

Monday Night Raw – September 23, 2013: Now We Sound The Drums Of War

Monday Night Raw

Date: September 23, 2013

Location: Allstate Arena, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

Things are getting interesting around here with the locker room starting to revolt against the HHH regime. The main story at the moment sees a group of ten guys standing up to the boss last week, setting the stage for a potential showdown between HHH and pretty much everyone else. This has the potential to be a very fun time for the WWE and Raw in particular. Let's get to it.

We open with an in memory graphic of Angelo Savoldi, the world's oldest professional wrestler, who died over the weekend at age 99.

We recap the events of Night of Champions as well as the Bryan/Armstrong segment resulting in Bryan being stripped of the title. Some of the locker room revolted, setting the stage for tonight.

The ten men who revolted (Prime Time Players, Usos, Zack Ryder, Kofi Kingston, R-Truth, Rob Van Dam, Dolph Ziggler and Justin Gabriel) are on the stage as HHH and Stephanie head to the ring. The bosses welcome us to the show before turning their attention to the guys on the stage. Shield is standing guard as usual. HHH thanks the guys for finally standing up for what they believe in. RVD says they were fighting for Daniel Bryan because HHH would have done the same thing to them had the roles been reversed.

HHH thinks they're supposed to be fighting to be WWE Champion, not for

the WWE Champion. The bosses ask why none of them are the face of the WWE, but HHH answers for them: it's because of the Shield. Therefore, tonight it's an elimination handicap match with Daniel Bryan joining the ten of them. Also there's going to be an audience poll on the WWE App to determine who faces Orton here tonight: Truth, Ziggler or RVD.

Cole shows us how to install the WWE App because we're not bright enough to do that ourselves.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Kofi Kingston

Non-title of course. Del Rio shoulder blocks him down to start but Kofi comes back with the double leapfrog, only to be sent into the corner before he can hit the jumping back elbow. A running clothesline sends Del Rio to the floor and there's a BIG flip dive (much more like a flip clothesline with Kofi landing on his feet) to take Alberto out. Back in and Alberto hits a hard kick to the head before taking it to the mat for a bit. Another kick to the head has Kofi in trouble but he dropkicks Alberto the floor, setting up the aborted suicide dive as we take a break.

Back with Del Rio kicking Kofi in the back for two and cranking on the arm. Apparently Kofi sent the arm into the post during the break. Del Rio gets caught on the middle rope but pulls Kingston down into the armbreaker on the ropes. Del Rio clotheslines Kofi down and goes up, only to jump into a dropkick which missed by nearly a foot. Some more dropkicks and the SOS are good for two on Alberto and the Boom Drop keeps the champion in trouble.

Trouble in Paradise is countered into a German suplex for two and a double stomp has Kofi down again. Kofi counters the armbreaker and a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker into something Cole calls a DDT for two. Kingston misses a springboard cross body, landing on the bad arm. Del Rio sends it into the post, hits a Codebreaker to the arm and the armbreaker gets the tap at 14:03.

Rating: C+. Nice match here as Kofi is continually good for a solid performance against anyone you put him against. Getting wins like this will only help Del Rio get his credibility back but he's too far gone to be saved now. It's nice to see the WHC get some exposure like this though so not much to complain about here.

Miz is about to talk about Orton's attack last week when HHH comes in. He laughs about Miz being hurt last week so tonight it's MizTV with Big Show as guest.

We recap the Rhodes' family troubles over the last few weeks.

Wyatt Family vs. Prime Time Players

You could have known that the Wyatts were in action tonight had you downloaded the WWE App. Or you could have just watched the show and found out like everyone else. The Players get a jobber entrance and the squashing begins early. Harper pounds on Young to start before bringing in Rowan, who is still wearing the mask. A hard slam leads to the mask being revealed as Young is destroyed even more.

A backbreaker from Rowan and it's back to Harper who stops Young's comeback attempt. There go the lights for some reason but it appears to be an electrical glitch as they're back a few seconds later. Darren kicks Luke away and makes the tag off to Titus to clean house. Darren hits a Cactus Clothesline to take Rowan to the floor but Harper catches Titus with the discus lariat for the pin at 4:26.

Rating: D+. Long squash here as the Players' push appears to be in trouble. The Wyatts continue to be awesome with that discus lariat becoming quite the weapon. Introducing the Sister Abigail plot point for Bray was a nice recharge for the characters and hopefully they'll add more to it soon.

Post match Bray hits Sister Abigail on Young.

Time for MizTV with Big Show. Miz is still favoring his arm after the Orton attack last week. He says he'd usually welcome us to the show but right now he's banged up and ticked off. It's a lot easier to put him down than to keep him down and payback is coming. Miz moves on to the Big Show/Dusty Rhodes segment from last week before bringing out the giant. Miz immediately asks Big Show how he could have done that last week before saying if Show didn't, Shield would have destroyed Dusty instead.

HHH and Stephanie are trying to break Big Show because he's the biggest guy in the locker room but now everyone is starting to step up. It's time for Big Show to step up to that witch, so here's Stephanie to her horrid music. She calls Miz's statements slander but Miz isn't scared. Stephanie talks about Miz's failures and calls him a utility player. He's good for all the promotional stuff but last week in his hometown, Miz failed his family, his friends and himself. Big Show is forced to knock Miz out before storming off.

Rob Van Dam wins the poll to face Orton in a landslide.

Randy Orton vs. Rob Van Dam

Orton takes him into the corner to start but has to bail to the floor to avoid a spin kick. Back in and RVD hits a kick in the corner to send Randy right back to the floor. Orton sends him face first into the apron as we take a quick break. Back with Orton getting two off a suplex and putting on a chinlock. RVD comes back with some kicks and Rolling Thunder for two. Orton charges into a boot and gets caught with the split legged moonsault, only to come back with the Elevated DDT.

The RK0 is countered with a kick to the face and a rollup is good for two on Randy. The middle rope kick to the face puts Orton down but he's back up before Rob can launch the Five Star. Instead it's the cannonball to put Orton down but he pops up to crotch Rob in the corner. A kick to the

head puts Rob on the floor and Orton sends Rob into various objects until it's a double countout at 10:45.

Rating: C+. This wasn't bad but it was all to set up the post match stuff. Rob was looking good out there and Orton was his usual solid self. They actually had some chemistry together and the match was pretty entertaining as a result. A double countout wasn't necessary as Van Dam might be leaving soon, but at least Orton didn't lose.

Orton keeps up the attack and destroys Van Dam even more, sending him into the barricade, steps and announce table before taking Rob's unconscious body back inside. A top rope Elevated DDT knocks Rob silly, possibly to write him off TV since his 90 day deal is coming up soon. Appropriately enough, Orton put Van Dam out in 2007 for Rob's first exit.

Los Matadores are here next week!

The announcers show Del Rio attacking RVD during the break on the WWE App. He put Rob in the armbreaker for a few seconds but was pulled off by referees.

Randy Orton comes up to the Bellas to offer himself as a replacement man once he takes out Daniel Bryan. Brie turns him down and Orton talks some more trash.

We get some clips from HHH and Stephanie's wedding as an ad for the new HHH DVD. Stephanie is watching in the back when AJ comes in to see her. Stephanie gives AJ a copy of the new DVD to show her what a real wedding looks like. AJ wants the Total Divas to go away like the reality show so Stephanie glares at her. Stephanie threatens to strip AJ of the title if she doesn't fight tonight. Again, who am I supposed to cheer for in AJ vs. Total Divas? It's never been made clear.

Santino Marella vs. Fandango

Naturally we start with dancing until Fandango takes him down and stomps away. Santino hurts his head trying to nip up and it's off to a body scissors. The fans chant overrated which Cole says is actually Summer Rae. Back up for an abdominal stretch but Santino hip tosses out and starts his usual offense. A Summer distraction lets Fandango suplex Santino down and the guillotine legdrop gets the pin at 3:50.

Rating: D+. The match was nothing of note but we got to look at Summer in a very revealing outfit and the comedy goof gets pinned. What more can you ask for in less than four minutes? Fandango's push coming back would be fine but he doesn't really have anything to go after given how all the champions are heels.

Here's Punk, clad in a Chicago Blackhawks jersey, for the first time since Night of Champions. During the entrance we're told it's Punk vs. Ryback at Battleground. Punk is annoyed at the audience for ruining his bad mood because he hasn't smiled in eight days. He tried to get the Stanley Cup here tonight but he couldn't quite get it. It feels like he let everyone down just like he did in Detroit last weekend. It's going to read in Gray's Sports Almanac that Paul Heyman beat him.

Punk isn't smart enough to stay down a lot of the time but maybe he can't do this anymore. Maybe he doesn't deserve to wear this jersey anymore or to wrestle in front of the best crowd in the world or to say he's from Chicago anymore. Then he comes out here and remembers being down 3-1 against the Detroit Redwings and coming back to win the series in seven games. That's the Chicago way: if you get beaten you come back and keep fighting. Punk wants to fight anyone right now but here's Heyman on a motorized scooter, singing what sounds like a Frank Sinatra song.

Heyman does his catchphrases but the fans finish it off for him in a funny bit. Punk threatens Heyman with an even worse beating than at Night of Champions because there are thousands of people here that will bail him out of jail. Heyman reminds us that he beat Punk but it's due to geography. See, Chicago is the Second City while the first city is

Heyman's hometown: New York City.

We see a shot of Paul getting the pin at the PPV, triggering a walrus chant. Heyman says he may be a walrus, but he pinned the shark in Detroit. Punk wants to know if Heyman's goons can get to him before Punk gets to Heyman, because he only needs two seconds to rip Heyman's face off. Paul says he beat Punk with both hands tied behind his back and goes to leave but the scooter doesn't work.

Punk goes after him but Ryback and Axel save their boss just in time. Punk makes a comeback and sends Axel into the set before diving off the stage to take out Ryback. The numbers catch up to him though and Ryback rips off the Blackhawks jersey. Punk is thrown onto the equipment and onto the edge of a table for good measure. Heyman stands up and jumps off the ramp, revealing that it was of course a ruse. Ryback says this is what happens to bullies.

Total Divas vs. AJ Lee/Alicia Fox/Layla/Aksana

Nikki is back in the ring now. Punk is helped to the back during the entrances. Natalya and Alicia get things going and Fox has to escape the Sharpshooter after just a few seconds. A big boot in the corner gets two for Alicia and it's off to the chinlock. Natalya goes after the leg and it's off to Brie for some dropkicks. Off to AJ for some kicks, only to get caught in the Bella Buster for the pin at 1:55. Great, this feud gets to continue.

We get a montage of RKO's from the Youtube channel. Thanks for adding in that Youtube detail. It really made the video that much better.

Shield says their backs are against the walls but that means they always win.

Here's Bryan with something to say. He talks about the allegations of a fast count from last week but doesn't think it holds up. Why would you

need a fast count when the other person was out cold? Bryan doesn't really care though because he's taking back the title in two weeks at Battleground. There won't be any fast counts or conspiracies. After Orton wakes up, the only thing he'll be hearing is YES. Cue Shield for the attack but Cody Rhodes and Goldust jump the barricade to go after them, only to be dragged off by security.

Shield vs. Daniel Bryan/Usos/Prime Time Players/Zack Ryder/Kofi Kingston/Dolph Ziggler/Rob Van Dam/R-Truth/Justin Gabriel

Elimination rules here. Jimmy Uso starts against Rollins but it's quickly off to Ziggler. Kofi and Rob are both here though very taped up. The fans are way behind Ziggler but Ambrose gets the tag to take over. Dean takes him into the corner to bring in Reigns for the power strikes. Back to Rollins for a kick to the chest but the now legal Ambrose gets dropkicked down. The tag brings in Van Dam but a quick shot to the ribs slows him down. Van Dam misses a charge into the post and the bulldog driver makes it 10-3 at 2:57.

Back with Kofi's hold on Rollins being broken before it's back to Ambrose to work on Kofi's injured arm. Dean pounds away in the corner but Kofi flips out of a belly to back suplex. Ambrose goes right back to the bad shoulder to stop the hot tag though and the bulldog driver eliminates Kingston at 8:06 (all times total).

Titus comes in next to throw Ambrose around before it's off to Reigns for the power showdown. Roman easily shoves him into the corner for some cheap shots from Rollins as Shield takes over again. This has been one sided so far. Titus gets away for a few moments but the spear takes him out at 9:44. Gabriel comes in and gets speared out 15 seconds later.

It's Ryder in now with some more luck, including the knees to the face and the middle rope dropkick, but a spear takes Ryder out at 10:30. GREAT sequence there by Reigns. Bryan comes in with the kicks and clothesline to put Reigns down followed by the running dropkicks in the corner. Jimmy

Usos hits a SWEET superkick and Jey's superfly splash eliminates Reigns at 11:24. That's the first time Reigns has been pinned in WWE.

Back from another break with Rollins dropping Young face first onto the buckle before it's back to Ambrose for the dropkick against the ropes. To recap right now it's Rollins/Ambrose vs. Young/Bryan/Ziggler/Usos/R-Truth. Rollins hooks a chinlock before bringing Dean back in, only to have Young score with a belly to belly. The northern lights suplex gets two for Darren but Ambrose escapes the Gut Check. A blind tag brings in Rollins for the top rope knee to eliminate Young at 17:16.

Back to Ziggler to a BIG ovation as he scores with a neckbreaker. Ziggler goes nuts but charges into a release Downward Spiral into the middle rope to give Dean two. Ziggler pops back up and hits a Zig Zag out of nowhere to make it 5-1 at 18:45. It's Rollins vs. Ziggler/Usos/Truth/Bryan. Seth slams Ziggler down and puts on a chinlock but Ziggler comes back with a running DDT to put both guys down. The tag brings in Truth for the first time to clean what's left of the house, getting two off the sitout gordbuster. Rollins comes back with a kick to the ribs and the running curbstomp for the elimination at 11:12.

It's still 4-1 so Bryan sends one guy to each apron in a Shield-esque move. Everyone comes in at the same time for the big beatdown, but here's Ambrose to brawl with Ziggler. The Usos superkick Reigns to the floor and hit BIG stereo dives to take the other Shield members out. Rollins jumps Bryan from behind and puts him on top, only to be shoved off for the flying headbutt. The running knee ends Rollins at 23:07 for the final pin.

Rating: B. Really fun match here with an amazing performance by Reigns in such a short amount of time. That's the kind of thing that got Diesel over back in the day and it set up a good ending to the match here. Bryan gets to stand tall and everyone looked great out there. Can you ask for something better?

Overall Rating: B-. The wrestling wasn't much for the most part, but the addition of a show long angle really helped things out here. The locker room revolting is a nice change of pace as you can only have Bryan vs. the world for so long. Other than that the Heyman vs. Punk segment worked really well for me and gives Punk more of a personal reason to want to take out Ryback. Good show this week and one of the better ones in awhile.

Results

Alberto Del Rio b. Kofi Kingston – Cross Armbreaker

Wyatt Family b. Prime Time Players – Discus lariat to O'Neil

Randy Orton vs. Rob Van Dam went to a double countout

Fandango b. Santino Marella – Guillotine legdrop

Total Divas b. AJ Lee/Aksana/Layla/Alicia Fox – Bella Buster to Lee

Daniel Bryan/Usos/Prime Time Players/Justin Gabriel/R-Truth/Zack Ryder/Dolph Ziggler/Rob Van Dam/R-Truth b. Shield – Running knee to Rollins

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Smackdown – September 20, 2013: The Strangest Gauntlet Match Ever

Sorry for the delay as I was at a WWE house show. Report coming.

Smackdown

Date: September 20, 2013

Location: US Bank Arena, Cincinnati, Ohio

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

We're past Night of Champions and the main story is that there's no WWE Champion. Bryan won the title on Sunday but has been stripped of it due to an alleged conspiracy between he and now fired referee Scott Armstrong. On Raw however, the roster finally came together to fight back against HHH and the Corporation, giving us an interesting battle for the first time since this began, which was somehow just over a month ago. Let's get to it.

We open with a look back at Night of Champions and Raw, set up through an interview with HHH. He compares the scandal with Armstrong to Pete Rose hypothetically conspiring with an umpire to fix the World Series.

Here's Vickie to open things up. She says she has a thrilling and exciting show planned for us tonight, but first she has to introduce the laughing stock of the WWE. Bob Backlund held the WWE Championship for over 2,000 days, but this man held it for less than a day: Daniel Bryan. Daniel says he'd rather be champion for one day than being a shrill corporate suck-up for his entire life. Vickie gives him an opportunity to come clean but Bryan says the truth is he kneed Orton in the face for three. It could have been a twenty count because Orton was out cold.

Bryan says he should still be champion but Vickie says he should be fired. Daniel says everyone is grateful that Vickie has no real power, but Vickie would rather talk about the people that got involved at the end of the night. Those people would be Ziggler, the Usos, R-Truth, Justin Gabriel, Zack Ryder, the Prime Time Players, Kofi Kingston and Rob Van Dam. Tonight it's going to be an 11-3 handicap gauntlet match. The idea is all eleven of them will come down to face the Shield 3-1 until Shield has defeated them all. Bryan is lucky enough to go last.

Naomi vs. AJ

Non-title. Natalya is on commentary and talks about how AJ is riding the coattails of the Total Divas who have revolutionized the division. AJ easily takes Naomi down and hooks a cravate as Natalya calls AJ an opportunist for how she kept the title on Sunday. A running back elbow gets two for the champion, though Natalya is FAR more entertaining, trying to make the Total Divas sound like good people. Naomi comes back with a dropkick and the Rear View for two. AJ's sleeper is quickly broken up but she grabs the Black Widow for the submission at 3:25.

Rating: D+. The match was nothing but this story is ranging anywhere from so bad it's hilarious to horrible depending on how you look at it. The problem is the whole angle hinges on no one ever watching Total Divas, because there's no way to cheer for any of its cast, but AJ is being presented as a stuck up villain who lords her title over everyone in sight.

Jack Swagger vs. Santino Marella

Colter tells Santino to take the ravioli out of his ears and asks if he has the proper papers to own a reptile. During Santino's entrance, JBL and Cole hype up Billy Gunn as the guests on their show by saying Road Dogg's catchphrases. Swagger throws Santino down and shouts at him a lot before hooking a double armbar. Santino comes back with his usual sequence before hooking a backslide to pin Swagger at 2:02. When I'm

feeling sorry for Jack Swagger, it's a bad sign.

Ryback vs. Nick Nardone

Nardone is OVW Champion Jamin Olivencia. Before the match, Heyman talks about Punk giving him all he could handle at Night of Champions, but only one of them could come out on top. Ryback says Heyman doesn't deserve to be picked on by a bully like Punk, so he's going to treat Nick like he'll treat Punk. It's a fifty second match with the Meat Hook and Shell Shock ending Nardone, as you would expect.

Here's Orton with something to say. He talks about Bryan and Armstrong taking the title from him at Night of Champions, but that was 100% his own fault. He never should have been in that position but he's spent two years repressing who he really is for the fans. Orton locked away the Viper because that's what everyone wanted. But then Monday night on Raw, HHH and Stephanie showed Orton what he really should be. We get a clip of the attack on Miz from Raw, which Orton calls a warning to anyone who gets in his path. At Battleground, he's going to end the war with Daniel Bryan and be his own WWE Champion.

Shield vs. Usos/Prime Time Players/Justin Gabriel/Zack Ryder/Kofi Kingston/Rob Van Dam/Dolph Ziggler/Daniel Bryan/R-Truth

It's 3-1, one man at a time, no tagging. Darren Young is first and it goes exactly as you would expect with Reigns getting the pin via the spear in 41 seconds. Titus O'Neil is in next and has a bit better luck by throwing the smaller guys around a bit. Reigns runs him down though and the big beatdown is on. Rollins grabs a guillotine with a body vice and the beating continues. The TripleBomb ends O'Neil at 1:57 (all times total).

Dolph Ziggler is in third but he charges in like a nitwit too. Ziggler speeds things up as fast as he can but Rollins and Dean finally get him to the ground. Reigns gets to take his shots including a headbutt.

Ambrose takes too much time talking though and Dolph gets in some solid offense, low bridging Reigns to the floor and hitting the Fameasser on Seth. A Cactus Clothesline puts Ziggler and Ambrose on the floor for a second but Rollins knees Ziggler to the floor. Reigns spears Ziggler down and he can't beat the count at 5:39.

Here's Kofi Kingston to try his luck but Rollins comes to meet him in the aisle for some reason, allowing Kofi to snap the other twos' necks across the top rope. A quick Trouble in Paradise gets a near fall on Reigns but the numbers catch up to Kofi. The bulldog driver gets rid of Kingston at 7:13. Rob Van Dam is in next and Reigns is still down.

A banged up Rollins and Ambrose jump Van Dam but he kicks both guys down as things speed up. Ambrose is monkey flipped down and Reigns is kicked back down to the floor. Rolling Thunder hits both Rollins and Ambrose at the same time and Van Dam loads up the Five Star on Dean....as HHH comes out to call the match off at about 9:00.

Rating: C. The non-finish hurt this a lot because I was starting to get into it at the end. The idea of Shield fighting off everyone at once but slowly getting beaten down made sense and felt like something out of a video game. It was really doing a good job at building drama to seeing how far anyone could get without getting beaten but the ending stopped it cold.

Post break HHH yells at Vickie, asking what in the world she was thinking. After what Vickie did tonight, ten more of them would revolt next time, then ten more until we had a full scale revolt. Vickie says it was good for business, but tonight needs to be about fair competition. HHH demands Vickie to make the Usos/Daniel Bryan vs. the Shield, therefore again making Bryan the focus of the show after saying for weeks that there was no way we could have Bryan as the focus of the show.

The Raw ReBound covers the Dusty Rhodes story.

Ryder and Gabriel come in to see HHH and he gives them a match for no apparent reason.

Zack Ryder/Justin Gabriel vs. Wyatt Family

Harper gives Ryder a freaky look to start but Zack fires off a forearm in the corner. A big boot takes Ryder down for two as everything breaks down. Gabriel is sent to the floor and Harper hits a buckle bomb on Ryder followed by the discus lariat (JBL: "GOOD GOD!") for the pin at 1:12.

Bray hits Sister Abigail on Ryder post match and talks about keeping his promises.

RVD has a banged up elbow but HHH comes in and gives him a world title match against Del Rio at Battleground. HHH leaves and Del Rio comes in to beat RVD down, including the low superkick. Cole thinks it's odd that Del Rio was right there at that given time.

R-Truth vs. Alberto Del Rio

Non-title again. Truth pounds away in the corner to start and gets two off a suplex. The ax kick misses though and Del Rio hits a quick Backstabber for two. Off to a reverse chinlock but Truth comes back with some kicks to the ribs. The front suplex is good for two but Alberto hits the corner enziguiri for the same result. Truth rolls out of the armbreaker and hits the ax kick for two, only to be caught with the low superkick and the armbreaker for the submission at 3:34.

Rating: D+. This was about what you would expect out of these two. Truth is a jobber to the stars anymore but at least we don't have to put up with his matches being set up by dancing anymore. Del Rio still has nothing to his character other than being from Mexico as the money has been phased out, keeping him as average of a heel as you can be.

Shield vs. Usos/Daniel Bryan

Bryan starts by firing off kicks in the corner to Rollins' chest before dropping a knee for two. Rollins tries the jumping knee but gets caught in the surfboard instead. With the hold still mostly on it's Jey in off the tag with a clothesline, only to get caught in the Shield corner and punched by Ambrose. Jey comes back with a backdrop and brings in his brother who gets two off a clothesline.

Off to a hammerlock but Dean fights into the corner, only to have Jey come back in with a big chop for two. The Usos drop a double elbow for two but Jey is driven into the Shield corner again for the tag off to Reigns for some stomping. Jey stays out of trouble by pulling Roman into the corner for the tag off to Bryan. Kicking abounds until Reigns takes Daniel down with an elbow to the jaw and a tag off to Rollins for a chinlock. That goes nowhere as Daniel jawbreaks his way out and tags in Jimmy.

Jimmy does about as well as a career tag team wrestler fighting off three guys who have been defeating main eventers for over a year now as we take a break. Back with Jimmy fighting out of a Rollins chinlock and making the hot tag off to Jey. A few rooms of the house are cleaned but Rollins enziguris him down, allowing for the real heat segment to begin.

Dean hits a running dropkick against the ropes and holds Jey in place for a slingshot hilo, giving Rollins two. Back to Reigns for a jumping elbow drop for two and we hit the chinlock. A huge clothesline gets two for Roman and it's right back to the chinlock. Jey fights up again and fires off right hands all around followed by a Bubba Bomb on Rollins. The hot tag brings in Bryan for the real house cleaning by knocking Reigns and Rollins to the floor.

Two running corner dropkicks set up a hurricanrana to Dean for two. Jimmy dives over the top to take out Reigns and Jey does the same to Rollins. Dean clotheslines Bryan down but gets caught in the YES Lock, right in

front of the ropes. Jey superkicks Ambrose into the running knee from Bryan at 14:00 shown of 17:00.

Rating: B. This was the same thing that you've grown to expect from every Shield match: great action, a bunch of saved near falls and a hot finish. On top of that the Shield doesn't lose anything here given that they were coming in at a disadvantage. Good match here but did you really expect anything else?

Overall Rating: C+. This was a hard one to grade. The gauntlet match was really fun but it was pulled halfway through for some reason. A solid main event helps of course and we got some story development, but this show felt like it was over before it started. I'm not sure if that was a good thing as only the gauntlet match felt like anything special. Still though, fun show overall and a good use of two hours.

Results

AJ Lee b. Naomi – Black Widow

Santino Marella b. Jack Swagger – Backslide

Ryback b. Nick Nardone – Shell Shock

Shield vs. Usos/Prime Time Players/Justin Gabriel/Zack Ryder/Kofi Kingston/Rob Van Dam/Dolph Ziggler/Daniel Bryan/R-Truth went to a no contest

Wyatt Family b. Justin Gabriel/Zack Ryder – Discus lariat to Ryder

Alberto Del Rio b. R-Truth – Cross Armbreaker

Daniel Bryan/Usos b. Shield – Running knee to Ambrose

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NXT – July 11, 2012: A Totally Different Kind of Show But Still Great

NXT

Date: July 11, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, William Regal

We're back with the fourth week of the show which I believe is the final show from the first batch of tapings. After the six man that ended the last episode, there really isn't anything set for tonight. I've heard talk of creating an NXT Title but that wouldn't be for at least four more weeks because the next set of tapings is already done. Let's get to it.

Welcome Home everyone.

Tyson Kidd vs. Camacho

See, this is what NXT is good for: you can get a guy like Camacho some ring time. He hasn't had much but he can get some here and it's fine for him to get it at this level. Kidd avoids a kick to the ribs and nips up into a dropkick. Camacho takes over with a fist to the head but Kidd flips through a backdrop and grabs a quickly broken leg hold. Backslide gets two on Camacho and it's off to an armbar.

Camacho sends him to the apron but Kidd skins the cat and sends Camacho to the floor. Hunico tries to interfere and gets ejected for his efforts. Kidd dives on both guys and we take a break. Back with Kidd kicking Camacho in the face and trying the Sharpshooter but a rope is grabbed.

Camacho goes to the floor but grabs a running boot, sending Kidd face first into the apron.

Back inside and Camacho is in control and working on the back of Kidd. A backbreaker gets two and he stomps on the chest of Kidd a bit. Another backbreaker gets another two and Kidd gets draped over the top rope. Camacho hooks a seated third cousin twice removed of an abdominal stretch which Kidd breaks, only to be headbutted right back down. A belly to back suplex puts Kidd down and a legdrop gets two.

Kidd tries to speed things up but gets caught in a wheelbarrow slam for two. A middle rope legdrop misses for Camacho and Kidd fires off his kicks. Camacho is draped over the bottom rope and Kidd hits a slingshot legdrop to the head to keep Camacho down. Back in and Camacho hits a butterfly suplex off the top for two. Camacho sends him to the apron but charges into a kick to the head. A Blockbuster gets two on Camacho as he gets his foot on the rope. Dang I thought that would have been it. Kidd loads up the Sharpshooter but here's McGillicutty for a distraction. Kidd knocks him to the floor but walks into a DDT from Camacho for the pin at 12:15 shown of 15:45.

Rating: B-. I was really getting into this by the end of it. It's amazing what guys like Camacho are capable of when they have time and a guy like Kidd to work off of. I'm so glad that Tyson is getting a main show push as it's long overdue for someone as steady in the ring as he is. This McGillicutty feud has gone on for awhile though and it's hard to see why it needs to continue.

Bray Wyatt video, this time about faith. It's a shame that he's out for so many months.

Hugh Jackman was on Raw once.

Justin Gabriel says he's back to make a statement. Heath Slater comes up and says that Gabriel will make a statement of failure. Slater talks about taking out legends and Gabriel says it'll be a young guy beating up Slater tonight.

Aiden English vs. Bray Wyatt

Wyatt talks on the way to the ring, calling himself the angel in the dirt and singing Time is on My Side by the Rolling Stones. Wyatt pounds him down and sends English to the floor and into the barricade. Back in and Wyatt rolls around on the apron before splashing English in the corner. Wyatt dances with English a bit (literally) before hitting a rolling Downward Spiral for the pin at 1:48. Awesome debut here and a good transition from promos to in ring work which was what I was worried about from Wyatt.

Video on Seth Rollins, who will knock you out.

We run down the MITB card.

Richie Steamboat says he's got a great opportunity here. Leo Kruger comes up and they get in a brawl.

Video on Raquel Diaz, featuring Tweets from her.

Usos vs. Prime Time Players

Apparently Slater vs. Gabriel is next week. JR sits in on commentary for this one and there's no AW for the Players. Jimmy and Darren get us going and Jimmy goes nuclear by going for the hair. Young gets takes into the Uso corner for a continued beating before it's off to Titus for more of the same. Back to Young who charges into a powerslam from Jey for no cover. The Players head to the floor and Jey has a hair pick.

Jimmy hits a dive onto both Players and we take a break. Back with Jimmy uppercutting Titus, only to be knocked down after looking at Young. Young comes in with a kind of spinning toe hold. It's clear JR has no idea which Uso is which, nor does he care. Jimmy kicks Darren to the floor where Darren trips up Jey before there can be a tag. Back in and Young works on the knee some more and tags Titus.

Jimmy gets in a shot to Titus but O'Neal breaks up the tag at the last possible second. Back to the knee but Jimmy breaks it up. For some reason though he goes to the Players' corner instead of his own. A backdrop puts Titus down and there's the tag to Jey. Jey cleans house and hits the running Umaga attack on Young in the corner for two. Titus takes Jimmy's

leg out again which allows the Players to hit the Demolition Decapitator on Jey for the pin at 9:51 shown of 13:21.

Rating: C+. Nothing great here but another win for the Players before they finally get their title match is just fine. The Usos are still stuck in limbo but they're good at a job like this. JR not knowing which was which says a small something, as there's nothing to tell the two guys apart unless you're looking at their chest. That being said, they're a tag team and there's nothing wrong with them being so similar, as it makes them look more like a unit.

Overall Rating: B-. This was a totally different kind of show this week but it still worked. This came off a lot more like a show that the old NXT did and that's ok for the most part. Having a fresh batch of faces makes that work well, and given the match quality was good all around, what more can you ask for? With talk of the tournament coming for a title, there's a lot of upside on NXT in the future.

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