

Smackdown – September 18, 2003: As Close To A One Match Show As You'll Ever Get

Smackdown

Date: September 18, 2003

Location: RBC Arena, Raleigh, North Carolina

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

This is almost literally a one match show and it's really the only reason I'm reviewing this. This was a request and it's because this show has the Lesnar/Angle one hour Iron Man match. In 2003 there were still individual brand PPVs so every other month you would get something resembling a supershow on free TV, usually having a huge match like this one. Brock and Angle have more or less traded the title all year and Angle is champion going into this. Nothing else matters for the most part so let's get to it.

Here's Vince to open the show. One of the biggest criticisms of this year in Smackdown was that Vince was all over it as was Stephanie. He talks about the iron man match tonight and is in full on hype mode. Say what you want about Vince but the man is a promoter at heart and loves what he does. You can hear it in his voice. He talks about how awesome the main event is and how awesome both guys are and...that's it. Ok then.

Oh wait here's Taker. He had been out for a bit due to I think a beatdown by Lesnar. I should mention Lesnar is Vince's hired gun at the moment. That'll likely be brought up later on. Anyway Vince tries to sweet talk him but Taker says the main event is safe. Vince however might not be. Intimidating indeed.

We get a tale of the tape for the main event which is something they should do more often.

Chris Benoit/Rey Mysterio vs. Tajiri/Rhyno

Rey is Cruiserweight Champion. He's defending the title next week against Tajiri and I think Benoit and Rhyno were feuding around this time so there's your explanation. Benoit vs. Tajiri to start this ECW Reunion match. Tarantula goes on but the referee keeps Rey from interfering. Rhyno comes in sans tag and Benoit keeps getting beaten up.

Chris reverses a belly to back suplex into a cross body for two. Benoit manages to suplex Rhyno and it's hot tag to Rey. Something like a tornado DDT put Rhyno down and everything breaks down. Green mist hits Rhyno and a 619 into a German takes Tajiri down. 619 and Rey drops the dime on Rhyno for the pin. Quick match.

Rating: C+. Just a quick tag match but they had some decent stuff in there. I've always been a fan of mixing two feuds into one tag match like this because you get two feuds advanced at the same time. Nothing wrong with being efficient like that and we got a decent match out of it too. No complains here.

Video on Los Guerreros vs. Haas/Benjamin which is up later for the tag titles.

Hype video for the iron man match....which is on the show we're already

watching.

The Rock is going to be on the cover of GQ.

Shaniqua vs. Nidia/Torrie Wilson

Shaniqua is a big old girl that won Tough Enough 2. Dawn Marie comes out with Nidia. Basically Shaniqua is getting pushed like a taller and black Chyna, just not one that anyone wanted to see. Torrie and Nidia get in some shots early but then it gets down to tagging. In the words of the theme song of Big Zeke, "This here's what you call domination." Torrie is thrown to the floor and a powerbomb ends Nidia.

Vince wants Stephanie to quit. Stephanie won't quit. Vince won't fire her but says he'll be rough on her now. This went on for about four months.

Highlights of Lesnar vs. Angle I and II (Mania and Summerslam).

Eddie and Chavo are glad to be back together. There's nothing to these promos tonight.

Cena is on the roof and raps about underestimating Eddie and the returning Chavo. He'll win Eddie's US Title too.

Smackdown Tag Titles: Los Guerreros vs. World's Greatest Tag Team

The fans loudly cheer for Eddie who starts with Benjamin. They go to the mat first of course and it's off to Chavo. This is Chavo's first match after a torn bicep. The champs take over on Eddie but he fights out of the corner, hitting a belly to belly on Shelton to bring in Chavo. Chavo gets a wicked headscissors to send Benjamin to the floor where Los Guerreros hit stereo dives to take both guys out.

Back with the challengers still in control, beating Charlie down. Eddie gets taken into the wrong corner and double teamed for a bit. It doesn't last long as he fights out and brings in Chavo. Shelton kicks his head off and Haas works on the bad arm. Northern lights suplex gets two for Shelton.

Back to Haas and the arm work continues. It's so weird to hear Tazz being professional, talking about his past experience in the ring with the same injury and snapping off intricacies in moves being done. Chavo counters a double team move into a dropkick to Haas and it's hot tag Eddie. There are Three Amigos but Haas escapes the third and hits a German.

Eddie gets a sweet arm drag/headscissors combo to take both guys down. Frog splash is broken up and the second attempt is rolled through because Haas moved. Haas grabs some chairs but Chavo pops up to take out Shelton with a dropkick into the chair into the knee. The Guerreros hit something that looked like Haas broke his freaking neck. Brainbuster sets up the Frog Splash and we have new champions.

Rating: B-. Pretty solid match here as both teams know each other very well. They would hold the belts for a little while before the Bashams took them. Chavo would turn heel on Eddie but lose at the Rumble before Eddie would win the world title in February. Anyway pretty fun match here

and fine for a TV tag title change.

Taz has keys to victory in the Iron Man match. I'm stunned.

Everyone is watching on monitors in the back.

Smackdown World Title: Brock Lesnar vs. Kurt Angle

Angle is champion coming in. This is an iron man match with a sixty minute time limit. There's a 15 second rest period after each fall. The challenger is the heel. Lesnar jumps him to start and we have a big old clock in the corner. Brock beats him down to start but Angle fires back with some clotheslines. Angle gets a shot to the knee and Brock chills on the floor.

He stays out there until about 8 and the knee isn't right. Brock asks for time but he was just channeling his inner Bret Hart as he plays possum. Angle doesn't mind and hits a set of armdrags to send Brock out to the floor. Lesnar grabs the steps but tosses them back instead of using them. He slides in at 9 and goes right back out to break the count. Well it's not like they don't have a lot of time to kill.

Brock breaks the count again and make it three times. Four times now. Angle is getting ticked which might be Lesnar's plan. We're five minutes into the clock now and we haven't really gotten anything going but they have plenty of time. Angle goes for the knee and Brock hits the floor AGAIN. Angle charges at him and Brock nails him to finally take over. Angle snaps off a suplex and clotheslines Brock to the floor where he holds the knee again.

Lesnar is down and holding the knee but this time Angle goes after him. He rams Brock into the steps head first and they slug it out. Brock gets the better of that and rams Kurt into the post back first. He goes to grab a chair and pops Angle in the head with it for a DQ at about nine minutes. Brock lays Angle out with the chair a bunch of times but it's in the rest period so it doesn't count.

Brock grabs some water at ringside. Does that mean there's a conspiracy against him? Angle is barely able to stand so Brock drills him with an F5 to tie it up at 49:38 to go. Brock kicks him in the ribs and asks Angle if he wants to tap. Lesnar puts the ankle lock on Kurt and he taps to make it 2-1 at 47:21. We take a break and come back at 44 minutes left with Lesnar breaking an Angle rally with a knee to the ribs.

During the break Brock hit an Angle Slam for two. Brock charges but his shoulder goes into the post. Angle gets a forearm smash and it's German time. Angle comes at Brock but gets sent back outside. Brock whips him into the railing HARD and this an F5 on the floor for the countout to go up 3-1 at 20 minutes in.

We take a break and come back with Angle in control after hitting some suplexes during the break. Lesnar knocks Kurt to the floor with an elbow and takes over soon thereafter. We're at 35 minutes left now as Brock gets two off an elbow drop. Angle reverses an Irish whip into the Angle Slam and it's 3-2 at 34 minutes to go. We're told that if this goes to a tie we'll have overtime.

Kurt pounds away but the Angle Slam is countered into an F5 attempt which is countered into the ankle lock. Brock rolls through and Angle manages to avoid the referee. Brock however drills him in the head with a

clothesline so when Angle hits the Angle Slam, there's no referee. Brock hits Angle low and grabs the title. A shot to the head of Angle puts him down and the referee wakes up to make it 4-2 Brock at 29:30 to go.

We take a break and come back with Angle on the floor with 25 minutes to go. Angle pulls him to the floor and hammers away, sending Brock into the steps. With Brock on the outside, Angle goes back in and up top to hit a double axe to Brock's back. That only gets two back inside though. Kurt goes up again and hits the missile dropkick for a close two. The moonsault that hits once a decade doesn't hit here and both guys are down.

Angle grabs a rollup for two so Brock takes his head off with a clothesline. Brock gets all ticked off and throws Angle over his head without leaving his own feet. Well that was awesome. It only gets two though and both guys are down. Kurt reverses another belly to belly into the ankle lock but Brock rolls through to send Angle to the floor. Angle goes into the steps again and back to the ring we go.

That only gets two in the ring as we have 20 minutes left with with score 4-2 Brock. Lesnar unhinges some steps but Angle hits a baseball slide to send them into Brock's face. Kurt looks like his shoulder is hurt from going into the steps. Angle gets an elbow for two as we take a break. Back and it's 5-2 as Brock hit a superplex for a fall during the break.

We have 14 minuets to go and it's 5-2 Brock. Brock takes him outside and tries to F5 Angle into the post but Angle reverses to give Brock an F5 into the post with the bad knee hitting the steel. Back inside and Angle throws on a half crab which is very smart. Brock makes the ropes so Angle throws on the ankle lock. Lesnar STILL doesn't tap so Kurt stomps away at the leg/ankle.

Kurt charges in at Brock but gets caught in an F5. Brock can't counter though and can only get a delayed two. Lesnar goes up top but Angle pops up for the running belly to belly and it's 5-3 with 9:50 to go. Angle wins a slugout and pounds Brock down in the corner. Angle puts the straps back up which is a new one for him. He tries to load up the Angle Slam but Brock grabs a DDT for two.

Kurt misses a right hand and Lesnar hits a German. Make that two Germans. Would you believe three Germans? He tries a fourth (there has been a lot of laying around between them so about 90 seconds passed for all those Germans) but Angle counters into two Germans of his own. Angle rolls through something into the ankle lock and in more or less the same ending at Summerslam, Brock can't find a rope and taps with 4:11 to go.

Four minutes left and both guys are down. Brock still leads 5-4. They're still down with 3:30 left. Kurt grabs the hold again but Brock rolls through to escape. They're both down again but Kurt is up and stomping away with three minutes left. Bow and arrow hold, which is like a side version of the STF, goes on to eat up some time. Brock wisely heads to the floor with two minutes left.

Smart strategy there as Lesnar only has to play defense and run the clock out to win the title. Kurt puts the ankle lock on Brock outside but back inside we go. Brock runs again so Kurt rams him into the steps. Angle hits some rolling Germans back in the ring and we hit a minute to go. He hits four Germans but this is taking way too long. Brock kicks him low with 30 seconds left but it's not seen. Ankle lock with the grapevine is on with 15 seconds left but Lesnar hangs on to win the title and end the show.

Rating: B. This match runs into the exact same problem that is more or less unavoidable for these matches: you can more or less skip the first 55 minutes and you still see the exciting parts. An hour is too long, even when the guys are having an entertaining match. This was good, but like I said the vast majority of it is just waiting for Angle to make his big comeback. However it does fly by as taking out commercials it runs about 46-48 minutes. Good match, but not a good idea for TV.

Overall Rating: C+. Like I said in the previous grade, you can skip about 55 minutes of this show and you'll see the important points. The iron man match is a trap that is almost impossible to escape in that regard and it's not a good idea for PPV or TV. It eats up so much time and so many things are put on hold for it. This was an entertaining show and it's always cool to see a world title change, but a normal match running about half an hour would have been a lot better.

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Monday Night Raw – August 26, 2002: The Beginning Of Modern WWE

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 26, 2002

Location: Madison Square Garden, New York City, New York

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's the night after Summerslam and for once a lot has happened. Lesnar

is the new world champion and Rock is gone until about February. On top of that, Shawn beat HHH but HHH destroyed Shawn post match, likely ending his career. Naturally that's not what happened but at this point that's the working theory. Also tonight we have a big change at the end of the show which set up things to be like that are in modern times. Let's get to it.

Here's Bischoff to open the show. He talks about how historic the show is going to be tonight, talking about things like the Hardcore title being unified with the IC Title and the presentation of a lifetime achievement award to someone. But first, here's the new world champion Brock Lesnar, along with Heyman of course. Heyman is very proud to be in MSG but says that Lesnar is a bigger deal than Sammartino, Graham and Hogan combined. He told us this would happen, but none of us would listen to him.

Heyman lists off all the things he said would happen and says maybe now the fans will listen to him. Brock gets the mic and says that he's only 25 and he's already world champion. He says no one can beat him...and here's Shawn Michaels? Oh wait it's HHH screwing with us. Ok HHH doing the Shawn dance is funny stuff. HHH insists Shawn is gone forever and will never get in the ring again.

Remembering that Brock is still in the ring, HHH says that he wore down Rock last week for Lesnar, and now HHH wants the title shot that he himself said Lesnar should give him. Brock takes the belt off and HHH asks if Brock is man enough to play the game. Well we know he's man enough to have a boring match with HHH that main evented Summerslam in 2012 but we'll get to that later.

Cue Undertaker to get in on this shindig before the boring begins. Taker says he should get the first shot at Lesnar, who doesn't object at all. HHH jumps Taker and it's a two on one beatdown for a few seconds before HHH stares at Lesnar some more. Taker jumps them both and knocks HHH to the floor before slapping Lesnar and kicking him out as well. HHH gets back in but bails a few seconds later. Lesnar looked like a total

afterthought here.

Eric makes HHH vs. Taker for the main event for the first shot at Lesnar.

Booker T vs. Christian

This is one of those “tag teams are feuding so here’s a member of each in a singles match” deals. Booker takes Christian down to start but the Ax kick misses. The reverse DDT gets two for Christian and the Canadian takes over. We hit the chinlock and there’s the USA chant. Booker comes back with some elbows and a spin kick for no cover. The spinning sunset flip out of the corner gets two but Christian rolls him up for two with his feet on the ropes. Another elbow puts Christian down and Goldust takes out an interfering Storm. Unprettier is countered into the ax kick for the pin for Booker.

Rating: D+. Nothing much here as it was already known that Booker and Goldust were the more entertaining team, but for some reason the title change didn’t happen last night. This was your usual Raw match where not a lot was changed, which would be the case for these guys for awhile. The titles would change hands two more times before Booker and Goldie got them, which caused the crowd to not care when it happened.

We get a video from some political event from earlier in the day.

Christian yells at Storm in the back when Test shows up. He’s got something planned involving an American flag.

Bubba Ray Dudley/Spike Dudley vs. Christopher Nowitski/William Regal

Molly is with Regal and Chris for some reason. Actually we get a video of HORRIBLE acting of Chris asking Molly to come to the ring with him. Apparently Chris wants to get lucky. His words, not mine. Bubba and Chris start things off with Bubba pounding away in the corner. Off to Spike

with a top rope double stomp, one of the moves that always makes me cringe. Regal and Molly crotch Spike on the post and it's almost immediately the hot tag to Bubba who cleans house. Molly tries her Molly Go Round but winds up taking What's Up instead. Spike throws in a table but before it's used, the Bubba Bomb pins Regal.

Rating: D. Another nothing match here which appears to be a theme tonight. The new version of the Dudleys never worked at all and the original team would reunite at the Survivor Series, in this same building actually. Nowitski was all character and no substance, which is the same problem someone like Sandow has to overcome today. This is one of those matches where the best thing you can say is at least it was short.

Nowitski keeps Molly from going through a table so Regal goes through it instead via a Bubba powerbomb (since the Dudley Dog didn't work).

Bischoff talks to a special guest that we can't see. That's up next.

Molly thanks Chris in the back and gives him a hug.

The special guest is Jimmy Snuka who is here to receive a lifetime achievement award. We get a highlight video from his career which is pretty cool stuff. Eric presents him with the award but keeps cutting Jimmy off. Bischoff says the magic words: 3 minutes. Snuka's eyes bug out in a funny visual but here are Jamal and Rosey for the big beatdown on Jimmy.

While Jimmy is being taken out of the ring, here's Jericho to put him in the Walls of Jericho. Jericho runs his mouth about how he should be receiving the award. Jericho compares Snuka to Ric Flair who he made tap last night. Flair was in the ropes so it didn't count but why let that get in the way of a good story? Since Flair interrupted the concert last week, Jericho is going to sing New York New York right here acapella. It's a little modified but what are you going to do? We take a break and come back with Jericho STILL singing. He's finally interrupted and we get

this.

Chris Jericho vs. Jeff Hardy

Jericho takes him down to start with a suplex but Jeff pounds away in the corner to take over. The Canadian misses a dropkick and gets catapulted out to the floor. Jeff hits a HUGE dive to take Jericho out before running the barricade, only to charge right into a powerslam. Back in and Jericho hits a backbreaker before choking Jeff with his hanky. Jericho puts on a bow and arrow to stay on the back, making sure to tell the referee to ASK HIM.

Jericho stays on the back as Jeff isn't selling as well as he usually does. He's just kind of laying there instead. Jericho hits a backsplash for two and an uppercut puts Hardy down again. Jeff's comeback lasts for about two punches before Jericho hits a sleeper drop to take him down for two. Chris goes up for something off the ropes but jumps into a dropkick before we can figure out what it is.

The Whisper in the Wind puts Jericho down and Jeff starts using his standard stuff. Hardy's sunset flip is almost countered into the Walls but Hardy escapes into a small package for two. The Lionsault hits knees and it's the Swanton for two as Jericho grabs the rope. Hardy tries a standing rana on Jericho for no apparent reason and there's the obvious counter into the Walls. Jeff gets the rope but Jericho won't let go of the hold, drawing a DQ.

Rating: C-. It was clear at this point that Jeff needed to take a break as he was doing nothing but signature stuff and had no fire in him at all. Thankfully that's what he did soon into the new year, leaving the company for like four years. Jericho was trying here but he had nothing to work with across the ring.

Flair doesn't make the save.

Heyman and Lesnar don't care who Brock faces at the PPV.

Test is going to burn an American flag later tonight.

Apparently that's right now as here are the Un-Americans to burn an American flag. They load up the blowtorch, Kane's pyro and music hits, Kane doesn't come out, so Goldust and Booker make the save. They get beaten down, Lawler gets up to save it but now Kane comes out. Gee that first time was pretty stupid wasn't it? Kane is noticeably slimmer here as he would be for a few more years. JR says that's an American chokeslam, even though it's a Spaniard chokeslamming a Canadian. Kane also has the half mask now, meaning he can say he's going to properly do a Spinarooni, which he actually does. Ok then.

Hardcore Title/Intercontinental Title: Rob Van Dam vs. Tommy Dreamer

This is a unification match in the series of "let's get all the titles together so HHH can be CHAMPION OF EVERYTHING" title unifications. This will be under Hardcore rules and is allegedly the final hardcore match ever on Raw. JR says these two have wrestled in "other promotions." You guys OWN THE COMPANY. I think you can say the name. They take it to the mat to start with neither being able to hit anything. It's a standoff and the fans chant for ECW.

Van Dam hits some running shoulders to the ribs in the corner and a Russian legsweep gets two. We head to the floor with Dreamer pulling out a ladder. Van Dam superkicks it into Dreamer for two and sets the ladder up like a bridge between the ring and the barricade. Dreamer tries to bulldog Rob off the apron onto the ladder but Van Dam shoves him face first into the ladder. FREAKING OW MAN!!!

Rob puts Dreamer on the barricade and jumps off the ladder to kick him in the face. Van Dam picks up a chair and heads back into the ring to crush Dreamer with the chair for two. The split legged moonsault hits chair but Dreamer's DDT onto it is countered into a northern lights suplex for two.

There's the DDT but not onto the chair which gets two as well.

The ladder is brought back in and a side slam onto the ladder has Van Dam in trouble. Dreamer's middle rope elbow hits only ladder and the Rolling Thunder onto the ladder onto Dreamer gets two. Dreamer gets crotched on the ladder, kicked with a chair and Frog Splashed for the pin.

Rating: C+. Entertaining enough but did anyone believe that Van Dam wasn't winning this? That's ok I guess but it would have been nice if this had been Jericho or someone like that. As for this, the match didn't work all that well but it wasn't terrible I guess. Van Dam would lose the title to I think Jericho soon after this.

Here's Stacy to say she's going to keep Trish from interfering in the next match. Howard Finkel says, and I quote, "Right now you're interfering with something in my trousers." My childhood is scarred forever.

Lillian Garcia vs. Howard Finkel

This is part of some Fink is a chauvinist deal and it's a tuxedo vs. evening gown match. The winner is permanent ring announcer for Raw. Howard says she looks good but he thought hookers were banned from this city a long time ago. This goes as well as you would expect. Howard says blondes like her should be on their backs. Stacy and Trish come in and strip Howard down to give Lillian the win.

Some guy named Criss Angel is going to live underwater for 24 hours. Ok then.

HHH vs. Undertaker

The winner gets the shot at Lesnar. Naturally it starts as a big brawl on the floor with HHH taking over. We head inside for the bell and a

countered Pedigree. Taker pounds away in the corner and hits the jumping clothesline for two. HHH kicks him in the face and gets glared at. Old School hits for two and Taker pounds away and hits the Snake Eyes but the high knee blocks the big boot. Out to the floor and Taker's knees go into the steps.

HHH pounds away on Taker's head against the barricade as this is clearly not going to last long. The Game pounds away even more and it's off to a sleeper because that's what HHH wanted to make a big move. This thing goes on FOREVER until Taker suplexes him down. They slug it out with Taker getting the advantage again. The referee gets squished because that's EXACTLY what this match needed. A big boot puts HHH down and there's the chokeslam, but here's Lesnar for a distraction. HHH hits Taker low but the Pedigree is countered. Lesnar knocks out Taker with the belt and HHH steals the pin for the title show.

Rating: F. It went eight and a half minutes and it was so boring I could barely stand it. A minute of this was spent in a sleeper and the rest was either punches or signature stuff. When you have Undertaker and HHH in there, anything worse than a watchable match is a failure. It's amazing how much better these guys got over the years.

Stephanie is in the back and Eric tries to throw her out, but she's here to say that Lesnar is exclusively on Smackdown, setting up the need for two world titles. Oh and that last match means NOTHING.

Overall Rating: D. And so it begins. Next week HHH would be handed the title that Sheamus currently holds because the world wants more HHH more than anything else. The problem with that is HHH in 2002 and 2003 was pretty awful, barely being able to pull out a good match if his life depended on it. Anyway, this was a pretty dull show with Lesnar being treated like nothing and the whole show being about HHH. Bad show, making last night an anomaly for the year.

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Monday Night Raw – August 19, 2002: The Final Rock vs. HHH Match

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 19, 2002

Location: Norfolk Scope Arena, Norfolk, Virginia

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

Another 2002 show of course because that's all I get requests for due to reasons I don't understand. It's also the go home show to Summerslam 2002, which is pretty easily the best Summerslam ever. The main event tonight is Rock vs. HHH. I think I just got why this show was requested. Anyway, let's get to it.

Here's Taker to open the show. He's AMERICAN and not evil at the moment. He lost to Test, an Un-American, last week in a tag match but has him one on one this Sunday. Taker says he isn't one to talk about his political beliefs, but just like his country, he doesn't take any crap from anyone. Only in American can a man like him be him. As long as he can back it up with his fists, that's all he needs.

However these freedoms come with a price. A lot of men and women have fought and died to give him those freedoms, and because of that he respects those fallen men and women. He also has a problem with people that come in here and abuse those freedoms. You can feel Vince's right wing talk flowing through Taker right now. Above all others, he doesn't like Test, he'll beat him up, you can figure out the details of this speech yourselves.

Taker gets done talking and his music plays again, but here's Test on a motorcycle of his own with the upside down American flag flying on the back of it. Test gets in the ring and takes the mic from Taker. He says

Taker sucks too, just like America. Why would you EVER give Test a mic? Seriously. Anyway, the fight is on, the other Un-Americans (Storm and Christian) makes the save, Booker and Goldust make the other save, six man later I'm sure. Yep Booker explains it in case you can't think for yourself.

Hardcore Title: Battle Royal

Tommy Dreamer, Jeff Hardy, Bradshaw, Bubba Ray Dudley, Crash Holly, Johnny Stamboli, Steven Richards, Terri, Spike Dudley

Eric Bischoff comes out and says that the 24/7 rule is gone and at the moment Tommy Dreamer is champion coming in. There's going to be a six minute time limit and whoever is champion at the end gets to keep the title. There are weapons under the ring and a tarp covering something big. A shoulder on Dreamer gives Bradshaw the title so everyone jumps the future JBL.

We're under five minutes left now and Bradshaw finds a cookie sheet to clean house with. Various weapons are brought in and it's your usual hardcore style brawl. Bradshaw loads up a powerbomb on the floor but Stevie superkicks him so Crash can pin him for the title. There's a table in the ring now and we're under 3:30 to go. Jeff uses Bubba as a launching pad to dive over the top and onto Stamboli.

Crash tells Bubba to get the table but gets powerbombed through one by Bubba instead for no cover. Dreamer KO's Bubba with a kendo stick and pins Crash for the title. The Clothesline from Bradshaw gets two on Dreamer as Bubba saves. Bubba hits Bradshaw low and superplexes Dreamer for two. We've got less than a minute left and Bradshaw keeps breaking up pins. Nothing else happens and the clock runs out with Dreamer as champion.

Rating: D. Well that was boring. Nothing interesting happened here and the match just ended with the same stuff going on for the last two minutes. Terri was gone after about a second so she didn't need to be in there at all. Thankfully the title would be unified with the IC Title a week later and the thing was put out of its misery. The joke had gotten old like a year and a half ago so ending it was the right idea.

Post match Kane's music hits and Kane doesn't come out. The screen says My Path Is Chosen.

Stacy and Trish argue over who deserves a women's title match. Eric pops up behind them while they accuse each other of being rather horrible women. Eric says the truest statement I've heard in a long time: "No one cares about women's wrestling, so let's just have a bra and panties match in the mud." Amen brother man.

Stacy Keibler vs. Trish Stratus

Bra and panties in the mud, which is what the big tarp was covering earlier. By bra and panties here they mean they're in underwear to start and fighting in the mud. Stacy throws Trish off the stage and into the mud to start and you really can't tell who is who here. The referee is in there too and one girl (I think Trish) spansks the other. Trish eventually rolls up Stacy for the pin outside the mud pit. The Fink is brought into the mud post match.

Rock is just getting here and is given a package apparently from Paul Heyman. He doesn't want it but stops to that FINALLY he's come back to Norfolk. Rock makes some Heyman jokes and introduces himself to the production lady that gave him the package. His leg starts to twitch because it's got a mind of its own. The package has pictures of Hogan all bloodied by Lesnar in it. Rock vs. Lesnar is Sunday.

Post break we actually recap the mud stuff.

Here's HHH with a contract of some sort. He says that nine times out of ten, everything is business in this ring. This one however is personal. How many times has HHH had a feud that wasn't personal? Without these papers being signed by Shawn, there won't be a match at Summerslam. It's the standard "you can't sue me after I beat you up" agreement.

HHH moves on to Brock Lesnar but stops for a not that nice chant from the fans. Lesnar is watching tonight when it's Rock vs. HHH No DQ and non-title. HHH is going to be waiting for Brock after the big beating. This is taking WAY longer than it should for what's being said but that's par for the course for HHH.

Here's Jericho with an interruption but this is a heel period for him so it's kind of odd for him to interrupt. Jericho: "Getting interrupted doesn't feel very good does it?" HHH: "It probably feels better than getting beaten at Wrestlemania for the Undisputed Title." Point to HHH. Jericho talks a bit more and the point is that Fozzy is performing tonight. Jericho runs down Flair before their match on Sunday, Flair jumps him with a trashcan and that's finally it.

Booker T/Goldust/Undertaker vs. Un-Americans

It's a big brawl on the floor to start until it's Christian vs. Taker to get things going. Storm and Christian are tag champions here. A tilt-a-whirl slam gets two for Taker and it's off to Booker. Test sends Booker into the steps and it's off to Christian again. Booker gets beaten down for awhile until he gets a boot up in the corner to stop a charging Test. Test powerslams him down for two and throws on a chinlock.

Booker fights up and hits a side kick out of nowhere to put both guys down. Double tags bring in Christian vs. Goldie and Goldust bulldogs and powerslams various opponents. He hits ten punches on Christian in the corner and loads up Shattered Dreams which hit after about 45 seconds of waiting for the referee to not be looking. Taker boots Test down and they fight up the ramp as Booker hits an ax kick on Storm. Christian knocks out Goldust with a title belt for the pin.

Rating: D. Nothing to see here and it doesn't make me want to see either of these matches on Sunday. The whole AMERICA vs. WE HATE AMERICA is an idea that works fine but there needs to be more than that one idea. Other than that though there wasn't enough here to make me care about either match, but there's enough on Summerslam that these aren't really needed.

We get a long video about Rock training for his match against Lesnar, which means training for The Rundown.

Bischoff gives Van Dam a pep talk for his match on Sunday. Big Show comes up and wonders why Van Dam is getting the IC Title shot on Sunday. Rob: "Because you're a tool?" Show: "I'm a giant." Rob: "Ok, you're a giant tool." A match is made for later.

Flair is fired up to fight Jericho on Sunday. Here's Jericho to jump him with a trashcan to even things up from earlier tonight. Flair bleeds on general principle.

Rob Van Dam vs. Big Show

Van Dam fires off kicks to start but for some reason he tries to monkey flip Show, resulting in RVD being sent to the floor. Show gets sent into the steps so he throws Rob into the barricade. Back in and Van Dam breaks up the chokeslam before firing away shoulders in the corner. The second attempt at the chokeslam hits but Show picks up the steps instead of covering him. Before Show can kill Van Dam though, here's Bischoff to ask what Show is doing. He calls out for Three Minutes and the team that would become known as Three Minuet Warning come out to destroy Show for the DQ. Short and nothing of note.

Rock isn't worried about the match with HHH being No DQ. He talks about how far back they go, including talking about how they argued and fought when they were babies. They also fought when they were in colonial days and in cavemen days. This segues into a Brock Lesnar highlight video and rumors of Lesnar being here tonight are running wild apparently. Rock isn't scared of Lesnar and isn't worried about HHH either. This wasn't one of Rock's best segments but he's got six days left before a long vacation so it's excusable.

HHH goes in to see Bischoff. Shawn has signed the documents but Bischoff throws in that he won't sanction the match. Eric says as far as WWE is concerned, the match never happens. Except for it happening on a WWE PPV in a WWE ring using WWE copyrighted theme songs and being officiated by a WWE referee, nope there's no connection to it.

Time for Fozzy to perform. This goes on for awhile until Jericho says they'll do another song. Flair interrupts and breaks stuff.

We get a long music video about Summerslam and the big matches there.

Rock gets a phone call but doesn't answer it. Ok then.

Lesnar and Heyman have tickets to Raw. Apparently it was Heyman that

called him. Bischoff comes out and tells them that they can't interfere.

The Rock vs. HHH

Non-title of course and No DQ. HHH says just bring it and the fight is on. A big clothesline takes the Game down and HHH gets thrown to the floor. Another big clothesline on the floor takes HHH down again but HHH drops Rock on the barricade to slow him down. Back in and HHH stays on the now injured ribs as things slow down. A right hand to the ribs puts Rock down and there's an abdominal stretch.

Rock escapes and they clothesline each other down as more time is spent laying around. Jerry points out the flaw in the Lesnar can't come in idea: if there's No DQ, it's legal for him to come in. Then again you can't expect WWE to cover its own plot holes. Anyway the spinebuster sets up the People's Elbow for two but HHH hits Rock low to slow him back down. Back to the floor and HHH sends Rock into the steps before pulling out the sledgehammer. Shawn runs in for the save and Lesnar is knocked off the apron. The match is thrown out and the big double brawl ends the show.

Rating: C. Not a great match but at the end of the day it's The Rock vs. HHH and therefore it's automatically worth looking at. Rock would be gone soon after this which is probably good for him as there was nothing left for him to do in the WWE for a long time. Shawn would of course go on to have another eight years or so which blew everyone's mind. The match was nothing great but it did its job well enough.

Overall Rating: D. This didn't really do it for me at all. The interesting thing is that Summerslam wound up being one of the best shows ever while the build up show to it sucked. Summerslam was a bright spot in a long stretch of darkness for the WWE and you could see a lot of that darkness here. There's nothing that comes off as interesting here and things would get even worse soon after this with the next year or so being ALL about HHH and Evolution. This was another bad show though.

Here's Summerslam if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/08/05/history-of-summerslam-count-up-s>

[ummerslam-2002-best-summerslam-ever/](#)

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What Happens In The Cell?

Ryback vs. Punk in the Cell for the title is the main event of HIAC. That opens a lot of doors. At the end of the day, I can't imagine Punk not being champion at the Rumble to face Rock. Now the question is will he be champion the entire way through the next few months? This is where the Cell becomes an issue, because otherwise the answer would be Ryback destroys Punk but Punk walks out and leaves the arena to save the title in fear. The Cell stops that from being an option, so the question is what do they do now?


The only thing I can see happening is Lesnar running in and attacking Ryback, setting up a match between them at TLC or the Rumble. if Ryback is going to lose in there, he has to lose by an inch and due to every method of cheating, illegal tactics, interference, and whatever else you can think of. Oh wait that can't happen because it's the Cell. Gee, MAYBE IT'S A FREAKING BAD IDEA TO HAVE THE CELL GUARANTEED WHEN YOU HAVE NO IDEA IF THE MATCH YOU WANT CAN HAPPEN IN IT! EVER THOUGHT OF THAT VINCE???

Anyway, the more I think about it, the more I think Ryback wins the title and then loses it in another gimmick match likely involving Punk and Cena at TLC. I mean, they wouldn't do Rock vs. Ryback.....would they?

There's one thing I'm sure of: I honestly do not know what is going to happen at TLC and I can't even lean one way or another. That happens very rarely in WWE and I LOVE it.

Thoughts?

Wrestlemania 29 Poster Released

This is from WWE Magazine I believe. Nice job of keeping up with storylines boys. 

Monday Night Raw – July 8, 2002: The Worst Decision In Company History

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 8, 2002

Location: Wells Fargo Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

You know, I constantly say how much I hate 2002 Raw, and yet this is the 11th episode of it that I'll have reviewed already. I plan on doing them

all starting soon, and I'll already be a fifth done with them. Interestingly enough, only one show has been after July. Anyway, we're between KOTR and Vengeance here, which means Undertaker is world champion. The only thing I recognize on the card is a match that is in the running for worst TV match ever, so that's likely why this was requested. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the 4th of July show with Angle making Undertaker tap out at the same time Undertaker pinned him.

Vince pops up to start and says Undertaker has the night off. Taker will however be on Smackdown to welcome Rock back. The main event for Vengeance is Rock vs. Taker vs. Angle for the title.

Theme song.

Here's Booker to open the show. This is just after he was literally kicked out of the NWO. He rants about X-Pac, compares him to Chuck E. Cheese, and wants him tonight. Booker knows he might get beaten down but you have to do that to get some respect. Instead he gets Eddie Guerrero. Eddie says this isn't about Booker, because the Dudleys stole a win from him. Last week Eddie promised Benoit that he would take out his anger on the first guy he saw, and with that the fight is on.

Eddie Guerrero vs. Booker T

Booker pounds on him to start and a knee to the ribs looks to set up the ax kick, only for Eddie to get in a shot to the knee and take over. A rollup with feet on the ropes gets two for Eddie and this is going slow already. Eddie suplexes him down and hits a neckbreaker for two. Booker comes out of nowhere with his corner sunset flip for the pin.

Rating: D+. This was about three minutes of punching and kicking followed by a nearly botched sunset flip out of the corner. For two world champion level guys, you kind of expect a bit more. That being said, this was pretty much normal for Raw around this time, as nothing was really clicking at all.

Post match Eddie tries to jump Booker again but gets kicked in the face.

Benoit runs in and it's a double beatdown on Booker. Goldust comes out for the save but gets beaten down as well. Here are Bubba and Spike with chairs to take out Benoit and Eddie for the real save.

A familiar name is coming to WWE. His name: Rey Mysterio.

Goldust asks for Booker's hand. Dancing ensues but Booker says this is serious. Goldust talks about going down and skips off. Booker superkicks a vendor that looks like X-Pac. Did I mention Booker is more or less the top face on Raw at this point?

Trish and Jackie Gayda are in the back and we get clips of Jackie vs. Molly from last week. Molly won so Trish came out and ripped Molly's pants off. Jackie accuses Trish of being jealous and oh my goodness she makes Stephanie look like a classic actress. Christopher Nowitski pops up and insults Trish because of her cowboy hat. Trish suggests a mixed tag with those two against herself and some partner. Nowitski makes cowboy jokes and Trish says her partner will be Bradshaw.

We get a famous Rock moment of him driving Lillian crazy.

Chris Benoit vs. Bubba Ray Dudley

Spike and Bubba are in the back when Goldust, dressed as Benjamin Franklin, claims to have traveled through time after having seen what the Dudleys did earlier to save Goldust and Booker. Franklindust proposes that the Dudleys team up with Booker and Goldust to fight the NWO. Goldie says he wanted to punch Thomas Jefferson a time or two but they're all in this together. Did I mention this is the top feud on Raw at the moment? We cut back to Benoit and Guerrero (his second) standing in the ring and Benoit's face makes it look like he wishes he was still healing from a broken neck.

Benoit jumps Benoit to start and takes him down with a forearm to the face. Benoit keeps pounding on him so Bubba chops back in the corner. There's a belly to back suplex to Benoit but an Eddie distraction keeps the backplash from being launched. It's not like it would have hit anyway. The Canadian hits a German on the American and they chop it out a bit before the American hits a German on the Canadian. A big sidewalk

slam puts Benoit down and Eddie jumps Spike. There's the Bubba Bomb to Benoit but Eddie throws Spike at the referee. Benoit uses the distraction to grab the Crossface for the submission.

Rating: C. It was better than the previous match because of the intensity in it, but was this really the best thing they could use Benoit for after he came back from injury? The match was barely long enough to rate and it was nothing interesting at all. Bubba Ray Dudley is roughly the third biggest face on the show right now, which should give you a good idea of how things were.

Post match the former Radicalz beat the Dudleys down until Booker and Goldust make the save.

Christopher Nowitski (notice the repetition of names tonight?) takes us on a tour of Harvard's athletics department.

We get some clips from last week's ladder match with Hardy vs. Undertaker.

Flair is praising Jeff in the back for trying last week when Steven Richards come up. We get Flair vs. Richards tonight, because in 2002 we use guys like Flair and Benoit to put over guys like Steven Richards and Bubba Ray Dudley, and by put over I mean beat them in three and a half minute matches that no one will remember by the end of the show because there was nothing to them.

Trish Stratus/Bradshaw vs. Christopher Nowitski/Jackie Gayda

JR warns us that Nowitski and Gayda are very green still, so you know this isn't going to be pretty. The men start and they get down in three point stances but Chris runs. Gayda gets the tag which brings in Trish because the genders have to match. Trish hits some Japanese armdrags and a dropkick for two before charging at the ropes, not hitting Jackie, and bouncing back into the ring. Jackie literally falls onto Trish and the Philly fans let them have it.

She chokes Trish on the ropes...by pulling Trish's throat away from the rope. Off to the guys again with Bradshaw kicking Chris in the face and

hitting the fallaway slam for no cover. Jackie jumps on Bradshaw's back...and the guys run into the crowd, leaving these two girls in the ring. Alone. IN PHILADELPHIA. WHO THOUGHT THIS WAS A GOOD IDEA???

Back in the ring, Trish chops away with Jackie looking like she's dancing instead of selling. Jackie chokes away in the opposite corner and puts Trish on the top. WHO TOLD HER SHE KNEW HOW TO DO A SUPERPLEX??? Thank goodness Trish knocks her away and tries a bulldog. Stratus jumps, her forearm hits Jackie in the back of the head...and Jackie doesn't move. Trish hits the mat and THEN Jackie falls down on her side. Trish rolls her up and the referee counts three even though Jackie kicks out at two. JR: "And mercifully it's over."

Rating: P. For Philadelphia. The WWE agents thought it was ok to leave Trish Stratus, who wasn't good yet, and JACKIE GAYDA, in her THIRD MATCH, alone in the ring in Philadelphia. This may in fact be the dumbest decision in the history of the company, and that's covering A LOT of ground.

Eddie and Benoit yell about the four guys they've dealt with tonight. X-Pac and Big Show come up and say chill. Shawn follows the NWO and says that we're getting a speech in a second from Nash.

Rock moment shows him making fun of whoever he happens to be feuding with at the time.

Here's the NWO because what would this show be without them? Shawn says you're either with the NWO or you're against them. We get a clip from King of the Ring where HHH seemed interested about joining them and apparently HHH has officially been offered a spot. Shawn talks about the Kliq and most people don't seem interested. Fan: "GET TO THE POINT!" HHH hasn't responded to their offer yet so Shawn thinks HHH is going soft because of the fans. HHH has until Vengeance to join or else.

Nash says that tonight, the NWO is going to take out Booker tonight and that's a message to the Game. It's his first match back from the injured list. Remember that as it'll be important later. Tonight it's a ten man tag with the three NWO guys, Benoit and Eddie vs. the Dudleys/Booker/Goldust/whoever else they can get. This took nearly ten

minutes somehow.

Ric Flair vs. Steven Richards

Flair pounds him into the corner to start like some legend beating down some midcard guy that never really got over other than for a few months. Flair pounds on him in the other corner now and we head to the floor. Back in and Flair gets backdropped but avoids a dropkick. Flair blocks a suplex, hits a belly to back of his own, and ends it with the Figure Four.

Rating: D. Total squash here and I have no idea why. Is this really the best they can do with Flair? I mean, you can't have him feud with Benoit or Guerrero and let him get one of those guys over? Flair doesn't need to win these matches and they're not helping Richards, nor are they doing anything for Flair, so what's the point? Better question: why am I expecting a point?

Rock has sung a lot. He's coming back to Smackdown though, probably because there's no one on Raw worth his time.

Here are Heyman and the KOTR and #1 contender, Brock Lesnar. Heyman talks about how whoever wins the triple threat is going to be the lamb led to slaughter at Summerslam. Lesnar gets RVD for the IC Title at Vengeance which Heyman declares a win already. Heyman knows this because he created RVD (and never put the world title on him for no apparent reason) along with everyone else in ECW. He made them to satiate the blood thist (his terms) of these Philadelphia fans.

This brings out Tommy Dreamer with a kendo stick. Guess what the fans start chanting. Dreamer says Heyman didn't make anyone. It was the people working so hard that made ECW along with the fans. Dreamer says he used to be the Innovator of Violence and he can take whatever beating Brock can give him. He hits Brock with the stick a few times and goes after Heyman, only to walk into the F5 on the floor. Van Dam comes out of nowhere for the save. Heyman takes a Van Terminator.

Pat Croce, the former boss of the Philadelphia 76ers, is here to talk about his new show Slam Ball, which is this freaky idea that had

basketball being played with trampolines.

European Title: Jeff Hardy vs. William Regal

Regal is defending of course. Jeff starts fast and hits the Whisper in the Wind for two. The legdrop between the legs keeps Regal down and they head outside. Regal gets in some stomps and takes over before hitting a Tiger Bomb in the ring for two. Regal Cutter gets two as well and Regal takes Jeff's head off with a running knee. The champ puts on a kind of Tazmission which doesn't last long followed by some elbows for two. Regal goes to take off the buckle pad and gets dropkicked into the corner. That and a Swanton are enough for the pin and the title for Jeff.

Rating: C-. Another short match that didn't mean anything. Jeff would look to be in line for a push here, but the title would be retired in two weeks because someone thought it was a good idea to have one champion per show for some reason that no one ever really explained. Jeff would do nothing of note before leaving in 2003.

This is your life Rock!

Regal starts to cry in the back. This also went nowhere as far as I remember.

The Dudleys ask RVD to be their partner.

NWO/Chris Benoit/Eddie Guerrero vs. Bubba Ray Dudley/Spike Dudley/Rob Van Dam/Booker T/Goldust

Van Dam and X-Pac start things off which is one of the best possible combinations they could put out there. Van Dam takes over with a lot of kicks and gets two off a big one. Off to Goldie who pounds away in the corner before hitting a powerslam for no cover. Here's Bubba, who somehow seems to be the guy on the face team getting the biggest push out of all of them.

Off to Spike with a headscissor takeover but he tries one too many flips and is taken down by a kick. Pac brings in Benoit who lays out Spike with a gordbuster before bringing in Eddie. After a bit more beating, a BIG monkey flip sends Eddie flying. Benoit comes in to suplex RVD down and

it's time for Big Show. Van Dam keeps playing Ricky Morton for awhile with X-Pac choking away.

Van Dam comes out of nowhere with a superkick but Shawn breaks up the Five Star. A spin kick from Rob allows for the hot tag to Bubba who cleans as much house as he can. Shawn trips Bubba and is chased to the back by Van Dam. As Van Dam is chasing him, Lesnar pops out and takes Rob's head off with a clothesline and lays him out with the F5. Bubba gets slammed by Show and it's off to Benoit again. Make that Eddie as you can see who is doing all the work here.

Hot tag brings in Booker who cleans the house all over again but Nash hits him in the back of the head. Here's the tag to Nash and let's time this. A big boot takes Booker down and then Nash goes over to the face corner, trips over Booker, and rips his quad apart, putting him on the shelf until April. Everything breaks down and Sweet Chin Music and a chokeslam end Booker.

Rating: D-. So let's see: we had Benoit and Eddie doing all the work, Bubba and Spike doing nothing of note, Booker doing the job, and the NWO getting to look good. Other than them, who benefits from this? This was all about the NWO which did nothing at all their entire run. Thankfully due to Nash's injury the team was split up the next week. This match sucked though and is a perfect way to cap off the awful show.

Shawn warns HHH to join or else to end the show.

Overall Rating: F. Nothing good happened on this show. Literally, there was nothing to see here at all. The best match is Benoit vs. Bubba which was nothing more than a setup for later in the show. It had one of the worst matches I've ever seen and some of the least interesting feuds in wrestling history. Who is the top face here? Van Dam? Booker? Bubba? It's really hard to tell and that's not good. This was the problem they were risking by having Austin be the only top guy and they had to bring HHH over soon to give them a star to save the show, which led to the disaster that was 2003. Horrible HORRIBLE show here.

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Monday Night Raw – August 20, 2012: The Fall Is Looking Better Than The Summer (Slam)

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 20, 2012

Location: Save Mart Center, Fresno, California

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's the night after Summerslam and nothing of note has changed. Punk is still champion, Lesnar beat up HHH as we expected him to, and there isn't much else to talk about. Things will start to die down now as they always do in the fall but hopefully things aren't all that bad. Let's get to it.

Here are Heyman and Lesnar to open the show. Heyman brags for Lesnar about making HHH tap last night. Apparently that means that HHH quit on all of the fans because he couldn't survive Lesnar. It's HHH's fault though because he told the referee to not stop the match no matter what happened and that's what happened. Heyman asks the referee to come down here to be addressed by Brock.

Lesnar gets in the referee's face and pulls Armstrong to himself, before saying good job. Heyman says Lesnar is the new king of kings. He's the master of the Brocktogan and the conqueror of the WWE Universe.

Sin Cara/Kofi Kingston/R-Truth vs. Prime Time Players/Cody Rhodes

Kofi and Young start us off with Darren being in trouble early. The champs' team clears the ring and we take a break. Back with Truth coming in to punch Young a bit more. Ax kick hits and Khloe Kardashian is the social media ambassador tonight. Good grief. Off to Cody who comes in with a release gordbuster on Truth to take over. Titus comes in with the neck crank on Truth as things slow down.

O'Neal barks which is called the Q Bark now apparently. He suplexes Young onto Truth for two which is a takeoff on the Hart Foundation's slam version back in the day. Off to a bodyscissors from Young followed by a chinlock from Titus. Kofi seems to have disappeared. Cara snaps off some ranas to clear the ring and Kofi dives on the Players. I guess he didn't disappear. Back in the ring Cody goes for the mask but gets rolled up by Cara for the pin at 10:10.

Rating: C-. This was a bit slow but I have no problem with combining a few feuds. That being said, why are the Players facing Kingston and Truth still? They lost twice already, clean both times I believe. Anyway, Cara continues to look good as they keep him in short bursts. A feud for the mask is fine but wasn't that what his first feud was for? Anyway this was decent.

AJ is in the back when Otunga returns. He offers his services and she gets mad for some reason, giving him a match against a mystery opponent. Otunga leaves and AJ responds to a Tout from Punk earlier, where he said he wanted to name his own number one contender. That's cool with AJ, but she has final say over it.

Ryback vs. Mike Spitter/Andy Takarez

One step forward, two steps back for Ryback. Ryback hits three powerbombs on let's say Andy. He shouts for Jinder and loads up the double Shell Shocked when Mahal comes in for the DQ at 1:29.

Ryback puts on the Clutch but gets destroyed anyway. The jobbers get beaten up too.

Dolph comes up to Jericho in the back and Jericho lists off his names. AJ comes in and makes a rematch between the two, with the obvious stipulation of Case vs. job.

Here's Del Rio to say exactly what you would expect him to say. We get stills of him having the foot on the ropes, he wants a rematch, we're all going to be bored. Cue AJ who says that's not her territory but Del Rio can have a match here instead.

Randy Orton vs. Alberto Del Rio

Before the bell and after a break, here's Sheamus to join the fun. Orton dropkicks Alberto down for two almost immediately and hooks a chinlock. A slingshot suplex puts Del Rio down and there's the Circle Stomp and kneedrop for two. Del Rio comes back with a knee and a chinlock for the sake of calling some spots. He mocks Orton's mat smacking and goes up for some reason, only to get superplexed down for two. They slug it out from their knees with the Viper taking over.

After the clotheslines from Orton he loads up the Elevated DDT, only for Del Rio to escape and hit an enziguri. A charge from Del Rio is caught and Orton hooks his backbreaker. After a pair of kicks to the arm it's apparently time for the armbreaker (he should just call it Destiny) but Orton counters into a neckbreaker for two. The Elevated DDT out of the corner gets no cover as Orton loads up the RK0. Ricardo comes in but Sheamus and a glare from Orton stops him. Del Rio hits a Backstabber for two as Sheamus points out the feet being on the rope to the referee. The distraction lets Orton hit the RK0 for the pin at 8:30.

Rating: C. This wasn't bad and hopefully it sets up a triple threat instead of another one on one match. Orton is in the kind of position where he can be thrown into a match like that and lose without it hurting him at all. He can add a lot to the match though, especially some fresh blood to a boring feud between Sheamus and Del Rio. Decent enough match here.

Punk says there was no controversy to his win last night. He still wants respect.

We get a Tout from Antonio Cesaro and Aksana in the ring after winning the title last night.

Here's the video on the stuff WWE did in LA this past week.

Damien Sandow vs. Brodus Clay

The intellectual says he's going to send the Funkasaurus back into extinction. That's quite the mind. Sandow sends him into the corner but

the power game takes over for Brodus. He backdrops Damien and dances a bit. Sandow gets slammed down again and an elbow keeps him down. Daniem tries to go after the knee of Brodus which has been bad for weeks now. That gets him nowhere other than put in the corner where Brodus does Big Show's gyrating hip attack. A running headbutt to the chest puts Sandow down again but a splash misses in the corner and Sandow rolls him up with tights for the pin at 2:40.

We go to Shawn Michaels in San Antonio. He says he was watching last night and talks about how it may have been the end for HHH. Shawn says you can prepare yourself for the end of your career but when it hits, you can't be ready for it. HHH left it all in the ring last night and couldn't get it done, so maybe his career is over. Shawn says that he was another distraction to HHH and if he had been in HHH's corner, maybe he would have won. HHH is one of the best ever and Shawn we all love him.

David Otunga vs. Big Show

Total dominance by Show who is wrestling more like a face here. He fires off some knees to the head of Otunga and hits the Eye of the Hurricane (I think Show called it the Final Cut back in the day but I'm not sure) before finishing with the WMD at 2:07.

Earlier today Show ranted about the match last night.

Kane/Zach Ryder vs. The Miz/Daniel Bryan

The idea is that the partners have had issues in the past. That's an understatement. They do acknowledge the issues Kane and Ryder have had which is a big help. Ryder gets in the ring very slowly and doesn't look happy at all. Bryan starts with Kane but Bryan tags out less than two seconds in. We get a DANIEL BRYAN chant as it's off to Ryder. There were two tags within the first fifteen seconds.

A middle rope dropkick sends Miz into the corner but Miz kicks Ryder in the face to escape. Bryan comes in and the place ERUPTS. He stomps on Ryder while taunting him about making a tag. Back to Miz who pulls on Ryder's face and hits a neckbreaker for two. Back to Bryan who fires off some kicks in the corner. Bryan accidentally runs into Miz, allowing Kane

to get the tag.

Miz won't tag in now so it's Bryan vs. Kane. Daniel's solution? Slap the monster. Bryan runs into the crowd and Miz leaves too. Kane chokeslams Ryder for old times' sake and beats up the steps and table. The timekeeper gets thrown around and Ryder gets a tombstone. Does Vince have some kind of fetish for seeing Kane beat him up? We'll say the match ended at 6:00.

Rating: D+. Not much here but unfortunately it doesn't set up Miz vs. Ryder for the IC Title which would have been a good short feud for both guys. Kane and Bryan both having anger management issues could be interesting, although I hope it doesn't wind up being about Charlie Sheen as the dynamic there would be weird.

Cena won't say Punk is best in the world.

Punk says that he picks John Cena for his #1 contender if Cena will accept a condition. It's not particularly stated but the condition seems to be that Cena has to respect him.

Divas Battle Royal

This is for the #1 contendership. I think there are seven in this and I'm not going to bother listing them. Aksana and Rosa go out at the same time and we have Eve, Tamina, Alicia, Natalya and Kaitlyn in there still. I didn't see Beth or Kelly in at all. Kaitlyn is sent to the apron but Tamina drags her back in for no apparent reason.

Eve is down in the corner and talking to a referee about something. Tamina and Natalya double team various people but they don't eliminate anyone. Alicia dropkicks them to the apron but both get back in. Natalya gets sent to the floor by missing a charge, Tamina superkicks Alicia out and Kaitlyn throws out Tamina. Eve gets up but can't get Kaitlyn out so Kaitlyn clotheslines her out to win at 4:10.

Rating: D. It was longer than it needed to be, it was boring, and the two most famous Divas weren't in it. I guess this sets up the match at Night of Champions which is as good a way as anything else to get us to that.

Nothing to see here though as the Divas are just worthless other than looking good.

After a recap of the opening segment, we see a Tout from Lesnar saying he's done with WWE because he's accomplished everything he wanted to here. Winning one match was his whole list?

Wade Barrett is still coming back.

Daniel Bryan has to go to anger management classes, which gives us a way to talk about the WWE App for Android.

Vickie yells at Dolph about AJ. Dolph says this is about him tonight and not Vickie. Vickie freaks out again and Dolph says he'll win. He leaves her in the locker room.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Chris Jericho

Contract vs. MITB Case here. Jericho gets a quick rollup to start and Dolph bails to the floor. Back in and Jericho grabs another rollup for the same result. A missile dropkick puts Ziggler down and Jericho backdrops him out to the floor. The springboard dropkick puts Dolph out there again and we take a break. Back with Ziggler holding a chinlock and doing the handstand. Jericho finally escapes and takes Ziggler down with a shoulder.

A top rope double ax gets two as does what was supposed to be a rana but Jericho's legs wound up under Ziggler's legs. That could work as another move in its own right. Ziggler grabs a jumping DDT to put Jericho down and the match slows a bit. Fameasser misses and but Jericho can't hook the Walls. Small package gets two for Ziggler but the Zig Zag is countered. The Lionsault hits knees and the Zig Zag gets rid of Jericho at 10:30.

Rating: C+. Another good match here from these two, although I'm not sure if last night's result was the right call now. Wouldn't it be better to have Jericho lose "the big one" last night and put up his job for a final chance to win? On the other hand, the win last night made Ziggler look like he was in a lot more jeopardy tonight so it's hard to say. Actually

the right call would have been to have these stipps last night, but that's too much foresight so we got this instead, which was still fine. The ending was never in doubt though as we knew Jericho was leaving.

Ziggler celebrates a lot post match but Jericho takes the case from Vickie. He hits Ziggler with it a few times and hits a Codebreaker for good measure. That's a pretty heelish exit after he lost completely clean.

Here's Punk to close the show. He goes to Lawler and wants an apology for Lawler saying that Punk turned his back on the WWE Universe. Before he can get that, here's Cena. Punk is annoyed that Cena came out early because he's stealing the spotlight again. He's tired of taking a backseat to Cena and Rock and everyone else. Punk has done it out of respect but he's never gotten any respect back.

He's tired of walking through airports and having people saying "what's up champ, why weren't you in the main event?" Punk says that he respects Cena and allows him to go on last, drawing a CM Punk chant. Punk talks about beating Cena twice last year for the title and for beating him last night for the title again. Last year he had to hold the company up to get some respect. Cena is the #1 contender now because Punk has to beat him again to get respect.

Punk talks about looking into the crowd and seeing all of the green (Cena's current colors in case it's 2017 or something). He wants Cena to say he respects Punk because the people will follow whatever Cena says. The title shot is his if he'll say Punk is the best in the world. That line gave me flashbacks to Jesus in the wilderness with Satan. Cena talks about how he believes in the people and how he has to believe in himself. Based on that, he can't say it because he doesn't believe it. He says he believed in everything he said leading up to the match with Rock and if he gets a rematch he'll say it again.

Punk has held the title for nine months and all anyone remembers is him blowing a kiss to Vince (which was before this title reign but you get the point). Cena will not say Punk is the best in the world but he's giving Punk another option: he's offering Punk vindication. If Punk can

beat Cena in Cena's hometown, that will prove he's the best in the world. If Punk won't do it, Cena has no respect for him. With that, Cena leaves Punk in the middle of the ring alone.

Punk immediately turns to Lawler and says he wants an apology right now. He demands an apology because he never turned his back on the WWE Universe as Lawler said he did. Lawler gets in the ring and says it's a misunderstanding but apologizes. He goes to leave but Punk stops him. If Cena won't say Punk is the best in the world, the people will believe Lawler, as he's the minister of propaganda for the WWE. Lawler thinks but he can't say it. He goes to leave again and Punk kicks him in the head. Punk stares down as the show ends.

Overall Rating: B-. There was something very important tonight that has been missing from Raw lately: there was a clear direction. Tonight we had I believe three potential matches set up for Night of Champions. Everything on the show seemed to have a point and that kept things from dragging. This was a decent show and I liked it more than most of the recent episodes, which is a good sign as we're in a new period of the year. Cena and Punk are channeling Savage vs. Hogan in 88/89 when the Mega Powers Exploded and that sounds awesome.

Results

Kofi Kingston/R-Truth/Sin Cara b. Prime Time Players/Cody Rhodes – Rollup to Rhodes

Ryback b. Mike Spitter/Andy Takarez via DQ when Jinder Mahal interfered

Randy Orton b. Alberto Del Rio – RK0

Damien Sandow b. Brodus Clay – Rollup with a handful of tights

Big Show b. David Otunga – WMD

Kaitlyn won a battle royal last eliminating Eve

Dolph Ziggler b. Chris Jericho – Zig Zag

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Summerslam 2012: Lesnar Is A Wrestler Again, Just Like Everyone Else

Summerslam 2012

Date: August 19, 2012

Location: Staples Center, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

It's that time of the year again and I can't say I particularly care about most of the show. The main events here are HHH vs. Lesnar in a match that has taken WAY too long to get to, Sheamus defending against Del Rio in a match we saw last month with Sheamus winning, and Cena vs. Punk vs. Big Show in a match that Show flat out does not need to be in. I'm not that fired up about this show again but hopefully they pull something off. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: US Title: Santino Marella vs. Antonio Cesaro

Antonio is challenging and has beaten Santino twice I believe in the past few weeks. Santino takes him to the mat to start and works over the arm with an armbar. Cesaro misses a charge and it's Cobra time but Antonio knocks Santino down and kicks the Cobra to the corner. We hit the chinlock for awhile and the idea is now that the Cobra is in the corner and Santino needs to get to it. This isn't exactly Jake Roberts but they're trying at least. Cesaro rips the Cobra up and Santino gets all fired up. He fires off his usual stuff but misses the headbutt. The Neutralizer is countered and Santino has another Cobra. He loads it up but Aksana's distraction allows Cesaro to hit him in the ribs and the Neutralizer gives Cesaro the title at 5:05.

Rating: D+. This was about what it should have been, stupid sock thing aside. There was only so much you could do at this point with Santino as

champion so having him lose to Cesaro here was the right move. With all these new stars they're pushing, they have to actually give a title to someone and Cesaro is as good as anyone else. Decent opener, but it kind of deflates the crowd before a show.

The opening video is about the 25 years of this show (even though there have only been 24 editions of it and WWE still can't count) and the main events, mainly focusing on Lesnar vs. HHH of course.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Chris Jericho

Ziggler has pink sunglasses to go with the shirt now. Jericho is injured coming in and word on the street is that this is his last night or next to last night so that'll likely come into play. The idea is that Jericho can't win the big one anymore which is an interesting way to go. Ziggler runs to start but the old man chases him down and speeds thing up. Jericho slips on what I think was supposed to be a spinning crossbody coming out of the corner but it only gets two.

Ziggler gets knocked down again but he reverses a suplex and goes for the bad legs. Dolph tries to speed things up but gets backdropped to the floor for his efforts. Jericho loads up the springboard dropkick but Ziggler moves, sending Jericho crashing into the floor. Back in and Ziggler works on the ribs as you would expect him to do. After knocking Jericho down again he uses Jericho's arrogant cover for two. That's awesome stuff there.

A corner splash misses and Jericho dropkicks Ziggler to the floor. Back in and Ziggler charges into a boot followed by a double ax from the middle rope from Jericho for two. The Fameasser out of nowhere gets the same for Dolph and Vickie is freaking out. The Walls are countered but Jericho hits an enziguri for two. Jericho doesn't seem like he's selling the ribs at all here. The sleeper goes on out of nowhere but the Canadian escapes and puts Ziggler on the top.

In a cool spot, Jericho punches him in the head ten times while standing on the top rope before snapping off a top rope rana for a very delayed two. A jumping DDT out of nowhere gets two for Ziggler and now it's Jericho in trouble. Jericho bulldogs Ziggler down but the Lionsault hits

knees. Zig Zag gets two and the fans are getting into this. Ziggler goes to pick him up but walks into a Codebreaker, sending him to the floor. Vickie grabs Jericho's foot as he throws Ziggler back in, giving Ziggler a small package for two. There are the Walls and Ziggler taps at 13:08.

Rating: B-. The selling in this was really getting on my nerves as Jericho didn't seem like he wanted to sell at all. Based on this, I really hope Ziggler doesn't cash in later to erase this match because it's happened already. The match got better near the end but it wasn't a masterpiece or anything. If the rumors of Jericho leaving soon are true, I don't really get the idea of him beating Ziggler clean at all.

Time for a recap of Lesnar vs. HHH, this time being from Monday with Shawn getting his arm broken.

Heyman and Lesnar are in the back and Heyman says that tonight, it's a fight to the finish, meaning the referee shouldn't stop the match for anything. No word on if that's the official rule or not.

Daniel Bryan vs. Kane

This is based off Bryan, Kane and Punk vying for AJ's affections a few months ago. There was a month or so off in between there so the story didn't quite follow up that well. Bryan tries to run from the monster to start but after the moonsault out of the corner, Kane slams him down and hits the low dropkick for two. There's a big Daniel Bryan chant just before he gets his head kicked off for two. Bryan goes after the knee and kicks Kane to the floor where he hits the suicide shove, but Bryan might have hurt his shoulder. It seems to be ok though as Bryan hits a missile dropkick for one as he comes back in.

Kane starts his comeback with some corner clotheslines and a side slam for two before going up. Bryan escapes the chokeslam but gets uppercutted right down. For no apparent reason, Bryan punches Kane in the face and gets beaten down in the corner. It's almost a DQ but Kane lets off because he's mellow now. A kick to the arm looks to set up the NO Lock but Kane is too big and fried and freaky. The fans start driving Bryan crazy so his top rope headbutt is caught in the chokeslam for no cover. The tombstone is countered into a small package for the pin at 8:03

despite Kane's arm clearly being off the mat.

Rating: C-. The match was ok but when you push the idea of this being a big deal of Bryan beating Kane, it might be better if they had had more than FOUR total matches (that's ever, including a match on Raw like 3 months ago that Bryan won. This could have been the first hour main event on any given Smackdown.

Kane chases Bryan into the back and destroys Josh Matthews for talking to him.

Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Rey Mysterio

Miz is defending because Rey beat him once on Smackdown ten days ago, which is all you need for an IC Title match at Summerslam. Rey is dressed as Batman for some reason. The blowup AWESOME balloons are back on the stage. Mysterio immediately grabs a rollup for two so Miz bails to the floor. AJ has tweeted that she'll deal with Kane tomorrow night. Rey gets sent to the floor but he rolls through it to land safely. That was kind of cool.

An attempt at the sitout bulldog on the floor is countered by Miz throwing Rey into the barricade. Back in and Rey escapes a belly to back suplex into a cross body for two. Miz hits a kind of Abyss Shock Treatment for two which was a good looking move for him. Off to a cravate from the champion followed by the corner clothesline. Miz loads up his top rope ax handle but Mysterio crotches him to get a breather.

Rey heads up and hits the seated senton, only to get caught in a sitout powerbomb when he tries a rana. Rey kicks him in the head for two before countering a slam into a spinning DDT for the same. Rey ranas him off the top into the 619 but the top rope splash misses. The Finale is countered into a rollup for a very close two. And never mind as the Skull Crushing Finale retains the title for Miz at 9:13.

Rating: C. This was another decent match but it's nothing that jumps off the page at you. Mysterio didn't need to win the title here and Miz winning another match over a big name is certainly a good thing, but sweet goodness I did not care at all. The match came and went and most

people didn't care because there was almost no build at all. Nothing to see here although it wasn't bad.

We're roughly an hour into this and there's nothing of note at all so far. It's been the epitome of a meh show.

Eve and Teddy say nothing of note outside AJ's office so Punk heads in to see AJ. After some exposition, Punk gets annoyed that AJ won't respond to anything he says. He says he'll retain the title tonight and AJ says nothing at all, nor does she move at all.

We recap Sheamus vs. Del Rio. Del Rio injured Sheamus' arm before their match last month which Sheamus won clean. This month, Del Rio injured Sheamus' arm before their match and then Sheamus stole his car. There's nothing to this feud and no one seems interested at all in seeing it.

Smackdown World Title: Sheamus vs. Alberto Del Rio

Feeling out process to start with both guys going for finishers early on. Sheamus misses the Brogue Kick, allowing Del Rio to kick Sheamus to the floor. Oh and Sheamus is defending. Del Rio sends him into the steps and it's back inside for a chinlock. A neckbreaker is countered by Alberto into some kicks to the face for two. We're only a few minutes into this and it's already dull.

Del Rio pounds his own chest and shouts BROGUE but charges into a double ax from the champ. A charge into the corner hits post though and Del Rio takes over for all of a second. The shoulder missile from Sheamus is broken up and a Codebreaker to the arm from the top gets two. The armbreaker goes on out of nowhere but Sheamus powers out of it into a kind of powerbomb. White Noise gets two and it's Brogue Kick time, but Del Rio hides in the corner.

That's fine for Sheamus as he hits the ten forearms to the chest followed by some punches in the corner. Del Rio drops Sheamus face first into the buckle and the running enziguri gets two. Ricardo comes in for no apparent reason and loses a shoe as Alberto yells at him. Sheamus blasts him with it and hits an Irish Curse for the pin at 11:21 but Alberto had his foot on the ropes. Geez we have to sit through this AGAIN next month?

Rating: D. STOP PUSHING DEL RIO BECAUSE NO ONE FREAKING CARES ABOUT HIM! I like Sheamus but my goodness no one cares about this feud and now it's going to go on ANOTHER month because WE WILL CARE ABOUT ALBERTO WHETHER WE WANT TO OR NOT. I'm so bored of seeing these two fight when it'll be another arm injury for Sheamus before Del Rio finally gets the title you know he has to get. The wrestling was fine and the rating is probably low but dang man, give Sheamus ANYONE else to feud with.

Some soldiers are here.

HHH told the referee earlier to only end it on a pin or submission. Let them fight apparently.

We're looking at Tweets from Shawn throughout the night.

Tag Titles: Prime Time Players vs. Kofi Kingston/R-Truth

The Players are challenging despite losing clean to the champs on TV a few weeks ago. Truth is also injured coming in because that's a running theme tonight. Truth and Young start things off and I guess Truth is ok after the emphasis they gave to him getting beaten down on Raw. Off to Titus who has a bit better luck, slamming Truth down and putting him in a front facelock. There's the tag to Kofi and NO ONE reacts when he springboards in to attack O'Neal. Boom Drop hits but Young's distraction breaks up Trouble in Paradise.

The challengers make Kofi chase them around the ring, which lets Titus clothesline Kofi down to take over. Darren puts on a chinlock followed by a powerslam for two. Titus hooks a quickly broken abdominal stretch but as he tries a spinning Rock Bottom, Kofi counters into a DDT. Off to Young vs. Truth and the fans don't react again. Everything breaks down and Kofi dives onto Titus on the floor. Young gets two on a rollup on Truth before the Little Jimmy retains the titles at 7:07.

Rating: C. Why? Why in the world would you keep the titles on Kofi and Truth, who haven't done jack with the belts in months. My only guess is because of AW, because clearly the Prime Time Players, a decent team in their own right, need to be punished for something their manager said. This show is getting worse and worse as it goes on and that's not good.

We recap the events in LA before the PPV. Basically, BE A STAR!

HHH vs. Lesnar is main eventing. Is anyone really surprised by that?

We recap the triple threat match which is Cena vs. Punk vs. Show. Cena is there because Punk is tired of being overshadowed by him and Show is there because we can't just have Cena vs. Punk which is an interesting match and because we potentially need a fall guy for Cena to win the title without beating Punk.

Raw World Title: CM Punk vs. John Cena vs. Big Show

Cole gives the dreaded stats of Punk's title reign, which are usually the kiss of death. Punk has pink trunks tonight which is a different look for him. Cole points out that Punk hasn't main evented a PPV since December. Way to push your champion as a big deal there Cole/Vince. Then again that's the idea of the angle but it doesn't help much. Show takes them both down to start with his big man power offense and does the SHH chops.

Punk and Cena team up to beat on Show but he runs them over. Cole calls Punk and Cena an unlikely alliance. You know, because two guys against Big Show NEVER team up on him. The small guys finally put Show down but Punk can't GTS him. Cena tries an AA but Punk breaks it up. Show takes over again and as you would guess, things slow back down. Cena gets knocked to the floor but Show misses a splash on Punk. The springboard clothesline is caught by Show and a slam gets no cover.

Show loads up the WMD but Cena goes after Show to break it up. Show spears Cena down for two and the small guys are down again. The Vader Bomb aimed at both only hits Cena but Punk saves the pin. Show and Cena go to the floor and the Big Bald catches Punk in mid suicide dive. He throws Punk into the ropes and heads back inside. Cena loads up his finishing sequence on Show to huge boos, only to get taken down by Punk.

Punk drops the elbow on Show for two. A kick to the head puts Show down and Punk throws on a Kofi Clutch but Show powers out again. Cena puts Show in the STF but more power escapes it for Big show. Cena's middle rope cross body doesn't work but the springboard clothesline from Punk puts him down. The running knee in the corner staggers Show but the

bulldog is countered. Top rope Fameasser puts Show down and it's a Koji Clutch and the STF at the same time for the tap.

Cue AJ who says restart the match. Show chokeslams both guys and gets two on both. Cena pops up and hits the AA on Show, but Punk throws him to the floor and pins Show to retain at 12:38 total.

Rating: C-. Nothing to see here for the most part, but I'm glad Punk retained....I think. One thing: what in the world was the point in the restart? If you want to go with Punk stealing the pin then that's fine, but why in the world do the whole AJ thing? Anyway, this probably leads to Cena vs. Punk in Boston at Night of Champions, which is what this show should have been. Still though, the match was just ok at best, just like every other match tonight other than the opener.

Fred Durst, Piers Morgan, Rick Rubin (music producer), David Arquette and Maria Menounos are here.

There was a WWE Film premiere last night. It's called The Day, which is another in the long line of great titles from WWE Films.

We recap the pre-show match.

Time for the annual Summerslam concert as Kevin Rudolph performs Be A Star. I have never heard so much silence when a musician takes the stage. Some Divas come out and dance with him. The announcers dance too. This just came and went.

Time for the BIG recap of Lesnar vs. HHH.

HHH vs. Brock Lesnar

Brock charges to start ala vs. Cena but HHH punches his way out of the arm. Brock gets the arm hold on and even jumps onto a standing HHH with it but HHH punches out of it again. A clothesline puts Lesnar on the floor and a jumping knee puts Lesnar down again. Lesnar gets sent to the floor for the second time and this has been almost all HHH in the first two minutes.

Lesnar gets back in and takes his gloves off. He takes HHH down with ease

and blasts him in the back of the head, which is illegal in UFC. Out to the floor and Lesnar hits a hammerlock slam on the table. Back in and another hammerlock slam hurts the arm even more. Lesnar wraps the arm around the ropes as this is basically a regular match so far. The F5 is countered but Lesnar hits a big German suplex to take him down again. HHH grabs a DDT to slow Lesnar down but it's right back to the arm hold.

That doesn't last so it's hammerlock slam #3 followed by HHH being sent into the steps arm first. They head to the announce table and Brock jumps off of it with a forearm to the back of the head/neck. Back in and Brock uses a freaking small package of all things for two. Lesnar clotheslines him down and the match slows down again. The Game grabs a suplex to finally get himself a breather and both guys are down.

The Pedigree is countered and HHH gets to do his fly over the corner bump. Out to the floor again and HHH sends Lesnar into the table to slow him down. Lesnar looks hurt, like legit hurt. It looks like his groin or ribs. Lesnar shouts about his stomach and things slow WAY down. Oh never mind he was apparently playing possum. If so that's the best selling Brock has ever done.

HHH knees him in the ribs to escape the arm lock and does it again a few times for good measure. Spinebuster puts Lesnar down but the Pedigree is countered into an also countered F5. Pedigree hits on the second attempt but it only gets two. Lesnar hits HHH low but Armstrong (referee) won't call the DQ as per HHH's orders.

The F5 hits but only gets two, which only shocks about half the audience. The kimura (arm lock) finally goes on in full but HHH makes the rope....which means nothing here. HHH pounds out of the hold because that's how tough he is or something. Out of nowhere HHH hits a second Pedigree but Lesnar no sells into the kimura. Lesnar cranks on it and HHH taps at 18:45.

Rating: B. Well, it's safe to say they've lost the point of Lesnar already. This was a standard WWE main event style match with HHH getting in more offense in about 80 seconds than Cena got in through his entire 20+ minute match with Lesnar. Brock trying the arm hold about 10 times

before getting it in good doesn't make him look awesome or anything. It makes him look like someone with one move and no game plan at all aside from that. The match was good but when you go from Cena and Lesnar having a potential match of the year to this, it's a pretty big letdown.

HHH gets to do the big "I don't need medical help" stand up and walk out but the fans tell him he tapped out. They play it up like it's his last match. Right.

Overall Rating: D+. This show wasn't bad. It was the thing that's far worse than bad: it was dull. The matches were all fine, but at the end of the day, pretty much nothing happened here. The only title change was on the preshow and it looks like we're gearing up for more Sheamus vs. Del Rio next month, which is boring me to tears. Cena vs. Punk will be awesome but it could have been awesome here. The show wasn't bad, but it was underwhelming. It's a weak ending to a pretty good summer for WWE.

Results

Chris Jericho b. Dolph Ziggler – Walls of Jericho

Daniel Bryan b. Kane – Small Package

The Miz b. Rey Mysterio – Skull Crushing Finale

Sheamus b. Alberto Del Rio – Irish Curse

Kofi Kingston/R-Truth b. Prime Time Players – Little Jimmy to Young

CM Punk b. John Cena and Big Show – Pinned Show after an AA from Cena

Brock Lesnar b. HHH – Kimura

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Summerslam 2012 Preview

It's Summerslam time and honestly I barely care after this lackluster build. Let's get to it. We'll start with the matches of course.

For the preshow I'll take Santino to retain in some wacky manner. It should go to Cesaro to just give him something to do but they're pushing Cesaro too hard to have him win here.

On to the main card, I'll go with Bryan over Kane. Bryan hasn't won a singles match in months but yet he doesn't need to win at all. I'll go with him because there is no reason to have Kane win at all here.

Ziggler over Jericho due to the word on the street being that Jericho is done after Sunday.

Miz to retain I guess but honestly does anyone care at all here?

Hopefully the Prime Time PLayerS take the tag belts as Kofi and Truth are some of the lamest champions I can remember in a long time, which is saying something for the freaking tag team titles.

Sheamus over Del Rio with a possible cash in for Ziggler. I really hope they don't put it on Del Rio and then have Ziggy cash in. That move drives me crazy.

For the main events, I'm hoping for Punk to retain but Big Show being in there would point to Cena walking out with the title.

For the real main event that hopefully won't go on last, it has to be Lesnar. I mean....it HAS TO BE Lesnar.....right?

Overall, this is one of the weakest looking Summerslams I can remember in a very long time. The world title match is dragged down by a combination of Big Show and Punk seeming to have no idea if he's a face or a heel. At the end of the day, Rock continues to loom over this company but at least now there's an open spot to face him at the Rumble. Other than that, we have Lesnar vs. HHH in a feud that has almost no heat on it because it was started and then not mentioned again for three months before Shawn turned into a scared coward and Lesnar turned into every other cowardly heel that runs from a fight on the roster despite running over JOHN FREAKING CENA like he wasn't there. But hey, it makes HHH look more feared and if anyone needs the extra boost, it's HHH.

Thoughts/predictions?

Monday Night Raw – August 13,

2012: Bad Things Happen In WWE Parking Lots

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 13, 2012

Location: American Airlines Center, Dallas, Texas

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

It's the final Raw before Summerslam and the card is mostly set. The word on the street is that there's something big planned for tonight but there's no word on what that is. The other interesting thing is that Del Rio vs. Sheamus has been canceled (in a TOUT of course) by Booker due to Del Rio's attack on Sheamus last week. It may be interesting to see where that goes. Yes, the Smackdown title may be interesting. Let's get to it.

CM Punk vs. Big Show

Yes we're opening the show with a match. Hopefully this keeps things lively tonight. Punk charges at him and is knocked down almost immediately. Punk comes back with some forearms but he's going to have to use speed rather than brawn here. Show chops him in the corner and stands on Punk's head. As that's going on, there's something I'd like to talk about for a bit. On commentary, Cole is talking about the length of Punk's reign, the size of Big Show, what the wrestlers have been up to lately, what titles Big Show has won and all that jazz. What is he not really talking about? What we're seeing in the ring.

It's like that's secondary to every other thing they can think of to talk about. Instead of the wrestling being the focus, it's as if they're trying to give us every other reason to care about things. It's like talking about all the features of a cell phone and all the internet and data capabilities it has but not mentioning that you can make calls on it. That's kind of the most important thing.

Speaking of the match, Show works on the arm but misses a charge in the corner. Punk hits the running knee but, say it with me, the bulldog is countered. Show spears Punk down...and here's Daniel Bryan. He yells about how he should be in the title match as Show hits a side slam for two. He loads up the Vader Bomb but Punk takes out the leg. The springboard clothesline gets two and Bryan runs in for the DQ at 6:00.

Rating: C+. I like it when these two go at it. Punk knows how to have a match with big men and it worked here. There's something about the way Show sells that running knee in the corner that makes it look awesome. Good stuff here even though it didn't have a lot of time. When you can drag a good match out of Show, that's saying a lot.

Bryan puts Punk in the NO Lock but Show breaks it up for no apparent reason. Cena comes out to save Punk and clears the ring. AJ comes out and makes the obvious tag for later in the show.

We're on a break now and I'd like to address the glaring problem with Raw right now: what is new here? It's the same stuff but with different faces (and that's a stretch) in the old roles. AJ is standard GM #85 (the Skipping Model), we have three guys fighting over a title with more or less no personal issues, and those three plus a fourth guy are in a tag match to end the show before the PPV. How many times have you seen that EXACT same scenario?

Back and JTG is ranting to Kaitlyn about not having a match when AJ skips by. She puts him in a match with someone. Gee, I wonder who that'll be. We'll be RI ght BACK to the arena in a bit to find out. Kaitlyn and AJ have a weird moment that I don't think anyone cares about.

JTG vs. Ryback

I was right before I even had time to think about it. Ryback has new music with the FEED ME MORE lines in the song now. The fans are getting into this FEED ME MORE chant. You know what might be interesting?

Given the reactions Ryback has been getting, hot shot him to the world title. Seriously, what do you have to lose? Ryback is a monster, he's getting bigger and bigger reactions every week, and he's been around the main event before. I'm not saying it'll be successful, but it would be an interesting way of shaking things up. It worked pretty well for Sheamus a few years ago. Anyway JTG gets Shell Shocked and pinned at 1:54.

You can vote for who you want to see in Piper's Pit tonight: Jericho, Zigler or Miz.

Santino defends against Cesaro on Sunday.

Piper is in the back sounding drunk and asking who will be in the Pit. He asks someone off screen who he thinks will be in the Pit and Shawn Michaels is next to him. Shawn is worried about Lesnar tonight and he gets a call from presumably HHH who is going to be getting here late tonight.

Heath Slater vs. R-Truth

Now there's an odd pairing. Truth/Kofi vs. the Prime Time Players on Sunday. Truth starts with his usual stuff but gets caught in a neckbreaker for two. Slater puts on a chinlock but Truth shrugs him off and hits Little Jimmy for the pin at 1:44.

The Players run out for the 2-1 beatdown because Kofi is in China still.

Mark Henry was in London for the Olympics.

Pauly D from Jersey Shore is the social media ambassador tonight.

We recap the Del Rio vs. Sheamus feud and we see the incident from Friday where Sheamus was attacked by fake cops, which is why the title match was

cancelled.

Sin Cara vs. Tensai

Tensai tries a powerbomb but Cara rolls into a sunset flip position which doesn't work either. Tensai takes his head off but his Vader Bomb misses. Cara hits a Swanton to the back of Tensai and an enziguri to both him and Sakamoto. A tornado DDT out of the corner gets the pin on Tensai at 1:06. Tensai HAS TO be done after that.

Tensai hits a Baldo Bomb and backslash on Sakamoto post match.

Shawn asks someone to let him know if they see Brock.

Time for Piper's Pit and Lawler has to be there with him to keep this logical. To the shock of no one paying attention, Jericho wins the vote by a landslide. Piper tells the fans to quit cheering Jericho for some reason. They talk about Wrestlemania 25 and the three on one handicap match they were on opposite sides in but Piper doesn't remember any of it. Piper talks about the fans starting to cheer for Jericho and says on Sunday it's about some fan in the front row in a red shirt.

I can't believe I'm saying this but THANKFULLY Vickie comes in to break this up. She brings out Ziggler who rips into Roddy and his tired old routine. Ziggler says Jericho is headed for the same place Piper is in, but Jericho counters by making a hair joke and telling Vickie to shut up. Jericho says he'll win the big one Sunday...and here's Miz. He has a tiny mustache now and says he's taking over this show. Dolph can be the guest but Piper and Jericho need to leave now. Piper FREAKS and a brawl breaks out.

Chris Jericho vs. The Miz vs. Dolph Ziggler

This was made during the break apparently. The heels go after Jericho to

start but he fights them both off with ease. Ziggler gets sent to the floor so Jericho chops away at Miz. Dolph trips Jericho up and comes back in for some stomping. Jericho gets double teamed a bit and things slow down. A double suplex puts the Canadian down and Ziggler drops the big jumping elbow.

A second elbow gets two but Miz breaks it up. It's time for the heels to fight as per custom in matches like these which allows Jericho to get up and clean house. Both heels are sent to the floor and Jericho dives out on top of them. He stands on the announce table and I'm so glad Jericho is a good guy again. I've always liked him better that way. Ziggler is sent back into the ring but he knocks Jericho into the announce table as we take a break.

Back with Miz kneeing Jericho down as Jericho tries a comeback. Miz vs. Mysterio on Sunday for the IC Title. Miz stays on the back of Jericho as Ziggler is nowhere in sight. Off to a chinlock for a bit but Miz's corner clothesline misses. Ziggler finally gets on the apron but Jericho dropkicks him down. Jericho hits the bulldog on Miz but the Lionsault only gets two as Ziggler comes back in.

Miz gets crotched on the top as Ziggler is sent to the floor by the Canadian. A superplex by Jericho is evolved into the Tower of Doom with Miz taking the worst of it. Dolph covers Jericho for two. The Fameasser gets the same and the fans are getting into these kickouts. Ziggler loads up something on Jericho but Miz runs in and hits the Finale on Ziggler...for two.

Jericho counters a reverse DDT on Miz but the Walls are broken up as well. A big boot takes Jericho down but Ziggler breaks up a cover. Dolph walks into a Codebreaker that gets two as Vickie puts Ziggler's foot on the ropes. Jericho escapes a Final and puts Miz in the Walls. Miz taps but Vickie has the referee. Ziggler comes in and hits the Zig Zag on Jericho for the pin at 14:15.

Rating: B-. I was really digging this at the end. After the commercial this got WAY better after a slow start. I was thinking Miz would win here and he probably should have to keep him looking strong going into a title defense on Sunday, but at least he didn't lose. This was a very fast paced match and I had no idea who was going to win by the end. Good stuff.

Eve hits on Punk but Punk says he's the same guy he's always been. Eve says no one believes he's changed, especially Cena. Punk says he'll go tell Cena himself. Eve has an evil smile as he leaves.

We get a LONG recap of the stuff that opened the show and led to the tag main event.

Shawn is panicking about Brock showing up when Cena taps him on the shoulder. Shawn says he's fine and walks away. Punk walks up to Cena and says that being champion means everything, but he's not a phony and isn't going to say he likes a match that he doesn't. Punk swears he won't stab anyone in the back and he'll make sure that tonight is all about him.

Wade Barrett is coming back.

Kaitlyn/Layla vs. Eve Torres/Beth Phoenix

Layla, who is still Divas Champion despite not being on TV in months, starts with Beth and they almost immediately botch a rollup. Layla gets rammed into the corner and it's off to Eve who is put in a sloppy side roll for two. The champ "hits" a bouncing cross body, giving us some great visuals from behind her. Eve drops down and it's time for the champion to dance. Off to Kaitlyn who gets a suplex for two but Eve starts pounding on her to take over. Back to Beth who cleans house and knocks Layla off the apron so she can choke Kaitlyn in the corner. An over the shoulder body vice is escaped and an O'Connor Roll pins Beth at 4:17.

Rating: D. This was a longer version of a bad Divas match. I have no idea why the title exists anymore but I'd assume there will be a match thrown in on Summerslam with Beth challenging because that's all that ever happens anymore. Nothing to see here although I wouldn't complain about looking at Layla in those pink shorts again. To be fair, at least we now know that single named Divas are better than full named ones.

Video on Lesnar vs. HHH.

Big Show/Daniel Bryan vs. CM Punk/John Cena

It's not even 10pm yet and it's main event time? A BIG YES chant starts things off, as does Bryan vs. Cena. Punk makes a blind tag after Cena knocks Bryan down and Cena isn't pleased with it. Show wants in but Bryan wants the champ instead. Bryan gets taken to the mat and it's back to Cena. Show wants in again but gets a few NO'S. Cena gets some impressive height on a leapfrog and dropkicks Bryan down.

Punk tries to tag himself in but Cena avoids it in a somewhat funny bit. Off to Show who pounds Cena down and does it again with a shoulder as we take a break. Back with Show hitting a charge in the corner to Cena. Cena charges into a bearhug but Bryan tags himself in while cena is in the hold. The fans go NUTS for Bryan again. Bryan misses a running dropkick in the corner and it's off to Punk who hits his usual, culminating with a neckbreaker for two.

Back to Show who works on the ribs a bit, followed by the big chop against the ropes. The champ gets put in a bearhug but some elbows to the head break the hold. The comeback ends almost immediately due to a backdrop from Show, who then walks over the back of Punk. Punk tries to fight out of the corner but Bryan won't let him use the WMD. The reactions for Bryan are mind blowing.

Show is walking away as Bryan hits the NO Kicks. Punk kicks Bryan down and looks at Cena but he doesn't tag. Instead Punk uses Cena's finishing

sequence on Bryan but Cena tags himself in before the Shuffle. Cena hits the corner clothesline and bulldog, but Punk walks away with the title. Bryan tries to steal a pin but walks into the AA for the pin at 13:45.

Rating: B-. This was another fun match and there was some interesting psychology going on out there. When you have no idea who is going to do what in a match, that's always a good sign. Punk doing the Cena imitation at the end was great stuff and it would lead to a great match between the two of them on Sunday. Unfortunately Show is in it also, which brings it down a peg. Still though, good tag match here.

Post match Punk saves Cena from an attack by Show, but Cena won't shake Punk's hand.

In the back, Punk says Cena went into business for himself and wouldn't shake the champ's hand. On Sunday, Punk will teach Cena some respect.

Brock and Heyman are here.

Christian vs. Damien Sandow

Sandow goes after him to start but Christian takes over with a shot in the corner. A right hand to the head sets up the jumping back elbow off the middle rope for no cover. Sandow bails before the Killswitch can be set up and they heads to the floor, where Christian is rammed about seven times into the steps. Cue Brodus who is in a cast from the attack last week. The distraction lets Christian roll Sandow up for two. Sandow hits his neckbreaker for the clean win at 2:11.

Shawn is still looking around every corner before he finally runs into Brock. Shawn walks away and nothing is said. Brock looks....pleased?

Here are Heyman and Lesnar. HHH still isn't here due to flight delays and Lesnar buys that, because HHH wants the match very badly. Heyman is doing

all the talking here of course. This was supposed to be the contract signing in case you were confused. Heyman says this is a very personal fight for HHH and therefore, there's a letter of indemnification, which means if Lesnar hurts HHH, HHH has no legal recourse. You'll get an uncomfortable beating on Sunday rather than a wrestling match.

Now on to Shawn, who Lesnar confirms is in the arena. Heyman calls Shawn out as a surrogate for the Game but apparently Shawn is afraid. Heyman says that everyone in Texas is a coward and that brings Shawn out. Paul says he'll accept Shawn's signature in place of HHH's but Shawn won't sign. HHH finally arrives, taking his suit off as he comes to the ring. After a staredown, HHH signs. Neither member of DX has said anything yet. Lesnar signs and leaves.

We get some TOUTS because what would Raw be without them?

HBK isn't sure if HHH can win, but he'll be in the Game's corner.

Show says what happened means nothing for the match on Sunday. We cut over to two cars colliding and see Shawn and Heyman arguing from their respective drivers' seats. Lesnar runs up and the camera cuts out, but we can hear Shawn getting destroyed.

Back and we recap exactly what we just saw. The car window is destroyed and Shawn is missing. HHH comes up and rants to AJ.

Lesnar carries Shawn into the arena on his shoulders and throws him in the ring. Shawn gets an F5 and Brock puts him in the armbar that he broke HHH's arm with. HHH charges out and Heyman says stop or Lesnar will break the arm. Lesnar breaks the arm anyway and bails. HHH chases him off before tending to his life partner to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This was easily the best of the three hour Raw's so far and that's primarily the case for one reason: they spread things out

tonight instead of trying to have the same 8 or so people fill in three hours. There was a lot of variety tonight and that made the show MUCH better as a result. It wasn't a masterpiece or anything like that, but it covered everything on Summerslam and has me wanting to watch the show for the first time in weeks. Good stuff although the first hour was shaky.

Results

CM Punk b. Big Show via DQ when Daniel Bryan interfered

Ryback b. JTG – Shell Shock

R-Truth b. Heath Slater – Little Jimmy

Sin Cara b. Tensai – Tornado DDT

Dolph Ziggler b. The Miz and Chris Jericho – Zig Zag to Jericho

Layla/Kaitlyn b. Beth Phoenix/Eve Torres – Rollup to Phoenix

Damien Sandow b. Christian – Neckbreaker

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