

Smackdown – April 19, 2013: The Match We Should Have Gotten At Wrestlemania

Smackdown

Date: April 19, 2013

Location: Thompson-Boling Arena, Knoxville, Tennessee

Commentators: Michael Cole, Josh Matthews, John Bradshaw Layfield

Back to the blue team again as we're starting to set up Extreme Rules. The main stories around here are Ziggler vs. Del Rio vs. Swagger and Henry vs. Sheamus which were both furthered on Raw. We're still in that limbo period between the aftermath of Wrestlemania and the build to Extreme Rules so it's kind of hard to guess what's coming tonight. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Swagger breaking up Alberto's rematch and then beating the champion on Raw, only to be beaten up by Del Rio seconds later, thereby making everyone look weak at the same time.

Here's Fandango to open the show. Cole tells us how Fandangoing is taking over the world, continuing to bury the idea into the ground. Fandango hits on Lillian who doesn't seem repulsed by him. He asks if she's ever Fandangoed before and that's too much for her.....until he spins her around and dips her back. Apparently she's terrible though so Fandango drops her to the mat. Fandango asks Lillian to pronounce his name but is interrupted by Santino.

Marella says that Fandango can dance but he's a very rude person. He liked watching the cheerleaders on Youtube Fandangoing a lot better than he likes watching the real thing. Santino offers to Fandango for us here but introduces us to his dance partner the Cobra. The dance discombobulates Fandango and he gets sent to the floor. The match is

after a break.

Santino Marella vs. Fandango

Fandango pounds him down as the announcers tell us about all of the Fandangoing around the world. The fans think Fandango can't wrestle as he stomps on Santino. Santino tries to nip up but can't do it so Fandango pounds on him even more. Off to a quick cravate but Santino comes back and gets the nipup this time. The Cobra is countered into a downward spiral for the pin for Fandango at 3:10. Yes make sure to take away the one good looking move he has and replace it with one of the most overused finishers in wrestling.

Rating: D. It really is pitiful how WWE has screwed up ANOTHER hot start for a character. Fandango got hot for a single week, so WWE's move is for him to not have a match on Raw and then squash a jobber to open Smackdown. That's fine for most people, but when your first match is against Jericho at Wrestlemania and now you're doing this two weeks later, it's a big step down. They should have given him the US Title on Raw or something like that, as it would at least show they're doing SOMETHING with him, other than telling us how awesome Fandangoing is and killing the concept right out of the gate.

Booker yells at Teddy for making Swagger vs. Ziggler on Monday when Big Show comes in. He thanks Teddy for giving him a partner tonight, unlike Booker who gave him a handicap match. Booker glares at Teddy so he leaves with Big Show.

Kofi Kingston vs. Wade Barrett

Non-title all around. Barrett pounds Kofi down to start but gets caught in a standing rana for two. A dropkick gets the same for Kingston and it's off to an armbar. Believe it or not, Barrett actually uses his punching background for a few seconds here but Kofi easily fights him off with a kick to the head. Back to the arm for a bit but Barrett knocks him

off the top rope.

Wade takes Kofi to the floor and rams Kofi's face into the announce table. That's only good for two on Kingston so Wade pounds on the ribs to keep Kofi down. Barrett pulls him off the top again for two and it's back to the chinlock. That goes nowhere so Wade hits a kind of Samoan Drop, but he covers arrogantly and gets rolled up for the pin at 5:32.

Rating: C. Not bad here but was there NO ONE else that Kofi could have pinned other than the Intercontinental Champion? Were the Prime Time Players off getting dance lessons? Were the 3MB guys trying to get Rhythm and Blues to open for them? Apparently so because we just had to have a champion get pinned here to make KOFI FREAKING KINGSTON look strong as a midcard champion.

We recap Sheamus being attacked by Mark Henry.

Henry says he attacked Sheamus because he can and that's what he does. Sheamus jumps him for a change.

We recap the world title situation with Del Rio and Swagger both wanting title shots. Del Rio was jumped by Swagger as he tried to get his rematch, so Swagger got the match and pinned Ziggler. It's a good thing he did too because Ziggler was starting to look credible for a few moments there. A triple threat match has officially been announced for Extreme Rules.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Jack Swagger

Swagger goes for the bad leg to start but Del Rio goes to Jack's bad arm to escape. Del Rio stays on the arm and it's another standoff. Jack takes him down with a quick headlock before going after the bad leg. Swagger tries to wrap it around the post but Del Rio punches his way out of danger. Alberto rams the bad arm into the steps and we head back inside

for a hard kick to Swagger's back for two.

Del Rio misses a charge into the corner though and is backdropped onto the ropes, hurting his leg again in the process. Colter talks trash as Del Rio falls to the floor and we take a break. Back with Albeto fighting out of a leg lock and kicking away at the arm again. Swagger goes right back to the knee for two more and hooks a leg lock on the mat. A crucifix gets two for Del Rio but Swagger kicks him in the face to put both guys down again.

Swagger takes it to the corner again and wraps the leg around the ropes before taking the bandage off the bad knee. Alberto fights up again but misses the running enziguri in the corner. Swagger puts him on the apron but as he goes for Del Rio, Alberto grabs a quick armbar over the ropes. The bad knee saves Swagger again though and it's time to shout WE THE PEOPLE a lot. Alberto ducks a big boot and comes back with the backbreaker but hurts his own knee in the process.

There are the forearms to the back and a Backstabber for two on Swagger. The armbreaker is broken up once and a second attempt is countered into the Patriot Lock in a nice counter. Alberto gets to the ropes so Swagger immediately hits the Vader Bomb for a close two. Del Rio comes back with the Codebreaker to the arm but the armbreaker is countered with Swagger sending him out to the floor.

They head back inside and a HARD superkick to Swagger gets two as Jack grabs the rope. The Patriot Lock goes on again but Del Rio counters into the armbreaker. Swagger counters into a rollup but Alberto counters THAT into a small package for the pin at 14:32 shown of 18:02. Really good finish.

Rating: A-. That's likely a bit high but I was WAY into this at the end. If they had done this match at Wrestlemania it would be a match of the night candidate with ease. The arm vs. leg stuff here was great and the submissions both played into the finish. Stupid booking aside, this was

really good stuff and I had a great time with it.

We get an abbreviated version of Ryback's reasoning for attacking Cena and their confrontation and the Shield beating down Cena to end Raw.

Shield says Monday was a moment that Cena won't forget anytime soon. They claim that Ryback has learned to not mess with the Shield anymore and saw a look on his face. They say the same look on Undertaker's face a few weeks ago and Undertaker is afraid. Ambrose promises to prove that Undertaker is mortal on Raw.

Great Khali/Natalya/Hornswoggle vs. Epico/Primo/Rosa Mendes

We actually get a reason for this match: Epico/Primo/Rosa stole Horny's parking spot earlier and there's video to prove it. I've heard worse. I can't think of anything off the top of my head but I've heard worse. Nattie takes Rosa down to start but can't hook the Sharpshooter. Rosa comes back with a kick to the back and a chinlock but Natalya fights back with a clothesline. Off to Epico and Khali with the giant hitting some hard chops in the corner. Primo tries to help but gets sent into the same corner as Epico for simultaneous chops. Horny annoys Rosa into a chase and Khali hits the Punjabi Plunge to pin Epico at 3:18.

Rating: D. Rosa was basically in half of a swimsuit and a vest so it doesn't fail based on that alone. That's about the extent of the good parts of the match though as none of these are people I care to see. At the end of the day they're fighting over a parking lot, but how many people can't get on television? Remarkable.

We get most of Punk's promo from Raw where he walked out.

We get Heyman challenging HHH to fight Brock in a cage match at Extreme Rules.

Mark Henry/Big Show vs. Randy Orton/Sheamus

Henry and Sheamus start and immediately talk trash, but Henry brings in Big Show before there's any contact. They immediately start brawling and Big Show sends him to the apron for chops to the chest like Sheamus would hit forearms. Sheamus comes back and hits the forearms to take over. Sheamus goes up top for the shoulder but has to jump over Show instead, allowing the giant to hit a superkick to take him down. An elbow drop misses and it's off to Orton.

The side slam puts Orton down and here's Henry to continue slowly pounding on Orton. A bearhug has Orton in trouble and it's back to Big Show to stay on the ribs. The chokeslam is countered into a DDT and both guys are down. Hot tag brings in Sheamus for his running forearms and the top rope shoulder for no cover. White Noise connects but a Henry distraction lets Show spear Sheamus down as we take a break.

Back with Show kneeing Sheamus in the head and getting two off the Final Cut. Henry comes in for a nerve hold before Big Show comes in for the same thing. Sheamus tries to fight up and finally manages a chop block to put Big Show down. Hot tag brings in Orton to pound on Henry and some clotheslines drop the smaller of the two monsters. A DDT gets two but Henry powers out. Show tries to come in but gets caught in the Elevated DDT. Everything breaks down and Show chokeslams Orton for the pin at 13:32 shown of 17:02.

Rating: B. This was the tag team formula to the letter and that's all you need a lot of the time. I'm a big fan of combining two feuds into one match like this as you can get those stories advanced while also adding in something different. Henry vs. Sheamus is going to be good stuff when we get to it and Orton vs. Big Show might not be bad either. Good main event here.

Overall Rating: B+. This is exactly what Smackdown should be: a wrestling heavy show with long matches and angle advancement. Tonight was

incredibly entertaining and blew by which is a good sign. Swagger vs. Del Rio is well worth seeing and the main event is solid stuff too. The rest of the stuff is very hit or miss but when you have an hour and a half of actual TV and about 40 minutes of that is top shelf stuff, you can't complain that much at all. Very good show.

Results

Fandango b. Santino Marella – Downward Spiral

Kofi Kingston b. Wade Barret – Crucifix

Alberto Del Rio b. Jack Swagger – Small Package

Great Khali/Natalya/Hornswoggle b. Epico/Primo/Rosa Mendes – Punjabi Plunge to Epico

Mark Henry/Big Show b. Randy Orton/Sheamus – Chokeslam to Orton

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Wrestlemania XXIX: And So....It Ends?

Wrestlemania XXIX

Date: April 7, 2013

Location: MetLife Stadium, East Rutherford, New Jersey

Attendance: 80,676

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

We have arrived at the biggest night of the year. The main events is John Cena vs. The Rock II for the WWE Championship. If that isn't enough for you to get into this, we also have Brock vs. HHH II, Undertaker vs. Punk and Del Rio vs. Swagger for the Smackdown Title. The show looks great, the matches look good, the WWE is going home, and it's Wrestlemania. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Wade Barrett

Miz is challenging. This match was set up because both guys had movies out at the same time but that has since been dropped. Miz beat Barrett on Raw a few weeks ago as well. Miz escapes a belly to back suplex to start and gets two off a quick sunset flip. Barrett gets in a kick in the corner to take over but Miz blocks the kick in the ropes. The Reality Check gets two for Miz before the Wasteland and Skull Crushing Finale are both countered.

Winds of Change get two for Barrett but the Bull Hammer misses. Miz takes the legs out and puts on the Figure Four but Barrett gets a rope. Wasteland hits this time for two and Wade is frustrated. In a unique counter, Miz trips up Barrett and puts on the Figure Four from the mat for the submission and the title at 4:10.

Rating: D+. What do you want here? It's a four minute match and not a very good one at that. At the end of the day, Miz isn't anything special, the match was nothing special, Barrett hasn't meant anything of note in forever, the title means nothing, and the match was four minutes long. How in the world are they supposed to get anything of note going? The answer is they aren't, because that's what a pre-show match is for.

The opening video is about Hurricane Sandy and is narrated by New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, who talks about New Jersey rising up due to its great spirit.

The National Guard waves a bunch of American flags.

The real opening video talks about growing up and making an impact on the

grandest stage of them all. It's your standard video about making a Wrestlemania moment, but well done.

Much like previous years, there's a big canopy setup, but this year there's a Statue of Liberty over the ring.

Shield vs. Sheamus/Big Show/Randy Orton

Surprising choice for an opener. Thankfully Shield doesn't come down from the upper deck of the arena. Sheamus and Reigns get us going and the pale one pounds away from one corner to the other. This is already longer than Sheamus' match from last year. A forearm puts Reigns down as does a hard clothesline for two. Off to Orton for the knee drop and some stomping. We get Cole's first error of the night as he says Orton won the WWE Championship at Wrestlemania 24 (he retained).

Reigns gets in some shots to the head and it's off to Rollins. That goes badly as well for Shield as he gets pounded in the corner and suplexed down. Back to Sheamus but Seth gets in a dropkick to the knee to take him down. Ambrose gets the tag and it's time for some evil double teaming. Sheamus will have none of that though and powerslam Ambrose down for two. Orton is ready for a tag but Show tags himself in instead. He rips Ambrose's vest open for the LOUD chop and Dean wants another one. Instead he gets about five in a row and a splash in the corner.

Dean actually comes back and dropkicks the knee out to bring in Rollins. A top rope kick gets two on Show and it's off to Reigns for some hard shots to Show's back. Ambrose is back in now, sans all of his vest and shirt. Back to Rollins as Shield is tagging in and out very fast. A running kick to the face gets two for Rollins and it's back to Roman for the chinlock. Big Show fights up with a belly to back suplex but Rollins takes out Orton to break up the tag. That's fine with Show though as he brings in Sheamus instead for some fast and hard hitting knees to the chest.

Rollins gets his own vest split open and there are the ten forearms to the chest. Ambrose tags himself in from the apron and there are ten forearms for him as well. The Regal Roll puts Dean down and Sheamus hits one on Rollins as well, this one on top of Ambrose. Reigns breaks up

something from Sheamus off the top and everything breaks down. Rollins dives through the ropes at Orton and slams his own head into the barricade. Sheamus is triple teamed in the ring but as Shield loads up the TripleBomb, Show spears them all down for the save.

Ambrose is the only one still in the ring for Shield as Sheamus is crawling to the corner. He reaches for Big Show but Orton tags himself in instead. The powerslam sets up the Elevated DDT and Big Show is ticked off. Orton loads up the RKO on Ambrose but Rollins springboards into the RKO instead. Reigns spears Orton down as Big Show watches from the apron for the pin at 10:34.

Rating: B-. Not as good as I was hoping for here but it was still a good match and a fine opener. This was more about the trio instead of the Shield, which is ok I guess but I'm hoping Shield gets to have their moment later on. The good thing here though is that Reigns got a 100% clean pin on Orton. It wasn't Shield picking the bones. It was a spear and a pin. That's a big help for the team and a good sign for them.

Big Show knocks out both of his partners post match.

Video on Rock vs. Cena.

Snooki is here.

Ryback vs. Mark Henry

They stare each other down before colliding. No one goes anywhere so they do it again to the same result. They slug it out with Ryback taking over. Some clotheslines stagger Henry a bit but Henry runs Ryback over with a single clothesline of his own. A powerslam gets one for Mark but Ryback fights back with some right hands. A suplex is blocked by Henry and he puts Ryback on the apron with ease. Henry sends him into the post and clotheslines him out to the floor for good measure.

Back in and Henry pounds away on the back even more to take away the power game from Ryback. We hit an old school bearhug for a bit before Henry throws him to the floor again. Ryback gets back in at nine and it's back to the bearhug. The bald one finally fights out of it and hits some

shoulders to the ribs in the corner and there's the Meat Hook. Ryback loads up the Shell Shock but Henry grabs the top rope and falls onto Ryback's back for the pin at 8:06.

Rating: D. What in the world was that? Henry DESTROYED Ryback here and beat him almost clean in eight minutes. I don't think there was an injury or anything, but why in the world would you have Ryback lose here? This keeps his long losing streak going for what, eight months now? I don't get this one at all.

Post match Ryback hits the spinebuster and Shell Shock on Henry. So why did we have the match end that way???

The announcers play with toys and announce a partnership with the Special Olympics.

Some Special Olympians are here with Stephanie McMahon and Governor Christie.

Tag Titles: Big E. Langston/Dolph Ziggler vs. HELL NO

HELL NO is defending. This was set up by Ziggler beating Kane and Bryan in singles matches and wanting a title match as a result. This is also Langston's debut. We get a funny bit to start with Ziggler kissing AJ to taunt Bryan and getting kicked in the head for a VERY close two ala last year. Ziggler bails to the floor and gets caught with a suicide dive. Back in and Bryan fires off the hard kicks to the chest but the big one to the head misses.

Ziggler dives off to tag in Langston and he gets Kane. Big E. easily catches a charging Kane and hits three straight backbreakers to take over. Kane gets a boot up in the corner to stop a charging Langston but the chokeslam is easily broken up. Langston runs over Kane and it's back to Ziggler for some quick choking. Langston comes in again for more shots to Kane's chest and ribs. He lowers his head though and there's a DDT from Kane to put Langston down.

Back to Dolph who breaks up a tag to Bryan, only to miss a splash in the corner. Kane's side slam gets two but the top rope clothesline misses.

The Fameasser kind of misses but Bryan comes in for the save anyway. Ziggler jumps into an uppercut from Kane but Langston splashes Kane for the save at two. The Big Ending is broken up and Kane sends Big E. to the floor for the knee from Bryan. The Zig Zag gets two on Kane and Dolph is frustrated. AJ slides in the briefcase but Kane ducks Ziggler's swing. The chokeslam connects and Kane takes out Langston. The Swan Dive from Bryan retains the titles at 6:30.

Rating: C. My predictions are taking a pounding tonight. I would assume this means Ziggler cashes in tonight, because we should totally buy him as world champion after he loses to Bryan here right? The match was fine, but at this point there's no need to see HELL NO with the belts anymore. It's just dull at this point and they stopped being funny a long time ago.

John Cena talks about Make-A-Wish.

Fandango vs. Chris Jericho

Fandango has a troop of dancing girls this time. This is set up because Jericho can't pronounce Fandango's name properly. This is also Fandango's debut. Fandango dances to start and is taken down by Jericho very quickly. The dancer heads to the floor but as soon as he heads back in, Jericho takes him down and pounds away even more. Fandango jumps over Jericho in the corner but walks into a Codebreaker to send him to the floor. A baseball slide sends Fandango to the floor and Jericho hits a big plancha to take him down.

Back in and Jericho wipes the dust off his hands but as he loads up the springboard dropkick, Fandango blasts him in the face with a hard kick. Off to a chinlock as JBL goes off on Fandango for posing too much. Chris fights up pretty quickly and speeds things up before hitting a top rope ax handle. A Thesz Press puts Fandango down as does an enziguri for two. A top rope cross body gets two for Jericho but he gets sent shoulder first into the post to stop his momentum again.

A Downward Spiral puts Jericho down and the guillotine legdrop hits....for two. The Walls are countered and Fandango clotheslines Jericho down. Another guillotine legdrop is broken up but so is Jericho's superplex

bid. The third legdrop attempt misses but the Lionsault misses as well. Jericho tries the Walls but looks to have tweaked his knee. Fandango gets a sloppy small package for the pin at 9:16.

Rating: D. This was REALLY sloppy at the end and it appeared to be botched. Fandango did nothing to impress me here as he only seems to have one big move in the legdrop and that was tried three times in less than ten minutes. That ending looked awkward though so I'm guessing something went wrong.

We look at Miz winning the Intercontinental Title on the pre-show.

Video on Rock being back and various cities his fans come from.

We get a highlight package of Mania moments set to Rocky music on the big screens with all the other lights off. The lights come back up to reveal...Diddy, for the annual music medley.

We recap Swagger vs. Del Rio. Swagger and his manager Zeb Colter don't like people coming into their country and taking jobs from "people that look like them". The world champion, Alberto Del Rio, is one of these people. Swagger won the Elimination Chamber match and earned this shot. To make it personal, Swagger broke Alberto's friend Ricardo Rodriguez's ankle. The idea is that Del Rio is the kind of immigrant that America was built on, but the fans aren't really buying him in this role for the most part.

Smackdown World Title: Alberto Del Rio vs. Jack Swagger

Swagger's entrance is cut off as he and Colter are in the ring after the video package. Colter goes on his usual rant about how awful New York is because of all the non-English languages being spoken. Apparently those foreigners are plotting something. Swagger pounds away to start but Del Rio sends him to the floor for a baseball slide. Alberto pounds on Jack on the floor for a bit before heading inside again. Colter starts distracting the champion immediately and Jack takes over.

A hard clothesline gets two for Swagger and it's off to an armbar, which Del Rio rolls up for two. Swagger comes back with the Vader Bomb for two

but as he tries to wrap the champion's legs around the post, Alberto pulls Jack's shoulder into the post. Back in and Swagger charges into a boot to the face and there are some clotheslines from the champion. Both Swagger and Colter get kicked in the face with the actual wrestler getting covered for two as a result.

The armbreaker is countered and Swagger hits a high belly to belly suplex for two. Jack goes after the leg but the Patriot Lock is quickly broken up. The Vader Bomb is broken up as well and Del Rio hits the ten forearms to the back followed by the Backstabber for two. The champion hits a hard German suplex for two but the armbreaker is countered into the gutwrench powerbomb for two.

There's another Patriot Lock but as Swagger tries the grapevine, Del Rio slides over into the armbreaker in a sweet counter. Jack powers out of that into the Patriot Lock again but Alberto makes the rope. Another gutwrench powerbomb is countered and Del Rio fires off a kick to the head, only to hurt his ankle even more.

The corner enziguri hits Swagger but Colter puts the foot on the ropes at two. Ricardo goes after Zeb but gets kicked in the ankle. Del Rio and Colter both have a crutch but the distraction lets Swagger deck Alberto. They head back in and there's the cross armbreaker out of nowhere for the tap out at 10:37. It was as sudden as it sounds.

Rating: C+. That ending came out of nowhere and cut short what was looking to be a good match. Thankfully they kept this a mat based match which is where both of these guys shine. The counters were pretty sweet out there and both guys looked good, but at the end of the day that ending stopped this dead in its tracks, which is a shame.

The National Guard is here.

We recap Punk vs. Undertaker, which is built around the idea of Punk disrespecting the memory of the recently dead Paul Bearer. Punk wants to be the 1 in 20-1, meaning he wants to break the Streak. He stole the urn as well, because that hasn't been done in about ten years or so.

Undertaker vs. CM Punk

Living Colour plays Punk to the ring live. Heyman and Punk throw the urn around before the match. Punk slaps Taker in the corner to try to tick him off before pounding away back inside. Undertaker launches Punk into the corner but Punk slaps him again. The chokeslam is blocked by a high kick but Taker kicks him in the face to counter. We head to the floor and Taker keeps pounding away before loading up the announce table.

Punk is rammed spine first into the post and there's the apron legdrop for good measure. Back inside and Taker gets some more open shots in the corner. Old School is broken up and Punk stomps away in the corner. In a solidly evil move, Punk hits Old School of his own followed by a Russian legsweep for two. Off to a kind of keylock by Punk which is easily broken up. Taker slugs him down but misses a running big boot into the corner.

A baseball slide puts Taker on the floor and there's a Macho ax handle to keep the Dead Man down. Back in and Punk works on the shoulder with some Scott Hall driving shoulder blocks. Taker fires off some right hands but gets caught in a swinging neckbreaker for two. Heyman shouts that Punk is getting closer and it's off to a chinlock. A suplex eventually gets Taker out of trouble but Punk tries Old School again. That's just asking for trouble though and Punk crotches himself on the top rope. Heyman: "WHAT HAPPENED?"

Taker loads up the Dive but Heyman makes the save. Instead of a chokeslam to Heyman though, it's a springboard clothesline by Punk for two. The running knee in the corner connects and there's the Macho Elbow for two more. Punk draws power from the urn and calls for Go to Sleep but Taker counters into the chokeslam for two. Back up and Undertaker wins a quick slugfest before pounding Punk down into the corner. Snake Eyes connects but Punk leg lariats him down for two.

A clothesline sends Taker to the floor and now Punk finishes loading up the announce table. Taker tries a Last Ride through the table but Punk escapes and high kicks Taker onto the table instead. The Macho Elbow.....doesn't put Undertaker through the table as Punk just kind of stops moving once he hits Undertaker. Both guys are down and Punk is holding his knee back in the ring. The referee gets to nine but Taker dives back in just in time.

Back in and Taker tries Hell's Gate but can't get it all the way in. Punk tries to flip over but only gets two as a result. There's the Anaconda Vice (no mention of Punk beating Taker in a submission match back in 2009) and Taker sits up. He glares at Punk while still in the hold and slips his hand underneath, but the chokeslam is countered into a bad GTS. Taker doesn't even go off his feet and picks Punk up for the Tombstone for two.

They slug it out again and Taker loads up the chokeslam, only to have Punk shove the referee down. Punk's knee is giving out but he hits the running knee in the corner only to be countered into the Last Ride. Heyman throws in the urn to blast Taker in the head ala HHH and the sledgehammer in 2001. Naturally it only gets two because Undertaker doesn't lose at Wrestlemania. Taker escapes the GTS twice and the second Tombstone makes it 21-0 at 22:23.

Rating: B. It was good but I never once bought the Streak as being in jeopardy. It wasn't going to end in a countout, it wasn't going to end off a GTS, it wasn't going to end with the same spot that HHH did better 12 years ago. It's a good match but it's a step down from the last four years. To be fair though, did anyone really think it was ending here? I'm not sure why you would. It's Undertaker at Wrestlemania for crying out loud. The match was entertaining though and Punk's visuals were great throughout, as was him hitting Old School. Good but definitely not great match here.

Undertaker reclaims the urn and looks like he's about to cry.

WWE has donated a lot of Slim Jims to the military.

Video on Cena being focused for the main event.

We recap HHH vs. Brock Lesnar using the same video we've seen about five times now. HHH didn't have a reason to get back into the ring until Lesnar hurt Vince. It's No Holds Barred with HHH's career on the line.

Brock Lesnar vs. HHH

Shawn Michaels is in HHH's corner. Lesnar is in the MMA gear which makes

him look even scarier than usual. They slug it out to start with HHH firing off a bunch of right hands to the ribs. Lesnar knees the Game in the ribs and out to the floor we go. Brock is sent into the barricade and the announce table but Brock sends him into the apron to take over. They head into the crowd but HHH immediately clotheslines Lesnar back to ringside.

Brock blasts him in the head and picks up a chair as we head back inside. The jumping knee to the face puts Brock back down and Heyman steals the chair away before HHH can use it. They head back to the floor and Lesnar hits a belly to belly suplex to send HHH onto the floor. A release vertical suplex puts HHH through the table and Brock screams at HHH's body. There's another belly to belly suplex onto the remnants of the table and Brock gives us another evil grin.

Shawn tries to check on Brock and is sent running away. Back inside and Brock pounds away into the corner and shrugs off a facebuster before clotheslining HHH down for two. Another belly to belly gets another two as Shawn plays cheerleader. A pair of German suplexes get three two counts and Brock shouts a lot. HHH fires back some right hands but gets whipped over the corner and back out to the floor.

HHH's arm is hanging there at the moment but he comes back with a clothesline and a right hand. Another clothesline puts Lesnar into the timekeeper's area. A chair shot staggers Brock but we head back inside for a bridging German for two. Brock decks Shawn off the apron but walks into a spinebuster. The Pedigree is countered but so is the F5. Shawn comes in to try a superkick but gets caught in the F5 instead.

A bad looking Pedigree gets two on Brock and it's sledgehammer time. Brock puts HHH up in mid swing and hits the F5 for two. We head to the floor and Brock cracks a chair over the Game's back before sending him into the steps. The same steps go upside HHH's head and Brock sends the other set into the ring. Back inside and Brock hits him in the arm with the steps for two more. Another shot with the steps gets another two but HHH comes back with some right hands. The Pedigree is countered into the Kimura arm lock but the ropes do nothing here.

Triple H breaks the hold twice by ramming Brock into the corner but Lesnar puts it on again. Brock fires off some knees and puts the hold on while on the middle rope but HHH picks him up and slams him down in a spinebuster. Brock misses a charge into the post and there's a low blow for good measure. HHH wraps Brock's arm around the post and Brock sounds like he in labor. A chair shot crushes the arm against the post and HHH does the same against the steps for good measure.

HHH throws on a Kimura of his own and Brock screams for Heyman, only to have Shawn superkick Heyman down. Brock holds off from tapping and lifts HHH into the air before slamming him down onto the steps. HHH throws the hold right back on and Brock slams him down onto the steps again to break the hold a second time. Here's a third Kimura by HHH and Brock lifts him up, only to be DDTed onto the steps. It's sledgehammer time again and a shot to Brock's head sets up a Pedigree onto the steps for the pin at 24:00.

Rating: B+. This started slow but the ending was much better. I was actually thinking Brock would tap at the end and they had me not sure of who was going to win until the end. I'll have a lot more to say about HHH spending eleven months with Brock Lesnar and then beating him in the blowoff match at Wrestlemania, but for now this was a good, hard hitting, entertaining match.

We get the Hall of Fame video from last night.

The Class of 2013 is presented to the arena: Mick Foley, Booker T, Trish Stratus, Bob Backlund, Donald Trump (booed) and Bruno Sammartino (gets a trumpet entrance). Foley got the loudest ovation it seemed.

The attendance record is 80,676.

Raw World Title: John Cena vs. The Rock

No entrance video, no musical performance, no special Mania entrance, nothing. Cena just walks out and kind of struts down the ramp at first. Apparently the eight person tag was cut from the show. I didn't think they could fit all of that into the amount of time they had left. We get Big Match Intros and we're ready to go. The crowd is exactly as you would

expect it to be. Rock is champion and the huge crowd favorite if that wasn't clear.

A quick shoulder block gets no one anywhere so we stare each other down a bit more. Rock grabs a headlock which does nothing of note either. We try it again until they run the ropes a few times followed by a hip toss to send Cena to the floor. Back in and Cena sends Rock into the corner before pounding away a bit. The champion comes back with a clothesline and a kick to the face to put Cena down on the mat.

Rock drives some elbows into Cena's chest but gets clotheslined down again. The crowd isn't into this for the most part. Cena hooks a chinlock which transitions into a headlock on the mat. Rock fights up and hooks a sleeper as the fans think this is boring. A suplex puts Rock down and Cena stomps away as he continues to be the heel in the match. Rock fights back with a Samoan drop and they lay around a bit more. Cena's release fisherman's suplex gets two.

Rock tries the spit punches but Cena hits the shoulder. A second one misses and the spit punch connects. The spinebuster is countered into an STF attempt but Rock escapes. Cena hits his finishing sequence but the ProtoBomb is countered into the Sharpshooter, and it's WAY better than the one he used last year. Cena rolls out of that and kicks Rock off so he can hit the ProtoBomb.

The Shuffle misses (I don't remember that happening before actually, which is hard to believe) and Rock hits a DDT to take Cena down. The Rock Bottom is countered into a bad Crossface but when that gets Cena nowhere, he hits a third ProtoBomb and the Shuffle for no cover. The AA is countered but there's the spinebuster by Rock. Cena picks the leg to counter the Elbow though and the STF goes on. In an impressive power display, Rock rolls onto his back and breaks Cena's grip to escape.

Cena charges into the Rock Bottom for two as the fans are barely reacting to these near falls because we're not even fifteen minutes into this yet. The AA hits for two but the to rope Fameasser misses. Now the People's Elbow hits but of course it only gets two. The near falls aren't even close as Cena is kicking out at like two and a quarter instead of two and

nine tenths.

After Cena rolls to the floor for a bit they head back inside for the boo/yay slugout. Rock for some reason tries a cross body and it's ANGRY Cena but he gets countered into a big Rock Bottom. AGAIN Cena kicks out barely after two which takes away a lot of the drama. Rock stops to listen to the people and loads up another Elbow, only to throw in You Can't See Me. In a nice callback to last year, Cena pops up and hits the AA for two.

Back up and they slug it out again and Cena hits a Rock Bottom of his own for two. NOW the fans are getting into this. Cena has no idea what to do now but as he loads up the Shuffle, he stops and sets up the Elbow. This is what cost him last year but he holds the ropes when Rock nips up, only to have the AA countered into a Rock Bottom for another two. This is starting to pick up a lot.

The AA is countered, the Rock Bottom is countered, the AA is countered again, the Rock Bottom is countered again, the AA is countered again, Rock hits a DDT. The champion tries about the nineteenth Rock Bottom of the match but gets countered into the Attitude Adjustment to give Cena his 14th world title at 24:00. Yeah seriously, that's it.

Rating: C+. This started off REAL slow but picked up after about twenty minutes. The problem is it stopped as soon as they started to get going. This fell into the classic trap of trying to have an epic match and collapsing under the weight. The problem at the end of the day is we've seen this done better before, so what's the appeal here? Not much to see here and it was freaking boring at times.

They say something we can hear to each other and shake hands...and Rock walks out to his own music to end the show. Oh wait they salute each other and pose to really end it.

Overall Rating: B-. This falls into that awkward "Good but not memorable" category. The big matches were all good but nothing on here was what I would call a masterpiece. Rock vs. Cena was good but we saw a better and bigger match last year between the two. The crowd didn't help things,

which ranges from either the cold or reports of REALLY obstructed views for a lot of them.

The biggest problem here is there was never that moment that you remember from each show until the end. Yeah that helps a lot, but it doesn't help when we've seen Cena win the title what, twelve times before? It also doesn't help that the moment comes after FIVE HOURS of WWE tonight.

Results

Shield b. Big Show/Randy Orton/Sheamus – Spear to Orton

Mark Henry b. Ryback – Henry fell on Ryback's back

HELL NO b. Dolph Ziggler/Big E. Langston – Swan Dive to Ziggler

Fandango b. Chris Jericho – Small Package

Alberto Del Rio b. Jack Swagger – Cross Armbreaker

Undertaker b. CM Punk – Tombstone

HHH b. Brock Lesnar – Pedigree on the steps

John Cena b. The Rock – Attitude Adjustment

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Swagger Didn't Even Get An Entrance

After the recap played, he was already in the ring. AT WRESTLEMANIA! I know they don't care about this, but he got a jobber entrance in a world title match AT WRESTLEMANIA.

That's HILARIOUS.

Wrestlemania 29 Preview – Smackdown World Title: Alberto Del Rio vs. Jack Swagger

Yeah this match is happening too. This is such a dull feud after a very hot start. There are multiple problems at the end of the day with the match, but the worst of all is fans aren't getting behind Del Rio. A lot of the fans agree with what Swagger and Colter are saying and that's not a good sign when you're looking for a new top face draw in Alberto. This brings us to another problem: all the heat is on Colter. Swagger basically just stands around and says WE THE PEOPLE before getting into the ring for the same matches he's been having for months. The real issue here seems to be between the managers instead of between the wrestlers in the match and that's not a good sign.

Speaking of Swagger's matches, they're a big problem as well. Swagger is still having the same matches that he's been having for years now which while ok, don't scream world champion at me. The Patriot Lock is good enough, but as a rule you don't see top faces tap in big matches. Thankfully Jack has the gutwrench bomb to get a pin with as well as various cheating tactics. That doesn't mean the match is going to be good, but at least it could work better than other things they might try.

Another problem is this "feud" and character have only been

around for a few months. Swagger wasn't ready to make the jump up from where he was when he came back to a world title match at Wrestlemania. This is reminiscent of JBL back in 2004 as he went from an old character to a brand new one to a world title match in just a few months. That isn't a good idea as there are no roots for this new character. We haven't seen him do anything other than hound Del Rio, so it's hard to get into this revenge feud. Swagger hasn't done enough to earn vengeance yet.

The last problem with this is also because of the build. As I mentioned, the problem has really been between the managers. The broken ankle helped things, but the money move in this feud was to have Colter get Ricardo deported so Rodriguez could return at Wrestlemania and destroy Colter for good. The ankle...eh it happened and was a good moment but they haven't really done anything with it since. I'm sure the managers will get into it on the floor during the match as well.

As for the match....I think Swagger takes it. Yeah he's got the DUI hanging over him, but I'm thinking WWE rolls the dice on him anyway. The other factor is that on top of the card, there's no other heel that looks likely to win. Swagger is the only heel who you could put over to keep every good guy from winning which never happens. The feud will of course continue at Extreme Rules, and hopefully Jack isn't nearly as dull as champion as he was a few years back.

WWE And Glenn Beck

So if you listen to Glenn Beck, may God have mercy on your soul.

Now that we have that out of the way, we'll get on to stuff that is actually news. Anyway, apparently Beck said that wrestling fans are stupid or something like that. This may or may not have been due to the Colter/Swagger story but every time I tried to look it up my head started hurting because I was reading too much Beck nonsense. Either way, this video popped up on WWE's Youtube channel. Watch the whole thing.

While I usually hate seeing kayfabe's corpse beaten up even further and while I always loathe Glenn Beck's nonsense, I couldn't help but smile at hearing people far smarter than him explain why wrestling is far better entertainment than his latest conspiracy theory about how everyone is out to get your freedom and the only way to save yourself is to buy both his latest book and whatever product is sponsoring him this week.

Anyway, any thoughts on this?

Monday Night Raw – May 16, 2011 – Let Nexus Ring!

Monday Night Raw

Date: May 16, 2011

Location: AT&T Center, San Antonio, Texas

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole, Josh Matthews

It's the final Raw before the Over the Limit PPV and we have our main event in the form of Cena vs. Miz for the title. Other than that there isn't a ton here so we'll likely fill

out the rest of the card tonight for the red show. Over the Limit feels like a filler PPV which is rarely a good thing. Hopefully Raw gives me a reason to not think that after tonight. Let's get to it.

Theme song opens us up.

Here's Cena but before he can say anything Riley pops up on the stage. Riley says he knows what Cena is going to say and introduces a video of Miz beating on Cena. Here's Miz -who looks weird without the title. Riley talks about how everyone has underestimated Miz. They're in the ring now and Cena isn't pleased. We get some classic cheap heat on the San Antonio Spurs for choking.

Cena cracks some jokes and implies Miz is a kid/stupid and then turns serious. He talks about how Miz has proven everyone wrong, but on Sunday he won't be saying he's awesome. He'll be saying he quits. An E-Mail says that Miz can pick Cena's opponent and the stipulation for tonight but it can't involve Miz or Riley. Miz isn't sure yet on either option.

Kofi Kingston vs. CM Punk

I'm not sure if this is a step up for Kofi or a step down for Punk. Punk takes over to start and tells Nexus to stay at the top of the ramp. Kofi sends him to the floor and they come down, only to have Punk send them back again. Punk fires off some elbows to the chest for two. Knee drop gets the same. He tries to go up top but Kofi gets a kick to the side of the head and the champ takes over.

That HUGE cross body gets two and New Nexus is looking worried. Boom Drop hits despite Kofi running around for about 8 seconds beforehand. He keeps looking at Nexus and misses

Trouble in Paradise. GTS can't hit but Kofi misses his jump in the corner. There's the GTS and Punk gets the totally clean pin at 3:56.

Rating: C+. This was fine and I can live with Kofi losing here as he was distracted by Nexus and he lost to a guy with a far better resume than he had. I'd love to see these guys get more time out there as the stuff they had worked quite well while it lasted. This was fine for a TV match.

Punk says that was just the beginning and Nexus will become the most dominant force in WWE history.

Miz is talking to Ziggler and Vickie about possibly facing Cena I assume.

Brie Bella vs. Kelly Kelly

Non-title again. We talk about the Divas on Twitter because that's about all there is to talk about. Kelly does her gymnast stuff as we keep talking about Twitter. The Twins cheat a bit and Brie works on a chinlock. Kelly spansks her a bit and a quick rollup/pinning combination ends this at 1:56.

Post match the Bellas beat down the blonde and it's Kharma time. HUGE pop for the music coming on too. Kelly is out in the corner and Kharma goes after her, only to have a Bella hit Kharma in the back. Implant Buster to the other one. We do get the terrified Kelly eyes and Kharma picks her up by the jaw. She flicks Kelly in the head, laughs, and leaves.

Miz talks to Big Show and gets cut off.

That's What I Am ad.

Here's Rey to address the situation with R-Truth from last week. He says that he wants to prove to Truth that he had no business being in last week's main event or any for that

matter. He's still waiting as we go to a break. Back and instead it's Alberto coming out to see Rey. He talks about how he's a pure blooded Mexican unlike Rey. Rey says he's proud to be a Chicano and an American. If Truth isn't here, then he has no problem shutting Alberto's mouth instead.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Rey Mysterio

They start off very fast with Rey getting a kick to the chest and moving out of the way of a charging Alberto. Codebreaker to the arm out of the corner as we take another break. Back with more arm work by Alberto and Rey can't quite fight back. Alberto puts on an armbar. Make that a LONG armbar.

Rey starts his comeback and here's R-Truth up in the rafters. He wants the cops to be called as there's a thief here as Rey stole his title shot. Alberto doesn't take the chance to jump Rey or anything so once Truth shuts up Rey keeps the advantage. He speeds things up a bit more and it's 619 time, but Ricardo grabs Rey for the CHEAP DQ at 9:34 total.

Rating: D+. Very boring match here as it was about 80% armbar and commercial. The point was to set up the Truth stuff post match but can't you have a good match at the same time that you're setting up an angle? Pretty weak stuff overall and not what you would expect from these two.

The heels beat Rey down a bit more post match, working on the arm. Truth runs in after they leave and beats him down even more, saying that on Sunday Rey is going to get got. The mask is almost off Rey at this point when Truth leaves.

Miz recruits Punk and Mason Ryan.

Time for the contract signing for Cole and Lawler. Lawler agrees that if Cole wins Cole gets the HOF ring and if it ever happens, Lawler will induct Cole into the Hall of Fame. Cole

signs immediately as does Lawler. Michael is all happy about it and it turns out that Sunday is a Kiss My Foot match. We get a clip of Ross being forced to kiss Cole's feet last month and also a clip from the Kiss My Foot match against Bret Hart where Lawler was made to kiss Bret's feet and then his own also.

Cole puts his disgusting foot on the table and Lawler says shut up. That was Bret Hart and Cole is no Bret Hart. He's not even a Jack Swagger. Cole runs his mouth off, talking about how no one remembers Swagger being a former world champion and the only reason Swagger was on Wrestlemania was because of Cole. Swagger isn't happy with this and says he's all yours King before leaving. Cole tries to make nice with Jerry and gets slammed down by the tie again. On Sunday, Jerry is going to put his foot in Cole's mouth and close it. Cole is crying as the segment ends.

Miz is talking to Kane when Big Show comes up. Kane leaves while Miz is still talking and the tag champs face Nexus next.

Cole is all annoyed now.

Big Show/Kane vs. Michael McGillicutty/David Otunga

Kane vs. McGillicutty to start us off and that goes badly for Genesis dude (NXT 2 reference if you didn't watch the show). Does that make Kane Nintendo Boy? Big Show comes in and the Nexus actually manages to take him down. Cole keeps apologizing for the tiniest things that tick Jerry off now which is a nice touch. The non-champs work on Show's leg as Punk runs his mouth a lot.

Show actually uses some nice leg work to get out of the hold but Otunga stops the tag. Show gets a belly to back suplex to put both guys down and there's the tag to Kane. Otunga's boots look like the ones Swagger usually wears. Kane beats up

both guys but here's Ryan in for the....not DQ as he doesn't get any contact in. Show takes him down on the floor and it's chokeslam time. Punk gets a kick to the back of the head and the McGillicutter ends Kane at 4:50.

Rating: C. Not bad here and nice to see a little surprise as Nexus might actually be getting a push for a change. Nexus is never going to be as strong as they were at first but this is nice to see as instead of just standing around they actually get a few wins. Hopefully the tag titles change hands soon though as Kane and Show can only do their unstoppable giants deal so long before it gets incredibly dull.

Truth is Miz's latest recruit. As long as they don't have another match I have zero issues there.

We run down the Over the Limit card to fill in some time.

Kane and Show say the loss means nothing. There's a title match on Sunday against Nexus apparently.

Cena is up next and he runs into Ryder again.

Miz comes out and picks a no holds barred match. Cena comes out to fight and is jumped by Jack Swagger, who is the opponent.

John Cena vs. Jack Swagger

Swagger starts off in control as Cole says this is why Swagger abandoned him. Cena tries to fight back but Swagger takes him down and adds a leg drop. The dueling Cena chants begin and Swagger adds a suplex. Vader Bomb hits as we take a break. Back and we see that Cena tried to fight back during the break on the floor but was rammed into the post. Also Swagger got a shot in with the computer.

Back in the ring and Swagger gets a chair shot to the back and

Cena is in big trouble. Vader Bomb onto the chair gets two only as the fans are getting back into this. Jack wedges the chair between the top and middle rope but here comes Cena. Never mind as he gets caught in something resembling a half belly to belly/half spinebuster for two.

Ankle lock goes on but Cena rolls through and avoids a charging Swagger, sending him head first into the chair. Cena starts the finishing sequence and with a look at Miz, the Attitude Adjustment sets up the STF for the tap out at 11:30 total. Better match than I was expecting.

Rating: C+. Pretty decent main event here as Cena and Swagger continue to have rather solid chemistry together. Cena gets to win a match by submission to prove that he can even though we already knew he could. Swagger looked good out there and got to be in control the majority of the time, which is what they should have done. Good stuff.

Miz lists off various ways he could make Cena quit on Sunday, suck as dropping Cena off the stage, slamming a camera into Cena as he's against the stage (which he actually does, getting a big crack as it hits the stage) or he could find something under the ring to use on Cena. Alex finds a pipe which he hands to Miz who climbs the stairs.

Miz says he won't use any of those things because there are a million ways to beat Cena which Cena hasn't thought of yet. He says he's going to find a way to make Cena quit that Cena has never seen before. Cena looks a tiny bit worried/scared here. Miz won't use the pipe Sunday, but he will tonight. Riley provides the distraction and Miz gets a shot in but Cena fights back and takes down Miz, standing tall to end the show. Cena says Miz is going to need the million he has and a million more, because at Over the Limit Miz is going to say I Quit. Staredown ends the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Not a bad show here as they added some

stuff to the PPV as well as built up a bit of drama for it. It still feels like a filler PPV but it's more interesting now or at least more fleshed out. For a go home show this was certainly adequate but it only gets my interest up for the PPV a little bit. Good enough though.

Results

CM Punk b. Kofi Kingston – GTS

Kelly Kelly b. Brie Bella – Cradle

Rey Mysterio b. Alberto Del Rio via disqualification when Ricardo Rodriguez interfered

David Otunga/Michael McGillicutty b. Kane/Big Show – McGillicutter to Kane

John Cena b. Jack Swagger – STF