411mania.com Exclusive Review: Great Balls Of Fire: What Should Have Been

Remember this? Yeah probably not.

https://411mania.com/wrestling/halls-wwe-great-balls-of-fire-review/

Great Balls of Fire: This Show Came Along and Moved Me Honey

Great Balls of Fire
Date: July 9, 2017
Location: American Airlines Center, Dallas, Texas
Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T., Corey Graves

It's time for the most oddly named pay per view in a long time and yes they're actually going to call it this. Brock Lesnar is getting back in the ring for the first time since Wrestlemania to defend the Universal Title against Samoa Joe. This has the potential to be a war and that's what the title needs. Let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: Cruiserweight Title: Neville vs. Akira Tozawa

Tozawa is defending and has Titus O'Neil in his corner. They run the ropes to start and flip away from each other. Neville gets sent to the

floor but blocks a dive with a kick, allowing Neville to yell at Titus. Tozawa gets sent into the barricade and we take a break. Back with Neville getting two off a kick to the chest. Tozawa gets in a kick of his own and goes up so Neville bails, meaning Tozawa gets in a suicide dive for two.

An Octopus Hold sends Neville to the ropes before he can kick Tozawa in the head for two more. Neville's Phoenix splash misses and Tozawa gets in the top rope backsplash, only to have Neville roll outside again. Tozawa heads up but gets crotched hard. Neville kicks the ropes to make it even worse and a kick to the chest retains the title at 11:26.

Rating: C+. What in the world is supposed to stop Neville? The division is pretty much empty now, though that finish seems to set up a rematch. I don't really need to see these two fight again but that's never stopped WWE before. Summerslam is up next and Tozawa vs. Neville II doesn't seem like the most interesting match in the world. Then again that would allow the creative department to not have to do anything so look for it to happen. The match didn't really click the way I was expecting as Tozawa just kicked and did his dives but at least he was a fresh challenger.

A longer than usual opening video has a drive-in movie theme with the matches being treated as old school trailers.

Bray Wyatt vs. Seth Rollins

Standard Bray feud: Rollins is popular so Bray wants to beat him up. Seth kicks him down to start and Bray smiles in the corner. It's too early for the suicide dive though as Bray punches him back and hammers away. They head to the apron for a slugout and Seth is sent hard into the steps for his efforts.

One heck of a charge sends Seth into the barricade and we hit the chinlock. Seth fights up and heads to the top, meaning it's a superplex to bring him back down. Bray has cut him off almost every time so far like he has Seth very well scouted. Rollins knees out of a suplex and sends Bray outside for the suicide dive.

The Sling Blade and Blockbuster get two on Bray but he breaks up the

momentum with a heck of a clothesline. That hard release Rock Bottom gives Bray two and he runs his mouth about being a god. Rollins slugs away until a poke to the eye cuts him off. Sister Abigail gives Bray the pin at 12:05.

Rating: B-. Well it was short but at least Bray won, even if that's not going to mean anything in his future. He's done this kind of thing before and it never goes anywhere because he'll lose the next time there's anything remotely resembling a big match. WWE has made it clear that they're not going to do anything with him long term and that gets very annoying for anyone who wants to get behind him.

The Hardys have been watching superhero shows to prepare for facing Sheamus and Cesaro. Jeff talks about being in the first tag team tables match and tag team ladder match. Not only do they break barriers but they also break bars.

We recap Enzo Amore vs. Big Cass. They were a popular team but Big Cass got tired of bailing Enzo out of trouble for running his mouth. Cass finally had enough of it and turned on him, sending Enzo into a more emotional place than ever before. Enzo is in way over his head physically but his heart could carry him through.

Enzo Amore vs. Big Cass

Before the match, Enzo talks about how they debuted here last year in the same arena but now it's war. He quotes some That's Life and says if Cass wants to stomp on him, come on because he's always going to be a dreamed. Enzo goes on for a LONG time and basically says he's here to fight because he won't give up. Cass debuts some new music, which might not be the most original but at least it's something new.

Enzo charges right at him and gets tossed around like he's not even there. Something like a crossface chickenwing slows Enzo down and Cass splashes him for good measure. Some forearms to the back have Amore in more trouble and Cass tells him to bring it on. A gorilla press drop sends him outside but he gets back in at nine. The big boot ends Enzo at 5:22.

Rating: D+. Total and complete squash and that's exactly what it should have been. Amore isn't someone who is going to be able to get in any significant offense on someone like Cass and that's what happened here. This is a good example of a perfectly booked match and that's not something you get anymore.

Tag Team Titles: Hardys vs. Sheamus/Cesaro

Sheamus and Cesaro are defending and this is a thirty minute Iron Man match because we haven't watched them fight enough. Cesaro distracts Matt to start and it's a Brogue Kick for the first fall at 20 seconds. Jeff tries his luck and dropkicks both of them down, followed by Matt ramming Sheamus' head into the apron a few times. It's Cesaro cutting Jeff off to save his brother and they head outside with the champs taking over.

Back in and Cesaro grabs a gutwrench to keep Jeff in trouble as the announcers get in "playing defense" as many times as they can. Jeff is sent outside and the match is going so slowly that we look back at the first fall. Cesaro grabs a side choke as we're not even ten minutes in yet. Matt gets knocked off the apron and the assisted White Noise gives Cesaro the second fall on Jeff at 9:48.

Back up and Sheamus goes shoulder first into the post, allowing the hot tag back to Matt. Sheamus is rammed into three buckles ten times each, followed by Poetry in Motion and a Side Effect. The Twist of Fate ends Cesaro to make it 2-1 at 12:55. Sheamus comes in and gets caught with the slingshot dropkick in the corner for two as we hit the halfway point. Jeff flip dives onto everyone but Cesaro posts Matt for a countout to go up 3-1 at 16:55.

Sheamus grabs a chinlock, followed by the very slow forearms to the chest. We hit ten minutes to go as Sheamus gets two off a double suplex. Cesaro kicks Jeff off the apron and grabs the Sharpshooter on Matt. Sheamus gets dropped as well though and Matt makes a fast tag so Jeff can cradle Cesaro to make it 3-2 at 22:55. A basement dropkick gives Jeff two more, followed by Matt's tornado DDT for two at 5:00 to go.

Matt hits the moonsault for what looked like three with Cesaro diving in (possibly too late) for the save. A super Twist of Fate drops Sheamus and

we're tied at 2:55 to go. Sheamus is still down so a top rope splash/elbow give the Hardys two. Jeff gets a blind tag and hits the Swanton but Cesaro, the legal man, rolls him up for the pin at 25 seconds left. Time runs out and the champs retain 4-3 at 30:00.

Rating: D. WOW this was boring and one of the most boring matches I've seen in years. There was no need for this to be thirty minutes long and this better wrap up the feud already. The last few minutes were a bit better but this felt like it was about an hour and a half long, which really isn't something you want happening, especially on a pay per view with no breaks. Now PLEASE let them be done.

Xavier Woods was at the Rocket League World Championships.

We recap the Women's Title match. Alexa Bliss is tired of being judged and if she has to beat up Sasha Banks to prove herself, so be it.

Women's Title: Alexa Bliss vs. Sasha Banks

Banks is challenging. Sasha knocks her outside to start and Bliss takes a breather while feeling her own jaw. Back in and Bliss does her dislocated arm thing, which the announcers are all shocked by because they've never watched her matches before. Bliss teases walking out and rams Bliss into the apron to take over. The double knees and moonsault knees to the back give the champ two and it's off to a modified surfboard.

One heck of a backbreaker gives Bliss two more but Sasha comes back with some forearms to the face. Bliss catches her with a sunset bomb out of the corner for two (nasty landing). Twisted Bliss hits knees (kind of) and the Bank Statement has Alexa in trouble until a rope is grabbed. Banks sends her into the barricade but Bliss slaps her in the face and takes the countout at 11:48.

Rating: C. The ending hurt it a bit but this is clearly there to set up a rematch. The dislocated elbow thing is still creepy and Banks is good for a challenger. I'm sure this is going to set up a rematch in some form of gimmick match, probably at Summerslam, which might not be the worst idea in the world. It's good enough but felt like a longer TV match.

Post match Sasha fights her up to the announcers' table. Bliss gets shoved off and the double knees off the table drops Bliss to the floor.

We look at the Kickoff Show match.

Tozawa is in pain and tells Titus he wants a rematch. Titus will work on it but wants Tozawa to get looked at by the trainers.

Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Dean Ambrose

Miz is defending. Dean goes after the Miztourage to start and grabs a rollup for two. Miz gets in the short DDT and kicks Dean in the chest to stay in control. Dirty Deeds is broken up but Ambrose throws Miz down to get a breather anyway. A butterfly superplex gives Dean two but he tweaks his knee on the way down.

Dirty Deeds still doesn't work and we hit the Figure Four. Dean, with a bloody lip, makes the bottom rope but the knee is done. Miz fires off the YES Kicks but gets slapped in the face. The top rope standing elbow gives Dean two but the Miztourage pulls Dean to the floor for a beating.

Dean dives on all three of them but bangs up his knee even more. Back in and Dirty Deeds connects with Maryse putting the foot on the ropes. Dean hits a suicide dive (partially taking Maryse out in the process) but Dallas hits him in the back of the head, setting up the Skull Crushing Finale to retain at 11:15.

Rating: C-. They had a long way to go to get over the boring story and they didn't get there. The Miztourage is a great addition for Miz as they fit him so well and Dallas looking like a Duck Dynasty/Sons of Anarchy hybrid helps a lot. I hope this doesn't lead to another rematch but these two have only dominated the Intercontinental Title picture for fifteen months now. WWE can get at least three more months out of this thing before they have to come up with something new.

Long recap of Roman Reigns vs. Braun Strowman. They were fighting back in February, then took a break for Wrestlemania, then Strowman shoved over an ambulance with Reigns inside, then they took another month off because of an elbow injury. Tonight it's an ambulance match in what should be the

blowoff.

Roman Reigns vs. Braun Strowman

Ambulance match. Strowman goes right after the ribs and throws Reigns outside with ease. A shot with the steps crushes Roman again but Strowman hits the post with the steps. Back in and Roman's comeback is cut off by the powerslam with Strowman going for a cover out of instinct.

Reigns slips off of Braun's shoulders and manages a Samoan drop. Strowman goes shoulder first into the post and Roman wraps it around the post. Some chair shots make the elbow even worse but Strowman just gets up and shrugs them off. Strowman tells Reigns to hit him and then knocks him off the stage and into the side of the ambulance. Reigns send him head first into the ambulance for a breather, followed by a Superman punch to put him halfway inside.

Strowman hits him with a backboard and throws Reigns back onto the stage. A hard shot knocks Strowman through the LED screen but Reigns can't follow up. Instead Braun pops up and throws him off the stage again. Roman misses a spear though and winds up in the ambulance to give Braun the win at 15:30.

Rating: B. It was a fun brawl and should end the feud (oh just wait a minute) but now it's clear that we're getting Reigns vs. Lesnar at Wrestlemania. Why? We're just that lucky I guess. Strowman vs. Lesnar could be a heck of a war like this one, though hopefully with an ending that doesn't look like the Cowardly Lion diving away from the Wizard of Oz. This was about what you had to expect, but that's not a bad thing in this case.

Roman pops out of the ambulance and spears Strowman into it. He jumps into the driver's seat and speeds to the back where, after a few camera cuts, backs the ambulance into a production truck to pretty much kill Strowman. Kurt Angle and company come up to try and open the ambulance….and we're going to the ring?

Heath Slater vs. Curt Hawkins

This is an impromptu match and I have no idea why it's been added. Hawkins is barely ready and the announcers ignore the match to talk about Strowman being in trouble. We cut to the back again where a fire truck is coming in to get Strowman out. With the camera away from the ring, Slater wins with something we don't even see at 2:28.

Still in the back, the Dallas fire department is here to use the jaws of life to open the ambulance. Braun crawls away and refuses medical help. Angle is STUNNED as Strowman walks away to applause. If they didn't do this for the sake of a double turn, I have officially lost the ability to understand this company. That was every possible sign of a Strowman face turn and Reigns, who lost and ATTEMPTED TO MURDER STROWMAN, is now about as heelish as you can get.

We recap Brock Lesnar vs. Samoa Joe. Samoa Joe became #1 contender last month and has showed that he's not afraid of Lesnar, even nearly choking him out at one point. Lesnar has shown no signs of being afraid of Joe and laughed at him for even trying. Tonight it's going to be a fight.

Universal Title: Samoa Joe vs. Brock Lesnar

Lesnar is defending and Joe's music hits at 10:51pm. Joe jumps him during the Big Match Intros and they head outside with Lesnar being Rock Bottomed through the table. The bell hasn't rung yet and Lesnar is dragging himself inside. Joe enziguris him in the corner and starts laying in the headbutts. Lesnar can't overpower him and Joe hammers away in the corner. He can't get the full Koquina Clutch in though and Lesnar sends him into the buckle for the break.

There's the first German suplex, followed by the second and third but Joe kicks him low for the break. Another Rock Bottom gives Joe two but he still can't get the Clutch. A weak version of the Clutch goes on until Lesnar escapes with a side slam. Lesnar charges into the post, only to slip between Joe's legs and turn on the German suplexes again. We hit the sixth but Joe slips out of the F5 and puts on the Clutch. Lesnar grabs the ropes but the referee casually lets it stay on. Brock is turning purple but he powers up into the F5 to retain at 6:29.

Rating: B+. THIS is what I've been wanting from Lesnar for a long time.

Joe got in some serious offense and beat on Lesnar for a good chunk of that match. This was FAR from what we had to sit through with Lesnar just wrecking people as he was put to the test and caught Joe in the end. I had a great time with this and it was certainly acceptable rather than having Lesnar destroy him. Very good match and a big relief.

Joe glares at Lesnar with the announcers emphasizing that Joe got caught and Lesnar was in big trouble to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The two main events are enough to carry it but SWEET GOODNESS the rest of this show was weak. The Tag Team Title match felt like it went on for longer than ever, Banks vs. Bliss was there for the sake of setting up a rematch, Bray vs. Seth was exactly what you would expect and Miz vs. Ambrose is likely continuing for no logical reason.

That being said, this show was the modern day In Your House: a lot of nothing and a major match on the end to draw the fans. It's certainly not terrible but there's no hiding the fact that it's a pit stop on the way to Brooklyn for Summerslam. That's not a bad thing and the fact that it's the same price at Wrestlemania makes up for a lot of it. Check out the main event but that's all you really need to see.

Results

Bray Wyatt b. Seth Rollins – Sister Abigail

Big Cass b. Enzo Amore – Big boot

Cesaro/Sheamus b. Hardys 4-3

Sasha Banks b. Alexa Bliss via countout

Miz b. Dean Ambrose – Skull Crushing Finale

Braun Strowman b. Roman Reigns – Strowman shut Reigns in the ambulance

Heath Slater b. Curt Hawkins – Unknown

Brock Lesnar b. Samoa Joe – F5

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/

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

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

Great Balls of Fire Preview

Goodness gracious it's another pay per view weekend. This time around it's the "Monday Night Raw" side and that means a lot of stories are dragging on WAY beyond their expiration date. However, this time we have Brock Lesnar in town and that's not something you get to see every day. Or every week. Or every month. Or every three months actually. Anyway let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: Cruiserweight Title: Neville(c) vs. Akira Tozawa

We're starting off with a tricky one here. Neville has been outstanding as the Cruiserweight Champion and I'm not sure I can imagine Tozawa being the one to take the title away. That being said, Neville is starting to make me think of Jim Ross' call at the end of Undertaker vs. Kane at "Wrestlemania XIV" after the third Tombstone to Kane. Ross asked what it could possibly take to beat Kane if that didn't do it. If Tozawa doesn't win here, who in the world is going to take the belt from Neville?

We'll get to find out because I'm going with Neville to retain here.

Tozawa is on a roll at the moment but this seems like the kind of place to set up a big name coming up from NXT (Johnny Gargano maybe? Or perhaps Aleister Black, who Neville beat once and therefore has a history with the champ?) to take the title instead. Either way, Titus International doesn't get its first gold just yet (or ever most likely).

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

This is a thirty minute Iron Man match because, AGAIN, WWE feels the need to stretch feuds out far beyond their expiration date. I know that's been a TNA problem for years but suddenly WWE is right there next to them. We've seen a ladder match, a 2/3 falls match, a cage match and a regular match (shocking I know) and now we get this, because we just needed more of the teams together.

I'll take the Hardys to win actually, if nothing else because there aren't many teams to challenge Sheamus and Cesaro otherwise. Think about it: aside from the Hardys and Heath Slater/Rhyno (When is the last time they had an important match?), there aren't any other face teams on "Monday Night Raw". I mean, unless you're counting Titus O'Neil and Apollo Crews, that's all you've got. Insert my weekly complaint about American Alpha not having a televised tag match since April 25. Too much of them being gone drives a man insane.

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

Speaking of feuds that need to go away for a long time (like ever), here's another one that just can't seem to die. These two have been feuding for what feels like ever and have traded the title multiple times. Save for a 37 day Dolph Ziggler reign, these two have held the title exclusively since the night after "Wrestlemania XXXII". I have no idea what's supposed to be so special about this feud but here we go again.

I'll take Miz to retain here as he has so many people in his corner and it's way too early to have the Miztourage fail him. Ambrose needs to move on to anyone else at this point and there's enough talent going around to feud with Miz and take the title from him down the line. Just get this feud over with already because while I like both guys, I'm completely

sick of seeing them fight.

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

I'm not sure what to think of this one. Again I like them both and Bliss has been on absolute fire (not straight fire because that would be gimmick infringement but still fire) with the title. Banks needs a big win though as it feels like forever since she and Charlotte were having their great/historic feud.

I'll take Bliss, likely through some sort of shenanigans. All signs seem to point to Nia Jax going after the title (because it certainly won't be Bayley, who apparently just lucked her way into being the biggest star in NXT or something), likely at "Summerslam 2017" and it would make more sense for her to want to face Bliss, who she likely thinks she would squash, that someone who has beaten her multiple times now. Bliss retains, though it's in a tough defense.

Seth Rollins vs. Bray Wyatt

I'll buy you a ham sandwich if you can make coherent sense out of whatever Wyatt is talking about with this one. I know it's the usual stuff but that doesn't mean it's something that makes the most sense in the world. Basically Wyatt thinks Rollins deserves a beating for bragging about beating Triple H and Rollins is always ready for a fight. This feels like the biggest filler match for both of them that I could imagine and that's not a good thing for two people going through the motions at the moment.

I'll take Wyatt to win, as I tend to do in these things. The problem is he'll win these matches but then never go anywhere with them because his character never changes and he chokes when the real pressure is on. I still have no idea why they took the Smackdown World Title off of him so soon when Jinder Mahal was their big idea. Rollins doesn't have anything going on either but I'll take Wyatt on a glorified coin flip.

Enzo Amore vs. Big Cass

Now this one has me interested. The problem with the team was always

simple: Amore was limited in the ring and there's only so much that Big Cass can do on his own. The thing is, Amore might be hot enough on the mic to carry us past that. If he just throws everything he has at Big Cass, there's a real argument to be made for him getting close here.

I say getting close here because, of course, Big Cass should win here. He has the potential to be a very solid heel character and that would start by having him kick Amore's head off and plant him with whatever he's calling his spinning side slam these days. Let Big Cass win here and start moving Amore over to "205 Live" where he belongs and everything will be fine.

Roman Reigns vs. Braun Strowman

Ambulance match. This one ENTIRELY depends on if you think they might be changing the main event of "Summerslam 2017" by having Reigns face Lesnar there. If that's the case, of course Reigns goes over here and sets up the biggest match of the year to FINALLY makes Reigns the guy, because winning the last two Wrestlemania main events, including becoming World Champion again, just wasn't enough.

That being said, of course I'm taking Strowman because you know full well that no one is taking away Reigns' moment in the New Orleans sun. It doesn't matter if you like it or not but Reigns is likely winning the Royal Rumble (in Philadelphia again, because Philadelphia just hadn't had a Royal Rumble in three years and that's not fair to the city and its fans) and going on to take the title from Lesnar in New Orleans because…..whatever Vince McMahon sees in him. But yeah Strowman wins here and gets F5'd at "Summerslam 2017".

Raw World Title: Brock Lesnar(c) vs. Samoa Joe

Now if you're rather slow, you might not get who I think is winning here. First of all, Samoa Joe has looked AWESOME in this buildup and that's a great thing. They've treated him like a legitimate threat to Lesnar and that's not something a lot of people can say. Win or lose he's going to come out of here looking like a much bigger deal than he went in as and that's a very good thing.

But yeah, Lesnar wins here and he does it in a heck of a fight. The key thing here though is Lesnar's motivation. If he's willing to work, this could be one of the most entertaining brawls in a long time. If he's just being Lesnar, I feel sorry for Samoa Joe who has worked this hard to get here. Lesnar wins though, but it's going to take a fight that shakes his nerves and rattles his brain.

Overall Thoughts

This show has surprised me a bit actually. When you hear the name Great Balls of Fire, how are you supposed to take it seriously? Even WWE has made fun of the thing because there's not much of a way to spin a Jerry Lee Lewis song as the name of a pay per view. You have SO many options to pick from (Great American Bash anyone?) and this is the best they can have?

The thing is though, they've managed to turn it into something interesting with a pretty solid card. I know the main event isn't likely to be the biggest surprise in the world but it could be one heck of a fight, especially if Lesnar is feeling motivated. Throw in what should be a good match between Reigns and Strowman and all they need is one other match to come through to make it a solid show. I'm actually coming into this one with a positive feeling, though again, PLEASE don't let Samoa Joe get squashed. Is that too much to ask?

Oh and in one last wrestling connection: Great Balls of Fire is where Ric Flair got WOO. Lewis says it different but Flair has said he took it from the song several times. So in case you're a fan or it makes you think "come on baby, you're driving me crazy", you have someone to blame for it.

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/

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

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

New Column: How WWE Spends Its Build to Summerslam

In which I ramble about how I'd do things in June and July.

https://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-wwe-spent-build-summerslam/

Great Balls of Fire

That's really what they're calling the July pay per view.

https://twitter.com/AACenter/status/857973196364029952?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw&ref_url=http%3A%2F%2F411mania.com%2Fwrestling%2Fbrock-lesnar-defending-the-universal-title-at-new-great-balls-of-fire-ppv%2F

And Lesnar is defending. Was the Wrestling Classic not available? Or The Big Event? Or what about High School Confidential?