

# NXT – July 10, 2014: Mission Accomplished

## NXT

Date: July 10, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Renee Young, Jason Albert

This is another show that has been built up for a few weeks and there's a good chance we get the payoff tonight. Coming off last week, we should be coming up on Sami Zayn/Adrian Neville vs. Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel. The match isn't going to be a masterpiece or anything, but it's going to be a well done match with a lot of high flying entertainment. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

### Bayley vs. Summer Rae

The winner gets a shot against Charlotte at some point in the future. Summer sends her into the corner to start but Bayley takes her down with a drop toehold and puts on an armbar. Bayley spins around on Summer's back and Rae bails to the floor. Back in quickly and Summer nails a kick to Bayley's ribs for one. Summer pulls on the arms with her feet on Bayley's shoulders as Charlotte is watching from the back.

The referee breaks up a hair pull and Bayley flips Summer over, only to have her head rammed into the mat. Bayley comes back with a suplex, drawing a BAYLEY'S GONNA HUG YOU chant from the crowd. A spear and suplex get two on Rae but she kicks Bayley in the face for two of her own. Bayley comes back with a top rope elbow to the jaw but Summer counters the Belly to Bayley into the Summer Crush (standing legdrop) for the pin at 5:23.

**Rating:** C-. Nothing special here but Summer vs. Charlotte is

going to be a solid match that belongs on a big stage. Summer isn't great in the rings but she looks good and has the attitude that a Diva needs. Bayley needs to stay in NXT as long as she can so WWE can't ruin her on the main roster.

Sami Zayn and Adrian Neville are banged up but they're coming for Gabriel and Kidd.

Justin Gabriel is with Tyson Kidd and says he's not going to be a loser anymore. He started in NXT and now somehow he's back. There's talent here, but it's not on his level. Tyson was right and it took one more loss to prove him right. Sometimes in life, you have to break some rules.

Tyler Breeze has entered the building.

### Sin Cara vs. Wesley Blake

Some quick rollups get two on Blake and a clothesline sends him to the floor, setting up a suicide dive. Back in and Blake takes him down by the arm for two before hooking an armbar. Cara comes up with a jawbreaker followed by a springboard headbutt. A springboard cross body gets two and a kick to the head sets up the Swanton Bomb for the pin at 3:32.

**Rating:** C-. Just a squash here but Sin Cara looked fine. He could use a few nice wins down in NXT, even though it isn't going to mean much for him in WWE. The original Sin Cara's run was just so bad that even the new performer can't do much with the character anymore. Still though, not bad.

Tyson Kidd and Natalya get in an argument over his recent actions. He tells Natalya to not come to the ring with him tonight.

Summer thinks she and Sasha should stay friends but Banks doesn't seem interested.

CJ Parker calls out Xavier Woods to talk about what happened last week. Parker apologizes but Woods doesn't seem to accept.

CJ offers peace before laying Woods out from behind.

The Vaudevillains talk about becoming the next Tag Team Champions and share an awesome laugh.

Video on the Ascension for the fans that are watching on the free preview.

### Bull Dempsey vs. Angelo Dawkins

A quick armbars takes Dawkins down and he makes the mistake of trying a sunset flip. The much bigger Dempsey sits on his chest and hammers away with headbutts and elbow drops. Dempsey chokes a lot and shrugs off a quick comeback attempt, setting up the Bulldozer powerslam for the pin at 2:55.

Dempsey says he isn't quitting until he's NXT Champion.

Zayn and Neville are ready.

### Sami Zayn/Adrian Neville vs. Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel

Natalya is here with Kidd despite the argument earlier. Kidd and Neville get things going as the announcers plug the Network. Off to Sami who cranks on the arm before it's back to the champion for more of the same. Zayn drops to the mat and Neville gets on his back for a corkscrew splash. Albert: "Rich can I try that off your back?" Renee: "I'll give you a dollar if you do!" Neville hits a middle rope cross body for two before it's off to Zayn for some chops. Justin offers a distraction and Tyson sends Zayn to the floor as we take a break.

Back almost immediately with Gabriel putting on a double chicken wing. That goes nowhere so Sami gets tied in the Tree of Woe, only to have Justin nail him from the apron. A double kick to the head gets two on Zayn and Tyson puts on a front facelock. Sami is in trouble but finally throws Kidd off and dives over for the hot tag. A standing moonsault gets two on Gabriel and a sitout powerbomb gets the same.

Adrian levels Kidd for two and the fans want Nattie. Justin's distraction prevents the Red Arrow and Kidd knocks Adrian off the ropes for the springboard elbow and two. Sami sends Justin outside but makes a blind tag, setting up a big high cross body for two as Adrian dives onto Gabriel. I thought that was it. Tyson grabs Sami's face but gets backdropped to the floor. Sami is left alone for the BIG flip dive to take out all three other guys. Kidd claims a knee injury but it's a fake. Sami punches him in the jaw but it knocks Natalya to the floor as well. Tyson fakes going to check on her and grabs a quick rollup for the pin at 10:35.

**Rating:** B. Take four guys and let them fly around the ring for eleven minutes and freak the crowd out. It's an idea that has worked since professional wrestling began and it's always going to work. The match was the usual solid stuff and Kidd looks like the most evil guy in all of NXT. Well done.

Kidd leaves with Gabriel.

**Overall Rating:** B. If the idea tonight was to get people to want to buy the Network to see NXT, they did a great job. You got some WWE names, some good matches, angle advancement, and a sense of "why am I not watching this?". That's the point of a show like this and it worked like a charm. Good stuff and a good regular episode too.

### Results

Charlotte b. Bayley – Summer Crush

Sin Cara b. Wesley Blake – Swanton Bomb

Bull Dempsey b. Angelo Dawkins – Bulldozer

Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel b. Sami Zayn/Adrian Neville – Rollup to Zayn

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# NXT – July 3, 2014: The Gorgeous One Looms

## NXT

Date: July 3, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, William Regal, Byron Saxton

Last week's show saw some new names rise up on the NXT roster with the Vaudevillians providing as much entertaining as you could ask for from a single act. Other than that we're getting ready for some new stories to get going this week, which usually makes for a good show. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

## Colin Cassady vs. Sylvester LeFort

Big Cass says that Pepe Le Pew is about to get dissed. First he's going to get disfigured, then he's going to get dismissed. LeFort continues to look better than half of the roster and can talk better than most of them as well. Big Cass starts in a hurry and it's the East River Crossing and the Empire Elbow for the in at 55 seconds.

Adrian Neville says it was an honor to beat Rob Van Dam. Tyler Breeze comes in and says he's impressed that Neville could focus that well with Breeze just twenty feet away. It must be killing Neville not knowing when Tyler is cashing in his title shot. "Just like your uggo face is killing me." Neville offers to give Breeze a title shot tonight but Breeze claims a finger

injury during a hand modeling session.

Video on Bull Dempsey, the last of a dying breed and the last real man in professional wrestling.

### Charlotte/Sasha Banks vs. Becky Lynch/Bayley

Bayley says Becky is her BFF: Bayley Friend Forever. Sasha and Bayley get things going with Bayley taking her down by the arm. Off to Becky, drawing a great Irish accent from Regal. Charlotte comes in and gets caught in an armbar before Bayley comes in to work over the arm as well. A double suplex drops Charlotte and a double clothesline does the same to Sasha as we take a break.

Back with Bayley getting sent into the apron before Charlotte works her over in the ring. The BFFs double team Bayley in the corner and Charlotte gets two off a knee drop. Sasha works on a chinlock before it's back to the champ for a choke in the corner. Bayley finally kicks Sasha into Charlotte and Becky gets the hot tag. A series of legdrops get two on Sasha and everything breaks down. Bayley is sent to the floor and Charlotte comes in legally for Bow Down to the Queen on Becky for the pin at 9:06.

**Rating:** C. Basic formula match here and there's nothing wrong with that. The BFFs aren't likely to be around much longer as Charlotte doesn't need Sasha at this point. Sasha isn't holding her down but there's just no need for her. Becky was much like over the top Irish here and that's a good thing for her.

Bayley shoves Sasha to the floor to prevent an attack on Becky.

Justin Gabriel is ready for Sami Zayn tonight when Tyson Kidd comes in. Tyson tries to get him to turn to the dark side but Gabriel says Tyson is wrong, and he'll prove it tonight.

Sasha yells at Charlotte for not having her back after the match. Charlotte says the team is done because she's the champion. Sasha implies that she's coming for the belt.

### CJ Parker vs. Steve Cutler

Parker's sign now has the word Woods crossed out. He runs over Cutler to start and says that Steve is ruining the world, just like all of them. Parker hammers away and hits a side kick for the pin at 1:30.

Parker rants about Xavier Woods being so educated but doing nothing on the main roster. If he had Woods' chances, he'd win titles and change the world along the way.

We get a sitdown interview with Tyson Kidd who says he wasn't in a mood to do the fallout show at Takeover and left before he said something stupid. He didn't know Natayla was there and didn't blow her off on purpose. Interviewer Renee Young asks what was up with freaking out on Natayla for telling the referee that Neville had his foot on the ropes. He went nuts during the match and is glad Natalya calmed him down. Tyson goes on in a calm manner about not wanting to win the titles that way but walks off when Renee asks about possible marital problems.

Summer Rae vs. Bayley next week for the #1 contendership.

### Sami Zayn vs. Justin Gabriel

Tyson Kidd is at ringside, drawing a Nattie's Husband chant. They trade wristlocks to start as Regal thinks Kidd and Natayla are having issues. Justin wrenches on the arm to escape a chinlock. Sami cranks on one of his own but Justin makes it to the ropes. They're still in first gear here. Gabriel runs him over with a clothesline for the first hard move of the match. He hammers away at Sami's head and we take a break.

Back with Gabriel getting two off a kick to the head and putting on a double arm crank. Gabriel gets another two and seems to be getting frustrated. He hammers at Sami's head but Zayn fights back with dropkicks and a Blue Thunder Bomb for two. The Helluva Kick misses though and Justin hits a middle rope kick to the chest for two. Sami blocks a German suplex but gets caught in an over the shoulder backbreaker for two. A huge moonsault gets two and Justin can't believe this. He loads up the 450 but Sami rolls out of the way. A downward spiral into a Koji Clutch makes Justin tap at 13:00.

**Rating:** B-. My goodness it's nice to see Sami get a win for a change. It's not a great match or against a top level opponent but Sami did his underdog thing and then came back to get the win. That's a nice change for him and the best thing is he hasn't lose his heat with all the losing.

Tyson jumps Sami post match and Justin turns heel and joins in. Adrian Neville comes in for the save and I'm sure we've got a tag match coming up.

**Overall Rating:** B. The main event scene has gone from nothing to awesome in a single hour. We have the tag match coming up which could spin off into some more matches and Tyler Breeze looming over the whole thing. This was a really solid episode for storytelling and we had a solid main event to cap it off. As usual, NXT knows how to run a wrestling show.

### Results

Colin Cassady b. Sylvester LeFort – Empire Elbow

Charlotte/Sasha Banks b. Bayley/Becky Lynch – Bow Down to the Queen to Lynch

CJ Parker b. Steve Cutler – Side kick

Sami Zayn b. Justin Gabriel – Koji Clutch

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# **NXT – April 10, 2014: Occupying A See Saw**

## **NXT**

Date: April 10, 2014

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Jason Albert, Rich Bocchini, Alex Riley

There aren't a ton of stories coming into tonight but the main event out of last week was Sami Zayn vs. Corey Graves being stopped to to Sami's head injuries. Other than that we also might be building to Neville vs. Clay in the future which isn't the worst idea for a first new opponent for Adrian. Let's get to it.

We open with an In Memory graphic for Warrior.

There's a new commentator named Rich Bocchini tonight. No idea if he's a permanent replacement for Phillips or not.

### Adam Rose vs. Danny Burch

The fans think the party entrance was awesome. Rose prances around the ring to start but gets knocked into the ropes. He leans back and keeps lifting his feet to stop the charging Danny before running him over with some shoulders. Rose cranks on the arm but gets dropped by a single right hand. Adam comes right back with something resembling a Bronco Buster and more prancing, followed by a middle rope elbow for the pin at 2:54.

Albert dances post match.

We look back at Sami Zayn being injured last week. The referee says he was doing the responsible thing and stopped the match for Sami's safety.

Corey Graves says that was just the beginning.

### Sasha Banks vs. Bayley

Banks runs her over a few times for two each but Bayley comes back with rollups of her own. Sasha just goes off on her and hammers away before pounding on the back of Bayley's head. She chokes away in the corner and stomps on Bayley for two. We hit a double arm choke for a bit but Bayley fights up and comes back with some forearms. A running clothesline sets up a middle rope elbow to the jaw for no cover. Sasha tries to fight back but walks into the Belly to Bayley for the pin at 3:12.

**Rating:** D+. Not much to see here but the hugging obsession is almost impossible to not like. Sasha has charisma but there's only so much she can do if she keeps losing like this. That being said, both of these girls are almost ready for the main roster. They're not at Paige's level, but most of the Divas in WWE aren't either.

### Sylvester LeFort vs. Mojo Rawley

Rawley crushes him in the corner to start and hits a Rear View followed by Hyperdrive for the pin at 47 seconds. Now THIS is what Rawley should be doing.

Post match Brodus Clay comes out to powerbomb and splash LeFort. "Better than Batista!" Clay still wants Neville and thinks he's earned a shot. He calls out Adrian again and here's the champion to call Brodus out on his whining. They stare each other down but Brodus walks out.

Oliver Grey is back but Camacho cuts off his promo. He doesn't like Adam Rose wanting to party all the time but Oliver cuts him off as well. Oliver wants a match against Camacho next week and it's on.

We look at the NXT guys at Axxess.

Khali is here and gets a hug from Bayley. CJ Parker comes up and is really hoping Khali recycles. Khali shouts in Punjabi but Bayley translates: the big man wants a match next week.

Here's Bo Dallas for a big announcement. He's seen what the YES Movement has done so it's time for the BO Movement to occupy NXT. The fans literally turn their backs on him and Dallas freaks out. "I GAVE YOU COOKIES!" He goes to ringside to yell before heading back in and falling to his knees in tears, saying this makes no sense. I could get behind a Bo Dallas that loses his mind.

We take a quick break to say Don't Try This At Home and come back with Bo's meltdown continuing. The fans want NO MORE BO and he weakly tries to turn it into Let's Go Bo. Now it's a Bo-Tista chant until JBL makes a rare appearance with a huge grin on his face. "Bo, your movement doesn't have enough people to occupy a see saw." He makes a match right now.

### Justin Gabriel vs. Bo Dallas

They circle each other to start until Justin nails a few cross bodies. A rollup gets a close two and Dallas bails to the floor. The fans want cookies as Dallas comes back in with a headlock. Justin fights up and sends Bo back to the floor again but gets knocked off the top rope. A suplex sets up a cravate from Bo and he sends Justin hard into the corner.

Dallas levels him with a clothesline but gets sent into the corner as well to put both guys down. Gabriel fires off a series of hard strikes

and gets two off a springboard cross body. Bo reverses a tilt-a-whirl slam into a reverse DDT for a close two and both guys are winded. A hard kick to the back puts Bo down but he avoids a top rope Lionsault. Justin comes right back with a small package for two but walks into a double arm DDT for the pin at 10:00.

**Rating:** C. Not bad at all here as Bo is finally getting some character development that he's been needing after losing the title. That character can only be taken so far and the meltdown was the logical progression for his character. Gabriel was his usual strong hand in the ring here and looked good flying through the air.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This was more like it as the show set up two matches for next week plus a title program with Adrian's first challenger. Dallas going nuts was a great addition and the main roster guys' appearances continue to be used properly. I liked this show a lot as it felt like an old school NXT show.

### Results

Adam Rose b. Danny Burch – Middle rope elbow

Bayley b. Sasha Banks – Belly to Bayley

Mojo Rawley b. Sylvester LeFort – Hyperdrive

Bo Dallas b. Justin Gabriel – Double arm DDT

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# Wrestler of the Day – March 3: Justin Gabriel

We're heading to Africa today for Justin Gabriel.

Justin got his start in South Africa for a promotion called World Wrestling Professionals. I'm not sure what's going on here but it's a match between PJ Black (Gabriel) and Mikey Whiplash (not Whipwreck).

## PJ Black vs. Mikey Whiplash

Black sounds like a heel here and says Whiplash cost him a match last week so it's time to settle things. The fans chant for Black as he lists off more nicknames than Apollo Creed. Whiplash has one of the worst physiques I've ever seen. He isn't overweight or anything but he looks like he hasn't been to a gym in years. Mikey bails to the corner to start and complains about PJ's boots.

Whiplash finally takes him down by the leg but Black counters into a headlock. The female announcer keeps changing from English to some other language and it's getting annoying. Black cranks on the wrist but Mikey takes the leg again and pulls it down to the mat. We take a break and come back with Mikey slapping Black in the face. Apparently this show is being held in the basement of the Dome of Doom. That's quite the location.

Black takes him down to the mat but Mikey hammers him with forearms. A legsweep gets two for PJ and he takes Mikey down into a very modified cross armbreaker. Whiplash fights up and sends him into the corner before dropping an elbow for two. Some forearms set up a camel clutch on Black before changing it over to some hard elbows to the jaw.

PJ rolls over Mikey's back and scores with a pair of spin kicks and a nice dropkick. A top rope Lionsault gets two for PJ and a Blue Thunder

Bomb gets the same with the fans getting into these near falls. The 450 connects as well but Whiplash somehow kicks out again. Mikey grabs a backslide and puts his feet on the ropes for the pin out of nowhere.

**Rating:** D+. There was a huge difference between the two guys here with Black looking like someone with a lot of potential and Mikey looking like a guy that reached his peak here in a bad match. He came off like someone who just didn't have any upside to him and nothing about him stands out at all. This was a situation where Black just needed a better opponent.

It was soon off to WWE and Florida Championship Wrestling where PJ Black would go by Justin Angel and win the FCW Title. This is a rematch against Heath Slater from November 21, 2009.

#### FCW Title: Heath Slater vs. Justin Angel

The idea here is that Slater lost the title to Angel in the final seconds of a 2/3 falls match and has had to wait thirty days to get a rematch. Angel armdrags him down and dances a bit, which seems to be a thing for him. A shoulder drops Slater again and it's right back to the armbars.

Back up and Angel is sent to the apron where Slater dropkicks his knee out, sending the champion face first into the apron. Slater hammers away on the floor and bends Angel's arm around the barricade. Back from a break with Angel armdragging Slater down for two. Slater takes him right back down and works over the arm until Angel comes back with a jawbreaker.

Not that it matters as Slater starts cranking on the arm again. Justin comes back with a discus forearm and a splash in the corner followed by a cross body for two. Slater drops him face first on the buckle and gets two off Sweetness (Zig Zag). Justin avoids a charge in the corner and hits a quick 450 to retain.

**Rating:** C. Nice match here but Slater continues to not really impress me in the ring. At the end of the day he's pretty generic but he was at least better than Whiplash. The ending came out of nowhere here and it hurt things a bit as well, but it's still a more entertaining match due to the atmosphere and better training that these guys have received.

Soon after this it was off to NXT as Justin Gabriel was one of the first batch of rookies on the premiere season of NXT. Justin would face Wade Barrett on the third episode of the first season.

### Wade Barrett vs. Justin Gabriel

Speed vs....whatever Barrett is here. Jericho yells at the announcers that Barrett is showing Jericho's influence. Barrett wears his jacket over his shoulders because in case he needs to get in a fight he needs his arms free. Cole explains the differences between all of Barrett's flowers. The first meant he was sorry for beating his opponent later tonight and the second was for the love of his winner's check.

USA chant and Matthews points out how stupid it is. Cole thinks maybe it's for Matt. If you're cheering for the manager, what does that really say about your match? Barrett dominating for the most part here as we're running out of time. Jericho shouts to the announcers about how he's working the back because JERICH0 works the back. Jericho really is stealing the show here which is the point I guess. And then Gabriel shoves him off the top and hits the 450 for the win. I think that was all the offense Gabriel had.

**Rating:** D+. Again not much at all here with Barrett dominating but Gabriel winning off his one move at the time. This wasn't much at all and while it was ok for the most part, the ending kind of made you say that's it. This could have used another two minutes or so to flesh it out but it wasn't horrible. Barrett looked good.

After the season ended, Gabriel and the rest of the first season cast would become the Nexus. They would immediately feud with John Cena, including facing him in a seven on one match on July 12, 2010, with me being lucky enough to watch live.

### Nexus vs. John Cena

In a weird moment before this there was an ad for Rise and

Fall of WCW and Russo got incredible heat. Weird. Cena got more boos than earlier but it was maybe 25% at the very most. The heels have to tag here and the no Raw guys can help. Cena gives Cole his dog tags which is a bit strange. Tarver starts off and Cena shows some psychology by taking the guys to the opposite corner. That makes perfect sense which is always a good thing.

He just mows people down one at a time which makes sense too. The thing about Nexus is it's the gang mentality rather than the individual nature. In the original NWO any of the three were legit threats. Here there's just arguably one guy, Barrett, who is a big threat. Together though they're deadly, which is a nice twist on the idea. They hit the floor and huddle before Slater gets a cheap shot in to take over.

The finishers start up and Slater hits three straight belly to back suplexes on him which is stupid looking. Cena fights back a bit but the numbers get to him. He gets Barrett in an FU but Sheffield takes him down. The 450 ends it clean which is exactly how it should have been. There is absolutely no way you can have Cena win here and they realized that. The Nexus surrounds him afterwards but he gets a shot in and hits the floor, getting a chair.

They surround him but make one fatal mistake: they forget to hold the mayo. Here's Sheamus with chair in hand, and the heels run for cover, ending the show. Post show, Edge and Orton came out for a tag match. Cena stayed down for like 5 minutes off a punch (turned out he was getting cleaned up from a cut) so it was 2-1. He came in at the end and cleaned house, hitting an FU on Sheamus for the pin while Orton got an RKO on Edge. Orton posed and we were done.

**Rating:** B. This is how you have a match like this. Cena looks human and the Nexus looks strong. There was no way you could make Cena win here and have it be believable so they didn't try to force it which is a good thing. This worked very well



and I liked it quite well. It sets up an aura of mystery for the PPV which is the best thing you can do. Well done and a good ending to the show.

Nexus would stick around for several months and Gabriel would pick up a Tag Title with Heath Slater when David Otunga and John Cena laid down to give them the belts. They held the belts for months, even past the end of the Nexus. The two would join a new group called The Corre, leading to February 25, 2011 on Raw and a title defense against The Miz and John Cena.

Tag Titles: The Miz/John Cena vs. Heath Slater/Justin Gabriel

According to Josh this is unprecedented for some reason. Miz vs. Slater to start us off. All Miz so far as he beats on both Corre members. Cena responds with a golf clap and is tagged in to a good pop. Back off to Miz as the champions have had nothing for the most part. There's the Skull Crushing Finale and it's over in 3:12. What the heck? Uh...ok then. No rating due to the length as it's 10 minutes til 11:00 so there's a lot more to come here.

Barrett says hold it as the Corre is invoking their rematch clause right now. An E-Mail says ring the bell. The match starts post break.

Tag Titles: The Miz/John Cena vs. Heath Slater/Justin Gabriel

Back with the match already in progress and Miz holding a wristlock on Gabriel. Cena comes in as does Slater. Cross body by Cena gets two and it's back off to Miz. The WWE Champion is knocked to the floor and Corre holds Riley back so Miz can be beaten down by Gabriel. Slater gets two on Miz. Off to a chinlock by Slater which gets him nowhere. It's weird seeing Miz as the defacto face. Neckbreaker by Slater

gets two.

Gabriel in now but Miz fights him off and hits that knee to the back/neckbreaker combo. He can't make the tag though as Slater is tagged in for the save. Miz still can't make a tag and Gabriel throws on a headlock. The crowd is WAY into this too which is making things a lot better.

Gabriel is sent to the apron and tries to come in off the top. He jumps into a big boot though and Cena wants a tag. Ask and ye shall receive as it's Cena vs. Slater now. Cena initiates his ending sequence and there's the 5 Knuckle Shuffle and FU. Actually it isn't as Miz shoves Cena over with something like the Skull Crushing Finale and Slater gets the pin to regain the titles at 12:00!

**Rating:** C+. Better formula match here and it worked pretty well. I had a feeling they were going to do the switch right back and I'm glad they did. This worked rather well and it sets up more of the world title feud between the two. Good stuff here and the whole segment worked rather well. Also very good that they didn't go with the predictable ending.

The Corre would break up without much fanfare and Justin would become little more than a high spot guy. This talent earned him a spot in the Smackdown Money in the Bank ladder match at Money in the Bank 2011.

Sin Cara vs. Justin Gabriel vs. Heath Slater vs. Sheamus vs. Cody Rhodes vs. Wade Barrett vs. Kane vs. Daniel Bryan

This is going to be a big insane match so it's almost impossible to call what's going on in these things. I'm really not sure who to predict in this. I went with Cody as a more or less random choice mainly out of a lack of anyone else. Big mess to start as these really should only have six people in them. Kane, Barrett and Sheamus clear the ring out and it's a three way staredown.

The Europeans...wait Kane is from Spain. Ok the two guys not named Kane go down and it's ladder time already. Bryan dropkicks Kane down as Slater and Gabriel team up a bit. Cara, who is in white/gray here, gets taken down but the former tag partners fight already. Slater goes for the ladder and is loudly booed. Gabriel goes up but the ladder is way off center. Bryan dropkicks him off but Cody goes up.

Kane sends Sheamus and Cody to the floor but Barrett stops the Big Bald. Kane throws a ladder at Sheamus to take him down. Slater vs. Kane and guess who wins that one. Cara pops up out of nowhere to drill Kane and break up the clothesline. Bryan hits a big dive and Gabriel does the same. Sorry for all the play by play stuff but it's all you can do in these things for the most part.

Cara is like screw you guys I'm the flier here and takes out Sheamus with a huge one. He follows that up by kicking Bryan in the head and hitting the top rope C4 to take Bryan down. Sin tries to go for the briefcase but can't pick a ladder up and into the ring. Barrett kicks his head off so it doesn't matter. They do the whole set up a ladder as a bridge from the ring to the table thing as is customary.

Cara avoids going through it though and Barrett clotheslines the post. For some reason the masked guy goes in again without a ladder and gets his head kicked off by Sheamus. Not a good night for the Mexican dude. Cara gets powerbombed through the ladder to more or less kill him. BIG pop for Sheamus for that one. Sheamus is controlling almost everyone here as Cara is taken out on a stretcher.

Kane and Sheamus are in the ring and fighting over a ladder. Scratch that as all three go to the floor. Bryan, Kane and Cody are all in the ring with ladders now. The small guys work together to take Kane down and there goes that partnership. Cara is gone now, as in out of the entire arena via a stretcher. Kane has the big ladder set up in the ring

and everyone comes in. Cody makes an attempt but all the small guys make a save.

The former Nexus triple teams Bryan and then the tag team tells Barrett to go ahead. Barrett proves why British wrestlers are stupid as he goes up and is pulled down just a few seconds later. Both of them go up but Rhodes shoves the ladder down. Cross Rhodes takes someone down and it's time for Barrett and Rhodes to fight over the ladder. Cross Rhodes takes Barrett out but Sheamus makes the last second save.

There's an Irish Curse and Pasty goes up, only for Bryan to make the save. Bryan rams him into the ladder a few times and goes up at the same time. Sheamus and Kane combine for a Doomsday Device to END Bryan. Kane and Sheamus are alone in the ring now. Well other than a ladder but that doesn't count I don't think. The big ladder is in the ring and a regular one is set up as a bridge against the middle buckle.

Kane escapes though and chokeslams various small people. Big Bald goes up but Bryan makes ANOTHER save despite being legally deceased I believe. Bryan goes up and almost gets the LeBell Lock on the ladder. That would be awesome. Bryan manages to knock Kane to the floor but Slater stops him. Bryan saves AGAIN as he's been insane so far tonight.

Slater goes up one more time but Barrett saves. Time for Barrett vs. Sheamus which doesn't sound all that appealing. Thankfully they team up and stop Slater, using a ladder like a fork to stop Slater and shove him off the top. That was cool. Sheamus goes nuts and takes out a lot of people so he can climb. Naturally he's not that smart so he sets up another ladder on the top rope.

Sheamus is just beating people up at the moment and not really trying to go after it. Even Booker is saying GO FOR IT. Ok now he's going up but Kane pops up from nowhere to stop him. Sheamus has a bridge ladder beneath him. He goes onto it but

doesn't break it. FREAKING OW MAN! Wasteland hits Kane and Gabriel climbs a ladder and hits 450 in the tightest space possible. That was AWESOME.

Bryan and Cody go at it on the ladder as everyone but Barrett is down. Wade comes up as Bryan tries to choke Cody out because he's an idiot. Cody goes down and Wade takes an elbow to knock him backwards a bit. Bryan is alone up there and Wade is on the bridge. Bryan kicks him down and WINS THE CASE! Totally didn't see that one coming.

**Rating:** A. I liked the storytelling aspect of this as Bryan was the MVP of this thing. He made a ton of saves and certainly deserved to win it in the end. The spots in this were great and Cara going out might have been due to prevent him from botching something major, which says a lot. I'm not sure I can see Bryan winning a title but stranger things have happened. GREAT match though.

Gabriel would continue to be the guy who put on good matches when given the chance, including this one from Superstars on March 15, 2012.

#### 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 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.

Another good match was on Superstars from August 23, 2012.

### 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.

These matches earned him a US Title shot at Hell in a Cell 2012.

#### US Title: Antonio Cesaro vs. Justin Gabriel

Since we only had three announced matches left and it's ten after 9, they had to add another match or two. Antonio says something in what sounds like German or Swiss before the match. Cesaro is defending and they've traded wins on Raw lately to set this up. Cesaro takes it to the mat as soon as the bell rings before cranking on the arm a bit. Gabriel counters a hip toss and monkey flips Cesaro down.

Justin goes up top but the champ knocks him off to the floor. Back in and a legdrop gets two for Cesaro and he pounds away with some rough looking shots to the head. An uppercut to the back of Gabriel's head gets two and it's off to a chinlock with a knee in the back of Justin. Cesaro puts him face down on the top rope and hits a running knee to the ribs. A double stomp gets another two on Gabriel and it's back to the arm. The crowd is pretty dead for this so far.

Gabriel comes back and takes Cesaro down for a quick top rope Lionsault for two. Cesaro takes Justin's head off with a clothesline for two. The champ pounds away in the corner but Gabriel comes out with a spinning DDT for two. Gabriel tries the 450 but rolls through when Cesaro moves. Cesaro goes to the floor so Justin hits a dropkick through the ropes for two. He heads back in but dives into the uppercut to knock Gabriel silly. Back in and the Neutralizer retains the title at 7:35.

**Rating:** C. I know there wasn't much here, but having Cesaro run through the entire lower card is a fine way to keep him on TV without having him face guys he's not ready to beat yet. It's also a good way to make him look like more than he really is, which is something Cesaro needs. Imagine that: using jobbers to the stars to push someone higher up the card. It's so crazy that it just might work.

We'll wrap it up with a match from Main Event on May 15, 2013.

### Cody Rhodes vs. Justin Gabriel

Cody chops away to start but gets suplexed down in a nice counter. Rhodes comes right back with a swinging neckbreaker but Justin hops up and fires off some kicks. A Blue Thunder Bomb gets two for Gabriel and the top rope Lionsault gets the same. Cody can't hit a quick Cross Rhodes attempt and gets countered into a small package for two. The Alabama Slam gets the same for Cody before Cross Rhodes is enough to give him the pin.

**Rating:** D+. This didn't have time to go anywhere and was just happening so Cody could get in an argument with Miz on commentary before their match at Extreme Rules. Gabriel looked decent but again it shows that he isn't much if he's not flying through the air. The kicks weren't bad though.

Overall Justin comes off as a one note guy but they're some very sweet notes when he gets the chance to play them. That 450 of his is a thing of beauty and he's pinned some very big names with it. I could see him having a nice run with a midcard title, but at this point he's lost in a very deep roster and there's not much he can do to get out of that.

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# On This Day: December 30, 2011 – Smackdown: Orton Takes A Little Trip

## Smackdown

Date: December 30, 2011

Location: Conseco Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, Indiana

Commentators: Michael Cole, Josh Matthews, Booker T

It's the final show of the year and we close things out with the Blue Guys. As long as it's not Blue Meanie I'm cool with that. Anyway tonight we should get some advancement in the three way world title feud. I hope they don't make Bryan look like a joke in this that can't get in any offense and has to escape with whatever kind of win he can get. Those title reigns completely defeat the purpose of being a champion. Then again so does MITB in general but whatever. Let's get to it.

We open with a video about Barrett vs. Orton. Their match tonight is the main event and it's falls count anywhere. I'm curious to see how this ends, which I'm sure you've heard about already.

Do you know your enemy? Mine is the number 2012, since I'll be writing 2011 for at least two more weeks.

Here's Booker coming out to do commentary. You know, his job. I wonder if he gets his pay docked for being late like this. He talks about how this has been a great year for him, starting with the Rumble and then joining the commentary booth. Then on Monday he beat Cody Rhodes and that's all because of the fans. He goes for his catchphrase but here's Cody to interrupt him.

Cody makes fun of local spots teams and the Indy 500 because that's what heels do. No seriously, it's a fine way to get the crowd booing you so why not do it? Rhodes talks about his year, ranging from being injured to beating Mysterio to winning the IC Title. Then he took a washed up announcer and pushed him to regain some of his former glory. Booker says that when he beat Cody on Monday, he wasn't that washed up. If Cody respected the business, he'd be congratulating Booker right now.

The champ actually agrees and says that he doesn't want to come off as some kind of bitter jerk because he's better than that. He actually congratulates Booker and offers a handshake. Booker shakes it and gets in his face a bit but turns to leave. Cody says of course now this is all over. Booker isn't sure what he means by that, but Cody says the fairy tale is over and Booker is nothing but a nostalgia act. If Booker keeps competing, his skills will be exposed as being gone. If he goes back to announcing, he'll be exposed as an illiterate moron. In short, Booker is a joke.

Cue...Dustin Rhodes? He comes out to the Goldust music but he's in a suit and no makeup. Dustin says he loves his brother very much but Cody is going about this all wrong. Booker is someone that Cody should respect because it was Booker that inspired Dustin to face his demons and make a comeback. Dustin gets the idea of building your own legacy, but don't do it at Booker's expense. Cody knows better than this.

Cody chuckles at this and says that as soon as Booker stopped teaming with him, Dustin fell back into those demons and then into utter obscurity. Booker gets in Cody's face and asks for a third match with Cody since it's one apiece at the moment. He wants to do it right now but Cody says we'll do it next week. Booker says that next week it'll be a celebration when he becomes the new Intercontinental Champion. Booker leaves and Cody beats Dustin down. Booker makes the save but Cody is long gone. Not a bad opening segment.

Tonight's main event: it's a tag team match!

### Ted DiBiase vs. Jinder Mahal

If DiBiase is supposed to be this everyman now, shouldn't he lose the I'm Rich theme song? They exchange quick control to start but Mahal keeps his, hitting a Vader Bomb knee drop for two. The crowd isn't exactly thrilled by DiBiase vs. Legs Mahal here. Ted gets in a few shots to slow Mahal down but tweeks his knee coming off the top. A Downward Spiral (so fed up with that move) sets up the Camel Clutch and DiBiase surprisnly taps at 2:50. Didn't see that one coming.

Teddy is talking about his New Year's Eve party tomorrow night when Aksana comes in. More flirtations are made and Drew McIntyre comes in. He's been signed back to Smackdown and Teddy is willing to forgive him. Drew isn't going to get paid what he was getting earlier when his career has fallen apart. He gets Big Zeke tonight and if he doesn't win, his job might be in jeopardy. Drew talks about the time he made Teddy beg for mercy and says that's nothing compared to what he'll do to Jackson.

### Alicia Fox/Kaitlyn vs. Natalya/Tamina

Tamina looks better with straight hair. The lack of JTG helps a lot also. Tamina vs. Kaitlyn starts us off. The evil ones take over on Kaitlyn and beat her down. Something like a Michinoku Driver by Natalya does nothing here as Kaitlyn makes the tag about two seconds later. Alicia hits the axe kick on Nattie for the pin at 1:34. Why do they bother with these matches? I honestly don't know.

Tamina beats up Natalya post match, including a Superfly Splash.

Don't be a bully.

Raw ReBound eats up some time.

We get a standard recap of Show vs. Otunga on Monday with Henry coming in as well. Bryan made the save.

Speaking of Bryan, he's in the back talking with AJ (who looks GREAT tonight in a black cut off top and jeans) about how he saved Big Show. Show comes up and asks to talk to Bryan alone. Show says that giants don't really need to be saved. Teddy comes in and says that the tag match main event won't be happening tonight as Otunga wants a rematch with Show. Henry will be in his corner. Bryan implies he'll have Show's back but doesn't exactly say it.

### Justin Gabriel vs. Hunico

I think there's new music for Gabriel but I'm not 100% sure. Hunico comes out on a lowrider bicycle with his new bodyguard who used to be in FCW and is named Camacho here. I don't remember his FCW name. Further investigations (as in I looked it up on Wikipedia) says that his name there is Donny Marlow and his dad is more famous as Meng or Haku.

Cole says he has a lot of knowledge about lowrider bicycles. Hunico gets sent to the floor and Gabriel misses a dive. Cole gives us the history of lowrider bikes and all I can think of is...why? There's something about Eddie Munster mentioned in there. Justin misses a springboard something coming back in but hits a powerbomb style move to take over. Hunico breaks up the 450 and brings Gabriel down so that the Swanton can end this at 1:48. This was nothing and Camacho didn't get involved at all.

Hunico/Camacho hit something like Cryme Tyme's old finisher to leave Gabriel on the mat (Samoan Drop/neckbreaker combo).

### Big Show vs. David Otunga

If nothing else we get the big knockout punch from last week which still looks great. Otunga has really long arms. Henry gets his own entrance. Show beats him down as Otunga tries to

get in whatever offense he can. David bails to the floor where Henry gives him something resembling a pep talk. Back in a shoulder block puts Otunga down as does a corner splash. Henry gets on the apron to distract from the chokeslam and Otunga hits a chop block and DDT for two. Henry goes to get in the ring but Bryan pops up with a belt shot to stop him. The big punch knocks Otunga out cold at 3:24.

**Rating:** D+. Just a squash here and that's about it. Bryan coming out didn't really mean anything or add anything as it wasn't like Show needed help. Also it doesn't help that he looks like a mosquito who keeps running in and hitting people then running. Nothing to see here but Otunga can sell a punch really well.

#### Ezekiel Jackson vs. Drew McIntyre

Jackson has some hair now. We get Drew's full entrance and I miss his song. Big Zeke controls with power for a few moments but Drew takes over pretty quickly. Jackson beats him down more and this match isn't going to last long. A big boot by Drew gets two. Northern lights suplex gets two. Jackson backdrops him and the fans don't care. Side slam gets two for the power man. Torture Rack is countered and Drew gets a boot up in the corner. It gets two even with his feet on the ropes. Drew argues with the ropes and Jackson rolls him up (with a big handful of tights) for the pin at 3:52.

**Rating:** D-. Terribly boring match here and I have no idea what the point of it was. Drew has fallen so far in the last year and a half that it's almost scary. I don't get the point in having Jackson use the tights but maybe it'll be addressed in the future. Jackson is pretty worthless as he isn't interesting at all and now he has to cheat to win matches over Drew Freaking McIntyre? Not a good match at all.

Video on Sheamus. I think they aired this months ago. I remember the rock version of Written In My Face.

Drew yells about the tights in the back and Teddy says he can't stand losers. He's a ticked off Peanut here. Old school fans will get that joke.

Here's Sheamus for a little chat. "What's the crack Indianapolis?" Is that an Irish thing? He wants to talk about the future and by that he means the Royal Rumble. The winner gets a title match at Wrestlemania. He doesn't care who he eliminates because he's going to win the Rumble. Cue Hornswoggle to get on my nerves. Horny is going to enter the Rumble as well because miracles like Bryan beating Big Show can happen. He says he'll win (only saying his own name). Sheamus admires that and gives us some Irish folk lore or whatever you want to call it. He gets all mean but is only playing.

Cue Heath Slater who is a breath of air. I can't stand Horny at all. Slater mentions guys like Bushwhacker Luke and the Brooklyn Brawler, who fall into the same category as Horny: the guy that says they'll win and is a joke. Slater says he's the greatest redhead on Smackdown and the only reason Horny won the battle royal was because Sheamus didn't want to squash a leprechaun. Slater doesn't have that problem though. Sheamus gets in his face and...sings Don't Stop Believin. Ok then. Sheamus says he sees Slater as more of an R. Kelly kind of guy, because he believes he can fly, and there goes Slater. That was...yeah.

### Sheamus vs. Heath Slater

Kind of awkward here as Sheamus was celebrating after throwing Slater out and we went to a break. Back and they're having a match. Sheamus pounds him down and works on the arm and then throws Heath to the apron. Slater slaps him and that was very stupid, so here are ten forearms to the chest for his efforts. Sheamus keeps countering him but Slater drop toeholds him into the middle buckle. Slater gets him onto the mat and hooks a chinlock. The counter to that triggers Sheamus' comeback which

consists of forearms to the back, a top rope shoulder and the Brogue Kick for the pin at 4:45 shown.

**Rating:** D+. The Rumble is probably the best thing that could possibly happen to Sheamus at this point. He doesn't have anything to do on Smackdown as it was looking like he was the next opponent for Henry but then Henry got hurt so they had to go to the Bryan reign. Since then he's just been beating up random people without breaking a sweat, which can only get you so far.

Bryan is talking to Teddy when Show comes in. He's getting annoyed at Bryan for always being there. Bryan wants a thank you for being there to bail Show out. They start growling at each other and we're told that it's Show vs. Bryan for the title next week. Show laughs a lot at that. Bryan says even if he loses, his reign lasted longer than 45 seconds.

Whoever they are, they're still coming. I'm kind of curious about that but I'm expecting a letdown.

We hype the three big title matches spread over the next week of shows.

### Randy Orton vs. Wade Barrett

Falls count anywhere. Slugout to start and Orton hammers him into the corner. Out to the floor and Barrett goes into the steps for two. With Barrett's head on the steps, a stomp gets two. Usually that would crack a skull but in wrestling it only gets two. That's why I love this stuff. RK0 is countered and Orton goes into the post as we take a break.

Back with them in the ring and Barrett hammering away. He hits that running boot to Orton as Orton is sitting on the middle rope which gets two on the floor. Big boot in the ring gets two and we hit the chinlock. Middle rope elbow gets the same. Back to the chinlock as this has been a lot more basic than I was expecting. Orton gets in the powerslam but Barrett escapes

the elevated DDT by heading to the floor.

Orton throws him over the table and they go into the crowd. They go into the back and Orton goes through a table. Randy sends him into an anvil case as Barrett tries to escape down the hall. The referee went down earlier so he's not here. They fight into an elevator and we actually cut to a security camera feed in the elevator.

They brawl out into what looks like a corporate area and a cameraman has to run to catch up to them. The camera goes through a door and we hear shouting and a crash. He catches up to them and Barrett is standing at the top of a flight of steps. Orton is laying at the bottom in a shape that probably isn't that comfortable. The camera looks down at him as he can barely move and we go off the air.

**Rating:** C. Pretty boring main event for the most part but once they got to the wild brawl it wasn't that bad. Word is Orton has a legit bad back so this is the angle that they're going with to write him off TV for awhile. That's fine and not having a pin works here because there's no point in having a pin with that being the closing shot of the show. Not terrible and the ending did the job it was supposed to do.

**Overall Rating:** C. I wasn't huge on this show. The point of it was to get Orton off TV for awhile and that worked out pretty well. Barrett looks great and we have a world title match set for next week. I'm honestly not sure what they're going to do with Bryan as the way he won the title makes him look like a fluke and there's a chance they'll pull it off of him with a Show heel turn. Either way, not a horrible show but nothing at all worth going out of your way to see.

### Results

Jinder Mahal b. Ted DiBiase – Camel Clutch

Alicia Fox/Kaitlyn b. Natalya/Tamina – Axe Kick to Natalya

Hunico b. Justin Gabriel – Swanton Bomb



Big Show b. David Otunga – WMD  
Drew McIntyre b. Ezekiel Jackson – Rollup  
Sheamus b. Heath Slater – Brogue Kick  
Wade Barrett vs. Randy Orton went to a no contest

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## **On This Day: August 23, 2012 – Superstars:**

### **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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# WWE Main Event – May 1, 2013: WWE's Wrestling Show

## Main Event

Date: May 1, 2013

Location: Joe Louis Arena, Detroit, Michigan

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

This is a request due to the opening match for the show. I've heard words like classic and match of the year candidate about it so maybe it'll live up to the hype. I rarely look at Main Event due to it being WWE overload for me, but as usual I have issues turning down requests. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Kofi beating Cesaro for the US Title a few weeks back.

Cesaro, now in a beret and sunglasses, says that he'll dominate with technical skill and tenacity.

## US Title: Kofi Kingston vs. Antonio Cesaro

Kofi is defending if that wasn't clear. The crowd chants USA for a match between a Swiss man and an African. That never ceases to amaze me. Anyway they feel each other out with Cesaro trying to use the power game to take over early on. Kofi gets behind him as they fight for arm control. Cesaro takes it to the mat with a grip around the ribs but Kofi rolls into a

cradle for two.

Antonio pulls him to the ground again but Kofi drives a knee into the arm to take over. Cesaro slams him head first into the mat and it's off to a headlock. Kofi tries to fight up but gets thrown down with the gutwrench suplex. The champ comes back with a kick to the head and a spinning springboard splash for two. Cesaro bails to the floor and we take a break. Back with Cesaro getting two off a European uppercut and hooking a chinlock.

A legdrop across the back of Kofi's neck gets two as does a butterfly suplex. There's a move I haven't seen in a long time. Back to the chinlock followed by a hard knee to Kingston's chest. Kofi comes back with some quick dropkicks and the Boom Drop for no cover. He loads up Trouble in Paradise but Cesaro bails to the floor. Kofi goes after Cesaro but has his neck snapped over the top rope. His leg gets caught in the ropes as well, apparently injuring it.

Cesaro gets back in but walks into the SOS for two. There's a Juvy Driver of all things to Kingston for two and a running European uppercut gets the same. Another gutwrench attempt is countered into a sunset flip but Antonio counters into a rollup for two as we take another break. Back with Kofi knocking Antonio out to the floor and hurricanranaing him into the steps.

Back in again and Kofi tries the spinning cross body but gets caught in mid air, only to roll into a cradle for another near fall. Cesaro takes him down again though and stomps on the bad leg before putting on a half crab. Kofi crawls out and gets a rollup, only to get caught in a half giant swing. That's a new one. Back to the half crab and Cesaro drags it to the middle of the ring. Kofi crawls over to the bottom rope and out to the apron, so Antonio climbs to the middle rope and superplexes him down from the apron for two more. That's INSANE strength.

Another double stomp to the chest gets two more for Cesaro and it's back to the half crab. Kofi gets to the rope so Cesaro loads up the Neutralizer. Even on one bad leg, Kofi is able to backdrop out of it and hit Trouble in Paradise to the back of the head, knocking Cesaro out cold

for the pin to retain at 18:30 shown of 25:30.

**Rating:** A-. Really solid match here with a length that you almost never get anymore. The leg work was fine and the story was solid here: Cesaro is a better wrestler and is smothering Kofi but Kingston can get one Hail Mary shot to win the match. I liked it when Khali and HHH did it back in 2008 and I liked it here too. Excellent match and I get people praising it as much as they have been.

Post match Kingston says he had a bad start to the year but kept fighting and won the US Title. He talks about becoming a father last week and gives a shout out to his wife and son.

Post break Kofi is in the back when Cesaro jumps him. He crushes Cesaro with a crate of some kind and says you don't take from Antonio because he takes from you.

The Raw Rebound talks about the end of the show with Shield pinning Cena and Ryback showing up because he never left. This shocked no one.

#### Justin Gabriel vs. Heath Slater

McIntyre tells Slater to rock Gabriel's face. Feeling out process to start with Gabriel sending Slater to the mat and mocking the band. Off to an armbar by Justin as we hear about the history between these two. Slater can't shake the hold but a Mahal distraction lets Slater make the rope. Cole: "Drew has something wrong with him." JBL: "YOU THINK???" They trade some headlocks before Gabriel puts on the armbar again.

Back up and a headscissors puts Slater on the floor and a suicide dive takes out Mahal and McIntyre. They try to get at Justin and earn an ejection for their efforts. Justin throws Slater to the floor again and we take a break. Back with more of the armbar on Slater as the announcers are talking about the Bay City Rollers and their cassette collections. Gabriel loads up the 450 but gets powerslammed down off the top rope for two.

We hit a chinlock on Gabriel as Cole makes air guitar jokes. A hard whip into the corner gets two for Heath but Justin comes back with some kicks

and forearms. Gabriel gets two off a springboard cross body and goes up. After breaking up a superplex, the 450 connects on Slater for the pin at 9:45 shown of 13:15.

**Rating:** C+. This is the same good match we've seen from these guys several times before. Gabriel continues to be a solid performer almost every time he's given more than a minute to work with, yet he can never get any significant time on TV. Slater is fine in this role as the goofy jobber and there's not a thing wrong with playing that role. Good stuff here.

**Overall Rating:** B. Solid TV show here with an excellent match and a quite good match to follow it up. Main Event is basically WWE's wrestling show where you can get some good action which doesn't mean much and doesn't require much thinking. The US Title match is very good and while I wouldn't call it a classic, it's worth checking out.

### Results

Kofi Kingston b. Antonio Cesaro – Trouble in Paradise

Justin Gabriel b. Heath Slater – 450 Splash

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