

Wyatt Family vs. Shield

WATCH

THIS

MATCH.

Match of the year so far by about a mile.

Elimination Chamber 2014 Preview

Wrestlemania is six weeks away and tomorrow will determine a lot of what we'll be seeing at the biggest show of them all. The kickoff match is a meaningless tag between Cody Rhodes/Goldust vs. Ryback/Curtis Axel. It's kind of amazing that the Brothers have fallen as far as they have in just a month. They were the hottest act the tag division has seen in months and then it's been thrown away for the sake of the New Age Outlaws. In 2014. Anyway there is zero reason for Ryback and Axel to win, which is why I think they will so we can get closer to Goldust vs. Cody which is allegedly a match everyone needs to see.

We'll start the main card with the most obvious win ever: Batista beats Del Rio and you really shouldn't need an explanation why. One thing though: We're supposed to cheer a guy who put Del Rio in a neck brace and then attacked him while he was still injured after Del Rio was angry that Batista hadn't earned any of his recent success. Why is WWE surprised people aren't interested in Batista?

I'm going with the Outlaws to keep the titles. I have a bad feeling they'll keep them on the old guys until Wrestlemania where they'll be in some multi team match where the Usos will get them, because a team like the Outlaws just couldn't lose a clean one on one match. Perish the thought. Sidebar on the Outlaws: I have no idea where the team is supposed to be going. The idea was supposed to be HHH pushing his friends, but the Outlaws won the match and rematch clean and have acted like faces the entire time. How does this benefit anyone but Gunn and Road Dogg?

Langston should beat Swagger, but I have a feeling he won't. The Real Americans should be splitting, but there has to be a way to get Colter on Swagger's side and away from Cesaro. Having Jack win a title while Cesaro comes up short would be a decent enough way, but I don't want Cesaro being wasted on Swagger at Wrestlemania. We'll go with Langston retaining to keep things from getting too messy.

Titus over Darren. Young is a decent enough wrestler, but there's just nothing interesting about him. It's refreshing to get a basic heel turn and blowoff match as a result though.

The big match of the evening is inside the Chamber and the most anticipated could be as well if there was ever a rematch. The Wyatts vs. Shield has the potential to steal the first half of the year and the build has been excellent. Bray vs. Reigns could be an outstanding collision which goes to show you what happens when you take two guys and build them up to the point where neither could conceivably lose. I'll go with the Wyatts here in what should be more obvious that it is. One more note that I've been saying for the previous week: Bray vs. Reigns at Wrestlemania. Any takers?

That brings us to the big one. I think we can safely write off Sheamus, Cesaro and Christian (more on this later). Cena isn't a likely winner due to the Wyatts as Bray vs. Cena seems to be set in stone. That leaves us with Orton vs. Bryan and

Daniel is coming in with a bad shoulder courtesy of the Authority. Couple that with Orton losing most of his matches leading up to it and Orton is almost a layup to win.

However there's one thing to remember: the Network launching on Monday. That leaves the door open for the very rare one night title reign or a surprise title change on Raw. I don't think it's going to happen, but if it does I'll go with Cesaro on a very long shot.

Overall Elimination Chamber has the chance to be a solid show with the six man tag looking to be as easy of a great match as you'll find. That being said, the show also has me worried about where things are going. For the life of me I cannot imagine Batista getting a one on one title shot against Orton at Wrestlemania. There's a chance we might see that match on Monday instead, but something has to stop that match from happening. Bryan doesn't have to be in the title match and facing HHH would be fine, but man alive Orton vs. Batista is just not going to do it for the main event of Wrestlemania. We'll find out a lot tomorrow, but we'll find out even more on Monday.

Thoughts/predictions?

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More In Depth Thoughts on Raw – February 10, 2014

Raw was another mixed bag last night but things are looking interesting going into Elimination Chamber. There isn't as much to talk about this week though.

We'll start with the old white elephant in the room. Betty White was the guest star last night and was fine. She's one of those celebrities that it's hard to not like on some level. Her segments totaled about seven minutes total and while they weren't funny, she didn't hurt anything and was charming so I can't complain too much. The Outlaws bit was rather dumb but that's comedy in the WWE for you. Oh and Big Show gets mauled by Brock two weeks ago and comes out just fine? Really?

The Authority did their usual schtick by making Orton look like a hopeless joke which we just have to live with anymore. HHH and Stephanie aren't getting shown up anytime soon because they're just so darn likeable and amazing so Orton gets to be the scapegoat. Nothing much to this segment, but can we please stop with the cutting off promos ten seconds in? This has become a thing recently and happened with Orton and Kane last night. It's kind of annoying, though at the same time it's less Authority related talking I have to listen to so I'm split on this one.

There were two more long and well done tag matches with a six man and four man version. While both were entertaining, I'm getting a bit tired of them. There are so many stories going on right now and since Smackdown is absolutely worthless anymore, everything gets crammed into Raw in a bunch of tag matches. They're entertaining, but I kind of roll my eyes when I hear one announced.

After the Wyatt six man we had a promo from Bray Wyatt, calling the Shield toy soldiers in a war they can't win. Bray said after the war the Family would be moving on to another plan, which has to mean Cena. I'm excited either way as the Wyatts have nailed their gimmick so well it's unreal.

Miz interrupted Santino vs. Fandango and ranted about not being able to get into a match while the two of them wrestled. As soon as he left, Cole asked what Miz's problem was. Lines like that are what make me want to watch the show with the sound muted.

I liked Sheamus' promo about walking into a bar with Christian. It was simple, to the point, and tied back into the Chamber. Nothing wrong with that.

Cesaro looked great in the tag match last night and needs to get away from Swagger immediately. That being said, it's Swagger who looks to be turning face soon, even though the fans are behind Cesaro. Obviously Colter can't be turned face, which is what makes me think it's coming.

Ziggler is supposed to be in line for a push so they job him clean in 90 seconds. Gotta love WWE logic.

Batista beat up Del Rio and their match was announced for Elimination Chamber. I gave Batista the benefit of the doubt at the Rumble and still don't mind him winning, but the spark is just not there at all. Batista looks in great shape and will probably be fine in the ring, but if he's the one in the main event of Wrestlemania winning the title, the crowd is

going to die a slow and painful death.

Lita is going into the Hall of Fame. The low cut tops she wore when she was with Edge alone are more than enough justification for me. Also, Trish has to induct her right?

It looks like we're getting Usos vs. Outlaws soon which hopefully gives us the long overdue Usos title reign.

Ambrose's open challenge was what it should have been. Henry wasn't much of a challenger but at least it was a title defense that wasn't wasted. One other thing though: what else was Henry going to do if there wasn't an open challenge? His return was advertised all night and last week, so were we getting a basket weaving lesson unless Ambrose issued the challenge? Also Dean's reaction with the bugged out eyes and forced smile when Henry's music hit had me in stitches. The guy's facial expressions are some of the best in wrestling today.

That brings us to the coolest part of last night's show: the Wyatts came out after Ambrose's match to stare down the Shield. The place went NUTS when it looked like the fight was on but Bray and company backed down. They need to let that match be an all out war instead of a tag match but it's going to be awesome either way.

The Divas match last night was horrible. I beg of you WWE: put Finlay in charge of them again. The wrestling was horrid and they're getting back into the horrible habit of the girls being models instead of wrestlers.

Kane vs. Bryan is coming and odds are it'll be on a big Raw before

Wrestlemania. No complaints from me.

The main event was of course Cena vs. Orton again, which isn't as bad as people make it out to be. The matches are still good but I don't get excited about them at all. It's been done so many times now and the premise doesn't work. Cena is so long since established as the top star and Orton just doesn't work as the huge rival anymore.

That being said, there were some very good things about the match. First of all, I love how Orton learns during his matches. If you watch his work against guys he's fought before, Orton will start countering/avoiding signature spots. He did it on Friday by countering the sunset flip out of the corner and last night he avoided the Cena shoulder blocks. It's a very simple thing but it shows thinking in the ring, which is a lost art.

Speaking of lost arts, Orton put on a clinic in working a crowd like an old school heel last night. He stalled, he played to the crowd, and he had the people wanting Cena to kill him. If you want the fans to pay attention to you, pay attention to them. It's how Cena has saved a ton of crowds from getting away from them and it's how almost every top star ever has gotten where they are. Look back at Rock, Austin, Cena, Sting and Bryan now: they all play directly to the crowd and ask them to react to things. Fans love nothing more than being a part of the show and it works the same for heels. Good stuff in that area.

A few more notes about the show:

Can we get Cena checked for short term memory loss? A few weeks ago Orton attacked his dad and never mentioned it. Then the Wyatts cost him the title at the Rumble and he hasn't talked about that either. I know it's

coming, but at least mention it again.

All of the champions in action lost last night. On top of that, the Outlaws were in a comedy segment that appealed to five year olds. I'm so glad we got the titles off of Goldust and Cody so the tag champions could be used in comedy sketches.

Has Big E. Langston fallen into a hole and no one has been around to hear him scream for help? The guy has disappeared since the Rumble.

Speaking of disappearing, does anyone remember Brock Lesnar demanding to be #1 contender? It looked like he was going to fight the Authority about it and then just disappeared. Good thing too, as it almost looked like the Authority might have to face some adversity and that's not Best for Business.

Rumor has it that Shelton Benjamin worked a dark match against Tyson Kidd last night. However, he and Kidd say this isn't true so chalk another one up for internet reporters.

Steve Austin and RVD were backstage last night with Austin there to talk to Zeb Colter about being on the podcast. From what I've heard, there are no plans to bring RVD back to TV soon.

Overall Raw was entertaining, but there was nothing that needed to be seen. It did a good enough job building up the Chamber show, but it didn't do much for me.

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WWE Network Details

This looks pretty good actually. From lordsofpain.net

Justin LaBar of WrestleZone.com is reporting that WWE has a targeted launch date of February 24th for the WWE Network, which is the day after the Elimination Chamber pay-per-view. This confirms a previous report from PWInsider.com, but LaBar's sources provided him with a few extra tidbits about the Network:

- Initial price point will be in the \$10-\$12 a month range, with the sign-up being for six months.
- You'll be able to watch WrestleMania 30 on the Network, with the plan still being the reported "every non-WrestleMania pay-per-view airing on the Network in the future".
- It won't be a channel on television, but an app-like service along the lines of Netflix that you'll be able to watch online and on devices like smart TVs, PS3, PS4, X-Box 360, X-Box one, and so on.
- There will be a live, 24/7 stream of content on the Network, which is the thing that will separate it from apps like Netflix, which focuses more on-demand viewing. However, on-demand viewing will still be a part of the Network, as the entire library of Raw and Smackdown episodes, as well as pay-per-views, will be available to watch at launch.

If any more information comes out, we'll be sure to pass it along to all of you.

I'm glad it's not a TV network, though the idea of WWE streaming this stuff could be a MAJOR problem. I'll pick it up of course, but that six month idea scares me a bit.

Survivor Series Count-Up – 2002: Open The Chamber Of Stupid

Survivor Series 2002

Date: November 17, 2002

Location: Madison Square Garden, New York City, New York

Attendance: 17,930

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole, Tazz

Well we're into the brand split era now and last month on Smackdown's PPV, we had a Cell match between Taker and Lesnar. Bischoff's response: the Elimination Chamber. This is one of those shows that ticks me off to no end because of how the booking goes. Other than that, we've got a stupid booking decision on Smackdown as well which I don't think I complained about enough the first time. Let's get to it.

The theme song is Always by Saliva which is a personal favorite.

Dudley Boys/Jeff Hardy vs. 3 Minute Warning/Rico

This is an elimination tables match. Oh and that's Bubba and Spike, not D-Von. Spike and Bubba got put through the same table on Raw Monday to set this up. The Dudleys and Jeff clear the ring to start and Spike is thrown into the arms of the Samoans. It's Bubba vs. Rico in the ring at the moment, because putting Spike and Jeff against Umaga and Rosey is a great idea right? Bubba chops Rico HARD in the corner before things

settle down.

What's Up hits Jamal and we get to the tagging section of the match before everything breaks down again. Bubba tells Jeff to get the tables but Rosey runs over Bubba after Bubba sets up a table in the corner. A BIG backdrop puts Jeff on the floor and Rosey rams Spike's head into a table. Rosey misses a charge and drives himself through a table in the corner but that doesn't count because it wasn't someone else putting him through.

Jeff tries a top rope dive at Rosey but literally bounces off. Rico brings in another table and gets caught in a Dudley Dog, but 3 Minute Warning catches him in a double powerbomb to put Spike through the table instead. Jeff and Bubba get slammed down but Bubba knocks Rosey off the top and Jeff sends Rico flying into a cameraman. Bubba pounds away but Rico hits a spinwheel kick to take his head off. Rico could go in the ring make no mistake.

Rosey and Jeff go out into the crowd and there's a table out there with them. Jeff is put on said table as Bubba gets kicked in the face by Rico. Jamal misses a splash and crushes Rico, allowing Bubba to Bubba Bomb Jamal and go to save Jeff. With Bubba's help, Jeff goes up to the top of an entrance and hits a BIG Swanton through Rosey through the table to make it 2-2.

Back in the ring Jamal has Bubba on a table ready for a Rico moonsault, but he looks hesitant to launch. He looks over his shoulder, shouts "C'MON JEFF!" before staggering. THEN Jeff shakes the ropes and Rico crotches himself. Not the best response but that's on Jeff more than Rico. Bubba tries a belly to back superplex through the table but Jamal moves it away. Jeff hits Whisper in the Wind to Jamal and follows it with a dropkick.

Hardy goes to the floor to get another table which he throws at Jamal. Jeff tries to run the railing but Jamal throws the table at Jeff, who goes flying through it. That doesn't count which I can kind of agree with. Jamal puts Jeff on another table and hits a HUGE splash off the top to eliminate Jeff. That looks awesome. Bubba beats on Rico in the ring

but Jamal saves his sideburned buddy. Jamal goes up to try a top rope rana (I guess) on Bubba, only to get caught in a HUGE powerbomb through the table to get us down to one on one.

It's Rico vs. Bubba with the former pounding away and pulling in another table. Rosey comes back in but Bubba pounds away on him too. Now Jamal is in there too and it's D-VON to the rescue! He's on Smackdown at this point so this is a big deal. 3D puts Rico through the table to end this.

Rating: B-. That's likely high but this was what you want to open a show. It helps a lot that this was a fifteen minute match instead of like six minutes like they are on Raw. This was fun and the pop for the reunion of the Dudleys (which would be permanent) was a feel good moment. Good stuff here and a good choice to open things up, especially in New York City.

Stacy is at the World (WWF New York) looking great. She introduces Saliva who is doing a miniconcert at the club. They perform Always here to eat up a few minutes and we get a video about the remaining matches.

RVD is stretching before the Chamber.

Cruiserweight Title: Jamie Noble vs. Billy Kidman

Jamie is defending and has Nidia with him. Kidman grabs two very fast rollups for two and make that four in the first 30 seconds. Jamie bails to the floor but Kidman throws him right back in. Noble comes back with a neckbreaker and it's off to a bow and arrow. Kidman gets thrown to the floor and Noble hits a suicide dive. Tazz: "I think Noble has something up his sleeve, but he's not wearing a shirt so he has no sleeve."

Back in and Kidman speeds things up with a back elbow and a dropkick followed by an AA into a backbreaker for two. A Falcon's Arrow gets two for Noble so Kidman hits Tessmacher's Tesshocker (belly to back suplex position but he slams Noble down face first instead). Kidman loads up the Shooting Star but Noble bails to the floor. That's fine with Billy so he dives on Noble out there to take the champ down again.

Back in and Nidia distracts Kidman but gets knocked off the apron by Kidman. The BK Bomb (Low Down) gets two for Kidman as does a Tiger Bomb

for Noble. They go up top and Kidman hits a sitout inverted DDT. That was pretty awesome looking but it only gets two. Noble hits Orton's Elevated DDT for two out of the corner so Kidman hits an enziguri to take over again. Billy loads up the Shooting Star but a Nidia distraction....only delays Kidman as he hits the Shooting Star for the pin and the title.

Rating: B-. These two got going good and strong at the end which is exactly what you want from a match like this. When you can get into the area of a match where it's one big move after another and you're just waiting on one of them to stay down, that's a great sign. The Shooting Star looked great too. This wasn't a masterpiece or anything but it was solid.

Angle and Benoit are in the back and Angle is incensed that Kidman could win a title. If he can win, then so can they, as long as Benoit stays out of the captain's way. Benoit gets in his face but Angle says they should be friends to the end. Benoit offers a handshake but Angle says no way. Angle: "I don't shake hands! Tag team partners hug!" So HELL NO is ripping off Benoit and Angle?

Victoria, still psycho here, is looking in a mirror. Then she thinks it's Trish and goes nuts.

We recap Trish vs. Victoria, which is a hardcore match. Victoria is batty and claims that it's because she and Trish used to work together as fitness models, but Trish slept her way to the top. Tonight it's about revenge. Why can't stories today have simple backstories like that? I mean, it's not that hard to LIE.

Women's Title: Victoria vs. Trish Stratus

Hardcore rules here and Trish is defending. This is their second PPV match after Trish won last month. Victoria immediately chokes her with Trish's coat before getting a broom out of one of the trashcans on each post. Trish jumps the broom (lucky guy) but Victoria takes her down almost immediately. Victoria chokes her with the broom in the corner but gets flipped to the mat.

Now Trish finds a trashcan lid but Victoria knocks the lid into her head

with the broom. We head to the floor and Trish gets whipped HARD into the trashcan. Back in and Victoria hits her slingshot legdrop for two. The challenger puts a trashcan in between the top and middle rope but Trish grabs her legs and slingshots Victoria's head into the can. Trish sets up an ironing board in the corner and whips Victoria into it for two.

It's kendo stick time with Victoria taking a beating. She gets a boot up in the corner though and BLASTS Trish with a trashcan lid. Victoria has a bloody nose and sits on the middle rope, allowing Trish to try a rana out of the corner. Victoria counters into a kind of Boston Crab position, but Trish does a big situp and hits Victoria in the head with a can lid.

That only stuns her though so Trish BLASTS her in the head with a trashcan lid again to knock Victoria off the ropes and out to the floor. Victoria gets a mirror from under the ring but Trish superkicks her down. Chick Kick (Punk's high kick) gets two for Trish as does a bulldog. Victoria rolls to the floor and pulls out a fire extinguisher to blast Trish with. That and a suplex gets the pin and the title for the nutjob.

Rating: B. This was AWESOME with both chicks beating the tar out of each other. The story of the match worked really well too with Trish trying to wrestle her way out of trouble against a monster that wanted to hurt her no matter what. This worked really well and is one of the most intense Divas matches you'll ever see.

Booker is getting ready.

Bischoff brags about the Chamber for a bit. Show comes up and says he'll show Eric why trading him to Smackdown was a bad idea.

Heyman is worried that Brock can't beat Big Show. Lesnar has (legit, due to Show hurting him at a house show) bad ribs.

We recap Show vs. Lesnar. Lesnar beat Taker in the Cell last month, so Show beat up Taker to make himself the next challenger. Even Heyman says Brock can't beat him.

Smackdown World Title: Big Show vs. Brock Lesnar

Lesnar is defending here and is mostly a face now. It's on in a hurry as

the fans are behind Lesnar. Show gets in a shot to the ribs in the corner and launches Brock across the ring. Brock is all like BRING IT ON and grabs a double leg to take Show down. They head to the floor and Brock gets rammed into the post. Back in and Brock pounds away before hitting something like a belly to back suplex. Show misses a charge and Brock "hits" a German, which means Show lands on Brock's head. Brock tries an F5 but Show knees him in the ribs.

The referee gets bumped and Brock THROWS Big Show down with an overhead belly to belly. Heyman throws in a chair and Brock cracks Show over the head with it. There's the F5 and a new referee but Heyman pulls the referee out of the ring. This makes no sense and I'll get to why in a second. Lesnar figures out what's going on and gives chase, but charges right into a pair of chair shots to the ribs. Show chokeslams Brock onto the chair for the pin and the title. That's Brock's first ever loss.

Rating: D+. Most of that is for Lesnar's INSANE power. Here's why this match ticks me off: Lesnar had to get the title taken off of him because of injury. That's fine. So they pick BIG SHOW to take it from him? This is the same idea as Nash beating Goldberg: you have an unstoppable monster and you take the title off of him for the sake of this old dude? You have Angle, Benoit, Eddie Guerrero and Edge on the Smackdown roster and you pick BIG SHOW? Now to be fair Angle got the title in a month, but why not just cut out the middle man and make a new star?

As for why Heyman's turn makes no sense, the whole idea of the match was that Heyman didn't think Lesnar could suplex, F5 or beat Big Show. He did the first two things and had Show beat until Heyman turned. Heyman is a lot of things, but he's always been someone that knows what kind of a monster he's got and sticks with them to the end. This is out of character for him, especially when an injured Brock had proven he could beat Show. So on top of being a bad match with bad booking, it makes no sense. Nice job WWE.

Show and Heyman immediately bail.

We recap the triple threat tag title match. Benoit and Angle beat Rey and Edge in the match of the year at No Mercy in a tournament final. The new

champions argued over who is team captain and have to work together or they're suspended. Edge and Mysterio won the titles on Smackdown in 2/3 falls match. Stephanie threw in Los Guerreros because these six are the Smackdown Six and you can't have just four of them together, even though we've had that for months. Not that I'm complaining though, because this is going to be AWESOME.

Smackdown Tag Titles: Edge/Rey Mysterio vs. Kurt Angle/Chris Benoit vs. Los Guerreros

Edge and Mysterio are champions and this is under elimination rules. It's Mysterio vs. Benoit to start which is fine with me. Benoit hits a HARD chop but gets caught in a rana and a flapjack to give Rey what will likely be a short lived advantage. Off to Edge for a double hiptoss before Kurt gets the tag and a big pop. Chavo punches Angle in the back of the head and that's a tag apparently.

Chavo gets shouldered down but nips up immediately. Off to Mysterio vs. Eddie which is one of those pairings that works no matter what. A headscissors takes Eddie down and it's off to Kurt to face the masked dude. They're going very fast paced so far. Angle misses a charge into the post but Rey takes too much time on the top and gets run over by Kurt. The Olympian tags in the psycho who suplexes Rey down for two.

Back to Angle who suplexes Rey down and gets in a cheap shot on Edge. The Angle Slam is countered but Angle clotheslines Rey down instead. Back to Chris as Tazz talks about Los Guerreros not wanting to get in yet. The battling partners tag in again so Angle can put on a front facelock. Rey fights up after about a minute in the hold and kicks Kurt in the face to take him down.

There's the hot tag to Edge who cleans house with a bunch of suplexes. Eddie comes in and goes to the floor with Rey. Edge misses the spear and gets caught in a Crossface and ankle lock AT THE SAME TIME. Mysterio breaks both parts of the hold up and Chavo pulls Angle to the floor. Rey dives on both of them and Benoit Germans Edge but Eddie comes in off the top to sunset flip Benoit, sending Edge flying in a German for two each. Eddie gets suplexed to the floor with his head smashing into the apron on

the way down. FREAKING OW MAN!

Benoit rolls more Germans on Edge (Gee I wonder why he needed neck surgery five months after this) and Eddie hits the Frog Splash on Edge but Benoit hits the Swan Dive on Eddie. Angle Slam and Ankle lock to Eddie while Benoit Crossfaces Edge. Chavo hits Benoit with a belt and throws the belt to Angle. Benoit thinks Angle hit him and Mysterio dropkicks Chris into Angle. Angle and Rey go to the floor and Edge spears Benoit for the elimination. Absolutely amazing sequence there which NEVER STOPPED.

Angle and Benoit destroy Edge and Rey before leaving. They lay out Los Guerreros too for fun. Eddie vs. Edge keeps the match going and Eddie suplexes the Canadian down before it's off to Chavo. Chavo pounds away on Edge as Los Guerreros double team. We get down to a much more standard tag team formula with Edge playing Ricky Morton. Edge finally comes back with a double clothesline and it's off to Rey.

Things speed up again with Rey flying all over the place and hitting a headscissors to put Chavo down. Edge spears both guys down and launches Rey up to rana Eddie off the top. That's another awesome sequence. There's the 619 to Eddie but Chavo hits Rey in the back to break up the West Coast Pop. Eddie puts on the Lasso From El Paso (a Boston Crab/Sharpshooter hybrid) for the tap and the titles.

Rating: B+. This was a match that felt like it got hacked to death. If you give these guys another 15 minutes (the match ran 20) and take away the belt shots, the match gets a lot better. The first half, as in before the first elimination, is INCREDIBLE. The stuff after that though is good but standard. Still though, these guys were the future of the company and it was a good sign to see them. Combine that with three guys named Batista, Orton and Cena that had debuted earlier in the year and you've got the next five years of WWE.

Here's Nowitski to make fun of New York in a really stupid promo. Matt Hardy comes out to yell at him before blasting New York as well. The mouth running goes on even longer until FINALLY Scott Steiner debuts and murders them. Somehow this took SEVEN AND A HALF MINUTES. Steiner would

go on to have perhaps the two worst PPV world title matches in recorded history against HHH before being shunted down the card.

Shawn says he believes in himself but we get RNN BREAKING NEWS! It's Randy Orton who has a bad shoulder. He says there's no new damage to his bad shoulder due to an extra pillow on the plane. This was the WAY over the top deal that Orton was doing which first turned him heel. I loved it but it got annoying fast, which is the right idea.

We recap the Elimination Chamber. HHH is the official WORLD CHAMPION OF EVERYTHING but Shawn beat him at Summerslam and wants a rematch. Bischoff wants to top the Cell so here's his latest idea. The rules are mostly simple: two guys start and there are four more in individual pods. After five minutes there's a new guy introduced and it's elimination rules. The winner is world champion. The other four guys are there because they're the biggest stars on Raw. This is set to Always again and they're not even trying to hide that this is ALL about HHH vs. Shawn.

HHH says that he's awesome and he'll keep the title.

Eric comes out and walks through the Chamber to explain everything I just said. Apparently the glass is bulletproof. This is the first time the Chamber had been seen and I believe the first time the rules have been explained.

Raw World Title: Kane vs. Chris Jericho vs. HHH vs. Shawn Michaels vs. Booker T vs. Rob Van Dam

Jericho is a tag champion, but the cool part here is that as he comes out, Saliva does his theme song live at WWF New York. HHH is defending of course. Shawn's tights are...brown. This is one of those decisions that no one ever quite got and he was made fun of extensively for them apparently. I mean....BROWN? Mankind wore brown for crying out loud. The wide show of the Chamber really does look cool. Anyway the entrances take a long time and RVD vs. HHH gets us going.

Van Dam hits a spinwheel kick to take HHH down but walks into a facebuster. The Pedigree is countered into a backdrop over the top to hit the cage outside the ring. JR's statements about the Chamber are already

nuts as he says it has no soul or conscience. IT'S A FREAKING CAGE! Anyway, HHH is rammed into the cage over and over to bust him open and Van Dam hits Rolling Thunder over the top rope to land on HHH on the cage. Yeah there's a floor made of cage surrounding the ring that is level with the mat if you've somehow never seen one of these.

Van Dam goes up on one of the pods but his flip dive mostly hits the floor instead of HHH. Back in the ring and HHH gets stomped down in the corner as Jericho is added in as the third man. Van Dam immediately kicks him down and it's five minutes until the next entrant. A cartwheel into a moonsault gets two on Jericho and they head outside the ring as well. In the first famous spot in the Chamber's history, Van Dam jumps off the top rope, misses Jericho, and grabs onto the cage like Spider-Man before spinning back around to cross body Jericho. That's still awesome.

HHH gets back up and hits the knee to the face of Van Dam which gives Jericho a two count. HHH and Jericho double team RVD before Chris tells Shawn to suck it. Van Dam's back gets rammed into the cage wall some more and Jericho talks a lot of trash. Rob's back goes into the cage over and over and we head back in to the ring. There's a spin kick to put Jericho down as Booker T is in fourth.

Booker quickly clears the ring and we get a Spinarooni before Van Dam fights Booker one on one. Booker gets in some shots to Rob but walks into the stepover kick to give Van Dam control again. HHH gets back up and takes Van Dam down, only to get caught by the scissors kick from Booker. The next big spot of the match is Van Dam going up to the top of the pod and hitting the Five Star on HHH, with Van Dam's knee hitting HHH's throat, severely (and legitimately) injuring HHH's windpipe. Since HHH can't get up right now to eliminate Van Dam, Booker hits a missile dropkick to take Van Dam out.

Booker grabs a quick cover on HHH but only gets two. Jericho goes after Booker but gets caught in an Alabama Slam for his efforts. Kane comes in fifth because we don't quite know if Shawn's back can handle a full match yet. Kane goes off on Booker and Jericho as HHH lays on the outside. Jericho gets launched face first into the cage wall and is then thrown through the BULLETPROOF, yes BULLETPROOF I SAY glass. This would become a

running joke in the Chamber.

JR says the Chamber has no soul or conscience again just to hammer home the point. Kane chokeslams Booker and Jericho adds the Lionsault to take Booker out and get us down to four guys. A Kane suplex gets two on Jericho as we're waiting on Shawn to come in. HHH goes up top for no apparent reason and gets slammed down ala Flair. Jericho missile dropkicks Kane down and here's HBK.

HHH is down in the corner of course so Shawn can only beat on Kane and Jericho. There's the forearm to Kane but no nipup, leaving everyone down at the moment. Kane whips Shawn HARD into the corner where Shawn flips upside down. There's a chokeslam for all three remaining guys not named Kane but instead of covering, Kane loads up a Tombstone on HHH. Shawn superkicks Kane down but he sits up. The Pedigree and Lionsault finally put Kane out and we're down to three.

Shawn gets double teamed by HHH and Jericho and it's time for Chris to dance. After being rammed into the cage a few times, Michaels is busted open. Jericho talks more trash and HHH walks around a lot. Shawn tries to fight back but his piledriver on the cage is countered to backdrop his bad back onto the cage again. There's the Lionsault...for two. You know, the move that put out Booker and Kane earlier? It's now not enough to put down Shawn when he's been beaten down and injured on top of having one match in four and a half years.

Shawn comes back with a moonsault press to Jericho for two before putting Jericho in the Walls. HHH finally comes back from getting popcorn or something with a DDT to Shawn. Jericho and HHH finally get in the argument you were expecting and the fight is on. Jericho jumps out of the corner and lands in the Pedigree, but Jericho counters into the Walls. While holding HHH, Shawn kicks Jericho's head off and it's down to one on one. If this surprises you, you're an imbecile.

So it's Shawn, bloodied and injured and in his second match in four years, against an also injured HHH in the main event at Madison Square Garden. Gosh I'm so glad these two are so selfless. The spinebuster puts Shawn down and HHH backdrops him over the top. Shawn sends HHH into the

cage but when Shawn tries to Pedigree HHH on the steel, HHH counters into a slingshot through the cage again. You know, because Shawn would still be alive at this point.

Back in the ring all that gets two and it's time for the slugout. Seriously, those brown tights are so stupid looking. A facebuster puts Shawn down and it's another clothesline to put him onto the outside. The Pedigree on the steel is countered into another slingshot into the Chamber wall. Back into the ring and Shawn drops the elbow off the top of the pod. The Superkick is countered into the Pedigree and, say it with me, Shawn kicks out at two. Another Pedigree is countered into a backdrop, followed by the Sweet Chin Music to give Shawn the title.

Rating: D+. I've mellowed on this match in the last few years to the point where I'm not mad about it anymore. However, it's still one of those matches where you look at it and say really. As in REALLY? We're supposed to buy that Shawn can survive ALL of that and still win the freaking title? You have to keep in mind this isn't the Shawn who was having the match of the year for like five years running. No one expected him to go on as long as he did. At this point, making it to Wrestlemania would have been impressive.

That's where this match loses it for me: we're supposed to buy that Shawn is so great, so amazing, and so tough that he can basically walk off the street and be better than four of the top guys in the business? There comes a point where my suspension of disbelief is cut off and I can't buy this anymore. We passed that at Summerslam, making this even more ridiculous. This match is also the reason we had to sit through the AWFUL match at Armageddon, where HHH and Shawn got to waste 40 minutes of our time by barely being able to move.

In short, this is way more than I can accept as far as the match being realistic. In wrestling, you have to accept that some stuff is ridiculous. That's called suspending disbelief. However, there comes a point where that's not the case any longer. It's unrealistic in wrestling terms to accept that Shawn can survive all this and win the title. This was pure selfishness from Shawn and HHH, which would get WAY worse in the future. HHH wouldn't make a new star for over a YEAR when he put Benoit

over at Wrestlemania in the same arena.

As for the rest of the match, it's acceptable, but WAY too long. The Chamber matches need to go about thirty minutes instead of the forty this one went. The last seventeen minutes here, as in the amount of time after Kane is eliminated, are REALLY repetitive and while they had good drama, they needed to be cut. Booker, RVD, Jericho and Kane were all there to fill in spaces and be there for Shawn and HHH to bounce off of. I don't hate the match, but it really doesn't work all that well.

Confetti falls to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The show overall is pretty solid actually but the main event is a good sized letdown. The Show/Lesnar stuff I went on about enough, but other than those two things the card is pretty solid. The triple threat tag is good stuff but the No Mercy match is even better. This show is worth checking out, but you won't be thrilled by the Chamber.

Ratings Comparison

Dudley Boys/Jeff Hardy vs. Rico/3 Minute Warning

Original: B

Redo: B-

Billy Kidman vs. Jamie Noble

Original: C+

Redo: B-

Victoria vs. Trish Stratus

Original: C-

Redo: B

Big Show vs. Brock Lesnar

Original: D-

Redo: D+

Los Guerreros vs. Kurt Angle/Chris Benoit vs. Edge/Rey Mysterio

Original: B

Redo: B+

Shawn Michaels vs. HHH vs. Booker T vs. Rob Van Dam vs. Kane vs. Chris Jericho

Original: B

Redo: D+

Overall Rating

Original: B-

Redo: C+

Dang that's a big swing on the Chamber. I don't remember liking it that much the first time.

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

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/02/20/survivor-series-2002-the-longest-rant-about-anything-ive-ever-done/>

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And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for just \$4 at:

Thought of the Day: One At A Time

So for the first time in forever I'm watching a WWE (Evolution of a Predator) and the DVD opens at Elimination Chamber. The narrator talks about how the Elimination Chamber is special because it only happens once a year. Not only does it happen more than once a year, it happens more than once a night. Just the sound of that on paper cuts down on how special the match should be. Make it once a year or at least give us several months between each match.

Thought of the Day: The WWE Treadmill

I'm finishing Smackdown and this became even more obvious. One of WWE's biggest problems is that the year is so repetitive and it's the same pattern over and over again. Think about this.

The year starts the night after Wrestlemania where something big happens to set up Extreme Rules. After that PPV we go to the start of the big summer angle which usually culminates at Summerslam or the next month's show. During the big summer angle we hit MITB, meaning the next few months are spent teasing cash-ins, usually starting around Summerslam. Then we

lighten up a lot until the end of the year through Survivor Series and TLC. The new year brings the Rumble and the start of the Road to Wrestlemania. The Rumble establishes one of the major matches, the a few weeks later we get the return of the big name for the other Wrestlemania main event. Then it's the Chamber to establish the other title match and six weeks later it's Wrestlemania to close out the WWE year.

How many years in a row have you seen that exact sequence?

On This Day: February 19, 2012 – Elimination Chamber: Why Doesn't The Chamber Main Event Its Own Show?

Elimination Chamber 2012

Date: February 19, 2012

Location: Bradley Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T, Jerry Lawler

This is the final stop on the Road to Wrestlemania, or the beginning of the road, depending on how you look at it. The even money would seem to be on both of the champions retaining here but you can never be sure. I mean, Santino is scheduled to be in this match so how sure can you be? Let's get to it.

The opening video is exactly what you would imagine it is.

The Chamber is lowered.

Raw World Title: CM Punk vs. Dolph Ziggler vs. Chris Jericho vs. R-Truth vs. The Miz vs. Kofi Kingston

Jericho enters last due to winning a match on Raw two weeks ago. Punk and Kofi start us off. Naturally the two faces wrestle as faces. Also they're not going to use a lot of energy this early in the match. Kofi goes to the ropes but might have slipped a bit. It was nothing bad though. They trade pinfall reversals and Kofi avoids the GTS. Punk avoids the Boom Drop and they go to the outside. Well as to the outside as you can go.

Punk blocks a kick and slingshots Kofi into the pod which has a great thud sound effect. Back into the ring but Punk has hurt his hip. It was probably due to that time when he got slammed out on the chain and landed on his hip, but that's just speculation. Here's the first pod opening and it's....a guy in pink trunks. The new idea they want to push is that it can go from a one on one match to a triple threat and so on. Great, another thing to have drilled into our heads.

Ziggler goes after Punk and does pullups on the Chamber wall. He splashes Kofi back in the ring and we're told that pins have to take place in there. Good thing to clarify. A splash attempt on Punk misses and everyone is in some trouble. Punk and Kofi double team Dolph and go to the outside for a double springboard. In a cool looking visual, they both dive at Dolph but collide in the air off the springboards due to Dolph ducking.

Dolph can't cover though so we open pod #2 after about three minutes. It's R-Truth who works on the pink one. He's no Bret Hart. Truth knocks Ziggler over the ropes to send Dolph leg first into the cage. Truth dives on top of him because he's not that smart all the time. Scissors kick gets two in the ring. Punk does his usual ramming his head into the other guy's ear to call a spot before superplexing Truth for two.

Trouble in Paradise misses Punk and Kofi gets thrown to the outside. Macho Elbow eliminates Truth but Ziggler grabs a rollup. Punk rolls through it and Kofi hits the kick on Punk (looked SICK). Ziggler goes after Kofi of course but Kofi fights him off. He can only get two on the champ though due to the delay. Kofi does the springboard into the Spider-Man cage grab then hits a tornado DDT Dolph onto the cage, basically knocking him silly.

Here's Miz in fifth to clean house. Everyone is down now so Miz covers Dolph, getting two. Kofi gets up on the ropes and kicks Miz in the face but is knocked off and crashes into the cage. GTS and Finale are both blocked so Miz hits the short DDT for two. They head to the mat and Punk grabs the Vice on Miz, but wouldn't you know it, Jericho comes in to break it up before the tap.

Jericho and Punk square off with Jericho in control. Walls and GTS are both blocked but the Lionsault hits for two. Ziggler comes back in and walks into the Codebreaker to get us down to four (Punk, Jericho, Miz, Kofi). Punk catches a Jericho dropkick and catapults Chris out to the cage again. Jericho gets rammed into the pods so he gets a finger into Punk's eye and hides in the pod. That works for about two seconds as Punk follows him in.

Punk's arm gets caught in the door and Jericho pulls on it to ram Punk into the pod door. Kofi remembers that he's alive and tries the SOS on the cage, driving his own head into the cage. Miz and Kofi are the only ones up now but Miz misses the running clothesline and Kingston goes up. A superplex is countered as Punk powerbombs Miz for two. Kofi climbs to the top of the pod and dives onto both of them but can't pin Miz.

Jericho comes in and Lionesomes Kofi for the elimination to get us down to three. He beats on Kofi after the elimination and throws him out of the Chamber. Punk kicks Jericho out of the Chamber and he's unconscious. The referees say he's done and

say he's not responsive. I'm REALLY not liking them doing this a week after what happened to Sorensen. The cameraman is down too but sits up a few seconds later.

Back in the ring Miz tries the Reality Check but Punk counters with a high kick for two. The running knee and bulldog get two but Punk springboards into the Finale for two. Miz freaks out and talks a lot of trash in the corner but misses a charge, hitting his head on the pod. GTS puts him out at 32:39 and I guess Jericho isn't running in as a surprise since it's over.

Rating: C+. The Chamber is one of those matches that gets an automatic higher grade to start. This was one of the weaker ones I can remember. For me the problem is that the main feud in this, Jericho and Punk, has no heat on it and there's zero reason for this to be in the Chamber. They were the only two that had a chance in this but their feud has just begun with nothing but a run-in by Jericho, a promo and some staring. That's the problem that these calendar based PPVs present and that looks like how the future will be.

We recap Santino getting his spot in the Chamber.

Santino drinks Raw eggs to Eugene's music and with a towel that looks like it has the All That logo on it.

Remember those overly long videos on Rock and Cena? Here's another one, this time on Cena's training regimen and the gym he goes to. Some developmental guys work out there. This one wastes four minutes of PPV time.

Divas Title: Tamina Snuka vs. Beth Phoenix

Beth is wearing something inspired by Piper. This match could be subtitled "How many times can we remind you that Tamina is Jimmy Snuka's daughter in a last ditch effort to make you care about her". Tamina goes up quickly but gets knocked down to the outside. Beth pounds on her and Tamina barely gets back inside. Tamina gets up and hits a Samoan Drop but the Splash

is broken up. Superplex gets two for Beth and Tamina chops her down. Superfly Splash gets two. Tamina goes up again but Beth brings her down, sends her into the buckle and the Glam Slam retains the title at 7:00.

Rating: D+. Call me sexist, call me a chauvinist, call me whatever you want, but I'm bored out of my mind every time the Divas are on screen. They're waiting on Beth vs. Kharma which basically means they're spending a year putting the whole division on hold, but at the end of the day is anyone going to care? I mean, who is Kharma going to feud with once she beats Beth? The division means nothing and it's so uninteresting. The US Title can't get on PPV because we have to see this. Right.

Santino punches some meat.

Jericho can't talk.

Here's Ace for his big announcement. He's the Raw interim GM and he's heard complaints about Smackdown's GM Teddy Long. And never mind as here's Alberto Del Rio! He says Teddy is a dog and likes to play favorites. Alberto wants Ace to be permanent Raw GM and the GM of Smackdown too. That brings out Henry who Cole thought was suspended (wasn't he on Smackdown this week?).

Henry thinks Teddy is a bully who physically assaulted him. He supports the idea of Ace as permanent GM of both shows. Here's Christian in a hat. Christian says that Teddy has been negligent and Smackdown is an unsafe working environment. He endorses Ace for GM as well. Ace has a picture taken of all four of them and then a second one. Now one with Otunga in it as well. And that's that.

Santino runs some steps.

The Chamber is lowered. As in the ambulance match is main eventing ELIMINATION CHAMBER instead of an ELIMINATION

CHAMBER.

Big Show says he has to win tonight.

Smackdown World Title: Big Show vs. Great Khali vs. Cody Rhodes vs. Daniel Bryan vs. Santino Marella vs. Wade Barrett

Barrett and Big Show start in the ring. Show runs Barrett over to start but Barrett gets him down for one. They go outside and Show gets rammed into the cage door twice. Wade goes after the knee but Show kicks him off. We get a statement from Lawler saying that if you're knocked out (like Jericho was) that counts as a submission. Why do I have a feeling this won't be enforced later? Show wants Bryan as the buzzer goes off but gets Cody instead. Show is standing there waiting on him and things slow down a lot.

Cody gets thrown to the outside while Barrett is thrown back inside. Chokeslam to Barrett is countered and Wade chop blocks Show down. Cody and Barrett team up on Show and start fighting a few seconds later. Santino comes in fourth and after he hits his usual stuff, Show runs him over. Cody takes Show down by the knee though as the fans chant for Santino.

Barrett and Cody double suplex Show onto the steel to put him down. Cody hits the moonsault to Barrett and goes after Santino. No one is out yet. Rhodes rams the Cobra hand into the cage and Khali is in fifth. Chops and clotheslines for both heels and the Punjabi Plunge to Rhodes. One to Barrett as well and a chop to Santino. The giants face off and Show spears Khali for an elimination about 40 seconds after Khali entered.

Show keeps staring at Bryan and then even tries to reach in and grab him. He breaks the chains on the pod and has broken through. Bryan demands the door be opened but Show has broken in and climbed through the top. The place ERUPTS for this. The clock goes off to release Bryan but they're both inside the pod. Bryan manages to get out but Show does the required

breaking the plexiglass spot. You know, THE SAME THING THAT HAPPENS EVERY YEAR.

Into the ring now and Show loads up the right hand. Oh wait it's the chokeslam instead but Barrett kicks Show in the face before there's a cover. Santino pops up for a quick rollup for two on Barrett but is then thrown to the outside. Cody hits two Beautiful Disasters to Show followed by a DDT. Barrett hits a middle rope DDT and Big Show is gone to a big reaction. So it's Cody, Barrett, Bryan and Santino to go.

Make that three as Santino rolls up Cody to pin him. Cody hits Cross Rhodes to Santino. There's Cody's next feud I guess. Barrett covers Santino but it only gets two. Barrett hammers on him and ties Santino's arms in the Chamber wall. The beating continues on Santino for awhile until Bryan gets back up with a flying knee to Barrett. Bryan goes up but Barrett knocks him part of the way into it again by the back of the head.

Barrett loads up Wasteland off the middle rope but Santino breaks it up because he's an idiot. Santino tries a superplex but gets shoved off. He avoids an elbow and Bryan hits a top rope headbutt, allowing Santino to steal the pin, meaning he's eliminated Cody Rhodes and Wade Barrett. Bryan is very happy to see what he's up against as it's one on one now. It turns into a cat and mouse game and Santino even gets the Cobra for two. The LeBell Lock goes on and Santino taps at 33:57.

Rating: B-. Better match with better drama, but at the end of the day this wasn't that great. Khali being out quick was fine but I have some real issues with them jobbing out their heels AGAIN for the sake of a one off thing. Barrett was this evil violent and cunning man and he loses to Santino. The same for the longest reigning IC Champion in 8 years. And for what? A pop because they can't put the freaking US Champion in there? Ok I'm shutting up before I go too long with this. Match was ok, but nothing great.

Here's Sheamus post match who takes Bryan out.

Time for unfunny comedy with Natalya. Cheese is present. Horny says that jack cheese is his favorite. Jack Swagger gets a cameo with Vickie, prompting a cottage cheese line. Justin Gabriel gets in Jack's face so Teddy makes our filler match. Jack says that one man should run both shows. Teddy agrees but says it should be him. The match is for the title.

Buy Rock's new DVD!

US Title: Jack Swagger vs. Justin Gabriel

Please change the title. Swagger controls to start and hits the Vader Bomb for no cover. Gabriel gets in some basic offense but Swagger grabs the ankle lock and wins by submission at 3:00. Of all the matches I've ever seen added to a PPV to fill in time, this was one of them.

Undertaker will be on Raw tomorrow.

We recap Cena vs. Kane. Kane wants Cena to embrace the hate, Cena says no. Kane does something bad to Cena to get him to embrace the hate, Cena says no. Kane does something bad to Cena then hurts Ryder to get him to embrace the hate, Cena says no. Kane does something bad to Cena then hurts Ryder then makes Cena make out with a hot woman to get him to embrace the hate, Cena says no. Conclusion? Ambulance match, duh.

John Cena vs. Kane

You win by putting your opponent in the ambulance and having it driven out of the arena. You know Walt Disney was an ambulance driver in World War I when he was about 14. True story. Kane's broken leg by Henry has been changed into a self imposed exile. Ok then. Cena charges to start and they head to the floor. They fight by the ambulance and use some of the stuff inside it as well.

Back to the ring and Kane goes into the steps but takes over

anyway. Kane hits the side slam but Cena ducks the clothesline. He hits some of his signature stuff but the AA is countered into a smother. Cena goes down and is out cold so Kane throws him to the floor. He goes under the ring and pulls out a wheelchair. Well at least he's making sure Cena is comfortable.

Cena escapes the chair and they fight to the ambulance again. Kane gets slammed into the vehicle and put into the chair. Cena rolls the chair into some production stuff. They fight into the tech area and Cena goes all beast mode. He asks Booker if this gets him a spot in the Fave Five and rams the steps into Kane's head. John sets up the steps and tries to AA Kane through the table but Kane reverses into a chokeslam through it instead.

Kane goes up to the ambulance and gets a stretcher on wheels. Kane gets him in the ambulance but can't close the second door. Cena kicks it into Kane's face and they fight to the cab of the ambulance. John climbs onto the roof of the cab and then on top of the ambulance. They slug it out up there and Cena AA's Kane off the ambulance into a conveniently placed area we can't see. At least you couldn't see the crash pad. He puts Kane in, closes the doors and it's over at 21:21.

Rating: C+. The match was ok but it wasn't great at all. Why this finished the show rather than one of the title matches is beyond me, unless something changes after the match. Cena winning was obvious and that's fine. At least it ends this horrible storyline for good (in theory).

Overall Rating: D. Let's see. The namesake match didn't main event the show, the world titles didn't change, the presumptive Mania matches are exactly what we thought they would be, and Cena wins again. Why exactly did this show exist again? I really didn't like this one at all and it feels like WWE is being dragged into Mania instead of hitting it head on. They really need to crank things up before the PPV because in

my eyes, what they're doing heading into it isn't working.

Results

CM Punk b. The Miz, Dolph Ziggler, Kofi Kingston, Chris Jericho and R-Truth – Punk last eliminated The Miz after a GTS

Beth Phoenix b. Tamina Snuka – Glam Slam

Daniel Bryan b. Great Khali, Big Show, Wade Barrett, Cody Rhodes and Santino Marella – Bryan last eliminated Marella with the LeBell Lock

Jack Swagger b. Justin Gabriel – Ankle Lock

John Cena b. Kane – Cena put Kane in the ambulance

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Elimination Chamber 2013: Looked Good On Paper, Looked Better In Reality

Elimination Chamber 2013

Date: February 17, 2013

Location: New Orleans Arena, New Orleans, Louisiana

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole

This is the final PPV before we hit Wrestlemania 29. The main events tonight are the Rock defending the Raw World Title against CM Punk, Alberto Del Rio defending the Smackdown World Title against Big Show and an Elimination Chamber match for the #1 contendership to the Smackdown World Title. The card is pretty stacked on top which hopefully will make for a fun show. Let's get to it.

Pre Show: Brodus Clay/Tensai vs. Rhodes Scholars

Sandow and Rhodes talk about how this is the reunion tour that the fans

have demanded on social media. Tensai has his own hat now and dances down to the ring. It's Sandow vs. Brodus to start things off but Damien is quickly sent to the floor. A double tag brings in Cody to face Tensai and after a splash staggers Rhodes, he comes back with a punch to the large head of Tensai.

Sandow cheats a bit, allowing Cody to hit the Disaster Kick for two. Damien comes in legally now and pounds away for a bit before bringing Cody back in for a front facelock. Tensai fights out and hits an uppercut but Rhodes gets a tag out anyway. Tensai shrugs off the Wind-Up Elbow and brings in Clay off the hot tag. Brodus runs over Cody in the corner and loads up his suplex but Sandow dropkicks him in the back for the save. The big guys crush Sandow with standing body attacks, followed by a double headbutt and double splash to Cody for the pin at 4:06.

Rating: C. This was exactly what it was expected to be: a fun opener that allowed both teams to fire up the crowd a bit. I have no idea what the point was in splitting up the Scholars to have them reunite like two weeks later, but I'm not a professional at stuff like this. Brodus and Tensai will probably enter the tag title picture soon, once HELL NO breaks up.

The opening video is about how this is the final chance at getting to Wrestlemania, but to go the men have to pay a price. We also talk about the six man tag with Shield vs. Cena/Ryback/Sheamus. Oh and the title matches are thrown in as well.

Smackdown World Title: Big Show vs. Alberto Del Rio

Alberto is defending, having beaten Show for the title on Smackdown earlier this year in a last man standing match. Del Rio won a rematch with the same gimmick at the Royal Rumble, but Big Show says Del Rio can't pin him. Alberto broke Big Show's bus because that's what kind of a hero he is. Big Show takes the champion into the corner to start and hits a pair of the skin curling chops, only to have Alberto come back with a kick to the ribs.

The Big Bald tries to get a boot up in the corner but Alberto hits a kind of jawbreaker onto the leg to slow Big Show down. The superkick to the

jaw gets two but Big Show easily throws Alberto away. Big Show spears Del Rio in half but only gets two out of it. A big clothesline puts Del Rio down and a kick to the throat does the same. The fans get behind Alberto but not enough to make him avoid the Vader Bomb for two.

Out of nowhere Alberto grabs the cross armbreaker but Big Show's limbs are too long, allowing him to get his foot on the rope to escape. Big Show gets back up and grabs a bearhug to slow things down again. He lets it go quickly though as instead of squeezing the champion, he has to kick Ricardo's bucket to the floor. Big Show tries a powerbomb but Del Rio counters with a rana to send Show to the floor. A suicide dive takes Big Show out and both guys are down on the floor.

Show dives in to break the count at nine but gets caught with a top rope seated senton for two. Back up and Big Show hits a fast chokeslam for another near fall but he can't follow up. The challenger loads up the WMD (is it called that anymore?) but Del Rio wisely bails to the floor. Show throws him back in but Del Rio counters another choke attempt with a DDT. That gets two for the champion as does the running enziguri in the corner. The fans are way into these kickouts.

There's the cross armbreaker again in the middle of the ring but Big Show stands up and hits a kind of powerbomb to break the hold. For you old school fans, think Davey Boy Smith vs. Shawn Michaels from 1992. The WMD is loaded up again but Big Show knocks out Ricardo with it instead. He picks up the bucket and Del Rio hits the running enziguri into the bucket (after slipping the first time) to drive it into Show's head. Another enziguri sets up the cross armbreaker for the submission to retain the title at 13:05.

Rating: B-. How in the world can this be Big Show vs. Alberto Del Rio? These two SUCKED just a year ago but now they're having awesome matches against anyone they face. Del Rio is in a total zone right now and I'm hoping he can make magic with guys like Henry or Swagger at Wrestlemania. Big Show can go back to the upper midcard to be slayed by a hero, which is fine all around.

No Ziggler cash-in.

US Title: Antonio Cesaro vs. The Miz

Cesaro, the champion, beat Miz at the Rumble but they're having another match because they just want to keep fighting I guess. Two of Rock's co-stars are in the audience here. Miz has a bad shoulder because of an attack from Antonio on Monday. Cesaro quickly sends him to the apron but gets caught in a sunset flip for two. Off to a wristlock by the champion but Miz reverses with another rollup for two. A shoulder breaker puts Miz down and the champion is in full control.

After a quick arm lock by Cesaro, Miz comes back with some knees to the ribs for two. Cesaro cranks on the arm some more to regain control and hooks a short arm scissors to keep Miz on the mat. The bad arm is draped across the bottom rope for two and it's off to another arm lock on the challenger. They get back to their feet and a big boot staggers Cesaro for a bit. The running clothesline in the corner sets up the top rope axhandle, but Cesaro counters into a Fujiwara Armbar.

Miz rolls out of the hold and backdrops Cesaro out to the floor to buy himself some time. A cross body off the apron is caught by Antonio but Miz escapes and sends the champion's bare knee into the steps. Back in and Miz channels his inner Nature Boy by working on the knee. A low DDT gets two on Cesaro and it's back to the knee. The Figure Four is countered but Cesaro claims a low blow...and that's a DQ at 8:22. That was a really unclear ending, but I'm guessing we get another match at Wrestlemania now. The replay shows that Cesaro caused the low blow himself.

Rating: C. Decent match with a lame ending here. At the end of the day, there's no reason for this match to happen, but it's pretty obvious that we're getting the big win for Miz at Wrestlemania, despite the face turn floundering. Cesaro continues to look strong here though which is the right idea. This was one of Miz's better matches in a good while.

Post match Miz kicks Cesaro low again.

HELL NO argues over whether or not Kane is in a bad mood. Kane says he's focused because tonight is a big deal for him. Bryan offers a partnership tonight and they hug it out, but Kane doesn't agree to watch Bryan's

back.

The Chamber is lowered.

Video on how the Chamber works. There are six men in the match with two men starting. The other four are in pods around the ring. Every five minutes, another man is entered into the match. People are eliminated by pin or submission and the last man surviving wins.

Jack Swagger vs. Kane vs. Daniel Bryan vs. Randy Orton vs. Mark Henry vs. Chris Jericho

Swagger has new music and Zeb Coulter with him. Jack says that when he talks, he showers us with truth. The mustache with Coulter attached talks about the Louisiana Purchase and how disappointed Thomas Jefferson would be with what has become of the once great nation. He doesn't like illegal immigrants asking for handouts, so the two of them will make things right. Tonight marks the beginning of a Jack Swagger America. The starters are going to be Jericho and Bryan.

Jericho snaps off some armdrags and hooks a headlock on the mat. Bryan counters into a NO Lock attempt but Jericho rolls out into an attempt at the Walls. Bryan rolls out of that to send Jericho into the corner before hitting some NO kicks. Daniel moonsaults out of the corner but gets sent to the cage on the outside. They fight to try to slam each other onto the Chamber floor but Bryan tries the NO Lock again. Jericho counters into a slingshot into the cage as they head back inside.

Back in and a belly to back suplex gets two for Chris. Jack Swagger is in third and he goes right after Jericho. Bryan gets rammed into the cage wall a few times and Swagger follows up with a splash to crush Goat Face again. Swagger drives his knee into Bryan's head to mash it against the Chamber floor but Jericho makes a save. Jack sends the Canadian into the cage a few times but Bryan comes back with a running knee to

Swagger's head to put him down again.

The swan dive from Bryan misses Jericho and Kane is in fourth. Kane and Bryan team up on Jericho and Swagger but Bryan turns on Kane with a rollup for two. Bryan wants to hug it out but instead Kane hits him in the face. The NO kicks have Kane in some trouble but the NO Lock is countered into a side slam for two. Kane goes up top but Bryan breaks up the clothesline. Jericho comes back in and plays Animal to Kane's Hawk in a Doomsday Device on Bryan. That gets two for Swagger but he can't suplex Kane a second later.

Randy Orton comes in fifth. He cleans house and hits a slingshot suplex on Bryan followed by the Elevated DDT on Kane onto the Chamber. In a cool visual, Orton superplexes Swagger just before Jericho superplexes Bryan to put all five guys down. Henry is desperate to get in and there goes the clock, giving us all six guys in the Chamber at once. House is cleaned again and a World's Strongest Slam eliminates Bryan to get us down to five.

Henry easily tosses Orton through the glass of a pod in a painful looking visual. Back inside it's Henry vs. Kane and the masked man staggers Henry with a big boot. The top rope clothesline is countered into another World's Strongest Slam to eliminate Kane and get us down to four. Henry loads up Jericho but Chris escapes and sends Henry into the pod wall. Swagger helps Jericho out and they hit a double suplex onto the Chamber floor. Jericho and Swagger head back in and a cross body off the top gets two for Chris.

The gutwrench powerbomb is blocked by Jericho but he can't hook the Walls. A bulldog looks to set up the Lionsault but Henry catches Jericho by the throat and throws him into the Chamber wall. Mark launches Jericho onto Swagger and both blonde haired guys are down. Henry misses a Vader Bomb onto both guys and it's a Codebreaker and RKO to eliminate the World's Strongest Man.

We're down to Orton, Swagger and Jericho but all three guys are down. Henry is applauded as he leaves but goes back inside to hit World's Strongest Slams on all three guys. The fans are digging Henry here and I can't say I blame them. Booker and Teddy come out to try to stop Henry and they finally get him out of the Chamber. Swagger covers Orton for two and has early control of the three way fight.

Orton and Jericho team up to throw Swagger shoulder and head first into the post/pod. The slugout is on now instead of eliminating Swagger though which could come back to haunt them. Jericho goes up but jumps into a dropkick for two. Swagger is back in now and walks into a powerslam, as does Jericho. Chris breaks up the Elevated DDT on Swagger with a dropkick for two. The Codebreaker to Swagger is countered into a belly to belly suplex for two more.

The running Vader Bomb (popular move tonight) doesn't connect with Orton but Swagger avoids the boot to the face and hooks the Patriot Act. Jericho hits an enzugiri on Swagger to break up the hold (why?) and there are the Walls on Jack. Orton breaks up the hold (again, why?) and gets two on Jericho before hitting a double Elevated DDT. Randy loads up the RK0 but Jericho blocks it, only to miss the Lionsault and walk into the RK0 for the elimination. Swagger immediately rolls up Orton for the final pin at 31:25 to go to Wrestlemania.

Rating: B. This was solid stuff and while it was somewhat obvious that Swagger was winning when they got down to three, the match never got dull or uninteresting as they had a very solid triple threat segment at the end. I'm not wild on Swagger winning and getting a shot at the title, but at least they've tweaked his character a bit to make him somewhat more interesting. Good Chamber match.

Wrestlemania tickets are still available.

We recap Shield vs. Cena/Sheamus/Ryback. The Shield is here to

fight for justice, but they've mainly attacked Ryback. Sheamus and Cena were attacked as well, so tonight the three superheroes join up to fight the seekers of justice.

Shield vs. John Cena/Sheamus/Ryback

Shield is Dean Ambrose, Seth Rollins and Roman Reigns in case you're reading this in 15 years. This was rumored to be inside the Chamber but it's just a regular six man tag. The fight starts as Shield comes through the crowd and it's a big brawl at ringside. They head into the ring and the bell hasn't rung yet. The good guys hit triple vertical suplexes on the Shield and the bell finally rings with Sheamus vs. Ambrose to start things off.

Sheamus is in full control and wisely rips off Ambrose's jacket to hit the ten forearms to the chest. Rollins is decked as well but a staredown with Reigns lets Ambrose get in a cheap shot. Off to Reigns legally now for some power strikes to the chest. Rollins and Ambrose hit some fast dropkicks for two until Seth hooks a rear naked choke to slow things down a bit. Back to Ambrose but he spends too much time shouting, allowing Sheamus to hit a fast Brogue Kick to put both guys down.

The hot tag brings in Cena to face the legal Reigns and there's a Shuffle for Roman. There's the STF but Ambrose makes the save. Rollins dives onto Cena to keep him down and get two for Reigns. A hard whip into the corner puts Cena down again and it's off to Rollins. Seth talks a lot of trash which allows Cena to come back, only to be taken down by a jumping kick to the face for two.

Back to Dean as the focus is on Cena's hand and arm. Shield hits some nice triple team stuff culminating in a big clothesline from Reigns for two. Sheamus and Roman get in a shouting match but Reigns is able to stop Cena's comeback attempt with a Samoan drop for two. Off to a chinlock followed by a punch to Cena's chest for two. Ambrose gets two off a neckbreaker followed by a figure four choke to keep Cena in trouble. John fights up but gets caught by a DDT for two almost immediately.

The fans really want to see Ryback now and they might get the chance as Cena backdrops Ambrose to the floor. The double tag brings in Rollins to

face Ryback as the place lights up. Ryback throws Ambrose into Rollins in the corner but Reigns breaks up the Meat Hook. Everything breaks down as Sheamus goes to the floor with Roman.

A HUGE spear puts Sheamus through the barricade but Reigns is down too. Rollins dives at Ryback but is caught in midair, only to be saved by Dean. Reigns comes back in for the TripleBomb but Cena makes the save. There's an AA to Ambrose as Ryback loads up the Shell Shock on Rollins, but Reigns spears Ryback down to give Rollins the pin at 14:51.

Rating: B-. Well that's one way to go. I'm not sure where they go with Ryback now though as he keeps losing every time he fights Shield. They've basically crippled his momentum at this point since Ryback hasn't won a match of note since...October? I have no idea what they're going to do with Shield next but you can't say they're not putting them over like free beer in a frat house.

Ryback storms out.

Don't try this at home.

Here are Ziggler and company with something to say. Ziggler congratulates Swagger on making it to Wrestlemania, but that doesn't guarantee him the world title. The MITB case guarantees you the title apparently. You should call the cops because Ziggler has stolen more shows than this year's Hall of Fame class combined. Cue Booker T who says Ziggler is wrong. He knows someone that can do everything Ziggler can do and more, so it's time for a match.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Kofi Kingston

Ziggler immediately takes it to the mat but Kofi pops up with a dropkick. Kofi misses a charge and goes shoulder first into the post though and Ziggy takes over. Kofi pops back up and does his double leapfrog, only to jump into the sleeper. The hold is broken and Kofi dives onto Big E. Langston on the floor. An AJ distraction backfires and Trouble in Paradise lays out Ziggler. It only gets two though as Langston makes the save, so Kofi dives on him again. Back inside and a cross body gets two for Kofi so he goes up top, only to get dropped onto the buckle. The Zig

Zag is good for the pin for Dolph at 3:54.

Rating: C. Usual decent match from these two as you would expect. When you fight each other as much as these two do, you become capable of having good matches in your sleep. These two passed that point years ago so even a quick four minute match like this is fine. Kofi continues to do his thing: make people look good.

Post match Langston lays out Kofi with the Big Ending.

We hear about the WWE App for the 475th time in the last month.

Broodus and the Funkadactyls are playing with the new WWE toys when Tensai comes in to hear a commercial. Tensai wants to know where his figure is. Broodus asks what the tattoos on his face mean but Tensai doesn't know. It might be a sushi menu though. Dancing ensues.

Divas Title: Tamina Snuka vs. Kaitlyn

Kaitlyn is defending and this match was set up on the WWE App on Monday. The crowd is silent for Kaitlyn's entrance so we get a quick promo from her about how scary Tamina is. Tamina shoves Kaitlyn around a bit to start but gets caught in a rollup for two. A backslide gets two more for the champ and Tamina is knocked to the floor. The other Divas are watching in the back. Kaitlyn goes to the apron, only to be rammed into the buckle and knocked out to the floor. Back in and a Samoan drop puts Kaitlyn down but the Superfly Splash misses. Kaitlyn spears her down to retain at 3:15.

Rating: D+. Did we really need this? No? I didn't think so either. When your match is set up on the WWE App, it's pretty clear that it's not needed on the card. For about two weeks there were no Divas mentioned anywhere on WWE TV and it was a very nice break. Why did they need to come back again?

Wrestlemania is in 49 days.

We recap The Rock vs. CM Punk. Rock won the title at the Royal Rumble but during the match, the lights went out and Shield attacked the Rock. That

was enough to give Punk the pin, but Vince McMahon restarted the match because he thought Punk was behind the attack. Rock came back and won the title with a People's Elbow to end Punk's fourteen month long reign. Punk DEMANDED a rematch tonight and recently got Vince to agree to the stipulation of if Rock gets counted out or disqualified, he loses the title.

Raw World Title: The Rock vs. CM Punk

Rock is defending and if he gets counted out or disqualified, he loses the title. Punk stole the physical belt on Raw and has it with him here. We get some big match intros and we're ready to go. Feeling out process to start with Rock avoiding some kicks from Punk. The fans are split on who to cheer for as Punk shoulder blocks Rock down. Punk does it again and smiles a lot. Heyman shouts that it's 2-0 now.

The challenger grabs a headlock and there's the third straight shoulder knockdown by Punk. Rock snaps off some armdrags so Punk bails to the outside. Back in and Punk slaps Rock which ticks the champion off. The referee breaks up the beating in the corner because it was about to cost Rock the title. Punk spits in Rock's face ala Christian vs. Orton from 2011. Rock takes his head off with a clothesline and sends Punk to the floor for another clothesline.

After a Heyman distraction, Punk takes Rock's head off with another clothesline back inside for two. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Punk hits some elbow drops for two. Back to the chinlock as Rock is in some trouble. The champion fights up but gets kicked in the head for two. Heyman shouts that Punk is getting closer and there's a snap suplex for two more. Back to the chinlock for a bit before Rock charges into a boot in the corner.

The springboard clothesline gets a near fall for Punk and it's off to a cravate. That lasts a few seconds because it's time for another chinlock. This is a much slower paced match than what they did at the Rumble. Rock fights up and pounds away in the corner but Punk avoids the spit punch and hits a running knee to the chest. The running knee hits to the jaw this time and the Macho Elbow gets two more.

They head to the floor where Punk loads up the announce table but gets rammed into the other table to stop the momentum. Back in and the high kick stops Rock cold for another near fall. We head outside again and Punk hits a Rock Bottom onto the table which doesn't break. That looked great as Rock bounced off the table with no give. Rock slides back in at nine so Punk pounds away. Punk runs his mouth a bit too much and charges into a Samoan drop to put both guys down.

Back up again and Rock hits a BIG right hand to stagger Punk against the ropes. They slug it out and there's the jumping clothesline by Rock followed by a DDT to put CM down. The Rock Bottom is countered and Punk elbows Rock down. Punk goes up top but dives into a Rock Bottom for two. The fans are shocked at that one. Punk shoves Rock into the referee right before hitting the GTS but there's no one to count. Another referee comes out as Rock escapes another GTS.

The spinebuster sets up the People's Elbow but it only gets two as well. Punk rolls onto the referee's ankle, sending him to the floor in pain. Another high kick puts Rock down and Punk calls for Heyman to send in the belt. Punk nails Heyman with the title and a second Rock Bottom is enough to send Rock to Wrestlemania at 20:57.

Rating: B. This started slow but got a lot better once they hit the main event style. The match was probably overbooked but that's Rock's bread and butter as an Attitude Era main eventer. I don't think people were expecting Punk to win the title here and the stipulation wasn't needed, but at least the match was entertaining. That's all you can ask for when you have a match with a pretty obvious ending.

Rock poses to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. This was a really solid show with nothing outside of the women being less than quite good. There are a TON of options still on the table for Wrestlemania which is a very exciting feeling. Things tomorrow night should shed some more light on what we're going to get, but we're definitely on the Road to Wrestlemania which means things should be getting very exciting very fast. Good show tonight too.

Results

Alberto Del Rio b. Big Show – Cross Armbreaker

Antonio Cesaro b. The Miz via DQ when Miz hit Cesaro low

Jack Swagger b. Randy Orton, Chris Jericho, Mark Henry, Kane and Daniel Bryan last eliminating Orton – Rollup

Shield b. John Cena/Ryback/Sheamus – Ambrose pinned Ryback after a spear from Reigns

Dolph Ziggler b. Kofi Kingston – Zig Zag

Kaitlyn b. Tamina Snuka – Spear

The Rock b. CM Punk – Rock Bottom

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