

# Smackdown – December 27, 2013: Cena Steals Another Show

## Smackdown

Date: December 27, 2013

Location: American Bank Center, Corpus Christi, Texas

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole

It's the final blue show of the year and I don't remember anything being announced on Raw. The main story from Monday was Big E.

Langston/Cena/Punk running off the Shield after being them for the DQ, meaning it's payback time tonight. We're getting closer to the Rumble and have less than 100 days until Wrestlemania so the times are getting exciting. Let's get to it.

Here's Cena to get things going. After looking at a clip of the end of Raw, Cena says the last Smackdown of the year is even more important than that. Tonight the WWE Universe is going to ring in the new year so we need NOISE. They have to have fun tonight because after the new year everyone has to worry about new year's resolutions.

Cena would like to give a bear hug to a real bear or star in a 1-800-Fella commercial or land the lead role in a musical production of No Holds Barred (dead silence on that line) or make a hip hop album with Great Khali (lukewarm) or reboot an animated Manimal series with Michael Cole in the lead role or, and only if he has time, get started early on his XFL fantasy team (nice chuckle).

There's one other thing he wants to do: gain forty pounds. Luckily for him he doesn't have to wait for the new year because the WWE World Heavyweight Championship weighs about forty pounds and he has a rematch clause. If Orton is listening he can get out here right now but instead

here's Shield. They surround the ring and easily take Cena down but here's Mark Henry for the save. When that doesn't work, Big E. Langston comes out for the real save to clear the ring. Kane comes out on stage and makes three singles matches for tonight: Langston vs. Ambrose (non-title), Reigns vs. Henry and Rollins vs. Cena.

### Usos vs. Wyatt Family

Before the match we get a clip of the Family throwing Bryan off a ledge last week. The Usos send the monsters to the floor and Jey takes Rowan down with a dive. Jimmy gets two off a rollup to Harper and a Whisper in the Wind gets the same. Rowan makes a blind tag and takes Jimmy's head off with a clothesline. A splash is enough to pin Jimmy in just 1:10.

Post match Bray gives Jey Sister Abigail.

Renee Young asks Randy Orton if he has any new year's resolutions. Orton says he's beaten everyone else in the company so maybe he'll win the Royal Rumble so he can spend Wrestlemania in a skybox writing his Hall of Fame introduction speech. Ziggler comes up and says he'll shut Orton up tonight. Orton promises an RKO until Kane comes in to make the match for later. Ziggler leaves and Kane says backstage must be a safe zone, but out there anything goes.

### Cody Rhodes vs. Antonio Cesaro

Colter's sign this week: "Press 1 for English, press 2 for INS." Cesaro is now residing in the US. This is fallout from Main Event when Cody went after Cesaro for interfering in a Swagger vs. Goldust match. Cody grabs a headlock to start as the announcers talk about Kane being the eyes and ears of the Authority tonight. Cody takes Cesaro to the mat and then out to the floor where Goldust gives Antonio a deep breath.

Back in and Cesaro punches Cody in the jaw and kicks him out to the

floor. After a Goldust staredown leads nowhere, Cesaro takes Rhodes back inside for a pummeling in the corner. Cody quickly breaks out of a chinlock and comes back with a front suplex for two but a Swagger distraction lets Cesaro get in a cheap shot and a rollup for the pin at 4:11.

**Rating:** D+. Another match that changes nothing as we wait for the title match that may never come. I'm not a fan of champions losing but at least this was a singles match instead of yet another tag loss. On the good side though, Cesaro getting a pin in a singles match is a nice thing to see and hopefully the first of many.

### Prime Time Players vs. Ryback/Curtis Axel

I refuse to refer to them as "Rybaxel." Ryback pounds on Young to start but Darren scores with a right hand to the jaw and a dropkick to the knee. Off to Titus for the front suplex to Darren onto Ryback for no cover. A hard shoulder puts Ryback down but Axel gets in a knee to O'Neil's back to take him down. Curtis chokes him in the corner ("BARK LIKE A DOG!") before it's quickly back to Ryback for a front facelock.

The heels take turns on O'Neil in the corner with Axel slapping him in the back of the head, only to run into a big boot. Darren gets the tag and scores with an overhead belly to belly on Axel before getting two off a northern lights suplex. Everything breaks down and Ryback is clotheslined to the floor, allowing Young to pin Axel at 4:51.

**Rating:** D+. The underlying problems with the tag division continues: it doesn't matter if you build up teams if the teams are boring and keep trading meaningless wins with no advancement in sight. This match doesn't change anything for either team and doesn't move the Players up towards a title program, at least not anytime soon.

We get a clip from the 50 Years of WWE DVD focusing on Saturday Night's Main Event.

## Randy Orton vs. Dolph Ziggler

Another non-title match. Ziggler now has a streak of pink hair which leaves JBL stunned. Dolph gets taken into the corner but comes back with a shot to the jaw to send the champion out to the floor. Back in and Orton headlocks him down and takes Ziggler's head off with a clothesline. Dolph comes back with right hands in the corner and the big jumping elbow for two. I guess the ten elbow drops spot is long gone.

Orton pulls Ziggler face first into the middle buckle to take over again and walks around very slowly. He walks around too long though and Ziggler gets in a dropkick, sending Orton to the floor and us to a break. Back with Orton stomping away on a fallen Ziggler. Randy puts on a reverse chinlock for a bit but Ziggler gets out with a jawbreaker. Dolph pounds away in the corner and scores with a neckbreaker before getting two off a neckbreaker.

The Fameasser misses but Ziggler avoids the powerslam and gets two off a jumping DDT. Dolph gets crotched on the top but breaks up a superplex attempt. A bad looking missile dropkick gets two and Orton is sent shoulder first into the post (same thing Orton did to him during a break). A bulldog gets two for Ziggy but Orton pokes him in the eye and RKOs Ziggler for the pin at 13:20.

**Rating:** B-. I like the ending with Orton taking the easy way out again, just like Cena accused him of doing leading up to TLC. The match was the usual good stuff from these guys as they've shown that they have chemistry. Ziggler getting to show off a little bit is much better than seeing him in nothing matches against Fandango.

Post match Orton takes Ziggler outside and gives him the Elevated DDT off the barricade.

Shield says they'll win all their matches tonight. Cena vs. Rollins sounds promising.

## Daniel Bryan vs. Damien Sandow

JBL wants to know why there was a good Santa and a bad Santa on Monday. Cole: "That's the way the story was written?" JBL: "WHAT KIND OF AN ANSWER IS THAT???" Bryan fires off some kicks in the corner to start followed by some knees to the ribs to put Sandow down. Damien comes back with some forearms to the back and sends Daniel out to the floor. The Russian legsweep sets up the Wind-Up Elbow for two and we hit the crossface chickenwing. Back up and Bryan hits the running clothesline and dropkick in the corner to set up the top rope hurricanrana. The YES Kicks set up the running knee for the pin at 4:01.

**Rating:** D+. Just a quick win here for Bryan in the kind of matches I wouldn't mind seeing more of. Well, more of as long as the opponents change every now and then and we don't have to sit through the same pairing every week. Sandow doesn't lose anything here as he's not ready to beat someone on Bryan's level so there's nothing bad in this whole thing.

Post match Bray appears on stage and says he realizes that Bryan is the one the people want. That means Bray has to destroy him.

## Dean Ambrose vs. Big E. Langston

Neither title is on the line. In addition to the other Shield members, Cena and Henry are both at ringside as well. Langston shoves Ambrose into the corner to start and drives shoulders into the ribs but gets clotheslined down. Dean pounds away with rights and lefts on the mat before hitting the running dropkick against the ropes.

We hit the chinlock for a bit before Ambrose goes up top, only to be slammed down like a ham sandwich being thrown off a cliff. A belly to belly puts Ambrose down again but he sends Langston to the floor for a standoff. No brawling ensues and Ambrose throws Langston back inside, only to have the big man run Dean over, setting up the Big Ending for the

pin at 2:46. That was close. I thought they wouldn't have Ambrose job clean again before the year was out.

Reigns comes in for the showdown with Langston but Henry moves Big E. out of the way.

### Mark Henry vs. Roman Reigns

Reigns wants a test of strength to start but headbutts Henry instead. A hard clothesline sends Reigns to the floor and a headbutt from Henry puts him down. Back in and a big boot to the jaw puts Reigns down as the slow pace continues. Roman snaps Henry's throat across the top rope and gets two off the Superman Punch. We hit a chinlock on Henry for a bit but he comes back with the JYD headbutts. Reigns will have nothing to do with that jive turkey nonsense and lifts Henry up for a Samoan drop. Another Superman Punch and the spear are good for the pin on Mark at 4:01.

**Rating:** D. Reigns looked good but he had to work through a lot of Mark Henry suck. It's a good sign that he's pinning former world champions clean in four minutes though. There's a BIG future for Reigns and the fact that these wins are becoming more and more natural are telling signs for him.

### John Cena vs. Seth Rollins

There's a lot of time left for this. Cena quickly takes him down and works on a hammerlock. Back up and Cena sends Seth to the floor with a hiptoss for a meeting with Shield. Back in and Rollins gets in some shots to knock Cena into the corner. Rollins blocks a bulldog and drops a knee for two before putting on a cobra clutch of all things. Cena tries to fight out and gets caught in a one arm camel clutch, only to fight up and drive Rollins into the corner to escape.

Rollins gets a boot up in the corner to stop a charging John and gets two

off a neckbreaker as we take a break. Back with Rollins firing off right hands to the jaw. Cena is sent into the corner but he reverses a whip into the corner to put both guys down again. John tries a comeback but gets caught in a quick Downward Spiral into the middle buckle. Rollins does You Can't See Me but Cena counters a neckbreaker into the ProtoBomb and hits the Shuffle. Rollins flips out of the AA and hits a Buff Blockbuster (that's a finisher that needs to be pulled out of mothballs) for two.

Cena gets taken down by a Stinger Splash but avoids the second attempt. He grabs a half nelson and lifts Rollins up before spinning into what was supposed to be a neckbreaker. Cena landed a foot or so away from Rollins but luckily the move could have passed for a half nelson slam. Rollins kicks out at two so Cena goes up, only to get knocked down to the mat.

The standing Sliced Bread #2 gets another near fall for Seth but Cena comes back with a Batista Bomb (not gimmick infringement just yet) for two. Cena tries to pull Rollins away from the ropes but Seth lands on his feet again and hits a jumping enziguri for a VERY close two. Rollins gets the same off a top rope knee to the face and the frustration sets in. The Black Out (running curb stomp) is countered in the STF but Rollins is into the ropes before too much damage can be done.

Ambrose tries to come in but gets picked off by Langston before he can make any contact. Dean is thrown over the announce table but Reigns hits a running clothesline to drop Langston. Henry throws Reigns onto Ambrose as Cena rolls through Rollins' cross body into the AA for the pin at 17:40.

**Rating:** B+. I was digging the heck out of this match and I was so glad that the ending wasn't a DQ. Rollins looked outstanding in there as he continues to prove his worth once the Shield breaks up. I could see him being the next Kofi Kingston, having awesome matches with anyone they put him out there with but never getting the big break. That's not a bad career to have at all.

**Overall Rating:** B-. This took some time to get going and the main event was by far the best part of the show. The first half of the show is only ok but the Orton vs. Ziggler match along with Rollins vs. Cena more than make up for it. This was using the old formula of wrestling on Smackdown and that's what was needed after a more entertainment based Raw. It's a nice way to close out the year and hopefully a good way to get us into 2014.

## Results

Wyatt Family b. Usos – Splash to Jimmy

Antonio Cesaro b. Cody Rhodes – Rollup

Prime Time Players b. Ryback/Curtis Axel – Rollup to Axel

Randy Orton b. Dolph Ziggler – RKO

Daniel Bryan b. Damien Sandow – Running knee

Big E. Langston b. Dean Ambrose – Big Ending

Roman Reigns b. Mark Henry – Spear

John Cena b. Seth Rollins – AA

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# Ode To The Big Gold Belt

This was going to be my second column for the newsletter but that's been put on hold for now. I might try to do more of these if they go over well.

TLC has come and gone and of course the biggest story is title unification. Instead of the WWE Championship and the World Heavyweight Championship, we now have the WWE World Heavyweight Championship. Barring a major surprise, the title will be represented by the WWE Championship going forward as there's almost no way a belt will debut and be retired in less than one year.

The World Heavyweight Championship will be leaving us soon and that makes me a sad KB. Therefore, I present to you my Ode to the Big Gold Belt.

First off, the title itself is just good looking. It's really as simple as that. Look at the World Heavyweight Championship and tell me it doesn't look awesome. The design was introduced for Ric Flair back in 1986 because promoter Jim Crockett thought a wrestler larger than life like Flair needed a larger than life title. The belt makes anyone look like a champion and is so classy and elegant that it makes anything else pale in comparison.

Another thing the title did was give some people a chance. Over the last eleven years the World Heavyweight Championship has allowed some wrestlers to become a world champion when they wouldn't have been able to otherwise. Names like Booker T, Jack Swagger, Kane, Dolph Ziggler, Mark Henry and Christian weren't going to win the top title in the company but the World Heavyweight Championship allowed them to be called a world champion for the rest of their lives.

Next up are four simple worlds: Money in the Bank. While the concept has been run into the ground over the years, there are a few moments where the World Heavyweight Championship cash-in blew the roof off the arena. The biggest moment of all these: Dolph Ziggler the night after Wrestlemania 29. Think back to that moment and remember how insane the arena went when his music hit. The place came unglued and Ziggler won the World Heavyweight Championship for the first time (yes it was his second reign but the first time the belt was awarded, not won).

On top of the moments the title has given us, it has also given us some incredible matches. Over the years there have been classics for the World Heavyweight Championship such as Randy Orton vs. Christian, Undertaker vs. Edge, Mark Henry vs. Randy Orton and Sheamus vs. Daniel Bryan. At the top of the list though is the main event of Wrestlemania 20, with Chris Benoit defeating Shawn Michaels and HHH in an absolute masterpiece for the title. Benoit winning the title by making HHH tap out in the middle of the ring in Madison Square Garden is as perfect of a way to win the title as you can possibly find.

Last but not least, the title served as a nice historical reference. While the history of the title isn't what the WWE would have you believe (that's a long story for another time but in short, the title being called the same as the NWA Title is nonsense. At best the title can be traced back to 1991 and that's stretching further than humanly possible), the design of the title is something that brings back memories of an era long since passed. With wrestling changing as much as it has in the last few years, it's nice to be able to remember a simpler time.

Overall the World Heavyweight Championship represents an era of WWE. Over the last decade plus it has given us everything from nostalgia to great matches to pops that blew the roof off. I'm sad to see it go as it meant a lot over the years, even when it was little more than a midcard title. Here's to you Big Gold Belt. May you shine on forever.

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# WWE.com's Top 25 Matches Of The Year

See if you can find the two glaring issues. #25 The Miz vs. Wade Barrett – Intercontinental Championship Match (Raw; April 8)

#24 Kofi Kingston vs. Antonio Cesaro – U.S. Championship Match (WWE Main Event; May 1)

#23 The Shield vs. The Usos – WWE Tag Team Championship Match (WWE Money in the Bank 2013 Kickoff)

#22 John Cena vs. Damien Sandow – World Heavyweight Championship Match (Raw; Oct. 28)

#21 CM Punk vs. Dean Ambrose (Raw; Dec. 9)

#20 Chris Jericho vs. CM Punk (Raw; Feb. 4)

#19 Rob Van Dam vs. Chris Jericho (Raw; July 15)

#18 Daniel Bryan vs. Randy Orton – Street Fight (Raw; June 24)

#17 John Cena vs. Randy Orton – Champion of Champions Tables, Ladders & Chairs Match (WWE TLC: Tables, Ladders & Chairs)

#16 Triple H vs. Brock Lesnar – No Holds Barred Match (WrestleMania 29)

#15 Alberto Del Rio vs. Christian – World Heavyweight Championship Match (SummerSlam 2013)

#14 The Undertaker vs. Dean Ambrose (SmackDown; April 26)

#13 Kaitlyn vs. AJ Lee – Divas Championship Match (WWE Payback)

#12 Goldust vs. Randy Orton (Raw; Sept. 9)

#11 Money in the Bank Ladder Match for a World Heavyweight Championship Contract (WWE Money in the

Bank)

#10 Cody Rhodes & Goldust vs. The Usos vs. The Shield – Six Man WWE Tag Team Championship Match (WWE Hell in a Cell)

#9 Team Hell No & Randy Orton vs. The Shield (SmackDown; June 14)

#8 Dolph Ziggler vs. Alberto Del Rio – World Heavyweight Championship Match (WWE Payback)

#7 The Undertaker & Team Hell No vs. The Shield (Raw; April 22)

#6 John Cena vs. CM Punk – No. 1 Contender's Match (Raw; Feb. 25)

#5 Daniel Bryan vs. Antonio Cesaro (Raw; July 22)

#4 Cody Rhodes & Goldust (w/Dusty Rhodes) vs. Seth Rollins & Roman Reigns (w/Dean Ambrose) (WWE Battleground)

#3 The Undertaker vs. CM Punk (WrestleMania 29)

#2 John Cena vs. Daniel Bryan – WWE Championship Match (SummerSlam 2013)

#1 CM Punk vs. Brock Lesnar – No Disqualification Match (SummerSlam 2013)

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# Smackdown – December 20, 2013: Wasn't He... And Weren't They... I Give Up

## Smackdown

Date: December 20, 2013

Location: AT&T Center, San Antonio, Texas

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

We're getting closer to the end of the year and the main story coming out of Monday is the potential for a three way feud between Cena, Orton and Bryan. Daniel had the champion beaten but Orton cheated to get out of the match, drawing in Cena for the save. It should be interesting to hear Bryan's thoughts on Cena running in to help him. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap from Monday with Cena cutting Orton off and the Authority giving Orton a match with Daniel Bryan, because the last few months of the Authority trying to crush Bryan are completely forgotten. The match recap doesn't do it justice.

Here's Orton to brag about becoming undisputed champion some more. He only has the WWE Championship this week. Orton says the Authority rewarded him with a match against Daniel Bryan. Randy beat him then beat John Cena when he tries to interfere because he just doesn't care. This brings out Cena as they're moving fast tonight. Orton says Cena needs to respect him but Cena says he's here to keep Orton from looking like a fool. If Orton doesn't want to be a champion he should get out.

Orton is the center of the WWE and everyone is going to be hunting him. It's up to Orton to determine how he wants to be remembered and on Monday he was a giant coward. Orton says he did what he had to do to win, but Cena points out the truth: Bryan won by DQ. Cena spent weeks telling us that Orton always runs away and takes the easy way out, hoping that Orton would come to fight at TLC. That's exactly what happened, but the next night Orton was taking the easy way out again.

Randy says Bryan isn't getting another rematch but here's Daniel with something to say. He understands Orton is too afraid to give him a rematch because when Bryan beats him, the myth that Randy Orton is the best comes tumbling down. On top of that, Bryan knows that when Cena beats Orton for the title, he'll get the shot he deserves. Orton says that's never going to happen because the Authority won't allow it. The fans don't like that idea but here's Shield to interrupt some more. Orton bails to the floor but here's Punk to even the sides before Shield gets

to the ring. Vickie comes out and makes one heck of a six man for later.

### Jack Swagger vs. Big E. Langston

Colter has a sign saying Deport Santa Claus because he's that awesome. This is non-title of course and was set up by the tag match from Raw. Zeb sits in on commentary and talks about confusing Santa Claus with Santa Anna since they were both singing Feliz Navidad. Langston runs Jack over to start but Swagger takes him into the corner to take over. A clothesline gets two and Langston gets caught in a front facelock. Big E. fights out of the hold and throws Swagger down, setting up the Warrior Splash for two. Henry runs Cesaro over for no apparent reason and the distraction lets Big E. hit the Big Ending for the pin at 2:54.

### Tamina Snuka vs. Brie Bella

AJ sits in on commentary and we get a clip of that great superkick to Nikki from Raw. Brie hits a quick cross body for two and sends Tamina out to the floor before slapping Snuka in the face. Tamina slams Brie down and kicks her in the ribs a few times. A knee drop gets the same as AJ wants to know why she has to keep defending against the same girls over and over. Cole asks if Tamina could get a shot but AJ says Tamina knows where her bread is buttered. "And she should know because I make a mean breakfast."

Brie comes back with a running knee to the face and a middle rope dropkick. Cole talks about Brie getting engaged on the season finale of Total Divas, giving AJ this great jab: "She's engaged? That should make her #1 contender!" As a follow up Cole asks if AJ has been asked to be part of season two. "No. I was hugged as a child and don't need the attention." Tamina comes back with a superkick but the Superfly Splash hits knees, giving Brie the rollup pin at 3:04.

**Rating:** C-. The match was nothing special outside of that superkick but AJ's commentary made this far more entertaining. The line about making

Tamina breakfast got a laugh out of me and everything she said about the reality show is true. Why should she keep defending the title against the same girls she's beaten time after time? Some of the comments she made could be planting seeds for Tamina to turn on her as well which makes things more interesting.

Brie shoves AJ down post match.

### Sin Cara vs. Drew McIntyre

Drew is quickly sent over the top rope, followed by a nice flip dive by the masked man. Back inside and a high cross body gets two on McIntyre but he throws Sin down. A knee drop has Cara in trouble but he jumps over Drew in the corner and armdrags him down. I can't imagine how badly the original Sin Cara would have botched that. A handspring elbow gets two on McIntyre before a kick to the head sets up a Swanton Bomb for the pin at 2:05. Just a step above a squash here. JBL gets in his line about how it's like a new Sin Cara.

### Brodus Clay vs. Tensai

Tensai takes him into the corner and drives shoulders into Brodus' ample gut. A clothesline drops Clay but he avoids the backsplash. Clay hits a pair of splashes in the corner and a running splash gets two. Another splash gets no cover and Brodus does the dinosaur claws dance. Cue the Funkadactyls with Xavier Woods for the distraction and, say it with me, Tensai rolls Brodus up for the pin at 1:45. I have no idea how this is supposed to help either guy but I'm sure it will be explained to me later.

Tensai and Woods beat up Brodus post match, setting up a dance party.

### Cody Rhodes/Goldust vs. Wyatt Family

Non-title again, meaning you can probably pencil in the brothers for a loss. Goldust and Erick get things going but Rowan doesn't move for the deep breath. Instead Goldust punches the mask off of him, only to get shoulder blocked down. Goldust comes back with some right hands, sending Rowan off to the corner for the tag to Harper. Off to Cody who brings Harper into the champions' corner before bringing Goldust right back in.

Luke takes over with some uppercuts to the jaw and drags Goldust out to the corner for the tag to Rowan. Erick is at the top of his weak offensive game here with choking, stomping and right hands. Harper comes back in with an uppercut for two with that disturbing look on his face. Goldust fights back but misses a cross body, sending him out to the floor and right in front of Wyatt as we take a break.

Back with Harper Gator rolling Goldust as Cole asks about Sister Abigail. Rowan comes back in for a claw hold and a big toss across the ring. Goldust finally gets an elbow up in the corner to stop a charging Rowan but Harper breaks up the hot tag attempt. A DDT puts Harper down a second later and there's the tag off to Rhodes.

Cody speeds things up with a springboard missile dropkick followed by the Disaster Kick to Harper. The moonsault press gets two but Rowan makes the save. Goldust sends him to the floor and dives off the apron to take him down, but Wyatt hits a quick big boot to Goldust's jaw. Harper picks Cody up by the ears (this guy really is evil) and takes his head off with the discus lariat for the pin at 11:04 shown of 14:34.

**Rating:** C+. The losing streak is here and there's nothing that can be done about it. These recurring ideas are all the proof you need that a change in the booking is desperately needed. Earlier tonight we had the distraction into the rollup and now we have the losing streak. That's roughly 40% of all the ideas they have and they used them in less than half an hour.

Post match Bray leans upside down in the corner as he goes after Cody,



drawing out Bryan with a chair to take out the Family. He takes Bray down and pounds away but has to fight off Rowan which allows Bray to escape.

Damien Sandow doesn't like Christmas. It's nothing but a bunch of adults asking for stuff they don't need, children asking for things they haven't earned, and filthy houses with ugly decorations. That's why he's going to cancel Christmas this coming Monday, but he's cut off by...Miz, who I thought was a heel. Miz gives him the "really" treatment and says he knows Santa. They celebrate Santa where he comes from and Sandow couldn't carry Santa's sack.

### The Miz vs. Damien Sandow

Miz takes him into the corner to start and scores with some clotheslines. Sandow tries to get a boot up in the corner but Miz wraps it around the ropes and kicks at the knee. The Figure Four goes on but Sandow gets to the rope. A rollup with a handful of trunks is enough to pin Miz at 1:28. I have no idea what the point of this match was as the promo could have done the same thing. Mark Henry fighting to save Christmas from the Latin speaking Sandow Claus is going to be glorious though.

Ad for the History of WWE DVD.

### Kofi Kingston vs. Fandango

Kofi gets the jobber entrance as JBL calls Fandango a male Shakira. "His hips don't lie." Cole: "...oh God." Fandango grabs a headlock to start but Kofi comes back with a dropkick. A clothesline gets two on Kingston and Fandango pounds some elbows into Kofi's chest. We hit the chinlock for a bit but Kofi avoids a middle rope knee drop. Kofi comes back with some chops and a dropkick followed by the Boom Drop. Fandango bails to the floor to avoid Trouble in Paradise and trips Kofi to send him to the mat. The guillotine legdrop gets the pin at 3:40.

**Rating:** D. I guess it's time to push Fandango again and we're going with Miz as a face again. Fandango has potential and thankfully his character has evolved past the point of just dancing and saying his name. Kofi continues to be in the same spot on the card as always and he'll still be over no matter what happens to him.

The Wyatts jump Bryan in the back, presumably taking him out of the six man later. Bray drops to his knees and says "ashes ashes, we all fall down." The Family throws him off a ledge which appeared to be a few feet high.

### Shield vs. CM Punk/John Cena

Still works for me. Punk and Ambrose get things going with CM going after the arm. Ambrose is driven into the corner and it's off to Cena for a shoulder block. The bulldog puts Dean down again and it's back to Punk who gets two off a middle rope elbow. We take a break and come back with Reigns holding Cena for a kick from Rollins. Back to Ambrose to pepper Cena with with right hands but John belly to back suplexes him to get a breather.

The rest doesn't last long though as Reigns comes in with headbutts and a lot of shouting. There's the awesome Superman Punch before it's off to Rollins for a forearm to Cena's face. Cena avoids a charge in the corner but rolls towards Shield, allowing Rollins to tag out to Ambrose. Dean hits a dropkick up against the ropes before it's back to Rollins for some right hands in the corner.

Cena is sat on the top rope but headbutts Rollins down to escape a superplex. Ambrose comes back in but walks into a tornado DDT. There's the hot tag to Punk who takes Ambrose down with a leg lariat and hits a running knee to Rollins' chin. Seth rolls to the floor for a suicide dive followed by the running knee in the corner back inside. The Macho Elbow looks to set up the GTS but Ambrose breaks it up. Punk drops of them with the neckbreaker/DDT combo for two on Rollins. Reigns makes the save and

Shield triple teams Punk for the DQ at 9:48 shown of 13:18.

**Rating:** C+. Good match as you would expect from these guys but the ending was lame. Cena sold the heck out of that beating by staying down as long as he did but there might have been more done to him on the floor. This keeps the Punk vs. Shield going which could keep tying him into the Authority.

Cena comes in for the save but Reigns hits the spear to take him down. Punk is about to take the Triple Bomb but Cena makes another save. The superheroes are in trouble but here's Big E. Langston for the real save. Ambrose and Rollins are sent to the floor and we get the showdown between Langston and Reigns but Punk gets a chair, sending Roman out to the floor. Shield backs off to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C-. Langston interfering to end the show is a really interesting idea as his NXT work has shown how capable he is of being a monster face. Unfortunately that's about all that held my interest tonight other than AJ's commentary. There's just nothing here of interest with a bunch of squashes complete with overdone finishes plus Miz being a face again for no apparent reason. Not an interesting show here but it wasn't the worst two hours ever.

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# 2013 Awards: Worst Match Of The Year

Again, not something that took long to think of. It's the Total Divas vs. True Divas match from Survivor Series. Not only was the work horribly sloppy, but Cole lost track of who was still in. Yeah the girls look great in their tiny outfits, but that doesn't mean the match is worth watching.

The runner up is Big Show vs. Randy Orton from the same show, though I didn't find it nearly as bad as everyone else. That being said, one thing is clear: Survivor Series SUCKED.

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## New Bi-Weekly Column

I'll be writing a column called KB's Corner every other Sunday for a recap on Wrestlezone.com. I'll only be linking them here so I don't steal the traffic from Wrestlezone. The first one was up on December 8 so there will be a new one up this coming Sunday.

Up first: Christmas Presents For The Wrestling Fan

[12/8 Wrestlezone Recap: WWE PPV Buyrates Are In, Matt Hardy Hits the "Finish Line" in Pro Wrestling, PWG Matt Rushmore Review Plus New Features, WWE/Impact Wrestling Discussion & We Answer Your Questions](#)

This is a link to just my page but check out the rest of it too.

Hope you enjoy,

KB

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## **2013 Awards: Moment of the Year**

This one took some time. There are a lot of options to go with here so let's look at some of the possibilities.

Dolph Ziggler cashes in MITB. The pop for this is absolutely amazing with the New York fans going insane for the smark hero of the day winning a world title. The problem with this is it doesn't really mean anything long term as Ziggler was having a musical instrument match with Sandow seven months later. Still though, awesome moment.

Rhodes Brothers get their jobs back. This is one of the rare stories that connected with people on an emotional level. You

have Cody who gets fired because he dared to stand up to the boss and had to fight for his job while Goldust needed a job as well. This was about standing up to the man and the fans bought into it. The match was awesome as well and the celebration with Dusty was a great moment.

Orton cashes in. This is one of those ideas where people knew it was coming but it was still awesome. That slight delay after Bryan wins the title before Orton's music hit made me wonder what was going to happen. That's what makes a moment work to perfection and the shock was great. HHH turning heel makes it even better and sets up the next four months worth of stories. It was much more about the surprise than anything else and that's a good thing.

Undertaker's tribute to Paul Bearer. I don't think this really needs an explanation.

That brings us to the winner.

John Cena selects Daniel Bryan. This promo was the culmination of Daniel Bryan having the year of his life and being rewarded for it. Cena comes off looking like the people's champion, the fans feel like their influence meant something and we got a classic match to close out the best show of the year as a result. When a moment is awesome as well as sets up months worth of stories and an awesome match, what more can you ask for?

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# Checked Out Christmas Bounty

Miz's movie in case you forgot.

It's not terrible but I'm probably going to forget I watched it in about 3 days. Miz is the co-star of the movie and is about what you would expect. It's not like That's What I Am where they hyped up Orton and he literally wasn't on screen for five minutes.

The movie is supposed to be a comedy but it's more of an action movie than funny. The story is an ex-bounty hunter is coming back to New Jersey because the one bounty she ever let get away is back in town. She hooks up with her old team, including ex-boyfriend Miz. She doesn't want her fiance to know she used to be a bounty hunter and spends half the movie hiding it. The fact that it's set at Christmas means nothing to the plot at all and this could have been set at any time of the year with no effect on the story.

It's better than some WWE movies but there's a reason this is a straight to DVD movie that aired once on cable. The action sequences aren't bad and the lead girl is good looking. Miz isn't bad in it all things considered and he looks fine beating up goons. It ran an hour and 45 minutes with commercials so it's not even that long. The movie isn't terrible by any means but it's nothing that is going to blow you away or be something you'll want to watch multiple times.

If you like Miz and not serious action movies you might like this but definitely don't buy the DVD if you're just curious. Rent it or see if it's ever on TV again at best.

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# Monday Night Raw – August 30, 2004: Total Divas Wish They Were Like This

## Monday Night Raw

Date: August 30, 2004

Location: Cow Palace, San Francisco, California

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This was a request from a long time ago and I have no idea why anyone wanted to see it. We're just past Summerslam 2004, meaning Orton is the world champion, having beaten Benoit at Summerslam, only to be thrown out of Evolution the next night. We're coming up on Unforgiven where HHH would make it VERY clear who ruled Raw and Heaven help anyone that thought otherwise. Let's get to it.

We open with an In Memory Of graphic for Marcin Makulski, a graphics designer for WWE who died either that day or over the weekend.

The opening video shows HHH throwing Orton out of Evolution and Orton spitting in his face.

Here's Evolution for their weekly ten minute chat. HHH says this unit exists because he invented it. It's his blood, sweat and heart that makes the team what it is today. Just ask Ric Flair, who was down in the dumps before HHH saved him. Batista had no direction or guidance until HHH showed him the way. Dude just say you think you're Jesus already. That brings HHH to Orton who was supposed to be the pet project. No one cared if Orton lived or died until HHH got hold of him. HHH wasn't done with him yet, but Orton spat in his face. That's how he repays HHH?

This brings out Orton who stands next to what appear to be three covered up pictures. Orton tells HHH to call him champ instead of Randy in a nice line. HHH is right: he gave Orton a chance to make a name for himself and HHH should be thanked for that. HHH got something out of it as well though, which leads to the first picture being revealed: a group shot of



Evolution with HHH front and center. The team was never about the past, present and future, but only about protecting HHH.

The Game goes into a tirade on how Evolution is all about him because he made it. Orton is one to talk about protection because the three of them protected him for over a year. Randy reveals picture #2: him pinning Chris Benoit all by himself, something HHH could never do.

The third picture is Orton spitting in HHH's face, making Trips even angrier than before. Orton is ready to fight if HHH wants a piece, but we're not waiting for Unforgiven. Randy takes off his shirt, but realizes it would be 3-1. He goes over to the third picture and pulls out a sledgehammer. HHH ducks a swing that would have killed him and bails into the crowd, leaving Orton to pose in the ring. Good ending to the segment but it didn't need to take fifteen minutes.

After a break Bischoff is yelling at Orton for swinging the hammer. As a punishment, Orton is thrown out of the building. Did I mention HHH is facing Eugene later tonight? Orton drops the hammer on Bischoff's foot.

We recap Rock making a shocking appearance last week to beat up La Resistance with a slight assist from Rhyno and Tajiri.

#### Rhyno/Tajiri vs. La Resistance/Coach

Rob Conway (who, as of this writing on December 17, 2013, is the NWA World Champion of all people) pounds on Rhyno to start before it's off to Sylvan Grenier for some neck cranking. The French Canadian tag champions hold Rhyno for a slip from Coach for two as this is already boring. Back to Grenier for a chinlock until Rhyno fights up and makes his comeback with clotheslines. Tajiri keeps getting kicked off the apron to keep him out as Rhyno Gores Coach down. Rhyno walks into Au Revoir (spinning suplex/side slam combo) for the pin.

**Rating:** D-. Oh my goodness how bad was the tag division at this point? I'm assuming Tajiri was injured or something here as he never came in at all. The match was really dull stuff with La Resistance being one of the least interesting multiple time champions ever and having no opponents of note at all. Terribly uninteresting match.

Papa Roach is here.

We recap Kane and Lita's wedding which saw a failed run-in from Matt Hardy to try to save the reluctant Lita. Kane's white tuxedo does rather well.

Kane tells someone off screen to not come out until he tells them to. It's not Lita.

Eugene tells Regal about how much he loves baseball and gets on Regal's nerves. Regal doesn't want Eugene to come out there for Regal's match with Batista.

### William Regal vs. Batista

Regal beat Flair last week with the help of the brass knuckles to set this up. Batista takes Regal into the corner to start and shrugs off a shoulder block attempt. Some knees and elbows have Regal in more trouble but he avoids a charge into the corner and gets a nice suplex on Big Dave. The knee trembler gets two but Regal walks into the spinebuster. Batista goes outside to get a chair but it's just a distraction so Flair can get in a brass knuckle shot to Regal's ribs. Batista's running clothesline (the Batista Bomb was still coming) is good for the pin. Just a squash to wrap up some ends from last week.

Smackdown Your Vote: Republican version. This was a voting drive kind of deal the company did for both parties to get 18-30 year olds involved in politics. Shawn, Ivory and Linda McMahon are representing here.

Here's Stacy to emcee the Diva Search segment. The Diva Search was exactly what it sounds like and basically filled in the Diva division for about five years. We get the five finalists (Christy Hemme, Carmella Descarse, Joy Giovanni, Maria Kinellis and Amy Weber, all of whom were hired) in swimsuits. Maria gets eliminated despite being arguably the most famous of the final five. She flips Carmella off on the way out and gets the only pop of the segment.

All four of the remaining finalists get thirty seconds to insult the other girls. Joy feels Amy up, spansks Christy and says Carmella has a big

mouth. Amy tells Joy to learn how to lick a pie, Christy to settle down and that Carmella knows "S\*\*\* about wrestling and that having a c\*\*\* in your a\*\* has nothing to do with wrestling." MAN this was a different era.

Carmella makes fun of Amy for being rejected for Playboy, calls Joy fat and hopes Christy wins if she doesn't. Christy says don't mess with fire because she'll get burned. Amy has fat lips and Carmella enjoys swallowing male bodily fluids in a gutter. Christy does the splits and that's it. Christy would wind up winning this, even though the most successful of all the girls in the Search had been eliminated weeks ago: Michelle McCool. To say this was extreme compared to the Bellas and Total Divas is an understatement.

Trish Stratus and Tyson Tomko make fun of Lita in the back. Kane gets in Tomko's face to stand up for his wife but winds up laughing with them. Another sign of the times: Kane has six pack abs.

Here are Kane and Lita for Lita's wedding present. After mentioning an open contract for Unforgiven, Kane thanks her for giving his unborn child a womb to grow in and has a surprise for her as a reward. Matt isn't here tonight but Kane has flown in his family. The fans go nuts at the thought of Jeff Hardy returning but instead it's a bunch of random guys, including Pat Hardy, Nat Hardy, Rat Hardy and a 400lb Samoan named Fat Hardy. Kane destroys all of them and chokeslams Rat for a pin since that apparently that was a match.

Kane raises his arms for the fire but Lita says hang on a second because she has a surprise for him too. See, they're married now and can sign legal documents for each other, such as that open contract. Kane laughs it off because Matt Hardy won't be able to fight by Unforgiven. Lita is aware of this, which is why she signed Kane to face Shawn Michaels. Kane injured Shawn a few weeks ago, even though he was fine for the voting thing about fifteen minutes ago.

### Ric Flair vs. Chris Benoit

This should be good. Flair is checked for brass knuckles and the referee actually finds some in his knee pad. Ric takes him into the corner to start but Benoit fights out with chops and a bad looking backdrop. A

quick Crossface attempt doesn't work as Flair makes the rope and we go outside for more chopping. Back in and Flair Flops face first on the mat but comes back with a quick chop block.

Ric fires away with chops and kicks at the knee in the corner before doing what was supposed to be a strut. There's a half crab of all things on Benoit as Flair needs a breather. They chop it out again until Benoit enziguris him down. Benoit misses the Swan Dive but rolls the Germans anyway. A Sharpshooter almost makes Flair tap but Batista comes in for the DQ.

**Rating:** C. This is one of those matches that would have been better five years ago with an extra fifteen minutes but at this point it was a shell of what it should have been. Benoit didn't look like his usual self here but the German suplexes looked great. Flair was starting to slip out there and it was on the verge of getting sad.

Batista powerbombs Benoit.

Here's Jericho for the Highlight Reel with special guest Edge. We get a clip from Jericho challenging Edge for the IC Title and getting dropped throat first on the top rope to retain Edge's title. It may or may not have been intentional, but Jericho wants a rematch at Unforgiven. Edge comes out on crutches but Jericho doesn't seem convinced. The champion says he tore his groin over the weekend and claims that he doesn't need to get disqualified to keep his title.

Jericho talks about Edge getting booed out of Toronto at Summerslam and starts a Y2J chant here in San Francisco. Edge calls the fans puppets and says Jericho can win the popularity contests because he'll keep winning the matches. Jericho questions the need for Edge's crutches and thinks as soon as he turns his back, Edge will bash him over the head. Edge says he has the MRI to prove that he's injured and promises Jericho the first title shot when he's healed. The champion goes to leave when Christian returns to jump Jericho. Edge looks confused as Christian whips Jericho with a belt.

Trish Stratus/Gail Kim vs. Nidia/Victoria

This is Trish's first match since June even though she never lost the title. Trish and Nidia get things going but Trish gets in a cheap shot to Victoria on the apron. Nidia is easily taken down and kicked in the ribs by the evil Stratus before it's off to Gail. Kim puts on a freaky looking armbar with her leg wrapped around Nidia's neck but lets it go a few seconds later. We get the unseen tag as Nidia fights to Victoria but Trish had the referee. Lucky guy.

The tag goes through a few seconds later anyway and Victoria cleans house, getting two on Gail off the spinning side slam. Victoria can't hit a big boot and has the Widow's Peak countered, allowing Gail to put on a modified Sharpshooter. Before Victoria can tap a mystery woman falls down the ramp, distracting Gail enough for Victoria to get a rollup for the pin.

**Rating:** C+. Gail looked great in her white shorts and evil Trish is one of the hottest things you'll ever see in wrestling. You add some awesome looking holds from Kim and I can almost forgive the mystery woman (Steven Richards in drag for no apparent reason) being such a stupid ending.

Smackdown ReBounce shows Eddie destroying Angle's car, which wound up being Teddy Long's. Angle was behind it and gets a 2/3 falls match against Eddie. That was such an awesome feud. Eddie vs. Angle, not Teddy. We also see Orlando Jordan defending the world title against Undertaker in place of an injured JBL. Layfield saved the title while wearing his AWESOME neck halo with his cowboy hat on top.

A sore footed Bischoff makes Orton vs. Kane for next week.

We run down the Unforgiven card.

### HHH vs. Eugene

No DQ. Eugene comes out in a poorly buttoned San Francisco Giants jersey to suck up to the crowd. You would think he would get how serious this was after HHH beat him up at Summerslam. HHH jumps him again here but Eugene comes back with headlocks and something resembling an AA. Back up and Eugene gets two off a backslide before heading right back to the headlock. HHH comes back with a stiff right hand and a low blow to take

over.

Eugene is thrown over the top rope, injuring his arm in the process. HHH of course pounds away on the injured slow guy because he can be a good heel when he tries. No sarcasm in that if you're looking for any. Back in and Eugene walks into a spinebuster followed by the knee drop so HHH can strut around a bit more. Eugene gets rammed into the buckles but it's Hulk Up time. He slugs HHH down and hits a top rope ax handle for two followed by an old school thumb to the eye.

A Rock Bottom looks to set up a Stunner but HHH grabs a sleeper. HHH: "ROCK A BYE BABY EUGENE!" Eugene is almost out but HHH lets go before the third arm drop. It didn't work for Adrian Adonis back in 87 but at least HHH follows up with a Pedigree. HHH lets him up again and pulls out the hammer, only to have Orton (in wrestling gear after wearing a suit earlier for no apparent reason) to take the hammer away. A shot to the ribs and an RKO put HHH down and Orton puts Eugene on top for what is supposed to be some huge moment.

**Rating:** D+. Well that happened. Anyone who has watched wrestling for more than five minutes in their lives knew that Orton was going to cost HHH the match, but it's not like this really means anything. It doesn't help when Eugene didn't move for the last five minutes of the show after a sleeper and a Pedigree.

**Overall Rating:** D. It's easy to see why Batista and Cena needed to rise up very soon. This was just boring for the most part, but Orton looked like a star in the making. That's the perfect explanation for why he lost the title to HHH at the PPV and wouldn't win another world title for over three years. HHH crippled that push so hard it's almost unfathomable, but at least HHH got to get the title back after letting other people have it for a full five months. Boring show, as expected from this time period.

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## 2013 Awards: Worst PPV

This one really wasn't that hard. It's Battleground and I really didn't have to put a lot of thought into it. The show just didn't need to happen and felt like a cash grab. The Rhodes Brothers vs. Shield was a very good match, but other than that there's nothing of value on the show. Some of the matches were ok, but there's no reason for them to be on a full priced PPV. The main event made things even worse with the Bryan vs. Orton feud being dragged out for the sake of being dragged out. On top of that the midcard stuff sucked. I mean, is there ANY reason to have the Real Americans vs. Khali/Santino go seven minutes? Just an unnecessary show and not a good one either.

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