks Orton down and stomps on Bryan in the corner to get the fans booing all over again. That's fine with Daniel as he hits running dropkicks to both guys in the corner. That woke them up again and so did the top rope hurricanrana for two on Orton.

Batista comes back with a suplex to send Bryan outside but he goes up top for no logical reason other than to allow Orton to superplex him back down. Daniel adds a Swan Dive and puts Orton in the YES Lock but here are HHH and Stephanie to pull out the referee. Crooked referee Scott Armstrong comes in to count two off the Batista Bomb on Bryan. Bryan sends a charging Batista into the post and kicks Armstrong in the head before hitting a FLYING GOAT onto the Authority, including Stephanie. Just fire him right now. Plant a tie on him or something.

HHH is livid and pulls out the sledgehammer but Bryan takes it away and knocks HHH to the floor. Orton comes back in and cleans house, joining forces with Batista to beat Bryan up even more. They take the tape off his shoulder as the Authority is taken out, much to JBL's chagrin. The announcers' table is loaded up with Orton setting the steps next to it, drawing a CM Punk chant for the save. Instead they get a Batista Bomb into a jumping neckbreaker (called an RKO). The scary part here is that Orton landed back first on a monitor and took a long time to get up.

Batista is the only man left standing and it's Lawler with the voice of common sense: "Throw one of them in the ring and cover them!" The old guys still get it. Medics come out to help Bryan as JBL joins Lawler's school of thinking: "COVER BRYAN ALREADY!" Orton and Batista brawl in a heatless segment as people don't accept that Bryan is done yet. The Elevated DDT off the apron gets a good gasp from the crowd, but Bryan getting off the stretcher gets a better reaction.

Orton immediately sends Bryan into the steps before throwing him back inside. Again he won't cover though, allowing Batista to come back in and take the champ down. There's the YES Lock to Batista but Orton is right back up for the save. Daniel is knocked to the floor by Batista's spear and the RKO gets a VERY close two on Dave to get the fans back into it.

Another RKO is loaded up but Bryan comes back in with the running knee. Batista throws Bryan down but Orton kicks out at two. Another Batista Bomb puts Orton down but Bryan comes back in with the running knee and the YES Lock FINALLY makes Bryan champion, sending New Orleans into a frenzy. Cole dubs it the Miracle on Bourbon Street in a call I really like.

Rating: B. This needed to be five minutes shorter but my goodness they cranked up the emotions here. There was no other possible ending to this though and the fans ate up every single bit of it. The near falls on the finishers were great and I was totally buying into them as potential endings. Not a great match but exactly the way the show should have ended.

Confetti falls (and I got a piece which I still have) and a huge celebration finally ends the show.

Overall Rating: A-. Time has brought this show back down to earth a bit but it's still incredibly fun. This was everything the fans could have wanted from Bryan (though not quite everything from Undertaker vs. Lesnar) and an incredibly emotional show. The wrestling here ranges from very good to mixed but the emotion is off the charts. That's what matters at the end of the day and it was the perfect story being told. The show holds up almost completely and it's still great and worth checking out. Bryan may never get back to the top again, but they can never take this night away from him and that's not the worst prize.

Ratings Comparison

Usos vs. Real Americans vs. Los Matadores vs. Ryback/Curtis Axel

Original: B

Redo: B

HHH vs. Daniel Bryan

Original: A

Redo: A

Shield vs. Kane/New Age Outlaws

Original: N/A

Redo: N/A

Andre the Giant Memorial Battle Royal

Original: C+

Redo: C+

Bray Wyatt vs. John Cena

Original: B

Redo: C+

Brock Lesnar vs. Undertaker

Original: C+

Redo: D+

Vickie Guerrero Divas Invitational

Original: D+

Redo: D

Daniel Bryan vs. Batista vs. Randy Orton

Original: A-

Redo: B

Overall Rating

Original: A+

Redo: A-

The main event was too high but the show is still an instant classic.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2014/04/07/wrestlemania-xxx-oh-yeah-i-went-there/>

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of the History of the Intercontinental Title at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B01D4D3EG0>

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Wrestlemania Count-Up – Wrestlemania XXVIII: Where Do You Go From Here?

Wrestlemania XXVIII

Date: April 1, 2012

Location: Sun Life Stadium, Miami, Florida

Attendance: 78,363

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

We wrap things up with this and a main event which no one ever thought we would see: John Cena vs. The Rock. This is one of if not the only match ever that I had to see. I didn't know if it would be good or bad, but I needed to see it. The match was announced the night after the last Wrestlemania and was literally built for a year. On the undercard we have Punk vs. Jericho for the world title, Sheamus vs. Bryan for the other title and HHH vs. Undertaker inside the Cell. When that is a DISTANT second match, you know you've got something huge. Let's get to it.

Lillian Garcia sings America the Beautiful.

The opening video is about how Cena and Rock's lives have both built up to this moment and how this match is Once In A Lifetime. Oh and HHH vs. Undertaker is happening too.

Smackdown World Title: Sheamus vs. Daniel Bryan

Sheamus won the Rumble to earn this show. We're pre-beard for Bryan here which is weird to see anymore. The bell rings, Bryan kisses his girlfriend AJ, turns around into a Brogue Kick and we have a new champion in 18 seconds. That number would haunt Bryan for at least six months.

Team Johnny is fired up for the twelve man tag for later tonight. Miz brags about being in the main event last year but it's Otunga who gets them to be quiet for a pep talk from Johnny Ace.

Win tickets to Wrestlemania 29!

Kane vs. Randy Orton

Kane had recently put the mask back on again and went after Orton to prove that he's still evil because last summer he lost a street fight to Orton and then shook his hand. Why is it Orton who gets these months and years long backstories? The opener didn't quite have its intended effect as the fans are chanting for Daniel Bryan. Kane takes over to start but the chokeslam is broken up by kicks to the ribs. Orton gets him down and stomps away but Kane reverses the Elevated DDT (called a bulldog by Cole) and takes over with a big boot.

Kane's low dropkick gets a near fall and it's off to a chinlock. Back up and they slug it out with Randy taking over. Kane will have none of that though and clotheslines Randy down for two. The side slam gets two more and it's back to the chinlock. A swinging neckbreaker out of nowhere puts Kane down but the monster hits a vertical suplex for another two count. Off to chinlock #3 as the match slows down again.

Orton backflips out of another side slam and his backbreaker puts Kane down for a bit. There's the powerslam and Orton is getting fired up. Kane goes shoulder first into the post and now the Elevated DDT hits (again called a bulldog by Cole). The RKO is countered into a big boot for two more for Kane but the top rope clothesline is blocked by a dropkick. Orton loads up the Punt but walks into a chokeslam for a close two. Another RKO is countered and Kane goes to the middle rope. Orton tries a superplex but Kane shrugs him off and hits a middle rope chokeslam for the upset win.

Rating: B-. I had always wanted to see these two have a match and I was pleased when I finally saw it. Kane can have a good match on a big stage when he needs to and that's what he did here. Orton is bulletproof so it's not like losing here means anything of note. This was a nice surprise and a good match with a big ending.

Santino is with Mick Foley in a sailor hat and a guy from the fishing show Deadliest Catch. They're eating crabs and Foley makes bad pirate jokes. Socko and Cobra make appearances, as does Ron Simmons and I think you can get the joke from here.

Some National Guard people are here.

Intercontinental Title: Cody Rhodes vs. Big Show

Cody is defending and the idea here is that Big Show has never had a good Wrestlemania moment. You know, because winning a meaningless midcard title in 2012 is more important than main eventing the show in possibly the biggest and best year the company has ever had. During the entrance we get some "highlights" from Show's career. Naturally the pin in the 8 man tag last year is never mentioned at all.

Cody runs to the floor to start but Show easily throws him back into the ring. There's a beal across the ring and a hard chop in the corner, followed by a Stink Face for good measure. Cody comes back with some dropkicks to the knee and pounds away as much as he can. Rhodes pounds on Show's back a bit and is LAUNCHED off on the kickout. The champion works on the knee a bit with a standing leg lock and a DDT to take it down. After some stomps to Show's head, he shoves Cody away with ease but gets caught by the Disaster Kick. A second is countered with a spear though and the WMD makes Show the champion.

Rating: D+. What were you expecting here? At the end of the day, Cody has nothing that was going to keep Show down and with all the building up of the match about Show's past embarrassments, there was only one way this could end. That and it's only about five minutes so it didn't have enough time to suck or anything. Not great but it was exactly what it was expect to be.

Video on what it means to be a Diva.

We recap the Divas tag. Kelly Kelly had been a guest on Extra with Maria Menunos when Eve and Beth came in and claimed they should be the guests. A tag match was made.

Eve Torres/Beth Phoenix vs. Maria Menunos/Kelly Kelly

Beth has...wings on her head? Kelly and the freshly heel Eve start things off with Kelly doing her screaming hurricanrana to take over. A handspring elbow hits Eve's knee in the corner but Kelly breaks up a moonsault and knocks Eve into the Tree of Woe. Off to Maria for a double Stink Face, resulting in the famous stain on the back of Maria's tights from Eve's makeup.

Since Maria isn't a wrestler, the beatdown on her begins quickly with Eve wrapping her up in a body vice. Off to Beth (in gold tonight) for a side bearhug as the match slows WAY down. Back to Eve for some quick double teaming but she takes too long with the shaky moonsault. It's back to Kelly as things break down a bit. A top rope seated senton gets two on Beth and the Glam Slam is countered into a bulldog. Back to Maria who goes...up. After getting pulled down, Kelly breaks up a gorilla press and a rollup is enough for Maria to pin Beth.

Rating: D+. Four good looking women in tight outfits and one of them anchors a national television show. Do you really need a further explanation as to why this happened? The interesting note: of these four, Maria is the only one involved with Wrestlemania 29 and that's as a Hall of Fame inductor.

Shawn Michaels, the guest referee inside the Cell, says either the Undertaker or HHH are done tonight.

New attendance record. As always.

Jim Ross comes out to do commentary for the Cell match.

HHH vs. Undertaker

This is inside Hell in a Cell with Shawn Michaels as guest referee. Undertaker basically became Batman in his cave and wanted a rematch to prove he could beat HHH. As in like he already did. This is also billed as End of an Era, but what era that was never actually became clear. The announcement of the Cell was perfect as HHH said he wanted one more thing, which was presumed to be Streak vs. career. It's a good lesson in

letting the feud set the stipulations, not the calendar. Undertaker debuts his new mohawk here to a gasp from the crowd. The Cell is lowered to Memory Remains by Metallica.

Taker pounds away into the corner to start with "carcinogenic" right hands according to JR. HHH pounds away as well but gets thrown out to the floor soon thereafter. HHH is sent into the Cell a few times and a backdrop puts him down on the floor again. Taker sends him into the steel over and over as it's one sided so far. Now it's the steps instead of the Cell with Taker in full control. Back in and a facebuster is no sold and down goes HHH again.

Old School connects and we head back outside again. Shawn isn't a factor yet. The steps go upside HHH's head and set up the apron legdrop. Back in and HHH hits a DDT, which somehow makes us completely even. The steps are in the ring now so HHH slams Taker's head into them a few times. A Pedigree onto the steps is blocked with a backdrop but HHH comes back with a spinebuster onto the steps, only to get caught in the Hell's Gate. In an impressive power display, HHH lifts Taker up into a powerbomb to break the hold and get two as well.

HHH throws in a pair of chairs and cracks one of them over Taker's back. Taker is whipped into the steps in the corner before they're sent to the outside. JR says there are no laws in the Cell. Other than you win by pin or submission and all that. HHH goes off with the chair, DESTROYING Undertaker Austin/Rock style. Shawn takes the chair away and tells HHH to cover Undertaker because he's not going to quit. Trips takes the chair back and shoves Shawn down before pounding on Taker even more. He tells Shawn to end it before he does.

Taker says do not stop it as he's getting back up. He turns around though and is hit in the ribs and back by the chair but it only gets two. HHH is starting to get frustrated so he hits Taker in the back with another chair and it's time for more pathos with Taker saying don't stop it. Cue the sledgehammer for a shot to the head for ANOTHER two. HHH (who is cut over the eye) has no idea what to do now.

The Game pulls up the hammer to slam it down onto Taker's head but Shawn

pulls it away to prevent the murder. Shawn is ready to stop it as Taker can barely move. Michaels raises his hand but Taker pulls him into the Hell's Gate to stop him. Trips breaks it up with a hammer shot but Taker comes back with a low blow and Hell's Gate on HHH. There's no referee though and Taker lets it go from exhaustion with his opponent out cold.

Another referee comes in as Taker hits a last effort chokeslam for two. Taker chokeslams the referee (I believe that's the same referee he beat up in 2001 against HHH as well) but walks into the superkick into the Pedigree....FOR TWO! I lost my mind watching that live because I really thought it was over. Now HHH shoves Shawn to the floor and Taker sits up to scare the life out of HHH. Taker erupts on HHH with a big boot and running clothesline, setting up snake eyes and another boot.

The Tombstone connects but HHH is up at two. Shawn has no idea what to do as both guys are slowly getting up. They slug it out from their knees before getting to their feet for more HARD punches. Another Tombstone is countered into the Pedigree for a VERY close two. HHH goes for the hammer but Taker steps on it to stop him. A HARD chair shot to the back puts HHH down and another one keeps him down.

Some more chair shots get two on HHH so Shawn screams at them to end this. HHH tries a hammer shot to the face but Taker easily blocks it. They stare each other down and HHH gives Taker a crotch chop. Trips walks out of the corner into a hammer shot to the head. HHH tries to climb up Taker's body but the strap comes down, the throat is slit, and the Tombstone makes it 20-0.

Rating: A+. This is another reason why I'm not so wild on last year's match: they're capable of SO much better and this is proof. This match told a great story with both guys destroying each other with Shawn being stuck in the middle and trying to figure out what do do in each situation. It's a great match, it's a great fight, and it's pure emotion the entire time. Great stuff here, and most importantly of all: there were moments where I thought it was over. I never bought that as a possibility last year.

After a few moments on the mat, Taker sits up but falls right back down.

He pulls himself up on Shawn and they embrace. HHH is still out cold. Shawn and Taker lift him up and carry him out of the ring. They embrace on the stage in one of the most iconic images you'll ever see. You don't often get to use that word, but it's true in this case.

Send Slim Jims to soldiers! I love charity stuff, but it's a big shift after what we just sat through.

We get clips of the Hall of Fame stuff from last night.

Here's the live presentation of the 2012 class: Mil Mascaras, Yokozuna (represented by his kids), Ron Simmons, the Horsemen (including Flair, which set off a lawsuit since he was still under contract to TNA), Mike Tyson and Edge (who gets theme music but has short hair which is such an odd look for him). This was the breather that the fans needed.

Heath Slater tries to get a spot in Flo-Rida's performance but gets turned and then shoved down. Hawkins and Reks laugh at Slater.

Team Johnny vs. Team Teddy

Johnny: Miz, Mark Henry, Drew McIntyre, Jack Swagger, Dolph Ziggler, David Otunga

Teddy: Kofi Kingston, Great Khali, R-Truth, Zack Ryder (with Eve), Booker T, Santino Marella

Each team has a Bella as a fan, the match is for total control of both brands, and Johnny is in a white suit. Oh and Vickie is with Johnny and Horny is with Teddy as the flag bearers. Otunga and Santino are team captains, because Miz and Booker aren't good enough. Kofi and Dolph start things off for their usual solid sequence. Truth comes in for a double hiptoss and a dancing legdrop.

McIntyre comes in to pound on Truth but it's quickly off to Khali to change momentum. It should also be mentioned that they're in red and blue t-shirts with the GM's on the front. Off to Booker to chop away on Drew and a superkick puts him down. Booker goes after the rest of Team Johnny but the numbers catch up with him, allowing Swagger to take over. Jack gets to beat on Kofi for a bit and it's off to Henry. Mark pounds him

down in the corner as the match slows way down.

Off to Miz with some knees to the chest and a boot to the face for two. We hit the chinlock for a bit but Booker comes back with a suplex for no cover. Ziggler comes in to break up the tag and drop some elbows for two. Everything starts breaking down as Henry hits the Slam on Booker but Khali chops him down. I can't keep track of everything going on but Henry catches a diving Horny in mid-air.

The girls get in a brawl and there's the hot tag to Santino to pound on Miz. The Cobra connects and Cole panics until Ziggler makes the save. Another hot tag brings in Ryder for the Rough Ryder for Dolph and a beatdown on everyone else. He loads up the Broski Boot but Eve gets in the ring as well. The referee tries to get her out and the distraction lets Miz hit the Skull Crushing Finale on Ryder for the pin, making Ace GM of both shows.

Rating: D+. As is the usual case with stuff like this, there was way too much going on to keep track of anything. There were something like 18 people involved in this whole thing and the ending was about Eve and her heel turn more than anything else. Ace would be GM for about four months or so while boring us to death against Cena. Not much to see here though due to the amount of people in the match.

Post match, Eve finally turns on Ryder for good, confirming him as the biggest loser in the WWE. Wasn't Eve already a heel in the Divas tag? Why is this supposed to be shocking?

Alex Rodriguez and Torrie Wilson are here.

We get a video on the media blitz and activities for Wrestlemania week.

To celebrate winning, Laurinitis changes the Raw World Title match rules so that if Punk gets disqualified, Jericho wins the title.

Raw World Title: Chris Jericho vs. CM Punk

This is over who is the best in the world and Jericho claims that Punk is really an alcoholic and his family has a bunch of substance abuse issues. The buildup for this really was good stuff, even though this is nowhere

near the main event. Punk takes it to the mat to start and fires off some kicks to the chest. He does the same with knees in the corner but stops when the referee gets to four. Jericho slaps him in the face and takes the beating like a man to try to get the DQ again.

Another few slaps have Punk in a frenzy but he holds off to avoid the DQ. A slam puts Jericho down but he rolls away before the Macho Elbow can be launched. Instead CM dives to the floor to take out Jericho, followed by a wicked smile. Jericho asks how Punk's sister and father are but Punk doesn't swing the chair he grabs. Punk charges into a pair of boots to the face and the challenger takes over.

They head to the apron and Punk tries a GTS, only to be clotheslined back into the ring. Jericho hooks a kind of Jackhammer to the floor for two back inside. We hit the chinlock but Punk fights up with a slap. Jericho comes right back with a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for two and kicks the injured back again. Some hard kicks to the torso keep Punk in trouble but he fires off some strikes of his own. The champion goes up but is pulled back down to land hard on his back.

Punk escapes a bow and arrow hold and sidesteps a charge to send Jericho crotch first into the corner. A spinning neckbreaker gets two on Chris and there's the running knee in the corner. Jericho counters the bulldog but has to stop the Lionsault to avoid knees. That counter is countered into a Walls attempt but Punk shakes him off for two. The Macho Elbow hits knees and Jericho hits the Codebreaker but it sends Punk out to the floor. Back in and Punk grabs a GTS out of nowhere for two.

Punk fires off the kicks and gets two off a quick powerslam. They trade German suplex grips but Punk gets dropped on the top rope to give Jericho control. The Lionsault gets two and Chris goes up, only to be chopped a lot to slow him down. The champion loads up a hurricanrana but gets countered into the Walls in one of Jericho's classic counters. Punk finally makes the ropes and sends Jericho to the floor to set up the suicide dive.

Jericho staggers to his feet and Punk hits the running knee, crushing Jericho's head against the post. They head back in and somehow Jericho

grabs the Codebreaker out of nowhere for two. Back up and Jericho pounds away on Punk in the corner, only to go up again and get kicked down. The GTS is countered into the Liontamer (the kneeling version of the Walls) in the middle of the ring but shifts it to the regular Walls.

Jericho has to pull him away from the ropes and Punk escapes into dueling small packages. CM rolls through again into the Anaconda Vice but Jericho knees Punk in the back of the head to escape. The Walls don't work again and Punk hooks another Vice, this time tucking his head in to avoid the knees. Jericho is trapped and finally gives up.

Rating: A. Great match here with both guys destroying each other and countering everything both guys had. I love the ending with Punk getting smarter as he kept going in a good display of psychology. Thankfully the DQ bit didn't go anywhere which makes it pretty stupid. Excellent match here though which would have been a great main event for any other show of the year.

Wrestlemania 29 is coming to New Jersey, but we'll bill it as New York because it sounds better.

Here's Brodus, who had recently debuted as the Funkasaurus. He tells everyone to get their phone, because they're gonna call their mamas. Brodus calls his own and apparently she's here tonight.....WITH THE BRIDGE CLUB! Cue a troop of old women for a BIG dance party.

Video on G.I. Joe 2 which was just released like two weeks ago. As in nearly a year after this show.

And now, it is time.

We recap Rock vs. Cena which is at least a year in the making. Something like seven years ago Cena insulted Rock in an interview, so when Rock came back to be guest host last year, he insulted Cena in his return promo. The night after Wrestlemania, Cena had challenged Rock to a one on one match at THIS Wrestlemania. This led to a year of build (minus six months for Rock to make a movie of course) which got me to the point where I HAD to see this match. I didn't know if it was going to be great, if it was going to suck, or somewhere in between, but I needed to see it.

That's never happened to me as a fan before.

Diddy comes out to bring out MGK (a rapper) to perform some song called Invincible. He does this stupid monologue about how Cena is a huge underdog in this, despite Cena being active having more experience overall than Rock. Cena is booed out of the building but gives something to an old lady who apparently is related to some Hall of Famer. We should be ready for Rock's entrance, but first we need Flo-Rida to perform two songs. I remember SCREAMING to get to it at this point. Oh and Flo has a bunch of dancers with him, presumably the same girls who were in the Bridge Club ten minutes ago.

John Cena vs. The Rock

Rock's ovation is thunderous. There's really no other way to put it as it's very clear who the fans are for here. During the big match intros, Cena is booed even further out of the stadium. They stare each other down and FINALLY the bell rings. Cena shoves him away to start and the dueling chants begin. They lock up again and this time Cena goes flying. Rock grabs a headlock before they fight over arm control.

A few armdrags put Cena down and a cradle gets a quick two for Cena. Cena has to make sure it wasn't three as he looks a bit shaken. Back up and John leapfrogs over Rock before taking him down with a headlock takeover. They get up again and Rock tries a quick Sharpshooter but Cena bails to the floor. Rock decks him as he gets back in but Cena charges at him in the corner with a hard shoulder to the ribs. Cena gets a quick one count off a clothesline before putting on a bearhug on the mat.

Back up and Rock punches away but gets low bridged out to the floor. Cena drops him ribs first onto the barricade and announce table before going to the ring for a seat. When Rock won't quit Cena throws him back inside and gets a two count. We're definitely in another gear now. Off to a bearhug on Rock's bad ribs but he won't quit. Rock finally comes back with right hands to escape and a DDT for two.

Rock wins a quick slugout and hits the spinebuster but Cena picks the leg to break up the Elbow. Cena comes back with his finishing sequence but the AA is escaped. A double clothesline puts both guys down as they take

a breather. After a few moments on the mat they slug it out with Cena punching Rock down to his knees. Rock fires off more punches and does You Can't See Me before trying the spit punch, only to get caught in the AA for a close two.

Cena goes to pick Rock up but takes the Rock Bottom for two for the Brahma Bull. Rock stomps away in the corner but walks into a side slam for two. John goes up top for a very delayed top rope Fameasser for another near fall. Rock comes back with a spinebuster into the Sharpshooter but he doesn't have it on well. Cena crawls to the rope so Rock lets go and pounds away. Back to the Sharpshooter (why don't more people do that? Even if Cena won't quit you can still do more damage) but Cena makes the rope immediately again. Gee maybe if he had pulled Cena from the rope it would have been harder to escape.

Rock fires off some elbows to the chest and sends Cena into the steps for good measure. Back inside and Cena tries a sunset flip of all things but immediately shifts into the STF in the middle of the ring. Cena drags him back to the middle of the ring and Rock is starting to fade. We get an old school arm check and Rock holds it up on the third drop. I love stuff like that. Rock makes it to the ropes and as they get back up, Cena walks into a Samoan drop to put both guys down.

Another slugout goes to Rock and the spinebuster sets up the Elbow.....for TWO. The place is losing their minds on these kickouts and can you blame them a bit? Both guys are spent here but Cena hits a catapult into the corner for two. With nothing left to try, Cena loads up the middle rope AA but Rock shoves him off and tries a top rope cross body but Cena rolls through into the BIG AA for an even closer two. Cena begs the referee to call it three. That gets him nowhere so Cena loads up a People's Elbow. As he hits the second rope, Rock nips up and hits the Rock Bottom for the shocking pin.

Rating: A+. What else do you want from this? This is one of those matches which could have gone either way as they beat the tar out of each other. They had the big fight atmosphere down to perfection here and while the ending is still questionable (yet not completely wrong), it's exactly what you want a Wrestlemania main event to be. This somehow surpassed the

hype and was excellent in every sense of the word.

Cena sits on the ramp, stunned.

Rock poses to end the show.

Overall Rating: A. This is one of the best shows of all time, bar none. The two big matches delivered far better than you could have hoped for, the Raw title match was great, nothing sucked, there are multiple Wrestlemania Moments on here, and the crowd was white hot all night. This is easily in the highest levels of Wrestlemanias ever and it's every bit as good as it was when I watched it live. Great stuff and absolutely worth checking out.

Ratings Comparison

Daniel Bryan vs. Sheamus

Original:

Redo: N/A

Kane vs. Randy Orton

Original: B-

Redo: B-

Cody Rhodes vs. Big Show

Original: D+

Redo: D+

Kelly Kelly/Maria Menunos vs. Beth Phoenix/Eve Torres

Original: C+

Redo: D+

HHH vs. Undertaker

Original: A+

Redo: A+

Team Johnny vs. Team Teddy

Original: C

Redo: D+

Chris Jericho vs. CM Punk

Original: A

Redo: A

The Rock vs. John Cena

Original: B+

Redo: A+

Overall Rating

Original: A+

Redo: A

I shortchanged that main event terribly. It's a masterpiece.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/04/01/wrestlemania-xxviii-one-of-the-best-shows-of-all-time/>

Well that's that I guess. As is the case with every PPV series, some are great, some suck, a lot are in the middle. This series however is different. It's THE show and THE series which is bigger than anything else in the world of professional wrestling. Wrestlemania has been around 29 years now and with the latest edition only a day away as of right now, it's still going strong.

Around 2001, Wrestlemania became a spectacle in addition to an event as they started going to major stadiums and drawing 70,000+ people to every

show. That's remarkable and the fact that the crowds keep growing is a great sign. I love wrestling and I love Wrestlemania, so watching these shows has been a treat.

I'll be back on July 24 with the Summerslam Redos, so I hope to not see you then. Why would I want to see you? I want you at your computers reading the reviews. Go read more of them now. Or my books. Yeah preferably the books.

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<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B01D4D3EG0>

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New Column: The February Problem

Looking at how bad February pay per views tend to be and how to fix the problem.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-the-february-problem/>

The Titus O'Neil Situation

So this is something that's happening. Basically O'Neil hugged Vince on Monday in something done with nothing in mind but Vince, on his latest kick, felt it was inappropriate in this setting (read as: on camera) and as a result, Titus has been suspended for 60 days (lowered from 90).

As usual, this comes off as WWE wanting to control every single thing they can. Sure WWE wants them to be having fun and interacting with people like they're all one big happy family, but it's controlled, perfectly planned out fun. Also, if you defy whatever Vince's latest whim is that day, you can be punished for whatever happens. Now assuming Vince says it's ok, you can have various objects pulled out of various orifices, have Vince run away riding an invisible horse with his pants around his ankles or have dream sequences filmed, but giving Vince a hug is off limits.

Dang Bayley might be screwed.

New Column: A Little Piece Of Confetti

Looking back at Daniel Bryan in WWE, capped off by his best moment.

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-a-little-piece-of-c>

Monday Night Raw – February 8, 2016: YES Is No More

Monday Night Raw

Date: February 8, 2016

Location: KeyArena, Seattle, Washington

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's a sad day in WWE as Daniel Bryan has been forced to retire due to his in ring injuries. The announcement has been confirmed by WWE and could possibly close out tonight's show. In addition to this big deal we also have Brock Lesnar on hand again this week as he's getting ready for his match with Dean Ambrose and Roman Reigns at FastLane. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Stephanie is in the ring for the official contract signing for Fastlane's main event. The fans chant for Bryan but Stephanie says Bryan isn't the one going on to Wrestlemania to face her husband HHH. Stephanie lists off the three men in the triple threat at Fastlane and here's Dean to jump the gun. However, there will be NO physical violence here tonight so Reigns can come out here as well.

Reigns wants to start the fighting now so let's get to it (it's catching on). This brings out Lesnar but Stephanie cuts off Heyman's line because everyone knows who he is. They all sign so Stephanie leaves, only to have Brock hit Reigns with the table and give Ambrose an F5. Well so much for Fastlane being interesting. HHH comes out to stare everyone down.

Cole addresses Bryan's retirement and we see a clip of his debut on NXT

in 2010.

Post break, Reigns and Ambrose promise to get Brock tonight.

Kevin Owens vs. Dolph Ziggler

Owens runs him over to start and hits a Cannonball in less than thirty seconds for an early near fall. Kevin stands on his head against the rope while talking a lot of trash at the same time. A clothesline followed by a bow gets two for Owens but Ziggler grabs a sleeper and they fall to the floor as we take a break. Back with Ziggler fighting out of a chinlock, only to get backsplashed for two. Ziggler starts his comeback with a Stinger Splash and neckbreaker to set up the elbow for two of his own.

The superkick gets another near fall for Owens but the Pop Up Powerbomb is easily countered, setting up the running DDT. Owens gets draped over the apron, allowing Dolph to hit a Fameasser onto the floor. Both guys are down for a VERY close nine count (they actually had me there) before they dive inside. Owens misses a Cannonball though, allowing Ziggler to roll him up and put his feet on the ropes for the pin at 11:14.

Rating: D+. I would love to hear the explanation for this one. Are they turning Ziggler heel? If so, it really doesn't seem like it as Ziggler wasn't treated like a heel after the match and the whole thing felt like nothing special. Owens must have forgotten to shake hands with someone or something.

Another Daniel Bryan moment saw him winning the US Title at Night of Champions 2010.

The Dudleyz come in to see the Usos, who have a tables match against New Day later tonight. Bubba and D-Von don't quite get this because that's their match. If they can get it approved, the Dudleyz would love to team up with the New Day for the match.

Video on Ryback.

Charlotte vs. Alicia Fox

Non-title and a rematch from Smackdown. An early Figure Eight attempt is

broken up but Charlotte drops her with a neckbreaker for two. After cutting off a WE WANT SASHA chant, the champ puts Fox in a Figure Four Neck Lock. The comeback doesn't go anywhere and the Figure Eight gives Charlotte the tap out at 5:15.

Rating: D. Just a squash here and the same match we saw on Smackdown. I'm not sure if this is supposed to help build up Brie vs. Charlotte just because Brie and Alicia are on the same "team", but this really wasn't the most interesting thing. If nothing else it makes me wonder why I bother watching Smackdown when they just air the same stuff here with nothing extra being added.

It's time for MizTV but before the guest comes out, Miz has to yell about AJ Styles attacking him. Who does AJ really think he is when he attacks an A-lister like the Miz? This brings out Chris Jericho to tells Miz to shut up. Before Miz can have much of a rebuttal, Jericho says it's time for the Highlight Reel. A bunch of roadies run in and take over the set, including lowering the Jeritron 5000. Miz says this isn't Jericho's show, so Jericho demands that his stool and potted plant are brought in.

Jericho shows us a clip of AJ knocking Miz's tooth out of his mouth on Smackdown, drawing a YOU LOOK STUPID chant. Miz: "I'm not Sheamus." Last week he had a major audition with Spielberg and thankfully his team of Hollywood dentists saved the day. Jericho sings about wanting his two front teeth for Christmas so Miz counters with a clip of AJ's pin over Jericho a few weeks back. Chris can't wait to take care of AJ on Smackdown so here's Styles. Miz is quickly dispatched and AJ stares Jericho up the aisle to wrap things up.

We recap Lesnar destroying Ambrose and Reigns earlier.

Bryan won Money in the Bank in 2011.

Ryback vs. Bray Wyatt

We get the return of the GOLDBERG chants as Ryback runs Bray over. Another big shot sends him out to the floor but the Family offers a distraction, allowing Bray to take Ryback down as we go to a break. Back with Bray clotheslining Ryback down again but missing a charge into the

post. A cross body into some right hands have Bray in trouble and a spinebuster gets another two count. The Meathook is countered into Sister Abigail for a pin out of nowhere at 6:50.

Rating: C-. So why couldn't they do this to Zigler instead? It's not like he's going to have issues with a loss but instead they give Ryback a much better look and have him lose clean in his second match. As usual, it feels like this company has the potential to set something up but then they go with whatever they can to make sure it doesn't happen. As always, the worst part is you can feel it coming every time.

Post match the Wyatts destroy Ryback both in and out of the ring.

We look back at Kane and Daniel Bryan. That's still one of the funniest things the company has done in years.

Big E. is singing about working on a table while Xavier Woods is making calculations on how to destroy a table. Renee Young comes in to ask if they have a partner yet so Woods destroys the calculator. Of course they haven't because there are still three of them.

Ambrose says he's ready to fight Lesnar on his own because he's never been in the ring with him.

Titus O'Neil vs. Adam Rose

Before the match, Rose names himself the Radical Mongoose, which really doesn't work for Axel. Titus chops him in the corner to start but gets kicked in the face for two. Back up and Titus will have none of this Irish whip nonsense as he LAUNCHES Rose across the ring and takes over with some clotheslines. The Outcasts save Rose from the Clash of the Titus by pulling him to the floor, only to have O'Neil runs them all over like bowling pins. Back in and a Slater distraction lets Rose grab a rollup for the pin at 3:19.

Rating: D. The match may have sucked but Adam Rose is the Radical Mongoose. There is no way that doesn't wind up being one of the best names in years. I mean, it's like a mongoose but RADICAL. Titus getting TV time is a good thing but not as impressive as the Outcasts actually

winning something.

We look at Bryan pinning Cena at Summerslam 2013.

Here's Dean Ambrose to ask what that was from Brock earlier. It certainly couldn't have been an F5 because those are supposed to hurt. It's clear that Brock certainly can't get the job done so get out here and give it another try. No Lesnar so Dean says Brock has gone soft. "That sounds like a personal problem." Maybe Heyman didn't give him permission to come out here.

That's enough to bring out Lesnar and Dean goes right at him, only to be destroyed with ease. Dean crawls towards Brock and eats another F5 to leave him laying. Ambrose starts getting up and waves Brock back to the ring, only to have Reigns come out for a distraction. The plan seems to work as Dean hits Brock low and walks out as Brock is hunched over in pain. This worked better than I was expecting and the near falls at FastLane are going to be awesome.

Back from a break and we recap everything we just saw. Thankfully this means I have more time to flip back to Cheers, which I've seen several times but is still more entertaining than seeing the same thing twice in five minutes.

Lucha Dragons vs. Rusev/Alberto Del Rio

Rusev kicks Kalisto off the apron to start but gets rolled up for a quick two. Del Rio comes in with a snap suplex for two of his own as they're wisely setting up the hot tag to Kalisto later on. We hit the nerve hold from Rusev, followed by a chinlock from Del Rio. A snap German suplex makes things a bit better for Alberto but Cara counters a suplex into a DDT, finally allowing the hot tag to Kalisto. The springboard spinning cross body gets two on Alberto and everything breaks down. Del Rio enziguris Kalisto down though and the top rope double stomp pins the champ at 5:38.

Rating: C. Is anyone else sick of seeing champions lose? I mean, you have a wrestler coming back off a shoulder injury and a heel with an arm submission finisher, but instead let's go with pinning a champion.

There's no way a multiple time World Champion could be seen as a credible champion without winning THIS match over Kalisto right?

Earlier today, Goldust thought he was Jimi Hendrix. A guitar is smashed and security drags Goldust away as Truth isn't sure what's going on.

Daniel Bryan occupied Raw along with the YES Movement.

Tamina vs. Becky Lynch

Sasha is on commentary. Tamina powers her into the corner but Becky slaps on an early sleeper. A Naomi distraction allows Tamina to get in a hard clothesline before slamming Becky's head into the mat a few times. Tamina takes her head off with a back elbow and we hit the neck crank. That goes nowhere so Naomi beats the heck out of Sasha. Becky kicks Tamina down and goes outside to help Sasha, only to walk into a superkick to give Tamina the pin at 3:42.

Rating: D. As much as I'd love to see Becky actually get somewhere, this makes the most sense for the feud. Tamina and Naomi are looking like the weaker pairing so giving them a win makes more sense. That being said, it's rather sad that there's no one else to throw out there instead of just doing singles matches to set up the tag match.

New Day offers Mark Henry a spot on the team tonight and the unicorn horn is actually accepted. Henry plays some trombone (not bad actually) but it's the dancing that gets him the job.

New Day/Mark Henry vs. Usos/Dudley Boyz

Tables match, meaning there are about fifteen tables around the arena. Only one person has to go through a table so the good guys clean house to start. A double dive drops the New Day and we take an early break. Back with New Day bossing Henry around...which doesn't go well as he doesn't like being told what to do and walks out. The good guys clean house with a double What's Up. Double superkicks all around set up a 3D to Big E. for the win at 6:42. Not enough to rate but this was nothing special.

Post match Jey comes up with a bad leg but the Dudleyz shove him down and turn heel with a SuperBomb to put Jimmy through the table.

Video on Daniel Bryan's career.

Here's Bryan, now with FAR less hair and beard) for his big speech. The DANIEL BRYAN chants get to him a bit as you knew they were going to. Now the YES chants cut him off but he says he was able to close his eyes and feel that in a way that he never could before. When you're out here you have to keep your eyes open but he'll never forget that feeling just now.

It's time to address the giant elephant in the room though. Yes, he did have to shave his beard but he wanted to cut his hair but he looked really silly with the beard. In his only cheap plug, he cut his hair for an organization called Wigs For Kids which doesn't charge the families for the kids that get wigs from them.

That brings him to the less fun stuff and the NO chant begins. Bryan doesn't want to be doing this any more than they do but he's been wrestling since he was eighteen years old. In the first five months of his career, he had already had three concussions. He had more and more concussions as his career went on and after sixteen years, that adds up to a lot of concussions.

Eventually it reaches the point where you can't wrestle anymore, but he's been told that he was fine. He's been training to get better and was ready at a moment's notice for WWE to say he could come back. Bryan has loved wrestling in a way that he's never loved anything else, which draws a THANK YOU DANIEL chant. Then a week and a half ago he had a test that said his brain wasn't as strong as he thought it was. He's got a family to think about and they're thinking about having kids. Fans: "YES!" Daniel: "That's what Brie says all the time!" Fans: "THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID!"

Bryan officially announces his retirement and talks about all of his emotions as of late. He's gotten to do what he loves for the last sixteen years. Now let's talk about a few things that he loves. Nobody outside this arena is going to care about this, but he loves the Seattle Seahawks. Right before his music hits, he gets a little twitch in his mouth and he loves it every single time. Third, he loves hitting the ropes and doing that dive because it makes him feel like Superman. He's

wrestled in the parking lots of gas stations and in front of 70,000 people in New Orleans.

While he's been doing that, he's gotten to meet people like Kane, who is the smartest man he knows. He's gotten to meet people like his mentor William Regal. Over the years he's met children who are stronger than he could ever be like Connor. On top of that he's grateful because wrestling doesn't owe anyone in the back a thing. The people who get in this ring do it because they love to do it but one day they got behind him in a way they shouldn't have gotten behind someone who is 5'8 and 190lbs.

He's grateful because a little over two years ago in this very arena, the people here hijacked Raw during a championship celebration between Randy Orton and John Cena. However, he's grateful because his dad was sitting right over there and got to see it happen before he passed away. He's grateful for meeting the woman of his dreams and for getting to announce his retirement in front of his hometown fans.

Tomorrow morning he's starting a new life where he's not a wrestler, which means he's got one more night to enjoy this energy. We get one more YES chant as Brie comes out to celebrate with her husband to finally wrap this up at 11:25, which might be the latest this show has ever gone. This was an outstanding speech and I'm glad that it's not an angle. Bryan gets to leave and he gets to do it in (basically) his hometown. You don't get much better than that.

Overall Rating: C-. This show was all about the big promo at the end but the rest of the night was really dull stuff. It ranged from boring to really annoying at times and it was going to take something very special out of Bryan to make the whole thing work. That's exactly what we got, but it was a VERY long night to get to the amazing speech. FastLane really is looking like a nothing show, which is one of the last things they need right now.

Results

Dolph Ziggler b. Kevin Owens – Rollup with feet on the ropes

Charlotte b. Alicia Fox – Figure Eight

Bray Wyatt b. Ryback – Sister Abigail

Adam Rose b. Titus O'Neil – Rollup

Rusev/Alberto Del Rio b. Lucha Dragons – Top rope double stomp to Kalisto

Tamina b. Becky Lynch – Superkick

Usos/Dudley Boyz b. New Day/Mark Henry – 3D to Big E.

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Daniel Bryan To Announce Retirement On Raw

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/daniel-bryan-expected/49430/>

You really had to expect this at some point and I'm actually glad he's done. There's no need to have him get back in the ring and risk getting hurt even worse. This lets him move on and ends the speculation.

New Column: The Object Of The Game

Explaining why HHH was one of the best options to win the Rumble.

[The Object Of The Game](#)

Royal Rumble 2016 Preview

This is one of the most difficult shows of the year to predict and it's not just because of the battle royal. Aside from the big main event, it's hard to guess a lot of the title matches because there's a chance that they're starting a new title program but they also might just be extending the current ones a few more months. Then there's the whole "let's throw the roster into one match for the title." Let's get to it.

We'll start on the pre-show with a nice little concept: a four way tag with the winning team getting Rumble spots. We've got Darren Young/Damien Sandow (So are the Players officially split?) vs. the Dudley Boyz vs. Ascension vs. Mark Henry/Jack Swagger. Ascension is written off of course and there's no reason to pick Young/Sandow. Therefore, we'll go with the only team remaining and the only one comprised of two former World Champions. Neither guy has a chance of winning but the more former World Champions you add to a World Title match the more prestige it has. If nothing else due to how lame the other options are.

Del Rio retains the US Title. Why? Well for some reason WWE insists on making us sit through as many boring Del Rio matches as we can while the

title gets less and less interesting every single week. I had a good time believing that Kalisto could go somewhere as champion but in the back of my head I knew WWE would hand it back to Del Rio as soon as possible. I have no idea who takes it off him (AJ maybe?) but it's not going to be Kalisto at this show.

I'll go with Ambrose keeping the title from Owens. In theory Owens should be in line for a big match at Wrestlemania and I can't imagine they put the title on him beforehand. Last man standing is a good way to have him lose but still keep him looking strong as Dean could win through shenanigans after a long fight. As long as they don't do the lame and way overdone "trap him under some big object" ending, this should be a really wild brawl that both guys are capable of delivering. Ambrose wins, though both guys should be in the Rumble too.

In a pick that doesn't make a ton of sense, I'll go with the Usos to win the titles off New Day. It's not that New Day isn't entertaining still (though the Jericho stuff has been horrible), but they've cleaned out the division more than once now so unless Enzo/Cass or Gable/Jordan are coming to the main roster like Monday or something, who else is New Day supposed to fight?

Charlotte retains, likely setting up a match against Sasha Banks as we roll into Wrestlemania, which could set up Bayley vs. Sasha on the main roster. Not that WWE is smart enough to pull that off of course. We're likely setting for the return of Nikki to challenge Charlotte in a copy of AJ returning to take the title from Paige in 2014.

That brings us to the main event and good night where do you start? Well actually you start with Reigns based on Monday, but I think it finishes with HHH. Yeah as simple of a story as they have, I really do think this winds up being HHH coming out in the last spot and defeating a worn out Reigns to win the title. However, I don't think it sets up HHH vs. Reigns at Wrestlemania. Instead I think they'll do that match at Fastlane and then set up Reigns vs. Lesnar II at Wrestlemania. I can't imagine they keep the title on Reigns as if nothing else, it leaves no one as a realistic challenger.

Now for the interesting parts: the surprises. Counting the two names from the pre-show, we'll have fifteen names announced. I won't bother trying to predict all fifteen as it's likely going to be one or two of the Social Outcasts and a bunch of midcard fillers plus HHH to cap it off. That leaves a handful of spots for legends and new names so here are a few guesses.

Word on the street is they're putting the Tough Enough winner in there for some hazing. If so, whatever. It'll take two minutes and no one is going to remember because Tough Enough winners barely ever mean anything because it's a stupid concept that doesn't work.

I don't think we get AJ Styles and I'd almost bet on the fact that we don't get Daniel Bryan. AJ likely debuts the next night or the next week and Bryan being in the Rumble would be a borderline disaster based on the last two years. Both guys would be fun, but the problem boils down to this: what's the point of bringing them in if they're just going to lose?

For legends picks, let's go with Jim Duggan and.....Papa Shango. Why? Well why not? If they can bring in the Boogeyman last year, why not bring in Shango here? I'll throw in Vader too, just so the announcers can make a lame Star Wars joke.

Finally, I'll go with Sami Zayn as the NXT representative. The fans know who he is and he can go right back down to NXT to build towards Sami vs. Balor at Takeover.

Overall, this is always a show worth looking forward to. The Rumble is one of the few matches that is always fun due to the drama and surprises included and this has the potential to be something awesome. I like the idea of putting the title on the line as it really does feel like the biggest Rumble of all time. Reigns is likely dropping the belt here to set up his big win at Wrestlemania, but this has the potential to throw a huge curveball. I know HHH vs. Reigns is likely at some point, but there's always the chance that it could go another way.

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