

# Smackdown – July 19, 2013: Deja Vu All Over Again

## Smackdown

Date: July 19, 2013

Location: Dunkin' Donuts Center, Providence, Rhode Island

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

With Money in the Bank passed we're now in the period of waiting for Sandow to cash in. After Monday night we have some of the main events set for Summerslam which means we need some blue matches to balance it out. Also Zigler is officially a face after breaking up with AJ and being destroyed by Langston. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence again, which I think is the norm now.

Here's Teddy Long to get things going. Tonight there's going to be a new general manager named and Teddy wants to throw his name in the hat. He doesn't know how good he'd be but he'll be better than Vickie Guerrero. Vince will be here in person tonight to give Teddy a job evaluation. Teddy polls the crowd who seems to like the idea of Long being the boss long term.

This brings out the returning Booker T to thank Teddy for filling in while Booker was out getting triceps surgery. Booker is back to be the GM now but here's Vince with something to say on the subject. Vince asks Teddy what match he would make to impress the fans so Teddy suggests Axel vs. Jericho for the Intercontinental Title. Booker's offer is Del Rio vs. Orton, which brings out Raw GM Brad Maddox. He thinks he should be GM of both shows because he was going to suggest both matches as well as the Smackdown return of RVD.

Vince's pick for the permanent Smackdown GM: Vickie freaking Guerrero.

Well of course she is, because if there's one thing WWE needs it's ANOTHER heel boss character. She blames the fans for getting her fired from Raw so she hates us all. Vickie goes into crazy mode, yelling about how she runs this show and is going to take everything out on the fans. You know, because we haven't done this same idea for the last year or so on Raw.

### Jack Swagger vs. Dolph Ziggler

Before the match we get a clip from Raw of Ziggler breaking up with AJ and then having her cost him a match against Del Rio. A rollup sends Swagger to the floor as AJ and Langston are watching in the back. Back in and Dolph pounds away in the corner and takes Jack down with a dropkick. Cesaro trips Dolph off the apron and hits an uppercut, earning him an ejection along with Colter. Back in and a sunset flip gets two for Dolph but he has to escape the Patriot Lock. The Zig Zag is good for the pin at 3:13.

**Rating:** D+. Ziggler was fine here and the fans loved him which is the right idea. It's a lot easier to get behind a feud with Langston instead of Del Rio as the matches and promos will actually be entertaining. This is a big upgrade for Dolph as he can go after the title later on and get some character development against Big E.

Post match Ziggler says he's sorry he dumped AJ on Monday because he should have done it a lot sooner. That's the kind of stuff he's been needing to say to help cement his face turn.

AJ freaks out in the back and throws a lot of chairs. Langston grabs her to calm her down and they look at each other but he kisses her on the forehead.

### Seth Rollins/Roman Reigns vs. Usos

Non-title. The Usos charge the ring and the fight is on before the bell. Ambrose comes in as well until Mark Henry comes out to clear the ring. The good guys stand tall and Henry is a face.

### Daniel Bryan vs. Wade Barrett

The place goes NUTS for Bryan. Barrett catches a cross body and puts Bryan stomach first on the top rope for some forearm to the back. A slingshot into a backbreaker gets two and it's off to a bow and arrow submission. Bryan fires off kicks in the corner and backflips over Barrett, only to be caught in the Winds of Change which are countered into a crucifix into the YES Lock for the submission at 1:54.

Maddox runs into Vickie in the back and Vickie slaps him in the face for taking her job.

Time for MizTV with guest Paul Heyman. Heyman says he doesn't want to answer any of Miz's questions but is cut off by a CM Punk chant. The fans don't realize how hard this is for Heyman because he still loves Punk. He advises Punk to stay down and leave the WWE Universe behind because if he comes back Brock Lesnar will take his head off. Miz doesn't believe a thing Heyman is saying because he swore on the life of his children and still lied. He walks out but Heyman introduces Axel as the man who beat Miz at MITB.

### Intercontinental Title: Curtis Axel vs. Chris Jericho

Axel takes over with a headlock to start but Jericho dropkicks him down. A top rope elbow to the jaw gets two for Jericho but Axel punches him back down. Axel cranks on an armbar but gets caught in a northern lights suplex for two. Jericho tries to jump over the champion in the corner but gets clotheslined in the back of the head for two instead. The Codebreaker is countered into a spinebuster for two but Jericho sends him into the corner as we take a break.

Back with Jericho fighting out of a chinlock but going shoulder first into the post to stop his comeback. Axel misses a middle rope elbow and Jericho gets two off a quick enziguri to make Heyman even more nervous. Axel comes back with the McGillicutter for two but misses a dropkick, allowing the Lionsault to get two. Axel blocks the top rope ax handle into a PerfectPlex but Jericho counters into a Walls attempt.

Heyman distracts Jericho into dropping the hold but the second attempt has Axel in a lot of trouble. Curtis hangs on for a very long time and finally crawls over to the ropes. He goes to the floor but gets caught by a suicide dive from the Canadian. As they head back in though Heyman shouts at Jericho, allowing Axel to hit the neckbreaker/cutter for the pin at 9:15 shown of 12:00.

**Rating:** C. This was a decent back and forth match but Jericho going after the Intercontinental Title is hard to get into anymore. Axel still isn't where they want him to be but he's not a total disaster either. This was a fine enough way to kill fifteen minutes and the fans got into the Walls so there isn't much to complain about here.

Post match Ryback comes out and destroys Jericho with a Shell Shock. This is Jericho's last appearance for awhile as he's going to be on tour with Fozzy.

Here's Damien Sandow to talk about forgiveness with quotes from Gandhi. He did NOT screw Cody in the Money in the Bank match, which makes him wonder why Cody attacked him on Raw. We get a clip from Raw but Sandow says he isn't going to hold this against Cody. That would make him a mouth breathing knuckle dragging halfwit like the audience. He invites Cody out here to talk through this because they're still best friends.

Cody gets in the ring but Sandow says there's no explanation required because he's forgiven. Damien did prevent Cody from being Mr. Money in the Bank but Sandow has an olive branch for him: Cody can be the keeper of the case until Sandow is ready to cash it in. Cody has earned this but

he hits Sandow in the head with the case, sending Damien running off. Rhodes throws the case at him and the fans seem quite pleased.

### Rob Van Dam vs. Darren Young

Darren takes him down with an armdrag worth millions of dollars. Van Dam hits his step over kick and a standing moonsault for two, sending Young out to the floor. Back in and Titus distracts RVD's Rolling Thunder attempt, allowing Young to take over for a bit. Van Dam comes back with a kick to the head and a springboard spinning cross body for two. A springboard kick to the face puts Young down and after kicking Titus to the floor, Van Dam hits the Five Star for the pin at 3:16.

**Rating:** D+. Not much to see here again but Van Dam getting another win makes sense. Also it's nice to see people like the Players being used to put over bigger stars. A loss to a former world champion doesn't hurt their credibility at all so why not do it more often? I still don't see the appeal of Young but Titus at least has charisma.

The Raw ReBound focuses about the Wyatt Family.

Vickie offers to bury the hatchet with Teddy but she's just kidding and has Teddy escorted out by security.

Big Show returns on Raw.

### Alberto Del Rio vs. Randy Orton

Non-title again. Orton rains down punches in the corner to start but Del Rio counters into the armbreaker over the ropes. He stomps away on Orton and chokes on the ropes for a few seconds. Orton bails to the floor to hold his arm but he drops Del Rio ribs first onto the barricade. Alberto whips him into the steps but Orton dropkicks Del Rio out of the air back inside. He loads up the powerslam but Del Rio holds the ropes to send

Orton to the mat.

The armbreaker doesn't go on full as Orton is in the ropes and Del Rio is getting frustrated. A backbreaker gets two on the champion but the Elevated DDT is countered by an enziguru for two. Del Rio kicks him in the shoulder and loads up an RKO of his own, only to be countered into the powerslam for two. The Elevated DDT connects but the RKO is countered into a Backstabber for two. Not that it matters as Orton rolls out of the armbreaker, ducks the superkick and hits the RKO for the pin at 8:50.

**Rating:** C. Del Rio is officially a jobber to the stars. There was almost no chance he was going to beat Orton here and he lost clean to the RKO after two straight wins where he escaped through interference. The match was ok but nothing more than that as the ending was barely in doubt at all. Both guys were their usual selves here and didn't seem all that interested in trying.

**Overall Rating:** D+. The show was just there this week with some ok matches but nothing we haven't seen before. This is the kind of show that made Smackdown very boring for a long time and I really hope that doesn't become the standard again. Vickie being GM again made me roll my eyes as this is her fourth stint as full time boss of a show. That sums up this episode: we've seen all this before.

### Results

Dolph Ziggler b. Jack Swagger – Zig Zag

Daniel Bryan b. Wade Barrett – YES Lock

Curtis Axel b. Chris Jericho – Neckbreaker into a cutter

Rob Van Dam b. Darren Young – Five Star Frog Splash

Randy Orton b. Alberto Del Rio – RKO

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# Money in the Bank 2013: Can I Get My Money Back?

## Money in the Bank 2013

Date: July 14, 2013

Location: Wells Fargo Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

This is one of the funnest shows of the year more often than not so I have high hopes for tonight. The main events are of course the two ladder matches along with Henry challenging Cena for the Raw Title. This is one of those shows where you can just turn your brain off and enjoy some wild action so hopefully things are as fun as they have the potential to be. Let's get to it.

## Pre-Show: Tag Titles: Usos vs. Roman Reigns/Seth Rollins

Shield is defending. Rollins starts with Jey with the Uso quickly getting two off a backslide. Off to Reigns who gets chopped down and caught with a double suplex for two. The fans are already chanting for RVD. A double spinebuster gets two for Jey as this is one sided so far. Seth pulls Roman out of the way of a superkick as we take a break during the pre-show. Back with the Usos still in control but Rollins avoids a charge and brings in Reigns to take over.

A clothesline sends Jey off the apron and out to the floor as Shield starts making fast tags. Rollins kicks Jey in the back for two and puts

on a chinlock. Jey keeps fighting back but can't make the hot tag. Seth is sent to the floor and Reigns is kicked away but Rollins dives to break up the hot tag. Jey is knocked tot he floor for a hard clothesline from Reigns. We take ANOTHER break and come back with Jimmy diving over the top to take out the Shield. Not that we got to see the hot tag or anything, but we needed a trailer for Dead Man Down right?

Jimmy gets a VERY close two off a high cross body and the Samoan drop gets two on Rollins. Seth comes back and loads up a superplex on Jey but the other two come in to make it a Tower of Doom with Jimmy taking the worst of it. Jimmy superkicks Rollins down and hits the Superfly Splash but Reigns makes a last second save. The fans correctly think this is awesome. Rollins counters a middle rope Samoan drop into an across the ring buckle bomb, setting up the Reigns' spear for the pin to retain at 14:50.

**Rating:** B. WOW this was better than I was expecting. The near falls in this were off the charts and the Usos actually had me believing they were going to win. The Shield has insane chemistry out there and the Usos proved that they can hang with them move for move. Excellent stuff here and by far the best pre-show match they've ever had.

The opening video is of course about money with the briefcases being loaded into an armored car. Cena and Henry get a generic video package as well.

Fandango vs. Cody Rhodes vs. Damien Sandow vs. Jack Swagger vs. Antonio Cesaro vs. Dean Ambrose vs. Wade Barrett

Colter does his usual anti foreigners rant about being in one of the founding cities of America. "Maybe Betsy Ross should have put a taco and a burrito on the flag." It's a huge brawl to start and I'm not going to be able to keep up with most of the action in the ladder matches tonight. The two teams lay everyone else out and bring in a ladder each. Cesaro hits the gutwrench suplex to send Cody into the ladder before shouting WE



THE PEOPLE. The Scholars take Cesaro the floor but Ambrose stops Swagger from climbing.

Ambrose, the crowd favorite, is left alone in the ring but Barrett makes the save. Barrett kicks Ambrose in the face, knocking the ladder on top of him in the process. Fandango kicks the ladder into Barrett's face and hits a slingshot legdrop onto the ladder onto Barrett. Sandow makes the save as Dean knocks Rhodes off the top rope with another ladder. Fandango is sent face first into the ladder and suplexed onto the one in the corner for good measure. Cesaro makes a climb but has to stop Ambrose with a hanging chinlock off the ladder.

Cody makes the save and hits a Samoa Joe MuscleBuster to send Cesaro into a ladder. Barrett makes the save with a broken rung of a ladder in a new idea. He and Swagger go up now with Wade BLASTING him with the elbow to knock Swagger off. Fandango makes the save but Ambrose catches him with the bulldog driver off the bottom rung. Dean does the windmill spot with the ladder on his head but the Real Americans grab either end to break it up. They lift Ambrose in the air to choke him out but Ambrose skins the cat in mid air in an AWESOME spot. The Americans dump him to the floor but there's no ladder left.

Cesaro gets on Swagger's shoulders but Cody hits a springboard dropkick to take them both out. Cross Rhodes lays out Fandango and Barrett but he shouts instead of getting a ladder. He finally gets the big ladder but is met on top by Ambrose for a slugout. Cody rams him face first into the ladder over and over but Rollins and Reigns come out to break it up.

They run interference of everyone else in the match but here are the Usos to take the tag champions out. Cesaro and Swagger get in on the brawl as well but Ambrose is going up. Rhodes makes the save and shoves the ladder over, sending Ambrose onto everyone else. Cody is all alone but Sandow comes in out of nowhere to steal the case at 16:40.

**Rating:** B. This was solid but it was a step below a lot of these matches.

The Ambrose and Shield stuff was great but I'm really not feeling the winner. Sandow hasn't won a thing of note in like a year but he wins one match and we're supposed to buy him as a main event level guy now? It doesn't work that way but WWE can't get that through their thick heads. Fans don't forget wins and losses like the writers do.

Here's Brad Maddox with something to say. He's glad to be the GM and even though he can't replace Vickie ("I don't look good in high heels") he's put Vickie on the expert panel. She gets a spotlight followed by a video tribute to her on the Titantron. It's a lot of her embarrassing moments followed by a standing boo for her. This is finally broken up by the start of the next match.

#### Intercontinental Title: The Miz vs. Curtis Axel

Axel is defending. Miz gets a quick cover off a shoulder block but Axel takes him into the corner for control. Curtis is sent to the floor and caught by a baseball slide before Miz sends him back inside. Miz stares Heyman down, claps his hands and falls down. The referee looks at Heyman and ejects him for allegedly hitting Miz. Smart move there. Axel takes over with a dropkick but the fans are MUCH quieter now. The Hennig necksnap gets two and we hit an armbar.

Back up and Miz avoids a charge in the corner but the fans do not care at all. A big boot puts Axel down and the corner clothesline sets up the top rope ax handle for two. Axel comes back with a PerfectPlex for two but Miz hits his one kick to the leg and puts on the Figure Four. Curtis reverses but gets turned over again, only to be right in the ropes for the break. Axel bails to the floor for a second before coming back in for his neckbreaker into a cutter for the pin to retain at 9:20.

**Rating:** D+. The match wasn't bad but it had no heat at all. People just don't care about Miz at all and the Figure Four is a big reason why. It's just a horrible move for him and comes off like a lame Ric Flair tribute, which is pretty much what it is. Nothing to see here but it was a way to

let the fans breathe a bit after the big match.

Summerslam ad, which is basically All Grown Up from Wrestlemania a few years ago.

### Divas Title: Kaitlyn vs. AJ Lee

AJ is defending and this has been a very well built feud. They used to be friends but Kaitlyn went after the title instead of helping AJ when she was having relationship issues, so AJ turned on her and has taken everything Kaitlyn cares about. Kaitlyn has a bad elbow coming in and is with Layla here. Kaitlyn gets a quick two off a gutbuster but is sent into the post on the floor. AJ works on the arm with a bridging armbar (almost a one arm Cattle Mutilation) before hooking a crossface chickenwing of all things.

Back up and Kaitlyn fires off a dropkick and a big shoulder followed by the reverse DDT for two. AJ slaps her in the face so Kaitlyn takes her head off with a clothesline. Kaitlyn knocks her off the apron but Langston catches her in midair. The spear connects back inside but Kaitlyn hurts her elbow again. AJ hooks the Black Widow submission out of nowhere and Kaitlyn taps at 7:03.

**Rating:** C. Very basic match here but it worked well enough. Kaitlyn looked good with the power stuff (and the tight outfit) while AJ needed to be a bit more evil. I doubt this is over yet because that's how WWE works, but the matches and story have been WAY better than anyone expected them to be.

The expert panel (Big Show, Kofi Kingston and Vickie) talk about the show so far.

### Chris Jericho vs. Ryback

The fans go back and forth from Jericho to Goldberg chants. Ryback bails to the floor because he's a coward now and Jericho takes him down with a baseball slide. Back in and Jericho hits a forearm to the back of the head but Ryback drills him with a shoulder. Jericho goes after the formerly bad leg but gets his neck snapped across the top rope for two. We hit the chinlock before Ryback gets two off a middle rope splash. Jericho is punched off the apron and lands between the two announce tables.

Back to the chinlock but Jericho escapes into a northern lights suplex and a failed Walls attempt. A top rope ax handle is caught in a Ryback belly to belly overhead suplex. The Meathook puts Jericho down and the Codebreaker is countered into a kind of spinebuster. A powerbomb gets two on Jericho but he comes back with an enziguri for two.

Ryback rolls to the apron and gets caught in a Codebreaker but he's back in at nine. A high cross gets two for the Canadian but he walks into a gorilla press. Ryback drops him down into a fireman's carry but Jericho counters into a DDT for two. Jericho misses the Lionsault and Ryback grabs a quick rollup for the pin at 10:20.

**Rating:** D+. The match wasn't terrible but man alive it's pathetic what they've done to Ryback. They took everything good and interesting about him and turned it completely around to make sure the fans didn't care about him at all. This was also the first match he's won on PPV since last year's MITB, yet WWE still wonders why no one cares about him.

Video on the opening of the WWE Performance Center.

We recap Ziggler vs. Del Rio. Ziggler won the world title through his MITB case the night after Wrestlemania then got injured on Smackdown. Del Rio went after Ziggler's head to win the title at Payback so tonight it's about revenge and the title for Dolph.

Smackdown World Title: Dolph Ziggler vs. Alberto Del Rio

Ziggler gets an AMAZING pop. Feeling out process to start until Ziggler gets two off a dropkick. Ten straight elbow drops (with the fans counting along) have Del Rio in trouble and he falls out to the floor. Back in and Del Rio scores with a running enziguri before sending Ziggler hard into the barricade. We hit the chinlock as the fans are nearly comatose for Del Rio. Can you blame them? There's NOTHING interesting about him at all. Ziggler misses a splash in the corner and Del Rio does that stupid smile of his.

Del Rio pounds on the back but misses a charge, sending him out to the floor. He tries to come in off the top but gets caught in a top rope X Factor for two. A Ziggler neckbreaker gets two and a Del Rio German suplex gets the same. The corner enziguri misses and Ziggler gets a close two off the Fameasser. It's amazing how much the crowd is into Ziggler. Del Rio gets two off a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker but Ziggler gets the same by dropkicking Del Rio off the top.

Cue AJ to skip around the ring before Ziggler counters another tilt-a-whirl into a jumping DDT for two. Ziggler tells AJ to leave but the distraction allows Alberto to crotch him on the top. A reverse superplex gets two on Dolph and the low superkick gets the same. Del Rio lowers his knee pad to reveal the knee brace but Ziggler avoids the shot....and AJ hits Del Rio with the Divas Title for the DQ at 14:27.

**Rating:** C+. This was getting good until the stupid ending. I have no idea what WWE's obsession is with dragging out stories for as long as they can anymore but they need to get over it. This feud isn't doing anything for anyone and it just keeps going. Either split up AJ and give Dolph the title or move on to something else. The match was good though.

Dolph yells at AJ post match and walks away, making Ziggler look like the jerk in the whole thing.

Video on WWE supporting the military.

Recap of Henry vs. Cena with Henry faking retirement and laying Cena out. He said the WWE Championship is the only thing he's never won and he wants that one big run with the title. One thing WWE has done right in the last few years is make the WWE Championship seem like a MUCH bigger deal.

### Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Mark Henry

Cena is of course booed out of the building. The champion charges at Henry and bounces off of him like a wall. Henry shoves him into the corner and a running splash gets two. Cena is front suplexed onto the steps for two as this is one sided so far. The fans chant Sexual Chocolate because that's what smark crowds do for a Henry match as Mark drops a leg on the back of Cena's neck. Henry throws Cena down and then out to the floor as the domination continues.

Back in and Henry stands around but misses a charge in the corner. Cena can't slam him so Henry cranks on the neck a bit. John gets back up and hits the shoulder blocks followed by the Shuffle but Cena still can't hit the AA. Henry falls on top for two but Cena counters a slam into most of a spinning DDT. Cena FINALLY hits the AA but it's only good for two. The high cross is caught in a World's Strongest Slam for two so Henry pulls the turnbuckle pad off. He also brings in a chair but as the referee is dealing with that, Henry pulls off another buckle.

Cena counters a whip into the buckle and hooks the STF but Mark easily gets to the rope. Henry gets two off a low blow but another World's Strongest Slam is countered into the STF with Cena dragging Henry back to the middle of the ring. Henry taps out to retain Cena's title at 14:40.

**Rating:** C. This was exactly what you would expect from this match. Henry came off like a monster of the month for the entirety of the buildup and that's exactly what he was here. Nothing in this match made me care about it because no one believed Cena was in any real danger. It wasn't horrible or anything but it came and went and nothing more.

We hear from the expert panel who have nothing interesting to say.

Video on the Wyatts attacking Kane.

CM Punk vs. Rob Van Dam vs. Christian vs. Sheamus vs. Daniel Bryan vs. Randy Orton

RVD, Bryan and Punk get good reactions but the fans aren't impressed with the others. Everyone goes after RVD to start and knock him to the floor. The remaining four go after Sheamus before pairing off themselves. We're quickly down to Bryan vs. Punk and the fans go nuts in a hurry. Van Dam is knocked off the apron and into a ladder as the two stars go at it. Bryan almost botches the backflip but counters the GTS into a YES Lock attempt, only to have everyone not named RVD make the save with a ladder.

Van Dam is back in now to clean house and pose a bit. Some baseball slides drop Punk and Sheamus before Rob drops Christian onto a ladder. Rolling Thunder onto Bryan onto the ladder takes Daniel out but it's Orton sending Van Dam to the floor. Rob kicks him down and loads up the Five Star onto Orton onto the ladder but Christian breaks it up with a short ladder. Christian loses a fight to Sheamus over a full sized ladder but Van Dam breaks up the pale one's climb with Sheamus landing on the ladder on the way down.

Sheamus is up almost immediately and rams various people into the barricade before bridging a ladder between the apron and the announce table. Bryan escapes a powerbomb through the ladder and hits a running knee to the face from the apron. Punk is loading up a ladder but Orton makes the save. Another ladder is brought in and all six climb up on two ladders with the briefcase being knocked away. All six fall down and Orton is holding his knee.

It's Sheamus on his feet first and cleaning house before going up, only to be caught by Bryan. We get the ten forearms on the top of the ladder but Punk stops Sheamus from pulling down the case. Sheamus and Punk slug

it out in the corner but Punk hits the running knee to take him down, followed by riding the ladder down onto his back. Orton comes back in and suplexes Punk into the ladder followed by the Elevated DDT.

Christian comes back in and spears Randy down but Van Dam knocks him off the ladder. The fans of course want tables as Christian goes up again. Van Dam is cut on the forehead. They both go up but Van Dam jumps to another ladder as Christian falls. The splash off the top of the ladder crushes Christian but Sheamus shoves Rob off the ladder. Bryan is back in to kick both of them before going into his usual insane rush.

He throws Sheamus THROUGH a ladder and goes up top....but Curtis Axel of all people comes out with a chair to beat him down. He lays Bryan out with his finisher on the floor but walks into a GTS. Heyman comes out to yell at Axel because he wants Punk to win. CM starts a very slow climb while holding his neck....and Heyman of course screws him by ramming another ladder into him. Punk is busted open BAD and here's Van Dam going up the ladder, only to have Orton make the save with an RKO. Orton pulls down the case to win at 26:31.

**Rating:** B-. Well that happened. Seriously that's about all there is to it. Everyone was about the same but the winner wasn't terribly obvious for most of the match. It wasn't bad or anything but you expect more when you have this level of talent in the match. At the end of the day though there was no hatred between these guys and that makes for a duller match. The Heyman stuff was pretty obvious but it sets up Lesnar vs. Punk at Summerslam.

**Overall Rating:** C. This show wasn't terrible but aside from maybe the ladder matches, there's nothing interesting on here at all. Everything felt like it was just there to fill in a spot on the card which isn't what you expect from a show like this. It's not a horrible show but there's nothing worth going out of your way to see here. Believe it or not, Payback blew the doors off this show.



## Results

Shield b. Usos – Spear to Jimmy

Damien Sandow b. Cody Rhodes, Antonio Cesaro, Jack Swagger, Fandango, Dean Ambrose and Wade Barrett – Sandow pulled down the briefcase

AJ Lee b. Kaitlyn – Black Widow

Ryback b. Chris Jericho – Rollup

Alberto Del Rio b. Dolph Ziggler via DQ when AJ Lee interefered

John Cena b. Mark Henry – STF

Randy Orton b. Rob Van Dam, Sheamus, CM Punk, Christian and Daniel Bryan – Orton pulled down the briefcase

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## **Smackdown MITB Winner**

It's not who you would think. Sandow won. This falls under the "let's have them lose every match for months but give them one win and expect people to care" category.

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# Smackdown Money In The Bank Match

Why do so many people think this match isn't happening? You need seven people for the match right? Here are some options:

Rhodes

Sandow

Ambrose

Sin Cara

Rey Mysterio

Khali

Cesaro

Langston

Big Show

Fandango

Miz

Barrett

Axel

R-Truth

There are a TON of people you could throw in there. Why do so many people think it's not happening?

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# Smackdown – May 10, 2013: Careful Ryback. You Might Be Getting Interesting.

## Smackdown

Date: May 10, 2013

Location: PNC Arena, Raleigh, North Carolina

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Josh Mathews

With only two Smackdowns left until Extreme Rules, the biggest question is obvious: will more furniture be destroyed here tonight? Oh wait this is Smackdown, meaning Lesnar and HHH will never appear here. Anyway tonight we're likely to get more build up towards the triple threat, meaning some combination of the people are likely to fight each other so that one can look weaker than another. Let's get to it.

We open with the voiceover and a video on the triple threat stuff from Raw, with Swagger destroying Ziggler and Del Rio with the ladder. It's Swagger vs. Langston tonight, as well as Ambrose vs. Bryan.

Jericho is in the ring for the Highlight Reel. His guest tonight is Ryback so we see some clips from Raw with Ryback beating Cena down. Jericho says he sees where Ryback is coming from but Ryback doesn't really care. It's Jericho's show though so he gets to talk about what he wants to. Jericho knows about all the times Shield has beaten Ryback down and all the times he's lost the WWE Championship. He says he's been WWE Champion six times so he understands what Ryback is going through. That's a bit confusing as he only held that title once. He's held six world titles but only one WWE Title.

Anyway Jericho wants to know what Ryback's Rules are. Jericho has gone through a period with people gunning for him because he had a chip on his shoulder the size of the big show. Ryback doesn't care so Jericho talks about how the Jericholics are judging Ryback. The fans understand the difference between beating Rock and Austin in one night and beating a one legged Cena in one night.

Jericho tells Ryback to be careful what he wishes for, because no one will respect him if he wins the title. Ryback says Jericho talks to much and threatens to drop him right now. Jericho says he doesn't think Ryback will do a thing, so here's Teddy to make this the main event. Does Booker do anything on Smackdown anymore? Ryback lays out Jericho with a right hand.

Mark Henry is going to try to pull two tractor trailers tonight to break a world record.

### Kofi Kingston vs. Cody Rhodes

Non-title of course. Cody trips him down but gets caught in a flip over armdrag as Kofi speeds things up. Rhodes gets in an elbow to the face and hits a knee to Kofi's thigh followed by the front suplex for two. Off to an armbars on the champion but Kofi easily escapes and chops Cody down. A rollup gets two on Rhodes but he rolls through Kofi's spinning crossbody for two. Both finishers miss but as Cody loads up the Disaster Kick he jumps into Trouble in Paradise for the pin at 3:28.

**Rating:** C. This was fine given the time constraints. I'm not wild on Cody losing again but he's way past the point of being a threat on Smackdown. Kofi is still his same old self, having decent to good matches but never rising above the midcard at all. In other words, this was exactly what you would expect from these two.

We look at Lesnar destroying HHH's office on Raw. Calling it frightening and a workplace invasion over and over again doesn't make it suck any

less than it already did. I don't know about you, but I have a problem getting upset that Lesnar destroyed a bunch of furniture and a TV that the company probably paid for. Oh wait he also broke a replica belt and some photos. How ever will HHH replace those things?

Colter talks about how Swagger is going to climb the ladder like an AMERICAN, one step at a time.

### Big E. Langston vs. Jack Swagger

Del Rio is on commentary. Before the match, he slides in a ladder but Swagger kicks Dolph in the face before he can do anything with it. Langston is knocked to the floor but Ziggler dropkicks the ladder into Swagger's face. Del Rio comes in and hits the low superkick to Dolph's face and rams the ladder into his head. Swagger has the ladder thrown at him and Del Rio stands tall atop the ladder. Somewhere in there Ziggler got a concussion and as of this writing, his status is still in doubt for the PPV. No match of course.

### Dean Ambrose vs. Daniel Bryan

They slug it out in the corner to start until Bryan hits a running knee to the ribs to take over. Some hard kicks to the back have Ambrose in trouble but he comes back by sending Bryan face first into the buckle. Bryan moonsaults out of the corner and hits a clothesline to set up kicks to Ambrose's chest. Dean rolls to the floor and there's the big suicide dive to take both guys out.

We take a break and come back with Ambrose dropping elbows on Bryan before putting on a cross arm choke. Ambrose transitions into a nerve hold and neck crank, giving him the rest hold trifecta. Bryan fights up but gets kneed in the ribs to stop his comeback cold. A running dropkick gets two for Dean and it's back to the chinlock. Back up and Ambrose misses a charge in the corner, slamming his shoulder into the post.

Bryan fires off the kicks in the corner before putting Dean in the Tree of Woe for even more kicks. A running dropkick to Ambrose's ribs gets two but he comes back with a quick backslide for two. Bryan kicks Dean down again and goes up top for the headbutt, only to be distracted by Shield. The delay makes him switch over to a missile dropkick for two instead.

Dean comes back with a forward belly to back suplex (he picked Bryan up for a belly to back and snapped him forward onto the mat instead) for two. Ambrose is starting to snap and fires off knees to Bryan's face. Bryan grabs the NO Lock out of nowhere but Reigns comes in for the save while the referee is watching Kane and Rollins fight. Dean loads up the bulldog driver but Kofi Kingston runs in for the DQ at 9:21 shown of 12:51.

**Rating:** B-. Good match here as Ambrose continues to look good in the ring. I like the Kofi run in as it's pretty clearly setting up Ambrose challenging him for the US Title either at Extreme Rules or soon thereafter. The match here worked well as both guys got to look strong and the ending saves both guys from losing while also setting up future stuff. That's how I like my run in finishes: efficient.

Shield is cleared out post match.

We recap the Highlight Reel, because we can't remember something that happened 50 minutes ago.

We see a clip from earlier today with Mark Henry attached to a semi truck and pulling it down the road. Apparently that's a warmup and next he'll pull TWO of them, which combine to weigh over 110,000lbs.

Clip from Raw of Sheamus getting taken down by Henry and whipped with a belt. The photos of the welts on his body are rather disturbing. The match at Extreme Rules is a strap match, where you have to touch all four buckles.

We go live to the parking lot where Henry is attached to two semi trucks. Before he starts he promises to destroy Sheamus at the PPV. Henry can't pull it at first but after Striker asks him some annoying questions, Henry gets all fired up and finally pulls them forward. That's rather impressive looking, whether it was rigged or not. Henry is spent...and Sheamus doesn't appear. That's kind of surprising.

The Raw ReBounce recounts all of the Ryback/Cena stuff from Raw.

Randy Orton looks at a clip of Big Show knocking him out on Monday. He says that vouching for Big Show got him knocked out twice, which has only made him more venomous.

### Big Show vs. Tensai

Tensai pounds away at Big Show and knocks him into the corner with right hands. Not that it matters as Show hits a single right hand and wins in 50 seconds.

Brodus gets speared down by Big Show but before Show can load up the WMD, Orton runs in with an RKO for the giant.

AJ runs into Kaitlyn as she gets another text from her secret admirer. Kaitlyn suggests that it's Dolph and they get into a catty argument until Natalya comes up to scare AJ off. Khali pops up in a Mysterio mask which is his undercover attire. He takes off the mask to reveal that it's actually not Mysterio before leaving. Kaitlyn says the mask isn't really needed and he just needs to keep his ears open. Natalya tells Khali he doesn't have to dress like Rhodes, as he now has a mustache on.

### Chris Jericho vs. Ryback

Ryback shoves him into the corner to start but gets caught by a dropkick to put him down. Jericho is thrown to the floor as Ryback shrugs off

whatever Chris throws at him. Back in and Ryback pounds Jericho down as the fans chant for the Canadian. Off to a chinlock by Ryback but Jericho fights up and elbows Ryback to the apron for the springboard dropkick. Ryback starts getting fired up but that might be too interesting for a heel so he stops to think instead as we take a break.

Back with Ryback stomping on Jericho in the corner before working over the leg a little bit. Now it's off to a body vice as Ryback can't seem to pick a body part. Jericho fights up but gets caught in a big spinebuster for two as JBL gets annoyed with Josh being an idiot on commentary. Josh: "Ryback will be in the ring with John Cena in ten days." JBL: "WELL DUH!" Off to a neck crank on Jericho as Ryback mocks the fans chanting for him. Back up and Jericho is sent over the top, only to hold on and go up top for an ax handle to the head.

Ryback slams him down again but misses a splash, allowing Jericho to hit a Lionsault to Ryback's back for two. As usual, the announcers are surprised that the Lionsault only got two. The Codebreaker is countered into another spinebuster and there's a jackknife powerbomb to keep the Canadian down. Someone needs to use the powerbomb as a finisher again. It's been far too long. Josh is totally behind Ryback in this match and criticizes Cole for hanging on to Cena, complete with comparing Cole's love of Cena to JR's love of Austin. That's very odd to hear coming from Matthews.

Jericho makes a quick comeback and tries the Walls but Ryback is just too strong. He kicks Jericho away before catching a cross body in a fallaway slam for no cover. The Meathook connects but Chris rolls through Shell Shock into the Walls of Jericho but Ryback easily gets the ropes. Now the Codebreaker hits but Ryback falls out to the floor. Jericho follows him out but gets thrown into the barricade and crotched against the post....for a DQ at 11:00 shown of 14:30.

**Rating:** C+. Not bad here but the ending was kind of lame. I guess the idea was to show that Ryback will be able to do whatever he wants to do



at the PPV, but it really fell flat here. Instead the ending could have been beating Jericho down and counting to ten, but again that might make Ryback look too intense and he might be effective as a heel. Also what was with Josh being a Ryback fanboy here?

Post match Ryback knocks Jericho over the announce table to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C-. This wasn't a bad show but it felt like nothing happened at all. There were four matches and two of them didn't even make it to three and a half minutes. The Henry thing, which impressive, didn't do much for anyone, Ryback continues to flounder as a heel because everything that got him over as a face has been taken away because it might make him too interesting. The world title stuff is the same schtick we've seen them do for months now. The show definitely isn't bad but it continues to have Smackdown's main problem: there's no need for it to exist.

## Results

Kofi Kingston b. Cody Rhodes – Trouble in Paradise

Dean Ambrose b. Daniel Bryan via DQ when Kofi Kingston interfered

Big Show b. Tensai – WMD

Chris Jericho b. Ryback via DQ when Ryback sent Jericho into the post

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# WWE Needs To Go Back To Kindergarten

Tonight on Raw, we saw a clip of Swagger attacking Del Rio's left knee. Then for Del Rio's match his right knee was taped, because WWE can't remember left and right.

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## WWE Hall of Fame: Class of 2007

It may be weaker at the top but it's very strong throughout.

### Dusty Rhodes

While not much in the WWE, he was HUGE elsewhere and one of the most influential people in the history of wrestling. If you want to talk about someone who is a lifer in wrestling, Rhodes is a good place to start. He debuted 45 years ago and is still active in wrestling today. Think about that for a minute. That's a LONG time to do anything, let alone be in wrestling. Rhodes is a yes, and if you're not familiar with some of his stuff from the 70s, look it up. It's far different than what he's most famous for.

### Curt Hennig

Hennig is one of those guys where the more I see of him, the more I'm impressed by him. He had nearly unlimited talent and one of the best gimmicks in wrestling history. Hennig came as close to living up to the name Mr. Perfect as you could get

and the various sports vignettes he had were some of the best promos ever. He never won the WCW or WWF World Title but he had a year long reign as AWA World Champion which is still solid enough to count for something. This is another easy yes.

### **Jerry Lawler**

Lawler is another guy that is legendary in the indies and one in particular, but he's equally if not even more famous for being the co-voice of Monday Night Raw and therefore the WWF as a whole. Lawler has been doing commentary for about twenty years now as well as still wrestling occasionally. He's never won a title in the WWE but he's never needed to. Lawler has long since been at the level where his reputation is safe no matter what he does. Lawler is another yes and one of the few people who would make it into both the WWE Hall of Fame and any other wrestling Hall of Fame as well.

### **Nick Bockwinkel**

This is another name that isn't that well known by a lot of young fans but he certainly should be. Bockwinkel was the father of the smart heel, as he was very crafty but also very skilled in the ring. Before him, most heels were monsters that a hero would have to vanquish. Bockwinkel came along and changed the entire idea, showing that heels could win with their minds instead of brute force. He's very similar to Ted DiBiase in that regard, which makes him a very influential man indeed. He held the AWA World Title for over eight years combined and the tag titles for over three years. That alone makes him an easy yes vote.

## **Mr. Fuji**

I love Mr. Fuji! (Five points if you get that reference) This one might surprise you. Fuji was a pretty lame manager, but he was a very accomplished tag wrestler. He was a five time WWF Tag Team Champion and holds the record for most days spent as a tag team champion. He held a tag title for 932 days. Billy Gunn is second at 916 and had twice as many reigns. The next place down is over seven months shorter. Fuji managed Demolition during a large portion of their record tag title run and also managed Yokozuna to the WWF Title. On top of all that, he was in FUJI FREAKING VICE (look that up if you want some old school hilarity). I was thinking no at first but a little research says he belongs in the Hall of Fame.

## **Jim Ross**

If Jerry Lawler is in, Jim Ross has to be in too. He's been the voice of the WWE for what seems like ever now and he continues to be a great commentator. His acting isn't exactly top notch half the time and he can be more than a little annoying, but the best way I can sum up JR is this: he and Lawler on commentary just feels right. Ross was also a force behind the scenes as he was VP of talent relations for a long time. He's a jack of all trades in wrestling and again I have no problem with him being inducted.

## **The Sheik**

Not the Iron Sheik but just the Sheik. This is a guy you probably haven't heard of but if you're a fan of ECW or Mick Foley or Terry Funk, you need to research this guy. He's arguably the father of hardcore wrestling in the US and was legendary in his main territory of Detroit. Sheik also

trained Raven and Sabu, which may or may not be a good thing in your eyes. As for being in the Hall of Fame, this is more of a personal issue but I'm saying no. Hardcore wrestling has done more to hurt wrestling than anything else and Sheik introduced the style to the world. I'm saying no based on that alone.

### The Wild Samoans

This is the team that started the entire tradition in the wrestling world. From The Rock to Yokozuna to Rosey to Roman Reigns, it all started here. The Wild Samoans were a very successful tag team and won multiple tag titles over the years. Afa also has been a successful trainer and trained Mickey Rourke for the movie The Wrestler. This is another team that is a yes, although there are a few other teams I would put in over them.

This is one of the most stacked classes from top to bottom ever and probably the best one yet with no huge negatives.

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# **On This Day: February 15, 1985 – Mid Atlantic Championship Wrestling: WCW's Grandfather**

## Mid-Atlantic Championship Wrestling

Date: February 15, 1986

Location: WPCQ Studios, Charlotte, North Carolina

Commentators: Bob Caudle, Johnny Weaver

This is another territory that I've touched on before and we'll be taking another look at it here now. I only have one episode at the moment but if this goes well I'll see if I can find some more. This isn't the main WCW show but rather a territory still, although I'd bet pretty strongly that you'll see a lot of the same people. Let's get to it.

I'm a little sketchy on the time period because this show should be called World Championship Wrestling. This doesn't look like the Atlanta studios though. The opening sequence says Mid-Atlantic too.

Upon further investigation (and by that I mean I did the World Championship Wrestling show from this date already), this is the B show and would be the forerunner to WCW Pro. I think I've got this now.

Caudle says we have new world tag champions but with him are the former champions, the Rock N Roll Express. They say they're coming for Cornette and their titles.

#### Manny Fernandez vs. Mike Semani

No idea if I spelled that last name right. Manny takes him down immediately and does kind of a reverse leapfrog out of the corner and the Flying Burrito (that's the real name. It's a flying forearm) gets the pin.

Ron Bass says he thinks he's stronger than Barbarian. If he wins whatever challenge that follows, he'll get \$10,000.

Arn Anderson, the TV Champion, rants about how Dusty Rhodes has apparently been stealing money from him.

#### Rock N Roll Express vs. ???/???

Two unnamed jobbers here. Robert starts with the one in green

and after some armdrags it's time for Ricky. Double dropkick to the second one and we're done in 30 seconds. Replay shows that Robert's literally missed by 10 inches.

We get a clip of Nikita saving Ivan Koloff from getting pinned by Magnum's belly to belly. Baron Von Raschke came in for a 3-1 beatdown. Dusty tried to make the save but got beaten down as well. Baby Doll, Dusty's chick, tried to help also but it only got Dusty beaten down even worse until the Road Warriors and Rock N Roll made the save.

### Black Bart vs. Ron Rossi

Bart is a big evil cowboy and he wins with a middle rope double legdrop in about 20 seconds. This would be the case a lot.

### Midnight Express vs. Rocky King/Ben Alexander

This would be Condrey and Eaton. The Rock N Roll Express comes out to watch and the place erupts. The jobbers are Rocky King and Ben Alexander. Not that it matters but I try to be informative. Top rope splash by Eaton, 45 seconds. That's a long match for this show.

Buy the Starrcade 1985 video for just \$40!

House show ads. Anderson isn't worried about defending the title in a cage against Dusty.

Cornette says that the Midnights are ready for Rhodes and Magnum in South Carolina.

Dusty says he and Magnum want to take out the Russians.

Magnum says pretty much the same thing.

### Nelson Royal/Sam Houston vs. Jim Jeffers/Tony Zane

Everything breaks down to start and we finally get it does to Houston and Zane. Houston is Mid-Atlantic Heavyweight

Champion. Off to Royal who puts a knee in Zane's ribs and it's off to Jeffers. Royal dropkicks him down and it's off to Houston for some abuse. Royal takes him down with a headlock takeover and Houston hits an atomic drop. This is going a lot longer than I thought it would. Royal uses a spinning toe hold to get the submission.

**Rating:** D. This was long and not that good. When I say long I mean about four minutes but for this show that's a marathon. This could have been accomplished in about 45 seconds but I guess they had to fill in the time somehow. I don't remember much about Royal but Houston would go to WWF soon and wouldn't mean anything.

The Midnights say they're awesome and any team can come after them that wants to.

Paul Jones and Barbarian say they're sick of Jones being called a weasel. Bass' challenge is accepted.

#### Ron Bass vs. George South

Bass throws him around and easily breaks any hold that South tries. Claw ends this quick.

More house show ads. Baby Doll says Arn has no chance against Dusty in a Texas Death Match. For the South Carolina show, the Midnights need to be ready for America's Team.

Baby Doll is in the arena now and says Dusty is on a movie set in Arizona with Willie Nelson.

#### TV Title: Arn Anderson vs. Italian Stallion

The fans chant for Dusty which gets on Arn's nerves. A quick rollup gets two for Stallion and he grabs an armbar. Arn finally wakes up and pounds on his back before sending Stallion to the floor. Now Arn hooks the arm as is his custom. The fans keep chanting Dusty as Arn stays on the arm. Arn literally works on it with basically the same hold for five



minutes. He wraps it around the post a few times and Stallion makes his comeback. He charges into a hot shot and the gordbuster ends this.

**Rating:** D-. This is a good example of a match that is long but not good. The match runs almost ten minutes but like I said, almost seven or eight of that is a boring arm hold. When it doesn't even play into the finish, that doesn't make things interesting. It makes them long and uninteresting, which isn't good. Really boring match.

Houston, Royal and Fernandez say they've got Magnum's back against the Russians.

**Overall Rating:** D. I wasn't that interested in this. You can tell that it's the B show here as there's not much of interest going on here. The main focus is on the two tag team feuds and Flair is nowhere in sight. It's not the worst show I've ever seen but there's nothing of note going on here. I might take a look at one more episode of this but if it's not any better I won't be doing more than that.

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## Proper Nostalgia In Modern Times

Last night was a good example of this. Something that I've mentioned before is how nostalgic characters are supposed to be used today. The problem with having guys like Roddy and Dusty and Slaughter doing nostalgia appearances is that they've been nostalgic for such a long period of time that the impact is gone. They're stars of the 80s, not the 90s.

Last night on the other hand, we saw guys like Goldust, Godfather and the year before that we had the Outlaws in the Rumble. This is pure nostalgia for people that grew up in the 90s and are a bit bored by modern wrestling at the moment. Geez if you consider Rock much more than a nostalgia character at this point you're missing the point. WWE is FINALLY catering to the 90s fans whose wallets they built the Attitude Era on. It's fine to bring out the 80s guys every once in awhile, but mix it up with the 90s every now and then.

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## **NXT – December 26, 2012: Why I Love NXT**

### **NXT**

Date: December 26, 2012

Host: Tony Dawson

Back to Florida and we've got a new challenger for Rollins in the form of Corey Graves. That's by far the biggest thing that happened last week as the main event was Big Show squashing Bo Dallas for no apparent reason. The shows have been solid lately and hopefully they close out 2012 with another good one. Let's get to it.

Welcome Home...to a year in review show. Apparently this is going to be highlights from the season, so I'll be cutting and pasting a lot here. Note that the full matches likely won't be shown but I'll be posting the full review from the match.

From August 29:

## NXT Championship: Jinder Mahal vs. Seth Rollins

They have a ton of time for this. Fink may be fat and older now (he's only 62 so he's hardly ancient), but that voice is still perfect. Mahal won't shake Dusty's hand before the match. Rollins tries to take him to the mat to start but Mahal gets back up quickly. A dropkick puts Mahal down again and Rollins hits a hard chop. Mahal gets sent to the floor but he avoids a dive and sends Rollins face first into the apron. A suplex onto the ramp has Rollins in trouble and we head back in.

We take a break and come back with Rollins in even more trouble. Mahal stomps him down and hits a backbreaker to start setting up the camel clutch. Rollins gets choked against the ropes and the fans are behind Rollins now. He tries a comeback but gets kned in the face by Mahal to take him back down. The camel clutch is escaped so Mahal pounds him in the back again. An enziguri out of nowhere puts Mahal down and Rollins punches Jinder down.

Mahal goes up for another knee but Rollins knocks him off the top and out to the floor. Rollins hits a HUGE dive to the floor and both guys are down. Back in and Seth goes up again, only to get crotched and superplexed from the top. We take another break and come back with the two of them slugging it out. Mahal might have a bad knee but he pulls off a sitout slam for two. A full nelson slam is countered and Rollins goes to the apron.

Seth hits an enziguri to the head and a running knee for two. The near falls are getting closer and closer here. A running forearm in the corner staggers Mahal but he manages to drop Rollins face first into the buckle. The low superkick (I think he calls it Avada Kadavra, making Rollins awesome) gets two. Phoenix Splash (moonsault into a 450) misses and Mahal hits the full nelson slam for two. Rollins gets to the rope before the clutch can go on and Rollins rolls him up for two. Rollins comes back with the buckle bomb and the Blackout out of nowhere for the pin and the title at 14:24 shown of 21:24.

**Rating:** B. I'm still not wild on Rollins' in ring work but the fans are into him and he's not dull. He also needs a new finisher as the Blackout looks pretty forced to put it mildly. As for the match though, they did a great job of building both guys up as unbeatable and then having them go at it. The match was very good as far as making you wonder who was going to win and it turned into a good back and forth fight at the end. Not a masterpiece or anything, but for the first NXT Championship, this was more than acceptable.

We get some clips of the rematch. This segues into clips from Raw of the Shield.

We get some highlights of various stars from NXT, such as Richie Steamboat, Bo Dallas, CJ Parker, Audrey Marie, Big E. Langston and Bray Wyatt (gets by far the most time).

From July 11:

#### Aiden English vs. Bray Wyatt

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

Bray Wyatt talks about how it's a new year for your loved ones to betray you in his name.

We get an exclusive match tonight between Kane and Rhodes.

Video on Kassius Ohno. I still don't care. He talks about inflicting pain on people and we get a recap of his attacks on various people with Regal making the save.

Ohno says a new year is coming and that the year of 13 will be a year for pain.

Punk talks about telling Rollins to beat respect out of people and somehow that evolved into the Shield. The future is here in NXT and he hopes people are taking notice.

Video on Langston and the FIVE count.

From November 28:

#### Camacho vs. Big E. Langston

This is a match for the \$5000 bounty that Vickie has put on Langston's head. Camacho tries to pound on him but Langston keeps shoving him away. A shot out of the corner puts Big E. down but Camacho slaps him like an idiot. The Big Ending (falling slam) ends Camacho at 2:06.

Langston demands the five count and you don't tell a man like that no. Camacho gets two more Big Endings for good measure.

We get a clip of Langston debuting on Raw. Ok, now the question is are they going to reference this on NXT starting next week? They're making it clear what's going on in the main world, so they can't (and by can't I mean will but shouldn't) ignore it from now on.

Langston says he attacked Cena because he was helping his friend. His business here on NXT is to become NXT Champion. His New Year's Resolution is to do just that. Unfortunately his manic style is gone now and he sounds all serious.

Video on various people in NXT that we haven't covered yet, including Kruger and Paige.

It's Rollins defending against Graves next week.

We get a clip from Main Event of Kane injuring Cody's shoulder.

### Kane vs. Cody Rhodes

This is from July but it's never before seen. Cody immediately bails to the floor and stalls. Back in and Cody pounds away in the corner, only to be pounded right back down. Kane hits the low dropkick for two and Cody heads to the floor. Rhodes gets beaten up on the stage and aisle before we head back to the ring. Kane misses the clothesline and Cody escapes the chokeslam before sending Kane into the corner.

Cody goes after the knee as we get into a more standard match here. We take a break (complete with a John Cena loves NXT promo) and come back with the announcers talking about a HUGE leap from Cody. We don't get to see it of course, but here's a sidewalk slam from Kane for two instead. The top rope clothesline hits but Cody grabs the rope to avoid a chokeslam. There's the Disaster Kick for two but Cross Rhodes is countered into a chokeslam for the pin at 7:00 shown.

**Rating:** D+. This was pretty lame. Neither team was formed yet so there's only so much to care about from these guys. Cody had a pretty awful year after showing amazing potential in 2011 while Kane resurrected his career for about the 12<sup>th</sup> time with the comedy team. This match didn't show much of either though and it was a dull match as a result.

Todd is talking about the upcoming year when Shield cuts into the feed. Rollins talks about being NXT Champion for months but never getting the call from WWE. Ambrose talks about how the WWE is ill and suffering from lies and corruption. The real world has enough injustice in it already

and that's not how WWE is supposed to be. Rollins understands why Corey Graves did what he did but next time, Graves is leaving on a stretcher. Ambrose says they're the best. Reigns gets in a great line of "NXT is our house and while we may come and go as we please, we'll always collect the rent." The Shield is here next week.

**Overall Rating:** B+. What a great show. This was designed to recap everything that happened in NXT so far and I don't think they missed a thing. Everyone got at least a soundbyte or a video about them and we got some matches on top of it. The feature match holds this back because it's just not that good, but it's nice to see them acknowledging what's going on at Raw and hopefully incorporating that into NXT. Good stuff here that reminded me what I love about NXT.

### Results

Kane b. Cody Rhodes – Chokeslam

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