

Extreme Rules 2018 Preview



IMG Credit: WWE

It's another pay per view and WWE isn't exactly hiding the fact that this is just a pit stop on the way to Summerslam....whatever that's going to be. The show isn't exactly extreme with a cage match, an Extreme Rules match and an Iron Man match. It's also a ten match card (plus two matches on the Kickoff Show, because this needed two matches on the Kickoff Show), one of which is guaranteed to go thirty minutes, that they claim will be ending at 10:30pm. Last time that meant 11:20 so maybe they can make it even later this time. Let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: Sanity vs. New Day

This is a tables match for the sake of trying to make the show live up to its name. Ignore the fact that this isn't actually on the show of course. Sanity was called up back in April but didn't debut until June because...uh, reasons. New Day makes perfect sense for a first feud so this is as good about as good as things are going to be at the moment. That being said, Sanity has looked good so far so maybe there's some hope.

I'll take Sanity to win here as there's no reason for them to lose. New Day has nothing to gain by winning here and Sanity has yet to actually win a big match. The violence would seem to suit Sanity quite well and a win over one of the best trios ever would do them some good. Killian Dain gets to look like a monster and overpower Big E. while Eric Young probably gets the win. That's how it should go and New Day will put in a good performance in the process.

Kickoff Show: Andrade Cien Almas vs. Sin Cara

Here's another match on the Kickoff Show which was added for the sake of adding something else. They already did the match on Tuesday and while it seemed quite good, a lot of it took place during the commercial. I'm not sure why they felt the need to cram something else in but that's the way WWE tends to go.

Of course I'll take Almas to win here because even WWE isn't crazy enough to have him lose to someone as low level as Cara. Almas could become a top star in a very short amount of time around here and having him lose to Cara would be one of the dumbest things that WWE could do to him. If the match is as good as the one on Tuesday was though, we'll be fine.

US Title: Jeff Hardy(c) vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

This was supposed to happen a few weeks ago but Nakamura was bitten by a police dog (wrestling writers wish they could come up with something that out of nowhere) and the match had to be postponed. Hardy has been champion for about three months now and all of his injuries have really held his reign back. What could have been a stepping stone to the main event has been every lame midcard title reign all over again.

Nakamura winning the title here is really the only result that makes sense here and somehow, despite being in the World Title match at WrestleMania earlier in the year, he kind of needs it. Hardy has shown that he can bounce back almost immediately from any loss but Nakamura has won a grand total of one important match (when he beat AJ Styles, allowing him to pick the stipulation for the next match, which he also lost) in the last few months. Give him the title and let people chase him for a few months.

SmackDown Women's Title: Carmella(c) vs. Asuka

Speaking of people who have fallen through the floor since WrestleMania, we have Asuka, who went from someone who was being talked about as a big time Ronda Rousey opponent to....this. Earlier this week I was worried that they might have James Ellsworth go over her and had to be relieved when he tapped. Carmella is getting better as a character, but when you go from Charlotte vs. Asuka to her very tired act with Ellsworth, it's a bit of a drop.

I'll go with Carmella retaining here, likely through some major

shenanigans. Asuka can go off to beat up the Iconics again and either Becky Lynch or Charlotte can come up to challenge for the title. I'm really not feeling Carmella as champion long term and she needs to lose the title, but that doesn't seem to be changing anytime soon.

Braun Strowman vs. Kevin Owens

This was put inside a cage as Owens kept running away from Strowman and maybe because there was only one match involving anything EXTREME on the EXTREME Rules card. Strowman has had it in for Owens since Owens tried to get everyone against Strowman during Money in the Bank. For some reason this has sent Strowman over the edge, to the point where he's destroyed Owens' car and knocked him off the stage in a portable toilet. And we're supposed to cheer for him.

I know the logical answer here would be to have Strowman wreck Owens all over again, but I can't shake the feeling that WWE would rather have Strowman destroy him until Owens finds a way to sneak out so Strowman loses by slipping on a banana peel. For some reason they love the idea of having Mr. Money in the Bank lose before cashing in, which seems to be destined for Summerslam next month. I have a feeling I'm wrong but I'll take Strowman with what should be the logical ending.

SmackDown Tag Team Titles: Bludgeon Brothers(c) vs. Team HELL NO

Here's the real SmackDown main event, which does suggest that WWE sees something more in Daniel Bryan's future than him just leaving in September. The reunion with Kane has been some very good television (I can always go for N'Sync lyrics) and if they can back it up in the ring to any degree, there's some money to be made there.

That being said, I have no reason to believe that the titles are going to change here so we'll go with the Brothers retaining. There's a good chance that Kane turns on Bryan for trying to make him into less of a monster and not doing things the way Kane wants to, setting up a match at Summerslam. With Kane having his election coming up next month, putting the titles on Kane and Bryan would be rather dumb, even more so with the Brothers being a strong monster team. No change here, but I don't think Kane turns on Bryan just yet.

Raw Women's Title: Alexa Bliss(c) vs. Nia Jax

This is the show's namesake match, likely taking place for the sake of trying to make this match feel more interesting than the first two times they did it earlier in the year. The personal issues have long since been settled, leaving Ronda Rousey being at ringside as the lone point of interest. That being said, WWE managed to cool her off after her great performance when she snapped, so I have little faith that they'll get this right either.

I'll go with Bliss retaining here as there's no one not named Ember Moon around to challenge Jax for the title at Summerslam. Just let Rousey get involved somehow to set up Bliss' complete and utter destruction next month. This isn't exactly a thrilling story in the first place though as their regular matches weren't great and Rousey is the real focal point, even though there's little reason to believe that she'll even be on the upcoming episodes of Monday Night Raw. Bliss retains, in the only logical conclusion they have.

Finn Balor vs. Baron Corbin

The fact that I can barely remember that this match is taking place tells you almost everything you need to know. I don't really understand why they're fighting in the first place but I have a feeling it has something to do with either something Stephanie McMahon wants or something unfunny that Balor said to set up a match for the sake of getting the two of them on the show.

Corbin wins here as he's been built up far better over the last few weeks, but more importantly because Balor is ice cold right now. He has nothing going on at the moment and while Corbin isn't very far ahead of him, at least he has a character with something to do. Just get this in and out because it's a story that isn't drawing any interest and really doesn't need to be on the show.

Intercontinental Title: Dolph Ziggler(c) vs. Seth Rollins

This is the thirty minute Iron Man match, which was the long gimmick the show had on the card for a good while. We've already seen these two fight for about thirty minutes on Monday Night Raw a few weeks ago and the match wasn't terrible, though I have little confidence in Ziggler being able to pull off another very good match.

I'm expecting a draw here actually, probably setting up WWE's favorite blowoff match between smaller guys: the ladder match at Summerslam. Drew McIntyre can interfere a bit here and keep things even as Rollins would win on his own, so at least the guy who should have the title in the first place can be involved. The match should be fun, though it has the same issue that all Iron Man matches will have: you can skip the first twenty seven minutes or so and still get the important stuff. But hey, anything to fill in time.

Raw Tag Team Titles: Matt Hardy/Bray Wyatt(c) vs. B Team

Hardy and Wyatt had some potential a few months ago but my goodness it's gone sailing out the window. This entire feud is built around the B Team parodying the champions week after week, making them more entertaining than the easy to mock champions. The B Team is just a comedy pairing and while they're doing fine, it's rather pathetic to see that they're the best challengers WWE can come up with for these lame champions.

I'll go with the champs to retain here while hoping to hear SAY YEAH as soon as they come to the ring the next night on Monday Night Raw. This should have been on the Kickoff Show for all the interest it has and while the B Team is funny, I can't imagine them actually getting the titles. Go with what works (at least better than the other option) and keep the titles on Hardy and Wyatt until the Revival can take the titles they should have taken about a year ago.

SmackDown World Title: AJ Styles(c) vs. Rusev

I'll spare you my well covered rant about how this should close the show because even I'm tired of hearing how stupid it is for the SmackDown World Title to be treated so badly. Rusev is finally getting some form of a reward after months of being one of the hottest things in the company, but at least Jinder Mahal got to pin him at WrestleMania. This is long overdue and somehow Rusev's first ever one on one shot at the World Title.

Of course I'm going with Styles to retain here as Rusev is more of a Monster of the Month than anything else. Rusev can get a lot out of a match with Styles before moving on to something else, though I'm hoping he'll be back to the main event scene (or two matches from the main event because the Tag Team Title match is

SmackDown's real main event) one day. Styles retains here and hopefully moves on to a showdown with Samoa Joe at Summerslam.

Bobby Lashley vs. Roman Reigns

That's right. This is your main event. The match with nothing on the line and with no gimmick attached other than IT'S ROMAN FREAKING REIGNS. There's a good chance that this is going to be the de facto #1 contender match because...well it's a Reigns match...but naturally we can't do that for the sake of making fans boo Brock Lesnar, which has worked so well before.

In something I'm going to regret, I'll take Lashley to win here because he needs a major victory. That feud with Sami Zayn left a very bad taste in fans' mouths so it would be rather beneficial to give him a win and a potential title shot at one of the biggest shows of the year. There's no reason whatsoever to have Reigns win so you can probably pencil him in. I'll take Lashley to win though and hope that WWE isn't as stupid as they come off at times.

Overall Thoughts

Is it any real shock that this week's Monday Night Raw audience was so absolutely terrible? Consider what we have on the red side: a match which will close the show that is built around a kind of personal issue but certainly not for the title shot because the champion has already said that neither of them are worthy of a shot. That's the big deal around here and that's supposed to be the big attraction. Oh and it's a regular match of course because we can't bother living up to the show's title. This is one of the laziest builds I've ever seen and I can only hope that Summerslam is better. For some reason though, my hopes aren't up.

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<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2018/05/25/new-book-nxt-the-full-sail-years-from-dallas-to-new-orleans/>

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

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

New Column: Give Blue A Chance

It's been long enough.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-give-blue-chance/>

Extreme Rules 2017: This Show Just Made the List

Extreme Rules 2017

Date: June 4, 2017

Location: Royal Farms Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T., Corey Graves

It's the night of extreme, which is loosely translated as "night of gimmicky rematches". The main event is a Fatal Five Way for a future shot at Brock Lesnar and the Universal Title, likely coming at next month's Great Balls of Fire. The stories aren't the strongest this time around so it's going to be mostly up to the in-ring action. Let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: Kalisto vs. Apollo Crews

Kalisto has been feuding with Crews and Titus O'Neil for a few weeks now with Titus stealing a tainted win over him last week. Feeling out process to start with the announcers talking about LaVar Ball

trying to buy into the Titus Brand. If you don't know who that is, leave it at that and consider it a good day. Kalisto takes over with some speedy technical stuff and sends Crews to the floor for a big springboard dive. He tries another dive but gets kicked in the head for his efforts as we take a break.

Back with Crews holding a front facelock but having to clothesline Kalisto down to break up a comeback. Kalisto makes his real comeback with the corkscrew springboard shoulder as Titus plays cheerleader. A small package gets two on Crews, followed by one heck of a tornado DDT for the same. Crews comes back with a Samoan drop but his standing shooting star only gets two. Titus offers some suggestions but the distraction lets Kalisto hit a quick Salida Del Sol for the pin at 9:35.

Rating: C+. That was a lot better than I expected and if it leads to Crews beating the fire out of Titus, so be it. Basically whatever gets Crews pushed better than he has been so far on the main roster with a bit of a character/personality to him is an improvement, as we've been seeing him waste away for over a year now. Kalisto continues to be the guy that should be near the top of the cruiserweight show but for now he's just a low level performer who fights heavyweights on the main show. You know, because the cruiserweight division is nonsense

The opening sequence talks about about things going extreme and how this is all about facing Brock Lesnar. You might remember him even though you haven't seen him in two months.

We recap Miz vs. Dean Ambrose. They feuded on Smackdown late last year but now they're both on Raw so we'll just keep it going. Miz got a shot at the title but Ambrose got disqualified, setting up this rematch.

Intercontinental Title: Miz vs. Dean Ambrose

Ambrose is defending and can lose the title via DQ. They start slowly with an exchange of hammerlocks as the announcers talk about this being Miz's 92nd pay per view match. A slap to the face annoys

Ambrose so he hammers away in the corner. Dean keeps his cool and sends Miz outside for a suicide dive, followed by a whip into the barricade.

Things settle down though as we make sure that the EXTREME show doesn't get too intense. Another yell from the referee allows Miz to get in an apron DDT for two. A neckbreaker is good for the same and Miz kicks him in the face for good measure. Three corner running dropkicks and the running corner clothesline has Dean in trouble but he's still able to punch Miz out of the air.

Neither finish can hit so Dean sends him outside for another dive. Back in and Ambrose grabs a rollup for two, only to tweak his knee coming off the top. That means it's off to the Figure Four with Dean finally getting over for the rope break. Dean gets crotched on top and Miz pulls him away, taking the turnbuckle pad with him.

The champ catches himself from sending Miz into the buckle but Miz uses the distraction to hit some YES Kicks. The big one is countered into a Figure Four on Miz but another rope grab is good for the break. They both limp on the bad leg for the slugout for a double knockdown before we FINALLY get to the obvious idea as Maryse slaps Miz. The referee says no and ejects Maryse though, allowing Dean to grab a rollup for two. Miz gets smart though and sends Dean into the referee but that's still not a DQ. Instead Miz hits the Skull Crushing Finale for the pin at 20:02.

Rating: B. I'm happy with Miz getting the title back but sweet goodness they were waiting around until the gimmick played into the ending. The slap not counting was pretty obvious but at least the DQ thing set up the ending. The problem here is very simple though: there's not much interest in these two fighting again because they did it for so long back in December and January. But hey, at least Cena got a marriage proposal in there before they send Miz right back where he was a year ago first right?

Bayley thinks Alexa Bliss was no Rock and Mankind but she's been watching Tommy Dreamer, Sandman and Steve Blackman to get ready for tonight. She also saw Wonder Woman and feels empowered to take the

title back.

Sasha Banks/Rich Swann vs. Alicia Fox/Noam Dar

Swann gets a great hometown pop with one fan in particular really seeming happy. How do I know that? It's because they cut to the one fan's reaction during the entrance. The women start but it's off to Dar before anything can happen. That means Swann has to come in to kick Dar in the head a bit before handing it back to Banks. The Bank Statement has Fox in trouble until Dar pulls her to the ropes.

Fox takes over on Sasha for a bit but another kick allows the hot tag to Swann, who gets almost no reaction this time around. A running flip Fameasser drops Dar and the spinning kick to the face makes things even worse. Everything breaks down and Sasha hits the double knees off the top to drop Dar on the floor. Back in and the Phoenix Splash ends Noam at 6:23.

Rating: D+. Well that was filler. Seriously what else can you call something like this? They have a six match card and one of the matches gets less than six and a half minutes. That being said, this was a match that shouldn't have gone any longer because it has no place on a pay per view card. Also why does Swann get to survive the hometown curse?

The winners dance.

Elias Samson sings about how bad Baltimore is. This goes nowhere but does manage to kill off three minutes.

We recap Bayley vs. Alexa Bliss. Alexa kind of cheated to win the title last month and then attacked Bayley with a kendo stick. Tonight it's a kendo stick on a pole match but the question is whether Bayley is capable of getting extreme.

Women's Title: Bayley vs. Alexa Bliss

Bliss is defending and gets sent into the corner early on, only to send Bayley outside. She's too short to reach the stick though, which falls out to the floor instead. A belly to back suplex on the floor makes things worse for Bliss and Bayley grabs the stick. Graves: "It's like she went from Prince Adam to He-Man!" Bayley

takes too much time pulling the stick back though and gets speared down, allowing Bliss to hammer away with the stick. The beating is cut off with a Bayley to Belly but Bayley can't follow up. More stick shots knock Bayley silly and the DDT finishes her off at 5:13.

Rating: F. So to recap: Bayley is the biggest star in NXT and then is booked like a huge loser in WWE. The fact that NXT was booked by Dusty Rhodes' protege and WWE is booked by a "creative team" has nothing to do with this I'm sure. Yeah I'm sure they didn't think that the simplest idea in the world (Bayley is an underdog who gets beaten down but keeps coming back because she has heart and loves what she does) needed to be completely redone in a horrible way or anything.

Just hand her the title almost right out of the gate, let her win an overbooked match at Wrestlemania and everything will be fine. It's certainly not creative's fault at all. Nah, it's all on Bayley, just like all those other hot prospects in NXT who just can't make it work for whatever reason on the main roster. All on them of course.

To clarify some of that rambling mess: this was a horribly booked match. The whole idea was building towards Bayley finding her inner anger and using the stick. They built it up well enough and then....nothing. She had one chance to swing the stick and then Bliss just beat her up to retain in a very short match. There was no late hope spot, there was no comeback and there was nothing for the fans to get behind. This was just a step ahead of a squash instead of something interesting, which makes the last month or two a complete waste. Bliss looked great but Bayley continues to be completely mishandled.

Did I mention I REALLY don't like WWE creative as of late?

Tag Team Titles: Hardy Boyz vs. Cesaro/Sheamus

The Hardys are defending in a cage with both members needing to escape to win, meaning no pinfalls. Cesaro and Sheamus head for the walls and the door to start but the champs pull them back in without much effort. A few whips into the cage set up a few Poetries in Motion against the cage. The advantage doesn't last long as Cesaro

sends Jeff into the cage. It's still too early to leave though as Jeff makes the save.

They trade some escape attempts to no avail until Cesaro ax handles Jeff. Sheamus misses the Brogue Kick and gets caught in Matt's tornado DDT to put all four down. The champs are up first and go up the cage, only to have Cesaro and Sheamus make quick saves. Jeff actually manages to get to the floor but that leaves Matt in a handicap match. The Side Effect drops Sheamus and Cesaro is put down as well but Matt can't escape just yet.

Jeff tries to help and even pulls him halfway over the top before Cesaro punches him down to the floor. That means Matt gets pulled back down into the ring for a double Razor's Edge (cool spot). A Brogue Kick drops Jeff again but Matt keeps Sheamus from escaping. Back to back Twists of Fate allows Matt to get his legs over the top until Cesaro hits an uppercut.

A super White Noise knocks Matt silly but here's Jeff to dive off the top with a Whisper in the Wind to take Sheamus and Cesaro down again. Matt gets up and drags Jeff's body towards the door as Cesaro and Sheamus go up over the top at the same time. Matt is on the floor first but can't get Jeff out (again), allowing Cesaro and Sheamus to drop down and win the titles (for a face pop) at 15:45.

Rating: B. Uh, is it just me or does that ending not make sense? Matt and Jeff escaped first but Jeff's escape is rescinded for going back in? When has that been a rule? It's not the worst ending in the world and I'm fine with Cesaro and Sheamus as champions (imagine saying that six months ago) as they had to get the titles off Matt and Jeff somehow, likely without pinning them. The match being good always helps too.

We recap the Cruiserweight Title match. Austin Aries has lost to Neville twice in a row, both times via some shenanigans. Tonight it's a submission match with Aries coming in on a bad leg, though he made Neville tap in a tag match six days ago.

Cruiserweight Title: Neville vs. Austin Aries

Aries is challenging in a submission match. Feeling out process to start with Neville working on an armbar instead of the taped up neck or bad knee. Aries smacks him in the back and hits a slingshot hilo, only to have Neville bail to the floor to escape the Last Chancery. Back up and Aries tweaks his knee coming off the ropes to give Neville a target. A dragon screw leg whip has the leg in trouble but Aries hits a few shinbreakers with the good leg.

The neckbreaker across the ropes is broken up and Aries might have hurt his arm on the landing. The arm is fine enough for Aries to take Neville's leg out again and grab a figure four until Neville makes the ropes. Ignore this being a SUBMISSION match, meaning the rope shouldn't be a break.

The Rings of Saturn go on Aries in the middle of the ring but he gets his feet to the ropes for another break. Now it's Aries grabbing his own Rings of Saturn, only to have Neville grab the referee. That's the threat of a DQ (ERG!) so Aries lets go to tell the referee not to do it.

Neville gets in a superkick and puts Aries on top but gets caught in a sunset bomb. The Last Chancery goes on but Neville crawls to the floor, only to have the hold stay on. Neville taps to no avail because the fall has to be in the ring. Aries misses the suicide dive to send him crashing to the floor. Back in and the Red Arrow hits Aries' back, setting up the Rings to make Aries tap at 17:23.

Rating: B+. Other than actually growling at the referee to STOP WITH THE DQ THREATS BECAUSE IT'S A FREAKING SUBMISSION MATCH YOU STUPID PEOPLE, this was really entertaining stuff. Above all else though, it needs to be the finish to the feud. Aries has lost every single time and now he lost as clean as you can in a match like this (which STILL shouldn't have disqualifications). Let it be over now and give us Akira Tozawa or someone else challenging for the title.

Great Balls of Fire ad with a 1950s theme because that's the best they can come up with.

Lesnar's title defense will take place at Great Balls of Fire.

We recap the Fatal Five Way, which is really happening because Braun Strowman is injured and we need a new #1 contender. Kurt Angle put five guys in a single match with the winner facing Lesnar next month.

Roman Reigns vs. Seth Rollins vs. Finn Balor vs. Bray Wyatt vs. Samoa Joe

Winner gets Brock next month, one fall to a finish and anything goes. It's a big brawl to start with Reigns being left alone in the ring until Bray Wyatt comes in to keep him from being lonely. Wyatt gets caught on the middle rope for a Samoan drop, followed by one to Joe for good measure.

Balor sends Reigns to the floor, leaving Bray to come back in and beat on Rollins and Joe. The three are sent outside for a big flip dive from Balor, only to have Reigns send him into the barricade. Joe breaks up the apron dropkick to Wyatt and sends Reigns into the steps. There isn't much else to do here other than list off moves, as is so often the case in matches like this one.

Wyatt and Joe get together to hit people with steps, including a shot to Reigns which draws some solid cheers. They officially make a deal and take over on Balor inside as Corey is waiting on them to turn on each other. Seth starts a comeback but gets DDTed onto the steps for his efforts. Bray grabs a chair and cleans house again until he and Joe take turns backslashing the chair onto Balor.

Joe finally misses a charge into a chair and Bray misses the crossbody, allowing Reigns to remember that he's in the match. Roman gets the expected house cleaning segment until Bray takes him outside for a Rock Bottom onto the table. Now it's Rollins coming back with a springboard clothesline on Wyatt, followed by a double Blockbuster to Bray and Joe.

Things speed up with Rollins loading up a suicide dive to Bray, who pulls Joe into the path instead. Back in and Sister Abigail plants Rollins, only to have Joe break it up and start the inevitable fight with Bray. Balor comes back in with a chair to break up the Koquina Clutch before dropkicking everyone in sight.

It's time to load up the announcers' table but Reigns comes back with a spear to drive Balor and Joe through the barricade. Seth is back up with a frog splash to drive Bray through the table but stays down holding his knee. The knee is fine enough for him to stand up for a staredown with Reigns as the chair is still in the ring. A quick Superman Punch gives Roman two, followed by Seth's low superkick getting the same.

Another frog splash gets two more but here's Bray for failed Sister Abigail attempts on both guys. Roman spears Bray down and hits Rollins with another Superman Punch. Balor takes one of his own but still comes back with the shotgun dropkick and Coup de Grace. It doesn't matter though as Joe comes back in with the Koquina Clutch on Balor for the win at 29:10.

Rating: A-. I think I can go with Joe vs. Lesnar if I absolutely have to. This was a WAY better match than I was expecting with the extra time doing it a lot of favors. They had all five looking strong with the Bray/Joe alliance working fine for a story during the match. Joe winning is a good idea as he can get a rub from working with Lesnar, despite having almost no chance at actually beating him. I had a great time with this one and the ending is a very good call.

Overall Rating: B+. This was actually a heck of a show, albeit one that isn't going to mean a thing after....oh I'd say tomorrow. That's a common problem in WWE and I'm not surprised to see it continue here. The idea of having a title match to build towards is a nice change of pace and should help the show a lot. Add that to a lot of really solid wrestling (only the Bayley vs. Bliss match was really bad, which is due to the booking instead of the action, or lack thereof) and you have a much better show than I ever would have guessed.

Results

Miz b. Dean Ambrose – Skull Crushing Finale

Sasha Banks/Rich Swann b. Alicia Fox/Noam Dar – Phoenix Splash to Dar

Alexa Bliss b. Bayley – DDT

Cesaro/Sheamus b. Hardy Boyz – Cesaro and Sheamus escaped the cage

Neville b. Austin Aries – Rings of Saturn

Samoa Joe b. Finn Balor, Bray Wyatt, Seth Rollins and Roman Reigns –
Koquina Clutch to Balor

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<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/05/19/history-of-saturday-nights-main-event-and-clash-of-the-champions-now-in-paperback-plus-price-drops/>

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Extreme Rules 2017 Preview

So it's time for one of the least gimmicky gimmick pay per views that WWE offers. I get the idea behind what they're doing here but can you really consider a lot of these matches to be EXTREME? It's a good idea if the bigger matches are all extreme (Is that really the best name they can come up with? It sounds so officially and corp.....yeah that's the best we're getting.) but it really feels like a bunch of gimmick matches which are lumped together under the EXTREME banner. Let's get to it.

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

There's no announced Kickoff Show match this time around so we can jump straight into the bigger matches. This is kendo stick on a pole match with the big idea being that Bayley can't get extreme with the stick. I mean, this ignores the time where she beat the fire out of Tommy Dreamer with one on Edge and Christian's show. This lead to the not as bad as people thought This Is Your Life Bayley which again saw Bliss beat the heck out of her.

I smell a screwy finish here with Bayley using the stick but still losing the match somehow. Bliss needs to hang onto the title for a good while as she's blown the roof off all of the expectations she had upon winning the title. Bayley continues to flounder on "Monday Night Raw" (A popular NXT talent being used horribly on the main roster? Really?) but I'm sure she'll land on her feet eventually.

Tag Team Titles: Hardys(c) vs. Sheamus/Cesaro

Wake me when this one is over. This is a fine example of a feud that has dragged on for the better part of forever (really only about a month and a half) because there's little reason for them to be fighting anymore other than the "Monday Night Raw" tag division is a barren wasteland. I know it's asking a lot but the precious, overworked (and overstaffed) writing staff could build up more than one team at a time.

I'll take the Hardys to retain here, even though they're rapidly turning back into the standard version of the team. There isn't much of a reason to care about them now other than nostalgia and hoping that they get to use the Broken characters down the line. They don't need to be crushed or anything similar but I could go for some new champions. However, that seems to be the Revival's spot to take and I think we're all the better for it.

Intercontinental Title: Dean Ambrose(c) vs. The Miz

Again, WHY IS THIS FEUD HAPPENING AGAIN? Miz moving to "Monday Night Raw" was the worst thing that could have happened to him as he easily could be feuding with Randy Orton over the Smackdown World Title right now. Instead though he's feuding with Ambrose again and chasing yet another Intercontinental Title. This time around though

he can win the title via DQ and that sounds like a way to a screwy finish.

In theory this should be Maryse slapping Miz or something of a similar simple manner for a quick DQ. However, instead they'll likely have Kurt Angle come out and say "eh that's not happening" so the match can continue with Ambrose retaining. There's no reason for Ambrose to keep the title (which he's had for FIVE MONTHS) but I have a feeling they're going to keep the belt on him even longer for absolutely no apparent reason.

Cruiserweight Title: Neville(c) vs. Austin Aries

This is their third straight pay per view match and also shows the major issues with having so many TV shows and pay per views. They had a great match at "Wrestlemania XXXIII" and a slightly less great match at "Payback 2017" but after seeing them fight in almost every possible style of tag match possible, I'm sick of watching them over and over again. This time around it's a submission match, which at least adds a new element to the match.

I think I'll go with Neville retaining here as him tapping out on Monday made it feel like they were setting up doubt that won't go anywhere. If nothing else this seems likely to set up Akira Tozawa as Neville's next challenger, which certainly wouldn't be the worst idea in the world. Either way, I'm sure the match will be entertaining and I'm sure TJP and possibly Jack Gallagher will be interfering as well.

Rich Swann/Sasha Banks vs. Alicia Fox/Noam Dar

I'm sorry what now? This is the best they can do and yet American Alpha is stuck on the "Smackdown Live" bench for weeks at a time? This is really all they can come up with for Banks (I reserve the right to retract this is it helps set up a Banks heel turn) when you have Dana Brooke sitting around? Or Mickie James and Nia Jax perhaps? It's two feuds put together and while that's usually good, Banks feels completely forced into this spot.

I'll take Swann and Banks in what should be the Kickoff Show match

at worst. Swann is entertaining in the ring and has a gimmick with the dancing thing but Dar really doesn't feel like he's all that special. Fox is good in the crazy role and Banks is great by definition but that doesn't mean we need to be having this match on pay per view.

Roman Reigns vs. Finn Balor vs. Samoa Joe vs. Bray Wyatt vs. Seth Rollins

And WWE still seems confused by why the "Monday Night Raw" ratings suck. This is about an opportunity to be destroyed by Brock Lesnar at a nothing show in July and that's really all they've got. The title isn't on the line here and Lesnar isn't going to be seen but we're supposed to get fired up about a match with a stipulation that might change anyway? I mean, do you believe WWE won't change the match before July? Nothing is actually on the line here and it's basically a glorified prequel.

I'll take Rollins to win here as there's a reason for Lesnar to want another shot at him after their match at "Battleground 2015". Paul Heyman even referenced that the night after "Wrestlemania XXXIII" so it's definitely been considered. Not that it matters though as this is just a pit stop on the LONG road to "Wrestlemania XXXIV" where Roman Reigns can save us all again and we can boo him our thanks.

Overall Thoughts

Overall "Extreme Rules 2017" feels very skippable. The wrestling should be good enough but that doesn't mean it's a show you need to see. You have a match setting up another pay per view main event and a bunch of rematches, plus Banks slumming it with the cruiserweights. That's really the best thing we can get out of WWE on the monthly pay per view schedule? Why do these things exist again? The show will likely be entertaining and the main event sounds fun but it's not a show I'm looking forward to watching.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the Histories of Saturday Night's Main Event and Clash of the Champions, now in PAPERBACK. Check out the information

here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/05/19/history-of-saturday-nights-main-event-and-clash-of-the-champions-now-in-paperback-plus-price-drops/>

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Extreme Rules 2016: Extreme Kickouts And Cleaning Supplies

Extreme Rules 2016

Date: May 22, 2016

Location: Prudential Center, Newark, New Jersey

Commentators: Byron Saxton, John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole

It's a night of rematches but in this case we have a few bonus stipulations to carry things forward. The main event is another match between WWE World Champion Roman Reigns and AJ Styles, in this case under Extreme Rules. The question here is who interferes and helps either guy pull off the win. Let's get to it.

On the pre-show, here are the Dudley Boyz with something to say. Bubba starts an ECW chant before telling the fans to stop buying everything they're told to do. Once the Dudley Boyz left ECW, it completely fell apart. As for today, ever since they got here, Bubba has been dying to say something. "D-VON! LET'S GET OUT OF NEW JERSEY!"

Bubba rants about how much he hates the New Era until Big Cass interrupts. After listing off a bunch of food (these jokes lose some of their connection without Enzo), Cass says the New Era is doing what the ECW guys did in Bingo halls but in front of millions of people. A quick brawl breaks out with Cass clearing the ring and calling them S-A-W-F-T.

It was smart to have them doing something here but if Enzo is going to be out much longer, they need to either give Cass a new partner (even a temporary one) or have him do a singles feud. Cass is legitimately hot right now and it would be very risky to waste that while waiting on Enzo, who is probably better suited as a mouthpiece, to come back.

Pre-Show: Dolph Ziggler vs. Baron Corbin

Rubber match because rubber matches are awesome and No DQ. The bell rings nine minutes before the regular show is supposed to start so they're in a hurry here. Ziggler dropkicks him down but Corbin takes it to the floor and sends Ziggler face first into the post. Back in and Corbin pounds away as Mauro lists off a bunch of biographical facts about Corbin (double degree in college and a Slipknot fan), making me miss the days of Mike Tenay doing the same thing in WCW. I know it's nothing all that interesting but it lets you know a few things about the guy.

Corbin's chinlock goes nowhere as Dolph gets in a jawbreaker and clothesline to take over. The Stinger Splash into a neckbreaker gets no cover as the countdown to the pay per view reminds us that this is in fact heavily scripted and certainly won't go over because that's how wrestling works. Corbin's powerbomb is countered into a sunset flip for two, followed by a Deep Six for the same on Dolph. Ziggler grabs a tornado DDT and the Fameasser for two and both guys are down. The superkick misses and Corbin hits him low, which FINALLY plays into the rules. End of Days gives Baron the pin at 7:58.

Rating: D+. It's not so much the action itself but more along the lines of how weak the gimmick stuff was here. They had a total of

one instance of using the rules (the posting early on is marginal at best) and that's not something that should happen in a No DQ match. It doesn't help that this didn't need such a gimmick but the calendar insisted on it and we certainly can't question that.

The other issue here, and this one is certainly not their fault, is the time. That clock on the screen kept letting you know that it would be over soon and really took me out of the match more than once. This should have started about ten to fifteen minutes earlier so they could have had the extra time to let this build up. It never ceases to amaze me that WWE, who OWNS THE NETWORK AND HAS AS MUCH TIME AS THEY WANT, can't time this stuff better. It really is inexcusable and yet it never stops happening.

The opening video talks about how rules control us but tonight is the chance to write our own rules.

Karl Anderson/Luke Gallows vs. Usos

Texas Tornado rules and this is their fifth match in less than a month, not counting six man tags. It's a brawl in the aisle to start with the Usos getting the better of it, despite certainly not being the most popular guys in the building tonight. Jey dives over the top to take out Gallows, followed by a high cross body for two on Anderson. JBL calls this a dream match, which might have been true on the first match or maybe even the second. I lost interest somewhere around the third but I'm not smart enough to keep up with WWE booking.

Something like the Boot of Doom off the apron blasts Jimmy and the Club takes over. The Usos fight out of what looked like a Doomsday Device and it's Jey dropkicking Gallows into a rollup for two. Anderson comes back in and knees Jey so hard that he holds his foot before getting two. Jimmy breaks up the Boot of Doom but the Superfly Splash gets the same treatment.

A Whisper in the Wind misses and it's the Gallows Pole to Jimmy, followed by a spinebuster for two on Jey. Anderson sends Jey outside but charges into a superkick, setting up the running Umaga Attack against the barricade. Gallows is back up with a clothesline (JBL:

“LARIOT0!”) and grabs the bell (insert your own Festus joke), only to eat a superkick from Jimmy. The Superfly Splash only hits the bell though and the Magic Killer pins Jimmy at 8:32.

Rating: B-. The match was fun but again, I lost all my interest in seeing these two teams fight weeks ago. It also helped that they were going somewhere with the rules being changed, basically starting the standard tag finishing formula at the beginning of the match. This was fine but they both really need to move on.

The Usos are helped out, which is mentioned as having a factor on the main event.

We get a quick recap of the main event with Rusev injuring Kalisto on Raw to make this even more one sided on paper.

US Title: Rusev vs. Kalisto

Kalisto is defending and tries to start fast with the corkscrew cross body, only to have it knocked out of the air with an ax handle. The fans are split on Rusev (now there's something you don't often see) as he pounds Kalisto down. We hit the bearhug and a CM Punk chant starts up. Kalisto fights out of a torture rack and counters into a sleeper with Rusev looking more shocked than worried. The hold goes nowhere so the champ grabs a tornado DDT (second of the night) and now the corkscrew connects.

There's the hurricanrana driver for two, followed by a hurricanrana through the ropes to send Rusev face first into the steps. Back in and Rusev escapes the Salida Del Sol so Kalisto scores with a moonsault to take him down again. Kalisto goes up but Rusev slams him off the top and right onto the apron to stop Kalisto cold. The doctor comes out to check on him so Rusev grabs the Accolade, bending Kalisto back so far that Rusev is on his back, easily making Kalisto tap at 9:30.

Rating: C. That stuff with the doctor had me worried that they might actually keep the title on Rusev here. There was no reason to not change the title here, especially with Cena coming back in a week on Memorial Day. I really wish they had done something more with

Kalisto but the curse of the midcard title got to him again, which really is a shame as it's taken down so many people now.

Trailer for Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 2, featuring Sheamus.

We recap the Tag Team Titles match with the old school Vaudevillains winning a tournament to earn this title shot against New Day. This included New Day building a time machine, which was NOT an empty refrigerator box.

Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Vaudevillains

New Day is defending but first they have something to say. After insisting that it was NOT a refrigerator box, Woods implies that he could use some photos or videos on his private feed. Big E. tries to cut him off but Woods insists that he get to shoot his shot. Fans: "SHOOT HIS SHOT!" Big E. has some gardening tools with them and since they're in the Garden State, it's time to put some hoes in the ground.

Kofi is the odd man out here which you don't see that often. The champs get jumped to start and Woods is sent into the post to give the Vaudevillains early control. Gotch comes in for something like a dragon sleeper but Woods gets out and blasts him with a jumping enziguri.

The hot(ish) tag brings in Big E. for some house cleaning in the form of some belly to belly suplexes. It's quickly back to Woods though with Big E. being sent into the steps. The Whirling Dervish only gets two on Woods and Big E. gets back in to spear English through the ropes. Kofi interferes with a kick to Gotch's head and Woods adds a Shining Wizard for the pin on Simon at 6:13.

Rating: C-. In theory this sets up Gallows/Anderson as the serious challengers but this really didn't do anything for me. For one thing, it's really not making sense to have the face champions use the numbers advantage. It's against logic in wrestling and needs to stop happening. It's not like Big E. and Kofi can't pull this off on their own. On top of that, this was just a six minute match after a pretty strong build with the Vaudevillains being treated like the

young guys they really are. I wasn't feeling this one but it seems like a one off match.

AJ says he'll win tonight and walks into the Club dressing room.

We recap the Intercontinental Title match with Miz defending against Sami Zayn, Cesaro and Kevin Owens. They've done a great job of setting up the four way feud with everyone going after each other and having a reason to want to fight their opponents. Basically Sami vs. Kevin and Cesaro vs. Miz were combined into one feud to this is the big blowoff.

Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Kevin Owens vs. Cesaro vs. Sami Zayn

Miz is defending and this is one fall to a finish. Sami hits a Helluva Kick on Owens at the bell and Kevin falls outside. Cesaro uppercuts Miz and we've got a good guy showdown early on. Sami starts in on the still bad shoulder before kicking Cesaro in the face for two. That's enough for Cesaro as he grabs a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for two of his own and Sami is in trouble. Back up and Sami low bridges Cesaro out to the floor as Miz comes back in, only to be clotheslined outside.

Byron tries to call the match but JBL says if Saxton was on life support, he'd unplug the cord and charge his iPhone. Ok, can we PLEASE cut out the JBL doesn't like Byron stuff? They've been going with it for like ever now and since it's certainly not leading to a match or likely anything, drop it already as it's been old but just keeps going for no reason other than picking on Byron. Sami flip dives onto Miz and Cesaro to put all three down. Back in and we almost get a Tower of Doom until Owens runs in for the save.

Kevin cleans house and gets two off the backsplash to Sami. The frog splash is broken up by Miz though and now we get the Tower of Doom with Owens getting the worst of it as Cesaro powerbombs everyone down. Sami knees his way out of Cesaro's suplex and the Blue Thunder Bomb gets two. Miz grabs an exploder suplex on Sami but Cesaro suplexes both of them at once because he's just that awesome.

All four are down in a corner now and that means it's time for the running uppercuts all around. Kevin stops Cesaro though and it's Cannonballs for everyone. Sami breaks that up though, only to eat Swiss Death. The Skull Crushing Finale gets two on Cesaro and everyone is down. Miz yells at Cesaro for kicking out and makes the mistake of slapping him in the face, setting up the springboard corkscrew uppercut to the champ.

That means it's time for the Cesaro Swing for over twenty seconds, followed by the Sharpshooter. The rope break doesn't exist in a four way so Maryse has to offer a distraction while Miz taps. You would think the referee, two feet away from Miz, would have heard that but instead Owens has to make a save. Miz grabs the ropes to block another Swing and Owens dives in with a frog splash to the elevated champion.

The Neutralizer gets two on Owens with Sami diving in at the very last moment for the save. Cesaro's powerbomb to Sami is countered into a very fast sunset flip for two. Cesaro BLASTS him with an uppercut but walks into an exploder suplex into the corner, only to have Owens come in with the Pop Up Powerbomb for two on Cesaro with Miz making the save.

Owens yells at Maryse and gets a Skull Crushing Finale on the floor, only to have Miz dive in for two more on Cesaro. These near falls are insane. Fans: "FIGHT FOREVER!" Miz is backdropped out to the floor but Cesaro turns around and eats the Helluva Kick for two with Owens making a save this time. While the two of them fight, Miz slides in and steals the pin on Cesaro to retain at 18:20.

Rating: A. This was some of the best timing I've ever seen in a multi-man match with the near falls getting me more than once. It's not often that I get fooled by some near falls but this match did it multiple times in less than twenty minutes. I had a great time watching this and the storytelling at the end with Sami getting obsessed with Owens and costing him the title as a result.

Pre-show chat.

We recap Dean Ambrose vs. Chris Jericho in an Asylum match (cage

with weapons). They had a match at Payback with Dean winning clean so Jericho hit him in the head with Dean's potted plant (Mitch). Dean then ripped up Jericho's \$15,000 jacket and the result is this match.

Dean Ambrose vs. Chris Jericho

There are weapons around the top of the cage, you win by pin or submission and Jericho is in boots and jeans. Jericho quickly takes him down to start but Dean makes a quick save and sends Jericho into the cage. It's time for the first weapon so Dean grabs....a mop, which he uses to blast Jericho in the ear. Cole: "He's looking to mop up Jericho here." Even Byron rips on him for a line that bad.

Jericho scores with a dropkick to take over but takes too long going up, allowing Dean to belly to back superplex him down. Both guys go up and it's Dean coming back with nunchucks, only to have Jericho grab a barbed wire 2x4. That goes nowhere so they both climb up with Jericho getting in a few kendo stick shots to put Dean back in the ring. The crowd isn't exactly thrilled by this.

Now some nunchuck shots have Dean in trouble and Jericho makes it even worse (I think?) by grabbing a leather strap. A whip to the head doesn't have much effect so Dean flips him off the top to put both guys down again. Dean straps him a few times but gets sent into the cage. Jericho climbs up but Dean is on the top rope to crotch him back down. Dean pulls off a fire extinguisher so Jericho throws a straitjacket over his head and gets two off an enziguri.

Thankfully Chris gets smart and ties Dean in the straitjacket....which he doesn't tie. Dean pops up with forearms which don't wake the crowd up so a clothesline gets two instead. A butterfly backbreaker gets two for Jericho and the fans want Ryder. Dean drops him again and climbs to the top of the cage for the standing elbow drop and almost no reaction. Like you would think it was a clothesline for a meaningless one count a minute into the match.

Since this hasn't gone on long enough, Dean goes up to get a mop bucket. That gets no reaction either but the bag of thumbtacks

inside gets a bit better reception. They tease going into the tacks multiple times each until they give up for the time being, killing the crowd again.

The Lionsault hits knees but Jericho counters Dirty Deeds into the Walls. That goes nowhere (of course) so Dean breaks a kendo stick over Jericho's back. Chris saves himself with a fire extinguisher blast, setting up the Codebreaker for two. Some barbed wire 2x4 shots to Dean's ribs have almost no effect as he counters another Codebreaker by dropping Jericho onto the tacks. Now THAT woke the crowd up. Dirty Deeds ends Jericho at a ridiculous 26:23.

Rating: D+. I think you can guess my biggest issue with this match. Dean vs. Jericho third from the top in a semi-comedy cage match on a gimmick pay per view shouldn't be 45 seconds shorter than the main event of Wrestlemania. The crowd just did not care here and they lost me as soon as the mop came into play. How much hatred and anger can you have in a match where the big violence for the first twenty five minutes is a mop to the head? Oh and they didn't even use the plant, which was the big idea of the match. I really wasn't feeling this one and it just went on WAY too long, even though it was a decent brawl at times.

We recap the Women's Title, which is somehow centered around Ric Flair. Natalya made the champ tap but Flair distracted the referee so Charlotte could escape. Therefore the result is a submission match with Flair barred from ringside.

Women's Title: Charlotte vs. Natalya

Charlotte is defending and this is a submission match. Natalya takes her down by the ankle to start and asks where Ric is now. A surfboard has the champ in even more trouble but she rolls out to the floor and fires off some chops. That's fine with Natalya who sends Charlotte shoulder first into the post to give her a new target. Back in and Charlotte kicks her in the face but gets rolled up into a cross armbreaker. I can always go for some basic psychology like that.

Charlotte gets up and powerbombs Natalya to break the hold before

grabbing something like a reverse Figure Four (with Natalya on her stomach and Charlotte on her back). Natalya crawls to the ropes and out of the ring for the break as the rope break rule still isn't clear over the years.

Charlotte scores with the moonsault and puts on a half crab but Natalya (with her leg just fine) pops up and throws her down with a German suplex. The Sharpshooter goes on so Charlotte climbs the ropes....which doesn't work as she crashes back to the mat. Cue a fake Ric Flair which is revealed to be....Dana Brooke. The distraction lets Charlotte get in a cheap shot and put on the Figure Eight for the submission at 9:34.

Rating: D+. Well that was nothing and so much for the women stealing the show at every pay per view. I didn't see any selling in this (Natalya being on her feet after the leg work and Charlotte's arm being fine for the Figure Eight) and the ending was stupid. Somewhat predictable as you knew something was going to happen (though Dana was a surprise) but stupid at the same time. I don't know if I just died in that marathon cage match or in the fact that Natalya was clearly just a filler opponent but I really wasn't feeling this one.

Flair, Dana and Charlotte celebrate post match. Cole thinks this was a set up because Cole is forced to sound like a stupid puppet.

We recap the World Title match, which is a Payback rematch after AJ won by countout and DQ but the match was restarted twice, allowing Reigns to pin him. Since then AJ has been forced to go extreme against his will but eventually he seemed to like the idea. There's still the question of whether or not he's been behind the Club attacks but that hasn't been treated as such an important idea this time around.

WWE World Title: Roman Reigns vs. AJ Styles

AJ is challenging and this is under Extreme Rules, meaning street fight. Styles tells him to bring it to start so Reigns elbows him in the face. AJ ducks some shots and fires off kicks, which are quickly shoved away so Roman can fire off corner clotheslines. A big jumping knee to the face knocks AJ silly and they head outside.

Reigns takes too long setting up the announcers' table though and gets knocked into the crowd. They fight over to the pre-show panel with AJ throwing him into various objects, including the table and a barricade wall. The Phenomenal Forearm off the table just staggers Reigns and they fight back to the timekeeper's area. AJ sends him into the post and peels back the floor pads, which can never go well.

The Styles Clash on the concrete is of course countered so AJ tries it on the announcers' table. Reigns counters that as well and catches a charging AJ in a big old backdrop through the other announcers' table. Fans: "YOU STILL SUCK!" Back in and Reigns hits a Razor's Edge into a sitout powerbomb (that should be someone's finisher) for two and the champ is shocked.

With little else working, Reigns loads up the Superman Punch but AJ hits him in the knee and Reigns buckles to the mat. AJ knees him in the face from the apron but Reigns catches him in a powerbomb (so much for the leg) through the other announcers' table (with AJ bouncing on the table before it breaks). The spear only hits the barricade though and Reigns is out.

They very slowly get back up and it's AJ trying the Phenomenal Forearm with Reigns Superman Punching him in the face for the counter. The spear connects off the steps but neither guy can get up. Cue the Club as AJ is thrown back inside. Now this brings up the question: who am I supposed to cheer for here? Cole acts like this is a big heel act but Reigns is hardly a good guy.

The Boot of Doom only gives AJ two (so much for that move meaning anything) but the Usos run out (so much for that angle earlier in the night) for the superkick party. Jimmy's Superfly Splash gives Reigns an obvious two. Another spear is countered and AJ scores with the Clash for two. The Superman Punch is countered again with an enziguri and the Styles Clash on the chair gets two more. Oh come on now. AJ is stunned so he unloads on the Usos and Reigns with the chair. Another Phenomenal Forearm is countered and a single spear retains the title at 22:13.

Rating: B+. This was really good, crippling the Styles Clash aside. It certainly wasn't one sided but I have a real hard time buying Reigns kicking out of all the offense before the run-ins, the Boot of Doom, two Styles Clashes and a bunch of chair shots. At some point it gets stupid and we hit that with about five minutes to go. Either way though, this was another really good brawl as they beat each other up for a long time before the finishing sequence that people weren't interested in seeing. I don't think anyone expected AJ to win here and that's fine, but good grief enough with killing the Styles Clash.

Post match Seth Rollins makes his return and lays out Reigns with a Pedigree. I have no idea if that makes him a heel or a face but I don't think WWE does either.

Overall Rating: B. The strong matches more than carry this show as you had the amazing fourway, the strong main event and a good opener to balance out the WAY too long (though certainly not horrible) cage match. The show was very up and down though and instead of leading up to a big ending, it was much more "here's something good now here's something bad." Thankfully it looks like we're setting up some fresh stuff with Money in the Bank in a month, but that show tends to just throw everyone together in one big mess and forget all the feuds. Still though, strong show and outstanding if you cut out one match.

Results

Karl Anderson/Luke Gallows b. Usos – Magic Killer to Jimmy

Rusev b. Kalisto – Accolade

New Day b. Vaudevillains – Shining Wizard to Gotch

Miz b. Cesaro, Kevin Owens and Sami Zayn – Miz pinned Cesaro after a Helluva Kick from Zayn

Dean Ambrose b. Chris Jericho – Dirty Deeds

Charlotte b. Natalya – Figure Eight

Roman Reigns b. AJ Styles – Spear

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Extreme Rules 2016 Preview

It really feels like we just got done with Payback and now it's already time for the next show. In this case that's not a good thing as the stories were only so strong in the first place and now it's clear that the stories don't have enough steam to keep going beyond this show. I'm genuinely not that thrilled to watch this show but maybe I'll be surprised. Let's get to it.

Starting on the pre-show, we have Dolph Ziggler vs. Baron Corbin in a No DQ match. We're getting this one because someone felt that the best way to get Corbin over was to have him lose a big match before beating Ziggler in a rematch. Now it's the always useful rubber match with a gimmick attached, even though I don't know how many people even wanted the second match in the first place.

Now in theory you have Corbin go over here but that's what everyone would have said going into their first match. Ziggler is a guy who can take loss after loss and be just fine so there shouldn't be any other option here aside from Corbin hitting a chair shot or two and End of Days for the pin, thankfully ending this mess of a feud in the process. More than once I've forgotten that they're even feuding and there's really no excuse for that.

Next up we'll go with Kalisto defending the US Title against Rusev.

This is another match where the ending should be obvious, especially if you look at things for more than all of eighteen seconds. Kalisto was beaten down on Raw and Rusev is an absolute monster, so why in the world would you not switch the title here? I'm sure John Cena returning on Memorial Day is just a coincidence as well.

There's a new gimmick match on the show as well, assuming you consider a weapons based cage match to be a new gimmick. This time we have Dean Ambrose vs. Chris Jericho in an Asylum match, meaning we have a cage with weapons on top. In this case the feud is over talk shows and a potted plant named Mitch, which is probably why I'm not very interested in this one. Ambrose should go over, unless it's decided that these two need to have a third match instead of being in Money in the Bank next month. Yeah Dean wins, but I wouldn't be surprised if Jericho got a surprise win for the sake of being illogical.

New Day is defending the Tag Team Titles against the Vaudevillains and I can't shake the feeling that we're getting new champions here. New Day has held the belts since Summerslam (a stat we're reminded of every few minutes, which is rarely a good omen for a title reign) and it should be near time for someone new to get the titles.

However, I can't exactly imagine the Vaudevillains actually taking them from New Day. It isn't going to hurt New Day if they lose them, especially if they get them back in a big moment. That being said, I think New Day retains but the Vaudevillains have been treated as someone beneath the champs, which makes them much more dangerous challengers. New Day should retain though and then drop them to Anderson/Gallows, who we'll cover next.

What have I done to deserve this? Anderson and Gallows debuted about a month ago and we're closing in on ten TV matches (counting six mans) where they've fought the Usos. If you can come up with a match that has been pounded into the ground any worse than this one, I'd beg of you to not tell me about it.

This time it's under Texas Tornado rules because it makes sense to just have them go to the big brawling segment that ends all of their

matches. I'll take Anderson and Gallows for the win here as they've been beaten enough times now that it's ok to let them win, just in case people started thinking something of the Usos while making sure no one thought anything of Anderson and Gallows. I'm thoroughly sick of this match but I'm sure we'll see it again because that's how WWE does things.

Now we have a match that is actually being treated as one of the biggest on the card as Charlotte defends the Women's Title against Natalya in a submission match with Ric Flair barred from ringside. The thing here though is that we have a classic Ric Flair formula: how can Charlotte possibly survive this one?

In this case, it's probably going to be due to some other form of shenanigans and then winning with the Figure Eight. Natalya just isn't going to win the title because she isn't that interesting and (in theory at least), it should be setting up a showdown with Sasha for the big title change down the line. The stipulation here comes off as a smoke screen though, which isn't the most interesting. The build has been good though and Ric not being around should help things a bit.

Next to last we have probably the second biggest match on the card and the one that I'm looking forward to the most as Miz defends the Intercontinental Title against Sami Zayn, Cesaro and Kevin Owens. They've put together one heck of a feud here as all four could conceivably walk out with the title and there's an actual reason to care about each of them fighting the other.

As for the winner.....I think it's going to be Miz. I know the logical move would be to move the title onto any of the other three but Miz hanging onto it can set up a one on one match for the title, perhaps for Sami, before they move on to the next big Zayn vs. Owens match. It also helps that Miz is quite the champion and could give someone a good rub in a title loss. Anyone could win here but I'd actually like to see Miz retain.

Finally we have the main event and please let this be the final match in the feud. Roman Reigns is defending the WWE World Title

against AJ Styles in an Extreme Rules rematch after retaining under some shenanigans last time. The idea here is basically welcoming a bunch of violence and interference, which doesn't really make me want to see the match again. I mean, it was awesome the first time but the Usos/Anderson/Gallows interfering has destroyed any interest I have in this match.

The question here is who interferes as a surprise to cost either guy the title. Of course there's always the Finn Balor option and it would make sense but I'm still not sure they'll pull the trigger here. Of course we'll have Reigns retaining the title but my goodness I'm not really looking forward to this one. I can't imagine Styles stays in the title hunt after this as he'll likely do Money in the Bank and then move on to another feud. Either way I'm not as excited for this one than I was for the previous one and most of that is due to this story being hammered into the ground without anything being added to it.

Overall Extrem Rules really doesn't feel that extreme. We have a nine match card (counting the pre-show) and there's an Extreme Rules match, a No DQ match, a cage match and a Texas Tornado match. Unless you could submissions and a four way as extreme, this feels like something just a step or two above a regular pay per view card.

Normally the violence and gimmicks can carry this show on its back without too much effort but this last week has killed any interest I had. It's just not a show that feels like it needs to exist and is only happening because the PPV schedule had Extreme Rules listed. There's definitely some stuff I'm interested in seeing but nothing that really blows me away. I'm almost sure things will be fine but the stories need to move on after this one.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book on NXT: The Full Sail Years Volume II at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01FWZZ2UA>

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

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

New Column: Unlocking The Gimmick Cage

Looking at how gimmick matches can be done very, very badly.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-unlocking-the-gimmick-cage/>

Extreme Rules 2015: Extremely... Something

Extreme Rules 2015

Date: April 26, 2015

Location: Allstate Arena, Rosemont, Illinois

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's time for the night of Wrestlemania rematches, which often makes for a very entertaining card. The main event will see Seth Rollins defending the World Title against Randy Orton inside a cage with the RKO banned and Kane guarding the door. We also have Roman Reigns vs. Big Show in a last man standing match and Rusev vs. Cena III in a Russian chain match. Let's get to it.

Here's Bad News Barrett on the pre-show to tell us that Daniel Bryan isn't here tonight to defend the Intercontinental Title. Since Bryan can't be here, let's bring out Neville for a replacement so he can take the Bullhammer destined to go upside Bryan's head.

Bad News Barrett vs. Neville

The fans are entirely behind Neville as Barrett grabs a headlock to start. Neville takes him to the mat and hooks a nice rollup for two before the front flips have Barrett even more confused. A dropkick sends him to the floor but Barrett trips Neville up to take over. Back from a break with Barrett holding a chinlock before throwing Neville into the air for a kick to the ribs and two. A big boot to the face gets the same on Neville and Barrett follows up with a nice slingshot backbreaker.

The second chinlock doesn't last as long, allowing Neville to fire off some kicks to the ribs to send Barrett outside, setting up the big spinning dive from Neville. Back in and Barrett catches him going up before planting Neville with Winds of Change for two. Wasteland gets a VERY close two but the Bullhammer misses, allowing Neville to hit an enziguri. The Red Arrow is broken up but Barrett misses another Bullhammer. A second kick to the head sets up the Red Arrow from (Cole: "Adrian") Neville for the pin at 10:40.

Rating: C+. Well that's a surprise. Neville getting the win is a big deal as it's his biggest pin ever, even if everyone and their mother pin Barrett. In theory this sets up a feud between the two of them over who gets the title shot whenever Bryan comes back, if he does at all.

The opening video talks about how this is the most extreme night of the year and focuses on Rusev vs. Cena and Rollins vs. Orton. Again, it makes sense to add gimmicks so it's not just the same show as last month without the big stage.

Luke Harper vs. Dean Ambrose

Street fight, meaning the fall must take place in the ring. Dean takes over to start and knocks Harper to the floor for a suicide dive. Back in and we get the kendo sticks to Harper's back, followed by a chair being thrown inside. Dean sits down and licks his lips until Harper comes back and suplexes him through the chair. Luke starts going after the knee with the kendo stick before wedging a chair in the corner.

In a unique spot, Harper LAUNCHES Dean face first into the chair for two as the fans stay behind Ambrose. Back up and a tornado DDT gives Dean a breather as the fans want tables. Luke counters Dirty Deeds and the rebound clothesline before they head back to the floor.

Dean's suicide dive is countered with a shove, so Dean does a kind of 619 and comes back with a clothesline in a cool spot.

They fight to the back with Luke being rammed into various things. Luke goes behind a wall and the camera has to run around to find him. THANK YOU! I can't remember the last time that happened but it drives me absolutely insane when there's a camera waiting on them. Harper and Dean get inside a car.....and drive away with the referee in the back. So I'm guessing the match is still going and continues later in the night?

HHH tells Kane to find that car before those two hurt someone. Rollins comes in and tells them to calm down because this is a big night. Kane goes off on Rollins and calls him a punk, but HHH wants things calm head into the main event. Kane better not screw up though. The fans could be heard calling this boring and I can't say I disagree. Don't put this stuff on the pay per view. We know the story is boring by now so don't make it even worse.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Sheamus

The winner has to kiss the winner's...uh yeah. Sheamus shoves him away to start but Ziggler comes back with forearms to the face. A dropkick staggers the big man and they fight to the floor. Ziggler is thrown at the steps but jumps on top of them for the slingshot DDT to stun Sheamus even more. Back in and Sheamus hits something like a Brogue Knee to take over. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Dolph fights up with another dropkick, only to get caught in a sitout powerbomb for two more.

Sheamus starts talking trash and follows it up with another devastating, yes DEVASTATING I say, chinlock. It's not devastating enough to prevent Ziggler from fighting up with right hands and a splash in the corner. The neckbreaker is countered and Sheamus nails a running ax handle, only to walk into a superkick for two. Sheamus plants him with a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker as they're trading big shots here. The Brogue Kick misses and Ziggler rolls him up for two before a rolling cradle is enough to pin Sheamus at 9:25.

Rating: C+. This was just a TV match with a quick ending but the two worked pretty well together. The idea here was to have Ziggler bounce off Sheamus and make all the power moves look good, which he excels at. Solid enough match here, even if the gimmick was really stupid.

Post match Sheamus takes nearly five minutes to do what he's supposed to do but of course he hits Ziggler low and gives him a Brogue Kick before making Ziggler kiss up to him like a heel should. Long video on what's coming on the Network.

Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Tyson Kidd/Cesaro

Kidd/Cesaro are defending and are the default heels here. Cole says that it's Kofi and Big E. Langston for the New Day. Kofi takes Kidd to the mat to start but Tyson wraps the arm around the ropes to take over. Off to Big E. vs. Cesaro with Cesaro catching Big E.'s leapfrog in midair and throwing him into the corner. It's back to Kidd as the champions stomp Big E. to the tune of New Day Sucks in an awesome moment. Tyson sends both challengers to the floor for a suicide cannonball dive on Kofi, only to have Big E. clothesline him down. Fans: "NEW DAY! SUCKS!" Woods: "WHAT DID WE DO??? WE'RE WINNING!"

Back in and Kofi hits a basement dropkick in the corner before we hit the chinlock. Big E. misses the splash and gets low bridged to the floor, allowing for the hot tag to Cesaro. The Swing is teased but it's a catapult into the corner, where Kofi jumps to the top for a spinning cross body, but Cesaro catches him in mid air for a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for two. Cesaro's apron superplex sets up the springboard elbow from Kidd for two, only to have Big E. dive through the ropes to spear Kidd down.

Back in and the Midnight Hour gets two on Kidd with Cesaro making the save. Kofi gets caught in the Sharpshooter and this time it's E.'s turn to make the save. There's the Swing into the dropkick but Woods gets on the apron for a distraction, only to be taken out by Natalya. Kofi uses the distraction to slide in with a rollup and a handful of trunks for the pin and the titles at 9:37.

Rating: B+. I had a really good time with this as Cesaro and Kidd are one of the most polished teams for such a short amount of time together as you'll ever see. Hopefully these teams have several more matches together as they've got great chemistry and work together really well. Awesome match here and I'd love to see more of it.

The pre-show panel chats for a bit and talks about Neville vs. Barrett.

New Day celebrates their win as Ambrose and Harper return. They

fight back to the arena and throw a bunch of weapons into the ring. Harper hits a quick powerbomb onto the chairs for two but takes too long putting Dean under the chairs, allowing Ambrose to toss him onto the steel. Dirty Deeds connects for the pin at somewhere around 59:00.

Rating: D+. So uh....what the heck was the point of this? If they had done something like Mankind vs. HHH at In Your House XVI where they kept fighting all throughout the night this would have been fun but instead it was three fourths of a match, then a 50 minute break, then a quick finish. Were they just five minutes short or something?

Long recap of Cena vs. Rusev. They traded wins at the previous two pay per views but tonight Cena is defending the US Title in a Russian chain match.

US Title: John Cena vs. Rusev

Russian chain match of the four corners variety, meaning forward momentum has to be maintained or your streak of corners is erased. They start with a tug of war and Cena gets three quick buckles, followed by Rusev getting two of his own. Rusev sends him to the floor and suplexes him over the ropes for two buckles but Cena hits him with the chain to break it up. They head outside with Rusev being pulled into the post, knocking him half silly in the process.

Cena gets two buckles but Rusev wraps his legs around the ropes for the save. Rusev scores with the spinwheel kick and chains Cena in the back a few times but can only get two buckles. For some reason Rusev goes up top, only to get pulled down onto the chain. Cena starts his finishing sequence but gets caught in the fall away slam, setting up the jumping superkick. The fans want Lana so she gets on the apron, only to be ejected by Rusev. Cena hits his usual stuff but the AA is countered into the Alabama Slam.

The Accolade is reversed into the STF and the rope Rusev grabs means nothing. Rusev pulls him down and hooks the Accolade so Cena gets to his feet and drives Rusev into two corners. He collapses from the hold though and Rusev hits the third, only to walk into the AA to break the streak. Back up and they both quickly get three, setting up a tug of war over the fourth. Rusev rushes for it but Cena pulls him into the AA and slaps the fourth to retain at 13:35.

Rating: C. I'm actually surprised but they did find a different way to end the thing. That being said, these matches can only be so good

as the gimmick gets in the way of the match. Other than the match being called a Russian chain match, there's no distinct advantage here for Rusev and it makes for a pretty average match. Not bad or anything, but I'll never want to watch this again.

Roman Reigns talks about how he'll keep getting up and win the last man standing match tonight.

Divas Title: Nikki Bella vs. Naomi

Nikki is defending and Naomi got the shot after attacking Paige, who had won a battle royal to earn the title match. Naomi has new music, stupid looking glasses and shoes that light up. Nikki puts on an armbar to start but gets suplexed down for two. The shoes are already really distracting as Naomi hooks a chinlock. Back up and Nikki avoids the Rear View but Naomi stops to dance a bit.

Naomi charges into an elbow in the corner and the Alabama Slam gets two. Back up and Naomi gets the same off a falling reverse DDT. A quick Bubba Bomb into a rollup gets the same but Nikki comes back with something like a Beautiful Disaster from the middle rope for two. Brie gets in a cheap shot on Naomi, setting up the Rack Attack to retain the title at 7:17. Those are our new heroes?

Rating: C. The Bellas (they're a collective entity in my mind at this point) are acceptable in the ring and improving, but they're far too annoying to make me ever care about/like them, especially with the one not in the match shouting COME ON *insert other sister's name here* a dozen times a match. It also doesn't help that they might be the worst written characters I've seen in years with the stories starting and stopping and them suddenly being faces with no reason given. Also their Total Divas personas haven't done them any favors. Somehow this is going to wind up as the Funkadactyls vs. Bellas isn't it?

Rusev yells at Lana and storms off. Lana hangs her head and walks into the Authority's locker room. That's something I guess and the fans gasped when they saw whose room it was.

We recap Reigns vs. Big Show, which exists to prove that there is a devil and his name is Vince McMahon.

Roman Reigns vs. Big Show

Last man standing. They slug it out to start and Reigns knocks Show to the floor before getting an early table. Big Show shoves it back

under the ring so Reigns posts him, setting up the apron kick for five. The table reappears and is set up at ringside but Big Show breaks it with his fists so Reigns can't put him through it.

Reigns opts for a kendo stick and nails Show with it a few times, only to have Show break it apart, saying he's a giant. Thanks for pointing that out. Show goes into his slow offense and the fans chant BORING, so Reigns gets a chair and blasts Show about ten times to put him down. A DDT on the chair stuns Show and allows Reigns to get two tables. The delay lets Show get back up for the KO Punch though, sending Reigns down for eight.

Show is annoyed so Roman hits a Samoan drop through the table. Back up and Big Show hits a spear, followed by the most polite, least impactful Vader Bomb you'll ever see. Reigns gets to his feet so Show goes up, only to get slammed down for almost no reaction. Two Superman Punches connect but Show catches the third and chokeslams Roman over the top and through the two tables Reigns set up earlier.

Naturally it only gets nine so Big Show leaves Reigns alone as he sets up the announcers' table. In a funny bit, Show sees the announcers' notes that say he needs to lose weight and yells at JBL. Back in and Reigns avoids a charge through a table in the corner, setting up a spear for eight.

Show rolls outside so Reigns spears him through the barricade for a spot we've seen before. It doesn't help that Show was motionless at seven and on his feet at nine. Show loads up a chokeslam on the table but Reigns escapes and runs the tables to spear Show through the Spanish table for eight. Reigns finally buries Show under the table for the win at 19:43.

Rating: C+. The worst part? The match wasn't really even that bad. Just too long though and the ending didn't do what they were hoping. Why did they need to have the table cover him when they could have done the spear for the win? In other words, it was a table that kept Show down instead of Reigns. Great way to make your next big star look awesome there guys. This could have been WAY worse, but the lack of crowd interest had them dead on arrival.

Randy Orton tells Kane that the Authority will turn on him.

We look at some Tough Enough applications.

Here's Bo Dallas, who wants to know why Chicago is the Second City

when they're clearly #1! That would be #1 at rejecting someone trying to make their lives better. The people here shouldn't worry about how extreme the rules get because they should be worrying about bo-lieving. Cue Ryback and the obvious happens.

Rusev is annoyed about the loss when Lana comes in and says it's done. There will be one more match between Cena and Rusev at Payback and it's I Quit.

WWE World Title: Randy Orton vs. Seth Rollins

In a cage with Rollins defending, the RK0 banned and Kane guarding the cage door. Pinfall, submission or escape to win. Rollins goes for the cage twice early and Randy pulls him down on the second attempt. A third attempt goes just as badly so Rollins climbs one more time and sends Orton into the cage to take over for a change. Seth gets reversed into the cage again and the chase is on up the cage wall with Orton making a save.

Rollins almost escapes again and this time the Stooges come out to help, only to have Orton superplex him off the top for a big crash and two. Kane yells at the Stooges as Orton can't follow up. To change up the pace of the escape counters, Orton crotches him on the top rope instead. The Elevated DDT plants Rollins and Lawler is already proclaiming Orton the next champion.

Orton loads up the RK0 but opts for a decent looking Pedigree for two instead. The fans chant YES as Orton loads up the Punt but Rollins ducks to the side and hits a quick enziguri. Kane is told to open the door and obeys the champ but Randy is right there with the backbreaker to stop Rollins again.

The door stays open so Orton stops to think about it, but the threat of Kane sends him back. That threat proves to be well founded as Kane slams the door when Orton tries to leave. Randy does the smart thing by kicking the door at Kane before it turns into a fight to escape. Kane slams the door on both men and takes off his jacket, so the Stooges send Kane into the cage. The monster chokeslams both guys and loads up a tombstone on Orton, only to have Randy escape and RK0 Kane. Seth uses the distraction to RK0 Orton, allowing him to escape and retain at 20:50.

Rating: C. This wasn't terrible but it took longer than it should have and ended with a pretty lame surprise. They were treating the RK0 from Rollins like Austin siding with Vince when it was really

just a technicality. The match was good enough but the gimmick continues to drag things down. Some of the early escape attempts were good though.

Overall Rating: C+. I liked this more than I thought I would but it still wasn't a blow away show. Unfortunately we seem to be heading for round 3 of multiple feuds at Payback, despite there being very little left for these people to fight over. Definitely a watchable show, but can we please get some fresh ideas on top? Like, even adding someone else to Orton vs. Rollins and no Kane doesn't count. Better than I was expecting but still not great.

Results

Dolph Ziggler b. Sheamus – Rolling cradle

New Day b. Cesaro/Tyson Kidd – Rollup with a handful of trunks

Dean Ambrose b. Luke Harper – Dirty Deeds

John Cena b. Rusev – Cena touched the fourth buckle

Nikki Bella b. Naomi – Rack Attack

Roman Reigns b. Big Show – Show couldn't answer the ten count

Seth Rollins b. Randy Orton – Rollins escaped the cage

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<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00UYAMB8U>

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

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

Extreme Rules 2015 Preview

This isn't going to be the longest one in the world as NorCal and I already did the full podcast preview for this show. In case you didn't listen to that show for some reason (and you should. Check it

and the other episodes here <http://mightynorcal.podbean.com/>), here's a shorter than normal version.

On the pre-show, I'll take Cesaro and Kidd to retain the Tag Team Titles. Cesaro and Kidd have been on fire with the belts and there's no real need to give the belts to New Day, who can stay over as heels for six months on that clap alone. I like New Day, but they don't need the belts yet.

Rollins over Orton in the Kane Show with Orton and Rollins as the backup players. I'm almost sure Orton will hit an RKO or two but Kane will somehow screw him over, because NO ONE would see a swerve like that coming because the Authority is just so much smarter than we all are. My interest in this match fell through the floor when Kane became involved and that's not how you want your first title defense to go.

Cena retains of course in probably the most brutal match on the show. Those two are going to beat the fire out of each other and probably go on to have yet another match, which will only make Rusev look all the lamer. It's a shame too as the guy has shown he can hang in there with the top guys, but since we NEED a tetralogy instead of just the regular trilogy. Also, can we please find a different way to end the match instead of Cena following him around?

I don't think Bryan is going to be able to go, meaning it should be Neville getting the shot. Who will it be though? Probably Truth or Ryder or one of the other designated losers. Barrett walks out with the belt either way, but my goodness do they really have to wait until the day of the show to announce that Bryan is hurt? Barring a shocker, they've known for a week and should just announce it instead of jerking the fans around with their "well he MIGHT be there!"

Sheamus beats Ziggler in the stupidest gimmick of the night that I'd assume only Vince and Dunn find funny.

Nikki retains the Divas Title. All hail the Bellas and forever praise be their names, even if it defeats the purpose of turning Naomi heel, which defeats the purpose of common sense as she wrestles the natural face style but they decided to turn all the Divas heel for some reason.

Reigns over Big Show to FINALLY END THIS STUPID STUPID FEUD THAT WAS DEAD FIVE MONTHS AGO BUT LET'S JUST KEEP THEM FIGHTING BECAUSE BIG

SHOW IS BIG AND THAT MEANS FANS WANT TO SEE REIGNS BEAT HIM UP EVEN THOUGH SHOW BEAT HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME IN WWE BECAUSE HE'S BIG AND THEREFORE INTERESTING!

And Ambrose over Harper in what should be a hot opener.

Overall this show doesn't have me all that fired up, but it's usually a sleeper hit. If they let the violence get cranked up, they can overcome the lame build but it's going to take some work. As usual, this is the Wrestlemania rematch show and you almost have to have the gimmicks to keep it from being Wrestlemania Part II.

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Wrestling Wars Podcast #3

The show gets WAY more streamlined this week as we have our first pay per view preview with a look at Extreme Rules 2015, complete with a little fantasy booking, Dixie Carter's face on chocolates and of course a fire on a life raft. Come check us out as we run down the post Wrestlemania pay per view offering.

<http://mightynorcal.podbean.com/e/wwp-episode-3-extreme-rules-preview-with-kb/>

Also keep in mind that we'll be back with an Extreme Rules fallout show the same night.

Let me know what you think.

KB