

Superstars – November 25, 2016: Is It So Much To Ask?

Superstars

Date: November 25, 2016

Location: Air Canada Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

We're past Survivor Series and that could mean some changes for WWE and Superstars in particular. You never know what you're going to get on here, and by that I mean you never know what you're going to get to go with Jinder Mahal vs. Darren Young. Those two are destined to fight for all eternity it seems so let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Sin Cara vs. Jinder Mahal

The fans seem confused as to why Mahal is here and I can't say I disagree. Feeling out process to start with Cara's backdrop drawing a smattering of applause. Mahal gets in a shot of his own and does that stupid peace pose. A kneedrop sets up the required chinlock and there's that peace pose again because that's Mahal's entire character, if you can call it that. Mahal gets dropkicked out of the air and Cara's Swanton Bomb is enough for the pin at 5:02.

Rating: D-. I know I've made this comparison time after time but it's really annoying to see the difference between Superstars and Main Event. Every week it feels like Superstars is just having a match because they have to while Main Event comes off like they're at least trying. It helps so much and can actually be entertaining. Why be boring when you don't have to be?

Video on Goldberg vs. Brock Lesnar.

From Monday.

Here's Goldberg getting the full entrance to open things up. Goldberg

thanks the fans for letting him be Goldberg again. He also thanks his wife and son for putting up with him and he got to be a star again one more time. Last night he ran into Stephanie McMahon who said he did have one more spear and Jackhammer in him (three spears and two Jackhammers if you're counting) but the question is does he have one more title run left in him. The fans go NUTS over that prospect and Goldberg says he's in the Royal Rumble.

And from Monday again.

Raw Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Sheamus/Cesaro

New Day is defending and talk about breaking Demolition's record for longest Tag Team Title reign in just 23 days. A powerslam gives Cesaro two on Big E. to start but Kofi escapes an early Swing attempt. Instead Cesaro sends him into the barricade and we take a break. Back with Kofi dropkicking Sheamus out of the air but getting Irish Cursed for two.

Sheamus won't tag out though and we get some heel (I think?) miscommunication with Cesaro being knocked off the apron. The hot tag brings in Big E. to clean house as everything breaks down. The Warrior Splash gets two on Sheamus but he rakes Big E.'s eyes to set up White Noise for the same.

It's back to Cesaro vs. Kofi with the Uppercut Train taking off, only to have an SOS get two. Trouble in Paradise is countered into a Cesaro Swing which goes into the Sharpshooter. The Brogue Kick puts Big E. down but Woods gets on the apron for the distraction as Kofi taps. Ever the moron, Cesaro lets the hold go and gets small packaged for the pin at 12:18.

Rating: C+. So they seem to be turning New Day heel. I think I can actually go with that as I'd much rather go there than have Cesaro and Sheamus stop them just before the record. Obviously they haven't gotten there yet and there's always the possibility that they'll switch the titles with two days to go, but at least they didn't do it here.

Bo Dallas vs. Curtis Axel

We actually get a video showing their breakup from last month. Dallas

goes after the knee to start and we hit an early cravate. Back up and a few clotheslines set up a Hennig necksnap on Bo as we go to a break. We come back with the Axehole getting two on Bo as this just keeps going. Dallas blocks a suplex to the floor and hits an elevated Final Cut of all things for two. The PerfectPlex gives Curtis the same but he can't grab a super PerfectPlex. Axel settles for a neckbreaker out of the corner, only to walk into the Roll of the Dice for the pin at 11:54.

Rating: D. This just KEPT GOING with Axel hitting and trying everything he had and getting shut down every time. I really don't know why Dallas is getting such a strong push but it's getting annoying to see Axel lose every single time. This show really didn't do much for Superstars' reputation though as it was boring to start and never got any better.

We'll wrap it up with Raw's main event.

Raw World Title: Kevin Owens vs. Seth Rollins

Owens is defending and there are no disqualifications with Jericho and Reigns barred from ringside. Kevin tries to bail to the floor and gets kicked in the face for his efforts. The springboard knee to the head gets two inside thirty seconds so it's already table time. Owens grabs the package piledriver slam and we take an early break.

Back with Owens in full control and hammering Seth in the head. A Sling Blade and suicide dive take Owens out, leading to another commercial. Back again with an exchange of strikes to the face putting both guys down. The frog splash misses Owens and it's a Cannonball into a chair onto Rollins for a close two. Owens sets up a pair of chairs for a powerbomb and you can see the backdrop counter coming before it happens.

Another table is set up in the corner and the Buckle Bomb drives Owens through it for a very close two. They fight into the crowd with Rollins getting the better of it by throwing a trashcan at the champ. Owens tries the powerbomb but Seth grabs the balcony wall and pulls himself up for a big dive. They make it back to ringside but a masked man shoves Rollins off the barricade. Of course it's Jericho and of course he gets a Pedigree on the floor. The Apron Powerbomb wipes Rollins out though and Owens throws him back in to retain at 23:07.

Rating: B+. Really good stuff here as it felt like a full on pay per view main event with high spots and near falls. The Jericho interference was a stretch and I'm kind of hoping it isn't used to set up another rematch at Roadblock as I'm pretty much over Rollins vs. Owens after this one. Really good main event though and I bought Rollins as a title threat.

Overall Rating: D. Sweet goodness this show doesn't make it easy. Well ok so I'd never call this difficult to sit through but they make no secret about the fact that the original matches are just there for the sake of requiring original matches. They don't seem to even be trying out there and it gets really annoying to sit through week after week. Mix up the lineup or put in some kind of effort. That's not too much to ask.

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

Monday Night Raw – November 21, 2016: There Is Logic In What They Do

Monday Night Raw

Date: November 21, 2016

Location: Air Canada Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

We're still in Toronto as the big pay per view weekends are starting to feel like an old Raw TV cycle. The big story last night is Brock Lesnar's complete destruction at the hands of Goldberg, who beat him in a mind blowing 87 seconds. Tonight we get started towards Roadblock in about four weeks so let's get to it.

We open with stills of Lesnar vs. Goldberg because a match running less than a minute and a half needs to be clipped.

Here's Goldberg getting the full entrance to open things up. Goldberg thanks the fans for letting him be Goldberg again. He also thanks his wife and son for putting up with him and he got to be a star again one more time. Last night he ran into Stephanie McMahon who said he did have one more spear and Jackhammer in him (three spears and two Jackhammers if you're counting) but the question is does he have one more title run left in him. The fans go NUTS over that prospect and Goldberg says he's in the Royal Rumble.

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Sheamus won't tag out though and we get some heel (I think?) miscommunication with Cesaro being knocked off the apron. The hot tag brings in Big E. to clean house as everything breaks down. The Warrior Splash gets two on Sheamus but he rakes Big E.'s eyes to set up White Noise for the same.

It's back to Cesaro vs. Kofi with the Uppercut Train taking off, only to have an SOS get two. Trouble in Paradise is countered into a Cesaro Swing which goes into the Sharpshooter. The Brogue Kick puts Big E. down but Woods gets on the apron for the distraction as Kofi taps. Ever the moron,

Cesaro lets the hold go and gets small packaged for the pin at 12:18.

Rating: C+. So they seem to be turning New Day heel. I think I can actually go with that as I'd much rather go there than have Cesaro and Sheamus stop them just before the record. Obviously they haven't gotten there yet and there's always the possibility that they'll switch the titles with two days to go, but at least they didn't do it here.

Chris Jericho is distraught that the List of Jericho was destroyed last night. Tonight, he's going to say who's to blame for this travesty.

Enzo Amore is stuck outside his locker room....and he's missing his clothes. After running into the Shining Stars and Titus O'Neil with the expected results. Enzo runs into Lana and, of course, asks how she's doing. Rusev comes in to yell and Cass comes to Enzo's defense. There's no offer of a shirt for Enzo or anything but a match is set up for later.

Mick Foley and Stephanie McMahon do their standard "we're awesome" segment and talk about needing to punish the Raw stars who lost last night. Sami Zayn comes in and gets a match against Braun Strowman. So Foley is a heel too.

Ariya Daivari vs. Cedric Alexander

Before the match, Daivari says Canadians are just as bad as Americans and rants in some foreign language. Alexander armbars him before the bell but Daivari takes over as the match gets started. Cedric's springboard is broken up into a big crash but he nails a handspring into a kick to the face. Another springboard into a clothesline sets up the Lumbar Check for the pin on Daivari at 3:10.

Rating: C+. The match was fine, even entertaining at times, but as usual I have no reason to care. I'm not sure if the 205 Live show is the solution but maybe they can get the focus back and find some of that spark that made Cruiserweight Classic so entertaining. This was better than the usual stuff at least.

It's time for the Highlight Reel with a serious Jericho wanting to find out what happened with the List of Jericho. Kevin Owens cuts him off and

asks when Chris upgraded to the Jeritron 6500. Jericho isn't happy with Owens for not realizing he was there when Jericho upgraded.

We see Owens saving Jericho from the Styles Clash with the List of Jericho, sending Jericho into a rant about everything that could have been seen. Owens: "Who cares???" That seems to be a breaking point for Jericho, because he cares. Owens yells at Jericho for screwing up by walking into an RKO a few seconds after he sacrificed himself. If that's how Owens feels, maybe they don't have much of a friendship.

Owens is never there when Jericho needs him and Chris is done with him. Kevin spins him around and they both blame Roman Reigns, setting up a big hug. The ranting goes on about Reigns and Rollins (who are hair conditioner brothers) until Seth comes out, demanding his title shot tonight. The brawl is on and here's Reigns, slowly walking to the ring for the save. Cue Foley to make the title match tonight, No DQ, with Jericho and Reigns banned from ringside.

We recap the opening segment.

Enzo Amore vs. Rusev

Before the match, Enzo says if Lana wanted to see him sans clothes, she just had to hack his phone. The Accolade finishes Enzo in 58 seconds.

Anderson and Gallows vs. Golden Truth

Winners get a shot at New Day next week. Anderson and Gallows take Truth into the corner for an early beating, including a bunch of stomping and a Gallows big boot for two. A kick to the face allows the hot tag to Goldust, who tries to go up top. That just earns him a crotching, followed by the Magic Killer for the pin at 6:02.

Rating: D. This was a bit more academic than it should have been and there's nothing wrong with that. It seems that New Day is going to have to run a gauntlet to get to the record, which is kind of a cool idea as long as they don't switch the belts with two days left for a slip on a banana peel moment.

Video on the Wrestlemania tickets going on sale. This includes someone

making a fourteen hour drive from Houston because Houston has never heard of an online sale.

Braun Strowman vs. Sami Zayn

Strowman jumps him before the bell and Sami is in big trouble to start. A running splash crushes Sami again and the match is almost stopped. Some hard clotheslines make things even worse. Strowman ties Sami in the Tree of Woe and Mick Foley comes out to stop the match at 4:00.

Rating: D. You really can't rate this match fairly but it did exactly what it needed to do. Sami can sell as well as almost anyone I've ever seen and that's what he did here to almost perfection. I'm really curious to see where this goes and I didn't expect that to be the case for this kind of story.

Emmalina video.

Here are Charlotte and Dana Brooke with something to say. She looks at some stills of the postmatch beatdown on Bayley before calling herself the Wayne Gretzky of WWE. Charlotte is so happy she doesn't have to deal with the Team Raw peasants but here's Sasha Banks to interrupt.

Sasha wants her rematch tonight and Charlotte agrees with one condition: it's in her hometown next week so she can beat Sasha again. Cue Nia Jax to say she dominated the Smackdown women, unlike Sasha, the short, purple headed Barbie. Dana finds this hilarious so Sasha decks her, only to get sent into the corner for the running splash. Bayley comes out for the save, meaning Sasha is thrown out to her.

Sasha Banks/Bayley vs. Charlotte/Nia Jax

Joined in progress with Nia throwing Bayley around and bringing in Charlotte for a chinlock. A failed monkey flip allows for the hot tag to Banks, who helps out with a double suplex to Nia. The Bank Statement makes Charlotte tap at 4:37.

Rating: D+. This did exactly what it needed to do and protected Nia at the same time. Jax is going to devour someone for that title eventually and whoever gets to take it off of her is going to be a star. As long as

this leads to a big match with (hopefully all of) the Four Horsewomen at Wrestlemania, everything will be fine.

We look at the opening segment for the third time.

Seth Rollins is ready for his match with Owens.

Noam Dar vs. Rich Swann vs. TJ Perkins

The winner gets Brian Kendrick, on commentary here, for the title on the debut of 205 Live. Kendrick says the new show was created for him as Dar dropkicks Perkins out to the floor, only to have Swann do the same to Noam. Perkins kicks Rich's knee out and we take a break. Back with Perkins kicking Dar in the face but getting caught in an ankle lock. Swann makes a save, followed by Dar breaking up TJ's kneebar. Another kneebar is broken up by a splash and Swann kicks Perkins in the head for the pin at 7:50.

Rating: C. Not bad here and Swann winning makes the most sense, which is a common theme tonight. Swann has already beaten Kendrick twice and it would be a big waste to not have him go anywhere with the title shot. It also helps that Rich has more charisma than most of the division combined so the fans can get behind him for a change.

Owens brags about beating AJ Styles and knows he's ready to beat Rollins, who failed him last night.

Enzo and Cass still merchandise.

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down. The frog splash misses Owens and it's a Cannonball into a chair onto Rollins for a close two. Owens sets up a pair of chairs for a powerbomb and you can see the backdrop counter coming before it happens.

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Overall Rating: B. I liked this show a lot more than I was expecting to and it's mainly because of the logical booking throughout (most of) the night. You can see where they're going with so much stuff and they set up three title matches in a single show while also having two titles defended. This felt like a completely different kind of Raw and while I don't believe it's going to last, this was a lot of fun and a welcome change of pace.

Results

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

Cedric Alexander b. Ariya Daivari – Lumbar Check

Rusev b. Enzo Amore – Accolade

Anderson and Gallows b. Golden Truth – Magic Killer to Goldust

Braun Strowman b. Sami Zayn via stoppage

Bayley/Sasha Banks b. Nia Jax/Charlotte – Bank Statement to Charlotte

Rich Swann b. Noam Dar and TJ Perkins – Kick to Perkins' head

Kevin Owens b. Seth Rollins – Apron powerbomb

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Survivor Series 2016: There Are No Words

Survivor Series 2016

Date: November 20, 2016

Location: Air Canada Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Corey Graves, Byron Saxton, Mauro Ranallo, John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole, David Otunga

For the first time ever, Survivor Series is a four hour show with a two hour pre-show. Now some might think this is too...oh wait I'm not a real fan if I complain about shows being too long unless it's Raw when it's unquestionably too long. Pay per views can be as long as they want you see. Tonight is all about Raw vs. Smackdown and Brock Lesnar vs. Goldberg so let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Ariya Daivari/Drew Gulak/Tony Nese vs. TJ Perkins/Rich

Swann/Noam Dar

Swann gets out of a suplex to start and dropkicks Nese in the jaw before handing it off to TJ. More flipping ensues and we can hear Renee Young talking to her producer and saying "nine minutes". The kneebar has Gulak in trouble but everything breaks down to send us to a break.

Back with Dar getting crotched on the middle rope and superkicked for two. A delayed vertical suplex gets two for Nese and it's back to Gulak for a leg lock. Some kicks finally get Dar out of trouble and it's off to Swann for the house cleaning. We hit the dives on the bad guys and it's Swann's standing 450 for the pin on Daivari at 11:50, or 8:57 after Renee said "nine minutes".

Rating: C. Standard six man tag though the pace seemed a bit faster here. Maybe giving them their own show is the solution because they still feel out of place on the main roster. They're more than talented enough but the lack of charisma and personalities are killing them. Someone like Gulak or Nese for instance are great examples of this as there's no reason to care about anything they're doing and it shows more every week they're out there. Not a bad match but it was in one ear and out the other.

Pre-Show: Kane vs. Luke Harper

Feeling out process to start with both guys going after the arm. That's not the most interesting thing in the world though so it's Kane being sent outside for the suicide dive. Back in and a Falcon's Arrow gets two for Harper as we take a break. We come back with Kane in a chinlock until a belly to back suplex drops Luke on his head. As JBL makes a Walking Dead reference, Kane walks into a superkick for two. A big boot to the shoulder and the running DDT give Kane his own near fall. Harper comes back with the discus lariat but Kane grabs the chokeslam for the pin at 10:08.

Rating: C-. This was every match you've ever seen these two have, meaning it wasn't half bad. Harper has been a little overshadowed so it's nice to see him have a match on his own for a change. Kane winning is fine, albeit a bit unnecessary as he just pops in and out of Smackdown at will.

The opening video is pretty standard and focuses on the three elimination tags plus Goldberg vs. Lesnar.

Survivor Series Women's Tag Team Match: Team Raw vs. Team Smackdown

Raw: Bayley, Alicia Fox, Nia Jax, Charlotte, Sasha Banks

Smackdown: Nikki Bella, Natalya, Carmella, Naomi, Becky Lynch

Actually hang on a sec as there's no Nikki. We cut to the back where someone has attacked Nikki, meaning Natalya will be taking her place. Alicia and Carmella start things off but it's quickly off to Bayley vs. Becky. Unfortunately that doesn't get to happen as Charlotte tags herself in, leading to a big ten woman staredown with Nia breaking everything up on her own.

It settles down to Becky trying the Disarm-Her on Charlotte but Nia comes in and runs through the Smackdown women one by one. Some double teaming finally puts her back on the apron and it's Alicia hitting an ax kick to eliminate Carmella at 6:26. Bliss pulls Alicia right back down though and Twisted Bliss ties us up at 6:47.

Everything breaks down and Naomi dives onto Jax, who sends Naomi head first into the post. That's enough for a countout at 8:46 and it's 4-3 Raw. Alexa takes Sasha into the wrong corner but Banks comes right back with the double knees without missing a beat. Alexa saves Natalya from the Bank Statement and it's a rollup from Natalya to get rid of Sasha at 10:26.

Charlotte takes Natalya down but the moonsault is countered into a sitout powerbomb. The Sharpshooter doesn't last long as Charlotte makes the ropes, allowing her to kick Natalya in the face for the elimination. So it's Becky/Alexa vs. Nia/Bayley/Charlotte but the Smackdown women get in an argument. Nia suplexes them both at the same time before falling to a horribly botched double DDT. The Disarm-Her (looks really bad as Becky can't lock it in) makes Nia tap at 13:26, leaving the match at 2-2.

Actually never mind as Charlotte boots Alexa in the face for the pin at 14:15. Becky is in trouble but comes back with clotheslines and forearms,

followed by the Bex Plex. It's off to Bayley who takes a Bex Plex of her own but blocks the Disarm-Her. A quick Bayley to Belly gives Bayley the surprise winning pin at 17:49.

Rating: C. This was pretty sloppy and the eliminations felt like an excuse to get us to the final few people, which makes sense as they're the most interesting but it also shows the problems with this kind of match. Bayley getting the pin was a good choice though I'm not sure why they got Sasha out of there so fast. All that being said: this was so far ahead of what these matches used to be that it might as well have been a different sport entirely. Things are trending in the right way and that's a good thing.

Charlotte destroys Bayley post match to set up the next title feud.

Anderson and Gallows pick on James Ellsworth until Mick Foley comes in for the save. After talking about how much he loved seeing Foley get beaten up as a kid, Ellsworth turns down an offer to come to Raw. Braun Strowman comes up and scares Ellsworth away.

Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Sami Zayn

Sami is challenging and the title can change brands. The Canadian fans are way behind Sami as he starts fast with a leg lariat and sends Miz to the floor for a breather. That's fine with Sami who moonsaults off the barricade to drop the champ again. The standard Miz distraction lets Miz take over on the leg with some kicks and a swing into the post.

Sami comes right back with a flip dive and the Michinoku Driver for two but Miz starts doing Daniel Bryan stuff again and takes over. That just means a Blue Thunder Bomb to give Sami two but the Helluva Kick only hits the buckle. The Figure Four goes on until Sami turns it over for the counter.

Miz starts in with the YES Kicks but gets pulled down into a Figure Four (which takes a bit as Sami doesn't seem to know how to do it) and the bell rings....as rung by Maryse. The distraction lets Miz grab a rollup (and tights according to Cole, even though his hand isn't grabbing anything) to retain at 14:09.

Rating: C+. Not the best here as the ending felt like they needed a way out and didn't want either guy to do a job. I'm really not sure what they're waiting on with Sami as he's more than over enough and ready to do something but he keeps going from one story to another (like Strowman, who didn't even have a match against Sami) without really getting anywhere.

Dean Ambrose and AJ Styles argue over what's going to happen at TLC when Shane McMahon comes in and tells them to cool it.

Survivor Series Tag Team Elimination Match: Team Raw vs. Team Smackdown

Raw: Enzo Amore and Big Cass, New Day, Anderson and Gallows, Shining Stars,

Smackdown: Heath Slater/Rhyno, Breezango, Usos, American Alpha, Hype Bros

When one member is eliminated, their partner is as well. Fandango and Big E. get things going but Fandango would rather give away fashion tickets. The Midnight Hour takes care of Breezango at 46 seconds but Jimmy superkicks Kofi to tie it up at 1:13. Well that's certainly a surprise. Ryder, with the old Survivor Series logo on his trunks, flapjacks Primo before it's off to Mojo (Graves: "Smackdown's resident blithering idiot.") for his bell clap in the corner. Ryder comes back in and has to deal with Anderson and Gallows, meaning it's a Magic Killer for the pin at 5:14.

We get the big moment of the match as American Alpha comes in for multiple double dropkicks but Sheamus starts stomping Gable down in the corner. The Shining Stars actually beat on Gable for a bit until the hot tag brings Jordan back in for the house cleaning. It's actually a Steiner Bulldog to get rid of the Shining Stars and tie things up.

Everything breaks down and it's Enzo being launched onto the pile. Slater hits a dive of his own, leaving Jordan to get caught in the Swing. Another Magic Killer eliminates American Alpha at 10:46 and we're down to 3-2. Slater has to fight off Anderson and Gallows but some Raw miscommunication allows a tag off to Rhyno. The Gore gets rid of Anderson and Gallows at 12:26 but the Bada Boom Shaka Lacka takes out Rhyno and

Slater at 13:00.

The Usos remember they're in the match and superkick Enzo into the Superfly Splash for the elimination at 13:30, leaving us with the Usos vs. Sheamus/Cesaro. Sheamus eats a superkick but Cesaro shoves him out of the way of the second, meaning it's a Brogue Kick for two on Jimmy with Jey making the save. Cesaro comes in with the Uppercut Train followed by a 619. The high crossbody gets two on Jey and there's the Swing to make it even worse. Jimmy superkicks the knee out to set up the Tequila Sunrise but Cesaro reverses into a Sharpshooter for the tap out at 18:56 as Sheamus cuts Jey off.

Rating: D+. Yeah ok we get it: Cesaro and Sheamus are a thing and we'll like them already. This was REALLY disappointing as they flew through the eliminations for reasons I don't even want to try to comprehend. But hey, they got the match in and out of there as fast as they could and that's what matters right? That's why we added an hour: so the matches that could be interesting could be short with two eliminations in less than eighty seconds.

So in theory the final Survivor Series match, which now means even less as Raw has secured the brand supremacy thing (assuming they're not counting the stupid singles matches), is going to run about forty five minutes.

Stephanie McMahon and Foley give Cesaro and Sheamus a Tag Team Title match tomorrow night on Raw.

We recap the Cruiserweight Title match, which is another non-existent feud because there's no story here. Kendrick has the title and Kalisto's job is to bring it to Smackdown.

Cruiserweight Title: Kalisto vs. Brian Kendrick

Kendrick is defending and Kalisto snaps off some hurricanranas to start. A running corner dropkick has Brian in trouble so he grabs the ropes to avoid getting pinned. That would be his craftiness you see and that makes him an interesting villain. Or so I'm told. Kendrick grabs a long cravate until Kalisto gets him to the apron for a Spanish Fly to the floor.

Back in and Kendrick gets flipped off the top but still grabs the Captain's Hook. The rope is finally grabbed and Kalisto starts snapping off the kicks, followed by a middle rope seated senton to the back. The Salida Del Sol gets two as Kendrick puts a boot on the rope. Kalisto heads up top...and here's Baron Corbin to hit Kendrick for the DQ at 12:19. Therefore, Raw is now 3-1, making the last Survivor Series match even less important.

Rating: C. I was digging this one until the end and it's amazing how much more interesting this is when you have a high flier that we've actually gotten to know a bit over the years instead of someone who was brought in without much backstory. Oh and another reason why the division hasn't worked so far: the champ's finisher is a chinlock.

Corbin gives Kalisto the End of Days.

Pre-Show recap.

Team Raw Men vs. Team Smackdown Men

Raw: Kevin Owens, Chris Jericho, Roman Reigns, Seth Rollins, Braun Strowman

Smackdown: Shane McMahon, Bray Wyatt, Randy Orton, Dean Ambrose, AJ Styles

Ellsworth is here as Smackdown's mascot. AJ and Owens get things going to really make the smarks happy. Neither can get anywhere so the fans start a STUPID IDIOT chant (Owens: "That's you!"). The fans get the tag to Jericho, who stops to hug Owens. Chris leaves so it's off to Rollins vs. Ambrose with neither being able to hit a finisher. Jericho comes back in and hits an enziguri for two on Dean.

Shane gets the tag and does his weird punching before elbowing Jericho in the jaw with the fans telling him he still has it. The boss gets beaten down as the announcers argue over which show had higher ratings. Not THE MATCH IN FRONT OF THEM, but the TV ratings. Roman comes in for the corner clotheslines but it's back to Ambrose vs. Owens. The Pop Up Powerbomb doesn't work and we get the big showdown instead, leaving Owens to do the

BIG flip dive onto everyone else.

A bunch of people go after Braun, leaving the Shield and AJ in the ring. The Smackdown guys clear the ring but get in a brawl until Shane breaks it up. A kick to Dean's head allows Strowman to powerslam Ambrose for the elimination at 15:59. Strowman shrugs off the Smackdown attack again, including a SCARY looking toss to send AJ over the top and out to the floor.

We get the Bray vs. Braun showdown with Strowman dropkicking Bray down in a not horrible visual. Orton finally gets in the RKO onto the announcers' table and Shane adds the top rope elbow for the huge crash. AJ gets Shane back inside and Strowman is counted out at 21:12 because Ellsworth grabbed his foot. James bails up the ramp but gets caught (How can you not outrun BRAUN STROWMAN?) and thrown off the stage.

Shane is still in the ring to take another beating and the Lionsault connects, only to have Shane reverse into a small package for two. McMahon and Orton both take Codebreakers and of course Shane kicks out. Question for discussion: would any other member of Team Smackdown be allowed to kick out of a Lionsault and Codebreaker in the span of thirty seconds? Naturally Shane gets in a shot on Jericho and makes the tag off to AJ. They trade submission attempts and AJ decks Owens, who comes in with the List of Jericho for the DQ at 29:28. Jericho is distraught and gets RKO'd for the pin at 30:21.

We're down to Shane/Orton/Bray/AJ vs. Reigns/Rollins. It's Seth going in first and the numbers game has him in early trouble. A superplex gets two on Seth but Orton is banged up enough to allow a tag off to Reigns. The sitout powerbomb gets two on AJ but he blocks the Superman Punch and brings in Shane. A DDT puts Reigns down and something like a spinebuster does the same to Seth.

The spear goes into the post and Shane loads up the Coast to Coast, which is speared out of the air....for two. He's officially announced as eliminated a few seconds later, presumably due to injury. Shane looks really messed up and it wouldn't surprise me if that wasn't exactly how it was supposed to go. There's a good chance that he didn't mean to kick

out but had no idea where he was.

Rollins gets the hot tag to clean house and hits his rolling superplex into the Falcon's Arrow for two on AJ. Reigns has to save Seth from the Elevated DDT on the floor but AJ breaks up a DoubleBomb. Cue Ambrose to go after AJ though and we get the Shield Reunion for a TripleBomb through the table. Seth pins AJ at 46:11 and it's down to two vs. two.

Orton and Wyatt circle the ring until Luke Harper shows up for a distraction. As usual, NONE OF THIS IS A DQ because that's not what the script calls for. Rollins Sling Blades Wyatt and dives onto Harper to keep up the house cleaning. The superkick looks to set up the frog splash but Orton pulls him out of the air with an RKO for the elimination at 49:32.

So it's Orton/Wyatt vs. Reigns with Roman starting fast to do what he can. Reigns is sent into the barricade but scores with the apron dropkick on Bray. Harper gets a spear and the Superman Punch drops Bray. Orton shoves Bray out of the way of the spear though and Sister Abigail finishes Reigns at 52:57. JBL: "RAW WINS! RAW WINS!" Otunga: "Smackdown got one!" JBL: "RAW WINS IS WHAT EVERYONE WANTED TO SAY BUT SMACKDOWN LIVE WINS!"

Rating: A-. This was a lot messier than it could have been but they did exactly what they needed to do here by eating up A LOT of time (longest Survivor Series match on record and longer than multiple Royal Rumbles) and being very entertaining at the same time. Bray winning is a very, very good idea as it's now the biggest win of his career and hopefully (emphasis on that word) he can build on it. Orton taking the bullet was interesting though and that's going to mean something going forward. I had a blast with this and it's the big Survivor Series match I was hoping for, issues with eliminations aside.

We get the same Goldberg vs. Lesnar recap we've gotten for weeks now.

Goldberg vs. Brock Lesnar

Lesnar drives him into the corner to start but Goldberg hits two spears in the first minute. The Jackhammer beats Lesnar in ONE MINUTE THIRTY

SEVEN SECONDS!!!

SCREW YOU DEAN AMBROSE, RANDY ORTON, AND ANYONE ELSE THAT LESNAR HAS KILLED BECAUSE GOLDBERG JUST BEAT HIM IN A MINUTE AND A HALF!!!

The show goes off the air before 10:30 with nothing else happening.

Overall Rating: C-. The show ended about five minutes ago and I'm still in shock. HOW IN THE FREAKING WORLD DOES THIS HELP ANYONE OTHER THAN GOLDBERG, WHO ISN'T EVEN STICKING AROUND??? Have Orton, Reigns, Wyatt, freaking Strowman or ANYONE else do that match. You have Orton get squashed at Summerslam and Ambrose get squashed at Wrestlemania but GOLDBERG gets to do this?

So in theory, this has something to do with Goldberg coming into the show injured. If that's the case, they knew this was going to be a short match. But they can't even give the other two Survivor Series matches twenty minutes? This is what you extended the show for another hour? Or you can't give anything else extra time?

I know I'm rambling here but this is one of the most astounding things I've ever seen. The money in Lesnar is gone for a long time, everything Lesnar has done in recent months and years feels like a total waste and Goldberg is probably gone until his Hall of Fame induction. Throw Luke Harper out there or Kane or ANYONE BUT LESNAR and it's fine. Unless there was a major contractual issue or something big backstage, I cannot understand why this happened.

The rest of the show was up and down with the great long match helping to save it but that main event is all anyone is going to be talking about for a long time. I really could have gone for the two earlier Survivor Series matches getting more time, especially in light of what's going on here. This is going to get a lot more talk in the upcoming days because I haven't been this shocked since.....probably Shane on Nitro.

Results

Team Raw Women b. Team Smackdown Women – Bayley to Belly to Lynch

The Miz b. Sami Zayn – Rollup

Team Raw Tag Teams b. Team Smackdown Tag Teams – Sharpshooter to Jimmy Uso

Brian Kendrick b. Kalisto via DQ when Baron Corbin interfered

Team Smackdown Men b. Team Raw Men – Sister Abigail to Reigns

Goldberg b. Brock Lesnar – Jackhammer

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Survivor Series 2016 Preview

For only the second time in history, WWE has a pay per view series reach thirty entries as we arrive at Survivor Series 2016. In what is the most important thing a Survivor Series can do, there's actually something on the line here, albeit just bragging rights, as Smackdown faces off with Raw in a series of three elimination tag matches. It's only a six match card (for now) so it should be interesting to see what they're doing with the show. Let's get to it.

We'll start with the ladies in the first Team Raw vs. Team Smackdown match. This looks almost completely one sided on paper as Smackdown has Becky Lynch and Nikki Bella, who are nowhere near enough to counter the

combined forces of Sasha Banks, Charlotte, Bayley and Nia Jax. However, never underestimate the power of WWE pushing Bella to the moon and back, meaning she has a good chance of overcoming the odds. She's fearless you know.

That being said, I really can't imagine Raw has much to worry about here. No matter how you look at it, there's just too much talent on the red show, even if they have all their in fighting. This should be a glorified layup as Carmella and Alexa Bliss are such liabilities for the Smackdown team that there's almost no way around their limitations. I'll go with Raw winning here in what shouldn't be much of a challenge for them.

On a side note since I don't have much material to talk about here with such a short card, is anyone else completely uninterested in seeing Bella vs. Charlotte treated as a huge showdown? We saw it last year and it was nothing special but now that Charlotte has become possibly the most successful women's wrestler ever and Bella was on the shelf for months, we're supposed to care? That doesn't make sense, though again, never underestimate the powers of a reality "star" in WWE.

Next up we have a title match as Cruiserweight Champion Brian Kendrick defends against Smackdown's Kalisto. This is a little bigger than your usual title match though as the winning brand gets the entire cruiserweight division. There isn't much to the feud as Kalisto was just named #1 contender a few weeks back on Smackdown.

I'm really hoping logic takes control here because there's not much of a reason to keep the title and the division as a whole over on Raw. Tuesday night has a little more open space and is better suited for an action based division than Raw, which is almost entirely storyline driven. Couple that with the upcoming 205 Live, which is being taped after Smackdown instead of Raw and there's really no reason for Kendrick to walk out with the title. If nothing else, maybe Kalisto can breathe some life into the title instead of being another mat based cruiserweight.

We'll go back to the elimination tags as we have the tag team version, featuring a staggering twenty wrestlers in one match. This kind of match hasn't been done at this level since 1988 and the previous incarnations

were borderline classics and among the best Survivor Series matches of all time. I'm not sure the talent is there to pull that off this time but at least there's a great chance for some exciting action.

Picking an accurate winner here is a lot more complicated though as neither team really stands out. Raw probably has the better lineup from top to bottom but Smackdown has American Alpha and better continuity. Unfortunately Raw has to deal with the Shining Stars and the issues between Cesaro and Sheamus. On the other hand, Heath Slater and Rhyno are playing WAY over their heads at the moment and I don't think they're going to be able to make that last against the Raw teams.

In a pick I'm not entirely confident in, I'm going to pick Smackdown to win here, if nothing else so there can be something on the line in the third match. Neither team looks great but I could certainly go for Cesaro/Sheamus vs. American Alpha with the technique vs. clubbing power formula. This should be a lot of fun if they do it right though and that's what matters in a match like this.

We'll go back to the title matches now with Miz defending the Intercontinental Title against Smackdown's Sami Zayn in another match where the title can switch brands. Miz won the belt back from Dolph Ziggler earlier this week and Ziggler not being on the card seems like a red flag.

At the end of the day though, I can't imagine Raw losing two titles and not having a midcard title to fall back on whatsoever. As much as I'd love to see Sami get a title, this doesn't really seem like the time to pull the trigger. Miz is a great Intercontinental Champion and can pick right back up where he left off after that pesky Ziggler run.

That leaves us with one Survivor Series match to go and this one is the biggest tossup of them all. I really don't know which one to pick as you would think Smackdown would be at a disadvantage with Shane McMahon on the team but he went thirty minutes with the Undertaker at Wrestlemania. The rest of the lineups pretty much cancel each other out though and that's rather influential in a match like this.

I'll go with Smackdown as WWE has a long history of putting the blue show

over when the two of them go head to head. There's nothing on the line here so it's not like this is going to mean much either way, but the bragging rights are always worth a chuckle at worst. If nothing else we don't have to listen to Matt Striker shouting "IN YOUR FACE! IN YOUR FACE! IN YOUR FACE!" when someone wins.

That leaves us with the main event, which is only somewhat interesting but is the focal point of the show. Twelve and a half years ago, Goldberg and Brock Lesnar had one of the worst major matches in wrestling history and for some reason we're supposed to forget all that and just enjoy them fighting again. It's also Goldberg's first match since that night and I'm not sure how bad this could really get.

Obviously I'll go with Lesnar, but neither guy is really a good option here. You don't have Lesnar set up as this unstoppable monster and then have him lose but at the same time, Lesnar beating Goldberg means as much as Hulk Hogan beating the Ultimate Warrior in 1998. Lesnar wins here after Goldberg doesn't do much besides throw spears. At least there should be some energy here and Goldberg will have a better chance than Dean Ambrose had.

Overall, Survivor Series has a lot of potential but it could be good or bad. If they let these matches have a lot of time (which they should given the four hour run time) and only add one more at most, they could have the time to build into something entertaining. Unfortunately they could also build into a disaster with the fans getting bored and matches that aren't the most interesting. I've been excited for this since it was announced though and I'm going to try to keep that optimism.

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Superstars – November 18, 2016: The Fourth Part is Always Bad

Superstars

Date: November 18, 2016

Location: First Niagara Center, Buffalo, New York

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Corey Graves

It's another week of Superstars and unfortunately that means another week of highlights from a Raw that wasn't all that interesting in the first place. Main Event has completely pulled away from Superstars for its original content so hopefully things can get a bit closer to even this week. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Titus O'Neil vs. Curtis Axel

And so much for that idea. At least we don't have to put up with that Titus Brand stuff on Raw anymore. Curtis takes him into the corner and dances away before the referee annoyingly tries to break up a brawl, allowing Titus to score with a big boot. We hit the horrible chinlock with Titus talking trash and trying to start an AXELMANIA chant. Axel makes his comeback with the necksnap and a running knee to the face for two. Not that it matters as Titus sends him chest first into the buckle, setting up the Clash of the Titus for the pin at 5:30.

Rating: D. That might become my standard rating for all Titus matches. He can talk a decent amount of trash but at some point you have to be able to do more than throw people through the air and do a Sky High. Also, so much for believing in Curtis Axel, who might have been building up towards a small push but now he's jobbing to Titus. Oh joy indeed.

Off to Raw for the first time.

It's time for Lesnar and Goldberg as it's nearly halftime of Monday Night Football. Lesnar slips a bit during his jump to the apron but it's not bad. There's a wall of security as Goldberg tells Lesnar to shut up and stay out of this. Heyman gets cut off by the GOLDBERG chants before finally going on about all the people Lesnar has killed. Goldberg cuts him off again to say his name isn't on that list, only to have the chants start up again. Heyman starts to offer something but Lesnar grabs the mic and tells the fans to shut up.

The offer is for Heyman to find a replacement for Sunday's match. That means Goldberg takes off his shirt so Lesnar shoves some guards down. Heyman says the beating will be so bad that Goldberg's son will call Lesnar daddy. The security is quickly dispatched and there's no one left between them. Lesnar, with one of the palest chests I've ever seen on a wrestler, walks away. This was WAY too long but they don't have a choice because there's nothing left for them to do on the show.

And then the second.

New Day vs. Seth Rollins/Braun Strowman/Chris Jericho

Jericho and Kofi start things off and that's not a bad thing. An elbow to the jaw puts Kofi on the mat and it's quickly off to Woods vs. Rollins with the latter coming in off a chop to the chest. That goes nowhere either as they hit the mat for Seth's headlock before it's back to Jericho as New Day takes over. The Warrior splash gets two and Kofi comes back in, only to get slammed by Braun as we take a break.

Back with Braun holding Kofi in a nerve hold before handing it back to Rollins. Some double knees put Seth down but it's Strowman running cross the ring to kick Big E. in the face. We wind up with Woods kicking

Jericho in the back and Strowman plowing through the other two opponents. Woods finally kicks him in the face and forearm rolls Rollins in the jaw. That's enough for Braun though as it's a powerslam to end Xavier at 14:06.

Rating: C. This picked up a lot near the end as Woods continues to be great at the last chance offense. Strowman is getting better at being a rampaging monster but he's still in need of some more experience. I liked the match well enough though and New Day will be fine with a loss like this. That being said, it's getting harder and harder to care about these one off matches between people with no animosity.

Jinder Mahal vs. Darren Young

Four times. I've done this show eight times now and this has been on the card on four occasions. Mahal hides in the corner to start (I'd hide from this match too) until a shoulder block and a jumping seated senton get two. A big boot puts Young on the floor and we take a break.

Back with Mahal choking in the corner and shouting that peace catchphrase that no one has ever caught nor used as a phrase. A chinlock doesn't go anywhere so Mahal yells at Bob Backlund before putting on another chinlock. See, it's the yelling that makes it more impressive. Young fights up with some belly to belly suplexes and that belly to back on the apron. Back up and Mahal sends him throat first into the rope, setting up a Regal Cutter for the pin at 11:12.

Rating: D. They're trolling me. Like, they have to be at this point. Either that or they really do pay absolutely no attention to this show and Mahal and Young just go out there because no one notices what they do every week. Unfortunately that means we have to put up with these two fighting almost every other week despite the fact that neither is interesting. Boring match here and it's probably a matter of time before they fight again.

A two minute highlight package of the Survivor Series Summit wraps the show up.

Overall Rating: D+. This week, Main Event gave us a good Luke Harper vs.

Apollo Crews match and a perfectly watchable Vaudevillains vs. Breezango match. This show gave us the fourth incarnation of a match that hasn't been interesting yet and another bad Titus O'Neil match. It's really amazing that Superstars is treated as a wasteland and Main Event is a show with a little effort put in. Another just barely passable show this week and that's sad given what can be done with something like this.

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Monday Night Raw – November 7, 2016: It's Not Good Enough

Monday Night Raw

Date: November 7, 2016

Location: SSE Hydro, Glasgow, Scotland

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

It's a rare taped show this week as they're on the annual November European trip. We're also less than two weeks away from Survivor Series and that means we'll be getting some more names added so some of the matches. The main Raw team is eighty percent set and it's fairly clear

that Seth Rollins is going to complete the team. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week with Mick Foley setting up most of Team Raw along with Rollins saving Roman Reigns from a beatdown.

Opening sequence.

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.

Rich Swann/Sin Cara vs. Brian Kendrick/Noam Dar

Dar is a Scottish wrestler and gets a huge ovation in his debut. Swann and Dar start things off as we hear that Dar also uses a kneebar submission. That would be another name on the list of people who use a style that goes against the idea of what made cruiserweights popular in the first place. The villains (Is Dar a villain? If so they're not presenting him as one.) are sent to the floor for a dive from Cara, who is sent into the barricade as we take a break.

Back with Cara in a chinlock before it's off to Dar for a neck crank. A faceplant gets Cara out of trouble and it's off to Swann for no reaction. Everything breaks down and Cara's slingshot Swanton Bomb crushes Dar. A rolling cradle gives Swann the pin on Kendrick at 7:23.

Rating: D+. The match was fun but it's another case of WHAT ARE THEY

THINKING. Dar is brought in to a huge pop and then they put him with the heel champion for reasons that still aren't clear. Oh and then let's have the champion get pinned AGAIN despite no indication that Swann is getting a title shot anytime soon. But they're cruiserweights and they're exclusive to Raw...for another three weeks until they get their own show.

Post match Kendrick yells at Dar and punches him out. Dar comes back and kicks Kendrick out of the ring to make sure you know Kendrick is worthless.

Video on Goldberg's career and his return to WWE a few weeks back. Brock has told Goldberg's family to not watch the match and that's not cool with Goldberg.

Stephanie is in her office to say she can't be on Smackdown this week but Shane McMahon and Daniel Bryan are welcome to show up next week. Sami Zayn comes in because Stephanie invited him here to say he drives her crazy. Foley wants Sami to answer Dolph Ziggler's Intercontinental Title open challenge but Sami is going to have to win a match to earn that spot. Let me get this straight: STEPHANIE is telling someone to tone it down? Is she kidding?

Here are Enzo Amore and Big Cass for a chat. Cass thinks Smackdown's team is going to be proven SAWFT. Anderson and Gallows, Golden Truth, Sheamus and Cesaro all join them and, after a break, Sheamus has something to say. After saying what a great Celtic country Ireland is, it turns into a four way insult exchange. New Day FINALLY shows up and they're in Braveheart gear. Woods has Francesca's Irish cousin: Agnes the bagpipes.

Xavier goes on a long speech about fighting for pride and Big E. finally does the William Wallace speech. Goldust: "You have such a brave heart." Cesaro says he and Sheamus are in but Sheamus says no because he's the captain. Sheamus: "On behalf of this team, we're in." Anderson and Gallows say they're going to stab New Day in the back the first chance they get. Woods is upset that Gallows throws his sword down but as luck would have it, a match has been signed for tonight. This was WAY too long and didn't really even establish anything new.

New Day vs. Anderson and Gallows

Non-title and joined in progress. Kofi and Big E. take turns stomping on Anderson until Gallows comes in for a running knee to Big E.'s jaw. Now it's the bald guys stomping and a reverse 3D gets two. It's chinlock time before Big E. finally fights up and makes the hot tag to Kofi. The Boom Drop sets up a crossbody for two but Gallows breaks up the Midnight Hour. A quick Magic Killer puts Big E. away at 6:45.

Rating: D+. We waited almost an hour for the second match and the best we can get is the Tag Team Champions losing clean in less than seven minutes to a team they've already beaten multiple times? This show has been a disaster so far and this was the latest bad moment in a series of them.

R-Truth suggests that he and Goldust take a break for a bit. Therefore, their spot on the team has been traded for a time share in Puerto Rico. They look through the brochure and Goldust realizes it's not as great as it seems.

Video on Brock Lesnar being all dominant and only having one blemish on his record. He can fix that at Survivor Series.

Owens and Jericho go to Braun's dressing room to try and get him on their side. Strowman didn't answer their knock so Jericho loads up the List but Kevin talks him down. Braun says he's on his own team so Jericho puts him on the List.

Emmalina video.

Survivor Series Qualifying Match: Shining Stars vs. Golden Truth

Truth hiptosses Epico to start and drops a dancing leg. Primo comes in to take over with some choking, followed by a double dropkick for two. A few kicks puts Primo down and the hot (work with me here) tag brings in Goldust to beat up the cousins. Goldust gets in a spinebuster on Epico but Primo grabs a rollup with his feet on the ropes for the pin at 5:18.

Rating: D-. So now we have one jobber team instead of the other on the Survivor Series team. This show has been HORRIBLE so far and this is the latest match that is just killing any energy the crowd might have been able to have. Like really, who cares which of these teams is going to the

pay per view so American Alpha can suplex them in half?

Time for big talking segment #3 with Michael Cole EXPLAINING SURVIVOR SERIES before bringing out Charlotte, the captain of the women's team. After a quick speech about how Raw is going to win, here's Nia Jax, who Charlotte cuts off to talk about how Bayley is the weak link. Nia doesn't want to listen to Charlotte so here's Alicia Fox, who talks about the name of the game being survival.

Next up is Bayley, who keeps getting cut off by the fans singing songs. Charlotte tries to introduce the last woman but the Bayley songs cut her off again. After a lot of praise, here's Dana Brooke but Sasha Banks comes out before much else can be said. Sasha thinks they can't win without her and bickering ensues until Charlotte hides behind Nia, which doesn't really go along with Nia's reaction to Charlotte about five minutes earlier.

Nia Jax/Charlotte/Dana Brooke vs. Bayley/Alicia Fox/Sasha Banks

Stephanie made this during the break and thankfully Cole just tells us this instead of needing to see it happening. That's all I ask. Bayley and Nia start things off with the small one being run off, meaning Alicia tries her luck. A triple baseball slide has almost no effect on Nia and it's Banks having to avoid a charge in the corner but Nia runs her over.

Back from a break with Sasha being put in a variety of chinlocks. A rollup finally gets two on Charlotte and the kickout sends Sasha into the corner for the tag to Bayley. The series of elbows has Charlotte in trouble and everything breaks down. Nia runs everyone over and throws Alicia into the wrong corner by the head. Charlotte accidentally kicks Nia in the head though and it's a Bayley to Belly for the pin on the champ at 11:45.

Rating: C. So is Sasha on the team or is it Dana? I'm assuming Banks but it's really not clear. Either way, this was by far and away the best thing on the show so far but that's not really saying much. Bayley pinning Charlotte finally sets us up with a new challenger as they're getting close to running Charlotte vs. Sasha into the ground.

Seth implies he gets a future World Title match in exchange for being on the team. Cue Strowman to say he never liked Rollins and might break him in half tonight.

Rusev vs. Sami Zayn

The winner gets the shot at Ziggler at Survivor Series. Rusev takes him into the corner to start but gets dropkicked out to the floor for a breather. Back with Rusev in control via a chinlock as you might expect. Sami tries to fight up but gets knocked right back down by the power game. For some reason Rusev tries to go up but eats the Helluva Kick from the top to give Sami the pin at 8:40.

Rating: D+. Not much to see here but Sami getting the title shot is a nice surprise. That's going to be the fun wrestling match at the show and if Sami just happens to get his first title on the WWE roster, so be it. Rusev losing again here isn't a good sign for him though and he needs to turn it around soon.

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. The last hour was a big help to keep this from being one of the worst shows of all time. Those first two hours were nothing short of a disaster though as there was nothing interesting and it was clear that WWE wasn't putting in the slightest bit of effort. I have little patience when WWE just presents a show and expects us to care because it's called Monday Night Raw.

At some point you have to put in the effort to make a show work and that's not what we got here. I don't care about cruiserweight tags and the Shining Stars vs. Golden Truth, no matter how much WWE hypes them up. Really bad show, but it could have been so much worse without the women and Sami's match.

Results

Rich Swann/Sin Cara b. Brian Kendrick/Noam Dar – Rolling cradle to Kendrick

Anderson and Gallows b. New Day – Magic Killer to Big E.

Shining Stars b. Golden Truth – Rollup with feet on the ropes

Bayley/Sasha Banks/Alicia Fox b. Charlotte/Nia Jax/Dana Brooke – Bayley to Belly to Charlotte

Sami Zayn b. Rusev – Helluva Kick

Kevin Owens b. Roman Reigns, Seth Rollins, Chris Jericho and Braun

Strowman – Owens fell on Jericho

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Hell in a Cell 2016: This Isn't Even Purgatory

Hell in a Cell 2016

Date: October 30, 2016

Location: TD Garden, Boston, Massachusetts

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

It's the annual "scary" show as we have three matches inside the Cell. In this case we've got Rusev challenging Roman Reigns for the US Title, Kevin Owens defending the Raw World Title against Seth Rollins and, possibly, a main event of Charlotte going after Sasha Banks' Women's Title. If that's true, it's the biggest match in the history of women's wrestling. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Lince Dorado/Cedric Alexander/Sin Cara vs. Drew Gulak/Tony Nese/Ariya Daivari

Rematch from Superstars. Cara and Nese start things off and Dorado looks so much like Cara that Mauro Ranallo gets them confused. A couple of backbreakers have Nese's partners in trouble as we get a Sin Cara chant. Cara moonsaults onto Daivari to set up a double tag to Dorado and Nese with the former cleaning house off a variety of kicks. A shooting star press gets two on Nese and everything breaks down. Nese throws Dorado onto Cara and Cedric to send us to a break.

Back (after that freaky Ziggler vs. Miz chicken ad) with Daivari kneeing Dorado in the face and the fans not going along with Nese's pleas for a DAIVARI chant. Nese trips Dorado and springboards into a Lionsault which barely grazes Lince but gets two anyway. The hot tag brings in Alexander to a very nice reaction. A triple dive takes the heels out and everything breaks down with a series of strikes and slams all around. Cedric stomps on Gulak and gives him the Lumbar Check for the pin at 9:37.

Rating: C. This is the kind of match you have these guys around for: it's entertaining, there's little reason for it to be taking place and the fans freak out because of all the high spots. These guys are great for popping a crowd but it all falls apart when they're trying to do something serious, which is a problem for a division like this.

The opening video features the Ouija board theme before talking about the three main matches and all the violence that will ensue.

US Title: Roman Reigns vs. Rusev

Cole says this is the 34th time the Cell has been lowered, which really doesn't have the same ring to it anymore. Reigns is defending and slugs away to start before heading outside for some failed rams into the cage. Rusev gets knocked off the apron and into the cage before being whipped into the cage. A kick to the head gets Rusev out of trouble and he takes Reigns back inside to start working on the arm.

Rusev misses a charge though and gets clotheslined in the corner, followed by a boot to the face. That just earns Reigns a whip into the steps before Rusev changes the pace a bit by hitting the champ in the face with the steps. They head back inside with Reigns slingshotting into

a dropkick through the ropes to send Rusev into the cage again.

It's already time for a kendo stick and a table as the champ pounds away on Rusev's back. They head inside again and Rusev gets the cane away before tying Reigns up. Some hard shots to the chest have Reigns in trouble until a spear gets a quick near fall. The Superman Punch connects for two but the second spear is blocked by a loud superkick.

Rusev sends him face first into the steps (on the top rope) for two more and frustration is setting in. The Accolade goes on with Reigns' shoulders nearly being pulled out of socket. The champ gets out again so Rusev opts for a chain, which is quickly knocked out of his hands. We actually get dueling Rusev chants as he loads the steps back into the ring. Rusev's kick to the face gets two more and it's back to the Accolade with Reigns on the steps with the chain in his mouth. Naturally Roman powers out of it into a Samoan drop onto the steps. Rusev stands up and gets speared off the steps for the pin at 24:31.

Rating: B+. And so much for Rusev and the Accolade at the moment. This was reaching Cena levels of taking a beating and surviving over and over no matter what happens, though at least it's in a match designed to be that barbaric. The other problem is who fights Reigns next. It's not like there's anyone really ready to face him on the Raw roster but at least they can just put him on the Survivor Series roster to buy themselves a month.

We look at Seth Rollins winning the triple threat on Monday.

Owens isn't impressed at Rollins beating him for three seconds out of a match that lasted about 600. Then he powerbombed Rollins onto the apron, just like he did to John Cena. Tonight Rollins wants to get inside a Cell to become Universal Champion to prove he's the man. That won't be happening because Owens is going to do in the Cell will make what we just saw look like a cakewalk. After the match tonight, it won't be clear what Rollins will be but Owens will be the man.

Bayley vs. Dana Brooke

Rematch from a few weeks ago on Raw where Dana won, albeit with the

ending looking a bit botched. Bayley gets in a few kicks to the ribs but Dana takes her into the corner to pull on the bad shoulder. Some knees to the should have Bayley in trouble, though I'm not sure why Dana keeps screaming before each knee drop. Dana loads up the ram into the post that won her the first match but gets blocked, only to have Bayley's bad arm draped across the top rope. A quick suplex from Bayley and a basement clothesline set up the middle rope elbow to the jaw. The Bayley to Belly gets the pin at 6:27.

Rating: C-. Not much to this one but the right person won and that's the important idea here. Dana is fine for a gatekeeper heel, especially when the division is as weak as it is at the moment. Bayley is probably in line for a title feud at this point and the good thing is there's enough history for her to go face vs. face with Sasha if she retains tonight.

Mick Foley and Stephanie McMahon play Exposition Theater about Survivor Series when Chris Jericho comes in to ask why he's not on Team Raw. This leads into a discussion of Foley being put on the List for a third time, a trinity, a triumvirate or tres tiempos. Foley isn't intimidated by threats of getting IT ("That's the stupidest thing I've ever heard.") so Jericho gets back to the point: he and Kevin Owens should be the captains of Team Raw. Stephanie doesn't think so because Owens has a title defense to worry about.

Enzo Amore/Big Cass vs. Anderson and Gallows

Before the match, Enzo has a message for Andy and the Big Gal. Enzo: "You are like Times New Roman s going to go upside Luke's head like Big Papi. Enzo thinks that after tonight, he's going to have to start calling Cass Woody because he's going to have Andy all over the bottom of his boot (if I have to explain that reference to you.....yeah I've got nothing).

Enzo cross bodies Anderson to start and it's already off to Cass for some shots in the corner. The bald guys are taken to the floor where Gallows clotheslines Enzo's head off to take over. It's a short form beating though as Enzo shoves Anderson off the top and hits his middle rope DDT. That means a hot tag off to Cass to clean house with Karl being sent out to the floor. The Empire Elbow gets two on Anderson but Cass misses the

big boot. Enzo tags himself in for a high crossbody and the dancing jabs. Gallows comes right back with a superkick and the Magic Killer puts Enzo away at 6:45.

Rating: D+. Again, not much to this one but this isn't the match that people are watching the show to see. Enzo and Cass are likely losing here to set up a big road to redemption where they FINALLY win the titles sometime in the new year and there's nothing wrong with that at all. Anderson and Gallows needed a win or two to get them back on track and this is as good of an option as they had.

We recap Kevin Owens vs. Seth Rollins. Owens won the title a few months back in a fourway with Owens receiving a bit of help from HHH. Rollins then had the title won last month until the referee was taken out and Rollins' pin wasn't counted. Seth claimed conspiracy so the solution was to put them inside the Cell.

Raw World Title: Kevin Owens vs. Seth Rollins

This means the women are indeed main eventing tonight. Rollins is challenging and is coming in with a bad back thanks to a powerbomb on the apron to end Raw. That means more kinesio tape, which I'm convinced is some kind of product placement. Owens immediately goes for the weapons on the floor but gets chopped for his efforts.

Back inside and Rollins gets two off the Sling Blade before shouting that he's the man around here. Owens: "Shut up." A Blockbuster gets two more and it's already table time. That takes too long though and the bad back is sent into the corner, setting up a backsplash to make things even worse.

Seth is sent into the cage and Owens rips off the tape, which Cole seems to think would hurt worse than the steel. Back in and Seth fires off more chops but Owens sends him through the ropes and face first into the cage. The slow beating continues as the Cannonball sends Seth back outside. That's fine with Owens as he hits a second Cannonball up against the cage but it's still too early for the Pop Up Powerbomb.

Instead they trade superkicks, followed by an enziguri to Owens and a BIG

clothesline to Rollins as both guys drop. Owens is up first and grabs another table, which he puts on the apron and wedges into the Cell wall at an angle with the original table set up underneath it. Rollins is up with something like a Falcon's Arrow onto the apron, followed by back to back suicide dives to send Kevin into the steel.

Owens busts out a fire extinguisher but sprays the referee for some reason. The fans want Jericho and here he comes as the original referee is taken out, likely due to a bad case of being cold. Jericho locks himself inside along with a second referee and the key. Rollins knocks Chris into the cage but walks into the package side slam for two more. Fans: "STUPID IDIOT!"

The springboard knee to the face sets up the Pedigree but Jericho makes the save and takes it instead. Rollins powerbombs Owens (after muscling him up) through the double tables and the fans lose it. The frog splash looks to finish but Jericho pulls the referee out to keep things going. That's enough for Seth who powerbombs Jericho into the Cell, only to walk into the Pop Up Powerbomb for a very close two.

The Canadians start double teaming Rollins with Jericho handing the champ a chair to unload on Rollins' back. Jericho tries to bring in a second chair and the results are as expected with Seth taking it away and cleaning house. Kevin chairs Seth down again and sets up the two chairs for a big old powerbomb to retain the titles at 23:19.

Rating: B. This was a better story with the good guy fighting through the overwhelming odds until he just couldn't hang in there anymore. It keeps Rollins looking strong and gives Owens a win, which thankfully he didn't need HHH to help him earn. It's still nothing great but at least it was the right ending with no interference from someone who wasn't involved in the story.

Post match Jericho gives Rollins a Codebreaker.

Pre-show recap.

Cruiserweight Title: Brian Kendrick vs. TJ Perkins

Perkins is defending and Kendrick is getting desperate to keep his career going. They trade rollups to start until Kendrick charges into a hiptoss. A slingshot hilo sends Brian outside but it's too early for the Wrecking Ball dropkick. Kendrick tries to tie TJ to the ropes using the athletic tape but the champ is right back with another dropkick. A belly to back suplex looks to set up something off the top, only to have TJ dive into a dropkick for two.

The fireman's carry enziguri sets up the Wrecking Ball but a rollup is countered into the Captain's Hook. TJ grabs the rope and Brian does the same to escape the kneebar. Brian loads up Sliced Bread #2 but tweaks his knee. Of course he's gold bricking and, after waiting around for about a minute, TJ goes over to him and gets headbutted into the Captain's Hook to give Kendrick the title at 10:33.

Rating: D. GAH this was so boring. I've tried to care about the cruiserweights but does ANYONE want to see these two and their stupid issues with Kendrick's mid-life crisis and TJ spouting off video game references? The match was fine but I was just so bored through the whole thing and there's no way around that.

Cesaro and Sheamus have a bonding moment and say they're ready to team together after hating each others guts. As expected, this turns into an argument, this time over rental cars.

Tag Team Titles: New Day vs. Cesaro/Sheamus

New Day is defending and say Cesaro is on the verge of some major endorsement deals, including shoes. This turns into a discussion of Kofi wearing Rob Gronkowski shoes to start a Patriots chant. Sheamus will get some deals of his own, but only on things like trashcans. The one thing you'll never see Sheamus around is these titles because NEW DAY ROCKS.

Sheamus clubs on Woods (odd to not have Kofi defending the titles) to start and it's off to Cesaro for some uppercuts. The Irish Curse gets two but Sheamus charges into some boots in the corner for the hot tag off to Big E. Woods dives onto Cesaro and Sheamus' Brogue Kick is countered into a sitout powerbomb for two.

White Noise gets the same on Woods but Sheamus misses a charge and gets caught by the springboard elbow. Cesaro Swings Woods but Big E. remembers that he's in this match and makes the save. The Midnight Hour is broken up and Sheamus Brogue Kicks Cesaro by mistake. That's only good for two as well and the champs are sent outside.

Sheamus goes up top (Byron: "Where is Sheamus going?" Cole: "To the top.") and dives onto all of New Day for a big crash. The legal Woods and Cesaro are thrown inside and Xavier gets caught in the Sharpshooter in the middle of the ring. Sheamus hits Big E. with the trombone and gets hit with Trouble in Paradise for the DQ at 10:23. As you might guess, Woods taps at the exact same time as the DQ.

Rating: C. This was better than I was expecting and the right call. If they just have to go with Cesaro and Sheamus as the eventual champions then so be it, but at least let us get through the record. Otherwise, why bother keeping the titles on New Day for the last several months in the first place? The match was fine and I bought some of the near falls so it could have been a lot worse.

Video on Goldberg vs. Lesnar for no other purpose but to extend the show because that needs to happen.

We recap Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks, which is culminating in the first ever women's pay per view main event and the first ever women's match inside the Cell.

Women's Title: Sasha Banks vs. Charlotte

Charlotte is challenging and comes out being carried on a throne. Sasha repeats her Takeover: Brooklyn entrance by being driven out in an Escalade and having four people escort her to the ring. We hit the Big Match Intros and then the Cell is lowered. Charlotte jumps the champ before the Cell reaches the ground so they can fight on the floor and extend the show even more.

The Cell is on the ground and Sasha loads up the announcers' table...but they both climb the wall. Charlotte drops down and hits a wicked powerbomb through the table. Sasha tries to get up but falls back down

and EMTs are called. She's put on a stretcher and Charlotte is announced as the new champion but Sasha gets up and goes inside to start the match (At 10:52 because screw you if you have a job and need to get up early. If you're going to watch a WWE show, you better be committed.).

Sasha goes right at her to start but gets monkey flipped into the cage wall. A throw over the top sends Sasha's back into the apron but she pops back up for a baseball slide as Charlotte gets a chair. Back in and Charlotte chops her down in the corner but stops to set up the chair. That means she's going to go face first into the steel, only to have Charlotte drop her back first onto the chair.

They head outside with Sasha climbing the cage wall and hitting the double knees to the chest to put both women down again. Back in and Three Amigos set up a frog splash on Charlotte for the big near fall. There's the Bank Statement but Charlotte powers out and fires off a few kicks. Sasha is right back up to lay her on the corner for the double knees onto the chest onto a chair for a loud crash. Charlotte comes right back by pulling Banks to the floor and sending her face first into the steps.

For the third time tonight we have a table set up at ringside and Sasha kicks Charlotte off the apron for a very weak bump. Thankfully they load up another table, which Charlotte pushes into Sasha's chest to drive her into the Cell again. The Figure Eight goes on but Sasha grabs a chair and blasts Charlotte for the break. Two backbreakers into a side slam get two on Sasha and Charlotte loads her onto the table for the moonsault. It's still too early for that though and Sasha crotches her on top, only to collapse when trying a running powerbomb. Natural Selection gives Charlotte the title back at 22:49.

Rating: B. That was quite the anticlimactic ending but it was quite the violent brawl up to that point. I'm really not sure about putting the title back on Charlotte as there's only Bayley next and it's probably a stretch to have Bayley win one pay per view match and then move up to the title challenger. Still though, really good, match (weak spots aside) and certainly historic, but the ending wasn't great.

Overall Rating: B. The big matches all delivered but everything else

belonged on Raw or in a dumpster somewhere. I'm really glad the women went on last though as it saves this from being a nothing show that isn't going to be remembered in more than a week or two. I know people seem to think I'm ridiculous for this but I still can't stand the overrun and this was the best example of why.

Look at some of the stuff on here to extend the show from the Goldberg promo to various Network ads to the buildup to the main event taking nearly ten minutes. It's just adding to an already long show and doesn't help anything. That aside, it's entertaining and a good pay per view and that's the best thing you can have most of the time.

Results

Roman Reigns b. Rusev – Accolade

Bayley b. Dana Brooke – Bayley to Belly

Anderson and Gallows b. Enzo Amore and Big Cass – Magic Killer to Amore

Kevin Owens b. Seth Rollins – Powerbomb through two chairs

Brian Kendrick b. TJ Perkins – Captain's Hook

Cesaro/Sheamus b. New Day via DQ when Kofi Kingston interfered

Charlotte b. Sasha Banks – Natural Selection

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Hell in a Cell 2016 Preview

It's time, once again, for that Halloween spectacle where WWE takes one of their biggest concepts and does it three times in one night before wondering why the thrill and mystique left so very long ago. It's time for "Hell in a Cell 2016" with three matches taking place inside the Cell, plus a handful of other matches that don't mean quite as much. Let's get to it.

We'll start on the Kickoff Show with Lince Dorado/Cedric Alexander/Sin Cara vs. Tony Nese/Ariya Daivari/Drew Gulak in a rematch from this week's "Superstars". Yeah the Kickoff Show is now copying the D show that only airs on the Network. The first match was something that indeed happened and I can't seem to remember anything else about it despite watching the match yesterday. My guess is that's due to the lack of personalities, characters or almost anything interesting about any of the six. I'll take Alexander and company to win on the grounds of a coin flip as there's not much to care about here.

We might as well get rid of the cruiserweights here with Cruiserweight Champion TJ Perkins defending against Brian Kendrick in the third match in a series that I don't think most people needed to see go to a second match. They've traded wins to set up Kendrick's second shot at the title, which is becoming less and less important every single week. I'll go with Kendrick getting the belt here as he already lost to Rich Swann, which would seem to set up Swann as the first challenger to the new champion. That makes enough sense, assuming you think having the cruiserweights around on the main roster still makes sense.

Let's go to something a little more fun as Enzo Amore/Big Cass face Anderson and Gallows. This is an interesting one as you have the highly entertaining and incredibly popular Amore and Cass, who have yet to actually win a regular tag match on pay per view while Anderson and Gallows came in hot and have floundered since the Draft. The question

here is which one actually breaks through and wins something.

I think I'll take Anderson and Gallows winning here as the whole idea of Anderson and Gallows wanting to crush the silliness out of the division makes sense if you're building towards Amore and Cass winning the titles at "Wrestlemania XXXIII". However, the idea of giving a team a new gimmick has never stopped WWE from having them lose on pay per view right out of the gate.

Anderson and Gallows seem to be more gatekeepers than contenders, which is kind of a shame on one hand but at the same time Amore and Cass eventually winning the titles is a better story. I'll go with the bald guys here with the promise of a bigger payoff for the popular guys later.

Let's go to one of the biggest matches as we step inside of the Cell for the first time with Roman Reigns defending the United States Title against Rusev. Once you get past the idea that Reigns has been the heel for most of this feud by doing stuff like attacking Rusev's wife and beating on a defenseless Rusev with a chair, there's been a very physical feud in there with both guys beating the heck out of each other.

I don't know why, but I think Rusev wins here. It's nothing but pure instinct, but I think they'll give the title back to the Bulgarian here and let Reigns move on up to the World Title scene again. Keeping in mind that my gut instincts are almost never right, take this one with a barrel or two of salt. However, I'm going to stick with that idea and say Rusev actually gets the belt back here, despite how little sense it would make in either the small or grand scheme of things.

Next up we'll look at something a bit less intense as Dana Brooke faces Bayley. This is another confusing one as Brooke won their most recent match, though it seemed to be a somewhat botched ending. Aside from that, Bayley hasn't exactly been on fire since she debuted on the main roster as the crowd is still behind her but there's not much of a spark to her.

I'll still take Bayley to win though as she has more potential as a challenger to whoever walks out of the Women's Title match with the belt. Brooke isn't the most interesting thing in the world and is a good obstacle for Bayley to overcome. I really can't imagine a scenario of

Brooke challenging for the title and unless Nia Jax is reappearing on "Monday Night Raw" to go after the title, this is Bayley's match to lose and there's no real reason to go any other direction.

We'll clear out the last non-Cell match with New Day defending the Tag Team Titles against Cesaro and Sheamus. Several people, including myself, have gone on several rants about how stupid it is to just throw Cesaro and Sheamus together after all those weeks of them fighting each other but ok, whatever. They're getting the title shot here.

That being said, there isn't the greatest case for new champions here. Sure New Day has gotten a little more stale over the last month or so, but they've held the titles for well over a year and are about six weeks away from setting the all time record. If WWE just MUST go with Cesaro and Sheamus as a team and wants them in the title picture, let New Day break the record and then go with the new champions sometime around Christmas. New Day should keep the belts here, not defend them at "Survivor Series 2016", and then lose them at some point in the future.

Now we'll move on to the two major matches, starting with Sasha Banks defending the Women's Title against Charlotte inside the Cell. This is the first time any women have participated in this particular match and on top of that it's in Banks' hometown of Boston. Why they didn't just wait until this show to do the title change isn't clear but the match being inside the Cell is a huge milestone for women's wrestling. If this match closes the show (more on that later), it's the biggest match in the women's wrestling history.

This is where I get scared of WWE as there's always a chance that they'll have the biggest layup imaginable and screw it up. Banks retaining here should be an easy concept but WWE seems to have no problem crippling their stars' hometown fans. If Banks loses and this doesn't go on last, I have no idea how they expect the fans to care about the main event.

But yeah, Banks wins here and goes on to feud with either Bayley or Jax in the first part of the new year as we somehow get to the Four Horsewomen in a match at "Wrestlemania XXXIII". Charlotte will be fine as she regroups and fights someone else (I'm not sure who though.) but Banks

should go over here.

That leaves us with the Raw World Title match as Kevin Owens defends against Seth Rollins. Where do you even start with this one? Owens is being overshadowed by Chris Jericho who doesn't have a role on this show and Rollins is being overshadowed by HHH, who may or may not show up tomorrow night for the sake of a slight advancement in this glacial paced story which seems to be setting up Rollins vs. HHH because that's the rub Rollins needs.

Rollins has even come close to saying that winning the title isn't the point here because it's all about impressing or showing up the Authority, which is the real title on this brand. Owens has been completely forgotten as champion as he was handed the belt as part of the HHH vs. Rollins feud and has since been turned into a glorified Jericho lackey. But somehow, this is one of the pay per view's main events.

I'll go with Owens retaining via HHH interference because you have to have some kind of cheating in a major match like this because that's how pay per view main events work. Rollins can go on to feud with HHH while Owens and Jericho probably get into it over the title, assuming Jericho is going to be sticking around and not going on tour with Fozzy instead. Owens wins here and is probably a lot worse off as a result because the title means that little anymore.

That leaves us with the big question: what goes on last? There have been stories all over the place about whether Rollins vs. Owens or Banks vs. Charlotte is the main event with "Monday Night Raw" General Manager Mick Foley officially saying it would be the women but then backtracking with the lame excuse of there can be multiple main events.

Here's the thing: Banks vs. Charlotte main eventing is a major story and a first time ever moment that makes WWE look like they're trying to do something special. If Owens vs. Rollins goes on last, it's just not that interesting. They're in a lame feud and it's not going to matter to have them go on last. Just let the women, in Banks' hometown, do something historic for a change so the fans can have some fun.

Overall, this is a moderately interesting show on paper but I'm much more

interested in the upcoming "Survivor Series 2016", which has left this one feeling pretty unimportant. Having three Cell matches waters the concept down but at least there's going to be a big feeling with something this big taking place....at least the first time they do it.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/heres-latest-whether-sashacharlotte-will-main-event-hell-cell/>

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Main Event – October 25, 2016: Do Something With This Guy

Main Event

Date: October 25, 2016

Location: Resch Center, Green Bay, Wisconsin

Commentators: Tom Phillips, David Otunga

There's nothing wrong with some extra content. Besides, if I'm doing Superstars I might as well do this one for a bonus. Main Event is

basically Superstars with the “Smackdown Live” roster instead of “Monday Night Raw”. These should be easy shows to watch so hopefully it’s a quick sit. Let’s get to it.

Opening sequence.

American Alpha vs. Vaudevillains

Alpha can’t even make the main roster anymore? Jason Jordan and Aiden English start but a blind tag brings in Chad for a monkey flip. The armbreaker over the top rope has English in even more trouble until Simon Gotch makes a save. The announcers discuss the upcoming Survivor Series tag team match as Gable and Gotch ram heads. English comes back in (through the bottom ropes) to break up the tag but Gable easily dispatches both of them for the hot tag off to Jordan. That means suplexes and throws all around before Grand Amplitude ends English at 4:10.

Rating: C. American Alpha is just fun to watch no matter what show they’re on. They really are the Steiner Brothers for the new generation and that’s one of the best compliments I can give them. I really could go with them on Smackdown more often but at least they’re getting time somewhere.

We go back to Raw, likely because this is released on Tuesdays due to a contractual issue with Sky Sports in England.

New Day vs. Cesaro/Sheamus

Non-title. Before the match, New Day praises Cesaro but says Sheamus shames us because no one wants to see him. Woods is the odd man out here, which is kind of surprising as they’re normally defending the titles. Cesaro’s backbreaker gets two on Kofi and a double back elbows shows that Cesaro and Sheamus can actually work together. New Day quickly gets it together and takes Sheamus into the corner for the Unicorn Stampede.

Back from a break with Kofi in trouble and taking the ten forearms to the chest. Cesaro misses a charge into the post and the hot tag brings in Big E. to deal with Sheamus. The Irish Curse gets two on Big E. and Cesaro’s

vertical suplex gets the same. The Midnight Hour is broken up but Kofi is launched straight into the uppercut. Sheamus Brogue Kicks Big E. for the pin at 11:45.

Rating: C+. Let's see. Yeah I'm checking here. Maybe...almost...nah I still don't care about Sheamus and Cesaro. They're still the same uninteresting pair that have been around since before Summerslam and still are little more than a rehash of the League of Nations having problems against New Day back in the spring. New Day needs to roll over them and give us the record in December. If you just have to give these two the belts after that then so be it but don't mess with the year plus run for this stupid idea.

Back to Raw again for the Sasha Banks vs. Charlotte contract signing.

Mick Foley is in the ring for the contract signing between Sasha Banks and Charlotte. They talk about how big of a moment this is going to be, only to have Foley go into his annual rant about how evil the Cell is. Charlotte calls Sasha an entitled second rate talent who will learn respect from the Queen this Sunday. Sasha is ready to crawl up the ramp broken and bloodied as long as she has the Women's Title. They trade insults but Foley cuts them both off to say he's their future. Dude if the Cell is going to turn them into 6'4 men with long beards, maybe we should cancel the match.

As expected, the fans chant for Foley, thereby completely missing the point of this segment. Foley met Charlotte as a child and his kids gave Sasha their signed photo of Eddie Guerrero. More insults and a double signing FINALLY wrap this up. Charlotte vs. Sasha in a major gimmick match is fine but no one, like NO ONE, buys that the match is going to be all violent and career threatening like Foley is pushing and that kills the idea.

Apollo Crews vs. Curt Hawkins

Crews doesn't even get an entrance and this is Hawkins' main roster (re)debut. Hawkins narrates his own entrance again, which includes him saying that this match isn't about to be postponed for an earthquake here in Milwaukee (it's Green Bay in an inversion of R-Truth's mistake on Raw

five years ago). No, that shaking you feel is Apollo Crews shaking in his boots.

Hawkins hides from a right hand on the floor before being put down with a headlock takeover. Crews does a front handspring into a dropkick just because he can and some armdrags send Hawkins outside. Back from a break with Hawkins in yet another armbar. Finally tired of having his arm worked over, Curt pops up and knees Crews in the back to set up a chinlock. A Michinoku Driver gets two for Hawkins, only to have Crews pop up and hit a running kick to the face. One enziguri later and it's the Toss Powerbomb to pin Hawkins at 7:04.

Rating: C. I'm not even sure where to start on this one. We've been waiting on Hawkins for over a month now and the vignettes have been awesome but he loses his first match, on Main Event of all shows, to the directionless Apollo Crews? Speaking of Crews, what the heck are they waiting on with him? He's young, he's talented, he's charismatic and he's almost never on Smackdown. Either send him down for a feud with Nakamura (that could work) or do ANYTHING with him on Smackdown. You couldn't give him a real feud over the Intercontinental Title? Or, like, anything?

We go back to Raw for the main event and post match shenanigans.

Seth Rollins vs. Chris Jericho vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title. They play keep away to start until Owens gets kicked out to the floor. A Blockbuster gets two on Jericho but Owens pulls Seth outside. The champ is sent into the barricade but Jericho throws Seth into the crowd. Back in and Owens scores with a clothesline, only to have Rollins avoid the Cannonball. The Pedigree doesn't work on either Canadian but the Lionsault hits Seth's knees.

Owens saves his buddy from a Pedigree and it's time for the double teaming. The handicap portion continues until Owens is low bridged to the floor. Jericho eats the low superkick and Rollins dives onto Kevin. Seth misses the frog splash and eats a Codebreaker for two. Owens comes back in and slaps Rollins a lot as the STUPID IDIOT chants kick in. Rollins escapes a double superplex and pins both guys at the same time with a double rollup at 10:00.

Rating: C+. The match was fun but it's WAY too late in the night to really matter. Rollins pinning the champ is appropriate as Owens has been a huge afterthought in this entire story. That also makes four straight times that Rollins has pinned Jericho so you certainly can't say he's getting too many wins.

Post match Owens and Jericho destroy Rollins by sending him hard into the steps. We're still not done though as Rollins runs up the ramp and dives at Owens, only to get beaten down again. Owens gives him the Apron Bomb and walks back up the ramp to get his title so some posing can end the show.

Overall Rating: C. Yeah this is basically Superstars with a blue look. The wrestling was a bit better here though and having Alpha and Crews are guaranteed pops from the crowd. I could have gone with them airing different clips than we got on Superstars, but I'm assuming that has to do with the broadcast issues as this show isn't immediately released on the WWE Network. Instead it airs on Hulu on Tuesdays so the best they can do is stuff from Monday night. Still though, good little show here and a great way to recap the big stories from Raw in about a third of the time.

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:

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

Monday Night Raw – October 24, 2016: Who Needs Sunday and a Cell?

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 24, 2016

Location: Target Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

The Beast is back tonight as Brock Lesnar is here for his first comments about his upcoming match with Goldberg. In addition to that we have two big matches including Sheamus and Cesaro vs. New Day in a non-title match and Chris Jericho vs. Seth Rollins vs. Kevin Owens in a triple threat. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's Jericho to open things up with some terrible news: tonight's triple threat match has been canceled until further notice. The fans aren't happy with that one but Jericho says it's because SOMEONE HAS STOLEN THE LIST OF JERICH0. Fans: "NO! NO! NO!" Jericho isn't leaving until the List is returned but here's Owens to interrupt. Owens doesn't care who has the List but he'll help Jericho find it once they get rid of Rollins.

Jericho says there's no triple threat match tonight but here's Stephanie McMahon to interrupt. She explains the idea of the triple threat (because Stephanie thinks all fans are idiots) and here's Rollins with the List. Jericho freaks out and Stephanie goes all screechy to say give it back.

Seth sees Stephanie mentioned as a stupid idiot but at the very bottom is Jericho's former best friend, Kevin Owens. Rollins wants to start a new list about Owens, who has no idea how it is inside the Cell. He'll also kick Owens' teeth down his throat and break his face with a Pedigree so he can teach HHH and Stephanie a lesson (because that's what really matters in this whole thing).

This segment showed how horribly uninteresting this whole thing is when Jericho isn't talking. Owens barely got to say anything and Rollins wants to win the title to show up HHH and Stephanie. Some main event feud. Also, did Stephanie need to be here? Like at all? She came out, told Jericho to do the main event (which Owens had already done) and was insulted that she was on the list (like Owens a few seconds later).

Post break Stephanie tells Rollins to give the List back because the fans were promised a triple threat. Rollins vents about Stephanie's real intentions and says the List is in the locker room.

Enzo Amore vs. Karl Anderson

Anderson and Gallows have cut off Enzo's mic so he and the crowd do it with pure vocal power. Enzo fires off rights and lefts in the corner but dives into a spinebuster as we take an early break. Back with Enzo getting kicked in the face but stopping a charge in the corner. A rollup is broken up but Cass kicks Karl in the face to give Enzo the pin at 7:39.

Rating: D+. I almost had this whole match written from the opening bell because this was exactly what you would have expected these two to do. It's fine to set up the tag match and thank goodness we didn't hear any of Anderson and Gallows trying to be funny. Enzo and Cass need to win on Sunday as it's not like Anderson and Gallows can go much further into the hole.

Rusev says he slept like a baby last night because he gets his hands on Roman Reigns inside the Cell this Sunday. Reigns has done a lot of horrible things but now it's Rusev's chance to crush him for good. Simple and to the point here, as it should be.

New Day vs. Cesaro/Sheamus

Non-title. Before the match, New Day praises Cesaro but says Sheamus shames us because no one wants to see him. Woods is the odd man out here, which is kind of surprising as they're normally defending the titles. Cesaro's backbreaker gets two on Kofi and a double back elbows shows that Cesaro and Sheamus can actually work together. New Day quickly gets it

together and takes Sheamus into the corner for the Unicorn Stampede.

Back from a break with Kofi in trouble and taking the ten forearms to the chest. Cesaro misses a charge into the post and the hot tag brings in Big E. to deal with Sheamus. The Irish Curse gets two on Big E. and Cesaro's vertical suplex gets the same. The Midnight Hour is broken up but Kofi is launched straight into the uppercut. Sheamus Brogue Kicks Big E. for the pin at 11:45.

Rating: C+. Let's see. Yeah I'm checking here. Maybe...almost...nah I still don't care about Sheamus and Cesaro. They're still the same uninteresting pair that have been around since before Summerslam and still are little more than a rehash of the League of Nations having problems against New Day back in the spring. New Day needs to roll over them and give us the record in December. If you just have to give these two the belts after that then so be it but don't mess with the year plus run for this stupid idea.

We look back at Goldberg's return.

Jericho frantically looks for the List but runs into Titus O'Neil, the Shining Stars and Jinder Mahal, all of whom have something for him other than the List (Titus Brand, travel brochures and a breathing exercise).

Bayley vs. Dana Brooke

Bayley has a taped up shoulder after last week. Dana says not so fast because she doesn't like the idea of last week's win being called an upset. Tonight there's going to be another match but this time it's arm wrestling. Dana easily wins so Bayley offers to go left handed. Bayley starts to win and of course Dana decks her and turns the table over for the beatdown. A Bayley to Belly sends Dana running and thankfully cuts off the BORING chants. Can you blame the fans for not being impressed here?

Jericho is freaking out over the List when he runs into Stephanie, who isn't interested in helping him. Stephanie lists off everything she has going on and says Jericho is in the match, List or not. Chris says no List and no match, ya dig? That's not cool with the boss, who says

Jericho wrestles or gets suspended.

Curtis Axel vs. Bo Dallas

Before the match, Axel does a really good speech about his Minnesota roots and being Curt Hennig's son. Bo starts fast but the Roll of the Dice is countered into a PerfectPlex for two. I bought that for a second. A running forearm drops Curtis and we hit the chinlock. Axel fights out and hits the running neck snap for two and that's it for his offense as Dallas grabs a rollup for the pin at 2:58. I've said Axel should be pushed as a face for years and this was more evidence that I'm right. It's also more evidence that WWE gets way too much pleasure out of having people lose in their hometown.

Video on Rich Swann.

Jericho is about to leave when a guy comes up to say he saw the List. Chris finds....Braun Strowman looking at it and asks for it back. Braun: "Say please." Strowman doesn't see Sami Zayn's name on the List but gives it back anyway. Jericho says it's on page four and since Braun touched his personal property, HE JUST MADE THE LIST!

Roman Reigns talks about being in the Cell, which Rusev hasn't experienced. Reigns takes this personally and is ready to do anything to keep the title on Sunday.

We run down the card for Sunday's show.

Golden Truth vs. Shining Stars

Mark Henry is with Golden Truth and Titus is with the Stars, which makes me feel a bit better about their earlier segment. It's really nice to have them actually have a reason to be in the back instead of just showing up for a cameo. I love little things like that. Corey is reading a brochure as the Stars come out to the ring as he needs to get his mom a birthday gift.

Primo is dropped by Goldust to start but some double teaming puts him down. The snap powerslam puts Epico down and everything breaks down with Titus low bridging Truth to the floor. Henry shoves Titus into the ropes

to crotch Epico, setting up a flapjack into Little Jimmy for the pin at 4:02.

Rating: D. Can someone take this show behind the barn and shoot it already? I'll actually give this match a little credit: they're trying to build something out of nothing and it could be a lot worse. I mean, there's at least something there and a moderate attempt to be interesting. It's not really working and the match feels like a nacho break but I'll take what I can get.

Mick Foley is in the ring for the contract signing between Sasha Banks and Charlotte. They talk about how big of a moment this is going to be, only to have Foley go into his annual rant about how evil the Cell is. Charlotte calls Sasha an entitled second rate talent who will learn respect from the Queen this Sunday. Sasha is ready to crawl up the ramp broken and bloodied as long as she has the Women's Title. They trade insults but Foley cuts them both off to say he's their future. Dude if the Cell is going to turn them into 6'4 men with long beards, maybe we should cancel the match.

As expected, the fans chant for Foley, thereby completely missing the point of this segment. Foley met Charlotte as a child and his kids gave Sasha their signed photo of Eddie Guerrero. More insults and a double signing FINALLY wrap this up. Charlotte vs. Sasha in a major gimmick match is fine but no one, like NO ONE, buys that the match is going to be all violent and career threatening like Foley is pushing and that kills the idea.

Emmalina video.

Brian Kendrick vs. Rich Swann

TJ Perkins is on commentary. As Kendrick makes his entrance, we see clips of his run from seven to ten years ago. It's very sad that the #1 contender to a title doesn't even have enough video from his current run for a highlight reel. In case you didn't know, Perkins runs down his history with Kendrick (Brian was his mentor) for the millionth or so time.

Swann flips over Brian and hits a good looking dropkick. A spinning dive to the floor takes Kendrick down and we head to a break. Back with Swann fighting out of a chinlock and snapping off a top rope hurricanrana. What looks like a victory roll is broken up but Swann slips out of the Captain's Hook and grabs a cradle for the pin at 9:14.

Rating: C. So Swann, who looked a lot better here, pins the #1 contender for a title that has no heat going into a pay per view title match. I get that Swann is likely the next challenger but they're ruining this division more week by week. I'll spare you another list of problems and just say Swann looked good here and go on.

Owens promises violence on Sunday but he's the only one coming back.

Braun Strowman vs. Sami Zayn

This has the potential to be good so let's see how they can screw it up. Before the bell, Strowman says he wants competition but he doesn't see that in front of him. Strowman shoves him away but Sami low bridges him to the floor. This goes badly for Sami as he dives at Braun, only to get thrown into the barricade. Strowman walks away and there's no match.

Kendrick comes in to see Perkins and says the clock is ticking on his career. If TJ loses on Sunday, he'll bounce back. If Brian loses, that's it for feeding his family. TJ walks away.

Here are Brock Lesnar and Paul Heyman with something to say. Heyman does his usual schtick about how Lesnar will smash Goldberg, only to have the Goldberg chants cut him off. Heyman calls out the fan that started them and says they're getting on Brock's nerves. After their match, all of the chants in the world won't be able to put Goldberg back together again. Suplexes are promised and the fans go back and forth with SUPLEX CITY/GOLDBERG chants. Heyman rips on them and the chant turns into GOLDBERG SUCKS....to wrap this up. Ok then. There was NOTHING here and it didn't need Brock at all.

Owens and Jericho have a meeting before the triple threat with Chris asking if their friendship means as much as the title. Kevin smiles it off and doesn't really answer. Jericho says they'll still be best friends

no matter what but Kevin looks concerned.

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Overall Rating: D-. What a dog of a show this was. There was no effort here and their best idea was to say "Raw Exclusive Pay Per View" over and over as many times as they could. This was every lame idea they could come up with in three hours with almost no one really trying and the show feeling even longer than usual. The worst part is the show wasn't even the worst. What it was was lacking energy and that's as bad as it's going to get. Horrible stuff here and little more than making me want to get to Survivor Series instead of caring about Sunday.

Results

Enzo Amore b. Karl Anderson – Rollup

Cesaro and Sheamus b. New Day – Brogue Kick to Big E.

Bo Dallas b. Curtis Axel – Rollup

Golden Truth b. Shining Stars – Flapjack into Little Jimmy to Epico

Rich Swann b. Brian Kendrick – Oklahoma Roll

Seth Rollins b. Kevin Owens and Chris Jericho – Double rollup

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