

Superstars – August 23, 2012: This Is Superstars In A Nutshell

Superstars

Date: August 23, 2012

Location: Save Mart Center, Fresno, California/Rabobank Arena,
Bakersfield, California

Commentators: Scott Stanford, Matt Striker

This is another request and in something rather different, this is from less than a month ago. People ask me to do Superstars more often but you can only do so much of the same WWE stuff over and over again. Anyway this is seemingly a random episode of the show so maybe we'll get some good action out of it which tends to be the case from this show. Let's get to it.

For the sake of context, this is four days after Summerslam.

Damien Sandow vs. Yoshi Tatsu

Sandow does his usual schtick about before the match. Yoshi's music is so catchy it's unreal. Sandow takes over to start and drops a knee for two. Off to a chinlock but Yoshi quickly breaks it up and comes back with a chop. Sandow ties Yoshi up in the ring skirt and pounds away as Tatsu can't get anything going here. The best he can get are a few rollups for two and some LOUD chops. A big kick puts Sandow down but the top rope spinwheel kick misses. The Russian legsweep sets up the windup elbow and the double arm neckbreaker for the pin.

Rating: C-. Extended squash here but that's what something like Superstars is good for. They don't need to run through a match in two minutes or so and it gives them some more ring time. The problem with

that is almost no one gets extended ring time so when they're asked to do it, they don't know what they're doing and the matches usually don't work.

We get a LONG recap of Lesnar vs. HHH from Summerslam as well as the fallout on Raw.

Drew McIntyre vs. Alex Riley

Drew has a bad hand here and milks it a bit before Riley grabs the wrist. A dropkick puts Drew on the floor but Riley misses a dive. Off to an armbar from McIntyre followed by some stomps to the leg. This is going really slowly. Drew tries the FutureShock but Riley sends him into the corner. Drew heads up but gets rolled up off the top for the pin for Riley out of nowhere.

Rating: D. Drew's offense is really dull as he just stomped a bit after getting control due to Riley missing a dive. Riley is one of those guys that can't get on TV for some reason and while I've heard various reasons, most of them seem stupid when you have a guy that could do some good for a company with basically no midcard to speak of at times.

Video on the Asian tour.

Video from the end of Raw with Cena confronting Punk before Punk beat up Lawler.

Justin Gabriel vs. Cody Rhodes

This is a rematch from a few weeks ago where Cody won. There's actually a story here: Justin showed up with a chick and Cody hit on her, setting up the first match. See how easy that is? Both guys feel each other out to start and it turns into a contest of showing each other up. Gabriel gets a rollup for two which Cody takes offense to. They trade some HARD slaps

and Gabriel takes Cody down and into a freaky arm trap hold.

Cody gets sent to the floor but he moves before Justin can dive. Unfortunately he moves into position for another dive from Gabriel as we take a break. Back with Gabriel hitting what looked like a dropkick for two. Gabriel goes to the apron but gets his arm snapped across the top rope to give Cody control. He bends Gabriel's arm over the apron before hitting a gordbuster for two. Cody cranks on the arm a bit more and gets two off an uppercut.

Back to more work on the arm, this time in the form of a hammerlock. Justin starts a quick comeback but misses a top rope Lionsault to give Cody control again. Off to a short arm scissors but Gabriel gets off his back to break the hold. A monkey flip puts Cody down as does a spinning kick to the face. Justin hits a kind of sitout powerbomb for two but a slam is countered into the Cross Rhodes for the pin for Cody out of nowhere. Nice counter.

Rating: C+. Pretty decent match here with a sweet counter to end things. Gabriel is good in this kind of a role: the guy who isn't going to win a major match anytime soon but he's got enough speed and ability to keep things interesting. For a main event on Superstars, this was fine.

Overall Rating: C+. This is Superstars in a nutshell: you get some decent wrestling from guys you don't usually see on WWE TV, but for the most part there's a reason these guys aren't on the big shows. They're not bad at all but they don't have anything that sets them apart from everyone else. Still though, you won't regret watching it and if you've got roughly 45 minutes to kill and want to watch wrestling, there are far worse things you could pick.

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NXT – August 22, 2012: They've Made Me Want To See The Title Match

NXT

Date: August 22, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, William Regal

So I had the whole intro written about how great it was that the title tournament ended tonight and how great it was to see something like that finally happen on NXT. Then I started watching the show and for no apparent reason, the match is next week. My guess is that they wanted it to be at the start of a new taping or something like that, but it's still disappointing. Let's get to it.

Derrick Bateman vs. Antonio Cesaro

Cesaro pounds him into the corner almost immediately but Bateman comes back with a dropkick for one. Regal talks about how strong Bateman is as he pounds away. Cesaro comes back with a hot shot to take over and it's off to the cravate and chinlock. Bateman comes back with a belly to back suplex and some clotheslines. He hooks what can only be called a reverse DDT (Bateman hooked him for a DDT and then fell forward to drive Cesaro's back into the mat. Why not just use a regular DDT?) but a charge misses in the corner. Gutwrench suplex sets up the Neutralizer for the pin at 4:01.

Rating: C-. Nothing special here but it's good to see that Bateman isn't a featured guy anymore. He's competent in the ring and the people in

Florida seem to like him somewhat, but the guy just isn't that interesting. I think he's supposed to be an everyman character which is ok but that's about as far as he's taken it.

Some WWE stars talk about what it means to be the first champion. This is probably the only time you'll ever see Cena talk about NXT.

Tamina Snuka vs. Sofia Cortez

Tamina grabs an armdrag to start but Cortez comes back with some kicks to the ribs. Tamina hits a forearm to the chest and Sofia gives her a look that says "HOW DARE YOU" before wrapping Tamina up with a bodyscissors. Snuka comes with some chops and a superkick for two. The Superfly Splash gets the pin at 2:52. Sofia showed a lot of fire here, which means nothing because she was released about ten days ago.

Raquel Diaz jumps Tamina post match and draws the lipstick L on Tamina's head.

Kassius Ohno vs. Jake Carter

I believe Carter is Vader's son. Feeling out process for the first minute with no one being able to get an advantage. Carter takes him into the corner and pounds away but Ohno suckers him in and takes over. Ohno puts on a Cravate but misses a big boot. Carter hits a side slam for two but walks into the rolling elbow for the pin at 3:55. According to Regal it's called the Dream Killer.

Rating: D+. I know Ohno was an indy legend, but his NXT stuff hasn't really grabbed me. He just kind of does the same strikes over and over until hitting the spinning forearm/elbow for the pin. There's no story to his matches for the most part and they're just not that good. I've only seen a bit of his indy stuff and it was way better than his stuff here.

Ohno beats on Carter some more until Richie Steamboat makes the save.

We get the same package from Raw and Summerslam, showing us what WWE did in LA for Summerslam week.

More people talk about the Gold Rush Tournament and what it means to be champion.

Michael McGillicutty/Johnny Curtis vs. Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel

Michael and Kidd start us off as Regal talks about Walt Disney spinning in his refrigerator. Wouldn't that be a freezer? Kidd takes him down by the arm and tags in Gabriel to speed things up. Kidd comes back in with a slingshot rollup for two as McGillicutty can't get anything going so far. A double kick to the rib keeps McGillicutty in trouble. Curtis comes in for a distraction and McGillicutty takes Justin's head off with a clothesline.

We take a break and come back with Curtis hitting a forearm to Gabriel to knock him down. Back to McGillicutty who doesn't stay in long at all. Curtis comes in and hits a suplex before it's off to the chinlock. Gabriel tries to speed it up but walks into an AA (that'll likely get Curtis in trouble) from Curtis to put him down again. Johnny tries a twisting moonsault but crashes and both guys are down.

There's the hot tag to Kidd and a lukewarm one to McGillicutty as well. Kidd fires off some kicks to the head for two but McGillicutty and Curtis hit a side slam/slingshot "leg" (more like a hip) drop combo for two. Back to Curtis who can't hit a superplex but Kidd slips off the top trying a moonsault press. McGillicutty is knocked to the floor and a Hart Attack with a Blockbuster from Gabriel gets the pin on Curtis at 7:42 shown of 11:12.

Rating: C+. Good fast paced tag match here but it got a bit sloppy at

times. These guys are like the Cruiserweights in WCW: you can throw them out there in almost any combination and the match is going to be entertaining. Kidd and McGillicutty are ready for regular TV but for some reason they rarely make it onto those shows.

Kassius Ohno accepts a challenge from Richie Steamboat, presumably for next week.

It's time for the showdown to end the show. Byron Saxton calls out Seth Rollins and Jinder Mahal for a face to face chat. Rollins says that his dream is to be in WWE and that's all that matters to him. He's on the brink of achieving that dream and he's not leaving here without becoming the champion. Mahal speaks Punjab and says that Rollins is a failure. The fight is on and Rollins dives onto Mahal on the floor and stands tall in the ring to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. The point of this show was to build up the title match next week and they did that very well. They made the NXT Title match feel like a big deal which is pretty impressive given that it's the minor league championship. Having a showdown like that was a nice touch and while I'm not wild on either guy, I want to see them fight now. The rest of the matches were just ok, but they weren't the point of the show tonight.

Results

Antonio Cesaro b. Derick Bateman – Neutralizer

Tamina Snuka b. Sofia Cortez – Superfly Splash

Kassius Ohno b. Jake Carter – Dream Killer

Justin Gabriel/Tyson Kidd b. Michael McGillicutty/Johnny Curtis – Blockbuster to Curtis

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NXT – August 8, 2012: The Weakest Show Yet And It's Still Better Than Anything On Season 5

NXT

Date: August 9, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: William Regal, Byron Saxton, Jim Ross

We're still in the title tournament this week with the other two first round matches taking place on this show. It still amazes me to see how much better this show is with just a little effort and a few new faces in there. The show is the most efficient show in wrestling today with almost no wasted time and everything hitting perfectly. Why can't more shows be like this? I'm sure it has nothing to do with Vince not being there to run it or anything. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the announcement by Dusty last week followed by all eight participants talking about what it would mean to them to win the first title.

Gold Rush Tournament First Round: Michael McGillicutty vs. Justin Gabriel

They fight over arm control to start with Justin taking him down to the mat with an armbar into a hammerlock. The fight over the arm goes on for over a minute before Gabriel gets a side roll for two. Gabriel escapes a suplex into one of his own, floating over with it into a double armbar. We take a break and come back with McGillicutty in control and putting on

a chinlock.

JR makes a Joe Walsh reference and tells the fans to Google him. It's a shame that people would have to do that. Gabriel fights up but they both hit cross bodies at the same time to put them both down. Gabriel gets sent into the corner where McGillicutty charges into a boot.

Michael rolls away before Justin can try the 450 so Gabriel settles for a Blue Thunder Bomb instead, getting two. In a cool move, McGillicutty grabs a small package and rolls through it even further into a Perfect Plex for two. Gabriel counters a backbreaker into the Eye of the Hurricane. Justin tries a top rope Lionsault but McGillicutty rolls out of the way and the McGillicutter gets the pin at 8:05 shown of 11:35.

Rating: C+. This was the usual good match you would expect from these guys. McGillicutty is getting better and better every time out there but he's not going to go anywhere on the main show because of whatever their latest reason is to not push new people. Gabriel also looked good here which is a good sign as he's showing there's a lot more to him than the 450. Good stuff here.

McGillicutty vs. Rollins is the first semi-final.

Kassius Ohno vs. CJ Parker

Parker takes him into the corner to start but it's quickly to a standoff. Ohno works on the arm but gets quickly rolled up for two. He bails to the floor to break Parker's momentum, only to trip Parker up and hit a slingshot stomp coming back inside. A running forearm in the corner puts Parker down again and a flipping backsplash gets two.

Off to a chinlock for a bit before Ohno kicks him in the head to counter a sunset flip. A few more boots to the head put Parker down but he avoids the forearm and makes his comeback. Parker hits a side kick for two but

charges into a big boot. The spinning forearm to the back of the head gets the pin at 4:33.

Rating: D+. I wasn't all that impressed here. Ohno is being used as a one trick guy who uses nothing but strikes. The match was pretty dull and Parker was just ok looking. I know Ohno has been around forever and has a ton of indy experience, but this version of him isn't working for me for the most part.

After Jason Jordan/Mike Dalton beat Hunico/Camacho last week, they say NXT is their proving ground.

Ascension video.

Paige/Tamina Snuka vs. Kaitlyn/Caylee Turner

Great, four Divas instead of two. Turne and Snuka start things off and we're immediately told who Tamina's dad is. Off to Kaitlyn after Turner is shoved down and they fight over a top wristlock. Paige comes in and goes nuts, stomping Kaitlyn down into the corner. Kaitlyn escapes a headlock with a clothesline for two. Off to Turner who works on Paige's arm. The crowd is mostly dead for this. It's back to Tamina who runs Turner over and drops a knee on her.

Turner gets a quick rollup for two and it's off to Kaitlyn again. After Kaitlyn uses a wide variety of stomps, Turner comes in for a chinlock. This is a very boring match if that wasn't coming across. Tamina hits a quick Samoan Drop to escape and tags in Paige. After a fallaway slam, Paige small packages Tamina for the pin at 6:26. That's an odd finish when you consider Paige was in full control at the time.

Rating: D. I say this every week, but it's very obvious that the majority of the Divas have no idea how to work a match longer than a minute or so. This was nothing but basic stuff over and over again with the girls

looking like they were struggling to fill in six and a half minutes. I know it's a new idea, but maybe getting some female wrestlers instead of models might help a bit.

Derrick Bateman comes up to Bo Dallas in the back and complains about not being in the tournament. He seems to think it's Dallas' fault that he (Bateman) didn't qualify but Dallas shrugs it off.

Gold Rush Tournament First Round: Bo Dallas vs. Jinder Mahal

The winner gets Steamboat next week. Mahal shoves him into the corner to start and then politely steps back to let Dallas out. Well that's nice of him. Dallas takes him to the mat by the arm and gets two off a hiptoss. The fans want to know where their Slushies are. Mahal heads to the floor and we take a break. Back with Mahal kneeing Dallas in the ribs and hitting a low dropkick for two.

Regal talks about Mahal's family as Mahal gets two off a neckbreaker. Mahal drops some knees to the chest for two before hitting more knees to the head. Well it worked for HHH so why not Mahal? Off to a cravate but Dallas escapes a belly to back suplex into a cross body for two. Dallas makes a brief comeback but walks into a sitout slam for two. Dallas runs up the corner and hooks a bulldog out of said corner for two. Mahal's running knee misses but he clotheslines Dallas on the top rope. A Downward Spiral sets up the camel clutch to send Mahal to the semi-finals at 8:25 shown of 11:55.

Rating: C. Not a great match or anything but it made Mahal look good which is the idea here. Dallas isn't someone that thrills me for the most part as he looks like a kid instead of someone intimidating and interesting. He's ok in the ring but nothing worth watching for the most part. Mahal is decent enough for a foreign villain and for a show like NXT, that's all he needs to be.

Overall Rating: C+. This was probably the weakest show yet but it was

still good stuff. They got the stuff done that they needed to get done here and now we have a final four in the tournament. I wasn't wild on the other two matches in there but you have to expect a misfire eventually from these guys. This was still a good show though and I'm looking forward to the rest of the tournament.

Results

Michael McGillicutty b. Justin Gabriel – McGillicutter

Kassius Ohno b. CJ Parker – Roaring Elbow to the back of the head

Paige/Tamina Snuka b. Kaitlyn/Caylee Turner – Small Package to Snuka

Jinder Mahal b. Bo Dallas – Camel Clutch

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NXT – July 18, 2012: Who Would Have Thought NXT Would Be The Best Show Ever Week?

NXT

Date: July 18, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: William Regal, Byron Saxton

It's week four or five here and things are seeming to change on this show, which is fine but it also would have been fine if nothing had changed at all. I believe this is the beginning of the second set of tapings so things are likely going to change a bit more here. I don't remember any announced matches for this so it'll be a surprise. Let's get

to it.

As I said I don't know any of the matches but WWE has promised me a great main event tonight.

Welcome Home.

The main event is Slater vs. Gabriel. I forgot about that one.

Tamina Snuka vs. Kaitlyn

Kaitlyn is called the girl next door. I've never had a neighbor that looks like her. Tamina tries her power stuff but results in a chop to take Kaitlyn down instead. Kaitlyn leg whips her down and things slow down again. Tamina is screw this wrestling stuff and chops her right back down again. Now it's a flying chop to mix things up. Kaitlyn hooks a kind of abdominal stretch in the ropes to take over.

Bulldog gets two for Kaitlyn and she hooks a bodyscissors on the mat. Tamina gets up and hits a spinning hair grab to slam Kaitlyn into the mat. Wouldn't that hurt Tamina too? Tamina tries the splash but Kaitlyn grabs her leg. A Russian legsweep puts Tamina down and Kaitlyn hooks an arm hold while using her legs to hold down Tamina's head. Tamina is like SAMOA POWER and uses a Samoan Drop to escape. Superfly Splash gets the pin at 5:20.

Rating: D+. I know that the complaint about the Divas that I usually have is that the matches are too short, but then we have matches like these where I don't care at all no matter what they do. I have no idea who I was supposed to cheer for here or why I'm supposed to be interested in them. This was five minutes of moves with some flow to it but nothing of note. Also, that splash is on the verge of losing the name Superfly Splash because it's barely the same move.

Raw moment is Jericho debuting in 99.

Big E. Langston, a very muscular black guy is coming. He has more personality in his calf than Ezekiel Jackson has in his whole body from what I can tell.

Jinder Mahal vs. Percy Watson

Mahal grabs a headlock to start as Regal tells stories of facing Mahal's uncles over 25 years ago. I'd love to just hear Regal tell old wrestling stories. Watson comes back with a suplex but Mahal fires in the knees out of the cravate to take over again. A knee drop gets two for Mahal. Apparently Watson and Cena are friends. Ok then.

Regal points out how the hand grips that Mahal has in this chinlock make the hold more painful. Now that's some good analysis. Watson comes back with his jumping attacks and the Heisman Splash for two. Percy takes too much time though and walks into a jumping knee and the camel clutch gets the tap at 4:22.

Rating: D+. They've wanted to push Mahal for awhile here so I guess this works as well as anything else. NXT is a good place for him but Mahal needs more promo time. We really don't know anything about Mahal though other than the Khali stuff from a few years ago. Still though, the idea of having a heel like that here is fine for a show like this. The match was dull though.

Richie Steamboat vs. Leo Kruger

Kruger takes him into the corner with chops to start but you can't chop a Steamboat and gets away with it. Richie rips some skin off Kruger's chest and a monkey flip sends Kruger flying. Steamboat chargers into the corner but Kruger uses a move I've never seen before. He grabs a rollup but uses it to ram Steamboat's head into the bottom buckle to take over.

Steamboat grabs a small package for two but Kruger puts him right back down with ease. Steamboat gets in a clothesline and some forearms to send Kruger to the floor. We get a chase but as they head back in, Steamboat hits a cross body but Kruger rolls through and puts his feet on the ropes for the pin at 4:30.

Rating: C+. This is what we've been building to on NXT for awhile. Not this match in particular, but putting these guys that we've built up together and seeing who comes out on top. That's how you start a new promotion or a brand in this case, and it works very well when it's done

right. They're doing that here on NXT and it's working well.

Raquel Diaz promo, I believe the same from last week.

Raquel Diaz vs. Paige

Diaz comes off like something resembling Lady Gaga. She's on a wireless mic and says she wants to give this show a makeover and sounds like a chick imitating Cher from Clueless. Her parents are Eddie and Vickie Guerrero so the genes are there. Diaz takes her to the mat and rams Paige's face into the mat. Paige comes back with a kind of superkick but Diaz will have none of that, and hits the Gory Bomb for the pin at 1:49. That's the kind of debuting squash you need.

Alex Riley is looking for catering and runs into Aksana. Nothing of note happens here but Antonio Cesaro pops up. Aksana says Riley was hitting on her, which Cesaro says is so American. Cesaro wants a match next week, which Riley says is very European of him.

Heath Slater vs. Justin Gabriel

JR is on commentary here as usual for the main event. Gabriel armdrags him down and hooks an armbar for early control. Slater fights up and gets taken down by the exact same sequence again. Gabriel tries to go up but Slater shoves him to the floor as we take a break. Back with Slater holding a chinlock for a few moments followed by a neckbreaker for two. A hard Irish whip into the corner gets two. Back to the chinlock as the fans chant that they want Frostees.

Slater sends him to the apron and catches Gabriel with a knee coming back in. A middle rope neckbreaker gets two as Slater is staying on the neck which was hurt when Gabriel fell to the floor earlier. Gabriel fires off some kicks and a sitout powerbomb gets two. Slater comes back with a good looking spinebuster for two. They trade some counters resulting in Slater hitting a reverse suplex for two.

A neckbreaker out of the corner gets two for Slater and he loads up a belly to back superplex. Gabriel knocks him off and tries AJ Styles' backflip into a reverse DDT, but he doesn't hit it quite right as it

looks like he lands in an over the shoulder gutbuster. Not that it matters though as Gabriel hits the reverse DDT for the pin at 8:50 shown of 12:20.

Rating: B-. This is exactly what people like Gabriel and Slater need. They're not going to get this kind of TV time on Raw or Smackdown anytime soon, but here on NXT they can go and have a 10-12 minute match and get the experience that they need. This was an entertaining match and for a TV main event on the lowest level show, that's all you can ask for.

Overall Rating: B. NXT continues to be awesome with only the Divas being weak, but that almost goes without saying. There's one thing here that I'd like to point out that I really like about NXT: Dusty Rhodes is the GM and has appeared I think twice in 5 weeks. What is cool about NXT is that we know who is in charge and who is making these matches, but we don't have to see Dusty making these matches. Think about how much time is spent on Raw and Smackdown just seeing people say hey, you two are in a match. NXT is as fast paced as you could ask for and man is it refreshing. Another good show here.

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NXT – May 30, 2012: Superstars II

NXT

Date: May 30, 2012

Location: Riverside Centroplex, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Commentators: Josh Matthews, William Regal

Back to what has officially become the most boring show this side of Warriors of Wrestling. We're hopefully wrapping this season up but getting there is really dragging, as there were

zero stories last week as well as no promos at all. That's a shame as the show was starting to get good up until that point. Let's get to it.

To give you an idea of how much WWE.com cares about this show, their website says it's up every Wednesday at 4pm EST. It's currently 8:05pm EST and I have to watch this on Youtube because neither today's show, nor last week's show are currently on WWE.com's NXT page.

Curt Hawkins/Tyler Reks vs. Usos

It's 8:19 and the show can now be found on WWE.com, if you look in the What's Hot section instead of the NXT section. If I'm a TV company, I'd be curious as to why I should put a show on that they don't even bother to put up on time. Anyway Jey and Reks get us going. Not much going on so far so Jey shouts to the crowd a little bit. Hawkins comes in and nothing goes anywhere now either. A quick chin/headlock by Jey goes nowhere so we head to the mat.

Off to Jimmy who armdrags Hawkins down and it's back to Jey. A headbutt to the chest gets one and the Usos tag again. Regal explains what cutting the ring in half means, because a term like that needs an explanation apparently. Jey escapes a slam and hits a great superkick to put Hawkins down. Reks pulls Curt to the floor to avoid the Superfly Splash so the Usos dive onto both heels as we take a break.

Back with Jey holding a hammerlock on Hawkins on the mat. Jey loads up a superkick but Hawkins drops to the floor and suckers Jey in. Blind tag brings in Reks and the Usos lose control for the first time. Hawkins comes in with a kick to the back and a chinlock. Back to Reks who puts on something like a Tazmission.

Jey escapes and it's off to Jimmy on a not very hot tag. A Bubba Bomb puts Reks down and the Umaga hip smash gets two. Hawkins interferes, allowing Reks to hit a Downward Spiral for

two. Jey comes in with a Samoan Drop for two. Jimmy is sent to the floor and Reks/Hawkins hit a powerslam/neckbreaker combo to pin Jey at 10:59.

Rating: C. The match was pretty boring until the ending where things picked up in a hurry. That being said, we've seen these two teams fight more times than I can remember, which makes this a little less interesting. Also having no story to it hurts things, but the match was perfectly fine. More Usos please.

Tamina Snuka vs. Kaitlyn

Maxine is on commentary, which is literally the first continued story in two weeks. She's fought them both before and this is due to last week's Kaitlyn vs. Maxine match apparently. Kaitlyn takes her to the mat and hooks a bodyscissors and a rollup for two. Tamina takes her down as well and puts on a seated abdominal stretch. Maxine makes fun of Kaitlyn's hair and Tamina changes to a chinlock. The crowd is surprisingly not completely dead here. Kaitlyn fights out and hits a bad cross body for two. Kaitlyn trips her up as they run the ropes and hooks a full nelson with her legs to make Tamina tap (with her foot) at 5:21.

Rating: D+. The match was pretty dull, but I'm digging this dueling submission story they've got going with Maxine and Kaitlyn. Also it's amazing how far less unbearable the Divas are when they get some time to work out a match instead of hitting like three kicks, a missed charge and the finisher with a signature move thrown in. Imagine that: wrestling makes things better.

Raw ReBound is about Big Show, which is all that Monday's show was about anyway.

Justin Gabriel/Derrick Bateman/Percy Watson vs. Michael McGillicutty/Johnny Curtis/JTG

Hey Justin is back. JTG still has the new attire and I still don't want to see him ever again. Watson and JTG get us going Watson works on the arm but JTG speeds things up a bit. That's cool with Watson as he runs over JTG and slams him down for two. Off to Justin who hooks an armdrag into an armbar. JTG gets him into the corner and it's off to Curtis who takes over.

Gabriel channels his inner Steamboat and armdrags his way to freedom, taking Curtis to the mat. Off to Bateman who dropkicks Johnny down for two. He misses a charge though and McGillicutty stomps Bateman down in the corner. Everything breaks down and the faces stand tall as we take a break. Back with Michael putting Bateman in a chinlock and punching him in the face a few times.

Dropkick gets two on Bateman. Back to Curtis who has #letsgetweird on his trunks. If you really want to push Twitter that hard, you would think they could find a better billboard than Curtis. McGillicutty and Curtis tag two more times as I guess they won't like JTG either. Curtis gives up the tag and it's off to Watson. Watson cleans house but JTG low bridges him to send Percy crashing to the floor.

JTG pounds on Percy both in and out of the ring, getting two in the former. Off to the chinlock again and then back to Curtis. Elbow to the face gets two. Watson hits a belly to belly out of nowhere and makes the tag to Justin. JTG comes in at the same time and things speed up. Gabriel hits a blue Thunder Bomb for two and everything breaks down. Bateman dives on McGillicutty and Curtis while Gabriel hits a jumping tornado DDT for the pin at 12:13.

Rating: C+. This was pretty good but it came and went. You had three good guys, you had three bad guys, you had twelve minutes, and the good guys won. It was pretty entertaining though and that's really all you can ask for on NXT in this weird kind of limbo period they're in at the moment.

Overall Rating: C+. Like I said in the main event, you really can't ask for more than about 45 minutes of entertaining matches from Superstars II anymore. Regal's position as matchmaker is never mentioned anymore, the attacks in the back are never mentioned anymore, and the Hawkins/Reks being security is never mentioned anymore. I know I'm in the small minority here, but I kind of wanted to see where those things were going. I've spent a year on this already and I'd like to see some resolution to those stories. This was entertaining at least though.

Results

Curt Hawkins/Tyler Reks b. The Usos – Powerslam/Neckbreaker combination to Jey Uso

Kaitlyn b. Tamina Snuka – Full Nelson with Legs

Justin Gabriel/Derrick Bateman/Percy Watson b. JTG/Johnny Curtis/Michael McGillicutty – Tornado DDT to JTG

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Primo/Epico Retain

No shock there. Fun match too.

Wrestlemania #28: Tag Title

Match – Primo/Epico (C) vs. The Usos vs. Justin Gabriel/Tyson Kidd

For the tag titles and likely a dark match. This was announced the week of the show and is going to be streamed for free on the WWE's Youtube channel and WWE.com. The champions have had the belts now for about two and a half months but were actually being used as jobbers on Raw for Big Show earlier this week. I love the Usos but for the life of me I don't get why they added in Gabriel and Kidd. Apparently the team was formed on Superstars with the question from Kidd of "hey, wanna be a team" and a reply of "sure". That gets you in the title match at Mania now I guess.

As for a prediction, I'll go with the champions retaining, but if this gets the title picture moving a bit it'll be great.

Thoughts/Predictions?

Wrestlemania Dark Match Set: Triple Threat Tag Title Match

[Source](#)

It's Epico/Primo defending against Gabriel/Kidd vs. The Usos. I won't be giving my thoughts on this yet because I'm planning on a major WM Preview later tonight with thoughts on all the matches

Thoughts on this?

Superstars – March 15, 2012: The Divas Main Event The Show. That's All You Need To Know.

Superstars

Date: March 15, 2012

Location: Quicken Loans Arena, Cleveland, Ohio/Nationwide Arena, Columbus, Ohio

Commentators: Josh Matthews, Matt Striker, Scott Stanford

This was a request that I got yesterday and I had nothing else to do so here it is. Superstars is a show I often get requests for and for some reason I don't ever do it. It's the D show for WWE and is more or less there for the sake of giving the somewhat big name that they don't have time to get on Raw and/or Smackdown. Let's get to it.

I don't think I've watched this show in like three years.

Justin Gabriel vs. Hunico

Hunico keeps up the tradition of saying something in Spanish

and then saying it again in English. Hunico uses a nice wristlock to start and flips around a bit. They fight for control over the arm and Gabriel gets a backslide for two. Hunico bails to the floor and things slow down a bit. Back in and things speed up again which Striker says favors Gabriel. I'm not sure about that but Gabriel hits a monkey flip and sends Hunico back to the floor.

In a cool move, Gabriel does something like a 619 as he swings his legs into the ring and then back out to kick Hunico in the chest. Hunico rams Justin's back into the apron and we take a break. Back with Hunico holding a chinlock which is quickly broken. Justin tries a sunset flip but Hunico rolls through and hits a Tajiri style kick to the head. Out to the floor and Camacho gets in a shot to keep Justin down.

Back to the chinlock and then Hunico goes up. Striker makes a Super Calo reference for some reason as Hunico jumps into a dropkick. Gabriel slugs away and hits another dropkick to knock Hunico to the floor. Justin hits a springboard plancha to take out both guys in a cool spot. Springboard missile dropkick to the back gets two.

Hunico comes back with a Saito Suplex for two. Gabriel comes back but his tornado DDT is countered into a northern lights suplex for two. A second attempt at the DDT works and both guys are down. Gabriel sets for the 450 but has to get rid of Camacho first so Hunico crotches him. A Death Valley Driver off the middle rope gets the pin for Hunico at 11:58.

Rating: B-. This was entertaining and longer than most matches you'll see anymore. Gabriel is a guy that they have something solid (not great but solid) with but if he's never going to get out of Superstars and NXT, that doesn't mean anything. Hunico is better than I expected him to be as well but he needs to get out of the generic Mexican dude gimmick. This was a good back and forth match but it never quite got to a great level.

Kofi Kingston/R-Truth vs. Curt Hawkins/Tyler Reks

Man I thought I was free of these guys off NXT. We actually hear about the Regal feud on NXT. I can't escape that show. Kofi vs. Hawkins to start things off. Apparently Little Jimmy has named the team the Hip Hop Express. Off to Truth as the NXT guys are in trouble. A spinning legdrop gets two for Truth but it's off to Reks. Back to Kofi who hits a middle rope forearm for two.

Reks gets a boot up in the corner as Striker calls him Rex-y. Tyler pounds him down but Truth knocks him to the floor with a leg lariat. Back to Kofi who uses Truth as a stepping stone for a somersault plancha to the outside. We take a break and come back with Kofi working on Reks. Tyler gets in a shot but charges into the pendulum kick and a top rope cross body for two.

Kofi goes after Hawkins for some reason and is sent to the floor on a low bridge. Back to Reks who gets two on Kofi. He hooks a front facelock and a modified Eye of the Hurricane for two. Hawkins puts Kofi in the Tree of Woe and fires off some kicks for two. He draws Truth in so the heels can go High Low on Kofi for two. Back to Reks who stalls a lot. Something that looked like it was going to be Snake Eyes is countered into a spinning kind of mat slam to put both guys down. Hot tag brings in Truth and he cleans house. Everything breaks down and Trouble in Paradise into the Little Jimmy gets the pin at 10:10.

Rating: C+. This was standard tag team formula stuff and that's usually the best idea you can have. That being said, I don't like the Kofi/Truth team as there's so much Kofi could do but instead the answer seems to be just throw him into a tag team because that's all he's good for I guess. I'll never get that mindset but WWE seems stuck on it.

Raw ReBound recap the rap vs. rock thing.

Kelly Kelly vs. Beth Phoenix

Apparently Natalya has said she can beat Beth. Kelly stomps away in the corner and uses her typical stuff: handspring elbow, Stinkface, headscissor choke over the rope etc. Thesz Press puts Beth down and a rana gets two. Beth comes back and drops an elbow to the back for two.

Off to a surfboard hold and then a modified full seated full nelson. Beth beats on her but misses a charge in the corner. Kelly's momentum lasts all of two seconds as Beth kills her with a clothesline for two. Dragon sleeper to Kelly but she makes her comeback and hits that headscissor spin of hers. Glam Slam is countered into a rollup for two. The second attempt works and gets the pin at 6:36.

Rating: D. I've said many times that I don't like the Divas and that's true for a variety of reasons. Number one of all though is probably that most of them just aren't that good. Kelly looked like she could barely run the ropes properly and because she can do a few moves ok at best, she's one of the top Divas in the WWE. This was the usual boring stuff from them but with more time.

Overall Rating: B-. I enjoyed it well enough for 45 minutes but it's not something I'd watch every week I don't think. First of all, any show that gives a Divas match six and a half minutes needs to have a curse of festering boils put on it. The problem I'd have with this show is that while the matches are ok, a lot of these guys don't get on regular TV for a reason: they're not that interesting. The show was decent though which is all that matters I guess, especially given that it's basically a collection of the week's dark matches.

Results

Hunico b. Justin Gabriel – Death Valley Driver from the second rope

R-Truth/Kofi Kingston b. Curt Hawkins/Tyler Reks – Little

Jimmy to Hawkins

Beth Phoenix b. Kelly Kelly – Glam Slam

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Smackdown – September 16, 2011 – Henry vs. Orton Looks Good

Smackdown

Date: September 16, 2011

Location: Air Canada Center, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jim Ross, Booker T

It's the final show before Night of Champions and other than the IC Title I think we're all set for Sunday. I haven't heard anything announced for tonight but it almost has to be better than Raw was. Orton vs. Henry will get pushed even more and to their credit I'm kind of interested in seeing how that match plays out, which is something I never would have bet on when it was announced. Let's get to it.

We open with the return of Edge who gets the monster hometown boy pop. He's here tonight to host the Cutting Edge with Henry and Orton. Edge talks about missing coming through the curtain and it feels good to be back. It feels better to be back here in his hometown of Smackdown. He misses being in the ring and competing and being in the back with his friends however more than anything he misses the fans.

Edge talks about having the Cutting Edge tonight and he won't pull any punches. That's later though. Right now...and here's Cody to cut him off. Cody says Edge is probably here to talk about Haven which airs tonight on SyFy after Smackdown (Cody's plug, not mine) but since Edge didn't do that, it sounds like he's sucking up to the people. He suggests the fans all need paper bags.

Edge says maybe it's Cody that needs a bag instead of the people. Maybe it's Cody that is ugly and disfigured. Cody says the last time he saw Edge he was walking out of Mania as world champion but Cody has become IC Champion since then and has gotten rid of DiBiase. Also he beat Orton on Monday. Cody pulls out a bag for Edge and says to take it home and put it in his office because it's a reminder that Cody is the new face of Smackdown. Edge hands it back, saying Cody needs it more.

Cody says that makes no sense. Edge says no it doesn't and neither does the idea that Dusty fathered him. That's rather true. Edge goes to leave but Cody screams to have the music cut off. Cody FREAKS, shouting about how he's better than the crowd and he's going to give the crowd paper bags. "You need a bag. You need a bag. You need two bags." Then a fan with a bag punches him and takes his bag off to reveal Ted DiBiase. Ted beats him up and beats down the baggers as well. Ted's music plays as Cody leaves. I guess that's the IC Title match. Good intensity from Ted.

Sin Cara vs. Daniel Bryan

This is the rematch from a few weeks ago where Cara beat down Bryan post match. Bryan says Cara can be all aggressive tonight and he'll be fine with it. Bryan charges straight at him with a flying knee and Cara is in trouble early. He tries another charge though and Cara gets a shot in to block the suicide dive. Cara sends him to the floor and Bryan is holding a lot of parts in pain.

After a break we have Cara holding a leg lock on Bryan. A flying headbutt to a standing Bryan gets two. Booker: "You can see the anger in Cara's eyes." Cole: "HE'S IN A MASK!" Cole 1, Booker 0. Cara tries another dive but jumps into a knee and here comes Danny. Big kick gets two. They go to the corner and Cara gets him in the tree of woe where he stomps away. I mean he stomps a lot. He stomps so much that it's a DQ at 5:00 shown of 8:30.

Rating: C. Not their best but this was still pretty good. The idea was that Cara was out to injure him instead of being a competitor which is a good change in his heel turn. Bryan at least has something to do but I'd like him to move on to a feud with someone a bit higher up on the card. Maybe that's coming though.

Cara keeps up the beating until...Sin Cara comes down for the save. There are two Sin Caras and one leaves, I think the imposter.

Ryder doesn't think Henry can stand next to Orton without attacking him. Teddy implements another no contact order for the Cutting Edge. Ryder has to go tell them. He leaves and Aksana comes in. She gives Teddy a massage, involving him bending over and saying how good it feels. Trish comes in and says she's been there before. And that's it.

AJ vs. Beth Phoenix

Total squash, Glam Slam ends it in 1:15. There's nothing else to say here. Beth says the time is ticking on Kelly.

Video on Sheamus who is Irish and awesome. This is set to a song which says Too Many Lies but in a slower/more rock style.

Edge and Trish are having a chat about MMA/yoga gloves or something like that. Christian comes up to make it a more Canadian party. Christian has been calling him a lot and Captain Charisma says Edge might have cost him the title. They

hug and everything seems cool. He asks Edge to put in a good word with Teddy to get one more match for the title and Edge is like dude, seriously? Edge says Christian is whining again and Christian storms off. Ryder pops up and tells Edge to pass along the messages to Orton and Henry.

Wade Barrett/Christian vs. Justin Gabriel/Sheamus

Barrett has the coat again. Sheamus has new music which is a rockier song. Wait maybe he doesn't. It sounds different at the beginning but maybe I'm crazy. Sheamus runs them both down pre match with his now usual Irish folk stuff. The former Nexus guys get us going. We talk about Gabriel going bungee jumping as he speeds things up. He tries a springboard move but jumps into a Bossman Slam (Booker: "Big Bubba Rogers!").

Off to Christian who pounds away on Gabriel and gets a small package and clothesline for two each. Back to Barrett while Cole makes fun of Booker for being a boxing fan. Booker is going to be getting his own WWE.com show soon. Gabriel fires off the kicks but Barrett powers him down again. Sheamus hasn't been in yet. Christian whips Gabriel back into the heel corner as we take a break.

Back with Gabriel getting beaten down again but grabs an STO on Christian. A double tag brings in Barrett and Sheamus to a big reaction. The Great White (again their terms and not mine) goes up but Christian grabs his foot. That doesn't work long either as Barrett takes the big shoulder. Christian escapes the Celtic Cross and a Brogue Kick takes Barrett down so that the 450 can end him at 7:05 shown of 10:35.

Rating: C+. This was fine and a nice way to make Sheamus look dominant while not having him really get his hands on Christian yet. That seems like a smaller version of when HHH kept trying to Pedigree Stephanie or when 911 kept wanting to chokeslam Fonzie for you ECW fans out there. Granted it'll be a much smaller scale.

Sheamus calls Christian into the ring but he bails. Sheamus' music is the same here so I guess I was hearing things earlier.

Great Khali vs. Heath Slater

I'm really not seeing the One Man Southern Rock Band going anywhere. Much like the Divas earlier, what are you expecting here? Mahal comes out partway through it and speaks whatever language that is and then comes in for the DQ at 1:12.

Khali fights them off but can't hit the Plunge on Mahal. He beats up Slater instead.

Raw recap eats up about 4-5 minutes.

Evan Bourne vs. R-Truth

Miz and Truth freestyle on the way to the ring. Ok Truth does and Miz shouts YOU SUCK at the right times. They start fast with Truth beating Bourne down pretty easily. Kofi and Miz are on commentary here. Miz makes fun of Kofi wearing a t-shirt and jeans. Kofi gets a good comeback with "You see this championship title right here? Because of this, this is how a champion dresses." That's something that needs to be done more often: talk about how the title means you're the best.

Bourne fires off some kicks and a low hurricanrana which drives Truth's head into the mat. He sets for Air Bourne but lands on his feet. Truth kicks the leg and hits that jumping downward spiral for the pin at 1:54. That's a pretty definitive loss for a champion two days before a title match but it makes the challengers look like a real threat. I've heard that move is called What's Up so we'll go with that.

Time for the Cutting Edge and Edge doesn't even get a full entrance? Whatsupwitdat? Edge talks about how important Toronto is to him and how he was at Mania 6 and how he won his first title in WWE here in Toronto also. The guests are Henry

and Orton so here they are. Remember that while the Cutting Edge is on, there's no contact allowed or the match is off.

Edge says that's probably a good thing for Orton to be honest because Henry has been running through people. He asks Orton if Orton believes he can beat Orton. Orton brings up a good point in that Henry has never attacked him when he's fresh and maybe that's because Henry knows his best isn't good enough. Randy doesn't think he can beat Henry. He knows he can.

Edge says that's the truth and brings up that Henry has never won a world title and doesn't know how that's possible. Getting to a world title means reaching a new level and Edge isn't sure if Mark can reach that level. Henry says the only reason he's letting Edge walk out is because Edge is right. He's seen smaller guys, such as Edge, win countless titles. I thought 30 was a very countable number but that's just me.

Henry is done smiling and showing personality and is here to take what Orton has. Orton says the match Sunday will sum up Henry's career: he'll look good but he'll be the world's strongest failure. They stare it down but Edge says to remember the no contact rule. He leaves and Edge says the Cutting Edge is now over.

Orton jumps Henry and gets him down to one knee but Teddy sends out the locker room to break it up. Henry gets in some shots and both guys break free of the others at one point. Orton fights them off (they're holding him, not attacking him) but runs into the World's Strongest Slam. Henry adds a splash and make it a pair. He stands tall to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This grade is going to fluctuate considering how you look at the show. If you looked at it as a regular show, it was pretty weak. If you looked at it as a go home show, this was pretty solid stuff. I really want to see Orton vs. Henry now because while I have a hunch who will win, I'm really not sure and it could go either way.

On the Raw side, I flat out do not care about Cena vs. Del Rio because they haven't given me a reason to care. Beth looked dominant, the tag champions are in trouble and I think it's pretty safe to assume Ted gets the IC Title shot. That's a pretty good use of two hours so I'll call this a solid go home show.

Results

Daniel Bryan b. Sin Cara via DQ when Cara wouldn't let Bryan out of the corner

Beth Phoenix b. AJ – Glam Slam

Sheamus/Justin Gabriel b. Christian/Wade Barrett – 450 to Barrett

Great Khali b. Heath Slater via DQ when Jinder Mahal interfered

R-Truth b. Evan Bourne – What's Up