

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)

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

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.

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 rule.

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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Monday Night Raw – December 16, 2013: VIVA EL GOAT!

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 16, 2013

Location: American Airlines Center, Dallas, Texas

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

Well it's the night after the BIGGEST MATCH EVER and Randy Orton is still world champion, just like he was going into the show. The Authority seems to be ok with these circumstances though the returning Vince didn't seem completely thrilled. Other than that, Bryan lost to the Wyatts and the Shield is going to be having some problems as we get closer to Wrestlemania. Let's get to it.

We open with the roster on the stage with HHH and Stephanie in the ring. The Authority talks about what a huge moment last night was with a new Champion of Champions being crowned. Orton is introduced and just like Jericho 12 years ago, has both belts around his shoulders. Randy talks about how amazing he is and how he takes any opportunity that is given to him. Cena can be seen looking upset on the stage.

Last week Orton stood in the ring with 20 other superstars and now he's the champion of champions. Orton goes to brag about himself even more when Cena cuts him off by calling Randy an idiot. Here's what Orton is going to say: "Viper, viper, apex, apex, apex, handcuffs ("Those were clever by the way"), and now I've saved these people twenty minutes." However Stone Cold Steve Austin has said that being champion means you have to put up or shut up every night, and that's true for Orton tonight.

Cena isn't talking about himself though. Last week he told a certain someone getting the first title shot if he won, and that means Orton should face Daniel Bryan tonight. Orton calls for security to get rid of both guys but Cena says Orton is just scared. Randy says no way, even though he doesn't have to listen to anyone. Stephanie: "Except for us." HHH says Bryan doesn't deserve a title shot yet, but the Authority always listens to the fans. Orton protests but HHH makes the match anyway.

Rey Mysterio/Big Show vs. Cody Rhodes/Goldust

This is non-title and determined by a fan vote with the other options being the Real Americans and Ryback/Axel. Mysterio sends Cody to the floor to start and hits a nice baseball slide. Rey actually hits that slide into a splash which is usually a bump instead of a move. Back inside and Cody pulls Rey off the top before the Disaster Kick hits for two. Goldust drops a knee to the back of Mysterio's head for two and drops some more knees to Rey's arm. Back to Cody who runs into a Big Show clothesline as we take a break.

We come back to see Big Show slamming Cole as the announcers take pictures of themselves for no apparent reason. Big Show shrugs off some shots to the face and puts on something resembling a cobra clutch as the announcers take more pictures and talk about tweeting the picture. We're now at about a minute straight with the match being completely ignored.

Big Show has Cody almost out cold and the fans want Goldust. The Final Cut gets two on Cody so Big Show goes to the middle rope. Cody avoids an elbow drop to prevent death and makes the hot tag off to Goldust. The painted one tries to fire away on Show but walks into a chokeslam. Cody breaks it up at two but is sent to the floor, allowing Big Show to knock Goldust silly. Rey splashes Goldust from Show's shoulders for the pin at 12:39.

Rating: C-. The match was a glorified squash as Big Show dominated everything while he was in there. I'd assume we're leading to the Rhodes split before they fight each other at Wrestlemania, even though they're as good as any team we've seen in a long time. That's the problem of writing instead of booking. The logical move would be to have the two of them team until they were running out of steam, but the end goal is the split so that's what we're getting, period.

Goldust is helped to his feet post match. Mysterio is clearly limping.

We get an amusing vignette for a Good Santa vs. Bad Santa match with Mark Henry and Damien Sandow playing the respective characters.

Bad News Barrett says there's a lot of money to be won in the lottery but none of us will win it. He has a gavel now too.

Orton comes in to yell at the Authority some more but they talk to him about how serious it is to be undisputed champion. He has to do twice the work now and they hope he can handle it.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Fandango

This is a rematch of last night's bad pre show match. Ziggler quickly dropkicks him down and sends Fandango to the floor, only to have the dancer clothesline Ziggler down. Back in and Fandango punches Dolph in the face and suplexes him down for two. We hit the reverse chinlock for a bit on Ziggler but he comes back with a quick rollup for the pin at 3:27. It's as sudden as it sounds.

Rating: D. Well this happened. There was nothing to the match and I have no idea why we had to watch it two nights in a row. Odds are we're going to see it again next week in a rubber match because WWE writers can't come up with another idea for these guys so they just have them fight over and over again. Nothing to see here.

Real Americans vs. Big E. Langston/Mark Henry

Swagger and Langston get things going with Big E. leapfrogging Jack and running him down with a shoulder. Off to Cesaro as Cole talks about Snap Chat, which is apparently a social media site. The fans think OU (Oklahoma University, Swagger's alma mater) sucks. Henry throws Langston into the corner for a shoulder to Swagger's ribs and Big E. hits an unassisted one of his own.

Mark drops down onto Swagger's back a few times before it's back to Langston for right hands in the corner. Some right hands let Jack tag in Cesaro, only to have Henry come in to throw Antonio around with ease.

Langston gorilla presses him down and knocks Cesaro the floor for a lull in the match. Back in and Cesaro comes back with some shots to the ribs and Swagger pulls Langston so Swagger can stomp away.

Back with Cesaro cranking on Big E.'s arm before hitting a nice gutwrench suplex for two. Cesaro breaks up a tag attempt and catapults Langston into Swagger for a belly to belly throw for two. Langton comes back by throwing Swagger to the floor and suplexing Cesaro down, setting up the tag to Henry. A powerslam gets two on Antonio but he comes back with a clothesline. Langston breaks up the Cesaro Swing attempt to Henry and the Big Ending is good for the pin at 15:30.

Rating: D+. WAY too long here and the match dragged several times. I have no idea why they keep jobbing the Real Americans and wasting Cesaro, as it's not like the main event scene could use a new heel. Also, is it really necessary to make a team out of the two strong black guys? Are the writers that creatively bankrupt? That's a rhetorical question as of course they are.

Weekly how to download the App video.

Bad Santa Sandow and his elves Tamina and AJ torment a young girl by telling her there are no presents this year and Christmas is canceled. The battle of the Santas is next Monday.

Ryback/Curtis Axel vs. Tons of Funk

Man alive there are a lot of tag matches tonight. Truth and Woods are on commentary. Axel dropkicks Tensai down to start before it's off to Ryback who gets two off a powerslam. Tensai avoids a charge in the corner but Brodus walks away from the tag. Ryback Meat Hooks and Shell Shocks Tensai for the pin at 2:22.

Brodus beats up Tensai post match until Woods and Truth make the save.

Truth asks the Funkadactyls come in for a dance to Brodus' music. Brodus is furious. Cole dances at the announcers' table, giving us this from JBL: "You are the worst white man in the history of dancing."

Here's Punk to talk about his win last night. He isn't a big Christmas guy but he can't believe he won last night. The war probably isn't over, but he still thinks there's more to Shield attacking him than meets the eye. Punk thinks there's something to the idea that the Authority was behind Shield attacking him, which isn't a big surprise. Everyone knows Punk isn't one to get along with authority, especially when they're trying to sweep him under the rug. He calls out HHH to hash all this out right now, but instead here's Shawn Michaels.

Punk calls out HHH and Stephanie again but Shawn says he understands Punk's problems with the Authority. The fans think Shawn sold out but when the chant dies out Shawn says they couldn't keep it up. Shawn is right there with Punk being anti-authority and since he superkicked Punk last week, shouldn't Punk's problem be with him?

The fans chant one more match (Punk: "I'm sure I'll have more than one more!") and Punk says the 15 year old him was thrilled that Shawn kicked him in the face last week, but if Shawn does it again, Punk will be the one kicking. Shawn says he's always liked Punk but what he's about to do is going to hurt him more than it hurts Punk. He introduces Punk's opponents: Shield, who were announced earlier tonight.

An App poll determines Punk's partners. Shocking no one, the Usos crush the Prime Time Players and Los Matadores.

Usos/CM Punk vs. Shield

Jimmy slams Ambrose down to start before it's off to Jey for a running forearm in the corner. Punk comes in to keep up the arm work before it's off to Rollins vs. Jimmy. Seth is quickly taken down with an armbar as the match slows down. A hiptoss puts Rollins down and it's back to Jey

for an uppercut. Jey Cactus Clotheslines Seth to the floor and we take a break.

Back with Jey trying to fight out of a double team but getting caught in the corner again for some stomping by Rollins. Jey rolls away from the corner and tags in Jimmy to speed things up a bit. Jimmy gets two off a Samoan drop but Rollins enziguris him right back down. Shield starts their tagging in and out to work over Jimmy as the match slows down again. Reigns slams Jimmy down for two and we hit the chinlock.

Jimmy FINALLY kicks Roman in the face and tags in Punk to wake up the crowd. CM fights off the rest of the Shield at the same time with a DDT/neckbreaker combination to Ambrose and Rollins. Everything breaks down and Reigns is taken down by a Jey dive to the floor. Rollins throws Jey into the barricade but gets caught by a suicide dive. Ambrose charges into a right hand from Punk, setting up the Macho Elbow for two. The GTS puts Ambrose down again but Reigns comes in off a blind tag and spears Punk for the pin at 16:18.

Rating: C+. The match was decent enough but the fans seem to be getting burned out on these tag matches. I can't say I disagree as this was the fourth tag match in less than two hours. It doesn't help that we've seen the Usos vs. Shield about 95 times in the last few months with the Usos never really getting anywhere as a result.

We recap the opening segment.

The Wyatts interrupt some WWE 2K14 footage with Bray talking about the long process of bringing down the machine. Bryan is a miniscule ant trying to break through a scorpion's armor. Bray told him he could take the pain away and is sorry for doubting Abigail. He understands what they have to do now and says if Bryan will not walk with the reapers, then he will burn with the saints. It was Harper finishing the statement, speaking for the first time ever I believe. The Family has been looking at something off camera while talking to Abigail. We pan over to see the

empty rocking chair.

Bella Twins/Natalya vs. Alicia Fox/AJ Lee/Tamina Snuka

Since this feud just won't die. Natalya grabs a quick rollup for two on Alicia before Fox can't quite tilt-a-whirl slam the Canadian. Off to Brie who gets slammed off the middle rope for two before it's off to Tamina to throw a shirt at Brie. We hit the chinlock as the match is dragging yet again. The announcers talk about the Will Ferrell movie Elf as Tamina slams Brie down. AJ gets the tag and the fans freak out, only to have Brie dropkick AJ down. The hot tag brings in Nikki who cleans house and puts AJ in a torture rack, only to have Tamina hit a GREAT superkick to put Nikki down. A Shining Wizard from AJ is enough to pin Nikki at 5:15.

Rating: C-. The match was saved by that kick alone. Even Shawn would have been jealous of that one. Tamina vs. AJ would seem to be the end goal of all this, but I'm not sure how we get there at this point. This was nothing of note for the most part as the Bellas trying to be all tough is more laughable than entertaining. That kick was sweet though.

Good Santa Henry with Bella and Horswoggle elves make a boy feel better by telling him that Christmas won't be canceled. I know it's stupid, I know it's corny, I know they do it every year, but I can't help but smile at these things.

Randy Orton doesn't know why the Authority is listening to the fans.

Randy Orton vs. Daniel Bryan

Non-title, as acknowledged by Cole. Orton gets caught by an early shot to the head and bails outside, only to come back inside and get caught in a headlock. Randy counters into a headscissors but Bryan comes back with an Indian Deathlock, sending Orton out to the floor again. Back in and Bryan drops elbows on Orton's knee before wrapping it around the post. The

Beard wins a quick slugout and knees Orton in the ribs, followed by a kick to the same area.

Orton rakes Bryan's eyes to get a breather but his Thesz Press is rolled through into a half crab. Randy makes the rope and gets in a stomp to Bryan's arm, sending Bryan into the corner in agony. JBL praises Orton extensively as Orton goes after the arm and stomps on Bryan's foot. We hit the armbar for a big before Orton wristdrags Daniel down. There's the Orton circle stomp but Bryan comes back by biting Orton's face. A running dropkick puts Orton on the floor but Randy sidesteps the FLYING GOAT, sending Bryan down onto his bad arm again.

Back with Orton holding a chinlock followed by a knee to the ribs, sending Bryan to the apron. Daniel gets knocked into the barricade and Orton drops him back first onto wall as well. Back in and a gorgeous superplex gets two on Bryan but he comes back again with the moonsault out of the corner and the running clothesline. Two straight running kicks in the corner set up a top rope hurricanrana but Bryan's arm injury prevents the immediate cover. The fans are correct as they call this awesome.

Bryan gets caught in the backbreaker but gets a quick YES Lock attempt to stop Orton's momentum. A catapult sends Bryan over the top but he skins the cat, only to get kicked in the ribs. The Elevated DDT drops Daniel again but the RK0 is countered into a backslide for two. The big kick to Orton's head gets the same and both guys are down. There's the big YES chant and Bryan goes up top, only to get crotched down. Bryan breaks up another superplex attempt and scores with the swan dive for another near fall. The fans are losing their minds on these kickouts and with good reason.

More kicks in the corner have Orton in trouble but he misses a running kick to the opposite corner to give Randy a breather. A rollup gets two for Orton but he gets caught in the YES Lock out of nowhere. The hold isn't on all the way though and Randy gets over to the rope and out to

the floor. Now the FLYING GOAT connects and Bryan hits a leg lariat up against the barricade. Back in and the missile dropkick connects, setting up the chest kicks. Orton ducks the head kick and low blows Bryan for the LAME DQ at 25:00.

Rating: A-. Gah they were ROLLING until that ending. Bryan had me believing in him like he never has before and the match worked better than any of their previous bouts. Orton was in a zone out there which people often forget he can reach. Really good stuff here and the best match Randy has had in a good while.

Post match here's Cena to go after Orton but he checks on Bryan, only to walk into an RK0. Orton poses to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. The show was good enough overall but the tag team overload was a bit much at times. It's nice to see them focus on tag teams again, but it might help if the tag teams were actually interesting or, you know, good. The main event was outstanding stuff with Bryan's arm stuff being very well done and it keeps some doors open for later. The Christmas special next week should be good and we have Punk setting his sights on the Authority to likely set up Wrestlemania. Good stuff but not a great show.

Results

Big Show/Rey Mysterio b. Cody Rhodes/Goldust – Splash to Goldust

Dolph Ziggler b. Fandango – Rollup

Big E. Langston/Mark Henry b. Real Americans – Big Ending to Cesaro

Ryback/Curtis Axel b. Tons of Funk – Shell Shock to Cesaro

Shield b. Usos/CM Punk – Spear to Punk

AJ Lee/Tamina Snuka/Alicia Fox b. Bella Twins/Natalya – Shining Wizard to Nikki

Daniel Bryan b. Randy Orton via DQ – Orton hit Bryan low

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Tables Ladders and Chairs 2013: Undisputed. Seriously.

Tables Ladders and Chairs 2013

Date: December 15, 2013

Location: Toyota Center, Houston, Texas

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

We're at the final PPV of the year and the main story tonight is of course the TLC title unification match between Orton and Cena to give us one world champion. It didn't make a ton of sense when they did this in December of 2001 and it doesn't make the most sense in December of 2013. This could headline Wrestlemania, but I guess they want a big buyrate for December, so why not shoot everything they have at it and forget the incredible money it could draw four months from now. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Fandango vs. Dolph Ziggler

How was Ziggler world champion six months ago? Fandango puts him down with a shoulder block but walks into a nice dropkick. Ziggler is sent to the floor and we take an early break. Back with Ziggler breaking out of a chinlock, only to get caught by a dropkick and rollup for two each. Dolph comes back with a quick Fameasser for two, causing Cole to say it's

shades of Billy Gunn, even though Ziggler has done more with that move than Gunn could ever dream of.

Ziggler pounds away in the corner and gets two off a clothesline. The Zig Zag is countered into a falcon's arrow for two but he gets crotched going up top. Summer Rae distracts Ziggler though, allowing Fandango to hit the guillotine legdrop for the pin at 4:22. Too much was spent in the commercial to rate but the match was a glorified dark match with a surprise ending.

The pay per view opens with HHH and Stephanie coming to the arena. Vince was seen on the pre-show but is nowhere in sight here. Stephanie talks about what an important moment this is and acknowledges the crowd by saying YES, this is a huge moment. HHH says the World Championship dates back to Lou Thesz as champion (not true in the short version of a long story) and talks about how big tonight is.

The opening video talks about how the wrestling industry is defined by the champion and the future path of wrestling will be determined tonight. There will be only one if that wasn't made clear.

Cole confirms that the winner will be the WWE World Heavyweight Champion which is the easiest layup possible.

CM Punk vs. Shield

Ambrose starts things up for Shield and feels Punk out a little bit. Punk wisely runs instead of being dragged into the Shield corner and shouts that he's beaten Dean twice already so give someone else a shot. It's off to Rollins so Punk bails to the floor to play some head games. Rollins chases him back into the ring and gets caught by some shoulders in the corner followed by three straight neckbreakers for two.

Seth fights up and brings in Reigns to throw Punk into the Shield corner. Rollins and Reigns make a wish on Punk's legs before Seth hits a neckbreaker of his own. Back to Ambrose for some rib stomps before it's off to Reigns for a hard clothesline. Shield is taking their time here instead of their usual fast tagging. Punk is thrown to the floor but still has enough in him to avoid Reigns' spear over the announce table.

Roman looks to have injured his eye when he went over the table.

Reigns is dazed but makes it back inside where Punk goes after his eyes. He rakes and punches away at it but Roman sends him outside again to get a breather. It's off to Rollins as a doctor looks at Roman's eye. A knee to Punk's head is good for two but he shoves Rollins into Ambrose, knocking Dean to the floor. The high kick gets two on Seth and Punk speeds things up with ax handles to the face.

A great looking running knee in the corner sets up a high cross body for two and the Anaconda Vice is on. Ambrose makes a diving save and comes in off the tag. Dean loads up a superplex but gets headbutted down, setting up the Macho Elbow. The cover is delayed as Punk had to take out Rollins and Dean kicks out at two. Rollins charges in but gets caught in the GTS. Punk goes after Ambrose, only to sidestep a charging Reigns who spears Ambrose down by mistake. Punk sends him to the floor and gets the upset pin on Ambrose at 13:10.

Rating: C+. To clarify, Punk just beat the unbeatable Shield by pin with no outside interference. Let me guess: this is great, whereas if say Cena did this, it would be him playing Superman again. The match was fine but more storytelling than anything else. It should be interesting to see where Punk goes now, as he's due for a return to the title picture after some time away.

AJ tells Renee that there's only one Diva that matters around here. She isn't on some silly reality show like Natalya and is going to be the one laughing after tonight. AJ is also counting days as champion now.

Divas Title: AJ Lee vs. Natalya

Natalya is challenging. AJ takes her down to start with a headscissors before Natalya reverses into an armbar. A low dropkick has Natalya in trouble so she heads outside, only to be distracted by Tamina, allowing AJ to send her face first into the apron. Off to a chinlock by AJ followed by a spinwheel kick to the jaw. Natalya comes back and sends AJ into the corner, only to get caught in a nice guillotine choke.

The blonde powers out and hits a basement dropkick to the face followed

by some clotheslines. Some suplexes set up the Sharpshooter and Natalya brings her back to the middle of the ring, only to have AJ kick free. The Black Widow goes on but Natalya rolls out, breaking it for the first time. A clothesline puts AJ down again but another Sharpshooter attempt is countered into a small package for the pin at 6:42.

Rating: C. There were some nice false finishes in there but I'm over Natalya challenging for the title. AJ has completely cleaned out the division except for Tamina, setting up the showdown whenever they go that way. I'm sure we'll hear about AJ vs. Total Divas again though, because just beating them about five PPVs in a row isn't enough proof of who is better.

The announcers play up that AJ pulled hair to get the small package.

We get a video package on the world titles that we've seen on Raw and Smackdown with Flair and Rhodes and others talking about what winning the title means.

Intercontinental Title: Big E. Langston vs. Damien Sandow

Before the match, Sandow tells the Texas crowd some assorted phrases that are worthless: y'all, ye if followed by haw, and Big E. Langston: Intercontinental Champion. Nice touch. Langston throws the challenger into the corner to start and hits a corner splash to keep Damien in trouble. They head outside with Langston in trouble, only to miss a charge into the post to change momentum.

Back in and Damien pounds away at Big E.'s head before putting on a chinlock. The Wind-Up Elbow gets two for Sandow and we're back to the chinlock again. Langston powers out of the hold and drops Damien with an electric chair. A belly to belly sets up the Warrior Splash for two but the Big Ending is countered into an Edge-0-Matic for two by Sandow. Another Big Ending attempt is countered into a small package for two but Langston is done messing around. He runs Sandow over with ease and the Big Ending is enough to retain the title at 6:25.

Rating: D+. The match was nothing you wouldn't see on Smackdown. These two did virtually the same match with the same story earlier this year

for Langston's NXT Title so there was some practice coming in. Langston has a bright future and a title defense on PPV isn't going to hurt him at all.

Vince is in the back and shakes Orton's hand. They appeared to be talking but there was no sound.

We recap Kofi attacking Miz on the pre-show, setting up a No DQ match later tonight.

Tag Titles: Real Americans vs. Big Show/Rey Mysterio vs. Cody Rhodes/Goldust vs. Ryback/Curtis Axel

Rhodes and Goldust are defending and this is elimination rules. Ryback and Axel have both beaten the champions in the last few weeks while Big Show and Mysterio have teamed together I believe once. Ryback shoves Rhodes around to start but gets caught in a half crab, allowing Goldust to come in with an elbow to the back of Ryback's head. Off to Axel for a nice dropkick, only to get caught in a wristlock.

Axel fights up but Goldust makes a tag off to Big Show who keeps up the arm work. There's the skin ripping chop and the fans want it one more time. Show does it a third time and Axel sells it like he got shot. Mysterio comes in for some forearms but Axel sends him into the corner. Ryback gets the tag and pounds Mysterio down, only to bring Axel back in for something resembling stereo cross bodies to put both guys down.

Double tags bring in Ryback and Goldust with the champion scoring off the uppercut and a spinebuster. Ryback loads up a powerbomb but gets rolled up for the pin by Goldust, getting us down to three teams at 6:12. Cesaro comes in to pummel Goldust in the corner before it's off to Swagger for a front facelock. The fans start chanting WE THE PEOPLE as Goldust is sent to the floor for a clothesline from Swagger.

Back inside and Cesaro gets two off the gutwrench suplex and we hit the chinlock. Off to Jack again for a bearhug as Big Show plays cheerleader for Goldust. Goldie fights back with right hands and a springboard elbow to the jaw. Cesaro easily takes him down and we get a short version Cesaro Swing. A Swagger belly to belly suplex puts Goldust down again and

we get the Vader Bomb/double stomp sequence from the Real Americans for another two.

Antonio puts on another chinlock but this time Goldust escapes with a jawbreaker. Cesaro can't break up the tag but Swagger runs around the ring and pulls Cody off the apron. Cody is holding his knee as Big Show throws Swagger into the barricade and Goldust catches Cesaro with a hurricanrana. A powerslam puts Cesaro down again and the hot tag brings in Big Show. Cesaro is thrown all over the ring and a shoulder block turns him inside out. Both Americans get punched in the jaw and Big Show pins Cesaro for the elimination at 14:42.

So we're down to the two good guy teams but Big Show waits for the champions to get on their feet. A hard shoulder block puts Goldust on the floor and Cody gives him a somewhat angry pep talk. Goldust comes back in for a top rope cross body with Big Show waiting on the impact for about eight seconds. The chokeslam is countered into a DDT for two and it's off to Cody for a double suplex on Big Show for two. The fans are rapidly losing interest.

Big Show swats a Disaster Kick out of the air and it's off to Mysterio (remember him?) for a springboard seated senton to Cody. Now the Disaster Kick connects for two on Mysterio and Cody is getting frustrated. Cross Rhodes is countered into the 619 to both champions. Goldust is sent into the barricade by Big Show but Cody sends the giant into the post.

Cody tries a springboard dropkick but gets caught in a powerbomb by Rey (how often do you hear that?) for two. Cross Rhodes are countered again but the 619 is countered into an Alabama Slam which is countered into a sunset flip for a VERY close two. The third attempt at Cross Rhodes FINALLY connects for the pin to retain the titles at 21:06.

Rating: A-. This dragged a bit in the middle but man alive that ending was great. Cody and Goldust are just awesome right now and I'm so glad they didn't give the titles to another thrown together team. I have no idea why the Usos weren't in there somehow other than putting in two bigger names. Really good match here though.

A bunch of people play with Brawling Buddies in a head throbbing segment.

The payoff is Kane scaring everyone off and having the Brodus Clay Buddy beat up the Cena Buddy. Cole: "...Yep."

Brodus Clay vs. R-Truth

Bonus match due to Brodus going nuts on Truth's buddy Xavier Woods on Raw. Truth takes him into the corner to start and scores with a dropkick, sending Brodus to the floor. A nice dive takes Brodus out again but he comes right back with a Banzai Drop for no cover. He finally drags Truth back into the middle for two before throwing him corner to corner again.

A running splash in the corner crushes Truth but he still won't go for the pin. They head outside with Tensai yelling at Clay to go for the win but instead Brodus puts Truth in the Tree of Woe. Tensai gets up on the apron for a shouting match before walking out. The Funkadactyls walk out as well and Truth hits a side kick into a rollup for the pin at 6:06.

Rating: D. This was much more of an angle than a match which is acceptable if they actually do something with Clay. The guy has a chance to be something interesting if he's pushed properly, but given how they've pushed him twice before I can't imagine it actually working. Good heel turn though.

Vince wishes Cena luck.

Kofi Kingston vs. The Miz

No DQ and set up by Miz attacking Kofi a few times recently in addition to the pre-show stuff earlier. Kofi goes nuts on Miz with right hands to start with Miz being sent to the floor. A Kofi dive is blocked by a right hand but Kingston drives him into the barricade. Miz is shoved up against the post but Kofi's Trouble in Paradise hits the post, badly injuring his ankle in the process. Miz DDT's the leg onto the floor and gets two back inside.

Kofi is in trouble but gets two off a quick rollup for a breather. Lawler talks about telegrams for some reason as Miz goes after the bad leg for some storytelling. Miz's cannonball down onto the leg is countered with a kick to send him to the floor, only to have Kofi miss a dive, sending him

into the barricade. Back in again and Miz unhooks a turnbuckle pad, setting up something big. The Skull Crushing Finale into the pad is countered into a rollup for two as we get a breather. Miz goes up but dives into a dropkick as a boring chant starts up. Back up and Kofi quickly sends Miz into the buckle to set up Trouble in Paradise for the pin at 8:03.

Rating: D+. This was longer than it needed to be and the ending didn't do much for either guy. The leg stuff didn't go anywhere at all which is one of the things that drives me crazy in matches. This feud isn't going anywhere for either guy but they're still feuding for no apparent reason.

Tribute to the Troops ad.

We recap Bryan vs. the Wyatts with Bray wanting Daniel to join the Family but getting kneed in the face instead.

Daniel Bryan vs. Wyatt Family

Bray of course sits in the rocking chair to start. Rowan gets us going for the team and takes Bryan's head off with an elbow to the jaw. Daniel gets caught in the corner and it's off to Harper for a lot of yeah yeah yeah. Bryan comes back with the surfboard knee stomps and some kicks but a shot to the ribs gives Luke control. Back to Rowan for some shots to the gut and a bearhug to slow the match down.

Harper slams Daniel down and Bray stands up. Wyatt himself comes in and shouts that he could have helped Daniel before splashing him in the corner. Bray goes nuts on Bryan before stopping for that evil look of his. A suplex/toss sends Daniel flying and Bray does the incredibly creepy Exorcist spider walk over to the corner for a tag to Harper. Fans: "THAT WAS CREEPY!"

Luke puts on a chinlock before Rowan throws Daniel back into the corner. A big boot from Harper puts Bryan down and it's back to Bray who shouts about the fans. He offers Daniel his hand but Daniel kicks it away and pounds on Wyatt's jaw. Bray will have none of that though and runs Daniel over before bringing Harper back in. Back up and Bryan avoids a charging Bray to send him into Rowan before avoiding a running big boot from

Harper.

Daniel busts out an awesome belly to back superplex on Luke for two before firing off the kicks. The big one to the head sets up the swan dive but Daniel has to fire off the kicks to Rowan, tying him up in the ropes. A tag brings in Bray who gets rolled up for two but Wyatt runs him over again. Bryan is whipped into the ropes but he scores with the FLYING GOAT to Harper. Back in the missile dropkick drops Bray but he counters the YES Lock and pummels Bryan down. Sister Abigail ends Bryan at 12:25.

Rating: B-. I was digging this a lot by the end with Bryan giving it everything he had. The most interesting thing here though was Wyatt. He's the kind of guy who you just have to watch when he's on screen, which is a rare thing to find anymore. In a word, he's mesmerizing. As for the result, there's no way you can put both singles guys over in the handicap matches and it doesn't hurt Bryan to lose here at all.

The expert panel (Booker and Foley) talk a bit.

We recap Orton vs. Cena which has been covered already. It's to determine who is champion of champions and we get the video package of their parallel histories from Smackdown.

WWE World Heavyweight Championship: Randy Orton vs. John Cena

TLC match, winner take all. They have a ton of time to used for this too. Naturally we get big match intros and we're ready to go. They head into the corner to start and Cena grabs a headlock. The wrestling gets boring though and we get our first ladder and table with the wooden one being set up in the corner. Orton escapes an AA through the table and heads to the floor for a chair. Cena can't avoid the shot to the back and Randy is in control.

They head outside again but Orton misses a chair shot and hits the post, allowing Cena to pick up the chair. A series of chair shots puts Orton down and John loads up another table on the floor. The distraction lets Orton send him into the steps to take over again as the dueling Cena chants begin. Orton tries to climb but Cena makes a fast save. The ladder is thrown to the floor and Orton headbutts him down. Some kicks to the

ribs have Cena in trouble but he comes back with knees and right hands, only to walk into the powerslam.

Randy brings in another ladder but gets it rammed into his ribs, allowing Cena to climb. Orton quickly suplexes him down but misses a ladder shot, sending the ladder to the floor. That's fine with Orton though as he cracks Cena in the back with a chair before wedging it into the corner. Cena blocks the shot into the chair and comes back with his finishing sequence, only to have Orton poke him in the eye and send him into the chair. Another ladder is brought in but Cena makes yet another save.

They both fight on the ladder until Cena throws Orton over the top and through the table. He can't climb that fast though and Orton pulls him down for an RKO. Both guys are down again but it's Cena up first with a clothesline to send him to the floor. Cena blasts Orton in the head with the steps and Randy might be busted a little bit. John brings in another table, giving us two tables in opposite corners. With all of the metal stuff at ringside, Orton hits Cena in the head with the microphone to take over again.

Orton loads up the announce table but instead clears out a path to Cena. John avoids the Punt though and catches Orton in an AA through the table to put both guys down again. Cena very slowly gets back in and grabs both belts without pulling them down. Instead it's Orton shoving the ladder away to leave Cena hanging, allowing Orton a free shot with the chair. Cena comes right back with a spear through one of the tables and both guys are down again.

Randy heads outside again and starts peeling back the mats to find some hidden handcuffs. Cena gets tied to the bottom rope and Orton teases him with the key. This didn't work at Breaking Point but call backs to old matches are usually fun. Cena tries to break the chain as Orton goes to pick up the big ladder for some shots to Cena's ribs.

Randy goes back inside as Cena beats on the cuffs with a chair to no avail. Cena pulls hard enough to rip the bottom rope off and go up to knock Orton off the ladder but he only has one free arm due to the rope. Orton grabs the rope and uses the power of gravity to pull Cena down,

sending him head first into the table which DOESN'T BREAK. That looked bad. Orton goes up again and pulls down both titles for the surprise win at 24:35.

Rating: B. I liked the match and the ropes idea was good, but that ending came out of nowhere. Given how badly Cena's head went into that table, I wouldn't be shocked if he had an actual injury. Orton winning makes more sense but I'm kind of shocked it was clean. Well as clean as you can get in a TLC match of course. Good stuff here but the ending leaves a lot of doors open.

Post match here's the Authority and Vince to congratulate Orton with no drama to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This show was about one match and the match delivered. The handicap matches both worked quite well too and the tag match ROCKED. It wasn't a classic show or anything but it was much better overall than I expected. The ending sets up a lot of questions about where we're going, but that makes things all the more interesting. Good show here and a solid ending to the year.

Results

CM Punk b. Shield – Punk pinned Ambrose after a spear from Reigns

AJ Lee b. Natalya – Small package

Big E. Langston b. Damien Sandow – Big Ending

Cody Rhodes/Goldust b. Real Americans, Big Show/Rey Mysterio and Ryback/Curtis Axel – Cross Rhodes to Mysterio

Kofi Kingston b. The Miz – Trouble in Paradise

Wyatt Family b. Daniel Bryan – Sister Abigail

Randy Orton b. John Cena – Orton pulled down the title belts

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