

205 Live – January 3, 2017: A Bad Gut Feeling

205 Live

Date: January 3, 2017

Location: Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Auditorium, Jacksonville, Florida

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Corey Graves, Austin Aries

I'm starting to get attached to this show and a lot of that is due to Neville. This heel character has been outstanding so far and it's easily the best thing he's done so far in WWE. It needs to lead to a Cruiserweight Title win over Rich Swann at the Rumble but I have a feeling they'll keep it on Rich for the sake of...I'm not sure really. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of Neville vs. Swann last week with the champ losing a non-title match.

Opening sequence.

Swann is injured so tonight it's TJ Perkins filling in against Neville.

Tajiri vs. Sean Maluta

Tajiri still looks so strange without the goatee. Maluta grabs a headlock to start and hits a good looking headbutt. For some reason Maluta charges into the corner, earning himself a Tarantula. Some VERY hard kicks to the head drop Maluta and the handspring elbow puts him down again. The Buzzsaw kick ends Maluta at 2:52. This was basically saying "Hey, remember Tajiri? Here he is again."

Post match here's Brian Kendrick to welcome Tajiri back. He's so glad to see someone who takes this serious and thinks they can take this show over. They shake hands but Tajiri mists him. Aries: "That's not kale juice!"

Neville is tired of how he's been treated and all the discrimination against him over his accent and looks.

Video on Tony Nese.

Jack Gallagher vs. Tony Nese

Before the match we get a recap of last week's Gentleman's Duel and all its glory. Nese has Gulak in his corner. Gallagher spins out of a wristlock and bounces out of a headscissors. We get the headstand in the corner with Jack jumping out because he's that awesome. Not that it matters though as Ariya Daivari comes in for the DQ at 2:25. Daivari destroys Gallagher post match.

Cedric Alexander wants Alicia Fox to be a little more careful. Kissing ensues.

Mustafa Ali vs. Noam Dar

Ali grabs a hammerlock to start and follows with a good looking spinwheel kick to the jaw to send Dar outside. As they come back in, Dar scores with a dropkick to the side of the head. It's time to start in on the arm as the fans are way quieter than they probably should be for a cruiserweight match. We hit an armbar with a knee on Ali's face until he grabs a tornado DDT to put both guys down. A neckbreaker keeps Dar in trouble until Ali flips right into a Fujiwara armbar. That's reversed into a crucifix, followed by a kick to the face and that sweet inverted 450 for the pin on Dar at 6:20.

Rating: C+. This was a snappy little match and that's the kind of thing this show needs. Well, aside from a better timeslot and more personalities but you get the idea. Making Ali a face is an interesting idea and I'm glad they're doing it instead of just going with the simple idea. Not a bad match here and it worked fine.

Dar says he wants Fox because she's always welcome in his corner.

Video on Akira Tozawa.

Neville vs. TJ Perkins

Neville now has the angry, slower music. Before the match, TJ says he's going to deal with this bully with a punch to the face. Perkins won't shake hands either and it seems to work fine here as a headscissors puts Neville down. A Rey Mysterio wheelbarrow bulldog and another headscissors sends a frustrated Neville to the floor.

Back in and Neville goes with the classic KICK HIM IN THE HEAD style, including a missile dropkick for two. That means a chinlock and for once it's fine to go to a replay here. The middle rope Phoenix splash misses though and TJ can speed things up to take over for the first time in a good while. A corkscrew plancha and a high crossbody give TJ two. The super hurricanrana gets the same as the

fans are starting to get into this. Perkins kicks him down again but gets crotched on the top. One heck of a superplex puts TJ away at 11:34.

Rating: B-. I love Neville's psychology here as it doesn't make sense to have him do all the flips that are going to pop the crowd. A superplex isn't a huge move but it looks good enough to feel devastating. I'm still digging the heck out of the character and this was the kind of victory that Neville needs: beating the top names and being just a few steps ahead of them no matter what.

Overall Rating: C+. I'm liking this show quite a bit more lately now that they've actually figured out a formula instead of just going all over the place with whatever they feel like doing at the moment. This was a good way to help build Neville into the monster heel who should take the title soon enough, though again I think it's going to be Swann retaining on gut instinct alone.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book, KB's Complete Monday Nitro and Thunder Reviews Volume V at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01MQKDV50>

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

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

**205 Live – December 27,
2016: I Think They're On To**

Something

205 Live

Date: December 27, 2016

Location: Allstate Arena, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Austin Aries, Corey Graves, Mauro Ranallo

We're starting to get in a groove around here and that's the best thing that can happen for a show that has only been around about a month. Tonight's big match is a non-title showdown (which WWE has gone out of its way to make seem like a title match) between Rich Swann and Neville, the latter of whom is likely to become #1 contender should he win. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of Neville's heel turn and subsequent path of rage.

Opening sequence.

Cedric Alexander vs. Tony Nese

Alicia Fox and Drew Gulak are the seconds. Nese powers him up to start but Alexander moonsaults into a headscissors, followed by a dropkick to the chicklets (as Mauro called them). A big throw puts Cedric on the floor and Tony's missile dropkick gets two back inside. The showing off continues as Nese drops down and nips up to avoid a clothesline, leaving Alicia to play cheerleader.

We hit a chinlock for a bit before Cedric speeds things up with a Tajiri handspring elbow into a kick to the head. That means it's time for Gulak and Fox to get into the required argument, capped off by Drew hitting the ground and claiming Alicia shoved him (she never touched him). The referee actually ejects her, allowing Nese to palm strike Cedric for the pin at 6:04.

Rating: C. Alexander is one of those guys who has grown on me so much since he's been in WWE. The twenty pound weight loss has done him a lot of good, though some of that might have to do with getting away from Ring of Honor and the really stupid Veda Scott story. Nese is being built up in a nice way too, which is what we need around this show.

Noam Dar brings some mistletoe for Alicia, earning himself a slap to the face. Dar tries again and gets slapped a second time, though he

doesn't seem to mind.

Earlier today Renee Young sat down with Neville, who doesn't like being left out of the Cruiserweight Classic. WWE and Americans in general are intimidated by his greatness. When he was in Japan, Swann was his young boy and Neville isn't putting up with him here. Renee can't understand what he says at the end and that's enough of this interview.

Mustafa Ali vs. John Yurnet

Yurnet is better known as Mr. 450 and has been on NXT a few times. John seems to get injured early on with his right leg looking immobile in a hurry. He's willing to keep going though and tries a sunset flip but the referee insists on checking it out. Ali hits a quick reverse DDT and finishes with an inverted 450 at 2:12. The finisher looked cool but it's clear that Yurnet wasn't wrestling at 100% here.

Post match Mustafa says he's from Chicago and isn't going to let all the prejudice against him define things. All he's going to do is keep racking up wins and let those speak for themselves. Simple, yet effective.

Video on Ariya Daivari, who is certainly a scoundrel and thinks nothing of Jack Gallagher.

It's time for the gentleman's duel, which I don't think counts as a match. Gallagher comes out in a suit while Daivari is wearing gear. There's a table with some flowers and various weapons in the ring. Gallagher lists off some weapons, almost all of which can be found in a game of Clue, plus an umbrella and a teapot. Daivari picks the lead pipe but Gallagher will fight with an umbrella.

We're not ready to go yet as Jack insists on standing back to back and taking five paces. Daivari tries to cheat but Gallagher knows it's coming and proceeds to use the umbrella for a low blow and a leg trip. Gallagher shrugs off a beating and hits his running corner dropkick to send Daivari running. If Daivari had ANY personality, this would be really entertaining. As it is, it's just something else to add to the highlight reel for when Gallagher becomes a star.

Tajiri is back next week.

Rich Swann vs. Neville

Non-title and Swann doesn't even dance when he gets to the ring.

Rich goes right after him to start and takes the fight to the floor for a right hand to Neville's jaw. A dropkick frustrates Neville as we hear about Swann being Neville's young boy in Japan. Neville gets fired up with a forearm to the face and sends Swann into the barricade a few times to really take over.

A hard ram sends Swann's bad back into the LED apron and Neville follows by mostly missing a big flip dive. Back in and we hit a chinlock, followed by a standing shooting star to make the back even worse. A missile dropkick gets two and Neville is just toying with him. The USA chant only seems to get on Neville's nerves until a hurricanrana sends him outside.

Swann follows him out with a Phoenix splash of all things and a tiger bomb gets two. One heck of a superkick knocks Neville out on his feet and Swann's Fantastic Voyage gets a very close two. A loud kick to the head gets a third straight two but Swann gets crotched on top. One heck of a superplex knocks Swann silly for the pin at 13:55.

Rating: B. I liked this more than I thought I would and the ending was the right way to go. Swann's back was messed up and his last run was all built on adrenaline, meaning it made sense for a big shot, especially one on the back, to be enough to cut him off for good. This also sets up the rematch with the title on the line and that's going to be one heck of a fight, especially if it makes pay per view.

Post match Neville kicks him in the head and hammers away. He finally leaves and demands his crown to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This show is starting to find its groove and if I just have to sit through a fifteen minute match between people I care about week after week, so be it. If you can tweak the formula just enough and keep people like Lince Dorado off the show, everything is going to get a lot better in a hurry. The show isn't quite there yet but it's gone from a task to get through to something I'm enjoying and that's a very good sign going forward.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book, KB's Complete Monday Nitro and Thunder Reviews Volume V at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01MQKDV50>

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

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

Monday Night Raw – December 26, 2016: I Love It When They Troll Us

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 26, 2016

Location: Allstate Arena, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

It's the city that keeps giving even after the holidays. We're closing out the Monday Night Raw year in Chicago and unfortunately that doesn't mean the Slammy Awards. With just under five weeks to go until the Royal Rumble, the big story is Braun Strowman invading the main event. That could result in some very interesting reactions from the Chicago crowd. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at Strowman's destruction last week.

Opening sequence.

Here's Stephanie McMahon to open things up. She wishes us all happy holidays and says Mick Foley is off tonight due to his extreme work schedule as of late (possibly due to hip surgery). The fans cut her off with a CM Punk chant and she actually acknowledges it by saying if the fans could last two minutes and fifteen seconds, they would last a minute longer than Punk.

Cue Seth Rollins to say he wants HHH tonight but Stephanie says she isn't her husband's keeper. Rollins begs HHH to come down but says

he'll settle for Strowman. This brings out Roman Reigns to say he wants Strowman too. Since both guys are wanting to fight Strowman, Reigns thinks they should go back there and drag him out here for a Shield style beating.

Stephanie is really fired up by the idea and even suggests that Dean Ambrose could be here. She's just kidding though because the Chicago fans are that easily manipulated. Instead, tonight we'll have Seth vs. Strowman and Reigns vs. an opponent of Stephanie's choosing.

Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Cesaro/Sheamus

New Day is challenging with Big E. on the floor. Cesaro gets beaten down in a hurry with double middle rope elbows and a legdrop for two each. Woods is thrown out to the floor and comes up grabbing his knee as we take a break. Back with Woods diving through the ropes into a tornado DDT to plant Cesaro on the floor.

The hot tag brings Kofi in for the flip dive and a slightly botched counter into the SOS for two on Sheamus. Everything breaks down and Woods' top rope elbow gets two on Sheamus with Cesaro making the save. The Swing goes on but Big E. gets on the apron for a distraction. That earns Kofi a gorilla press down onto the big man and a blind tag sets up the Brogue Kick to retain the titles at 10:11.

Rating: C+. This was the required rematch so Cesaro and Sheamus can move on to someone else. New Day is in the Edge and Christian position of having long since outgrown the tag division so it's time to move on to a new endeavor. Unfortunately I'm not sure what that's going to be but a strong Kofi singles run could be interesting.

Video on Brock Lesnar. Goldberg is back next week.

Strowman runs into Chris Jericho and Kevin Owens, who seem to have been looking for him. Owens thinks that Strowman is up next for the title after Reigns is dispatched so Strowman should focus on the Seth and Roman. Apparently Rollins and Reigns have been talking smack about Strowman and said his punches are like being hit with a pillow. Strowman doesn't buy the rumors and seems to want to

demolish the two of them.

Golden Truth is in the back talking about Scrooge when Bayley comes up to give Goldust a Bayley Bear dressed like Dusty Rhodes. Karl Anderson and Luke Gallows come in and RIP THE BEAR'S HEAD OFF.

Nia Jax vs. Scarlet

Scarlet is a jobber wearing a Sasha shirt so the destruction is over in 53 seconds off a Samoan drop.

Nia tells Scarlet to choose a better role model and drops the big leg.

Charlotte shakes Stephanie's hand when Owens and Jericho come in to lodge an official complaint. Jericho doesn't bring spiders or being in shark cages. Is Foley going to put the spiders in the cage? It might give Jericho acne-arachna-phobia! They want to be face Reigns for the US Title tonight as punishment for Foley. Stephanie says she hates bosses who use their authority to advance some personal agenda (HAHA STEPHANIE IS SO IRONIC AND FUNNY!) so she gives Owens the title shot. Jericho doesn't seem pleased but goes along with it.

Here's Bayley for a chat. She's so happy to be in Chicago because she's the new #1 contender. This brings out Charlotte to show us the clip from last week where her shoulder was up at two. Since there was a problem, Stephanie has agreed to expunge the match from the record books. However, since Charlotte is feeling charitable, she'll let Bayley have another chance to win right now. Oh and there's going to be a guest referee: Dana Brooke.

Charlotte vs. Bayley

Dana won't let Bayley go into the corner so Charlotte starts in with the chops. Bayley takes over and gets dragged off so Dana gets suplexed. Another referee runs in as Charlotte takes over in the corner with more chops. Bayley shrugs it off and grabs the Bayley to Belly but Dana pulls the referee out. Back in and Charlotte grabs a rollup with feet on the ropes, allowing Dana to count the pin at 3:39.

Rating: D. Just an angle here instead of a match and that's fine.

I'm not sure how we get to Bayley's title match without Foley around, though of course there's a chance that Stephanie will be all nice and happy and give Bayley the match anyway. Bayley is going to get over huge when she wins the title, if she isn't there already.

Stephanie yells at Braun, who wants Sami Zayn in a last man standing match next week. The boss agrees, as long as Seth gets the same beating Sami will get.

We look back at Neville's speech from last week, which is one of my favorite moments in a long time. He's nailing the heel character at the moment and I'm hoping he annihilates Swann to take the title.

TJ Perkins vs. Neville

Austin Aries replaces Saxton on commentary. Neville won't shake hands (as he shouldn't) so Perkins knees Neville in the chest for two early on. A spinning kick sends Neville outside and a high crossbody gets two back inside. An AUSTIN ARIES chant starts up as Neville kicks TJ in the head to send him to the floor. Back in and we hit the chinlock for a bit before a double chickenwing into double knees to the chest gives TJ two. The Detonation Kick looks to set up the kneebar but Neville reverses into a rollup and grabs the tights for the pin at 4:58.

Rating: C-. Well that didn't work quite as well as it had before. Neville really shouldn't be giving up that much offense and it's really annoying to see them possibly screwing up a great character this fast. I loved watching Neville in that tag match last week because he was eight steps ahead of everyone else but here he was just slightly better, which isn't how to make the character work that well.

Neville yells about people making fun of his accent and face not being appropriate for Monday Night Raw. It's American ignorance and arrogance that prevents them from appreciating him. Tomorrow night, Neville wants Rich Swann.

We look back at Enzo Amore getting destroyed by Jinder Mahal and Rusev at sensitivity training.

Here are Enzo and Cass with the former in a wheelchair (and of course it's leopard skin). Enzo says the sensitivity class isn't for him because he's already gotten a degree in being a certified G (which means you can teach that). We get a long rant from Enzo about how his cup runeth over and he's spilled his Haterade. Since he's done that, the big man is hitting cleanup. Cass calls out Rusev but gets someone a bonus with Jinder Mahal. Enzo pops out of the chair and pulls Mahal off the apron, leaving Cass to clear the ring. The injured Enzo is thrown into Mahal and Cass stands very tall.

Shining Stars vs. Bo Dallas/Darren Young

This is over an incident on Facebook Live earlier today. And never mind as it's Strowman time...and he's got a Christmas tree. The beatdown is on and it's officially a no contest at 1:04 (though it should be a DQ as he hit Dallas first).

Strowman destroys everyone, including Bob Backlund (though just by proxy).

Seth Rollins vs. Braun Strowman

Strowman throws him into the corner to start but Seth gets in a suicide dive on the floor. Back in and the enziguri and springboard knee to the head stagger the monster. A second knee has him even more wobbled but he pulls Seth out of the air on the third attempt. Seth actually drops him with a Blockbuster but the Pedigree is countered with a backdrop over the top. Braun runs him over again...and here's Sami through the crowd to jump Strowman for the DQ at 3:34.

Rating: C. I would have had Strowman go over clean here but I can live with what they did. Rollins shouldn't be squashed but he sold quite a bit for the monster, which is the best thing they could have done without having him get destroyed. Strowman didn't lose though and that helps so much.

Post match Braun chases Sami to the back, leaving Rollins to take the Codebreaker from an invading Jericho.

Owens praises his best friend for getting rid of Rollins, leaving it

one on one tonight.

Emmalina says the wait will be worth it but she's still premiering soon.

Golden Truth vs. Anderson and Gallows

Goldust takes Anderson down in the corner to start but Gallows comes in to start the beating. Truth fights up and brings Goldust back in as everything breaks down. We actually get some fire from Goldust, who throws Anderson into the barricade. They head inside though and it's Karl getting in a rollup for the pin at 3:34.

Rating: D-. Goldust can't even get revenge for someone ripping his dad's head off a teddy bear? I mean, they could have NOT BOOKED IT THAT WAY but how else would we get the third rollup finish of the night without it? Anderson and Gallows going after the belts is a good idea, albeit one we've seen for months now.

Rich Swann vs. Ariya Daivari

Non-title. Daivari takes him down to start but misses the early frog splash attempt. That means a double stomp to the back and the spinning kick to Daivari's head for the pin at 1:22.

Post match Swann agrees to face Neville, who jumps the champ from behind.

Daivari calls Jack Gallagher a scoundrel so of course Gallagher is next to him. Jack challenges Daivari to a duel, SLAPS HIM WITH A GLOVE, and corrects Daviari's American history by saying this makes Gallagher more like Aaron Burr.

Video on Lesnar vs. Goldberg from Survivor Series. I still don't know why I would want to see them fight a third time.

US Title: Kevin Owens vs. Roman Reigns

Reigns is defending. Owens hides in the corner to start and gets knocked to the floor with a right hand. Back in and Owens starts to slowly hammer away but Reigns clotheslines him down. Cue Jericho for a distraction so Owens can score with a DDT. The backplash gets two and we take an early break.

Back with Owens getting two off the Cannonball and we hit the chinlock. Owens: "ASK HIM!" Reigns fights up and gets in the apron kick, only to get caught with a Backstabber for two. It's too early for the Pop Up Powerbomb though so Reigns grabs the sitout powerbomb for two.

The Superman Punch misses but the second attempt connects for two on Owens. Jericho offers a distraction though and Owens gets in a Codebreaker for two. This brings out Rollins to Pedigree Jericho on the floor but Owens superkicks Seth down. Back in and the spear ends Owens at 16:21.

Rating: C-. I'm actually starting to get a kick out of WWE trolling the fans so hard. They just had the World Champion get pinned as close to clean as a World Champion is going to get pinned by Reigns again and they did it in Chicago no less. As much as I can't stand the booking, there's something amazing about how much WWE is willing to screw the fans over for their own ambitions.

Post match Owens gets Pedigreed and Jericho gets speared to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This wasn't a horrible show but you could tell they weren't putting in much of an effort on the tail end of a holiday weekend. The ending was rather annoying but it's balanced out by Strowman being this unstoppable monster. I'm not sure where he's going next but he's already an entertaining part of the show. That being said, there's really nothing that has me interested at the moment, though maybe that's due to the end of the year and the rather awful main event scene.

Results

Cesaro/Sheamus b. New Day – Brogue Kick to Kingston

Nia Jax b. Scarlet – Samoan drop

Charlotte b. Bayley – Rollup with feet on the ropes

Neville b. TJ Perkins – Rollup with a handful of tights

Shining Stars vs. Bo Dallas/Darren Young went to a no contest when Braun Strowman interfered

Braun Strowman b. Seth Rollins via DQ when Sami Zayn interfered
Anderson and Gallows b. Golden Truth – Rollup to Goldust
Rich Swann b. Ariya Daivari – Kick to the head
Roman Reigns b. Kevin Owens – Spear

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book, KB's Complete Monday Nitro and Thunder Reviews Volume V at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01M0KDV50>

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

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

New Column: 12 Wrestling Things of Christmas

I think the title gives it away and no I'm not singing, thank goodness.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-12-wrestling-things-christmas/>

205 Live – December 20, 2016: The Night of Neville

205 Live

Date: December 20, 2016

Location: Joe Louis Arena, Detroit, Michigan

Commentators: Austin Aries, Mauro Ranallo, Corey Graves

We've actually got a hot story around here as Neville returned on Sunday and turned full on heel for the first time in his WWE career. This included beating up Cruiserweight Champion Rich Swann, which set up a tag match on tonight's show. Neville will team with Brian Kendrick to face Swann and TJ Perkins. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Sunday's title match and Neville's turn, including the tag match being set up last night on Raw.

Opening sequence.

Ariya Daivari vs. Lince Dorado

Dorado flips around a lot with Aries accurately saying it's wasting energy. Daivari grabs a neckbreaker for two and drives a running knee into the back. We hit the chinlock as this isn't the most interesting match so far. Dorado gets up and hits a Tajiri handspring into a Stunner, sending Daivari outside for a big flip dive. A springboard hurricanrana puts Daivari down but Dorado gets shoved off the top, setting up a frog splash to give Ariya the pin at 5:37.

Rating: D+. As interested as I am in the main event tag (which has a limit), this is a good example of everything wrong with the division. There's almost no interest in the match, the wrestling was nothing all that special and Daivari is a rather dull character. Dorado is the most generic luchador in a long time and it doesn't make for a strong match as a result.

Daivari says Jack Gallagher is a scoundrel.

Kendrick comes up to Neville in the back but Neville wants nothing to do with him until they're out in the ring.

Tajiri is coming.

Cedric Alexander vs. Drew Gulak

Speaking of uninteresting characters. Cedric, with Alicia Fox in his corner, works on Gulak's arm to start and knees him in the face for good measure. Gulak sends him throat first into the middle rope and does something like a curb stomp with the shin instead of the foot. A chinlock doesn't last long and it's Cedric coming back with his springboard clothesline for two.

In a pretty scary bump, Alexander grabs a vertical suplex and takes Gulak over the top for a crash to the floor. They're lucky they landed right there. Gulak shoves Cedric into Fox and we've got a bad ankle. Cue Noam Dar to carry Fox off, leaving Cedric to hit the Lumbar Check for the pin at 5:35.

Rating: C. The wrestling was better here and both guys were trying but Gulak just isn't interesting in the slightest. Cedric has the talent and there's something there with the Fox story but it's still fairly low level by comparison to a few of the others in the division. Alexander could make the jump up the division ladder but he's going to need a stronger story.

Cedric runs off to find Fox. Gulak blames Fox for the loss because women do not belong on 205 Live.

Video on Jack Gallagher.

Fox is getting her ankle iced and thanks Dar for having her back.

Neville/Brian Kendrick vs. TJ Perkins/Rich Swann

Neville blasts Swann in the face to start and the aggression is really flowing early on. Swann gives a look that suggests he can't handle this as the announcers talk about how awesome Neville has been since Roadblock. You know, the show TWO DAYS AGO. Kendrick smiles as Neville forearms Rich in the corner but a forearm allows a blind tag to Perkins.

TJ actually gets in some offense before Kendrick comes in, stares at Neville, and chokes on the mat. A good looking spinning kick to the face puts Kendrick down, followed by a slingshot hilo for two. There's an interesting story here with Neville being the scariest thing in the match and Kendrick being the only one the good guys can beat.

The still banged up Swann tags himself in and manages a few clotheslines on Kendrick. A Flatliner cuts Swann off again though and Neville deadlifts him into a German suplex for two. Some weak

rights and lefts have little effect on Neville but a superkick gives the champ a near fall (though the replay shows the lack of contact). Neville pops right back up and clotheslines Swann inside out but the champ gets over for the hot tag. Perkins fires away on Perkins and the Detonation Kick sets up the kneebar. It's Neville making another save but Swann tags himself in and kicks Neville in the head. A double superkick gets two on Kendrick as everything breaks down. Perkins and Neville wind up on the floor, leaving Sliced Bread #2 to set up the Captain's Hook on Rich. This time it's Perkins making a save, leaving Neville to kick Swann in the head and talk a lot of trash. TJ tags himself back in and dives into an enziguri, setting up the Red Arrow for the pin at 14:09.

Rating: B. The wrestling was good here but this was completely about the storytelling. Neville looks about 900 miles ahead of the rest of the division and the beatdown of Swann was the perfect way to make that come alive. I completely got into the story here and Neville pinning Perkins and covering him like it's an annoyance instead of a victory is great. Neville is just killing the character so far and that's some great potential for this division.

Overall Rating: C+. The opening two matches didn't do much for me but that main event saved the show. Unfortunately this brings up the obvious problem: there's not enough (at the moment) for a whole show but this stuff doesn't work on Raw. Since putting it on Smackdown is COMPLETELY OUT OF THE QUESTION AND WE SHOULDN'T EVEN ASK ABOUT IT EVER AGAIN for some reason, this is probably the best of the remaining option.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book, KB's Complete Monday Nitro and Thunder Reviews Volume V at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01MQKDV50>

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

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

Roadblock: End of the Line: Feel Free to Try Something

Roadblock: End of the Line

Date: December 18, 2016

Location: PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

We'll wrap up the pay per view calendar with this show, our third pay per view in about a month. This isn't the hottest card in the world with a fairly lame main event of United States Champion Roman Reigns challenging Kevin Owens for the Universal Title. There's also an Iron Man match as Sasha Banks defends the Women's Title against Charlotte. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Rusev vs. Big Cass

This is over Big Cass defending Enzo Amore, who tried to sleep with Rusev's life. Before the match, Enzo says something about Lana owing him money and Rusev playing Jumanji in the hotel room. Enzo puts on a red nose and Cass lists off the eight reindeer. Cass kicks Rusev in the face and we take a break less than thirty seconds in.

Back with Cass hammering away and dropping the Empire Elbow for no cover. They head outside Rusev taking him out into the crowd, leaving Enzo to go after Lana. Rusev defends his wife while Cass checks on Enzo, leaving Rusev to beat the count at 4:33. Not enough for a rating but this was rematch bait.

The opening video has a police chase theme with the idea being that everything ends at the end of the line.

Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Cesaro/Sheamus

New Day is defending. Big E. is confused about what the show is called because he thinks it's a rather different, very un-PG kind of

blocking. I'll let you figure out what the joke there is. Woods suggests that the challengers should be called Swing Low Irish Chariot. Cesaro dropkicks Kofi at the bell for two and it's already time for the uppercut train. It's too early for the Swing so Sheamus clotheslines Kofi instead.

The slingshot shoulder gets two on Kingston and Swiss Death is good for the same. This has been completely one sided so far. Kofi breaks up the ten forearms and brings in Big E. for the spear off the apron. The Warrior Splash gets two on Sheamus and everything breaks down. Sheamus kicks Cesaro by mistake and Woods kicks Cesaro by design, setting up the Big Ending for a very close two.

The Midnight Hour is broken up and Big E. gets the Brogue Kick. Cesaro Swings Kofi into the Sharpshooter for the submission...but Woods has the referee. Cesaro lifts Kofi up into a suplex and rolls into the Neutralizer for two with Big E. making the save this time. That was some scary power, as is always the case with Cesaro.

Woods sacrifices himself to take the Brogue Kick and the SOS gets two on Sheamus. Cesaro comes in without a tag (though Sheamus was right next to him), meaning Kofi kicks Cesaro for no count. Instead Sheamus sneaks in and rolls Kofi up for the pin and the titles at 10:00.

Rating: B-. The ending was really good but I have no interest in Sheamus and Cesaro holding the belts. It's more than fine to take them off New Day now but you really couldn't do this at the Rumble against Enzo and Cass or ANYONE that might draw some interest? People didn't care about Cesaro and Sheamus at first and I doubt they will now, but this was going to happen no matter what.

New Day gets the big show of respect and we get the battle for the spotlight from the new champs.

Kevin Owens doesn't care about New Day because that will never happen to him. After insulting the interviewer, Owens flags down Chris Jericho and gives him a present. Jericho isn't impressed with his holiday scarf.

Sami Zayn vs. Braun Strowman

Ten minute time limit as Raw GM Mick Foley is scared for Sami's health. The ring announcer says Sami must last ten minutes though, which makes things a bit unclear. So can Sami not even go for wins? Sami dodges for the first thirty seconds and Braun no sells a chop. Braun gets his hands on Sami for a big toss and kicks him in the ribs for good measure.

We're down to eight minutes as Sami knocks Braun over the top, only to have Strowman come back in and hammer away with ease. The referee starts to check on Sami with about six minutes to go but Zayn wants to keep going. Braun lets Sami stumble around as we get down to five minutes. Some very hard clotheslines take us to four minutes and here's Foley with a white towel.

Sami is thrown down at Mick's feet and Braun goes outside to talk trash. Zayn grabs the towel and throws it into the crowd with two minutes left. Strowman promises to finish this himself but misses a charge into the post. Another missed charge sends Braun through the barricade but Strowman beats the count with 47 seconds left. A third missed charge hits the post and Sami gets two off a high crossbody. Sami is knocked to the floor but comes back in for the Helluva Kick as time ends at 10:00 (really 10:12).

Rating: D+. Corey sums it up perfectly: Sami didn't win anything here. He just didn't get killed. This really belonged as an angle on Raw to set up the pay per view match instead of being the match itself. Sami hitting his finisher (which didn't knock Braun down) to end the match was a nice touch but I really have no idea where this goes outside of Braun beating Sami in another match.

Package on the UK tournament.

We recap Chris Jericho vs. Seth Rollins. Jericho lost to Rollins several times but then started costing Rollins matches against Owens. This earned Jericho a Pedigree on top of a car and that means a match.

Seth Rollins vs. Chris Jericho

Jericho headlocks him to start and does the Gift of Jericho pose. Chris stops him with a raised boot and the missile dropkick gets two. A rake of the eyes slows Rollins down (he even makes like he can't see for a bit, which you almost never see anymore) but he's easily able to catapult Jericho into the buckle.

Jericho gets in a clothesline and we hit the ASK HIM chinlock. Back up and Rollins fires off some right hands followed by the Slingblade. A Blockbuster gets two and Jericho gets shoved out to the floor. Rollins' springboard knee is countered into the Walls which last about as long as you would expect them to. Now the Lionsault is good for two and Seth's Falcon's Arrow gets the same.

Rollins tries the Pedigree but Jericho powers out and gets in a hurricanrana, which transitions into the Walls. Seth counters that with a small package for two, followed by the frog splash. Cue Owens for a distraction, just as Jericho grabs a small package. The Pedigree is countered again but Jericho stops to yell at Owens, allowing Seth to get in the jumping knee. Rollins gets the Pedigree for the pin at 17:12.

Rating: B+. I really liked this one as Jericho's roll continues. You can almost pencil in Jericho vs. Owens for the Rumble and that story is going to write itself very well. Rollins getting the pin makes sense and maybe we can FINALLY do the blowoff between him and HHH so Rollins can move on with his career.

Pre-show recap. Cass vs. Rusev II is set for tomorrow night.

Cruiserweight Title: Brian Kendrick vs. TJ Perkins vs. Rich Swann

Swann is defending and Austin Aries is sitting in on commentary. One heck of a forearm puts Kendrick on the floor, leaving Perkins to take the champ down. Swann hurricanranas both guys down at the same time (Aries: "I've done it before.") but gets caught in the Captain's Hook.

Perkins makes the save with the kneebar but Swann makes a save of his own. Cole: "Who is the favorite now?" Aries: "I would be if I was in there." Kendrick gets tossed and Perkins slaps on another

kneebar, sending Swann to the ropes. That's not a break in a triple threat but Perkins lets go anyway. Back up and Swann kicks Perkins in the head to retain at 5:59.

Rating: D+. Can we please, please, PLEASE get Aries anything he wants? He was by far and away the most interesting thing about this match as he just commands respect and I completely buy him as the greatest cruiserweight of all time. I mean, I know he's not but he gives you the belief that he is and that's what matters.

Post match Neville makes his return to celebrate with Swann before turning heel (!) and destroying all three. Fans: "THANK YOU NEVILLE!" I can totally go for this, though the idea that Neville weighs under 205lbs is downright laughable.

Owens goes to Jericho's locker room but Chris won't let him in. Kevin tells him to put his name on the list but Jericho still doesn't open the door. That hurts Owens' feelings and he walks away.

Recap of Sasha Banks vs. Charlotte. They've traded the title for months and this is the final match.

Women's Title: Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks

Banks is defending and this is a thirty minute iron man match, though JoJo says the winner is the woman with the most pinfalls. I'm going to assume that's an error because nothing like that was ever mentioned before. Feeling out process to start and they hit the mat for the first two minutes. Banks headlocks her down and things stay slow to start. Some chops have Charlotte in more trouble but it's too early for the Banks Statement.

Another attempt fails just as much so Banks opts for a dropkick instead. Banks: "Your daddy loves me more!" Sasha wraps her up in something like a rear naked choke but Charlotte drops her back onto the mat for two. Charlotte heads outside and takes the double knees as we hit eight minutes in. A cross arm choke has Charlotte in more trouble but she doesn't tap out as we get to ten minutes.

Sasha throws her outside for a suicide crossbody, only to be tripped face first into the steps in a bad looking crash. We're twelve

minutes in now as the referee slows things down a bit to check on Sasha. Three straight knees get two on the champ but another one misses to give Sasha a breather. Charlotte does the figure four headscissors and we're at the halfway mark.

Something like a neckbreaker onto the knee gets two on Sasha and Charlotte seems to be getting frustrated. Natural Selection connects for two but Banks can't get the Bank Statement. Instead Charlotte is put on top, only to come back with a super Natural Selection for the first fall with 10:45 to go.

Charlotte talks a lot of trash but can't get another fall as we hit nine minutes left. Banks goes to the air and spins into a rollup for the tie with 8:43 to go. That means Charlotte needs to get aggressive, only to have Sasha grab the Bank Statement for the tap out with six minutes left. Charlotte gets smart by draping the knee over the middle rope and crashing down onto it as the clock keeps ticking.

Some cannonballs down onto the knee set up a leglock as we've got three minutes left. A not great Figure Four goes on with two minutes left and Sasha is in big trouble. The hold is turned over a few times until Sasha gets caught in the middle of the ring. We're down to thirty seconds left and Banks screams a lot. Charlotte FINALLY turns it into the Figure Eight and Banks taps with two seconds left, meaning it's a draw at 30:00.

This is the END OF THE LINE though so let's do sudden death. Charlotte gets in a shot at the bad leg before the bell rings and a small package gets two for the champ seconds into the extra period. The Bank Statement goes on but Charlotte grabs the bad leg to break the hold. It's turned into a Figure Four and Sasha (with a bloody mouth) taps to the Figure Eight at 2:58 of overtime.

Rating: B. Well that happened. I'm completely out of things to talk about with these two trading the title because WWE has no concept of how to wrap up a feud in an appropriate manner. Charlotte winning is fine, though the question now is who challenges her next. I know the obvious answer is Bayley, but do you trust them to do something that

logical?

We recap Owens vs. Reigns. Roman beat him a few weeks ago to earn another shot here tonight but the big story is about the drama between Jericho and Owens.

Universal Title: Kevin Owens vs. Roman Reigns

Owens is defending and I'll only refer to him as champion for the sake of simplicity. Kevin quickly bails to the floor but gets punched in the mouth for his efforts. Something like a spinebuster gets two for Reigns but the threat of a jumping clothesline sends Owens outside. The champ takes over on the floor and hits the backplash off the steps, followed by the chinlock back inside.

Owens wants to know why Reigns didn't put his title on the line but suspects it's a lack of testicular fortitude. A standing flip legdrop of all things gets two on Roman and it's back to the chinlock. Reigns finally powers out and drives Owens into the corner, only to have the champ throw him down with a German suplex. The Superman Punch is countered into a DDT for two more.

Reigns no sells the Cannonball and hits the Superman Punch for two of his own and both guys are down. Owens goes up top and gets Superman Punched again but still manages to grab the swinging superplex. A Swanton Bomb hits Roman's raised knees and it's spear time. It might be the big scream before the spear but somehow Owens knows to bail to the floor. Reigns gets suckered in and a splash off the apron onto the announcers' table doesn't break the table.

The second attempt works though and Reigns' ribs are hurt again. Reigns dives in at nine so Owens bolts to the top for another frog splash and the accompanying near fall. Roman's sitout powerbomb and Owens' Pop Up Powerbomb get two each and the champ doesn't know what to do. He goes outside for the title belt, earning himself a spear as he comes back inside. Cue Jericho, who looks back and forth at both guy. A Codebreaker to Owens draws the DQ at 23:33.

Rating: B. Good, though the waiting for Jericho took a little away from it. Unfortunately this shows the problem with Reigns being US

Champion coming into this match: what good does it do to tie the title up in this match with no challenger for the title in sight? Yeah Owens vs. Jericho will be fine but sweet goodness enough with the champion vs. champion nonsense.

Jericho raises Owens' hand because IT WAS A SWERVE to end the show. Uh, couldn't he just tap Reigns and get the same result? Rollins comes out and helps with the beatdown, including a DoubleBomb to put Jericho through the table. Owens goes through the announcers' table to end the show to almost no reaction.

Overall Rating: B+. I liked this a lot more than I thought I would but it's a great example of a show I'm never going to watch again. Other than Charlotte getting the title back like we've seen before, nothing was really interesting here, though I can always go for a night of good wrestling. That being said, they really, REALLY need something fresh in the main event scene on Raw because "oh wait they're still best friends who get beaten up by the Shield guys" was tired a month ago.

Results

Cesaro/Sheamus b. New Day – Small package to Kingston

Sami Zayn b. Braun Strowman by surviving the time limit

Seth Rollins b. Chris Jericho – Pedigree

Rich Swann b. TJ Perkins and Brian Kendrick – Spinning kick to the head

Charlotte b. Sasha Banks three falls to two

Kevin Owens b. Roman Reigns via DQ when Chris Jericho interfered

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book, KB's Complete Monday Nitro and Thunder Reviews Volume V at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01MQKDV50>

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

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

New Column: I'm Afraid You're Just Too Darn Long

Because when you want to talk about multi-man elimination matches, you quote Back to the Future.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-im-afraid-youre-just-too-darn-long/>

Superstars – November 11, 2016: There's No Way Around It

Superstars

Date: November 11, 2016

Location: SSE Hydro, Glasgow, Scotland

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

Maybe the European version will be more entertaining. If nothing else it should be interesting to see how this week's Raw looks chopped up into a much shorter version. At this point it's not like it's going to be any worse as I really didn't care for the full edition with the same idea three times in a row. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Neville vs. Titus O'Neil

It wasn't any good two weeks ago and odds are it's not going to change here. Neville moonsaults over him to start and scores with a running flip dive out to the floor. Back in and Titus goes back to the really basic power offense (anything else would be too complicated) with the triple backbreakers. Titus: "CHEER FOR HIM NOW!" Ok so he can insult a crowd fairly well. We hit the chinlock (Titus: "I'm firmly in control!") before another backbreaker has Neville in trouble. Back up and Titus charges into a boot in the corner, setting up a Red Arrow for the pin at 4:57.

Rating: D. I actually liked Titus' talking here but they weren't hiding the fact that Neville was all flips. These two just do not have chemistry together but that might be due to Titus not being very good. Granted it doesn't help that Neville doesn't have much to his arsenal aside from the same stuff he's done for years.

From Raw, here's the video on Goldberg vs. Lesnar from the former's perspective. Still good stuff.

And now, the Lesnar version.

Emmalina video.

Bo Dallas vs. Darren Young

This isn't exactly a surprise during election week. There's no Backlund in Young's corner, mean there's no one to yell at Bo as he bails to the floor early on. A headlock doesn't get Bo very far so Young takes him to the ground for an armbar. It's too early for a crossface chickenwing though and we take a break. Back with Darren being sent into the barricade for nothing close to a countout. We hit back to back chinlocks for a bit before Young's comeback goes nowhere. The Roll of the Dice finishes Darren at 10:08.

Rating: D. What do you want me to say here? Darren Young is one of the least interesting wrestlers I've ever sat through. His ring work is passable enough but there's no charisma or connection to him. Above all else, this is more proof that once Backlund is gone, Young likely won't be far behind him.

We go back to Raw for our first full clip.

Here's Stephanie McMahon to a chorus of boos. She talks about how big the battle between Monday Night Raw and Smackdown Live is going to be before introducing the four competitors for the main Survivor Series match. Kevin Owens, Chris Jericho, Roman Reigns and Braun Strowman will be joined by...Seth Rollins in not that much of a surprise. Owens doesn't care for Rollins being on the team but Stephanie cuts him off to go through Smackdown's team. Raw better fight like their jobs are on the line because they are.

Stephanie leaves and Owens and Jericho talk about how they've taken over the show in recent weeks. Kevin thinks they need winners on the team, unlike the Shield who died because the members were all horrible human beings. The brawl is on with Braun standing behind until he cleans house. Strowman and Reigns have a staredown but here's Stephanie again to make a five way match for later tonight. And then, Monday's main event.

Braun Strowman vs. Seth Rollins vs. Roman Reigns vs. Kevin Owens vs. Chris Jericho

Stephanie: "Now you all are going into the biggest match of your lives and it's so important for Raw to win. NOW GO OUT THERE AND BEAT THE HECK OUT OF EACH OTHER FOR MY AMUSEMENT!!!" Non-title, nothing on the line and Reigns comes out last. Rollins, Owens and Jericho go outside so we get Reigns staring at Strowman for a long time. Strowman is knocked to the floor where Rollins beats on him with a kendo stick. Now it's a table but Strowman makes a quick save to take us to a break.

Back with Strowman giving Reigns the reverse chokeslam and kicking Jericho out of the air. Owens tries to talk his way out of trouble before punching Strowman in the face, earning himself a clothesline. Everyone goes after Strowman and an enziguri from Rollins into the Superman Punch is finally enough to send him outside. The Sling Blade drops Owens and it's time for the Shield showdown.

That goes nowhere as Strowman has to be dealt with again, only to have the Canadians break up the TripleBomb through the table. Strowman is put on the table and it's Jericho being powerbombed

through Braun through the table. Back in and Rollins kicks Owens in the head for two, followed by the Pedigree for the same with Jericho making the save. That earns Chris a Pedigree but Owens makes a save. Reigns Superman Punches Owens....right into the pin on Jericho at 14:58.

Rating: C+. This was fine, although I'm really not sure what this changes. The World Champion winning a match has become a big surprise because he loses way too often anymore. At least the right guy won and this isn't being used to set up the new challenge. I'm still not sure why Stephanie would want to make that match but who am I to question her?

Overall Rating: D. No amount of cutting it up can hide the fact that Monday's show sucked. WWE can claim whatever they want but they put on a bad show and there's no way around it. The regular stuff here was a big waste of time as Young is boring and Neville has to work WAY down so Titus can keep up with him. Totally worthless show here and that's not normal for Superstars.

Superstars – October 7, 2016: The Raw Alternative

Superstars

Date: October 7, 2016

Location: Staples Center, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

This is the kind of show you don't often get in WWE: a quick and simple wrestling show where the in ring action is really all that matters. You'll also get some highlights from this week's Monday Night Raw while seeing some names that don't often make it onto the major TV show. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Darren Young vs. Jinder Mahal

Dang it I can't get away from Mahal. Darren works on the wrist to start and almost falls over while trying a swinging neckbreaker. Mahal pulls him out of the corner though and drops some knees from the middle rope for his first two. We hit the chinlock for a bit before another knee drop gets another two. Mahal has those long legs so it makes sense to use the knees that often. Back up and Young grabs a belly to back suplex onto the apron, followed by the Gut Check for the pin on Mahal at 4:21.

Rating: D. The wrestling was fine but these two combine for the personality of a chair. I'll be very glad when the election is over and we can drop this making Darren Young great again nonsense. At least putting him on Superstars is better than making me watch him face Titus O'Neil every week on Raw.

We go back to Raw for the Roman Reigns/Rusev/Lana segment.

Here's Roman Reigns to open the show and MY GOODNESS they're booing him out of the building. WWE is asking for this one as Reigns just isn't the kind of person who can go out there and talk full time. He goes into the guy line but here's Lana to interrupt. Fans: "THANK YOU LANA!" With the accent slipping, Lana rips into Reigns for everything he's done in recent weeks but Reigns just tells her to bring her husband out here if he wants that rematch.

Rusev comes out and the brawl is on again with the Bulgarian getting the better of it and knocking Reigns into the crowd. Rusev takes the belt and starts to walk up the ramp but Reigns sneaks up from behind him with a Superman Punch. Reigns grabs the mic and says they can have the rematch but it's going to be inside the Cell.

Back to Raw and here's most of New Day vs. Chris Jericho/Kevin Owens.

Chris Jericho/Kevin Owens vs. New Day

Non-title. Masterson and Kutcher are on commentary as Owens runs Woods over to start. Owens makes sure to jump over Xavier in the

kind of funny bit that most people just don't think to do. Woods gets taken into the corner for the double teaming as Kutcher talks about their new show. It's off to Big E. to face Owens for some hip swiveling.

Graves says Saxton would be the Fez (character on That 70s Show, on which Masterson and Kutcher starred) of the commentary table, which sounds like a good insult, assuming you find dating Mila Kunis' character to be a bad thing. Big E. gets beaten down even more as the announcers discuss middle names and scarves.

Back from a break with Owens and Big E. colliding off a double clothesline. Woods comes in and gets chinlocked before it's back to Jericho for a running clothesline in the corner. A superplex is broken up and Woods gets two off a high crossbody. Owens breaks up a hot tag attempt and gets two off a DDT.

Cue Seth Rollins to the stage for a distraction though and Woods gets in an enziguri. The hot tag brings in Big E. to clean house (and swivel the hips of course) but Owens superkicks him down. Big E. and Owens go to the floor and Jericho gets the Liontamer on Woods, only to have Rollins offer a distraction. A quick Midnight Hour puts Jericho away at 16:25.

Rating: C-. This was much longer than it needed to be and served little more purpose than to have Kutcher and Masterson there to plug their new show. It's a really bad sign that this is what the World Champion is being used for: a second hour tag match with little to gain other than helping set up a Netflix show. Well done WWE. It's good to see what you think of what should be your flagship star. Masterson and Kutcher were both fine and seemed to be having a lot of fun, which is much better than you're going to get out of most guest stars.

Rollins gives Jericho a Pedigree to really get under Owens' skin.

Neville vs. Curtis Axel

Axel slams him to start and it's already time to pose. A rollup gets one for Neville but Axel drives in some knees to the robes to take

over again. We get the front flips across the corner and a dropkick sends Axel outside. That means a running flip dive but it's way too early for the Red Arrow as Neville is kicked out to the floor. Back from a break with Axel hitting a great looking dropkick and grabbing an armbars chinlock. The Axehole (that neckbreaker faceplant that Axel used to use as a finisher before it stopped finishing anyone) gets two and it's an enziguri into the Red Arrow for the pin on Axel at 7:18.

Rating: D+. Not the most exciting match in the world but I liked it better than the opener. Granted that's probably due to having Neville in there instead of someone like Young as there's so much more charisma in the second match. Axel continues to be someone that could go somewhere if they gave him the right story but there's been too many losses and too much time gone over the years to make it work without something major.

Long recap of Charlotte vs. Sasha, going all the way back to the BFF's days in NXT. They've both been fighting to prove themselves as the best in the world and have traded the title over the last few months.

Hispanic Heritage Month video on Cesar Chavez.

Raw Women's Title: Sasha Banks vs. Charlotte

Charlotte is defending and we get Big Match Intros. Sasha kicks her outside and hits a suicide dive, setting up a break less than thirty seconds in. Back with Charlotte in control and working on the back with a backbreaker (makes sense) and a hard shove into the corner. Sasha blocks the big boot and gets two off the double knees.

The champ is sent outside but is still able to drop Sasha's back onto the apron. Sasha tries to go up top but gets knocked onto the ropes for a nasty crash. Charlotte's superplex is shoved off and double knees from the top get two. It's too early for the Bank Statement though so Charlotte sends her outside, setting up a CORKSCREW MOONSAULT TO THE FLOOR! I mean it made almost no contact but it looked awesome. Natural Selection gets two back inside and Charlotte is frustrated. A headscissors sets up the Bank Statement

and Charlotte taps in a hurry to give Sasha the title at 14:17.

Rating: B. Good match but they felt out of sync at the end. That missed moonsault didn't help things and the ending felt like it was out of nowhere. Sasha winning makes the most sense and, dare I say, sets up a rematch inside the Cell? They'll have a rematch one way or another and it needs a little something more than just a regular match.

A long celebration ends the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This show's rating depends on whether or not you're factoring in the bonus footage. With the bonus and far more important stuff being thrown in, I could easily see why people would prefer this over the full three hour version. Oddly you could skip the original wrestling and just watch the stuff from Raw to get your fill of Monday's show in far less time. It's a perfectly entertaining and quick show, which makes it very different from Raw.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book, KB's Complete 2014 Raw and Smackdown Reviews Part I at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01LY6766K#nav-subnav>

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

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

Superstars – September 30, 2016: Now With More People

You Won't See On This Show

Superstars

Date: September 30, 2016

Location: US Bank Arena, Cincinnati, Ohio

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

I don't normally do this show but I was in the arena live for the taping so I might as well take a look at the show. This was taped before last week's Monday Night Raw and now serves as the night's dark matches. Superstars tends to be completely forgotten and there's a good chance that's justified. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence, featuring a bunch of people you won't be seeing on this show.

Sami Zayn vs. Curtis Axel

Not a bad choice to fire up the crowd. Axel takes him down by the arm to start so Sami does his big spin out to escape. Sami's reverse leapfrog sets up some armdrags into an armbar and the fans are very pleased. Some right hands and a good looking dropkick put Zayn down but Axel spends a bit too much time yelling. The exploder suplex sets up the Helluva Kick to give Sami the pin at 4:40.

Rating: C-. Not much to this one but Sami is the perfect choice to open a show and fire the fans up. There's just something so easy to cheer about Sami and it hasn't failed him yet. For the life of me I don't know why he's stuck on the midcard treadmill when Smackdown is dying for talent and Zayn can't even get on Raw most weeks.

We see a long stretch, as in the better part of five minutes, of Roman Reigns vs. Rusev from Raw.

We see Charlotte, Dana Brooke and Sasha Banks' segment from Raw. This is much closer to being complete so here it is in full.

Here are Charlotte and Dana Brooke for a chat. Charlotte says last night was another chance for everyone to be disappointed because that's what she does time after time. She's not the huggable Bayley or the internet darling Sasha Banks. Cue Sasha to say that's her title because Charlotte didn't beat her last night. Sasha is owed a one on one match and she wants it right now. Charlotte tells the YESing fans to be quiet so she can tell Sasha that she'll get her

rematch...next week. Sasha cleans house and the villains leave.

Neville vs. Jinder Mahal

This would be another option that could have picked the crowd up during Raw but nah, we needed three minutes of Stephanie yelling at Foley instead. To no one's surprise, Mahal comes out to crickets. Neville grabs a headlock to start as we hear about Mahal talking trash about NXT stars coming up through the ranks. So yeah, this actually has a story to it. Mahal's armbars doesn't do much to shake his image of being really boring so Neville handsprings across the ring and hits something like a hurricanrana. The tease of a dive scares Mahal to the barricade and we take a break.

Back with Mahal missing a charge and falling outside again, only to have him send Neville ribs first into the apron. A basement dropkick puts Neville down and a big boot to the face gets two. Neville comes back with his series of kicks, including a big one to knock Mahal out of the air. The Red Arrow puts Mahal away at 8:55.

Rating: D. I don't know how many more ways I can say Mahal is boring but it's the biggest problem with so many wrestlers today. There's no real character there and his in ring abilities aren't enough to make me want to watch anything he does. This was longer than it needed to be with Neville doing what he could but having nothing to work with in Mahal.

Most of Kevin Owens on the Highlight Reel (minus anything with Enzo and Cass) ends the show.

It's time for the Highlight Reel. Jericho tells us to be quiet about a dozen times because this is the most anticipated Highlight Reel in WWE history. Before Owens comes out here though, Jericho has a bone to pick with Masterson and Kutchner, who have the nerve to claim that they're better friends. Jericho: "THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!" That's so unthinkable that they're both about to make the List of Jericho.

It's almost time for Owens to come out but Jericho yells at the cameraman for shooting him from the wrong side, which means HE MADE THE LIST! Rollins is on there too because he got hurt again last night. Owens comes out and praises the Jeritron 5000 but says he's not about to wear a suit for a place like Cincinnati, Ohio. What kind of town can this be when it created Dean Ambrose? Jericho: "HE STILL OWES ME \$17,000!" Owens moves on to Rollins and says the rib injury is karma after all the people Seth injured over the last year

and a half. Cue Rollins but security and Foley pull him back.

Overall Rating: D+. I see why I don't watch this show most of the time. It's basically just a long recap show with some dark matches filling in the gaps. That being said, there's a reason this is little more than D level programming to fill in time on the Network and to satisfy international commitments. It was fine enough but nothing worth going out of your way to see whatsoever.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book, KB's Complete 2014 Raw and Smackdown Reviews Part I at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01LY6766K#nav-subnav>

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

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