

Smackdown – December 6, 2013: All Hail The New Buzzword

Smackdown

Date: December 6, 2013

Location: BOK Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole

We're closing in on TLC and a lot more of the card has been set in stone. The main stories coming out of Raw are the two handicap matches for TLC with Punk taking on the Shield and Bryan facing the Wyatts. Tonight it's Punk against a member of Shield to be announced tonight. Other than that we're likely to get talking from Orton and/or Cena. Let's get to it.

Theme song.

Here's Orton to open the show. He talks about becoming the champion of champions at TLC (still sounds better than Unified Champion) and shows us a clip from the end of Raw where Cena put him through a table. Even though Orton has about five injuries as a result, he'll still prove his greatness at TLC. He may not be the most likeable of characters but he's never liked any of us or John Cena. Orton does however revere Stephanie and HHH because they know what's best for business. Maybe he's taken some things they've done for him for granted so Orton would like to apologize.

Before he can get all the way through though, here's Daniel Bryan to point his fingers in the air a lot. Bryan says Orton needs to apologize for being a champion. In all of their title matches, Orton never once legitimately beat him. Just because Bryan has been targeted by the Wyatts, he hasn't forgotten about Orton or what Orton did to him. Daniel says that after TLC, he's going to be first in line for a title shot at the new champion. Tonight though he's looking at the face of the WWE and feels like putting a knee on that face. Orton says no but Bryan appeals to the crowd for a YES chant. Randy just stands there.

Big E. Langston vs. Fandango

Non-title and Sandow is on commentary. Langston's music seems to have been remixed. The champion throws Fandango around with ease and drives his shoulder into Fandango's ribs. Fandango is sent to the floor but Langston takes too much time going after him and gets clotheslined down. Back in and Fandango puts on a front facelock but shoves Fandango off like he's a cruiserweight. Some clotheslines set up the Warrior splash but Fandango comes back with a kick to the head and a knee to the jaw for two. Langston shrugs it off and hits the Big Ending for the pin at 2:35.

Post match Sandow gets in the ring to point at Langston's belt. Dang they're warming up for the Wrestlemania Point early this year.

We get the opening of Smackdown from WWE 2K14 via Youtube. Riveting stuff of course.

Cody Rhodes/Goldust vs. Ryback/Curtis Axel

Non-title. This is fallout from Main Event where Goldust had Ryback beaten but Curtis came in for the DQ. Cody starts with Ryback as JBL tries some portmanteaus of Ryback and Axel's names. Goldust quickly comes in and gets caught in a gorilla press for two. Ryback hits a middle rope splash and Axel drops a middle rope elbow for two as the announcers talk about Superstar of the Year. The former Heyman Guys take turns on Goldust until it's off to Axel for a chinlock.

Back up and Axel misses a dropkick and walks into a powerslam to give Goldie a breather. The not hot tag brings in Cody with a missile dropkick and the sunset flip out of the corner for two. Cody's moonsault press gets two and everything breaks down. Goldust knocks Ryback to the floor and Cody lays him out with a Disaster Kick off the announcers' table. Rhodes heads back inside and is immediately rolled up by Axel for the pin at 4:24.

Rating: D+. This didn't have time to go anywhere, but are we really jobbing one of the hottest acts in the company to Axel and Ryback? I was hoping this whole "champions lose to set up a title match" bit was taking a hiatus but apparently WWE was just luring me into a false sense of security.

Orton vs. Bryan is official for later.

Bad News Barrett tells us that we're all sheep who will follow each other to the slaughter.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Kofi Kingston

Del Rio jumps Kingston on the floor before the bell and sends him into the barricade. Kofi gets put in the armbreaker for some screaming as referees try to pull Del Rio off. No match, but haven't we seen Del Rio destroy Kofi after a loss before?

We recap Punk's issues with Shield leading up to the handicap match at TLC.

Shield promises to hurt Punk tonight but they're going to leave him healthy enough to make it to TLC. It's going to be Ambrose facing Punk tonight.

Dean Ambrose vs. CM Punk

Non-title because the US Title is nothing but a trophy again. Rollins and Reigns stay in the crowd to keep it one on one. Punk has bad ribs coming into this. Cole: "Punk didn't tape his ribs. Why put a target on his back?" Punk grabs a headlock to start but misses the high kick as Ambrose hangs onto the rope. Dean charges into a big boot of all things from Punk, setting up four straight legdrops for two for Punk.

Dean comes back with a knee to the ribs to take over and Cole completely ignores it to read more nominees. We hit the chinlock for a bit but Punk fights out and forearms Ambrose in the head. The GTS is countered with another shot to the ribs but Ambrose bails to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Dean stomping on the bad ribs like the smart heel that he is. Dean keeps taunting Punk as he peppers him with right hands before hooking a crossface chicken wing. Punk is down so Ambrose goes up, only to miss a top rope elbow drop. The springboard clothesline gets two for Punk and the running knee in the corner gets the same. Ambrose counters the swinging neckbreaker into a backslide which sets up a Fujiwara Armbar to stay on the arm.

Dean lets it go for some reason but counters another GTS attempt into a sleeper. Punk rolls through that into the Anaconda Vice but Dean quickly makes a rope. The Macho Elbow is broken up with a superplex for two and Dean goes back to the armbar. Punk gets into the ropes as well and finally scores with the high kick for two. The GTS, Bulldog Driver and another GTS are all countered and Punk is sent shoulder first into the post, giving Ambrose a rollup (with a handful of trunks) for two more. Not that it matters as another high kick sets up the GTS for the pin at 13:00.

Rating: B-. Good match, annoying booking. There are three Shield members to pick from. One is a champion, one is the golden boy and the other is Seth Rollins. Why in the world wasn't this Rollins doing a job for Punk? The match would have been entertaining and you keep the title looking strong at the same time. It's really not that complicated of an idea but WWE continues to mess it up. The match was what you would expect from Punk vs. Ambrose for 13 minutes, but why did Ambrose go after the arm so much when Punk had bad ribs coming in?

Renee Young (looking stunning in a red dress) is with Rey Mysterio in the back. She asks Rey which world title means more. Before Rey can answer,

the Real Americans (now in matching jackets with Cesaro's saying Toni and Swagger's saying Big Hoss) come up and asks to see Rey's papers.

Colter wants to know what's up with Mysterio's mask, if that's even his real name. Rey says he was born and raised in San Diego, California but is Mexican in his heart. Colter thinks Rey's title reign should be stricken from the record books but Rey thinks the Real Americans should be stricken from the building. Zeb throws out a challenge for a tag match with Rey getting a partner. Rey says si.

Natalya vs. Tamina Snuka

AJ is on commentary and talks about how she was the most interesting Diva in the match just by skipping around in a circle. Tamina gets caught by a quick clothesline for two but she easily shoves Natalya to the floor. Nattie gets rammed ribs first into the apron a few times before Tamina takes it back inside to crank on Natalya's arms.

Cole spends the match trying to make AJ into a heel by asking why she thinks she's above the title which just isn't working. Natalya gets two off a low dropkick but Tamina kicks out of the Sharpshooter. A Samoan drop puts Natalya down but she misses the Superfly Splash, giving Natalya the pin at 2:59.

Post match Natalya yells at AJ to no effect.

The Funkadactyls sell stuff and annoy me by existing.

Real Americans vs. Rey Mysterio/???

The mystery partner is Big Show, who apparently is just going to forget about the whole Authority ruining his life thing. Big Show chops Swagger in the corner and headbutts him down to start. Off to Rey for a top rope hurricanrana but Swager counters the sitout bulldog into a wheelbarrow

slam in a nice move. Cesaro gets in a neck snap across the top rope as Cole brings up Cesaro making Titus sick last week.

Mysterio fights out of the corner but Jack sends him out to the floor. Back in and the Real Americans take turns pounding on Rey until the sitout bulldog takes Swagger down. Double tags bring in Cesaro and Big Show so the giant can clean house. A spear gets two on Cesaro as Swagger makes the save, only to have Rey hit a quick 619 to Jack. Big Show chokeslams Cesaro, setting up a Rey splash from Big Show's shoulders for the pin at 4:20.

Rating: D+. Just a match here with a very short version of the tag team formula. Big Show being in the midcard again is a better fit for him, but I really hope this doesn't lead to a big man/little man tag team. The Real Americans continue to go from hot to cold like no one else on the roster.

We get a video package of various champions over the years, talking about what being champion meant to them. It's mainly a collection of promos from their careers with a few guys sitting down to talk about what the win means. Cool stuff.

HHH's sitdown interview talks about how great the unification match will be and guarantees that the King of Kings will crown the Champion of Champions.

Bad News Barrett has some good news for us. There will be a Champion of Champions after TLC, but that man will have a target on his chest. He'll be the hunted, making him the envy of the locker room, meaning he's doomed.

Daniel Bryan vs. Randy Orton

Non-title of course. They fight into the corner to start with neither

being able to get an advantage. Orton takes over with some right hands but Bryan fights out of the corner with punches of his own. Daniel goes after the arm as the announcers discuss Bryan joining the Wyatts. Orton comes back with the backbreaker for two and a clothesline puts Bryan down. Bryan scores with a dropkick to send Orton to the floor but Orton moves before the FLYING GOAT can launch.

We take a break and come back with Orton getting two off something we didn't see before putting on a chinlock. Bryan fights out and moonsaults over Randy to set up the running clothesline. A pair of running dropkicks in the corner set up some kicks to Orton's chest and a top rope hurricanrana gets two for Bryan. Daniel sends him to the floor and now the FLYING GOAT connects.

Back in and the missile dropkick drops Randy again and there are the YES kicks. The big one misses as is the new custom and Orton gets two off a powerslam. Orton connects with the Elevated DDT but Bryan counters the RK0 into a backslide for two. Now the big kick lays out Orton and the Swan Dive....doesn't launch because we've got Wyatts. The distraction lets Orton hit the RK0 for the pin at 8:44 shown of 12:14.

Rating: C+. Bryan continues his roll but it's clear his time on top is over. The ending keeps the Bryan vs. Wyatts feud going but doesn't do much for Daniel himself. It does however give Bryan some more momentum going into the PPV which is a good idea, but unfortunately it's at Bryan's expense.

Post match Bray pops up on screen and says tick tock over and over. He doesn't mean to keep haunting Bryan, but how many times does Bryan have to cross a burning bridge to know he doesn't have to fight this battle alone? Bryan knows what they are, but at TLC he'll learn what he himself is. Bray laughs to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. They're doing a decent job of building up to TLC but not everything was clicking tonight. Bad News Barrett is going to bomb

and it's going to bomb badly. There's just nothing there at the moment and the insults are as easy as you can think of. On the other hand, the handicap matches are going to be solid with Bryan vs. Wyatts getting more interesting every show. The world title match is looking more and more like a screwy finish every week, but at least we have a new buzz phrase with Champion of Champions.

Results

Big E. Langston b. Fandango – Big Ending

Curtis Axel/Ryback b. Cody Rhodes/Goldust – Rollup to Rhodes

CM Punk b. Dean Ambrose – GTS

Natalya b. Tamina Snuka – Pin after a missed Superfly Splash

Big Show/Rey Mysterio b. Real Americans – Splash to Swagger

Randy Orton b. Daniel Bryan – RK0

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NXT – December 4, 2013: NXT's Yellow Brick Road

NXT

Date: December 4, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Renee Young, Alex Riley

Tonight is one of their bigger shows as we have Dallas vs. Neville for the title, Natalya challenging Paige for the Women's Title and possible Rega vs. Cesaro or at least some development for the feud. NXT has been able to pull off the big shows quite well in the past so hopefully they keep that streak going tonight. Let's get to it.

Welcome Home.

Women's Title: Natalya vs. Paige

Paige is defending. This is a result of Natalya being all whiny on Total Divas and Paige accusing her of going Hollywood. We get a rough handshake before Paige takes her down with a headlock. Natalya grabs the leg to counter but Paige reverses into a wristlock. Natalya rolls through into one of her own but Paige breaks it up with a headbutt. They trade rollups for two each before Paige catches Natalya's kick to the ribs.

Natalya rolls through into a leg lock on the mat as the chain wrestling continues. Off to a headlock on the mat by Natalya but Paige gets to the ropes before the Sharpshooter goes on. Back from a break with Paige stomping away in the corner. Apparently Natalya tried to get in a cheap shot during another handshake during the break which set Paige off.

Paige puts on an abdominal stretch but is reversed into the same hold by Natalya. The blonde enhances it a bit by lifting Paige's leg up for more pressure. Saxton: "Natalya putting some more twerk on Paige." Paige fights out but gets leg dragged to the mat. Natalya stomps away but Paige fights up, only to have both girls try cross bodies at the same time to give us a stalemate.

Natalya is all fired up now and gets two off a snap suplex and a hard slam. Now it's Sharpshooter time but Paige crawls over to the corner and through Natalya's legs, sending Natalya head first into the buckle. Natalya goes for the legs again but Paige counters into the Paige Turner for the pin at 10:16 shown of 13:46.

Rating: B-. The fact that Paige isn't on Raw is becoming more and more of a crime every day. The girl is good looking, young and can go in the ring but for some reason (allegedly age, even though JoJo is a year and a half younger than Paige) she's stuck here while we get True Divas vs. Total Divas. The match was what we've come to expect from the Divas and the chain wrestling was a very nice treat.

Cesaro imitates Regal, telling him not to stick his nose into Cesaro's business. Kruger comes in and says Cesaro took him to a place he hadn't been in a long time. Cesaro: "A shower?" Kruger thinks he can be a Real American and Cesaro says he'll talk to Zeb if Kruger does him a favor. It's something related to Sami Zayn, who faces Kruger tonight.

Aiden English vs. ???

The jobber isn't named so we get the LET'S GO THIS GUY chant. Renee talks about all the organizations Aiden is a part of, including various mime and opera groups. I love little details like that which enhance a character far better than saying the same stuff over and over again. Imagine that: making stuff up to make a character better. Total squash with English throwing the jobber around and ending him with the Director's Cut at 1:18.

The fans chant for and receive an encore. The ring is filled with roses after English finishes in a nice touch.

Here's Cesaro in a suit to apologize to Byron Saxton for what happened last week. We get a clip of Regal saving Saxton last week before Saxton comes up onto the stage to talk to Cesaro. They shake hands and Cesaro invites Byron to do the Real Americans pledge but Saxton isn't too thrilled. Cesaro grabs him by the neck and slaps Saxton down before fixing his suit. No Regal.

Sami says last week was tough but if anyone is going to take the title from Bo, he's glad it's Adrian. Either way, he'll get it eventually. Leo Kruger jumps him from behind to set up their match.

Tyson Kidd vs. Leo Kruger

Didn't they say Kruger was facing Zayn tonight? Either way, this was set up when Kruger kicked Kidd's crutches out back in February. Tyson stomps him down in the corner to start and a belly to back suplex gets two. Renee enjoys looking at Kidd's toned body as Kruger takes him down into the corner and chokes with his boot before hitting a kind of Stunner onto the recently repaired knee. We take a break and come back with Kruger still on the knee and even putting on the Sharpshooter. Kidd is in trouble but Sami Zayn comes out for a distraction, allowing Kidd to get a rollup for the pin at 4:46 shown of 8:16.

Rating: D+. This needed a break? The match was nothing to see as it was supposed to be about revenge but I need more than a rollup for revenge. To be fair though this was hardly a feud and was really just tying up a loose end from February. It also sets up Zayn vs. Kruger even more so good booking but bad action.

Camacho and Hunico want the tag titles.

NXT Title: Bo Dallas vs. Adrian Neville

Neville quickly takes him down to start for two but Dallas bails to the corner. A cross body out of the corner gets the same and Dallas heads outside for another breather. Back in and Dallas takes off a buckle pad behind the referee's back before taking Neville's head off with a forearm for two. We hit the cravate from the champion before a corner clothesline and the bulldog gets two on Adrian.

Dallas drives some knees into the head for two more but misses a middle rope knee drop to give Neville a breather. Some running forearms to Dallas' head have him in trouble and a big shot sends Dallas out to the floor. A huge Asai Moonsault takes Dallas out but he kicks out at two. Adrian loads up the Red Arrow but Bo bails to the floor before it can launch. Instead it's a cross body to the outside to crush Dallas again

but only Neville beats the count back in for the countout at 7:38.

Rating: C. The match was decent while it lasted but the ending was just a way to extend the feud. To be fair though this match wasn't built up nearly as well as the Zayn vs. Dallas match so it's not as much of a drop. This could be leading to Dallas vs. Neville vs. Zayn which could be very entertaining if given a good amount of time. Not a great match here but it did its job.

The announcers talk about Dallas being champion for nearly 200 days to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This was a middle of the road show for NXT but it was still entertaining. It set up some stuff for the future which continues to be one of NXT's strong suits, but it didn't give us anything we really needed to see tonight. The fact that this was a show to get us to the next show and was still entertaining is a really good sign though. The future is bright for these guys.

Results

Paige b. Natalya – Paige Turner

Aiden English b. ??? – Director's Cut

Tyson Kidd b. Leo Kruger – Rollup

Adrian Neville b. Bo Dallas via countout

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A Bit More On AJ vs. Total Divas

Odds are most of you haven't seen every episode of Total Divas. If they make the Total Divas the faces in this, here's what they're going to have to overcome from the "reality" show. Nataya – The most insecure, whiny person of all time. Every episode so far has seen her complain about something, ranging from not getting on Wrestlemania to having to babysit the new girls to her love life. Some of it is indeed justified, but GET OVER IT already. For someone who was raised to be in the business and is clearly the best in ring worker from the show, she has a lot of things to whine about.

Trinity/Naomi – She's the second best in the ring and one of the more likeable girls on the show, but at the end of the day she's a cheerleader and little more. At the end of the day though she's loud and a bit annoying without enough personality to really stand out. She'd be ok to push on her own and that's about as good as I can say about her.

That more or less ends the good stuff to say about the cast.

Jojo – Uh....she exists. Seriously, she has no personality because she has no screen time on the show. She seems nice but there's nothing to her.

Eva Marie – The epitome of what's wrong with the Divas' division: she's annoying, she can't do a thing in the ring and

she's loud, meaning she's being pushed. The first few episodes focused on her bucking authority and lying to get to the top of the division. She looks good and the red hair helps a lot, but we've seen her as a lying manipulative witch who got engaged and then was flirting with Fandango to get a spot on the main roster later that night. Quite a hero.

Bella Twins – Yeah they're different on the show but on Raw they might as well be the same person. These two are EVIL on the show but the worst part about them is they seem very materialistic. For instance, we spent a full episode with the Bellas going to Cena's Tampa mansion and then Daniel Bryan's childhood home in Washington. While Cena's place could have been a stand-in for Wayne Manor, Bryan lived in a modest house. By modest, I mean a house that almost any sane person would be fine spending forty years of their lives in. Brie Bella's recommendation: TEAR IT TO THE GROUND because it's not big enough. You know, because everyone should be able to afford a multi-million dollar mansion with its own water slide. Brie is also the person moving to Arizona to spend more time with her dog.

Ariane/Cameron – This is the one that drives me the craziest. She's loud, self-obsessed, cares about her looks more than anything else, whines about EVERYTHING, and talks like a stupid 15 year old girl. For instance she wanted to get breast implants and spent the entire episode referring to them as her *cue stereotypical California valley girl accent* bewwwwwwwwwwwbies. Basically she's Laycool but FAR less charming.

These are the people that we might have to cheer against AJ. For the love of all things good and holy, please let that be

the case. It would be GLORIOUS.

Total Divas Viewers Rise 14%

The show is a hit. Let the Did You Knows begin!

Total Divas Is GLORIOUS

If you can, make sure to catch the replay of this. It's one of the funniest shows I've seen in years and is far more of a train wreck than the previews made it out to be. Find a copy of it and kick back for an hour because it's the funniest thing a wrestling fan has seen in a long time.

NXT – March 27, 2013: WWE Kills Another Show

NXT

Date: March 27, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, William Regal, Jim Ross

After last week's Wyatt Family heavy show, the odds are that we'll be

seeing something new this week. That's one of the good things about NXT: they keep things fresh every week while still keeping something from the previous week going. Granted it helped to have only an hour per week to fill in. Let's get to it.

We open with the I'm Coming Home video for Mania.

Welcome Home.

The idea tonight is a Road to Wrestlemania special. We even have The Fink doing the announcing. Nothing wrong with that.

Divas Title: Natalya vs. Kaitlyn

Kaitlyn grabs a go-behind to start but Natalya takes it to the mat to crank on the leg a bit. Tonight's main event is Orton vs. Sandow. That doesn't like like a very NXT kind of show. Natalya shoves her down but gets caught in a jackknife cover for two. We get the always cool looking bridge up into a backslide for two on Kaitlyn followed by a failed Sharpshooter attempt.

Natalya misses a discus lariat but settles for a snap suplex for two. Off to an abdominal stretch by Natalya and we take a break. Back with Kaitlyn reversing into a bad abdominal stretch of her own. After that gets reversed, Kaitlyn runs over Natalya and hits the fireman's carry gutbuster for two. Natalya comes back with a quick Sharpshooter out of nowhere but Kaitlyn powers out of it. Back up and the spear out of nowhere ends Natalya at around 7:00.

Rating: D. This match shows how big the difference is between the NXT Divas and the WWE Divas. This was the same plodding and boring Divas match I've seen a hundred times in the last few years on the main shows. There was nothing to see here at all and the match was several rungs below what the NXT girls usually do.

Alberto Del Rio says he's ready for Swagger and "the guy from Jumanji". Del Rio says he was born in Mexico but made in America.

Brodus Clay vs. El Local

Local is Ricardo Rodriguez under a mask. Brodus easily throws him around to start and even gets two off a jackknife cover. Local goes after the knee in a smart move but can only get two. Brodus has enough of the selling and runs over Local before suplexing him down. A splash in the corner sets up a regular splash for the pin at 2:00. Literally a squash but Local got in a few shots.

The Raw ReBout is about Punk and Undertaker, which is short in the first place so you know the recap is quick.

Shield says they'll be fighting and winning for justice on Wrestlemania Sunday. They talk about starting a new revolution after winning.

Cena talks about Wrestlemania and how big of a deal it is. Last year he had to win but failed, so now the pressure is on Rock. It's Rock's first title defense (second but whatever) and it might be the first time that Rock fails at something in his life. In about two minutes here, Cena said April 7 eight times.

We go to the announcers and Kassius Ohno appears and destroys Regal.

Randy Orton vs. Damien Sandow

Orton grabs a headlock to start but Sandow grabs one of his own. A back elbow to the face puts Sandow down and there's a stomp to the face. Damien comes back with some shots in the corner but Orton hits the Thesz Press to take over again. Sandow bails to the floor and gets taken down by a clothesline as we take a break. Back with Orton stomping away but Damien comes back with a quick elbow and some stomps of his own.

The Elevated DDT is countered and we head to the floor where Orton is sent into the steps. Off to the chinlock back inside followed by the Russian legsweep and the Wind-Up Elbow for two. Orton fights back with right hands and a superplex for a delayed two. The powerslam puts Damien down but he gets a boot up in the corner followed by a neckbreaker for two. Randy comes right back with the Elevated DDT and the RKO finishes at 9:30 shown of 12:00.

Rating: C-. This was the same dull match you would see between these two at any given Raw or Smackdown or even a house show. Sandow got in his usual stuff and Orton shrugged it off as you would expect it to. Nothing to see here but I guess for an NXT main event this was ok enough.

Overall Rating: D. Bad to boring matches, a single bit of angle advancement, and a bunch of talk about Wrestlemania which we get on Raw and Smackdown every single week. This is FAR less interesting than what we get during the regular shows and for once, this show was a chore to sit through. Bad show this week and that's because it was full of the main roster guys.

Results

Kaitlyn b. Natalya – Spear

Brodus Clay b. El Local – Splash

Randy Orton b. Damien Sandow – RKO

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NXT – July 26, 2012: Best Divas Match In Months

NXT

Date: July 25, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: William Regal, Byron Saxton

We're back with the sixth week of NXT and it barely feels that long at all. We've got some stories coming together and tonight it's Cesaro vs. Riley which should be a decent match. It really is remarkable how much better this show is with just some minor adjustments to it, like giving us stories and matches consisting of more than about ten people. Let's get to it.

The new intro for WWE programming is shorter than the old one. It says WWE: Then, Now, Forever. I'm not sure I like it better than the old one but it's fine.

Bo Dallas/Derrick Bateman vs. Johnny Curtis/Michael McGillicutty

Regal says Michael and Johnny could be one of the best tag teams ever. I don't often say this, but I think Regal may be wrong. Also, why is WWE so obsessed with having Bateman vs. Curtis? Apparently Cena says that Bateman is the strongest pound for pound guy in the company. That's not something I would have guessed. Fast paced start with Bateman/Dallas clearing the ring but Dallas gets caught on the floor.

Back inside and McGillicutty hooks a chinlock on Dallas but it doesn't last long. Dallas grabs a sunset flip but Curtis had gotten a blind tag and breaks it up. Dallas escapes a hold from Curtis and there's the tag to Bateman to no reaction. A flapjack puts Curtis down and a flip neckbreaker gets two. McGillicutty cheap shots Bateman, allowing Curtis

to hit a Falcon's Arrow for the pin at 4:06.

Rating: C. For a quick tag match which didn't mean much of anything, this wasn't bad at all. They were moving very fast here and even though the matchup that is being pushed here in the form of Bateman vs. Curtis is played out, the addition of two extra people helped a lot. McGillicutty could be something awesome, but his name is crippling him.

Antonio Cesaro vs. Alex Riley

JR has jumped in on commentary. Riley gets his usual good reaction, and since Cena isn't here to be annoyed because of something we never would know about if not for dirt sheets, Riley can actually have a match. Cesaro takes him down with amateur stuff to start but Riley speeds things up and hits a dropkick for two. Cesaro hot shots him and Riley is in trouble again. The crowd got very quiet all of a sudden.

Regal gets very excited about an abdominal stretch but Riley counters into a rollup for two. Antonio muscles him down and hits a big boot in the corner for two. A delayed gutwrench suplex gets two. Back to the abdominal stretch but Cesaro hooks his leg over Riley's head on top of it. It looks great but Riley counters in about 10 seconds. Riley pounds away with right hands and some clotheslines. A spinebuster puts Cesaro down but Aksana pops up on the apron. Cesaro hits a kind of spear/side slam and the Gotch Style Neutralizer (Regal called it that) gets the pin at 5:12. It's a falling forward cradle piledriver.

Rating: C-. This was an extended squash and in that regard it worked well. If the recent reports about Riley are true, that's another name on the list of guys that have a bunch of potential who are held down because of some stupid thing that happened backstage that only a handful of people think means anything. Cesaro looks good but for some reason he can't get on TV at all. I'm sure it's because he "doesn't know how to work" or something like that.

Kassius Onoo says that he brings danger to the table because he can fly, he can use holds and he can hit you. He closes it out with this: "My name is Kassius. I hurt people." I like that.

Drew McIntyre, who faces Seth Rollins tonight, says tonight the talking about Rollins ends.

Natalya vs. Sofia Cortez

Natalya quickly takes her to the mat but gets caught in a headscissors. They get back to their feet but Cortez armdrags her down again. Nattie comes back with a discus lariat and spansks Cortez a bit. Natalya hooks a suplex and a cool looking pinning combination for two. O'Connor Roll gets two for Natayla and Cortez kicks her out of the ring on the kickout. Natalya is fine but sits on the floor for the countout at 3:10. She shouted at the referee to count because she wasn't getting back in.

Rating: C+. I know I bash the Divas a lot, but this was a decent little match. They were moving out there and they never looked like they were trying to follow a list of moves out there. What I mean by that is it looked natural out there, which is a big flaw in most Divas matches today. Good stuff here and I don't remember the last time I said that about the Divas.

Natalya runs back into the ring and beats Cortez down, putting her in the Sharpshooter.

Video on Raw 1000. That really was a fun show.

The Ascension vs. Dante Dash/Garrett Dylan

Dash and O'Brien start but O'Brien charges through him and blasts Dylan off the apron. Kameron comes in and Ascension drops rapid fire elbows on Dash. Down goes Dylan off the apron again and the Downcast (jawbreaker

out of a flapjack) gets the pin on Dash at 1:46.

Big E. Langston is still coming and he debuts next week.

Seth Rollins vs. Drew McIntyre

I miss the full Broken Dreams entrance. That thing was awesome. Rollins speeds things up to start and dropkicks Drew down. Another dropkick puts McIntyre on the floor and a dive takes Drew down again. Back with a double clothesline putting both guys down. Rollins nips up and hits an enziguri to take Drew down. They head to the corner but Rollins' charge hits the middle buckle. The advantage doesn't last long as Rollins rolls Drew up for two and clotheslines him down for the same. A Phoenix Splash (moonsault into a 450) misses and Drew kicks Seth's head off. Futureshock gets the clean pin at 5:30 shown of 9:00.

Rating: C-. This was basically a squash with a surprise ending. Rollins looked good here with him flying all over the place and hitting almost everything he tried. The ending is a bit questionable but it gives McIntyre a bit of credibility when he loses on this show more often. That's probably the right move and the match wasn't awful or anything.

Overall Rating: B-. That seems to be the consistent grade for this show. There were some good matches here and at the end we had the promise of something major being announced next week. I have a feeling I know what that is and that'll make things a lot more interesting around here. The main event wasn't much but it did its job well enough. Another good show here.

Results

Michael McGillicutty/Johnny Curtis b. Derrick Bateman/Bo Dallas –
Falcon's Arrow to Bateman

Antonio Cesaro b. Alex Riley – Gotch Style Neutralizer

Sofia Cortez b. Natalya via countout

The Ascension b. Dante Dash/Garrett Dylan – Downcash to Dash

Drew McIntyre b. Seth Rollins – Futureshock

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