

WWE House Show – September 20, 2013

I took in the WWE house show tonight at Rupp Arena in Lexington, Kentucky. I know I said this about the TNA show I went to over the summer, but this might have been the most fun I've ever had at a wrestling event. The crowd was red hot all night and the matches were all at least decent. There was even a nice surprise that I'll get to in a bit. Let's get to it.

The tickets didn't cost anything as I beat a wrestling expert on the local radio station in a trivia competition to win the seats. We were in the second row on the first level above the floor seats, which is where I've sat many times before. The view was great and you could easily see almost everything save for some brawling on the floor or in the aisle. I'm horrible at guessing attendances but I'd guess there were a few thousand people. The entire upper deck was empty but Rupp arena holds well over 20,000 people so a packed house was out of the question. As usual the empty sections started filling up as the show went on.

Also note that I'll be lighter on the ratings tonight as this is a house show, not a major show.

Damien Sandow vs. Zack Ryder

In possibly the biggest shock, Zack Ryder might have actually received the ovation of the night. I mean the place exploded for him and didn't stop cheering for him for nearly half of his match. It was like 2011 all over again and it was a very nice surprise for an old Ryder fan. Before the match Sandow asked up to stand for My Old Kentucky Home (state song)

but said we weren't worthy of it. He also promised to drive 65 miles to Louisville to be with a real basketball team before trying to start a Let's Go Cards (hated enemy of the Kentucky Wildcats who play at Rupp) chant. He also said God bless Rick Pitino (Cardinals coach) to really tick them off.

The match was what you would expect, though there was some nice psychology included. Ryder missed a charge and got his arm tied up in the ropes. Sandow spent the majority of the match working over the arm which is such a basic move but so many wrestlers just miss it anymore. Ryder hit the Broski Boot and sent Sandow face first into the buckle, setting up the Rough Ryder for the pin in about 6:00.

Rating: C. Fine opener and the crowd is very hot tonight.

The fans voted for the Divas tag to be a dance off instead of a match.

AJ/Layla vs. Funkadactyls

Didn't Layla turn her back on AJ recently? Anyway AJ got a high pitched pop before refusing to dance. Layla did the usual comedic dancing before slipping while going to the corners. The Dactyls did their usual routine but AJ/Layla jumped them to start a match. I sat through this entire thing and absolutely nothing happened that deserved to be written down. Horrible boring stuff and the fans didn't care at all. Cameron pinned Layla after about 7:30 with a not horrible DDT.

Rating: D-.

The Dactyls danced afterwards.

Jack Swagger vs. Sami Zayn

Since this is an ultra conservative state, Swagger was relatively over. Zayn was the one guy I was hoping would be here who wasn't advertised, though he came out to crickets. Remember that for later. This wasn't as good as their NXT match but it was still one of the better matches of the night. A few fans behind us chanted OLE which seemed to confuse many fans around us. Colter wasn't there either as was recently announced.

This was a nice match with Swagger controlling for the most part. Sami came back with his high spots, including a big flip dive over the ropes to take out Swagger. Sami's top rope cross body looked great too. He tried a second one but got caught in the second Patriot Lock of the match, only to roll Swagger up for the pin at about 10:00. The important thing to note was that while Sami came out to crickets, he had the crowd invested in the match after just a few minutes. Zayn made them care about someone they didn't care about, which is really difficult to do. That's a good sign for his future.

Rating: B-. This was really fun stuff.

Kofi Kingston/Usos vs. Wyatt Family

The Wyatts was the advertised appearance I was looking forward to most. First of all though, the Usos' entrance got a HUGE reaction. They always

get a solid reaction on TV as well, which makes me hope that they get a stronger push soon. The Wyatt entrance got a nice reaction too and the reports are correct: they're just chilling in person. Bray sat in his rocking chair while the other two were in the ring when the lights came on. I've seen Undertaker, Kane and Big Show in person but those two were even more imposing. Rowan, the one with the mask, stood perfectly still during the pre-match staredown and stayed there until the opening bell. It worked really well.

Bray stayed on the floor at first before bolting into the ring to beat down an Uso, revealing some bright red pants that you have to be a brain washing swamp preacher to pull off. Bray is downright eerie in person, walking around the apron with this psychotic look on his face. They worked a regular formula match here with I think an Uso getting beaten down for the most part. You just couldn't take your eyes off Bray though as he was so creepy. The big spot of the match was a triple suicide dive from the good guys.

It was quickly forgotten though as Bray came back in and did the spot where he leans over backwards in the corner, only to drop to his hands to do the upside down on all fours walk from the Exorcist. JBL freaking out when he sees that on TV will be quite a sight. Anyway Kofi got the hot tag and everything broke down with Kofi hitting Trouble in Paradise on Harper, only to get caught with Sister Abigail for the pin at about 12:00.

Rating: B. REALLY fun match here with the Wyatts, Bray in particular, totally stealing the show.

World Heavyweight Championship: Alberto Del Rio vs. Rob Van Dam

There wasn't much to talk about here. Alberto worked on the arm, Rob came back with kicks. Del Rio went after the arm and got the armbreaker, only to not break when Van Dam got to the ropes for the DQ, just like at the PPV. Match ran just under 10:00 and was nothing special at all. Not bad, but these two have don't have much chemistry.

Rating: C-.

Rob got up and kicked Del Rio down, drawing out Sandow to tease a cash-in, only to be kicked in the face by Van Dam. Van Dam went around shaking hands as we went to intermission.

Ryback vs. Santino Marella

Now we get to the comedy portion of the evening. Ryback insisted that the referee hold the ropes open for him, only to say those weren't the ropes he meant and that the referee had to open the other set. Ryback was then introduced at 305lbs, which he insisted be described as ALL MAN. Santino was ticked off about the bullying and said Ryback was just a bully, just a mean person and....much bigger than he looked from the floor.

Santino tried a series of shoulder blocks to start the match but kept bouncing off Ryback and falling to the mat. He hit the ropes again but stopped short of Ryback, said "allow me" and fell on his back without being touched. Santino couldn't execute a nip up or slam Ryback, so the big man destroyed him for a bit instead. Santino came back and hit the nip up and slam to big pops because they had been built up. Again, simple idea but no one does it anymore. Santino loaded up the Cobra but Ryback bit his fingers to block it and put on a bearhug, only to have Santino escape with a wet Willy. The Shell Shock ended Marella in 7:40.

Rating: C+. Fun comedy squash here and there's nothing wrong with that.

CM Punk vs. Curtis Axel

This was kind of confusing as the match had been advertised as for the title, then as No DQ later in the show. Axel said that Heyman (not here tonight) had found a rule saying that Axel didn't have to defend the title if he had defended it in the last 30 days, so this was non-title. Axel also said there would be DQ's, because apparently he just has that authority.

There really wasn't much to this match and it was mainly punching and kicking. Punk did his usual spots, including the dive through the ropes and the Macho Elbow, but there were no weapons at all in the match. At one point Axel even grabbed a mic and said he wouldn't be using a table so stop asking for one. Punk won with a GTS in approximately 15:00 (I forgot to time it). Not much of a match but the fans were into Punk.

Rating: C. I'm guessing Punk is moving a bit slowly due to the injuries from the PPV.

Daniel Bryan vs. Randy Orton

Now this is where we'll get to the interesting part. Orton got a solid pop but Bryan...got the same at best or maybe even a bit weaker one. The fans got on their feet and did the YES chant and the finger point, but it definitely wasn't an explosion or even a huge pop. My buddy Josh

suggested that a lot of the fans aren't so much into Bryan, but maybe just joining in because everyone else is doing it. I read a report from I want to say Wade Keller from a Smackdown taping a few weeks back and he said about the same thing: the fans cheered for Bryan, but he doesn't get the same reaction that other superstars get. There's time to change that, but it's very difficult to overcome.

This was about what you would expect as Bryan got in all of his usual spots. Bryan is incredibly talented, but he's getting to the point where he's using a lot of the same sequences. Those sequences are very entertaining, but other than the running knee he hasn't changed things up in awhile.

The interesting part of this was Orton might have lost a tooth due to a running dropkick in the corner. Something very large flew out and Orton was holding his mouth and nearly writhing around in pain. Bryan got the YES Lock but Orton got to the rope. Bryan missed a dive to give Orton control, meaning a lot of chinlocks. Bryan made his comeback and hit his signature spots before hitting the running knee out of nowhere for the pin at 16:50. I don't even think Orton loaded up an RK0.

Rating: B-. Good match but it wasn't great by any means.

Bryan went around to shake hands to end the show.

Overall Rating: A-. This show was a blast with only the Divas match being bad, but if the worst thing I have to sit through is Layla basically wrestling in a bikini, so be it. The fans were on fire all night, most of the big stars were there, and the matches were all solid. I believe the seats we were sitting in cost about \$20-30 and they would have been more

than worth the price. I was at the show in Louisville a few months back and wasn't very impressed. This was the polar opposite and one of the most entertaining shows I've ever been to. WWE is on fire at the moment and at a level I haven't seen in a long time. Great show.

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Smackdown – September 20, 2013: The Strangest Gauntlet Match Ever

Sorry for the delay as I was at a WWE house show. Report coming.

Smackdown

Date: September 20, 2013

Location: US Bank Arena, Cincinnati, Ohio

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

We're past Night of Champions and the main story is that there's no WWE Champion. Bryan won the title on Sunday but has been stripped of it due to an alleged conspiracy between he and now fired referee Scott Armstrong. On Raw however, the roster finally came together to fight back

against HHH and the Corporation, giving us an interesting battle for the first time since this began, which was somehow just over a month ago. Let's get to it.

We open with a look back at Night of Champions and Raw, set up through an interview with HHH. He compares the scandal with Armstrong to Pete Rose hypothetically conspiring with an umpire to fix the World Series.

Here's Vickie to open things up. She says she has a thrilling and exciting show planned for us tonight, but first she has to introduce the laughing stock of the WWE. Bob Backlund held the WWE Championship for over 2,000 days, but this man held it for less than a day: Daniel Bryan. Daniel says he'd rather be champion for one day than being a shrill corporate suck-up for his entire life. Vickie gives him an opportunity to come clean but Bryan says the truth is he kneed Orton in the face for three. It could have been a twenty count because Orton was out cold.

Bryan says he should still be champion but Vickie says he should be fired. Daniel says everyone is grateful that Vickie has no real power, but Vickie would rather talk about the people that got involved at the end of the night. Those people would be Ziggler, the Usos, R-Truth, Justin Gabriel, Zack Ryder, the Prime Time Players, Kofi Kingston and Rob Van Dam. Tonight it's going to be an 11-3 handicap gauntlet match. The idea is all eleven of them will come down to face the Shield 3-1 until Shield has defeated them all. Bryan is lucky enough to go last.

Naomi vs. AJ

Non-title. Natalya is on commentary and talks about how AJ is riding the coattails of the Total Divas who have revolutionized the division. AJ easily takes Naomi down and hooks a cravate as Natalya calls AJ an opportunist for how she kept the title on Sunday. A running back elbow gets two for the champion, though Natalya is FAR more entertaining, trying to make the Total Divas sound like good people. Naomi comes back with a dropkick and the Rear View for two. AJ's sleeper is quickly broken

up but she grabs the Black Widow for the submission at 3:25.

Rating: D+. The match was nothing but this story is ranging anywhere from so bad it's hilarious to horrible depending on how you look at it. The problem is the whole angle hinges on no one ever watching Total Divas, because there's no way to cheer for any of its cast, but AJ is being presented as a stuck up villain who lords her title over everyone in sight.

Jack Swagger vs. Santino Marella

Colter tells Santino to take the ravioli out of his ears and asks if he has the proper papers to own a reptile. During Santino's entrance, JBL and Cole hype up Billy Gunn as the guests on their show by saying Road Dogg's catchphrases. Swagger throws Santino down and shouts at him a lot before hooking a double armbar. Santino comes back with his usual sequence before hooking a backslide to pin Swagger at 2:02. When I'm feeling sorry for Jack Swagger, it's a bad sign.

Ryback vs. Nick Nardone

Nardone is OVW Champion Jamin Olivencia. Before the match, Heyman talks about Punk giving him all he could handle at Night of Champions, but only one of them could come out on top. Ryback says Heyman doesn't deserve to be picked on by a bully like Punk, so he's going to treat Nick like he'll treat Punk. It's a fifty second match with the Meat Hook and Shell Shock ending Nardone, as you would expect.

Here's Orton with something to say. He talks about Bryan and Armstrong taking the title from him at Night of Champions, but that was 100% his own fault. He never should have been in that position but he's spent two years repressing who he really is for the fans. Orton locked away the Viper because that's what everyone wanted. But then Monday night on Raw, HHH and Stephanie showed Orton what he really should be. We get a clip of the attack on Miz from Raw, which Orton calls a warning to anyone who

gets in his path. At Battleground, he's going to end the war with Daniel Bryan and be his own WWE Champion.

Shield vs. Usos/Prime Time Players/Justin Gabriel/Zack Ryder/Kofi Kingston/Rob Van Dam/Dolph Ziggler/Daniel Bryan/R-Truth

It's 3-1, one man at a time, no tagging. Darren Young is first and it goes exactly as you would expect with Reigns getting the pin via the spear in 41 seconds. Titus O'Neil is in next and has a bit better luck by throwing the smaller guys around a bit. Reigns runs him down though and the big beatdown is on. Rollins grabs a guillotine with a body vice and the beating continues. The TripleBomb ends O'Neil at 1:57 (all times total).

Dolph Ziggler is in third but he charges in like a nitwit too. Ziggler speeds things up as fast as he can but Rollins and Dean finally get him to the ground. Reigns gets to take his shots including a headbutt. Ambrose takes too much time talking though and Dolph gets in some solid offense, low bridging Reigns to the floor and hitting the Fameasser on Seth. A Cactus Clothesline puts Ziggler and Ambrose on the floor for a second but Rollins knees Ziggler to the floor. Reigns spears Ziggler down and he can't beat the count at 5:39.

Here's Kofi Kingston to try his luck but Rollins comes to meet him in the aisle for some reason, allowing Kofi to snap the other twos' necks across the top rope. A quick Trouble in Paradise gets a near fall on Reigns but the numbers catch up to Kofi. The bulldog driver gets rid of Kingston at 7:13. Rob Van Dam is in next and Reigns is still down.

A banged up Rollins and Ambrose jump Van Dam but he kicks both guys down as things speed up. Ambrose is monkey flipped down and Reigns is kicked back down to the floor. Rolling Thunder hits both Rollins and Ambrose at the same time and Van Dam loads up the Five Star on Dean....as HHH comes out to call the match off at about 9:00.

Rating: C. The non-finish hurt this a lot because I was starting to get into it at the end. The idea of Shield fighting off everyone at once but slowly getting beaten down made sense and felt like something out of a video game. It was really doing a good job at building drama to seeing how far anyone could get without getting beaten but the ending stopped it cold.

Post break HHH yells at Vickie, asking what in the world she was thinking. After what Vickie did tonight, ten more of them would revolt next time, then ten more until we had a full scale revolt. Vickie says it was good for business, but tonight needs to be about fair competition. HHH demands Vickie to make the Usos/Daniel Bryan vs. the Shield, therefore again making Bryan the focus of the show after saying for weeks that there was no way we could have Bryan as the focus of the show.

The Raw ReBound covers the Dusty Rhodes story.

Ryder and Gabriel come in to see HHH and he gives them a match for no apparent reason.

Zack Ryder/Justin Gabriel vs. Wyatt Family

Harper gives Ryder a freaky look to start but Zack fires off a forearm in the corner. A big boot takes Ryder down for two as everything breaks down. Gabriel is sent to the floor and Harper hits a buckle bomb on Ryder followed by the discus lariat (JBL: "GOOD GOD!") for the pin at 1:12.

Bray hits Sister Abigail on Ryder post match and talks about keeping his promises.

RVD has a banged up elbow but HHH comes in and gives him a world title match against Del Rio at Battleground. HHH leaves and Del Rio comes in to beat RVD down, including the low superkick. Cole thinks it's odd that Del Rio was right there at that given time.

R-Truth vs. Alberto Del Rio

Non-title again. Truth pounds away in the corner to start and gets two off a suplex. The ax kick misses though and Del Rio hits a quick Backstabber for two. Off to a reverse chinlock but Truth comes back with some kicks to the ribs. The front suplex is good for two but Alberto hits the corner enziguri for the same result. Truth rolls out of the armbreaker and hits the ax kick for two, only to be caught with the low superkick and the armbreaker for the submission at 3:34.

Rating: D+. This was about what you would expect out of these two. Truth is a jobber to the stars anymore but at least we don't have to put up with his matches being set up by dancing anymore. Del Rio still has nothing to his character other than being from Mexico as the money has been phased out, keeping him as average of a heel as you can be.

Shield vs. Usos/Daniel Bryan

Bryan starts by firing off kicks in the corner to Rollins' chest before dropping a knee for two. Rollins tries the jumping knee but gets caught in the surfboard instead. With the hold still mostly on it's Jey in off the tag with a clothesline, only to get caught in the Shield corner and punched by Ambrose. Jey comes back with a backdrop and brings in his brother who gets two off a clothesline.

Off to a hammerlock but Dean fights into the corner, only to have Jey come back in with a big chop for two. The Usos drop a double elbow for two but Jey is driven into the Shield corner again for the tag off to Reigns for some stomping. Jey stays out of trouble by pulling Roman into the corner for the tag off to Bryan. Kicking abounds until Reigns takes Daniel down with an elbow to the jaw and a tag off to Rollins for a chinlock. That goes nowhere as Daniel jawbreaks his way out and tags in Jimmy.

Jimmy does about as well as a career tag team wrestler fighting off three

guys who have been defeating main eventers for over a year now as we take a break. Back with Jimmy fighting out of a Rollins chinlock and making the hot tag off to Jey. A few rooms of the house are cleaned but Rollins enziguris him down, allowing for the real heat segment to begin.

Dean hits a running dropkick against the ropes and holds Jey in place for a slingshot hilo, giving Rollins two. Back to Reigns for a jumping elbow drop for two and we hit the chinlock. A huge clothesline gets two for Roman and it's right back to the chinlock. Jey fights up again and fires off right hands all around followed by a Bubba Bomb on Rollins. The hot tag brings in Bryan for the real house cleaning by knocking Reigns and Rollins to the floor.

Two running corner dropkicks set up a hurricanrana to Dean for two. Jimmy dives over the top to take out Reigns and Jey does the same to Rollins. Dean clotheslines Bryan down but gets caught in the YES Lock, right in front of the ropes. Jey superkicks Ambrose into the running knee from Bryan at 14:00 shown of 17:00.

Rating: B. This was the same thing that you've grown to expect from every Shield match: great action, a bunch of saved near falls and a hot finish. On top of that the Shield doesn't lose anything here given that they were coming in at a disadvantage. Good match here but did you really expect anything else?

Overall Rating: C+. This was a hard one to grade. The gauntlet match was really fun but it was pulled halfway through for some reason. A solid main event helps of course and we got some story development, but this show felt like it was over before it started. I'm not sure if that was a good thing as only the gauntlet match felt like anything special. Still though, fun show overall and a good use of two hours.

Results

AJ Lee b. Naomi – Black Widow

Santino Marella b. Jack Swagger – Backslide

Ryback b. Nick Nardone – Shell Shock

Shield vs. Usos/Prime Time Players/Justin Gabriel/Zack Ryder/Kofi Kingston/Rob Van Dam/Dolph Ziggler/Daniel Bryan/R-Truth went to a no contest

Wyatt Family b. Justin Gabriel/Zack Ryder – Discus lariat to Ryder

Alberto Del Rio b. R-Truth – Cross Armbreaker

Daniel Bryan/Usos b. Shield – Running knee to Ambrose

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On This Day: September 15, 2003 – Monday Night Raw: Goldberg's Funeral

Monday Night Raw

Date: September 15, 2003

Location: Carolina Coliseum, Columbia, South Carolina

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

I can understand asking for a 2002 Raw, but 2003? Why would you want to subject yourself to that? I don't get wrestling fans sometimes. Anyway, this is the go home show for Unforgiven which had a main event

of.....Goldberg vs. HHH I believe? A check of that would say I'm right, as well as saying that I need to get a life. Let's get to it.

Eric Bischoff and HHH are in the back and there's going to be a going away party for Goldberg tonight because HHH is going to destroy him on Sunday.

Theme song. Across the Nation was as good a theme as they've ever had.

As the show opens, Jericho and Christian are in the ring with signs demanding that Stone Cold must go. This is an official protest you see. Jericho does the talking and says that Austin is a menace and a horrible GM. Christian says Austin is a joke because he's keeping Christian off PPVs. They try to start a Stone Cole Must Go chant and here's Austin. Austin talks about how Jericho slapped him on the back and eventually hurt his feelings. The idea here is that Austin cannot attack anyone unless provoked and he really wants to beat someone up.

Austin says that Christian will be defending on Sunday (that takes about 30 seconds) but doesn't name an opponent. Instead he's interested in getting someone to provoke him but as he pulls his fist back, he tells Christian to do it instead. Jericho gets in Austin's face again and wants the shot at Christian on Sunday. Austin says ok but Jericho has to win the following match first.

Rob Van Dam vs. Chris Jericho

Christian tries to get in a cheap shot but gets kicked down instead. Jericho gets dumped to the floor and taken out by a dive as we take a fast break. Back with Van Dam hitting a forearm and the cartwheel moonsault for two. A standing rana (called a moonsault by JR for some reason) gets two for Van Dam so he goes up, only to be shoved off the top by Christian.

Back in and Jericho puts on a chinlock as the fans chant for RVD. Rob fights up and hits a spinwheel kick and that stepover kick of his followed by Rolling Thunder. A flying kick off the top gets two but Jericho rolls through a monkey flip. The Walls don't work so Jericho hits a sleeper drop for two. Rob tries a springboard kick but the referee gets

kicked in the face. Well of course he does. The Lionsault and Five Star both hit knees so Christian comes in and hits both of them with the title so it's a draw.

Rating: C. This wasn't bad but Jericho was really needing to get the to the Trish storyline to get a recharge at this point. Christian would stay at about this level for awhile until he left for TNA for a few years. Van Dam is Van Dam and that's about all there is to him. The match itself wasn't bad but it's nothing we haven't seen them do way better at other times.

Austin makes it a triple threat. You know, LIKE EVERY OTHER TRIPLE THREAT.

Video of Goldberg beating Hogan on Nitro.

Spike Dudley vs. Rob Conway

Spike is in a neckbrace and his brothers fight the other members of La Resistance into the crowd. Conway hits a neckbreaker and wins in about 20 seconds.

Post match Conway powerbombs Spike through a table before the Dudleys make the save. The Dudleys would win the tag titles Sunday in a handicap tables match.

Coach and Al Snow suck up to Bischoff but he blows them off as some chick from Tough Enough gives him a note saying there are two women here. I have a bad feeling about this. Regarding Snow and Coach, see they're the Heat commentators and want to be the Raw commentators so there's a tag match between the two of them and JR/King on Sunday for the Raw commentary job. Somehow WWE isn't sure why no one liked 2003.

The two women are of course Moolah and Mae. We're in South Carolina so you knew this was coming. Moolah wants a match for her 80th birthday. Austin pops in and says do it and tells Eric to kiss Moolah for luck. Mae Young is there, so you should know what comes next.

Victoria vs. Fabulous Moolah

Victoria hits both Moolah and Mae, but the distraction of Mae lets Moolah roll her up in thirty seconds. That would be two matches that combined to last less than 60 seconds.

Post match Victoria beats both of them up but Randy Orton comes out to save for some reason. Then he realizes they're legends and RK0's Moolah.

Goldust/Lance Storm vs. Mark Henry/Rodney Mack

This is when Storm was "just having fun" and would come to the ring dancing to hip hop music. Whoever asked me to review this show, I'd advise you to NOT REQUEST ANOTHER ONE LIKE THIS. Teddy Long manages the team you would expect him to manage, which may or may not be called Thuggin N Buggin Enterprises. Storm and Mack start things off and the fans chant boring, which is the idea behind Storm's new character. See, Austin told him he was boring and to get a personality.

Storm takes Mack down but Henry hits him in the back of the head to take over. A splash crushed Storm and it's off to Goldust who almost immediately gets caught in the World's Strongest Slam for the pin. This actually broke 1:50, so we're getting closer to a match that's actually long enough to rate (even the first match barely was as a lot of that was in a lot of that was in a commercial). This would be Goldust's last match on Raw for about three years.

Evolution (minus Batista who is recovering from injury) is in the back planning for the party for Goldberg later. Orton has to take care of something and runs into Shawn who he faces Sunday. Orton says Shawn made his career out of being a stepping stone and Sunday, he's going to use Shawn as a stepping stone. Shawn slaps Randy in the face and says Orton better step hard.

Hurricane tries to teach Rosey to fly. Rosey gets a cab instead.

Molly and Gail Kim say their handicap match tonight with Trish is now No Holds Barred. Sure why not.

Here are Kane and Shane McMahon to sign the contract for their last man standing match on Sunday. Shane says he's taking Kane down on Sunday and

signs. There goes the table and the fight is on. Shane hits Kane low several times and gets in a pair of chair shots. With Kane down, Shane pulls the cover off an announce table at ringside that is apparently only here for this segment (JR and King broadcast from up by the stage at this point). Shane puts Kane on the table and hits the big elbow to drive Kane through it.

Gail Kim/Molly Holly vs. Trish Stratus

No Holds Barred just because. Trish hits a quick double neckbreaker to start and gets down to one on one with Molly. You know, because they have to tag in a no holds barred match. I will say this: Molly is really good looking with black hair. Trish kicks Molly in the face and hits the Stratusphere before it's off to Gail. Kim takes over with a clothesline and a middle rope legdrop for two. Some heel double teaming allows for a Molly handspring elbow for two. Apparently Molly is Women's Champion. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Trish rops Molly while trying a spinebuster. The villains double team Trish and the Molly Go Round pins her.

Rating: F. When you hear the words "no holds barred", you expect more than a generic bad handicap match. The only thing good about this was the girls all looking good, which was the case for most Divas matches back in the day. This division needed a shot in the arm and it needed one in a hurry.

Post match the beating continues and a chair is grabbed, but here's the returning Lita to make the save. She's been gone over a year due to a neck injury. If nothing else she looks great in a black bra and tiny shorts.

Post match Gail and Molly are in the back with Eric. Eric says he fired Lita but Austin comes in and says he rehired her. There's a tag match for Sunday. Gail: "I slept with the wrong general manager."

Here are Coach and Snow dressed as JR and King respectively. They go to the broken announce table as they're going to give us a preview of what Raw is like next week. Yeah, THIS is one of the top matches at Unforgiven.

Test vs. Val Venis

Test has Stacy with him as his reluctant love slave or something like that. Test makes Stacy sit down in a chair after hitting Val a few times. Val escapes the pumphandle slam and hits a Blue Thunder Bomb for two. Val loads up the Money Shot but Test kicks the referee into the ropes. There's the Pumphandle Slam but Stacy pulls Test to the floor. Scott Steiner, Stacy's alleged savior, comes out to distract Test and Stacy crotches her client on the ropes. Val hits a full nelson slam for the surprise pin. Coach and Snow were very annoying on commentary here. Steiner would turn heel and use Stacy just like Test was soon.

Steiner beats up Test post match but Test gets Stacy before he leaves.

Lawler comes out and asks to fight Snow right now. The match is after a break.

Al Snow vs. Jerry Lawler

Coach and JR are on commentary here as Lawler controls with some very basic stuff. They slug it out and King hits a DDT for two. Snow comes back with a slam but a suplex is countered into a small package for the pin. This was the last match of the show people. This is the main event. Let that sink in.

Coach hits JR before bailing.

Austin runs into Evolution and says HHH is having the Goldberg party by himself.

Here's HHH for the farewell. He asks the crowd for a Goldberg chant but they're not interested. We get music and confetti and balloons because this needs to get stupider. HHH says there are no such things as dynasties in wrestling but he's the one constant. Apparently the one constant isn't the mic as it goes out yet we can still hear it on TV. With a new mic, HHH shows off a portrait of Goldberg being bloodied by Evolution. This is going nowhere by the way. Now we get VIDEO of the beating! Goldberg finally pops up on screen and says he'll win the title before coming out and gorilla pressing HHH to end the show.

Overall Rating: F. Despite that TEN MINUTE closing segment, I have zero desire to see either the main event or any of the matches on the show. There are two matches on this show that were long enough to rate: one ended in a draw and one was a no holds barred match that had nothing out of the ordinary. Other than that you have all kinds of stuff like Moolah and Test and the Spike match. Horrible show here and I want nothing to do with Unforgiven or Raw in 2003. Naturally the whole year is on my schedule.

Here's Unforgiven if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2012/11/03/unforgiven-2003-i-was-wrong-2002-isnt-the-worst-year-ever-for-wwe/>

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Night of Champions 2013: Well That Was Surprising

Night of Champions 2013

Date: September 15, 2013

Location: Joe Louis Arena, Detroit, Michigan

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

This is the first PPV after the big summer angle with the rise of the new Corporation. Our main event tonight is Randy Orton defending his title against Daniel Bryan in Bryan's first one on one shot against the new champion. The other main event is CM Punk vs. Paul Heyman/Curtis Axel in

an elimination tag for Punk's chance to get his hands on Heyman. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Tag Team Turmoil

This is a tag team gauntlet match with the winning team earning a tag title shot at Seth Rollins/Roman Reigns later in the show. There are five teams in total with two teams starting. The winners of the first match move on to face the next team, last team standing wins. It's 3MB vs. Tons of Funk (minus the Funkadactyls) to get us going.

Brodus starts with Heath (teaming with McIntyre here) and quickly crushes Slater in the corner. Off to Tensai who follows Slater to the floor. Drew busts out a flip dive over the top of all things to take over for a bit. Back in and Tensai gets two off a sunset flip but Drew pounds away in the corner, only to get rolled up for the pin by Tensai at 2:40.

The Real Americans are in next but 3MB sticks around to beat on Tensai. Cesaro shouts WE THE PEOPLE and it's time for a commercial on the pre-show. Back with Cesaro still shouting WE THE PEOPLE before Tensai counters a suplex to take him down. Hot tag brings in Brodus to clean house with his headbutt to the chest and a splash in the corner but Swagger breaks up the cover off the middle rope splash. Swagger makes a blind tag and puts a covering Brodus into the Patriot Lock for the submission at 5:16 total.

It's the Usos in fourth, meaning the Prime Time Players are last. They charge in to the ring with Jey hitting a big flip dive over the top to take out Swagger and a slingshot moonsault connects on Cesaro. Swagger comes in legally with a belly to belly suplex on Jey before we hit the armbar. Back to Cesaro for some choking and we take ANOTHER break. Do we really need commercials during a big commercial?

After seeing the same explanation of how to order the show that we got in the first commercial break, we're back with Cesaro being knocked off the

apron but Swagger avoids the Superfly Splash and the Patriot Lock submits Jey at 10:00. It's the Prime Time Players in last with Titus cleaning house on Swagger. A fall away slam puts Jack down but he takes Titus' leg out, only to have Darren Young break up another Patriot Lock. The hot tag brings in Young but he gets caught in the Patriot Lock as well. Young rolls through and the Gut Check gives the Players the title shot at 11:55 total. Cesaro was gone for the last fall.

Rating: D+. These matches are fun in theory but I've never cared for them for the most part. At the end of the day, it doesn't work to see these falls go down in just a few minutes. There's no time to get any story going and one of the last two teams in line always wins the thing. Nothing special here and I think everyone knew the Players were winning here.

The opening video is about what defines a champion with clips of men like Sammartino, Hogan, Michaels and Austin. It transitions into the usual PPV opening video focusing on the main events.

Here's HHH to open the show. He thanks us for joining him in what's best for business and says he's listening to the audience. There won't be any interference in the main event from anyone, including Shield, Big Show or anyone else. HHH asks us if we're ready for Night of Champions which brings out Heyman (in a suit) and Curtis Axel.

Heyman says he's tried everything to get a message to HHH but this is the best he can do. HHH asks Heyman when he last slept or showered and Paul snaps that he's stressed out. Heyman complains about the position he's been put in as we're ten minutes into the show and this is what we're getting. He explains the entire story of Punk vs. Heyman/Lesnar as well as the match we've got tonight in case you bought all the PPVs available tonight and aren't sure what you want to watch.

Apparently the handicap match is No DQ which must have been announced on the pre-show. HHH says Heyman shouldn't be worried if he trusts Curtis

Axel as much as he claims to. The match stays on so now Axel gets to beg for his boss' life. He brings up beating HHH in a match as the fans chant BORING. HHH says this is Night of Champions so HHH is going to go to the back and the first person he finds gets an IC Title shot.

Intercontinental Title: Curtis Axel vs. Kofi Kingston

Well this is a letdown. Kofi takes him down by the wrist and sends Axel to the floor. Back in and Curtis avoids the double leapfrog and bails to the floor again because the seventeen minutes of stalling to open the show weren't enough. Kofi kicks him on the way back in and Axel is on the floor for the third time in three minutes. Back in again and a dropkick gets two on the champion so Axel goes outside AGAIN. Kingston gets tired of waiting and goes outside but gets sent into the steps. Kofi stops himself and jumps to the apron and then the top for a spinning cross body to the floor.

Back inside again and Axel gets in a cheap shot to take over. Kofi is tied up in the Tree of Woe for a spear to the ribs and the snap Saito Suplex is good for two. We hit the neck crank followed by a clothesline for two for the champion. A quick slam gets two on Kofi as this boring match continues. Back to the chinlock for a bit before Kofi tries to spin around a clothesline but can't quite pull it off as crisply as he wanted to. A DDT gets two on Axel and Kofi's spinning cross body off the top gets the same.

There's the Boom Drop but Trouble in Paradise misses. Axel drives Kofi into the corner but walks into a pendulum kick. Kofi goes up, only to dive into a dropkick to the chest for two. Kingston escapes another Saito Suplex and a side roll gets two. The SOS is countered and Trouble in Paradise is ducked but Kofi counters Curtis' neckbreaker into the SOS for....something as the camera is on Heyman at what could have been the three count. It's only two so Kofi goes to the corner, only to wind up on Axel's shoulders and dropped on the top rope. The neckbreaker into the cutter are good enough to retain Curtis' title at 14:05.

Rating: C. When civilization has come to an end and the human race is gone, Kofi Kingston will still be in the Intercontinental Title hunt. The match wasn't terrible and it got WAY better at the end, but the first five minutes of this match were way too boring. Also what's the idea of having Axel in a nearly fifteen minute match before he was a big underdog in the match later? Methinks something is up.

Chris Jericho is named the best IC Champion ever with 63% of the vote over Mr. Perfect, Pat Patterson, Rick Rude and Honky Tonk Man. Those are your only options.

Ricardo teaches Van Dam how to say his finishing moves in Spanish. Also Del Rio has no testicular fortitude and the universal term for World Heavyweight Champion is RVD.

AJ's new friends (Aksana/Alicia/Layla) want nothing to do with her for the title match. AJ says they're nothing without her, which makes me think they're actually pushing the Total Divas as the good ones in this.

Trish Stratus dominates Michelle McCool, Wendi Richter, Lita and Fabulous Moolah to be named best Divas/Women's Champion ever.

We get the entire promo that set up AJ vs. the Total Divas and the Total Divas beating AJ up.

Divas Title: Natalya vs. Brie Bella vs. AJ Lee vs. Naomi

Big face reaction for AJ despite the lack of clarity in whom we're supposed to cheer for. AJ gets chased to the floor and sent into the barricade before. The challengers all kick AJ to the floor before the Total Divas break down. The crowd goes SILENT when AJ isn't in there. Brie cleans house but walks into a dropkick from Naomi. Those two take each other out and AJ grabs a rollup on Natalya for two. The Rear View gets two on Natalya and Brie loads up a superplex on Naomi.

Natalya makes the save but has to duck a high cross body from Naomi. AJ sends Naomi to the floor but Naomi pops back up onto the apron to totally miss a high kick to Brie. Natalya baseball slides AJ to the floor and suplexes Brie down for no cover. Brie breaks up a Sharpshooter on Naomi so Natalya slams her down onto Naomi. Why the referee doesn't count Naomi while Brie is on top of her isn't clear. Natalya puts both of them in a Sharpshooter which I believe she did to Laycool before but AJ makes the save. There's the Black Widow on Natalya for the submission to retain AJ's title at 5:45.

Rating: D. This is in no way related to AJ because she did everything she could out there. These other girls SUCK and no one cares about them. There's nothing else to it than that. They're getting this push because they're horrible to each other on a reality show and that's supposed to make them interesting wrestlers. Yeah Natalya can go in the ring and Naomi is athletic, but that doesn't mean anyone cares about them. I'm being very generous with the rating actually. It was that bad.

We go to the All-Star panel of Alex Riley, Booker T and Santino Marella.

World Heavyweight Title: Rob Van Dam vs. Alberto Del Rio

Alberto is defending, Rob is the hometown boy (close enough) and Ricardo is here after being banned from ringside on Smackdown. Del Rio quickly takes him down but Rob comes right back with a kick to the face. A loud spinwheel kick in the corner has the champion staggered and a monkey flip gets two. Del Rio hits a dropkick of all things but misses a charge and falls to the floor. A slingshot moonsault puts Alberto down and Rob drapes him across the barricade for the spin kick to the back.

Del Rio blocks a suplex back in and brings Rob to the apron before knocking him out to the floor. The champion's suicide dive takes Van Dam down and Del Rio sends him into the barricade. We hit the chinlock before Rob rolls him up for two. A snap suplex puts Rob right back down and Del Rio does the finger point. Del Rio kicks him in the back of the head for

two and it's back to the chinlock. An enziguri sends Del Rio to the floor but Alberto misses a dive and crashes on the outside.

Back in and a kick to the face gets two for Rob and the middle rope thrust kick gets the same. A top rope kick to the face sets up Rolling Thunder but Alberto rolls away and hits the Backstabber for two. Rob breaks up the reverse superplex and the cannonball off the top gets two. They slug it out with Del Rio getting two off a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. Rob kicks his way out of the armbreaker and gets two off a rollup.

The split legged moonsault gets the same but Alberto comes back with a Codebreaker on the arm. Del Rio's low superkick gets two but Rob kicks him off the ropes. The Five Star hits knees and there's the armbreaker but Rob gets to a rope....and Del Rio holds on through the five count for the DQ at 14:28.

Rating: C+. The match was fine but the ending crippled anything it could have been. Alberto just isn't interesting as a champion whatsoever but he's been in every PPV Smackdown Title match this year. I don't know who we're waiting on to take the title from him but this wasn't the right ending for this match.

Post match Rob hits a Van Terminator to wake the crowd up.

Axel is confident while Heyman panics even more. We've covered this for weeks now.

Booker T beats out Flair, Edge, Batista and Undertaker as greatest World Champion ever. WHAT?

Orton wants to know what HHH is thinking. HHH says he's just making sure he picked the right face of the WWE.

The Miz vs. Fandango

Here's the filler match we all knew was coming. Fandango dances around to start and drives some elbows into Miz's neck. Miz comes back but can't hit the Reality Check or put on the Figure Four, allowing Fandango to send him to the apron. Back in and Miz hits the corner clothesline but a Summer Rae distraction lets Fandango take over again. We hit a chinlock with a bodyscissors as a Summer Rae chant starts up.

The announcers are talking about baseball as Miz sends Fandango to the floor, only to jump into a kick to the ribs. Now it's a Randy Savage chant as the fans just do not care about this match. Miz fights up and goes after the leg before hitting the short DDT for two. Now the fans want tables. Fandango suplexes him down for two and ties Miz up in the ropes for a guillotine legdrop for two. The real guillotine legdrop misses and Miz gets two as the crowd groans. Thankfully the Figure Four ends Fandango at 8:00.

Rating: D. This show is sinking like a stone. The fans didn't care about this at all and there's no reason for them to. It's a feud about Miz interrupting Fandango's dancing and that's about it. Why would I want to see that on a show I'm paying to see? Also it's a bad idea after such a dull show so far.

WWE loves the National Guard.

We recap Punk vs. Heyman/Axel. Punk asked Heyman to stop coming to the ring with him so Heyman screwed him over at MITB. Punk swore revenge so Heyman brought Lesnar back to beat Punk up with Brock getting the pin at Summerslam. Now it's Heyman/Axel vs. Punk in an elimination match so Punk can get his hands on Heyman.

Paul Heyman/Curtis Axel vs. CM Punk

No DQ and it's under elimination rules. Heyman of course hides on the floor as the other guys swing kendo sticks at each other. Axel gets in a shot but Punk comes back with a series of his own to take over. Curtis

gets knocked down and Punk dives through the ropes to get at Heyman. Paul is taken into the ring and put in a chinlock before Punk picks up the stick. CM takes too long though and a low blow drops Punk. Curtis pounds away and gets in some stick shots to the back.

The beating continues as Heyman does Brock's bounce on the floor. The fans still want tables but they get chops and forearms from Punk instead. Axel hits a clothesline to the back of the head for two and it's table time, making Curtis the most over guy in the arena for a split second. The table is set up in the corner but Punk blocks a suplex through the table, only to have Axel do the same. Axel takes Punk down again and we hit another chinlock.

Punk fights up and sends Curtis into a chair in the corner, knocking Axel to the floor. Back in and Punk hits his swinging neckbreaker and the knee into the corner. Axel rolls away before the Macho Elbow and gets in a chair shot for two. The lone boring chant is blocked out by a Punk chant as Axel gets two off a neckbreaker of his own. Heyman shouts that Axel is better than Punk as Curtis strolls around the ring. More kendo stick shots to Punk's back get two but Punk counters the neckbreaker into the cutter into the GTS. The Anaconda Vice gets the tap out at 10:40 to get us down to Punk vs. Heyman.

Punk wisely keeps the hold on to knock Axel out even more before going after Heyman. Heyman slowly walks around the ring before running up the ramp, only to go into the crowd and back to ringside. Punk catches him in the ring and pulls on Heyman's ears and nose. Punk gets the stick but Heyman hugs him. The smile on Punk's face is rather creepy as he canes Heyman down. Heyman: "OH THAT HURTS!" Punk pounds away before calling for the GTS. He's not ready yet though as he pulls out the handcuffs from his boot, just like Heyman used on him for the big beating a few weeks ago.

Heyman tries to tap out but the fans think this is awesome. Heyman begs for mercy, making it even better. Punk hits him very slowly with the stick and says to remember that it was him doing this to Paul. Heyman

tries to tap with his foot so Punk promises to break Paul's face. Cue Ryback to drive Punk through the table, slicing Punk's back open in a scary looking visual. Heyman is placed on top for the pin at 15:56.

Rating: B-. This was exactly what it was supposed to be: Punk getting some revenge, only to have Heyman debut his new guy to give Punk a real challenge next month at Battleground. At the end of the day, Axel just isn't competition for CM Punk and everyone knew it. Ryback isn't a huge star, but he's a much bigger deal than Axel and gives Punk a much better challenge. Good choice here and the perfect booking.

Punk refuses medical attention for his back.

More expert panel stuff.

US Title: Dolph Ziggler vs. Dean Ambrose

Ziggy beat Ambrose via DQ on Friday to get this shot. Feeling out process with Ziggler trying to speed things up, only to have Dean grab the rope. Ziggler gets two off a dropkick and there are the ten elbow drops. They tumble out to the floor and Dean takes over before heading back inside for a knee in the back and some face rubbing into the mat. We hit a reverse chinlock followed by a regular chinlock until Ziggler fights up and gets two off a sunset flip.

They trade rollups for two each and Ziggy goes to the middle rope, only to be knocked down so Dean can slowly rake his back. A superplex gets two for the champion so Dean flips over the top and goes up but Ziggler catches him in a top rope X Factor for two. Ambrose's full nelson is countered into a rollup for two and Dean goes to the corner.

A Stinger Splash and ten punches set up a clothesline for two on Ambrose and it's off to the sleeper. Dean easily suplexes his way to freedom and a near fall but gets caught in the Fameasser for a close two. Dean's

bulldog driver is countered into a rollup for two but the second attempt is good for the pin to retain the title at 9:54.

Rating: C+. I liked this one more than I thought I would. This is the kind of match the show needed: a fast paced, back and forth match with both guys looking good. A clean win over a former world champion is nothing but good for Dean and the match was a nice pickup as well. Good stuff here.

Sting is named best US Champion ever over Bobo Brazil, Harley Race, Sgt. Slaughter and Ricky Steamboat.

Tag Titles: Prime Time Players vs. Shield

It's Rollins/Reigns defending as the Players won tag team turmoil on the pre-show. Rollins and Titus start in a nice power vs. speed matchup. Seth can't throw Titus around and has his cross body caught, only for O'Neil to throw him down like it's nothing. Off to Young with a headlock on the mat followed by some shoulder blocks and a clothesline for two. Roman gets the tag and blocks an O'Connor Roll before being sent to the outside.

A big elbow gets two for Young and it's back to Titus to pound on Rollins some more. All Players so far as Titus blows the whistle, allowing Rollins to bail to the floor. Darren follows Seth to the floor, allowing Shield to take over as they come back inside. It's Reigns working over Darren before throwing him back to the outside.

Back in and Seth hooks a chinlock on Young before slapping him around a bit. Young comes back with a quick belly to belly but Reigns blocks the hot tag. Darren sends him into the corner and backdrops Seth down, allowing for the hot tag to Titus. O'Neil starts cleaning house and hits the release fall away slam on Rollins. Clash of the Titus gets two as Reigns makes the trademark Shield save. Young and Roman go to the floor but Reigns jumps back in for the spear on Titus, giving Seth the

retaining pin at 7:30.

Rating: C. This was fine all things considered. The Players weren't going to get the belts and everyone knew it, but it's nice to see a fresh team in the title scene. It's not like those two getting a title shot is a stretch or anything so I can't imagine a ton of complaints about Young being pushed. Nothing special here but it was fine.

We look at Heyman vs. Punk some more.

DX is named the greatest tag team of all time over the Wild Samoans, the Bulldogs, the LOD and the Harts. That's so laughable I'm not even going to bother making fun of it.

We recap the main event. Bryan won the title from John Cena at Summerslam before being screwed over by HHH and Randy Orton, bringing in the new Corporation with Orton being named best for business. Bryan was then beaten down for weeks on end as he waited for his one on one rematch with Orton here tonight. No one has been allowed to help Bryan for fear of losing their jobs. Cody Rhodes questioned things and lost his job in a match against Orton.

Hulk Hogan dominates Cena, Punk, HHH and Austin as Best WWE Champion ever. All of the polls were landslides.

WWE Championship: Randy Orton vs. Daniel Bryan

HHH has guaranteed no interference but there are no special rules. BIG pop for Bryan as expected. Feeling out process to start with Bryan taking the arm for early control. Orton takes him down with a shoulder but Bryan fires off a knee to the ribs to take over. Bryan unleashes the kicks but Orton comes right back with a clothesline. Randy takes too much time posing and Bryan comes back with right hands, only to be clotheslined down again for two.

We hit the chinlock for a bit before Orton fights up and pounds away at Orton's head with some good aggression. Randy comes back with a knee to the ribs and the slow circle stomp They're doing the slow build here for the big finishing sequence. Orton rains down right hands in the corner with the fans chanting NO on each one in a nice touch. Bryan fights back with the running clothesline and the kicks in the corner as Orton is suddenly reeling. The headbutt connects to send Orton to the floor for the FLYING GOAT.

Back in and the missile dropkick sends Orton to the floor again, setting up a second FLYING GOAT! Back in again but Orton bails to the other side of the ring but Bryan's third FLYING GOAT meets a forearm. Orton hits the Elevated DDT on the floor but Bryan slides back in at nine for a nice false finish. Orton does the finger point and loads up the RK0, only to have Bryan escape but knock the referee to the floor.

Bryan can't get the YES Lock but there's a second referee in now. Orton's powerslam gets two but the Elevated DDT is countered into the YES Lock in the middle of the ring. Bryan is CRANKING on it too with the arm looking like a pretzel. Orton very slowly crawls over and finally makes the rope in another nice false finish. There are more kicks in the corner but the running dropkick misses. The first referee is still on the floor which makes me very nervous of a double fall.

Orton puts Bryan on the corner but Bryan slips through the legs and crotches the champion. Orton is put down into the Tree of Woe for more kicks to the ribs and now the running dropkick connects. Bryan loads up a belly to back superplex but Orton knocks him down, only to have Daniel pop up with a forearm to a seated champion. Now Bryan's superplex connects but Bryan hangs on by the legs.

A LONG flying headbutt hits Orton but Randy is out at two. The original referee is back in now which isn't something you see that often. Bryan unleashes more kicks but Orton catches the big one into the high collar suplex to put both guys down. Orton can't get a backslide so Bryan hits

the big kick to the head and the running knee gets the pin and the title 17:49.

Rating: B+. This took awhile to get going but once they got on a roll they didn't stop. That running knee has become a devastating finisher and it worked very well here again. I'm sure there will be more shenanigans in the future but the match tonight was very good. Solid stuff here and I can't say I'm upset that Bryan won. Good stuff here, as you would expect.

Bryan celebrates to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. The last couple of matches saved this from being one of the least interesting shows I've ever seen. It's still not a good show but it setup Battleground well enough. That's the problem with having three PPVs in seven weeks: there's not enough time to build anything up. Nothing really happened tonight and it felt like a big episode of Raw. I've seen worse but this was a huge drop after Summerslam.

Results

Prime Time Players won Tag Team Turmoil last eliminating the Real Americans

Curtis Axel b. Kofi Kingston – Neckbreaker into a faceplant

AJ Lee b. Natalya, Naomi and Brie Bella – Black Widow to Natalya

Rob Van Dam b. Alberto Del Rio via DQ when Del Rio wouldn't break the cross armbreaker

Paul Heyman/Curtis Axel b. CM Punk – Heyman pinned Punk after a spear through a table by Ryback

Dean Ambrose b. Dolph Ziggler – Bulldog driver

Shield b. Prime Time Players – Spear to O'Neil

Daniel Bryan b. Randy Orton – Running knee to the head

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Monday Night Raw – September 9, 2013: BRYAN DID IT!

Monday Night Raw

Date: September 9, 2013

Location: Air Canada Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

We're in Bizarro Land tonight with three stories for the show. First of all, Edge is back for one show only to promote the season premiere of his TV show Haven and likely cutting a big promo on what's going on in WWE at the moment. Other than that we have Goldust returning to fight for his brother's job against Randy Orton in a match that will be more interesting for the story than the wrestling. On top of that it's the go home show for Night of Champions so we'll get the final push. Let's get to it.

Here's Edge to open things up to a big reaction. He still has the short hair which is still strange to see from him. Chimmel even throws in an over the voice crack for old times' sake. It's the Cutting Edge which is back due to a request from HHH. The boss wanted to have Edge back to talk with his old partner. Not Christian, but Randy Orton. Edge however doesn't see anything interesting in Randy Orton because Edge made cashing

in MITB cool.

Orton is just a puppet who has Shield do his fighting for him. Therefore, Orton won't be the guest tonight. The guest will be someone good for business (Edge: "Say YES if you agree with me"): Daniel Bryan. As Bryan comes out, we see a clip from the end of last week's show with Big Show knocking Bryan out cold.

Bryan says having this many people chanting your name helps because he's taken a lot of TripleBombs, a lot of RKOs and a lot of Knock Out punches. No matter how many times HHH holds him down though, he'll be WWE Champion. Edge says Bryan deserves a fair shot at Orton and asks Bryan if he thinks he can beat Randy. Can he shove it in HHH's face and become WWE Champion? Can Bryan become the face of the WWE? Bryan is about to say yes but here's Orton for an interruption.

Orton calls it a shame that Edge can only get a reaction in a place like Canada. Edge thinks Orton acts like an entirely different body part than a face. The Ortons have a history of long running medical problems. Bob had a bad arm forever and Orton has no spine. HHH has made Orton his puppet. As great a mind as HHH has for the business, he's flat out bad at picking talent. This brings out HHH but Edge cuts him off, reminding HHH that he (Edge) can't get in trouble because he doesn't work here. HHH has said that Edge, Chris Jericho and John Cena had no future so why should we believe what HHH says about Bryan?

HHH plugs Haven on Friday and admits that he was wrong about Jericho and Cena, but he was right about Edge being a failure. The bottom line is that the experiment of the Rated R Superstar was a failure because he never drew a dime. At the end of the day, the best way to shut up HHH is to prove him wrong. Bryan is going to get that chance by facing Dean Ambrose here tonight.

Since Dean will have Shield in his corner, Bryan can have Big Show in his corner. HHH says he isn't a dictator, but Edge cuts him off by saying he

earned his Hall of Fame ring instead of marrying into it. The boss says it's easy to talk when you know no one can come down there and hurt you, but maybe he can hurt the ones Edge loves. Here's Shield dragging out an unconscious Christian as we go to a break.

Back from a break with Edge storming in on HHH and Stephanie but Shield jumps between them. Edge wants to be cleared for one night only so he can take HHH apart. HHH wants to know who Edge thinks he is by storming into his city (HHH's) of Toronto like this. He tells Edge to get out of this town and off of his show, threatening him with Shield.

Kofi Kingston vs. Curtis Axel

Non-title here. Axel hammers away on Kofi and hits a quick dropkick for two. Kofi flips out of a belly to back suplex and hits a spinning chop to take Axel down. The SOS gets a quick two but Curtis grabs the rope to escape. Axel heads to the floor but comes back in to pound on Kofi in the corner, eventually drawing a DQ at 2:14.

Heyman yells at Axel that this can't happen on Sunday. Axel goes over to Kofi but gets his head kicked off.

Video on Goldust to hype up his match with Orton.

Medics look at Heyman's leg in the back due to him slipping on some water earlier. I smell goldbricking.

We look at the end of last week's show with Bryan vs. Big Show and Bryan being laid out. Again.

Booker T comes up to Big Show in the back and talks about everything that big Show wants to do to everyone tonight. Show needs to remember his daughter and his family when he's out there tonight. He can't let his pride make him make a mistake. Show says pride is all he has left.

Wyatt Family promo.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Bray Wyatt

That's quite the upgrade for Bray. Wyatt pounds Ziggler down to start and shouts GAME OVER. Ziggler comes back with a dropkick but Bray runs through him as we take a quick break. Back with Ziggy fighting out of a chinlock but getting caught with an elbow to the jaw. Off to a reverse chinlock but Ziggler fights out and pounds away with everything he can throw. The dropkick and Fameasser gets two but Ziggler has to avoid the Family, allowing Bray to crush him in the corner. Sister Abigail gets the pin at 6:40. Not enough shown to rate but this was pretty much a Wyatt squash.

Video of Goldust's comedy bits over the years, mainly with Booker T.

Heyman comes out on crutches, flanked by Curtis Axel and a guy who could be Damien Sandow's twin but is actually a doctor. Heyman doesn't care for the Canadian healthcare system, which is why he's brought along his personal physician from New York City. Apparently Heyman has torn his meniscus or ACL from slipping on the water. Therefore, he's out of the match with Punk on Sunday.

This brings out Maddox with the famed Dr. Samson for an official WWE medical examination. Heyman is told to sit in a chair for the knee examination and we have to see his bare leg. Fans: "This is awkward!" Samson checks all of the ligaments and Heyman says everything is very sore. The diagnosis is that Heyman is fine so Heyman freaks. This brings out Punk with the kendo stick and Heyman sprints off, meaning the jig is up. Punk beats up Heyman's doctor for fun.

Brie Bella/Natalya/Naomi vs. Layla/Alicia Fox/Aksana

AJ is on commentary as Trinity starts with Aksana. The Rear View gets a

quick two as AJ talks about the Divas Title being reality. Trinity goes up top but Aksana shakes the ropes to bring her down and take over. Layla chokes Trinity on the ropes and gets two off a dropkick. AJ: "I'm too old for you Jerry. I'm 26." Trinity finally gets in a shot to bring in Natalya vs. Alicia. Nattie cleans house as Cole talks about AJ having a 25% chance of keeping her title. AJ: "Well I had a million to one shot at making it in WWE and I main evented Raw." Point to AJ. Natalya hooks the Sharpshooter on Alicia for the win at 2:53.

Video on Goldust's in ring accomplishments.

Alberto Del Rio vs. R-Truth

Del Rio easily takes Truth down to start but gets sent to the floor for a dive by the non-champion. The fans chant for the announcers as Del Rio catches Truth with the running enziguiri to knock him off the apron. Back in and we hit the chinlock followed by a clothesline for two on Truth. R comes back with a leg lariat and the sitout front suplex for two of his own. Now the chant is for Undertaker as Del Rio hits a tilt-a-whirl slam. The low superkick and the armbreaker are good for the win for the champion at 3:50.

Rating: D+. Just a squash here to set up Del Rio for the title defense on Sunday but it was better than expected. It can't be a good sign when Del Rio beating a jobber to the stars is a big win for him though. A champion of any kind shouldn't need a win like this going into a PPV. It's not a good sign for the booking leading into the title defense.

There's a five team Tag Team Turmoil match with the Real Americans, the Usos, 3MB, Prime Time Players and Tons of Funk for the #1 contendership this Sunday.

Zeb Colter thinks Canada is a bad neighbor but they can all be saved if they start caring about more than hockey.

Antonio Cesaro vs. Santino Marella

Cesaro takes him down with a dropkick as soon as the bell rings. A clothesline puts Santino down but he comes back with his strikes as Cole talks about Marella's Battle Arts Academy. Cesaro will have none of this though and hooks a giant swing with a TON of revolutions. As in this goes on for like 30 seconds. It's STILL going!

Cesaro throws him down after almost a minute straight of spinning but Santino comes right back. The saluting headbutt sets up the Cobra but Cesaro uppercuts him down for two. A running European uppercut in the corner gets two and Cesaro starts slapping him. Santino comes back with a throw and gets the pin at 3:45.

Rating: F. Not for the wrestling but for the stupid booking. We announce Cesaro for a big PPV match and have him do the awesome giant swing, but the comedy goof is back so we have to give him a win for no apparent reason. Either A, wait until after the PPV match or B, USE SOMEONE ELSE. Put a 3MB guy in there (only two will be in the PPV match) or Wade Barrett or someone else not doing something. Why waste a cool moment like the giant swing for the sake of giving a comedy guy a win? Because there's no long term thinking in the midcard and hasn't been for years.

Damien Sandow vs. The Miz

Miz takes over with a quick suplex but Sandow takes him into the corner with some shoulders to the ribs. Miz comes back with the top rope ax handle for two. Sandow avoids a low kick to the face and hits a quick Russian legsweep. The Wind-Up elbow gets two on Miz but he comes back with a kick to the leg. Cue Fandango for a distraction, allowing Sandow to roll Miz up for the pin at 3:49. I believe that's Sandow's first one on one win since June.

Rating: D. This was nothing at all as neither guy has anything going for them at all. I have no idea what it is that the fans love about the

“distraction leads to a rollup” finish but it’s been beaten so far into the ground that it’s hit water. Miz vs. Fandango doesn’t do anything for anyone but at least it gives them something to do.

Goldust talks about Cody living right and how he wants to make up for his past failures by saving Cody’s job tonight. HHH interrupts and says he hopes Goldie doesn’t let them down.

Randy Orton vs. Goldust

If Goldust wins, his real life brother Cody Rhodes gets his job back. Kayfabe takes another bullet as Cole talks about Dustin Rhodes coming here and being given the Goldust character instead of just being a creepy guy who does this on his own idea. JBL drops the Crockett name to confuse most people under the age of 30. Goldust gets in some quick offense and knocks Orton the floor for a breather.

Back in and Orton pounds away but misses a dropkick, giving Goldust two. Orton fires off right hands but Goldust counters the powerslam into a rollup for two. Randy rolls to the floor to avoid Shattered Dreams and we take a break. Back with Goldust sending Randy into the steps but being sent into the post to give the champion momentum all over again. Orton gets two back inside and hits the circle stomp followed by a chinlock.

Goldust fights up and hits a bulldog out of nowhere to put both guys down. The sliding uppercut staggers Orton and Goldie rains down right hands in the corner. Goldust is looking really winded as he gets two off a rollup. Orton comes back with the Elevated DDT but the RK0 is countered into Cross Rhodes for two. Not that it matters as the RK0 is good for the pin at 14:54.

Rating: C-. Is this supposed to be surprising on any level? On the best day of his career, Goldust was an upper midcarder at best and he’s fighting the reigning WWE Champion. Goldust has never been close to Orton’s level but we’re supposed to believe he can come out of retirement

and beat him here? He looked really winded near the end too which didn't help things.

Post match Orton says he'll shatter Bryan's dreams at Night of Champions.

Stephanie "consoles" Goldust by reminding him of all the people he let down and calling him a loser. Oh and tell Dusty that she says hi.

Rob Van Dam vs. Ryback

Del Rio comes out and says that the people will be chanting ADR on Sunday. Ryback shoves Van Dam down to start but gets caught by a kick to the face. An elbow to the jaw puts Rob down and Ryback pounds away before hooking an abdominal stretch. Van Dam escapes and hits the step over kick followed by Rolling Thunder for one. The top rope front flip gets two on Ryback and the top rope kick puts him down again. Ryback bails to the floor to avoid the Five Star but Rob's dive to the floor only hits barricade. Rob is crotched against the post (barely) for the DQ at 2:58.

Ryback Shell Shocks Van Dam post match.

Stephanie tells Big Show not to touch Shield during the match tonight or he's fired. Big Show destroys a TV.

Dean Ambrose vs. Daniel Bryan

Big Show and Shield are at ringside. Bryan fires off kicks in the corner to start but Dean comes back with some chops. Daniel gets in some more kicks and Ambrose bails to the floor for a conference. Back in and Daniel kicks away even more before starting on Dean's arm. The seated surfboard doesn't last long as Ambrose makes the rope to escape. Bryan flips over Ambrose in the corner and hits the running clothesline followed by a single arm butterfly suplex. Bryan goes up for the headbutt, only to be distracted by Rollins and knocked into the apron as we take a break.

Back with Dean sending Bryan into the buckle but Bryan avoids a charge into the corner. There are the running dropkicks and the kicks in the corner followed by a top rope hurricanrana for two. Dean avoids the big swinging kick to the head but and grabs a rollup for two. Bryan slaps on the YES Lock but Ambrose gets to the rope. Bryan misses another dropkick in the corner and gets rolled up (with trunks) for two.

Dean loads up a superplex but gets crotched down into the Tree of Woe for more kicks. A belly to back superplex gets two on Ambrose as Big Show plays cheerleader. Bryan fires off more kicks to Ambrose but misses a charge and falls to the floor. Reigns' spear hits the steps and Rollins' dive hits the announce table. Dean DDTs Bryan on the floor and sends him back inside for two, only to get caught in a small package for the pin by Bryan at 14:08.

Rating: B. Good match here as you would expect from these two. Ambrose is MONEY in the ring and can have a good match against almost anyone. Bryan continues to be on fire with the crowd but the title isn't changing on Sunday. I'm worried that the reactions are going to die down eventually but they're still solid enough for now.

Post match Bryan avoids a charge from Ambrose and sends him into the tag champions. Cue Orton but Bryan hits the FLYING GOAT to take him down. Shield is back up though and beats Bryan down but Big Show gets up with a chair. Of course he drops it though as Orton throws Bryan back into the ring for the RK0. Big Show slowly walks up the ramp but HHH and Stephanie come out and order him to knock Bryan out.

Big Show doesn't want to do it but Orton tells him to follow orders. Orton holds up Bryan for the punch but Big Show won't do it. Orton throws Bryan down and takes too long yelling at Big Show, allowing Orton to hit the running knee to end the show. This would be the 1st consecutive show to end with Daniel Bryan standing up since he won the WWE Championship.

Overall Rating: C+. I liked this one tonight. It felt like there was an

energy tonight that we haven't had in a few weeks. Things are looking good for Night of Champions, but it feels like it's going to be a filler show before we get to the next big show. Edge helped a bit but the Goldust match didn't do much for me. The main event was solid though as Shield continues to have good matches every week. This wasn't a great show but it did a good job at setting up the PPV, which is the right idea here.

Results

Kofi Kingston b. Curtis Axel via DQ when Axel wouldn't stop attacking Kingston in the ropes

Bray Wyatt b. Dolph Ziggler – Sister Abigail

Natalya/Brie Bella/Naomi b. Layla/Alicia Fox/Aksana – Sharpshooter to Natalya

Alberto Del Rio b. R-Truth – Cross Armbreaker

Santino Marella b. Antonio Cesaro – Throw

Damien Sandow b. Miz – Rollup

Randy Orton b. Goldust – RKO

Rob Van Dam b. Ryback via DQ when Ryback sent Van Dam into the post

Daniel Bryan b. Dean Ambrose – Small Package

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Smackdown – September 6, 2013: Unlucky Number Seven

Smackdown

Date: September 6, 2013

Location: Target Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Michael Cole

We're almost three weeks into the new Corporation and not a lot has really changed. Daniel Bryan is still getting destroyed every week, the roster still won't help him and it still makes all the good guys look like cowards who won't stand up for anyone. The other main story is Punk vs. Heyman which is set for a handicap tag at Night of Champions. After that I could see the two stories merging with Punk helping Bryan in his war with the Corporation. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Cody getting a match against Orton and losing his job as a result. No mention of Bryan and Big Show in the intros here.

Opening sequence.

HHH and the GM's are in the ring (with a red carpet) and the roster on the stage with Shield standing guard at ringside. HHH says as of Monday, Cody Rhodes is no longer a WWE Superstar. He talks about Cody being insubordinate to the COO of the WWE, making him disrespectful to the fans since HHH is the WWE. How long do you think he's wanted to say that line? He gave Cody a chance to fight for his job but Rhodes lost, meaning Cody Rhodes fired Cody Rhodes.

That was hard since HHH is friends with the Rhodes Family but as COO he has to make some hard decisions. However, tonight he's going to allow for

an open forum for any superstar to air their grievances. No one says anything so HHH begs them to open up to him so he can work hard for everyone here. Damien Sandow supports the firing of Cody Rhodes because Cody embodied everything that was bad for business.

HHH says he appreciates that but doesn't want this to be all about kissing up to him. Kofi Kingston goes to the mic and says the entire locker room has been living in fear since Cody was fired and that's not good for business. HHH took Cody's livelihood away and that makes everyone else live in fear. HHH is about to respond but 3MB cuts him off to complain about Big Show just standing around watching everything. Oh and thank you HHH for having an awesome management style.

RVD comes to the mic and says HHH brought him back to WWE a few months ago. Rob expected things to be better now but the vibe isn't very cool around here. HHH: "I've been waiting since 2000 to have RVD call me dude." HHH thinks Rob is still cool and asks to hear from someone else.

Ryback is tired of being called a bully and HHH agrees because it wasn't Ryback's fault Ziggler was hurt on Raw. Therefore tonight it's Ryback vs. Ziggler again. HHH stops for a minute to say that Daniel Bryan isn't here because Bryan thinks he's above everyone else on the stage. Tonight it's Bryan vs. a member of the Shield of Bryan's choice. HHH thanks the stars for their honesty and gives Kofi a non-title match against Curtis Axel. RVD gets a non-title match as well against Randy Orton. Orton gets his big introduction to end this segment.

Time for a sidebar. This segment shows a lot of what's wrong with this whole story: it's a HHH story and everyone else is just there. A few weeks ago after Bryan destroyed the Escalade, HHH said Orton was just holding the WWE Title for him. Tonight HHH said he was the WWE. The guys that all said stuff were treated to HHH's unfunny jokes as HHH tries to be a cool heel.

Much like the far too long feud with Lesnar, this is a HHH story which we

don't need. Everyone else is just there in the background but it's HHH front and center every week. More people are going to be elevated throughout the story but so far it's only pushed HHH. It's still entertaining and has potential, but there's too much HHH dominance so far and it's hurting things.

Randy Orton vs. Rob Van Dam

Del Rio sits in on commentary. Rob starts with some shoulder into the ribs and a kick to the face for two. Another kick to the face gets two more and a slingshot legdrop has Randy writhing around on the mat. A top rope kick to the face gets two for Rob but Orton counters Rolling Thunder into a powerslam for two. Orton stomps Van Dam's head but Rob comes back with yet another kick for two. The fans chant for ECW as Randy pounds away at Rob's head for two.

Rob comes back with the fifth kick to the face of the match as Del Rio says Ricardo was stealing money from him, hence the split. We head to the floor with Orton being draped across the barricade, only to move from Rob's kick to the back. I don't think I've ever seen that move miss before. Back in and Orton goes after the leg with a Robinsdale Crunch before stopping to pose.

Randy throws him back to the floor and we take a break. Back with Rob fighting out of the chinlock and getting two off a superkick and a standing moonsault. A spinwheel kick in the corner staggers Orton but he avoids a monkey flip and kicks Rob's leg out for two. The Elevated DDT puts Rob down but the RK0 is countered with, say it with me, a kick to the head. A rollup gets two for Rob and now Rolling Thunder connects.

The Five Star misses and Rob rolls to the floor for a second, only to come back in for another kick to Randy's face. Alberto gets off commentary and sends Ricardo into the post, drawing Rob into a dive to the floor, taking Del Rio out. Randy sends RVD into the announce table and hits the Elevated DDT on the floor (the same move that wrote RVD out

of the WWE six years ago, not mentioned here of course) before the RK0 gets the pin at 10:18 shown of 13:18.

Rating: B-. Good match here with Orton continuing to turn his usual spots into heel moves quite well. I'm not wild on the booking idea of having both the champion and the challenger losing as we head into the PPV but such is life as the World Heavyweight Champion in the WWE anymore. At least Orton is still looking strong.

Post match Del Rio beats up Rob and puts him in the cross armbreaker.

Daniel Bryan says that he wasn't invited to the town hall meeting and the only attitude problem he has is that he wants to be WWE Champion. Shield can pick a member to face him because any of them are fine with him.

AJ runs into Layla, Aksana and Alicia Fox (who is at least six inches taller than all three of them) and says that she'd rather face any of them rather than the Total Divas because the three of them are actual wrestlers. AJ has a plan.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Ryback

This is a rematch from Monday where Ambrose jumped Ziggler before the match. Ziggler escapes a quick gorilla press and low bridges Ryback out to the floor. Back in and Ziggler hits a quick dropkick but misses a splash into the corner to give Ryback control. Dean Ambrose jumps in on commentary out of nowhere and goes into that creepy voice of his.

Ryback puts on a bearhug and gets a two count out of it before lifting Ziggler back into the air. A BIG DDT gets Dolph out of trouble and he pounds away on Ryback in the corner. Dolph gets two off a neckbreaker and the Fameasser gets the same. Ryback knocks Ziggy to the floor but misses a charge into the steps. Ziggler goes after Ambrose but walks into the Meat Hook to take his head off. Back in and the Shell Shock ends Ziggler

at 4:32.

Rating: C. This was more angle advancement for Ziggler vs. Ambrose than anything else but it's good to see Ryback getting some wins in his new persona. Ziggler's fall from grace continues but I guess a US Title shot is better than nothing. The fans did seem more into Ziggler than usual so maybe the fighting against odds idea might work for him.

Curtis Axel vs. Kofi Kingston

Non-title. They fight over a top wristlock to start and the fans are entirely behind the hometown boy Axel here. Axel takes him to the mat as we open with some nice chain wrestling. Off to a headlock by Axel but Kofi fights out for the double leapfrog and jumping back elbow to the jaw. Curtis has a quick consultation with Heyman and walks right into a headscissors.

Kofi dropkicks him to the floor but Axel steps to the side before Kofi can launch the suicide dive. Instead Axel tries to send Kingston into the steps, only to have Kofi jump over the steps, turn around and use the steps as a springboard for a clothesline. A Heyman distraction lets Axel shoulder Kofi to the floor and we take a break. Back with Axel holding a chinlock but Kofi comes back with kicks to the ribs. Axel will have none of that though and hits a clothesline to the back of the head for a close two.

The fans want to see a PerfectPlex but instead they get Axel jumping into Kofi's boots to put both guys down. Kofi speeds things up but walks into a great looking dropkick for two more. The dueling chants begin but Kofi misses a charge into the corner and gets caught in a quick Tree of Woe. Not that it matters as Kofi escapes and hooks the SOS out of nowhere for the pin at 6:44 shown of 9:44.

Rating: C. This was nothing special and the ending came from way out of left field. I guess the idea they're going for is Axel could lose at any

time to Punk and leave Heyman alone but it didn't do this match any favors. Also it's not like this does much for Kofi as he's perpetually in the midcard title hunt. Not a bad match but the sudden ending hurt it a bit.

We get the Bray Wyatt promo from Raw on Kane disappearing while talking about Icarus. The myth, not the indy guy.

Heyman is panicking over what might happen at the PPV when Renee asks him about that very thing. Paul calls tonight an error in judgment and takes the blame instead of putting it on Axel. Renee says that Punk has promised to give Heyman the beating of his life which freaks Paul out even worse.

Naomi vs. Brie Bella

Have we ever gotten an explanation of why she's Naomi in WWE and Trinity on Total Divas? Brie kicks her down and puts on a chinlock while shouting that she'll be Divas Champion. Trinity fights out and hits a flipping clothesline for two before they tumble to the floor where AJ, Alicia, Aksana and Layla run to the ring for the DQ at 1:39.

The Total Divas are beaten down and AJ declares herself Divas Champion. This is somewhat booed, which makes me chuckle as they're really going with the Total Divas as the good people here.

Los Matadores are coming.

Real Americans vs. Usos

Antonio now has a We The People cape, making him even more amazing than he was before. Cesaro charges right at Jey with a dropkick at the bell to send him to the floor. Swagger gets the tag and runs Jey down with a clothesline on the floor before heading back inside. The Vader Bomb

crushes Jey and a double stomp from Cesaro makes it even worse. Back to Swagger for a double arm trap but Jey fights up and backdrops Jack to the floor.

The hot tag brings in Jimmy who throws Antonio to the floor and hits a big dive to take him down again. Back in and the running Umaga attack in the corner gets two as Swagger saves. Jey superkicks Cesaro down and loads up the Superfly Splash but Swagger shoves him right into the European uppercut for the pin by Cesaro at 3:37. Jey sold that perfectly by stopping cold on impact and looking like he ran into a building.

Rating: C. This started slowly but the ending helped a lot. I'm glad to see Cesaro winning again but he needs to get away from Swagger. Jack is such damaged goods at this point and it's dragging Cesaro down. Antonio could be a great choice for the corporate enforcer if treated as a serious threat, but instead he's having to drag Swagger along with him.

HHH comes up to see Big Show and gives him a handicap match against 3MB for what they said earlier. Big Show can use the like stress balls.

The Raw ReBound covers the Big Show/HHH/Bryan stuff that closed the show.

Big Show vs. 3MB

Slater is the first lamb to be slaughtered and Show takes out the knee. The other two are knocked to the floor and the carnage begins. Show unleashes the chops on Mahal's chest and spears Drew in half. Back in and a double chokeslam takes out Mahal and McIntyre but it's the WMD to pin Slater at 2:35. Exactly what you would expect here.

Shield comes out as Show leaves but HHH takes the giant to the back.

Seth Rollins vs. Daniel Bryan

Reigns steps forward to distract Bryan and give Seth a cheap shot to start. Bryan comes back with a knee to the ribs and fires off the kicks to a kneeling Rollins. A Cactus Clothesline sends both guys to the floor but Bryan heads inside with Shield closing in on him. Rollins knocks him back to the floor and kicks Bryan in the side of the head for two. Off to a chinlock for a bit before Bryan comes back with forearms and a release German suplex. Bryan hits the corner dropkick and its missile cousin for two.

Back up and Bryan fires off more kicks but the Rollins ducks the roundhouse kick and shoves Daniel to the apron. An enziguri puts Bryan on the floor and Reigns gets in a cheap shot to take Bryan down. Bryan is whipped into the steps but Rollins' top rope knee is countered into the YES Lock. A Reigns distraction breaks it up though and Bryan hits the FLYING GOAT to take out Roman. Not that it matters though as the running knee to the head pins Rollins at 6:06.

Rating: C+. This was the usual fast paced match these two are expected to have but the limited time they had kept it from being great. It's good to see Bryan get a clean pin over one of the guys that has tormented him for weeks now so at least he didn't get crushed again. Nice main event here but it needed a few more minutes.

Bryan bails to escape Shield and poses on the stage....but Orton lays him out with the belt to end the show. This would be the seventh consecutive show to end with Daniel Bryan laid out since he won the WWE Championship.

Overall Rating: C. This was just ok. We didn't get much development tonight and the show ended with Bryan laid out yet again. They have to do something by Night of Champions but they kind of put the brakes on Big Show's story tonight. Instead of being all upset he was given a bone by HHH and was on screen for about five minutes all night. Nothing to see here but it was an acceptable use of two hours.

Results

Randy Orton b. Rob Van Dam – RKO

Ryback b. Dolph Ziggler – Shell Shock

Kofi Kingston b. Curtis Axel – SOS

Naomi vs. Brie Bella went to a double DQ when Layla, Alicia Fox, Aksana and AJ Lee interfered

Real Americans b. Usos – European Uppercut to Jey Uso

Big Show b. 3MB – WMD to Slater

Daniel Bryan b. Seth Rollins – Running knee to the head

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Smackdown – August 30, 2013: The Eruption Is Coming

Smackdown

Date: August 30, 2013

Location: Thomas and Mack Center, Las Vegas, Nevada

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

We close out August with Daniel Bryan on a bad run of luck. For four straight shows now he's been left laying by Randy Orton and the new

Corporation, but luckily for him the fans are still WAY into him. That's only going to last for so long though until the fans start to view him as a guy who got lucky against Cena instead of an elite level star. Let's get to it.

Theme song opens us up.

We get things going with MizTV featuring guests Big Show and Dolph Ziggler. Miz says the three of them were all on the stage along with forty other superstars while Daniel Bryan had to run the Shield gauntlet. They were all told that if they said anything, HHH would make them miserable. However, Miz thinks it's time for them to speak up about how the WWE is being run. Big Show says that was one of the hardest things he's ever had to do. Ziggler is nervous to say anything and says let Big Show keep going. Miz is about to say something when HHH cuts him off.

HHH thinks MizTV is cool but wants to hear what Miz was about to say before he came to the ring and why Miz isn't in a suit. Miz says you never know when a fight could break out and wants to know if he can ask HHH a question. HHH says no he can't and asks why these three are taking the Daniel Bryan route and making it personal. They shouldn't be jealous of Randy Orton. After all, Orton isn't a guy who talks a lot but can't back it up or a guy who just happens to be big, but (to Ziggler) at least he's big enough.

HHH talks about how Orton being champion is what's best for business, meaning it makes more money for all of them. Miz is jealous because he can't get near the WWE Championship again, but since HHH is in a good mood he's giving Miz a shot at Randy Orton tonight. HHH saw Ziggler looking miserable because he lost to the Shield in a 3-1 handicap match, so tonight he gets a rematch with all three guys. That leaves Big Show, who gets the night off. Instead he gets to sit next to the announcers and do nothing about it whatsoever. Show looks like he wants to chew through steel but goes and sits down.

Randy Orton vs. The Miz

Non-title of course with Big Show at ringside. Orton takes Miz into the corner to start and we get a clean break. Miz jumps over Orton in the corner and clotheslines him down but Orton easily escapes a Figure Four attempt. Orton staggers him with a headbutt and gets two off a dropkick. Miz is tossed to the floor as Orton is doing a good job at making his usual spots into heel moves. Miz is dropped back first onto the barricade for two back inside.

We hit the chinlock but Miz fights up and pounds on Orton in the corner until the referee pulls him away. The running clothesline in the corner sets up Miz's top rope ax handle, only to have Orton kick him out of the air. The Elevated DDT is countered into a backdrop to the floor....and here comes Shield as we take a break. Back with Shield standing between the ring and the ramp as Orton sends Miz into the barricade.

The fans chant for Big Show as Orton throws Miz back inside for two. Orton does the circle stomp and hits another chinlock but Miz fights up with some elbows. A neckbreaker gets two for Miz but Orton escapes the Skull Crushing Finale. Now the Elevated DDT connects but Miz counters the RK0 into a backslide for two. A dropkick to the knee sets up the Figure Four and Orton is in trouble. Randy finally makes a rope and jumps to his feet for the RK0 and the pin at 10:02 shown of 13:02.

Rating: C+. Nice match here as Miz can have a decent performance against the right kind of opponent. The Figure Four still needs to go though as it just doesn't fit the rest of Miz's offense at all. As has been said many times, the guy used one move to get to the WWE Title and to the main event of Wrestlemania, so why would he need to change things? Good match here and a good win for Orton who got a clean pin.

Shield comes in for the post match beatdown but Bryan makes a save with a chair, sending the place into a frenzy. THIS is what they've been needing to do for weeks now.

Los Matadores are still coming.

Vickie yells at Bryan for what he just did and gives him a match with Ryback as a result.

We recap the Punk/Heyman/Axel segment from Raw. Thank goodness the fans were chanting Walrus instead of Boring because that was a great segment.

Rob Van Dam vs. Damien Sandow

Sandow says he'll win and win and win until he's world champion. Other than the winning part, he might be right and that's kind of scary. Rob hits a quick kick to take over and jumps up top for a legdrop of all things, good for two. Sandow comes back by sending him shoulder first into the post followed by the Russian legsweep and the Wind-Up Elbow for two. Big Show is still at ringside in case you were wondering. Sandow hooks the chinlock but Rob quickly fights up and snaps off a hurricanrana. Damien slows RVD down with a big boot but Rob hits a springboard kick to the face and the Five Star gets the pin at 2:37.

Post match here's Alberto who insults both Ricardo and RVD. Del Rio warns RVD to not sleep with the dogs because he'll wake up with fleas.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Shield

Rollins starts for Shield but Dolph knocks the other two members off the apron before going after Seth. A cross body gets two for Dolph and he pounds away on Rollins' head. Rollins gets him into the Shield corner for some stomping and it's off to Reigns. A Samoan drop from the Samoan gets two and Ambrose comes in to talk trash and pound away. The fans chant for Ziggler as JBL is having a great time watching this destruction.

Dean shouts at Ziggler in the corner so Ziggler slaps him in the face and backdrops the US Champion to the floor. Ziggler can't follow up though so

it's back to Rollins who counters the Fameasser into the always awesome looking buckle bomb. Reigns comes in off a blind tag and spears Ziggler out of his boots for the pin at 4:00.

Rating: C-. What else could they have done here? Thankfully this doesn't hurt Ziggler and I could see him getting the US Title shot at Night of Champions. That spear from Reigns continues to be awesome as I don't remember anyone ever throwing their legs in the air like he does. It looks like he's almost flying through the other person and it looks great every time.

Post match Shield chokes Ziggler on the ropes and taunts Big Show. The Triple Bomb leaves Ziggler laying and Big Show seething.

Here are Heyman and Axel with something to say. Axel introduces us to another clip of Heyman attacking Punk on Raw. Heyman wants to know what the fans want from him. Are they mad at him for the beating he gave his prodigal son on Monday? He isn't sorry for what he did because the fans voted him into that situation. Did they think he was going to take his beating like a man?

For 434 days he and Punk were the reigning WWE Champion and every single one of their opponents were put down using Heyman's plans and Punk's implementation. Every time Punk has come up against Heyman, it's been Punk on his back, looking up at his mentor. This brings us to Night of Champions, where Heyman might have to face Punk on his own again.

If that happens, the fans are expecting to see Punk beat Heyman into the ground, and Heyman is indeed afraid. If Punk gets his hands on him, you won't see Paul Heyman again. However, that fear could be Punk's worst enemy. Look at what Heyman has done to Punk out of love and think about what he could do if he was facing a beating at Punk's hands. More greatness from Heyman here.

Wyatt Family vs. Tons of Funk

Harper starts with Tensai and the fat man knocking Luke to the floor. Tons of Funk hit a double standing splash to Harper but Rowan breaks up the big splash. Harper kicks Tensai in the face and it's the discus lariat and splash combination for the pin on Tensai at 1:13. This was pretty sloppy for a seventy five second match.

Wyatt hits Sister Abigail on Tensai post match.

Los Matadores are still coming. That hasn't changed in the last hour.

We look at the AJ promo against the Total Divas from Monday.

Ryback vs. Daniel Bryan

Ryback has a new split color singlet. Thankfully we only hear about the Escalade for the first time during Bryan's entrance. Bryan charges right at him but gets shoved across the ring with ease. A slam puts Bryan down as Big Show looks on with a worried look. Ryback fires off some hard shoulders into the corner for two but after staggering Bryan with a headbutt, Ryback misses a charge into the post.

Bryan starts firing off the kicks and hits a running dropkick to the chest in the corner. Ryback rolls to the floor for the FLYING GOAT as Orton strolls down to the ring. The distraction allows Ryback to run Bryan over as we take a break. Back with Bryan fighting out of a chinlock and firing off kicks to the legs.

Daniel loads up the running clothesline but gets caught in a hard spinebuster for no cover. The Meat Hook connects for two s Ryback loads up a belly to belly superplex. Bryan doesn't feel like dying today so he headbutts Ryback down and hits the missile dropkick. Here come the kicks and the big one to the head is good for two. There's the YES Lock but Orton comes in for the DQ at 6:25 shown of 9:25.

Rating: C+. These two have good chemistry together as Bryan knows how to play the David role to Ryback's Goliath as well as anyone else. Bad character development and horrid win/loss record aside, there's potential in Ryback as a monster heel. Good match here as I've come to expect from these two.

Bryan is ready for Orton and catches him in the YES Lock but here's Shield for the save. Big Show is out of his chair and looks like he's about to explode. He finally slides into the ring but doesn't touch anyone. HHH comes raving down the aisle, demanding that Big Show get out of the ring. Show stays in the ring and stares down at HHH before finally climbing out. He looks like he's about to cry as HHH demands he go to the back.

The beating on Bryan continues as the announcers go into serious silent mode. Orton has Shield hold Bryan for more punishment and walks Bryan around the ring to look at all the people. The Batista thumbs up/down thing sets up the Triple Bomb and in case we haven't channeled enough heel stables for you yet, Orton spray paints NO on Bryan's chest to end the show. This would be the fifth consecutive show where Daniel Bryan has been left laying since winning the WWE Championship.

Overall Rating: B. I really liked tonight's show as they treated it like things mattered. I'm liking the main story more and more as it's reminiscent of 1998 when Undertaker refusing to fight Kane as Kane destroyed more and more people. At least we can almost guarantee the matches will be better this time around though. Overall though the show came off quite well with almost everything being at least good.

They could be on the verge of something huge here if they play their cards right, but they can't keep having Bryan get destroyed forever. The silver lining though is Bryan isn't losing matches and is being beaten down by impossible odds, so once he gets backup (which is clearly coming), he can fight Orton on level ground and get his big win.

Results

Randy Orton b. The Miz – RKO

Rob Van Dam b. Damien Sandow – Five Star Frog Splash

Shield b. Dolph Ziggler – Spear

Wyatt Family b. Tons of Funk – Splash to Tensai

Daniel Bryan b. Ryback via DQ when Randy Orton interfered

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On This Day: August 27, 1999 – ECW on TNN: The Era Of Suck Begins

First ECW on TNN

Date: August 27, 1999

Commentator: Joey Styles

From the title I think you get the idea here. This show is weird as it's a lot like the old WWF TV shows as it's a collection of previously aired matches thrown together here. The first show they taped was awful so they turned it into

this. The main thing is Lynn vs. Van Dam from Hardcore Heaven 99 which I'll re-review and see how it matches up with the original rating I gave it, which is something I don't think I've done before. Let's get to it.

We open with a clip of the Dudleys (who would leave for WWF in like a week) powerbombing someone through a flaming table as Joey says this isn't WCW or WWF but ECW.

Cue theme song. The main focus is Tazz who would leave in like 2-3 months and everyone knew that was going to happen.

Joey lists off a bunch of people to have held the TV Title but says RVD might be better than all of them.

TV Title: Rob Van Dam vs. Jerry Lynn

I think this is new commentary here but I'm not sure. This is really just a way to introduce Van Dam and give us what they know is an exciting match. You can't hear a word the ring announcer is saying. They start with a nice sequence where neither can get any real advantage but the fans love it. We actually get highlights of both guys in the middle of the match. I get that you want to showcase two of your top guys but dude, do it when there's not a match on.

Van Dam gets knocked to the floor and Lynn takes over. Lynn gets a top rope bulldog for two. RVD is bleeding from....something. I think at this point we go to a commercial as we get an ad for Anarchy Rulz. Joey suggests the Warrior could be coming to ECW. Oh dear. Yeah the commentary here is new. Lynn is bleeding too now after botching a fall to the floor and hitting his foot on the ropes. The replay has a rap song with it. Really?

Lynn gets a sunset powerbomb for two. What would an ECW match be without tables? Van Dam's eye is messed up and made of pretty colors. Van Daminator in the stands as this match is kind of hard to follow. Another commercial doesn't help as

they don't stop the match for it, which is either a good idea or a bad idea and I'm not sure which. Lynn gets another sunset powerbomb through the table on the floor.

CUE THE RAP SONG REPLAY! After a clip or a commercial, Fonzie takes a chair pelted at his head. Lynn goes for a top rope belly to belly but he just falls off. You know the chant we get from that. Cradle Piledriver is blocked and both guys are down. Split Legged Moonsault hits Lynn. PAY ATTENTION MORRISON. THAT IS HOW YOU DO THE FREAKING MOVE. And there's the Five Star out of more or less nowhere but Lynn rolls through for two. Van Daminator and a HUGE Five Star ends it.

Rating: B-. The clipping hurts this a lot. It makes this look like far less of an ultra competitive match and more like RVD just breaking a sweat. It's still good but at the same time it really makes Lynn look weak. At the same time though this was about RVD and that worked very well. This was still good but a different kind of good. I gave the PPV version a B as I still find these matches to be overrated by most ECW fans.

We plug Rollerjam (which as a kid I thought was a cool show. The women were hot if nothing else) and then talk about the ECW World Title, listing off guys that didn't win it but tried to, such as Konnan, Benoit, Austin and Foley. I'm not entirely sold on talking about guys that USED to be here, but you could look at it like this: We had these guys before they were superstars. Imagine what kind of buried treasures we have here now. That makes sense.

Shane threw down the NWA Title, which meant nothing to most fans watching this show but whatever. That was 5 years before the debut of the TV show. Didn't know that.

ECW World Title: Taz vs. Rhyno

This is from Hardcore TV or a house show. Rhyno hits a powerbomb 3 seconds in and Taz just pops up. Rhyno means nothing at this point which you can probably guess. Well we're

in Chicago if nothing else. Taz is massacring him here with Rhyno looking like a freaking jobber. He's hit two punches to the ribs and a no sold powerbomb. Tazz sets up a table and Rhyno hits new levels of offense with THREE punches to the ribs. Suplex through the table sets up the Tazmission. Total squash if there ever has been one.

Rating: N/A. This was DOMINANCE which is the idea I guess, but Rhyno looks like a joke here. The problem is that these matches are just random defenses with no meaning to them. We keep hearing about Steve Corino and how he's Taz's archenemy, but we never even see him.

Video on Sabu who is apparently awesome. No match or anything but just highlights.

Ad for Anarchy Rulz again.

Spike Dudley vs. Big Sal

Low blow and Acid Drop end it. Literally that's the whole thing. Who is Spike? Who is Sal? "Spike has done it again!" What does he do? Apparently that's not important. Ah ok they call him the Giant Killer.

The Impact Players introduce themselves and we have no idea if they mean anything or not. Cyrus pops up for no apparent reason as Jason makes gay jokes about Joey. We see clips of the Impact Players beating people up which helps a bit as we know they're dominant.

House show ads.

We get a BUNCH of clips of guys and a brief description (as in their nickname) of them. It's set to a Kid Rock song so what do you expect here?

Taz talks about how TNN and ECW are together now and how cool that is I guess. We get clips of famous people he's made tap out. He talks for like three minutes and that ends this mess.

Overall Rating: D. This was a total mess. Considering this is the first show, this was just awful as you learn nothing about the guys other than Taz being a tough guy and RVD is awesome. Other than that though you get nothing at all here though and other than a single good match to start, this gave us nothing. We have no idea about any feuds or angles or anything like that as it was just a few squashes and one big match from months earlier. This just didn't work as Heyman clearly didn't know what he was doing, which became a theme here. Bad show and just a car wreck of an hour.

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Smackdown – August 23, 2013: Randy Orton Is A Pretty Man

Smackdown

Date: August 23, 2013

Location: Rabobank Arena, Bakersfield, California

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's an interesting time in WWE as we have our first heel super stable in several years and they can do whatever the like because "we own the place." The two questions at the moment are what will Daniel Bryan do to fight these guys off and who will step up to help him in the war. Odds are we won't find out until Monday. Let's get to it.

We get clips from the main events of Summerslam.

Theme song.

Here's Vickie Guerrero to open us up. She's cleared the air with HHH and brings out Randy Orton, actually pronouncing the T for a change. Orton talks about being a role model and about how he didn't lie at all during this whole thing. He said he would be cashing in MITB very soon and that's exactly what he did. No one should have been surprised when he won the title on Sunday. The only person who should have been surprised was Orton himself, as he didn't expect HHH to do what he did, even though he didn't need the help. Orton says he's the face of the WWE but here's Bryan to disagree.

Before Bryan addresses the face of the WWE, he wants to say what he was trying to say on Raw: thank you John Cena for giving him the chance at Summerslam and for wrestling with a torn tricep. That one chance let him know what it feels like to be WWE Champion. As for the face of the WWE, it's already time for that face to change. Bryan doesn't look like Randy Orton. Orton is tall, chiseled and just pretty.

Bryan sees why HHH likes him so much, but Orton is also arrogant. He's been handed every opportunity because he's a third generation wrestler and it's been his Golden Ticket. Bryan can't get over how pretty Orton is and asks the fans to cheer for Orton because of it. Randy is so pretty that it makes Daniel want to kick him in the face.

Bryan has had to work his way up through the high school gyms wrestling on infected mats to get where he is today because he isn't tall and isn't pretty. However, he can wrestle and beat Orton for the WWE Championship. Bryan is entitled to a rematch and he wants it tonight. Say it along with Orton and I: Wait until the pay per view. They stare at each other and Orton tries an RK0, only to be dropkicked to the floor. Solid segment here with Bryan sounding like a natural rival to Orton and laying out the basic story. Orton saying he didn't know HHH was going to help him is

interesting as well.

Vickie rants about Bryan on the phone and says someone needs to teach him a lesson. Wade Barrett comes in and says he doesn't like Bryan either, so he'd be willing to take care of him tonight. Vickie says ok and makes it a no holds barred match. No make it extreme rules. Or inside a cage. Wasn't Vickie supposed to be all mega evil this time or something?

Cody Rhodes vs. Curtis Axel

Non-title. Feeling out process to start with Cody tripping Axel down to the mat. Curtis comes back with a great dropkick but Cody heads to the apron for a springboard dropkick of his own. Curtis rolls outside but moves before Cody can dive on him. Cody's back is rammed into the apron as we take a break.

Back with Curtis dropping elbows for two before hitting a Hennig necksnap for the same. We hit the chinlock for a bit but Cody avoids a middle rope fist a few seconds later. The Disaster Kick misses but Cody gets two off a sunset flip out of the corner. Heyman's distraction breaks up the moonsault press and Axel hits his neckbreaker into a faceplant for the pin at 3:55 shown of 6:55.

Rating: D+. So we build Cody up for weeks and then have him lose in less than seven minutes with the title not even on the line. To be fair though, Cody had almost a month of wins under his belt so it was long past time to bring him back to earth. He might jump to TNA or the UFC or Hollywood and we wouldn't want to make money off of him while we could right?

Post match Heyman wants to talk about CM Punk. He talks about being in emotional pain along with his physical pain because he made Punk the best in the world and then was betrayed. Punk lost to Lesnar at Summerslam and now Punk is in a downward spiral. Under Heyman's leadership, Axel has notched victory after victory and no one has been able to take the title

from him. Axel challenges Punk to an Intercontinental Title match on Raw because he can't lose with Heyman in his corner.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Big E. Langston

Langston jumps Ziggy before the bell and throws him around the ring with ease. The bell rings and Dolph avoids a charge in the corner, only to be slammed down for two. Langston gets two off a splash and we hit the chinlock. Dolph fights up and sends Big E. into the post before taking him down with a neckbreaker. A dropkick drops Big E. again and Ziggler counters a powerbomb into an X-Factor for two. AJ gets in a cheap shot on Ziggler and Langston runs him over for two. The Big Ending is escaped and Ziggler hits the Zig Zag for the pin at 2:01. Langston loses with a pre-match advantage and interference. So much for him.

Christian vs. Alberto Del Rio

Non-title here. Del Rio pounds away in the corner to start but gets backdropped out to the floor. Christian sends him into the barricade and Del Rio walks up the aisle as we take a break. Back with Del Rio kicking away in the corner but getting punched in the face to give Christian a breather. Christian is shoved to the floor to counter a tornado DDT, possibly injuring the shoulder that made him give up on Sunday.

Back in and the champion cranks on the arm before getting two off a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. Alberto misses a charge into the ropes and gets dropkicked out to the floor. Christian pounds away back inside the ring but misses a high cross body, allowing Alberto to dropkick him in the face for two. Christian's spinning sunset flip out of the corner gets two more but Del Rio avoids a middle rope dropkick and tries the armbreaker.

The Canadian rolls out and hits a tornado DDT out of the corner for two in a nice sequence. Alberto bails to the floor to avoid the spear and catches Christian with the running enziguiri for two back inside. Christian blocks the low superkick and tries the Killswitch, only to have

Del Rio send him shoulder first into the post. Alberto goes to the middle rope and rolls Christian into the armbreaker for the submission at 8:17 shown of 12:57.

Rating: B-. Another good match from these two and now the series is at 2-2. I'm guessing we're supposed to ignore the two losses by Del Rio because he won the next two, though I don't think many fans see it that way. The match itself was good stuff though with both guys building on spots they've used in their previous few matches.

Post match Del Rio talks about how awesome he is and how everyone else is a peasant. Is Del Rio being rich even a thing anymore? Del Rio says to follow him to greatness but Ricardo interrupts him. He says no one is going to lead him to greatness but now he's hanging out with RVD. Rob comes to the ring and Christian dropkicks Del Rio down, allowing Rob to hit Rolling Thunder. That was a pretty non-good guy move there from Christian.

We recap the opening segment of the show.

Big Show/Mark Henry vs. 3MB

Slater gets to start with Big Show and is launched into the corner before it's off to Henry. A big boot puts Slater down but Heath avoids a seated senton and brings in McIntyre for some stomping. Mahal comes in for the same but Slater is tagged in and run over by a BIG shoulder block. Big Show comes in and cleans house but Slater breaks up the pin after a chokeslam to McIntyre. JBL: "Dumb, dumb move." The World's Strongest Slam ends Slater and the WMD is good for the pin on Drew at 3:11.

Rating: D. The match was nothing and you can't complain about it too much. It did its job, though either monster could have done the same thing in the same amount of time. It would help to have some midcard tag teams for Henry and Show to beat but there's just not enough depth in the division to do that.

Post match Shield asks if beating 3MB is supposed to mean something. Seth says they're going to have fun knocking Show down again. Reigns will never respect Mark Henry and Rollins adds that they're just better than the monsters. BELIEVE IN THE SHIELD, even though Ambrose wasn't in this interview.

Antonio Cesaro vs. Darren Young

Young gets taken down seconds into the match and Cesaro pounds him into the corner. There's the gutwrench suplex but Cesaro charges into a boot in the corner. Antonio comes right back with the standing chinlock and a clothesline for two. Darren comes back with right hands and an overhead belly to belly followed by a northern lights suplex for two. A hot shot and the Gut Check are good for the pin at 2:31. Nothing match as Young's push continues.

Ryback signs an autograph for a fan's son but the fan doesn't know what his name is. Ryback rips up the picture he signed as a result. I'm with Ryback here. How did the fan not know his name when it's in big red letters on the front of his vest?

Punk has accepted the match with Axel for Raw.

The cage is lowered.

Daniel Bryan vs. Wade Barrett

Barrett pounds him into the corner to start but Bryan blocks a ram into the steel. Daniel pounds right hands in the corner but charges into a boot to the jaw. Now the ram into the cage works but Barrett can only get a two count. Bryan comes back with a backdrop into the cage and Daniel fires off kicks in the corner. There's the backflip over Barrett in the corner but the running clothesline is countered into the Winds of Change for two.

We take a break and come back with Barrett kicking Bryan's head into the cage. Now it's Barrett having the back of his head rammed into the steel and Bryan adds the running dropkick to crush Barrett even more. A missile dropkick gets two and Bryan fires off the kicks to Wade's chest. The big one to the head misses and Barrett sends him into the cage before clotheslining him inside out for a close two.

Wasteland is blocked via a grab of the ropes but Bryan gets caught in an electric chair for two. Barrett goes up the cage but Bryan makes a save. He can't German superplex Wade down and gets kicked to the mat, only to charge up the corner and pull Barrett back inside. Bryan hits a rolling powerbomb to bring Wade back to the mat and the running knee to the face is good for the pin at 8:58 shown of 11:58.

Rating: B. Good match here with Barrett looking like he could hang with the big boys. It's amazing how far he fell while being Intercontinental Champion because when he has a good opponent he can put on an entertaining match. Bryan was his usual good stuff here and the fans are still into him after Summerslam. Hopefully that holds up.

Post match Bryan celebrates on the floor but walks into an RK0.

Overall Rating: B. This was a really solid show as WWE continues their roll. We had good matches throughout the show with the bad stuff being pretty short. I'm not wild on the ending though. That's three times now that Orton has stood tall over Bryan in three shows and that's going to catch up with them. Bryan doesn't need to beat Orton down or anything, but he needs to be standing when a show ends soon. It's still very early in the story though so it's not like it's already dead or anything. Good show tonight.

Results

Curtis Axel b. Cody Rhodes – Neckbreaker into a faceplant

Dolph Ziggler b. Big E. Langston – Zig Zag

Alberto Del Rio b. Christian – Cross Armbreaker

Big Show/Mark Henry b. 3MB – WMD to McIntyre

Darren Young b. Antonio Cesaro – Gut Check

Daniel Bryan b. Wade Barrett – Running knee to the head

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On This Day: August 12, 2010 – Impact Wrestling 2010: WHOLE F’N SHOW! WHOLE F’N SHOW!

Impact

Date: August 12, 2010

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tazz

Episode Title: The Whole F’N Show

This is the PPV caliber show, since they NEVER have PPV style matches on TV. Nope, not TNA. I guess this is supposed to be like their Clash of the Champions or whatever. The ratings here should be most interesting. Hopefully there are no ECW

guys tonight and remember: NO TALKING ALL NIGHT. Any bets on that one?

AJ Styles vs. Kurt Angle

If Angle loses he retires. AJ has a tattoo on his side which looks weird but it has his initials and his kids' birthdays so I can live with that. Angle gets a SWEET suplex on the floor. This is non-title which just about gives away the ending as well as you could want it to. AJ is freaking awesome to watch, which is what irritates me about the whole Flair tribute thing. There's no need to add that in with his great stuff.

AJ does all of his usual stuff but can't get the pin. He hits the forearm and the Pele but none of them work. This isn't Angle's usual formula yet but of course it's good given who is out there. AJ avoids the running belly to belly but Angle hits a middle rope moonsault press which was NICE.

Ankle lock goes on and from that angle Kurt looks FAT! AJ misses his moonsault DDT thing which he hasn't busted out in years but the recovery was fine. Angle Slam gets two as this is a very fast paced match. Angle blocks the low blow into the ankle lock with the grapevine for the tap. Nice match but they needed more time, as in like twice the time.

Rating: B. Solid match here but with more time, as in like ten more minutes, this could have been a classic. They were WORKING out there though and everything flowed quite well. These two have mad chemistry together and it's clear why they get put on TV so often. I can live with the TV Champion losing, but I still see little reason to not make this a title match since the career thing is only for the top ten guys.

Knockouts Title: Angelina Love vs. Madison Rayne

Now, can we break the streak of title changes without an actual pin? How are we supposed to take this division seriously with the commentary the way it is? Naturally a lot

of the moves from Madison are shall we say suggestive? And make sure you get the back shots. Love kills her with a bunch of stuff and here's the motorcycle chick.

The crowd chants Tara as they know what's coming. Skye pops up from behind and DRILLS her with a chair. The helmet comes off and she's wearing a mask underneath. It comes half off but all we see is a mouth. Back in the ring Lights Out ends this and Love is a five time champion.

Rating: D. Crap match but did you expect anything else? Love looked like Mr. Perfect with the outfit and that was more or less the high point. This whole biker thing is going on to not make it look like Tara just returned a week later which is stupid since clearly the crowd knows who she is. This was a really short match but it did the job...whatever that was supposed to be.

Mr. Anderson vs. D'Angelo Dinero vs. Matt Morgan

Anderson is the only one to get a TV intro. The faces go after Morgan which doesn't work at all naturally as they wind up fighting over it. The rankings will be announced next week due to...something. Anderson with a Thesz Press as Morgan sits on the floor and lets them fight, which isn't a bad idea at all. Mic Check to Dinero and Morgan slides in for the save and to steal the pin. I'm not sure if this was longer than the women's match or not.

Rating: D+. Better than the previous one but more disappointing at the same time. This has been built up for weeks and technically months and it gets four minutes? This could have been much better than it came off as which is never a good sign. It's ok but it's just ok, which is never a good thing given what they could have likely done with more time. Imagine that: TNA needing more time for their wrestling.

Jeff Hardy vs. ???

I've heard that this is supposed to be a debut and that this isn't a debut. If it's a debut, the common guess would be Helms, which would be somewhat exciting. And it's Shannon Moore.

Jeff Hardy vs. Shannon Moore

When will wrestling companies get that no one cares about Moore? Why does this guy keep getting a job? They're brothers apparently, or at least that's what Shannon says. No reason why but whatever. We're told they're friends which is news to about 90% of the wrestling audience but whatever. Jeff keeps running into the corners after Shannon and ramming into the buckle like an idiot in a bad comedy movie.

Moore dominates for the most part until Hardy realizes he's a three time world champion and Shannon Moore is Shannon Moore. A name change might help him a lot actually. Twist of Fate sets up the Swanton into the knees. Shannon gets shoved off the ropes and lands in perfect position for the Swanton and the pin.

Rating: C. Better than I expected here, but again I ask: Shannon Moore? Is that the best they can come up with? Wrestling companies have tried to push this guy for years and it hasn't worked so why do they keep trying it? This didn't work back in the days of the WWF and it's not working here. Anyway, this was an ok match but really nothing special at all. And remember, this is PPV quality baby!

Tag Titles: Beer Money vs. Motor City Machine Guns

This is 2/3 falls. I'll give TNA this: when they find something that works, they RUN with it. Shelley and Roode start us off and the crowd is WAY behind Shelley. The Guns do their usual insane speed stuff which is always cool looking. Roode does the old classic heel tactic of slapping his hands to convince the ref that there was a tag. It doesn't work but it's always awesome.

Sabin breaks through the endless domination of the heels as the fans are just getting irritating. NICE (I think) double team spot from the Guns as we get a downward spiral combined with a DDT and a missile dropkick. Roode takes Sabin's head off with a big boot and the Guns clear the ring. Back in the ring a Backstabber sets up DWI on Shelley to make it 1-0 Beer Money.

Never a fan of challengers getting clean pins in the first fall of a 2/3 match. It makes the champions look like they lost completely clean. Nice double dropkick by Sabin to clean house again. The splash/neckbreaker ties it up after about two minutes. That move needs a name.

Roode does a HUGE dive over the ropes which they screw up by changing the camera at the last second. After a break it's more even fighting. This has been a great match. Sabin hits a springboard DDT on Roode which I loved. Granted that might be because the DDT is my favorite move. Both teams hit a sweet double team sequence.

Sliced Bread #2 is countered as is DWI. Last Call superkick ends Roode and the double team combo DOESN'T get the pin on Storm. I would have bet on that ending it. Another one does in fact end it though, which is a bit anticlimactic but still, GREAT match here, although just a step behind the initial win at the PPV. Still though, great match.

Rating: A. This was indeed a great match but it makes me wonder where they're going to go now that these two have fought so many times now. This is more about a back and forth insanity pitch rather than psychology or storytelling and that's fine a lot of the time, especially in tags. This was very entertaining and the false finish was great for drama. These two teams have insane chemistry and this was no exception at all. Great match and well worth finding, although most of their matches are.

TNA World Title: Abyss vs. Rob Van Dam

Janice, the board with nails in it, is above the ring and can be used as a weapon, which of course it won't be. You win by pinfall. Eric Bischoff is the referee for no apparent reason. I mean that literally: no one can come up with a reason for him to be out there. Abyss goes up the ladder as RVD is coming to the ring but gets caught. That was very smart.

Rolling Thunder misses and RVD hits the ladder. After a break Abyss misses a chokeslam onto the ladder. They do the run up the ladder as a ramp spot which is ok. This is about 5 minutes into it not counting the commercial and it's 10:33. This is going to be a long match or the announcement is going to take forever.

This is a pretty standard ladder based match but it's not bad. The pinfall being the way to win makes Abyss a much bigger threat here which is very smart thinking. There are the thumbtacks of course since those are perfectly normal in a match like this. Let's pour some glass on top of that too. Abyss of course lands on them since he has the shirt on which telegraphs it completely. His hips landed on them but whatever.

Barbed wire board is brought in and of course Van Dam puts Abyss into it plus a few more spots which look cool if nothing else. Van Dam gets his hand on the board and they botch a spot as he gets shoved off and BANGS HIS FACE on a ladder that is set up like a bridge between the ring and the barrier. Hokey smoke that looked terrible. Abyss gets the board.

Naturally he puts it down to punch RVD a bit. For like the third time it gets stuck in the buckle. RVD looks ok and at least his face is still in one piece. He gets some chair shots in and then the Van Terminator into the barbed wire board into Abyss and the Five Star eventually gets the pin. Solid fun match but again I ask: WHY WAS BISCHOFF THE REFEREE?

Rating: B. Solid hardcore style match. The nail board of course meant nothing at all as you would expect. This was a fun main event, although I really wonder where they're going with Van Dam now as he's beaten EVERYONE now. I get that they wanted to make him dominant, but the smart move here was to put the title on Abyss, which they passed on so there we are.

Hogan comes down and we go to a break. RVD is still here and Hogan talks, since there can't be any talking right? Hogan declares that TNA is the top wrestling company in the world and that Hardcore Justice set the bar. He brings out the ECW guys, or at least the main ones. Even Sabu is here.

Hogan says he gives them the ring in a show of respect. There are like 10 or more guys in there. Dreamer is the mouthpiece and thanks everyone. RVD kisses him on the cheek and the lights go out. And here's Fournutone plus Williams and Morgan. Raven and Sandman come out to even the odds as it's a massive beatdown.

Abyss comes back and beats up Van Dam some more. Flair comes out as the fans cheer this. In the back Van Dam is covered in blood and Abyss holds up Janice. Flair yells at Dixie, saying she caused this, as we end it.

Overall Rating: A. This was a GREAT show. Everything hit on almost all cylinders although the Hardy/Moore match and the triple threat left a bit to be desired. This was a very fun show though and I had a good time watching it. I'm skeptical about how it's going to go after this week though as they're banking everything on this one big angle and if it doesn't work, they're in trouble. We'll see though, and we get a good show here so that's a success if nothing else. Worth seeing for sure.

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