

The Ratings Are In

And it was a squash.
<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/wow-aew-dynamites-rating-s-viewership-numbers-hit-park-smash-nxt-setting-record/>

AEW walloped NXT by about 500,000 viewers, plus beat last week's Smackdown in the 18-49 demographic. That's WAY beyond what any reasonable expectations could have been and will keep TNT happy for a long, long time.

It was a great case of everything coming together well and while there is room for improvement on AEW, I'm not sure how much better it could have gone. As I'll say about anything though: well done. Now do it again, but better.

Raw Ratings SUCK And I'm Not A Bit Surprised

<http://411mania.com/wrestling/wwe-raw-rating-tanks-to-new-low/>

This is a combination of more than one thing. First and foremost, the NFL is killing WWE. I don't think that's a bit secret at this point.

Second, the fans seem tired of the same matches over and over. Last night's main event was Rusev vs. Reigns. That was a cool showdown in the battle royal last year but now, who in the world thinks Rusev is going to beat him? It's a boring match that is just set up as part of a much longer story. In other words, don't bother watching now because it's going to

be at least January before something interesting happens.

Third, the fans have gotten so used to having no one to cheer for that seeing ANOTHER heel champion is burning them out. Reigns held the title for five minutes. Unless you count Brock, who was still officially a heel, we haven't had a face champion since Summerslam 2014. That's getting into TNA territory. At some point, you have to give the people something to celebrate or they're going to give up.

Fourth, the injuries are taking a big toll. All those people being gone leaves a BIG chunk of the show needing to be filled in and it's really hurting things. Without Cena, Orton and Rollins (not to mention the part timers), there's a lot of time to be filled. Last night we had the New Day doing a (funny) segment that went nowhere and Ryback beating up Heath Slater in another "country music is stupid" segment. Couple that with a nothing Mark Henry vs. Neville match and some midcard tag matches and there was nothing interesting to watch.

Finally, Sheamus is the World Champion. Now Sheamus is a cool guy and capable of doing some good stuff in the ring (see the Big Show matches which gave Big Show his best performances in years), but coming into the title win, he had won one singles match since September. I know WWE disagrees, but fans remember that. They see a guy who stole the title and is likely holding it for a long time. So we have a loser fighting a choker for the title while the Authority sits back and laughs. How is that supposed to be entertaining?

At the end of the day, WWE needs to freshen things up a bit. Aside from major changes like the show running long etc., they need something fresh. I don't mean giving the Authority new toys to play with. I mean a new idea. The Divas closing the show last week drew the best ratings in weeks. Now the show shouldn't be about the Divas, but the key thing is that felt fresh. It wasn't another tag match or another two upper

midcard guys fighting on Monday night Maggle.

Freshen things up, get rid of Sheamus, stop having champions lose and BUILD UP SOMETHING FOR NEXT WEEK! That still drives me nuts. Why in the world can they never have a match built up for the following week unless it's a tournament? "Next week, Dean Ambrose gets his shot at the Intercontinental Title! Ambrose beat Owens at Survivor Series and now he wants the gold! Tune in next Monday!" Maybe that can open the show instead of Stephanie strutting down to the ring and then yelling at someone for fifteen minutes. I don't know about you, but nothing gets me fired up more than TALKING!

But yeah, these numbers aren't surprising given how little effort they're putting in right now.

Raw Ratings Aren't Great And It Shouldn't Be A Surprise

<http://www.f4wonline.com/more/more-top-stories/96-ww-e-news/44533-raw-ratings-still-at-low-levels>

I'm surprised Raw did as well as it did. Here's why.

The decline in ratings really isn't surprising for a few major reasons.

1. Monday Night Football. Raw in the Attitude Era didn't come close to Monday Night Football's numbers and that's never going to change. Monday Night Football is a juggernaut and always will be. There's no way to get around this.

2. The Network. Raw is made available a month later. If I wanted to, I could watch every episode of Raw leading up to a pay per view and skip over the parts I don't want to see. It's quick, it's easy, and WWE hypes the heck out of the Network every chance they can.

3. Did you know WWE.com does it's own live Raw results? As in they say what's going on during the show, making it easy to get a quick recap instead of watching the full show? This is in addition to the dozens of other sites that do the same.

4. It's three hours a week. That's WAY too much for most people and it's overload. Consider Summerslam weekend. You had Takeover running two and a half hours plus a half hour pre-show, you had a four hour Summerslam plus a one hour pre-show, and then you had Raw, which was three hours plus a half hour pre-show. That's eleven and a half hours of content in three days. Two shows are pay per views and one is fallout. Which are you most likely to cut out from your schedule?

5. As for last night, it's hard to blame this on Sting. Yeah he was the main event, and we knew that a total of two and a half hours in advance. Instead the advertised matches featured Nikki Bella (with her crossover appeal from Total Divas of course, which has about a million viewers a week, a good percentage of which are probably already watching Raw) and the Prime Time Players, the latter of which was a title match with the winners getting to face the Dudleyz. Sting was announced as a last minute match and if you weren't watching the show at some point, you didn't know about it.

6. A lot of people don't watch cable TV anymore, and why should they? With Netflix, Hulu and the WWE Network, there's a ton of good material out there for way cheaper. For the people who still do have cable, there are roughly 1.38457 million channels to pick from these days. Couple that with DVR and people watching parts of the shows and the ratings shrinking really isn't a big surprise.

I know they're still the most common means of examining how well a show did, but is there a reason we're still using the same measuring stick for the show that we used seventeen years ago? A lot has changed since then and of course there are going to be fewer people watching the same show. I'm stunned that it's still as high as it is.

Oh and despite the ratings: the stock is at about \$19 a share, or \$4 higher than it was a year ago at this time. There might be something more to the company's success than just the TV ratings, but again that's all most people seem to care about.

Ring of Honor Ratings Are In

And they're not too bad. According to 411mania.com,

– Ring of Honor's debut on Destination America are in. The episode scored 163,000 viewers and a 0.04 rating in the 18 – 49 demographic.

For those curious, the numbers are lower than Impact Wrestling's Wednesday debut by 45% and 55%, respectively. Impact scored 232,000 viewers and a 0.09 demo rating.

A bright point for Ring of Honor is that their 11 PM replay scored 110,000 viewers and a 0.03 demo rating, compared to the 85,000 and 0.03 that last week's 11 PM Impact replay did. Impact's midnight replay scored 72,000 viewers and a 0.02 demo rating.

There are a few things to keep in mind:

1. This is second run programming for Ring of Honor as it already aired on their syndicated stations.
2. Ring of Honor has a far smaller national footprint than TNA. TNA was coming off a much bigger network while you could argue ROH has never been on the national stage (calling HDNet a national stage is as big a stretch as saying TNA is competent), meaning this was basically their national (as national as Destination America can be) debut.
3. With a show debuting on a new network, it's common to see the numbers go up over the next few weeks as people find out about it.

All in all, this isn't bad. There's room for improvement, but if Ring of Honor closes the gap, TNA is in big, big trouble.

Raw Rating

Not something I usually talk about but this week is a bit different. Raw drew a 2.68 last night, which is down again. Ratings have been trending down with Bryan on top which isn't a good sign. Yeah there's a lot of other stuff at the moment, but Bryan doesn't seem to be helping anything.

Thought of the Day: TNA Is Not Competition For WWE

This is one of those ideas that makes no sense when you actually think about it. The common statement you hear is TNA needs to stay around to be competition to WWE. TNA has been around for over eleven years and has never, not once, come close to competing with them. Someone that thinks they have been, please tell me how they've competed. Simply being in the same business and producing the same kind of material isn't competing. By that logic a seven year old writing a story in school is competition for Stephen King. TNA's highest rating ever for Impact is a long distance from Smackdown's lowest number in years. About three times as many people watch Raw as watch Impact. The PPV buys are so lopsided it's unreal.

TNA doesn't compete with WWE. They don't come close and they won't for a very long time. If TNA goes out of business (and no I don't think they are anytime soon), WWE isn't going to be breathing a sigh of relief. TNA is a promotion which has done better than most companies, but to even think they're a serious competitor to WWE at this point or any point in their history is laughable.