

NXT – June 26, 2013: The Show Before The Show

NXT

Date: June 26, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: William Regal, Tom Phillips

The focus shifts back to the titles tonight as Bo Dallas and Big E. Langston both return to the NXT Arena after their title match two weeks ago. We also have Dawson'Dylan vs. Ohno/Graves for a future title shot against the Wyatt Family. This is a pretty stacked show by NXT standards so let's get to it.

Big E. Langston vs. Aiden English

Langston slams him down twice and the Big Ending finishes English in 42 seconds.

Another Big Ending is good for the five count. Langston goes to leave but comes back in and hits a third Big Ending for a second five count.

Emma is blowing bubbles in the back and says her plan for the match tonight is to win. She says Renee can't have her bubbles but can hold them while Emma has her match.

NXT Women's Title Tournament First Round: Emma vs. Aksana

Aksana takes her to the mat to start and gets two off a backbreaker. Emma avoids a charge in the corner and slides into a sunset flip for two. Aksana works on the arm but the match turns into a catfight with neither being able to take

over. Off to a headscissors on Emma before Aksana takes her into the corner for some gyrating. Emma kicks her to the mat and hooks a bridging Indian deathlock called the Dilemma for the tap out at 3:38.

Rating: D. Aksana looks great in her outfits but the girl is a disaster in the ring. Thankfully they don't treat her like anything serious and she's just there to fill in a spot when needed. Emma continues to be entertaining by being so goofy that it's hard not to chuckle at her. She's getting better and better in the ring as well.

Emma brings some kids in the ring to dance with her.

Leo Kruger is hard to understand. Everything changes next.

Dante Dash vs. Leo Kruger

Dash takes him to the corner to start as we hear about Kruger being a mercenary. Leo pulls him down to the mat and drives some knees into Dash's shoulder to take over. Back up and Kruger bends Dash's arm over the shoulder before sending him into the post. The shoulder goes into the post again and a big clothesline puts Dash down. Kruger's GC3 (seated arm/triceps pull) gets the submission at 2:46. Squash.

The Ascension will rise. Again.

Mickey Keegan vs. Bo Dallas

Dallas takes him down with an armdrag for two as the crowd is SILENT. A pair of atomic drops and a dropkick put Keegan down again and some forearms set up a climbing the corner bulldog. Dallas hits the belly to belly for the pin at 1:47. The fans

do not care at all.

Post match Leo Kruger comes in and lays out Keegan before reaching for the title.

Kassius Ohno/Corey Graves vs. Scott Dawson/Garrett Dylan

The winners get a shot at the Wyatt Family at some point to be announced. Ohno starts with Dawson with Kassius cranking on the arm. Off to Graves for more arm cranking before Ohno takes him down with a headlock. Graves comes back in to work on the arm as Phillips inaccurately says the Wyatt Family is undefeated as a tag team. Dawson finally escapes and takes Graves down to bring in Dylan for a neckbreaker for two.

We take a break and come back with Graves still in trouble as Dawson and Dylan continue to cut the ring in half. Dylan hooks a chinlock before a clothesline gets two for Dawson. A jawbreaker gets Graves out of trouble and it's back to Ohno to clean the lower half of the house. A kind of spinning release suplex gets two for Kassius but Dylan makes a blind tag and the trailer boys hit Southern Pride for two. Now it's Ohno in trouble with Dawson getting two off another clothesline.

Dylan comes in to crank on the neck as Regal actually acknowledges a YOU CAN'T WRESTLE chant. Ohno fights up but can't make the tag after sunset flipping Dylan. An elbow to the jaw is enough for the tag to Graves and the fans aren't all that interested. A knee to the face gets two for Graves as everything breaks down. Corey ties Garrett's legs up in the ropes to pound away even more before getting two off a fireman's carry into a backbreaker. Dawson and Ohno go to the floor as Graves takes out Dylan's leg and the Lucky 13 leg lock gets the submission at 9:34 shown of 13:04.

Rating: C-. The match wasn't terrible but like the live crowd I couldn't get into it. Given the story going on with the Wyatt Family the ending was never in doubt whatsoever which makes the match less interesting to sit through. Add in the fact that Dawson and Dylan are a black hole of charisma and this was long and not very interesting.

Post match the Wyatt Family hits the ring to beat down their #1 contenders but Adrian Neville comes out for the save. He loads up the Red Arrow but Dawson and Dylan break it up. William Regal of all people runs in for the save but the heels have too much of a numbers advantage. Bray splashes Regal in the corner and the Family's music plays to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This was one of those shows that builds for later instead of being entertaining in its own right. A ticked off and serious Langston is interesting as is Kruger going after the title, but Dallas seemingly as a face and Dawson/Dylan in general do nothing for me or the live crowd it seems. The post main event stuff helped as the Wyatt Family are far more interesting heels than the trailer boys.

Results

Big E. Langston b. Aiden English – Big Ending

Emma b. Aksana – Dilemma

Leo Kruger b. Dante Dash – GC3

Bo Dallas b. Mickey Keegan – Belly to belly suplex

Corey Graves/Kassius Ohno b. Scott Dawson/Garrett Dylan –
Lucky 13 to Dylan

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Zeb Colter Gets A New Client

Even Cole immediately buried this on commentary. It's Cesaro, who completely misses the point of Colter's speeches. In other words, now he's a jobber to the stars with a manager. That's an improvement for him at least.

On This Day: June 4, 2001 – Monday Night Raw: Jesse Ventura Is Cooler Than You

Monday Night Raw

Date: June 4, 2001

Location: Target Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Attendance: 11,417

Commentators: Paul Heyman, Jim Ross

Back to the Invasion era (kind of) as we're rolling up to King of the Ring. Last week Benoit got his title shot in a great match so tonight it's Jericho's turn. Also I think we begin qualifying matches for the tournament as I remember watching the Rhyno vs. Tazz match that's on the card tonight. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the rematch from Smackdown where Benoit almost won the title again. That match might have been even better. Those two had some scary chemistry. Benoit destroyed Vince with a chair and Austin stole the win with

tights.

Intercontinental Title: Kane vs. Christian

The tape on Kane's arm is shrinking. Christian runs down Minnesota because everyone from there is a freak. The bell rings twice for some reason and Kane hammers away quickly. He hits the top rope clothesline but Edge has the referee. He interferes again so Kane goes after him but the power of Canada causes his bad arm to go into the steps. Christian gets a low dropkick for two but I don't think his offense is going to be lasting much longer.

The challengers gets slammed off the top but Edge distracts from the chokeslam. Edge takes one instead and HUGH MORRUS runs in, hits a moonsault (complete with a big WCW logo on the Tron and a siren blaring) and leaves. A BIG layout powerbomb kills Christian and Kane keeps the title. Shane celebrates in the production truck.

Rating: D+. Just a squash but the whole point was to have Morrur do the ending which is still cool looking. Acknowledging that it's WCW is a nice touch as everyone knew who it was but it's cool to hear it. This was a huge moment but unfortunately it wouldn't get much more exciting than this. The match was just there.

Here's Vince and he's mad. He says that Shane isn't going to cause trouble in his company. Now onto Benoit and Vince REALLY isn't happy with him. He lists off things that his injuries could be called and the fans cheer louder each time. Benoit is never getting another title shot because he's sadistic. Only a sadist would give Austin ten suplexes in a row. Tonight, Benoit gets Big Show.

Cue Foley to a BIG ovation. He has his new book with him so what do you think he'll be talking about? Foley thanks the fans for making it a bestseller for the second week in a row. He's in People Magazine also. However, he's here to talk about

the piece of paper he's been using as a bookmark. It's a contract, one of which he signed while Commissioner. This one says he can make a main event for any Raw he chooses. Tonight, it's Austin vs. Jericho for the title. Benoit and Vince are banned from ringside. Vince says that contract doesn't count because we're not in Connecticut or something like that.

Foley has a counter for that though. He brings out GOVERNOR JESSE VENTURA. Vince looks TERRIFIED. Jesse puts on his glasses and looks at the contract. He says that he's the highest elected official in Minnesota and since Vince couldn't control him when he worked for Vince, he certainly can't control him now. What Vince needs to learn is that there are people in the world more powerful than he is, and Jesse is one of them. He shakes Mick's hand, says have a nice day, and that's that. Jesse is one of those guys that is just awesome every time you see him and it worked here. Foley says he has a big surprise for Vince later.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Jeff Hardy vs. Matt Hardy

Well isn't this interesting? They come out together which isn't something you see that often. Matt is European Champion. Jeff grabs a rollup for two very quickly. Matt tries the Twist but Jeff counters. Expect to read the word counter a lot in this. The fans like Lita the best and in that pink top I can't blame them. Whisper in the Wind gets two for Jeff. Out to the floor and Jeff tries to run the railing but Matt ducks.

In a SWEET spot, Matt charges at Jeff while Jeff is up against the ring. Jeff backdrops him up against the ropes and in a Tajiri like bounce, Matt bounces off of them and hits a DDT to Jeff. The middle rope legdrop misses and Jeff loads up the Swanton but gets crotched. Jeff shoves him off and tries the Swanton again but it hits knees. The Twist is countered into a backslide for the surprise pin for Jeff.

Rating: C+. The idea here of course was that they knew each

other so well and they kept countering one another. Having the ending be quick like that was the right move and it worked out well. Good stuff here and WAY better than their match at Mania and Extreme Rules, but that could just be due to this being when they were young and motivated to have good matches.

Austin is polishing the belt when Vince comes in. He has some bad news for Austin: he has to defend the title tonight against Jericho. Vince blames Linda so Austin says just give her half of your money (\$500 million) because if you can't live on \$500 million, you're planning on living too long. In a funny bit, Austin starts to say that no woman deserves that but looks at Debra and says NEVER MIND. Funny stuff.

Trish is in the back when Foley comes up. She's mad about being challenged to a bra and panties match by Terri. Foley asks if Trish is scared and turns this into a story about Alexander Hamilton dying into a duel. If he had a bra and panties match, he'd still be alive. Trish: "He'd be over 200 years old." Foley: "EXACTLY! It's part of your duty as an American to compete tonight." Trish: "Mick, I'm Canadian." Foley: "Which is part of...North America." Trish: "You're right!" HILARIOUS segment.

Regal and Tajiri are in his office and Tajiri gives him some tea. It needs to be two degrees warmer. Kurt comes in and Tajiri is sent off for more tea. Shane has accepted Kurt's challenge at King of the Ring. Angle also mentions that he wants to win the King of the Ring again so Regal puts him in. He also wants Spike Dudley so Regal adds him to the Holly team and adds Spike to the Dudleys so it's a six man.

The Dudleys aren't happy because Spike is their partner.

Molly Holly is at WWF New York and looks great in a blue dress. She thanks the fans but more importantly, Spike for all the flowers he sent. She says she likes him. Spike sees it and freaks out.

Dudley Boys vs. Hollies/Kurt Angle

Six man tag here. Hardcore and Kurt have a quick argument due to the whole severely broken arm Kurt gave Hardcore a few years ago. D-Von and Hardcore start but Spike comes in before there's any contract. Kurt wants to come in but gets decked quickly and it's back to D-Von, giving us two tags before there was any contact between the legal men. We get going and D-Von hits a powerslam for two.

The fans want tables but that would be a DQ here, so do they want the Dudleys to lose? Actually who are the faces here? The Dudleys want to put Molly through a table which is hardly a good guy action. Hardcore beats on Spike for a bit, including the punt to the "abdomen". Off to Crash for such a short time that I didn't see him do anything. Back to Hardcore who hits a suplex for two.

Crash comes in and there's a distinct lack of Kurt in this, which I think is the point. Spike manages a tag to Bubba but the fans miss it. Kurt does get in and Spike GOES OFF, until Hardcore gets in a shot and Spike gets killed by a German. Spike blocks a superplex and hits a double stomp off the middle rope.

Double tag brings in Bubba and Hardcore and a Bubba Bomb puts him down. Crash takes a Samoan Drop and Hardcore takes a Doomsday Device. Kurt pops in for a German on Bubba but the moonsault misses. Hey Kurt. WHAT'S UP??? Bubba calls for a table but it's a 3D to Crash instead. A quick Angle Slam pins Bubba though.

Rating: C. Again this feud is just kind of fun. There's no main event or title implications to it but the feud works very well. It's well done and the feud makes perfect sense. For some reason, that just can't be done today. It seems that everything has to be part of a bigger purpose and a bigger story. Nothing can be a small and self contained story

anymore.

Big Show vs. Chris Benoit

Show runs over Benoit to start as we hear again that Benoit was an undefeated WCW Champion. We'll ignore that it was because he never defended it I guess, much like everything about Benoit is ignored anymore. Off to a bearhug by Show which Benoit bites out of. Gorilla press drop by Show and Benoit is in trouble. Show goes up (GULP!) but misses a middle rope elbow. Swan Dive is caught into a chokeslam but Benoit counters that into the Crossface and Show taps out! Too short to rate but that ending was pretty awesome. I'm a sucker for Benoit going all wrestling master and countering stuff into the Crossface.

Taker arrives, over halfway into the show.

Here's Taker in the arena and he's ticked off because of the stalking of his wife. If someone wants to do something with him, do it now and keep his family out of it. Taker says nothing is going to be easy until this ends. And then he turns to JR. JR was the first one to get the letter about the tape. Taker doesn't think JR has something to do with it but if there's something JR isn't telling him, he'll be the first name on Taker's list. Heyman says the words "old lady" and is promptly punched in the face. JR suggests that he go ask Vince.

Taker says that's a good idea and we get another video of Sara outside and it looks like she's watering plants or something. The voice says that if he wanted to get closer then he would. Taker's dog is out there too. Sara goes inside and the voice says she thinks she's safe in there. Back in the arena, Taker goes to the back and isn't happy.

Classic KOTR: Taker vs. Mankind in the Cell.

Back from a break and Taker kicks in the door to Vince's

office, demanding answers. Vince says he has nothing to do with this. He may have an ego but he doesn't have a death wish. Vince suggests it might be the same person that flashed the WCW logo: Shane. Taker threatens Vince with the insertion of the WWF into a place it isn't designed to go on Vince's body if he's lying.

King of the Ring Qualifying Match: Rhyno vs. Tazz

Rhyno is Hardcore Champion but this is non-title. Nice pop for Tazz. Rhyno pounds him into the corner to start and hits what would have been a Gore had it not been for the corner. This is Tazz's first match since Mania? I didn't really miss him. Rhyno comes off the middle rope but jumps into a suplex. Tazz Gores Rhyno for two and I remember that from when I was 13. Tazz hooks the Tazmission but Rhyno uses the Bigelow Breaking The Ring counter. Gore ends this.

Rating: D. I have no idea why this match sticks out to me but it does. Not a good match or anything and you can see Tazz is completely gone. Rhyno would make the semi-finals of the KOTR but wouldn't go anywhere until the Invasion started when he moved up to the midcard with a few quick main event shots.

Austin and Debra are a bit nervous about Mick's surprise with the champ being moreso. Debra goes off to find info from Foley.

Video on Smackdown Your Vote which is a cool idea.

Debra is looking for Mick. He's sitting on some steps and they exchange pleasantries. She gives him what appears to be candy and asks about the surprise. He won't say but she gets an autographed copy of the book.

Christian and Edge have some weird self-help moment and both say they want to be King of the Ring. They're both in the tournament too.

Jericho tells Cole to shut up (AMEN) and that he's accomplished a lot, including telling Vince that he is rather small. I'm assuming he meant that Vince had one and that it wasn't a rather embarrassing announcement. Jericho says he'll treat Austin like a sl** and that he'll win the title. He steals a bunch of Austin catchphrases while saying this.

Terri vs. Trish Stratus

Bra and panties here so I'm not sure what you want me to say about it. Heyman says this is in the tradition of the Funks and the Briscos. JR says that the Briscos never had a bra and panties match, officially. I really don't want to know some of the stories that JR has. Both of the girls look good and they can't wrestle yet, although Trish is trying. Terri loses her top and is out there in heels. Trish loses her top and Terri stands on her hair. Oh ok Trish hadn't lost her top yet. Perry Saturn comes out in a robe...and has lingerie on under it. The distraction lets Trish win. I think you can figure this one out for yourselves.

WWF World Title: Steve Austin vs. Chris Jericho

Foley's surprise is that he's the troubleshooting referee. He'll be outside while there's a regular one in the ring. Austin beats him into the corner before Jericho can even get his title off. He tries the Thesz Press but Jericho counters it into the Walls. Austin runs for the ropes and we go to the floor. Jericho gets sent into Foley and Austin goes into the steps. Back in the Lionsault hits knees and Jericho is down.

Spinebuster messes up Jericho's ribs even more as does an elbow drop. Jericho is in trouble here as Austin is having to protect his back and ribs due to the Germans from the other Canadian on Thursday. Jericho fights out of a bow and arrow but gets kicked low. That only gets two and JR mentions that Austin wouldn't mind getting disqualified. Why doesn't he do that then? It can't be that hard.

Austin yells at Foley for some reason and the distraction lets Jericho get in a low blow to shift the momentum again. They slug it out which is won by the Canadian. Missile dropkick gets two. Middle rope hurricanrana gets two. Austin ducks the forearm and Jericho takes out the referee. Foley, like an idiot, checks on the referee as Jericho hooks the Walls. Foley slides in but leaves his feet out of the ropes so Regal makes the save. Jericho and Regal get into it and Foley accidentally cracks Jericho with the chair. Regal takes Foley out and Austin only gets two! And never mind as the Stunner ends this.

Rating: C+. Pretty fun match and the main event of the King of the Ring should be pretty obvious at this point. Regal coming out was pretty clear given how Foley was positioned but I think I can let that slide here. Not a great match but they needed more time and they've had better matches before. I can't think of any right now so maybe they haven't.

Regal gets the Walls and the Claw to close the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This was really more about setting the stage for King of the Ring and that's fine. The main event of course would be Austin in a triple threat with the Canadians. The idea here is that Austin can barely beat one of them so how can he beat both of them? Well considering Benoit would break his neck in the match and would be out almost a year, that might give you a hint. Anyway good stuff and the Invasion is still building.

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On This Day: April 21, 2008 – Monday Night Raw 2008: King Me

Monday Night Raw

Date: April 21, 2008

Location: BI-L0 Center, Greenville, South Carolina

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is another request and since it's taking forever to download some TNA shows, I figured I might as well knock some of these off in the meantime. This is the King of the Ring tournament so it's a three hour special. Almost everything you have here is a tournament match, plus an eight man tag and a REALLY stupid other match. Let's get to it.

Theme song gets us going. It's still Papa Roach.

We open with Lillian telling us that the tournament is back tonight.

King of the Ring First Round: Chris Jericho vs. MVP

Jericho is IC Champion and MVP is US Champion. There's no bracket yet and even JR and Lawler haven't seen them. I don't mind a champion losing so much here as one of them gets to look stronger. This is also the go home show for Backlash, which is a show I haven't done yet. MVP takes him to the mat to start but Jericho comes back with some knees to the head and a kick to the same area.

MVP punches him in the corner as this is off to a hot start. Jericho drapes him over the top rope and mostly misses a baseball slide to the floor. MVP catches him coming back in with a knee lift and a kind of clothesline for two. He hooks kind of a modified abdominal stretch on the mat but Jericho

gets up pretty quickly. Overhead belly to belly puts Jericho down for two. They do the Flair bridge up into a backslide spot which gets a good reaction in Horsemen country. Big boot gets two for MVP. Jericho comes back with a clothesline but the Lionsault misses. Play of the Day is countered into the Walls and Jericho advances.

Rating: C. Very basic match here but with a one night tournament you have to keep things that way. Again I don't mind MVP losing clean here because it was to another champion and on top of that he would drop the title on Sunday anyway. Not much to see here but it was fine all things considered.

Jericho sits on the throne post match.

King of the Ring First Round: CM Punk vs. Matt Hardy

Punk has the MITB case. Feeling out process to start but it turns into a strike off, won by Punk. He takes Matt down for two and hooks a quick chinlock. Matt comes back with some headbutts and drives an elbow into Punk's back off the middle rope. Matt's bulldog is countered into the clothesline and bulldog out of the corner for two. Punk's springboard clothesline is caught in the Side Effect for two. Twist of Fate is countered into a GTS which is countered into a sunset flip which is countered by Punk sitting on Hardy for the pin. Nice ending.

Rating: C+. Another short match here but this one was a little more fun than the previous one. The ending was pretty quick and that's a good thing as it was certainly entertaining for a four minute match. Punk was on a roll at this point and he would win the world title in about two months. Matt would get the US Title on Sunday.

All we have as far as a bracket is Jericho vs. Punk in the semi-finals.

Tonight it's Barack Obama vs. Hilary Clinton. That's the

really stupid match I warned you about. We see it in Smackdown vs. Raw 2008 for a preview.

We get a clip from Raw last week of HHH vs. JBL when Orton ran in and HHH got double teamed. The fatal fourway on Sunday (those three plus Cena) is now an elimination match.

JBL says this Sunday he'll take his place on top of the WWE. He was in the New York Times today.

King of the Ring First Round: Finlay vs. Great Khali

Khali is having issues with Big Show around this time. Horny is at ringside of course. Finlay charges at Khali but gets shoved down almost immediately. Khali shoves him down but misses a legdrop. Finlay pounds away but Khali shrugs him off and sends him to the corner. Horny comes in with the club but Finlay saves him. The chop puts Finlay down and Khali wraps Finlay's leg around the post....for a DQ? Apparently so. Too short to rate but this was nothing of note.

Big Show comes out but Khali won't go for him until Sunday.

Finlay is helped out because of the knee attack.

King of the Ring First Round: William Regal vs. Hornswoggle

Twenty seconds, Regal Stretch. Finlay comes in to help but Regal beats him down and attacks the knee. Regal is GM at this point so shenanigans seem to be up.

The brackets are set for the semi-finals:

Jericho

Punk

Finlay

Regal

Video on the annual post Wrestlemania European tour.

Here's Shawn for a little chat. Apparently Batista isn't happy about Shawn retiring Flair at Wrestlemania so Shawn wants to talk about it right now. They have a match on Sunday with Jericho as referee for no apparent reason, although it would set up a six month feud between Shawn and Jericho. Here's Batista and Shawn if Batista wanted to face Flair at Mania, which is what Jericho suggested on Smackdown.

Batista asks if that would make Shawn feel better. This isn't about Flair anymore, but rather about Big Dave and Shawn. He respects where Shawn is, but not how he got there. He'll finish this with Shawn at Backlash. Shawn appreciates the honesty but he's everything Batista says he is. Whether Dave likes it or not, Shawn is Mr. Wrestlemania and there definitely is blood on his hands. Batista is going to need luck on Sunday. Shawn goes to leave but Batista spins him back around. Shawn gets into superkick position but Batista just walks past him and leaves.

Hilary Clinton gives the kind of promo/speech that a famous person gives when they talk to a wrestling audience that they don't understand. This one isn't terrible though as she mainly talks about how she'll fight for America and lists some of her issues. It's very corny, but I'll give them points for at least talking like this. Obama and McCain will talk later.

Hardcore Holly vs. Carlito

Just...why? Oh this is something to do with the tag titles. Holly and Rhodes are champions coming into this. Carlito has his partner Santino with him. Feeling out process to start with Holly mainly in control. Carlito comes back with a backbreaker for two. Off to a chinlock which doesn't last long. Carlito works on the back some more but misses a charge. Holly makes his comeback with clotheslines and the dropkick but his back gives out. He loads up the Alabama Slam but his back gives out again. Backstabber gets the pin.

Rating: D. This wasn't much. This would presumably set up the match on Sunday but it didn't happen for some reason. Then again, no one cared at all about the tag titles so it's not like anyone cared. This was really just a breather to allow everyone to transition from the first half of the show to the second.

HHH says he'll win.

King of the Ring Semi-Finals: Chris Jericho vs. CM Punk

Both guys are tentative to start but both get quick twos. The first big move is Jericho draping him over the top rope out of a suplex. Punk tries a springboard but Jericho kicks his legs out and Punk is in trouble. Jericho tries a hammerlock but Punk takes his head off with a clothesline for two. They trade rollups like at the end of Punk's other match but no one gets a pin. Walls are countered into a rollup for two.

Jericho hits an enziguri for two and this is getting good. Punk snaps off a powerslam for two. GTS is countered into the bulldog and Jericho loads up the Lionsault. It looks strange as Jericho tried to land on all fours because Punk had his knees up. Either way he stopped himself and hooks the Walls but Punk makes a rope. Jericho goes up but Punk high kicks him down. He puts Jericho on his shoulders and the GTS sends Punk to the finals clean.

Rating: B-. These two always work well together and this was no exception. Punk got a win here which made him look a lot stronger, which is what someone like Jericho is great at. Even four years later Jericho is still putting people over but it still means something, which is a great sign for a veteran like him.

Senator Obama gives a very corny speech, concluding with "do you smell what the Barack is cooking." Just...no.

King of the Ring Semi-Finals: William Regal vs. Finlay

Finlay has the bad knee coming in. Regal circles him to start but gets monkey flipped to the floor. Regal sends him into the steps and he hits knee first. Back in the ring and it's time for a slugout. Regal goes shoulder first into the post for two. Finlay tries a fireman's carry but the knee gives out. Back to the forearms and a rollup gets two. Regal hits him in the head with a knee and puts on the Regal Stretch. Finlay passes out to send Regal to the finals.

Rating: C. These two always have good matches as they're always physical. The more I see of Finlay the more I appreciate him as he was really good at stuff like this. There was nothing for him to lose out there and he was going to be adequate at worst no matter who you put him out there with. Good stuff but short.

McCain uses a lot of wrestling lines and says go vote.

We run down the card for Backlash.

Cena says that you've heard everyone talk tonight and he has as good a chance as anyone else, but the advantage he has is he doesn't have to go through himself.

Let's get this over with.

Hilary Clinton vs. Barack Obama

There's a Bill impersonator with Hilary, who comes out to Real American. No one reacts AT ALL. Obama comes out to Rock's theme and I guess is the face in this. They're impersonators in case you didn't get that. It's so weird seeing and hearing people not care at all about Hogan's music. I mean there's NOTHING. This is one of those times I feel ashamed about being a wrestling fan. They both cut promos on each other and Hilary's is far better, as she's played by a chick from SHIMMER. The fans still don't care.

Is this supposed to be funny? Are we supposed to be this

stupid to find this entertaining? Rock's theme gets ZERO reaction either and Obama has huge ears. King gets the only funny line of this by saying that if Obama were facing Mike Tyson in this it would be a buffet. They have a "match" which isn't completely terrible as both are played by wrestlers. Obama hits a Rock Bottom but Bill breaks up the People's Elbow. Cue Umaga for a Spike to Obama and a Samoan Drop to Hilary. Bill runs away. This got TEN MINUTES.

Here are a bunch of face Divas to introduce the new Women's Champion Mickie James. She beat Beth who was considered unbeatable so it was a big upset. It still amazes me how much more interesting the Divas were just a few years ago. Mickie thanks the other girls but gets cut off by Beth and some other evil girls. Remember when there were twelve Divas that could be in one segment and could all have at least a passable match? Beth says it's not if she'll win the title back, but when she'll win it back. Michelle slaps Beth and the brawl is on.

Mr. Kennedy is coming back.

King of the Ring Finals: William Regal vs. CM Punk

Punk comes in with bad ribs because of the matches earlier. Regal is basically in his second match after the Horny match and beating an injured Finlay. Punk starts off fast with some kicks in the corner. He tries the bulldog but gets suplexed down and it's off to a bow and arrow hold. Punk fights up from that and hits a spinning kick to the knee.

Regal grabs the arms and forces him right back down to the mat as is his custom. The idea is that it's strikes vs. grapples which is about as natural as you're going to get with these two. Punk fights up again and hits a BIG kick to the head to stagger Regal. Spinning backfist sets up the high kick for two. That sounded great. Punk loads up the GTS but Regal grabs the rope. He escapes and hits the knee trembler, followed by

the Stretch. Punk hangs on for almost thirty seconds but finally has to tap to give Regal the tournament.

Rating: C-. This was too short to mean much but it gave Regal some more psychosis to work with which was a really entertaining time. Then it just stopped cold because it was getting too good and that's how WWE works. Punk giving up because of the rib injury is ok because Regal didn't win fairly (coming in at a big advantage), which is fine.

Regal's psycho look while he sits on the throne is still great.

Here's Orton for the main event but first he brags about how awesome he is and how his title reign will continue after Sunday.

Randy Orton/Edge/Chavo Guerrero/John Bradshaw Layfield vs. John Cena/HHH/Kane/The Undertaker

Orton is Raw champion, Edge is challenging Taker on Sunday, Chavo is challenging Kane, JBL is challenging Orton, Cena is challenging Orton, HHH is challenging Orton, Kane is ECW Champion, Undertaker is Smackdown champion. Now that's a packed main event. How out of place does Chavo look here though? After the entrances take forever to get through we're ready to go. Seriously, there were ten minutes spent on entrances PLUS a commercial. That's ridiculous.

Taker and Orton look to start but Edge jumps Taker in a surprise. This goes badly for the Canadian as a big clothesline puts him down. Old School hits (hasn't that been called old longer than it wasn't called old?) and we take a break after 40 seconds. Back with Chavo tagging Edge in to work over a downed HHH. The spear is countered into a spinebuster and there's the tag to Cena.

He starts his finishing sequence very quickly on Edge but Chavo low bridges him on the Shuffle attempt. JBL throws him

back in clean which shocks Jerry. Off to Orton who does nothing so it's JBL again. Russian legsweep gets two as does a clothesline. Edge comes in and the Cena chants begin. Edge gets a big boot and it's off to Orton for a chinlock. Cena stands up but it's a double clothesline and both guys are down.

The tags are made to Chavo and Kane with the Big Bald cleaning house. All of the evil team goes down and a side slam puts Chavo down. The top rope clothesline mostly gets shoulder and everything breaks down. Chavo counters a slam attempt into a DDT but as he goes for the Frog Splash Kane chokeslams him down. Out of nowhere though Edge spears Kane for the pin.

Rating: C. It's a main event tag match and that's about it. They covered almost everything and they had the most secure winner at the PPV (Kane) take the fall which is a good thing. Not a bad match but it's just a way to throw everyone into the main event at once, which is fine for building up the PPV main events.

Edge takes an FU post match, HHH takes the Clothesline, RK0 to HHH and a double chokeslam to JBL and Orton. Undertaker stands tall to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. This was a really entertaining show that went by fast. I'd have liked to see some better wrestling in there but the matches had to be fast due to the tournament. I'm glad they didn't go to any double eliminations as in an eight man tournament that's kind of excessive. Good show though and I want to watch Backlash now so that's a great sign. Good stuff.

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NXT – March 20, 2013: The Art Of Week To Week Booking

NXT

Date: March 20, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tony Dawson, William Regal

Last week's show was about building for the future, so hopefully we get what the stuff that was being built to this week. The main stories are the Wyatt Family vs. Bo Dallas and the tag champions and Langston vs. O'Brian which should be a good match when we get around to it. I love how they make us wait around here. It's like the old days when they didn't have PPVs every month to build to and things can flow more naturally. Let's get to it.

The opening video recaps the Family vs. Neville and Gray and sets up Neville vs. Family member Luke Harper tonight.

Justin Gabriel vs. Leo Kruger

This was set up by a Gabriel challenge last week. Feeling out process to start with both guys shoving the other into the corner. Kruger gets the first control with a headlock before Gabriel grabs one of his own. Back up and Kruger shoves him down before driving an elbow into Gabriel's neck. We take a break and come back with Leo still in control, this time via a hammerlock.

Justin fights up for a few seconds but is driven right back down by the hammerlock. He escapes again but they ram heads to put both guys down. Back up and they slug it out by exchanging forearms until Gabriel takes

over with a series of right hands. A big spinebuster gets two for Kruger but as he goes for an arm hold of some kind, Gabriel suplexes him down to get a breather.

Gabriel goes to the middle rope for a kind of jumping mule kick for two followed by a HARD kick to the chest. Justin is consistently selling the arm work from earlier which is a very nice thing to see. A big spinning kick to the head of a kneeling Kruger gets another two count as does a sunset flip.

Gabriel plants him down but Leo rolls away before the 450 can be launched. Kruger goes old school villain with a thumb to the eye before draping the bad arm over the top rope. A seated armbar has Gabriel in trouble but somehow he crawls over to the ropes. Kruger hits a kind of Stroke onto the arm before putting the armbar back on and that's good enough for the tap at 9:56 shown of 13:26.

Rating: B. I really liked this match as they had a great story going out there. Gabriel sold the arm the entire way through the match which was really nice to see. Kruger continues to impress me and having him as a crazy man who was driven over the edge by his time in the South African militia is a fine character. Good stuff here.

Audrey Marie says it's always the calmest before the storm because Sasha knows Audrey is gunning for her.

We recap the ending segment from Raw.

William Regal is in the ring with something to say. He calls out Kassius Ohno who comes out in a shirt which says fighting spirit. Regal says whatever their issue is, it isn't worth it because Ohno doesn't want to end up like Regal is. William offers an apology and a handshake but Ohno won't shake it. Ohno talks about growing up idolizing Regal and traveling with CM Punk to attend a camp Regal held to learn from him. During Kassius' time in Europe, Regal was a mentor to him and made sure the

right people saw Ohno's footage which was his foot in the door to the WWE.

Now though, Regal is on the downside of his career and it's not a career that Kassius wants. Ohno wants to know what Regal has accomplished in this industry because he used to be an amazing villain, but now he tries to laugh with the people, but the people are really laughing at him. All anyone is going to remember is Regal bending down to kiss Vince, and that's enough for Regal to shove Ohno down.

We look at Punk and Undertaker's segment from Raw.

Bayley vs. Paige

Bayley is some new chick here apparently. Paige easily throws her down to start and gets a rollup for two. Off to an armbar by Bayley for a minute or so before Paige fights up and screams a lot. Paige whips her into the corner and trips her down so a kneeling Texas Cloverleaf can make Bayley submit at 2:23.

Post match Summer Rae runs out to the ring but Paige stares at her to send Summer backpedaling.

Adrian Neville vs. Luke Harper

We finally learn something new about the Family: Harper is from Rochester, New York. Harper lands a STIFF right hand to take over early but Neville charges right at him, only to be dropped with a hot shot for two. We take an early break and come back with Harper headbutting Neville down and crawling on the mat to hook a chinlock. A kick to the head and an elbow drop get two for Luke and it's off to an over the shoulder backbreaker.

Harper clotheslines Adrian's head off and gets five straight two counts.

Luke looks to Wyatt for inspiration, allowing Neville to fire off some forearms to get himself a breather. A running forearm staggers Harper and a kick to the head from the apron staggers him a bit more. There's a missile dropkick for two but Neville has to dive on Erick Rowan who was approaching the ring. Harper heads outside as well and there's a top rope Asai Moonsault to take him down as well. Back in and a spinning DDT puts Luke down but Wyatt himself distracts Neville, allowing Harper to hit a discus lariat for the pin at 7:33 shown of 11:03.

Rating: C+. I was digging this match with the David vs. Goliath formula working the entire way through. The ending is good too as Harper winning gives the Family a reason to get another shot at the titles but Neville only lost because he was at a 3-1 disadvantage. Good match here and a solid main event.

Post match Oliver Gray comes out to save his partner which makes you wonder where he was during the match. Bo Dallas comes out to make it 3-3 and the Wyatt Family is cleared out to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. NXT just works. The matches are good, the promos are good, the stories are interesting, the show never drags, the commentators actually talk about what is going on in the NXT world and I want to see what happens next. What more can you possibly ask for than that? The main event sets up a nice six man tag and we have the title match to look forward to also. Another good show this week.

Results

Leo Kruger b. Justin Gabriel – Seated Armbar

Paige b. Bayley – Kneeling Texas Cloverleaf

Luke Harper b. Adrian Neville – Discus Lariat

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On This Day: February 29, 2012 – NXT: Here's A Bonus For You. Take That How You Will

NXT

Date: February 29, 2012

Location: Key Arena, Seattle, Washington

Commentators: Josh Matthews, William Regal

It's the one year anniversary show, despite the season not being on the air for a year yet but again, counting is probably too complicated for WWE. Striker has promised us a major announcement tonight which probably won't wind up meaning much of anything because this is NXT, the land of crushed and broken dreams. Let's get to it.

Alex Riley/Percy Watson vs. Darren Young/Titus O'Neil

Titus starts with Riley and the beating begins. Riley gets in a dropkick and it's off to Young. Alex takes him down but goes up and is kicked down to give Young the advantage. Things slow down a lot with Titus taking over and saying that he has five. Riley tries to dive for a tag but Titus carries him back to the corner to bring in Young again.

Atomic drop gets two and it's off to a chinlock with a body scissors. Riley manages to get a kick into the face of a bent over Young and tags in Watson. Watson speeds things up and hits the Heisman Splash for two. Watson goes after Titus though and walks into the double knee gutbuster from Young for the pin at 5:46.

Rating: D+. Technically this was fine but this feud has been going on forever. While they've done a good job of having it evolve over the months with logical step after logical step, it's still not an interesting feud. Again, this would be so much better if they had something to fight for other than just pride.

Titus says Percy gets his rematch next week.

Back from a break and we have Alicia, Kaitlyn and Justin Gabriel in the ring in chairs. It's supposed to be Bateman vs. Slater at this point. Apparently this is an intervention. Oh dear. They're intervening about 5'5 of pure evil. Bateman: "You mean Trent Barretta?" They talk about how crazy Maxine is and how she beats up random new members and makes everyone miserable. Kaitlyn set this up. This is being booed out of the building.

We get a highlight package of Maxine and Bateman's relationship, including the whole engagement and the Johnny Curtis stuff. Bateman says she's a lot better at home and he doesn't want to die alone. Kaitlyn says that constantly getting slapped in the face is weird, not love. He asks Kaitlyn what love is then, so she bends him back and kisses him. Maxine runs out and gets in a fight with Kaitlyn which is quickly broken up. Maxine beats on Bateman and the girls are in the main event tonight.

Tyson and Natalya run into each other in the back. McGillicutty comes up and says something smells around here but it's not Natalya. They're up next.

Michael McGillicutty vs. Tyson Kidd

They go to the mat and Michael controls with a quick headlock. Regal talks about Tiger Mask as Tyson hooks a hammerlock. Michael works on the wrist but Kidd reverses into a cradle for two. McGillicutty sends him into the corner and out to the floor for the first big advantage. Off to a chinlock with

McGillicutty having a way too excited look on his face. Back up and Kidd gets up a boot in the corner and they clothesline each other.

Kidd starts firing off some hard strikes and a jumping spin kick gets two. Rolling cradle gets two. Kidd goes up but gets crotched. He knocks McGillicutty off and hits a moonsault press for two. Kidd loads up the Sharpshooter but McGillicutty kicks him away and the McGillicutter gets the pin at 6:22. McGillicutty's face looks like it belongs in a Will Ferrell movie.

Rating: C. Why did that just happen? They've been pushing Kidd very strong the last few weeks and now he loses clean to Michael McGillicutty? For what? Was Kidd getting too over or something? I really don't get this, especially after the last few weeks where they've had Kidd being Bret-esque with the Sharpshooter combinations. Then again it's NXT so it's not like anyone is paying attention.

Raw ReBound is about Rock and Cena of course.

Maxine is freaking out in the back and runs into Aksana. Maxine says everyone is plotting against her and she thinks even Aksana is in on it. Anyone that crosses Maxine will regret it.

Striker is in the ring for his major announcement, drawing a Regal chant. He talks about all the ring announcers and commentators and the thirty new superstars they've added. He does know that NXT has been around two years and that this season has been a year right? However there's only been one host. He's got this job because he loves this stuff. NXT was supposed to be about exposing the unseen because the guys in that locker room are carrying the business into the future. Yep the business is dead.

Anyway, lately NXT has been missing its point and that's because of Striker. Tonight that changes...and here are Hawkins

and Reks to interrupt. They have a surprise for Striker and they pull out chairs and drinks because they want to see this. Striker finally yells at Curt to shut up. He tells Hawkins to come try him if he wants to. Someone with veteran experience needs to take over. Someone that has worked his entire career so that Curt Hawkins and Tyler Reks can be called wrestlers. Striker will still be host but the matchmaker is now Sir William Regal.

Regal gets in the ring and says that there are going to be some new people coming to NXT to face Hawkins and Reks. As for them, why are they wearing sunglasses inside? This is the beginning of the new NXT and their first surprise is next week.

Kaitlyn vs. Maxine

Bateman and Curtis are on commentary for this. Curtis rubs lotion on his chest. He says that Maxine is in his back pocket for whenever he wants to pull her out. Brawl to start and Regal says he's very open to bribes. Kaitlyn books a body scissors for a bit but Maxine takes over with basic stuff. A running double ax gets two. Maxine beats on her a little more until Kaitlyn hits a Bubba Bomb and a rollup for the pin at 3:21.

Rating: D. As usual this was boring. These girls hate each other but always have coherent wrestling matches instead of wild brawls. That's one of those wrestling things I've never quite gotten. Anyway, dull match and the ending came out of nowhere. It is nice to see something other than a mat slam of some sort for a new finisher though.

Maxine gets in Regal's face and says she looks forward to working closely with him.

Overall Rating: C-. I wasn't all that thrilled with this show but it wasn't terrible. Regal taking over could be a good thing but if he just does the same things Striker did, this

isn't going anywhere. I've been saying it for months but this show is desperately in need of some fresh blood or at least some fresh faces. Also, end the whole Bateman/Curtis/Maxine stuff. It's been going on for months now and it's still going around in circles. Not a bad show tonight but this glimmer of hope needs to go somewhere.

Results

Darren Young/Titus O'Neil b. Alex Riley/Percy Watson – Double Knee Gutbuster To Watson

Michael McGillicutty b. Tyson Kidd – McGillicutter

Kaitlyn b. Maxine – Bubba Bomb

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NXT – December 19, 2012: The Real World Champion Is Here

NXT

Date: December 19, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: William Regal, Tony Dawson

We're into the new cycle of NXT now, but the problem continues to be the gap between the current WWE product and the current NXT product. It's a bit off putting to have the Shield version of Rollins on Raw and this version of him on NXT. It looks like we're moving towards Rollins vs. Graves in the main event scene around here. Oh and Big Show vs. Bo Dallas is tonight. Let's get to it.

The opening video is all about Dallas vs. Big Show.

Welcome Home.

Primo/Epico vs. Usos

Jimmy starts with Primo and we quickly hit the mat. There's an armdrag to put Primo down but Primo comes back with a hammerlock. Primo rolls away from an arm hold by Jimmy and we've got a standoff. Rosa gives Primo a quick kiss which earns him an elbow to the face. Back to the armbars and here's Jey for the first time. Epico comes in as well and immediately puts on a chinlock which doesn't last long either. This is a back and forth match so far but no one has any kind of long term advantage.

The Usos load up the Superfly Splash but Primo bails to the floor for a breather. Jey is all cool with that and hits a HUGE dive to take out the cousins. We take a break and come back with Epico holding a chinlock on Jey. Epico rolls some belly to back suplexes for two. Primo gets the same off a dropkick as the fans want Carlito. Jey avoids a dropkick in the corner and gets Primo caught in the Tree of Woe for a few seconds.

Hot tag brings in Jimmy but the referee didn't see it. Nice touch. Jey counters a whip into the corner and hits a big backdrop to give himself a breather. There's the real hot tag to Jimmy and a Bubba Bomb takes Primo down. The running Umaga attack in the corner sets up a Samoan Drop for two. Everything breaks down and a Jimmy superkick sets up the Superfly Splash to Epico for the pin at 8:28 shown of 11:58.

Rating: C+. They stuck with the formula here and it worked really well. The Usos are so talented and smooth together out there but they can barely ever get on TV. The few times recently where they were on television, they got the biggest reactions of the match. Interesting how that works. Anyway, good stuff here and a nice opener.

Post match the lights go out and it's Ascension (complete with recently released Kenneth Cameron) on the screen, telling the Usos that the war is far from over.

Camacho/Aiden English vs. Big E. Langston

Camacho can pick anyone to fight Langston with him and he picks this jobber? English has to start and is immediately pounded down by knees in the ribs and a running clothesline. Langston drags English over to

Camacho and extends English's hand for a tag but Camacho bails. Big Ending ends English at 1:12.

Post match there's another Big Ending and the FIVE, then does both of them again. The reactions for the FIVE thing are tremendous.

Percy Watson vs. Kassius Ohno

Watson speeds things up to start and pounds on Ohno's back to start. Ohno comes back with a suplex and a corner splash followed by some high energy stomps/knees to the head. Off to a dragon sleeper by Kassius followed by some choking on the top rope. They chop it out a bit but Ohno charges into an elbow to the face. Percy makes his comeback but the Persecution is blocked. Ohno Blade (or whatever he's calling that elbow now) knocks Watson out cold at 5:23.

Rating: D. I am so bored with Ohno. The guy is talented but he's got NOTHING going for him at all. He's a bad guy who likes to strike people, but his attitude is all wrong for it. There's nothing to dislike about him and that makes him a weak heel. He's just kind of there and has his time every week. Watson continues to be nothing.

Ohno shouts at Regal post match.

Here's Seth Rollins for a chat with JR. Seth says he's here for anyone that wants to fight him and he's not hard to find. Corey Graves jumps Rollins from behind and puts him in the 13th Step leg lock. Graves talks about how his tattoos all tell a story and now he wants the Title. He says Rollins feeds off the fans and he'll see Seth in his nightmares. Not bad here but calling himself the Savior of Misbehavior isn't going to get him over.

Cena tells us to watch the NXT Year In Review show next week.

Bo Dallas vs. Big Show

Non-title I'd assume. This is about what you would expect to start: Dallas goes nuts with strikes and is easily shoved away. The beating goes on for awhile until Dallas gets on his back and chokes away. Show falls

back on him to break the hold but misses an elbow. Dallas escapes the chokeslam but a bulldog is countered with a basic slam. WMD ends this at 4:53.

Rating: D. What in the world were you expecting here? It's a tiny minor league guy against a massive world champion. I have no idea why they picked Show here because it doesn't do Dallas any good and the match sucked as a result. I don't get this one at all, as there are a ton of guys you could bring in to beat Dallas but get a better match out of him at the same time. Odd choice here.

Overall Rating: C. This didn't work all that well for me. It wasn't a bad show or anything, but this didn't really advance anything. The only storyline stuff we got was Ascension vs. Usos which we've done before and Ohno staring at Regal. Oh and Graves vs. Rollins, but we already knew that was coming. Not much to see here but it wasn't terrible or anything.

Results

Usos b. Epico/Primo – Superfly Splash to Epico

Big E. Langston b. Camacho/Aiden English – Big Ending to English

Kassius Ohno b. Percy Watson – Ohno Blade

Big Show b. Bo Dallas – WMD

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NXT – December 5, 2012: Where Squashes Can Still Work

NXT

Date: December 5, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tony Dawson, William Regal

This might be the week where Mahal finally gets the title shot that he earned weeks ago. It'll be nice if they've finally caught up with Raw and he's in the Band rather than being his usual self. Other than that hopefully we'll have a better show than last week, which was probably the worst show they've had in this season. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Michael McGillicutty vs. Antonio Cesaro

Heel vs. heel? Or was there a McGillicutty face turn that I completely missed? This is non-title I believe. They head to the mat to start and Dawson talks about how McGillicutty wants to complete the first father/son pair to hold the US Title. I'm pretty sure Dusty and Dustin already did that but. Anyway, Cesaro chops away and goes to the stomach to take over. Apparently we're just ignoring Dustin as we hear about Dusty winning the US Title as well.

The fans are firmly behind McGillicutty with a pair of chants for him. Cesaro turns that to a big gasp instead with a double stomp to the ribs. There's a body vice to stay on the ribs but McGillicutty comes back with a sunset flip for two. Cesaro gets the same off a clothesline, followed by the gutwrench suplex for two more. Back to the body vice but Michael GOES OFF on Cesaro, pounding him into the corner and hitting a clothesline to take over. Cesaro comes back with a classic thumb to the eye and the European Uppercut to set up the Neutralizer for the pin at 6:00.

Rating: C-. The match was pretty dull, but McGillicutty showed a lot of fire here. That comeback with punches into the corner was a cool moment and it's clear that McGillicutty could be an excellent face. Well, if you change his name to the one he should have had for like three years now.

Axl Keegan vs. Bo Dallas

This is Keegan's debut. Dallas takes the bigger guy to the mat to start but goes face first into the middle buckle. A slam gets two for Keegan and it's off to the neck crank. Dallas makes his comeback with a bunch of forearms and clotheslines followed by the spear for the pin at 2:47. Dallas still does nothing for me.

Dallas says he's lost a bit lately but he gives the pain the respect it deserves. He issues an open challenge to anyone in the WWE to come and face him, no matter how big a name they are.

The Raw ReBund is the end of the show with the lie detector segment and Ryback standing tall.

Corey Graves vs. Yoshi Tatsu

Graves jumps Tatsu in the aisle and has a big advantage to start. He goes for Yoshi's leg and beats on that for awhile, kicking it in the corner and bending it around the ropes. There's a leg crank as the fans think Corey is awesome. Yoshi fights up and hits some backdrops followed by his kicks but Graves stops him dead with a knee crusher. Graves hooks that reverse figure four of his, apparently called the 13th Step for the pin at 2:59. Just a squash.

Gavid Reid vs. Roman Reigns

Oh come on. We're supposed to care about a guy named GAVID? Reigns stomps him down in the corner and shouts a lot. Reigns puts on a cravate and asks the fans what his name is. A clothesline puts Reid down and that belly to back slam gets the pin at 2:09.

Reigns yells at ring announcer Byron Saxton and tells him to get out.

Tyson Kidd says he's ready for Leo Kruger and says if that's what he has to go through to get to the NXT Title, so be it. Kassius Ohno comes in to make fun of Kidd, so Kidd quotes Albert Einstein. Ok then.

Rollins vs. Mahal is next week.

Tyson Kidd vs. Leo Kruger

Kruger stares in the corner while the fans chant for Kidd. We quickly hit the mat but Kruger makes the rope. Kidd speeds around and has Kruger frustrated very quickly. Off to a headlock on the mat by Tyson as we take a break. Back with Kruger holding a full nelson but Kidd fights out. A cross body misses Leo though and Kidd crashes to the floor. Back in and Leo stomps away very slowly, which is appropriate for him.

Kruger keeps pounding away and hooks the full nelson again which even Regal calls an unusual move. Tyson tries to stomp on the foot to escape but Leo pounds him down with ease. Here come the kicks from Kidd for the real comeback including one from the apron. A springboard elbow hits Kruger's knee, which again hurts Kidd more than Kruger. Kruger pounds away some more and goes up, only to be armdragged off the top. After a kick to the face from the apron, the Dungeon Lock gets the tap out from Kruger at 9:05 shown of 12:35.

Rating: C+. Is Kidd capable of having a bad match if he gets more than five minutes? The match was nothing great, but Kidd looks so smooth out there every time he's in the ring. Decent main event here, as I continue to wonder how much I like Kruger's character. I like the facials he gives, but I'm not sure how far a human big game hunter can go.

Post match Kassius Ohno comes in for the double beatdown until William Regal of all people comes out and pulls Kidd away.

Overall Rating: C+. This was an episode where we got to see a lot of

people, mostly in squash matches. NXT is still a place where that can work, as most of the matches were short and therefore still got to see a lot of people. That's good when you just have an hour a week. Not a great show or anything, but it was an entertaining hour of TV and I want to see more of it, which is a good thing.

Results

Antonio Cesaro b. Michael McGillicutty – Neutralizer

Bo Dallas b. Axl Keegan – Spear

Corey Graves b. Yoshi Tatsu – 13th Step

Roman Reigns b. Gavid Reid – Spinning Belly to Back Slam

Tyson Kidd b. Leo Kruger – Dungeon Lock

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Smackdown – November 6, 2012: Can We Vote Smackdown Out Of The WWE?

Smackdown

Date: November 6, 2012

Location: LG Arena, Birmingham, England

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

This is one of those cockamamie live Smackdowns that almost no one watches because there's no reason to care about Smackdown. The main event

for tonight is Del Rio vs. Orton, because we need it hammered into our heads that we wasted our time watching the three Barrett vs. Orton matches. Other than that there's nothing announced for this week. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap from last night with the Survivor Series elimination match being shifted around.

Here's Sheamus in the ring to open things up. Apparently there was an incident in a pub last night and we've got footage of it. It shows Regal, Sheamus and Big Show in a pub and a brawl breaks out. Show destroys Sheamus using various furniture. Back in the arena, Sheamus tells Cole to get out of the ring. He doesn't respect Show because of Regal getting attacked in the pub, so Sheamus wants to fight right now. Not for the title, but just to fight.

Instead Show pops up on screen and calls Sheamus an ungrateful ginger. Show held back in the pub but at Survivor Series Show is going to go at Sheamus full speed. Sheamus calls him out again but here's Barrett instead. Barrett says that Sheamus already has to face him on Main Event so don't even worry about Big Show tonight. Sweet goodness just make the tag match already. Sheamus calls him to the ring again but Barrett leaves.

Barrett is in the back post match and Booker makes the tag match. Why do they bother having these ten minute openings when that's the match announced every time? Seriously, that's good TV time being totally wasted on pandering when you know the outcome the second the names are mentioned. It's Sheamus/Regal vs. Show/Barrett if that's not clear.

Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Kofi Kingston

Kofi is defending. Now remember: Miz has lost three straight times to Kofi but he got a pin in a tag match. That pin after a Show punch was apparently enough to convince Booker to give us this match. The first

thing said during this match is that Kofi has Miz's number. They're not even hiding that there's no reason to believe Miz can win here. The ropes seem extra loose here for some reason.

After a headlock by the champion he hits a monkey flip and clothesline to put Miz on the floor. A baseball slide misses for Kofi and Miz puts him on the barricade. Kofi is fine with that and walks the barricade like Jeff Hardy used to do, hitting a clothesline to take Miz down. Back in and Miz drops Kofi out of the corner and might have hurt the champ's knee. We take a break and come back with Miz getting two off something we didn't see.

Miz holds onto the ankle in a hold that really doesn't look like it hurts. During the break Miz dropped Lofi's knee on the steps and back live a dropkick to said knee gets two. Miz hooks a weird kind of standing Figure Four before going to the mat with a generic leg lock. Kofi's solution? Kick him in the face. Why overcomplicate things? Kofi fights back and hits the Boom Drop but Trouble in Paradise is countered. The Finale is countered into a series of rollups before Miz hooks a half crab. Kofi goes up again but gets crotched. Miz's superplex attempt is blocked and Kofi hits a top rope cross body to retain at 11:29.

Rating: C+. We get it: Kofi can beat Miz. Now why did we need to see this for a fourth time? I've heard the plan is to move Miz to the main event again, so the solution is to have him lose FOUR TIMES? The lack of drama hurts this, as the announcers kept harping on the 3-0 that Kofi has been since this feud started. Not a bad match but it was beating a dead horse.

Post match Miz offers a handshake (you read that right) but Kofi dropkicks him to the floor. Jerk.

Prime Time Players vs. Sin Cara/Rey Mysterio

Young vs. Cara to start with Darren taking control. Titus adds his power stuff before it's back to Young with a cravate. Titus breaks up a hot tag

for a second before an enziguri from Cara lets him tag Mysterio. Rey speeds things up and rans Titus into 619 position, only to have Darren break it up. Titus grabs a charging Rey and hits the Clash of the Titus for the pin at 3:13.

Rating: D+. At least with this feud that keeps going the teams are alternating wins. Titus and Young have charisma to them where they're fun to watch. Mysterio and Cara are going to be popular no matter what they do, so there's nothing for them to lose here. This was short but it was competitive enough to not be terrible.

Post match Striker tries to interview the Players, but the Players interview themselves with every answer being millions of dollars. They make Striker say it too but he's not so enthusiastic. They try to get Striker to do the millions of dollars dance but he gets whistled at for having no rhythm and a bad mustache. The Players do the dance instead.

As this is being written, Linda McMahon has officially lost her race in the Senate.

We recap the Cena/AJ/Vickie stuff from last night and by recap, I mean show the whole thing. We're going to get MORE footage on Raw. Good grief
END THIS STUPID STORY ALREADY!

Booker and Teddy talk about the tag match tonight with Teddy saying that he made a lot of tag matches too. This turns into Booker implying Teddy is sucking up to him. Oh wait Booker is just kidding.

Big Show/Wade Barrett vs. William Regal/Sheamus

After the break, we look at the video from earlier again in case someone forgot it. BIG pop for Regal. Sheamus chases the heels to the floor before the match starts and we stall a lot. Show wants to start with Regal but both guys tag to bring in Barrett vs. Sheamus. It's their usual

power brawling stuff to start with Sheamus finally getting two off a clothesline. Off to Regal in his one piece women's swimsuit for his usual hard stuff to Barrett's chest. Sheamus hits the slingshot shoulder for two.

Show yells at the referee a lot and it's back to Regal, who gets a pop on his second tag instead of the first. Regal gets his legs swept out from under him and Big Show comes in to pound him down. The heels double team the home country guy but Regal keeps fighting back. Show shoulders him right back down and puts on a nerve hold as we take a break. Back with Barrett still working over Regal before bringing Show back in.

Show works on Regal's arm and Regal yells a lot while having an EVIL look on his face. I think JBL said that the Souvenir has been changed to the Bull Hammer now. I wouldn't be complaining about the name change. Barrett hooks a front facelock but Regal shakes him off. That and a forearm to Barrett's face are enough to make the tag to Sheamus who fires off a bunch of ax handles to drop Show. The top rope shoulder looks to set up the Brogue Kick but a Barrett distraction allows Show to spear Sheamus down. Off to Regal who fires on Show with everything he's got, but the WMD knocks him silly for the pin at about 14:00.

Rating: C-. This was your standard main event tag match for the hometown audience. I'm kind of glad they didn't have Regal get a win over either of these guys because it would have been silly to have a guy never on the show get a win over a top guy. If this were a house show it would have been fine but on TV Regal losing was the right call.

We recap the food fight last week with Orton and Del Rio.

Del Rio doesn't have much to say but Rosa wishes him luck.

We get the Brad Maddox segment from Raw. This one is clipped though.

Orton says he's crazy and doesn't mind being called names by Del Rio.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Randy Orton

This is falls count anywhere and anything goes, since I guess Hardcore is on the not cool list of terms now. We come back from a break but WAIT, before the match we have to look at some SyFy show to fill in more time so we don't have a 25 minute main event. Here's Alberto, but here's ANOTHER recap before the bell can ring. If anything goes here, why doesn't Ricardo come in and help Alberto?

He hands Del Rio a chair but Orton knocks it away from Alberto. The chair gets wedged between the top and middle rope in the corner but Orton dropkicks Del Rio to the floor. Alberto sends him into the barricade and has to escape the Elevated DDT. They head into the crowd with Randy giving chase. Del Rio whips him into some big metal cases. They head into the concourse and we take a break.

Back with the brawl continuing in the back before they head into the arena again. Del Rio drapes him over a barricade and hits a knee lift for two. They fight back up the steps with Orton pounding him in the head. A cameraman goes down as we go to a flat area where Del Rio hits a superkick and a chair shot for two. We take another break and come back with Del Rio having steps placed in the ring. Orton fights back and they go to the floor by the stage where Orton backdrops Del Rio from the floor to the ramp for two.

Ricardo tries to choke Randy a bit and is immediately shrugged off. Orton throws Ricardo into the British phone booth on the stage and pounds on him a bit. It's about time some of those props up there were used. Orton hits the clotheslines back in the ring and sends Del Rio into the chair that Alberto set up earlier. Del Rio sends Orton to the apron but Orton comes back with a headbutt.

There's a table set up at ringside but Orton can't suplex Bertie through

it. Instead Alberto hits an enzugri to send Randy through it VERY slowly. That gets two on the floor and Alberto grabs a mic. He says he's the new Apex Predator of the WWE and there's the armbreaker. Apparently rope breaks don't count here (yet they count in the Cell I believe) so Orton has to hit Del Rio in the head with the mic to escape. Alberto sends him shoulder first into the post and pulls the steps into position. Del Rio tries an Elevated DDT onto those steps but Randy escapes and it's the RKO onto the steps for the pin at 21:45.

Rating: B. For a main event on free TV, this was a solid hardcore match. Does Orton ever lose matches with rules like this one had? They beat on each other really well with Orton getting the better of it for the most part, but Alberto didn't look bad at all. Hopefully this ends the feud like traditional storytelling would dictate.

Josh's line to close the show: "Who is the Apex Predator of the WWE?" SO WHAT WAS THE POINT OF THIS FREAKING MATCH??? Orton just beat him in a brutal match but we're still not sure? And they wonder why no one is interested in their stories anymore.

Overall Rating: C. The main event was good but the rest of the show was only ok. The real problem here is that Smackdown adds absolutely nothing to WWE anymore. It's a lot of matches you different versions of on Raw and a big tag match that doesn't mean anything outside of England. On top of that you get long recaps from Raw and that's it. Seriously, what else is there on Smackdown? Oh there's that wacky Teddy and Booker bantering.

This show is worthless anymore and the rating is going to bomb with the election being tight at the moment. But hey, when you have a ton of bad stuff on Raw, the solution is to just air it again right? Tonight's episode did not need to be on Tuesday and it's not going to mean anything, as these feuds are the same ones you get on Raw. Why the WWE thinks people want to see them again on Tuesday/Friday is beyond me, but what do I know?

Results

Kofi Kingston b. The Miz – Cross Body

Prime Time Players b. Sin Cara/Rey Mysterio – Clash of the Titus to Rey

Big Show/Wade Barrett b. Sheamus/William Regal – WMD to Regal

Randy Orton b. Alberto Del Rio – RKO onto steel steps

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Monday Night Raw – October 8, 2001: Austin vs. Angle III

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 8, 2001

Location: Conseco Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, Indiana

Attendance: 9,204

Commentators: Jim Ross, Paul Heyman

We're 13 days away from No Mercy but more importantly tonight, Angle defends against Austin in a match with NO, I repeat NO, interference at all. You know, so they can guarantee interference. Other than that there isn't much to do here but we're getting set for the PPV too. Since there isn't much else to say, let's get to it.

We open with a recap from Smackdown where Angle fought RVD with Van Dam winning to earn Austin a shot tonight on Raw.

Dudley Boyz/Tazz vs. Big Show/Tajiri/Spike Dudley

DUCHESS OF DUDLEYVILLE! YES! Stacy Keibler is now managing the

Dudleys and has the gray camo skirt and the tied off Dudleys t-shirt with the glasses. For me, this is the hottest she EVER looked, which is covering a lot of ground. It's a brawl to start until Tazz and Spike get us going. Spike gets suplexed over and D-Von comes in, only to get taken down by his half brother. Tag to Big Show who cleans house. Taz breaks up a double chokeslam with a low blow and a kick to the head from Tajiri gets the pin in maybe 90 seconds. What in the world was the point of this match?

Post match Spike tries a Dudley Dog on Bubba but gets thrown to the floor. Torrie gets powerbombed through the table while Tajiri is forced to watch. Big Show got shoved to the floor in case you were wondering. Yes, six men were used to further Stacy vs. Torrie at the PPV. Let that sink in for a minute.

Torrie gets checked out in the back.

Here's Stephanie looking great in a leather top and a short leather skirt and thigh high boots. She wants to know why it's such a big deal that Torrie got put through a table when Jericho beat Stephanie up two weeks ago on Smackdown. We see her being put in the Walls and getting hit two more times after that. She's better now and she thinks she can do anything, so she's going to watch the main event tonight.

Cue Jericho to cut her off. We get the required Stephanie jokes but here's Shane to interrupt him. Stephanie dancing like a stripper for her brother's song is both nice to see and also strange at the same time. Shane says Jericho's usual long list of insults for some reason and says he's funny. Stephanie is freaking out and Shane says that if Jericho actually focused, he could be the top guy.

Instead, Jericho is a choke artist who does comedy relief. Jericho thinks it would be comedy to see the McMahons team up against him tonight. Stephanie says she knows Jericho wants to get his hands on her body but she's not that stupid. Instead

it'll be Shane/RVD vs. Rock/Jericho. How much money was there to be made by Jericho turning heel and admitting he treated Steph like this because he was in love with her but refused to admit it?

RVD is watching in the back when Test/Booker come in to congratulate him for his success. Booker was happy RVD won but he could have beaten Angle a lot faster. Booker is a five time champion, which RVD says means Booker lost the title five times. Ok then.

Some chick tries to be DDP's student but is clearly reading off lines, which is the idea. This went nowhere.

WCW Tag Titles: Hardy Boyz vs. Booker T/Test

The champs (Booker/Test) jump the Hardys during their posing time but the brothers clear the ring. Test and Matt get us going but Booker kicks Matt in the back of the head to give the Canadian the advantage. Off to Booker who hits the forearm to the head for two. Test comes back in quickly and walks into a tornado DDT. Off to Jeff who speeds things up and everything breaks down. Bookend to Jeff and here's Lita with the rana. Twist of Fate takes down Booker but Test breaks up the cover. Test throws Lita into the crowd and here comes the Spinarooni. Undertaker comes in and hits the Last Ride so the Swanton can get the pin.

Rating: D+. This was a coherent match for a minute and then everything fell apart. The titles being switched again doesn't really mean anything but it would set up Dudleys vs. Hardys again because we haven't seen that in a few months I guess right? Pretty boring match but again with about 3:45 to work with and two people interfering, how much could they do?

Booker and Test fire each other up and say they'll get the belts back.

Lita says they'll celebrate later and leaves to run into

Hurricane and Molly who chastise her. Molly vs. Lita later.

Christian comes out for commentary.

US Title: Rhyno vs. Edge

Rhyno is defending and charges Edge into the corner almost immediately. Edge comes back with an atomic drop and some right hands. Rhyno knocks him right back down and drops a leg as Christian gets off commentary. Edge goes after him and avoids a charging Rhyno, hitting the Edge-O-Matic for two. The champ hits a spinebuster to put Edge down and finally takes his t-shirt off. Edgecution hits as there isn't much selling in this match. And never mind as Christian pulls Edge out for the DQ.

Post match the Gore misses and Edge spears Christian.

Rob Van Dam/Shane McMahon vs. The Rock/Chris Jericho

Rock and RVD start things off with Rob firing off kicks in the corner. A moonsault out of the corner misses and Rock takes his head off with a clothesline. Off to Shane who gets punched in the face, allowing Rock to bring in Jericho. Jericho destroys Shane and sets for the Lionsault but Van Dam kicks him down off the ropes. RVD comes in legally and hits Rolling Thunder for two.

Back to Shane because that worked so well for the Alliance team the first time. A jumping back elbow gets two for the Boy Wonder and it's time to dance. An enziguri to Shane allows the tag to Rock and things speed up. Shane tags in RVD who is quickly put in the Sharpshooter. Jericho knocks Shane to the floor and pulls Rob out too, putting him in the Walls on the floor.

Shane comes out of nowhere to bulldog Jericho into the steps and I think bust him open. Back in the ring the Five Star misses the Rock and it's punching time. He pulls Shane in for

the Elbow but RVD makes the save. Rock reverses a whip into the Rock Bottom but Shane saves. Jericho comes in with a chair but blasts Rock with it by mistake, allowing Van Dam to pin Rock.

Rating: C. Not bad here and we get the start of both a big feud as well as Jericho's heel turn that led him to his first world title. Van Dam beating Rock I believe would lead to him getting a title match (against Austin) on PPV in a triple threat. Shane would go on to do nothing new, but that's probably a good thing.

The Alliance celebrates with Van Dam, but it's in front of Austin's dressing room, meaning he's not happy.

Chris Benoit was at WWF New York last night and predicted Angle getting the win.

Lance Storm and Ivory are at WWF New York tonight and says Benoit doesn't speak for all of Canada.

Jericho gets his cut looked at when Rock comes in. He wants to know what Jericho was thinking, to which Jericho says that it was to get at Shane. Rock isn't happy and Jericho says even Rock makes mistakes every now and then. Jericho says he was trying to win the match which Rock isn't happy about. Rock wants Jericho to live up to his mistakes, so Jericho says maybe he should have knocked the People's Eyebrow off his face. Rock says try it now and the fight is on.

Light Heavyweight Title: Scotty 2 Hotty vs. X-Pac

Pac is defending. He starts with his bouncing headlock but Scotty comes back with very basic offense. Pac gets sent to the floor but he kicks Scotty's head off in retaliation. Back in and Scotty takes over again as this is going nowhere. Bulldog sets up the Worm for the pin but Pac's foot was on the ropes. And there's the X-Factor for the pin.

Rating: D. The match was ok enough I guess but it's nothing of note at all. It's pretty clear they had nothing else to do here so they threw the title out there for the sake of filling in some time. Then again, did ANYONE care about this title at all? Pac had the WCW Cruiserweight Title too so there was no division to speak of.

We're supposed to talk to Austin but it's Debra instead, looking as white trashy as you can get while still being both white and trash. She says Austin doesn't want to talk and asks where Regal's office is.

Lita vs. Mighty Molly

Molly quickly takes her down and drops some elbows for two. She puts Lita down again and poses too much, allowing Lita to take over again. Molly wants a handshake so Lita punches her in the face. Handspring elbow misses for Molly but she blocks the Twist of Fate. Molly gets a bridging rollup for the quick pin. Was there a point to this either?

Hurricane and Molly leave on the Hurricycle, but tonight it's the Molly Mobile.

Regal is in his office when Debra comes in to beg Regal to let her be at ringside for the title match tonight. Regal say no way because there is NO interference tonight.

Angle says he isn't worried about anything. Austin gave up at Unforgiven and he'll do it again tonight.

WWF Title: Steve Austin vs. Kurt Angle

Debra comes out before Angle so Regal comes out to throw her out. He's even going to stay at ringside to ensure that no one interferes. If you don't know what's coming by this point, you have no business reading this. They start brawling on the floor and with the arena mostly full of smoke. They head into the ring and Kurt avoids a right hand to take over with chops.

They're moving very fast right now.

Austin hits the Thesz Press and the middle finger elbow for one. Now Angle hits a Thesz Press and more punches. That's been the majority of his offense so far. Austin tries a kick to the ribs but Angle catches it into an ankle lock, but Austin immediately gets the rope. They go to the corner again and Austin wraps Angle's leg around the post. Out to the floor with Austin going into the table and Angle going into the post in response.

Angle comes back and throws Austin over the table and peels back the mats on the floor. Austin fights back again to avoid being dropped on concrete and fires away with chops. Back into the ring and Kurt comes back as well but Austin rams the knee into the apron to slow your Olympic Hero down. Austin suplexes him down and stomps on Angle's hands. Why don't more people do that? Off to the chinlock which is quickly broken by a backslide from Angle for two.

Angle throws on a sleeper but Austin easily breaks that as well with a jawbreaker. Kurt doesn't stay down long, so Austin's shoulder is stronger than his head I guess? Now Austin hooks a sleeper but Kurt breaks it just as fast. A cross body and small package get two apiece for the champion. Austin tries a sunset flip of all things but Angle drops down onto him and fires away with punches.

Austin low bridges a charging Kurt to send him out to the floor. He goes for a chair but picks the one right next to Regal for no apparent reason. That gets taken away so Austin has to settle for a clothesline. Austin loads up a piledriver on the exposed concrete but Angle backdrops out of it. Back in the ring Angle gets put in a Boston Crab but makes the ropes relatively quickly.

Austin doesn't like the decision to break the hold so he shoves Hebner. Angle comes back with clotheslines and chops

and punches in the corner. Austin tries a double ax off the middle rope but Angle catches him in a belly to belly. Here are rolling Germans and Austin is in trouble. With the referee trying to get Austin to let go of the ropes he low blows Angle to escape. Angle Slam is countered and there goes the referee. Austin gets the belt but Regal takes it away, only to drill Angle with it. JR is SHOCKED, SHOCKED I TELL YOU! That only gets two for Austin but a Stunner gives him the title back.

Rating: A-. Another great match between these two but Austin came to play here. What's often forgotten about him is how awesome he was in the ring because of how great he was at talking, but this was more proof that he was excellent in the ring. Regal turning isn't needed at all as the Alliance already had two people with match making abilities, so this is just more crowding in that area.

Overall Rating: B. Good show because of the awesome main event (with NO COMMERCIALS) and the start of Jericho vs. Rock, but there were some holes in this. Regal becoming Alliance Commissioner was a bad idea because it just wasn't needed and it made things even more complicated, but it's not a huge deal. This was a good show, but they needed to make some major changes to save the Alliance, although it was probably too late at this point.

I've already done the Raw from October 15 so here it is if you're interested:

[Monday Night Raw – October 15, 2001 – Kind of a Mess](#)

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