

Wrestling Wars Podcast

Episode 45

<http://mightynorcal.podbean.com/e/wwp-45-the-return-kb-catches-me-up-on-a-famous-tna-storyline-and-we-go-over-the-ww-draft-and-what-it-means-moving-forward/>

We're back with the Draft, Roman Reigns (kind of) and Final Deletion because we need to talk about it.

New Column: The Worst Thing WWE Could Do – Roman Reigns Edition

Looking at what WWE should but likely will do coming off the Reigns suspension.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-the-worst-thing-ww-can-do-roman-reigns-edition/>

Roman Reigns Suspended 30

Days For Wellness Policy Violation

<http://411mania.com/wrestling/we-suspends-roman-reigns-for-wellness-policy-violation/>

Reigns has also stated that this is legit and isn't denying a thing. This doesn't change anything for Battleground as the suspension will end before then but he won't be around for the Draft.

Monday Night Raw – June 20, 2016: How To Make Battleground Important

Monday Night Raw

Date: June 20, 2016

Location: Talking Stick Resort Arena, Phoenix, Arizona

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

A lot changed last night at Money in the Bank, not the least of which is all three members of Shield held the WWE World Title at some point. Dean Ambrose walked out with the title after cashing in Money in the Bank briefcase to end the show on new champion Seth Rollins, who had taken the title from Roman Reigns. We're heading towards Battleground now but first up is that whole Brand Split and completely changing the company thing. Let's get to it.

Dean arrived earlier today and threw money at the cab driver, only to have to chase after the cab because he forgot the title.

Opening sequence.

Here's Dean to open things up, walking past a Raw and Smackdown podium on the way to the ring. The fans tell him that he deserves it before Dean talks about barely remembering a lot of last night. Apparently he ran into the Cleveland Cavaliers but he isn't a fan. I'm sure the crowd booing him out of the arena didn't sway that decision in the slightest. Dean gets right to the point: hard work and dedication pay off and when it pays off, it pays off BIG.

If Roman Reigns is the guy, maybe Ambrose can be the Dude. Call him whatever you want but you have to call him champ because it was all worth it to get here. Cue Roman to some LOUD booing. Roman says last night wasn't his night because it was Dean's night. He's here to congratulate the new champ but the fans cut him off with a YOU CAN'T WRESTLE chant. Roman says all the people chanting that need to take a sip of their beer and calm down. The other reason Reigns is out here is to find out if Dean is a fighting champion.

This brings out a furious Seth to say he never properly lost the title and Reigns needs to go to the back of the line. Here's Shane McMahon to calm things down a bit. Shane thinks the best idea is to have Seth vs. Roman with the winner facing Dean. Shane talks to an invisible Stephanie about her idea since the real version isn't here tonight. Stephanie agrees so let's have the match tonight instead of waiting around.

Sami Zayn vs. Kevin Owens

Owens bails to the floor to start so Sami takes him down with a clothesline. You would think Sami could come up with some different offense somewhere in there. Sami moonsaults off the barricade to drop Owens again so Kevin bails into the crowd. That goes nowhere as Sami throws him back to ringside, only to have Owens drive him into the post as we take a break.

Back from a break with Kevin's backslash hitting raised knees. Sami low bridges him to the floor for the running flip dive, only to charge into a superkick for two. Sami's half and half suplex looks to set up the Helluva Kick but only earns him another superkick. A victory roll out of

nowhere gives Sami the pin at 8:54.

Rating: C+. These two always work well together and it's a good idea to have Sami get a clean pin over Owens. You can't have the whole thing be one sided and I kind of like the idea of not waiting for some big moment for the first win for a change. Good enough match here but these two have that natural chemistry that you just can't fake.

Kevin goes after him again post match but Sami escapes a powerbomb on the stage and they trade fists until referees break it up.

After a break, Sami and Kevin are still fighting in the back.

The announcers talk about the Draft, basically making the official announcement.

Here's John Laurinitis to throw his name in the hat as GM but Shane comes out to say no way because that's not how it's going to work.

Enzo Amore/Big Cass vs. Vaudevillains

Enzo and Shane compare shoes and dance a bit on the way to the ring. After the usual catchphrases, Enzo says he didn't like what Johnny Laryngitis was saying. Any guesses how many dimes he would have if he got one for every time Johnny said something important? English stomps Enzo down to start before it's off to Gotch for a neckbreaker. The slow beating continues until Gotch eats a Downward Spiral into the middle buckle. The hot tag brings in Cass to clean house with the Empire Elbow for two on English. Enzo goes up for the Rocket Launcher, now named the Bada Boom Shaka Lacka, for the pin at 2:53.

Here's AJ Styles to talk about the tainted win last night. The bottom line though is that he beat John Cena, even if it didn't go down like he expected it to go. Either way, the Club is going to continue but he wants Anderson and Gallows to come out and apologize right now. Anderson and Gallows come out and AJ yells at them a bit, saying that was his only first chance to beat Cena and now John has an excuse. AJ wants an apology right now and gets one from both guys, but now he needs Cena out here as well.

Cena comes out and says AJ broke the contract but Gallows says AJ had no idea what they were going to do. That's the apology but Cena thinks it's a coverup to hide the fact that AJ isn't as good as he says he is. Cena can accept the win because that's the most important thing in WWE. What AJ doesn't get is the idea of being a man of his word. Last night Styles proved that he doesn't have a word or balls. That earns him a CENA chant but AJ doesn't think the fans know what they're talking about.

AJ thinks there should be a fight right now and Cena is ready but that's not what Styles meant. Instead AJ meant against either Anderson or Gallows, not Styles himself. Cena says it doesn't matter which one he faces because the other will be at ringside. Therefore, he'll fight all three, which is the contract AJ should have signed in the first place. AJ stops him again and says it's Anderson vs. Cena right now.

John Cena vs. Karl Anderson

Joined in progress with Cena pounding Anderson down but stopping to look at the entrance for Styles and Gallows. An early ProtoBomb sets up the Shuffle and the AA, drawing in the rest of the Club for the DQ at 2:24 shown.

Post match Cena takes the Magic Killer and Styles Clash.

Stills of last night's ladder match and World Title situation.

We also look at the opening segment.

Rollins is ready to take the title back from Ambrose and it starts tonight. He wants to prove that he's the best member of the Shield once and for all. Oh yeah that's grounds for a triple threat.

Becky Lynch is sick and tired of everyone turning on her with Natalya being the latest one to do so. Natalya jumps her from behind and says it's time to think about herself.

Baron Corbin vs. Zack Ryder

Ryder pokes him in the eye to start but Corbin might have been goldbricking as he blasts Ryder in the face with a right hand. Zack

shrugs off some choking and sends him outside for a dropkick from the apron. The Elbro gets two but Corbin slides under the ropes and runs back in for a right hand, followed by End of Days for the pin at 3:03.

Rating: D+. This was better than I was expecting with Ryder getting in a lot more offense than I was expecting. Of course the second you heard Ryder's music playing you knew how this was going to go but that's all you can expect from someone like him. At least they kept this short though and there was almost no mention of Dolph Ziggler, a development that is LONG overdue.

We look at WWE announcing a partnership in China and signing a Chinese wrestler to a developmental deal.

The Wyatts are coming back soon.

We look back at Paige beating Charlotte in a non-title match last week.

Paige (who seems to not be under arrest) talks about having a history with Charlotte from Team PCB but Charlotte and Dana are behind her laughing about getting cell phone service. Charlotte brags about rocketing up the charts after Team PCB broke up while Paige fell down like a tree. Paige says she'll win the title tonight and Charlotte will have no one to blame but herself.

Women's Title: Paige vs. Charlotte

Charlotte is defending and we get big match intros. A rollup gets an early two for the champ but she nips up off a shoulder. Paige hits a running knee in the corner followed by a series of knees to the face from the bottom rope. Dana offers a distraction though and Charlotte nails Paige to take over as we take a break.

Back with Charlotte doing her figure four headscissors faceplants but Paige grabs a backslide for two. Some superkicks set up a running knee for two on the champ, followed by a fall away slam. Paige's superplex is broken up and the moonsault gives Charlotte two. The Figure Eight is countered into a small package for two and the Rampaige gets the same with Dana putting the foot on the ropes. That earns her an ejection but

Charlotte hits Natural Selection for the pin at 8:30.

Rating: C+. Good match here as usual and it's nice to see Paige not have to babysit the lower level women for a bit. That being said, we're just waiting on Sasha at this point and it's just a matter of time until Sasha comes back and gives us the big Summerslam feud for the title. Well maybe Battleground but whatever.

Post match Paige gets suplexed but here's Sasha for the big return to clean house. Charlotte gets caught in the Bank Statement to draw Dana back in, only to have Paige help make the save.

Roman says he's going to be the guy to beat Seth Rollins.

The Wyatts are here.

Here are the Wyatts for their big return. We get a big welcome back chant so Bray asks if they missed him. The Wyatts have been locked away and punished but they have never forgotten what they stand for. Bray issues a warning to everyone back there...and here's New Day to cut them off. Woods says Bray needs to stop talking so much and Kofi goes into the usual spiel, only to have Bray seem to hypnotize Woods. Kofi gets him back but Bray thinks the future is New Day falls. That's uh...quite the odd choice for a pairing but Bray controlling people is interesting. Are the Wyatts still faces though?

Life Lesson With Bob Backlund, focusing on Backlund giving orders, not advice.

Rusev vs. Titus O'Neil

Titus says this is about respect and revenge instead of the US Title. He charges in and a fight starts before the bell, meaning no match so this MUST CONTINUE! They fight outside with Rusev getting the worse of it and being sent out into the crowd.

Miz and Maryse are on the set of Marine 5 and Miz gets annoyed because he can't get good quail. He freaks out and goes on a rant about how bad the crew is, right in front of the crew.

Chris Jericho is in Shane's office and rants about how he should be #1 contender but Shane doesn't see it that way. Jericho brings up the 69 tacks and calls Shane a stupid idiot, which doesn't sit well with the boss. Chris wants to be on whatever show Shane isn't running but Shane says he'll be on both.

Seth Rollins vs. Roman Reigns

Winner goes to Battleground for a title shot and Dean is on commentary. Roman shoulders him down to start and they head outside with Rollins getting knocked around even more. Roman loads up the announcers' table but gets caught with a Blockbuster back inside. A dropkick gets two for Seth and we hit the chinlock. Rollins takes it to the floor and sends Roman into the barricade, only to get kicked in the face back inside. They head outside again with Reigns sending him into the barricade as we take a break.

Back with Rollins throwing on a sleeper but Reigns quickly escapes and fires off some forearms until the referee breaks it up. The distraction lets Seth get in a jumping enziguri and he sends Roman outside for the suicide dive. Back in and Reigns scores with his powerbomb for two. Neither guy can hit a finisher but Seth tries a springboard and dives into the Superman Punch for two. The spear is blocked by a kick to the face so Reigns punches him out to the apron.

Now the springboard knee to the face sets up the slow superkick for two but Reigns avoids a great looking frog splash. There's the apron boot and Roman loads up the announcers' table. Seth escapes to avoid extreme pain and scores with another enziguri. Seth barely breaks the count but Reigns pulls him back outside for a spear over the announcers' table. That spot loses a lot when there's no big crash. Neither guy gets back in and it's a double countout at 17:27.

Rating: B-. Obvious ending aside, this was actually a bit more entertaining than last night as the length really pulled the first match down. Of course this sets up the Shield triple threat which should headline Summerslam but why do that when you can do it at a nothing show like Battleground? In theory this leaves Reigns vs. Lesnar II for

Summerslam but that's assuming Lesnar is healthy after the UFC fight. But hey, why play it smart when you can play it stupid?

Post match Shane comes out to say we need a #1 contender but Dean says he'll fight both of them in the same night. The triple threat is made and Dean hits Dirty Deeds on both guys to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This show set up some stuff for Battleground as it seems like we're heading towards some Money in the Bank rematches. You have to assume we'll get Sami Zayn vs. Kevin Owens in a big showdown, plus the Cena vs. Styles rematch and of course the big triple threat. Still though, good enough show here with some watchable wrestling but again we're still stuck in a weird bit of limbo with the Draft in a month. I'll take a watchable show that's off the air at two minutes after the hour instead of thirty two minutes after the hour though so this is a bit less annoying than last night's show.

Results

Sami Zayn b. Kevin Owens – Victory roll

Enzo Amore/Big Cass b. Vaudevillains – Bada Boom Shaka Lacka

John Cena b. Karl Anderson via DQ when AJ Styles and Luke Gallows interfered

Baron Corbin b. Zack Ryder – End of Days

Charlotte b. Paige – Natural Selection

Roman Reigns vs. Seth Rollins went to a double countout

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Money in the Bank 2016: A Father's Day Miracle

Money in the Bank 2016

Date: June 19, 2016

Location: T-Mobile Arena, Las Vegas, Nevada

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, John Bradshaw Layfield

You always hear about how any particular show is supposed to be the best ever but in this case they might actually have a chance at the best Money in the Bank of all time. There are three major matches tonight with AJ Styles vs. John Cena, Roman Reigns defending the WWE World Title against Seth Rollins and of course the Money in the Bank ladder match. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Breezango vs. Golden Truth

Breezango has severe sunburns due to some shenanigans before the match. Fandango and Truth start things off with Truth chopping at the very raw chest. It's off to Breeze vs. Goldust as the chop-a-thon continues. Fandango comes in and ducks a chop, only to have Truth slap him on the back. Breeze offers a distraction so Fandango can stomp away, much to his own severe pain. We hit a leg crank on Truth for a bit before it's back to Goldust for more chops and atomic drops. Everything breaks down and the Final Cut (suplex into a neckbreaker) puts Fandango away at 5:00.

Rating: D+. Sure it was stupid but I've got a soft spot for this angle as they're just having goofy fun. The wrestling obviously wasn't the point here and that's ok when the entire point of this match is to fill in some time before we get to the actual pay per view. It's nothing worth watching again but it's funny enough to do its job.

Pre-Show: Lucha Dragons vs. Dudley Boyz

Bubba and Kalisto start things off before Cara comes in for a dive, followed by a double dive to take the Dudleyz down. Back from a break with Bubba working on Cara's arm as the fans want tables. D-Von's big elbow drop gets two before it's back to Bubba who threatens to rip Cara's mask off. The jab sequence is countered by a dropkick from Cara and the hot tag brings in Kalisto. The hurricanrana driver and kick to the head have the Dudleyz rocked and we get some heel miscommunication for good measure. A 3D is broken up and it's the Salida Del Sol and the Dragon Bomb (swanton) for the pin on Bubba at 8:50.

Rating: C+. This was WAY better than I was expecting and a rather snappy little tag match. The Dragons never getting the titles is actually a bit surprising but at least we get a few nice matches like this every now and then. I'd still like to see Kalisto get an extended singles run but if this is the best I can get, so be it.

The opening video looks at the history of Las Vegas and the idea of chasing the dream. Everyone here tonight is going all in for the sake of reaching their goal, whatever that may cost.

Tag Team Titles: Enzo Amore/Big Cass vs. Vaudevillains vs. The Club vs. New Day

New Day is defending. Enzo's attire looks like it's covered with a bunch of miniature license plates. He's sorry but he's a bit tired tonight because he and Lady Luck were up all night. New Day does some impressions on the way to the ring, including calling Enzo and Cass a sawed off Han Solo and a hairless Chewbacca. The Vaudevillains are the Monopoly Men and the Club is being sent back to Japan to cure their male pattern baldness.

One fall to a finish here and it's Kofi vs. Karl to start things off. It's quickly off to Gallows who eats a quick pendulum kick in the corner before Enzo comes in to help clean house. Kofi grabs a rollup for two on Amore and that's not quite cool. We get the big showdown between Cass and E. but Gotch tags himself in instead. Everything breaks down and all eight stare each other down in a cool visual.

The heels are sent outside and it's Enzo/Cass vs. New Day, only to have the Vaudevillains jump Kofi from behind to take over. Gallows tags himself in but a double clothesline drops both Luke and Kofi. A double tag brings in English and Enzo (odd choices for tags) but it's quickly back to Gallows, who low bridges Enzo to the floor. Amore grabs a tornado DDT on Luke and another double tag brings in Cass and Anderson. Cass cleans house and throws Enzo onto a pile at ringside.

The Rocket Launcher gets two on Anderson with Gallows pulling Enzo out at the last possible second (or maybe a bit too late). Kofi tags himself in but misses Trouble in Paradise. The Whirling Dervish gets a very close two on Kofi (I bought that as the finish for a second) and Big E. spears Gotch to the floor. Kofi grabs a DDT on English but Karl makes a blind tag. There's a Magic Killer to English, only to have Big E. make a quick save. The Midnight Hour connects on Anderson and Kofi pins English at 11:47.

Rating: B+. It's not quite the four way from last month but sweet goodness they were on fire here. This was a great back and forth match where I actually bought that all four teams could have gotten the belts at any time. In theory this sets up the Club vs. New Day for the titles at Battleground after New Day sets the record for the longest title reign.

Kevin Owens is in the back and brags about being awesome when he powerbombed John Cena on the apron last year. See, you have to specify what he does because everything he does is special. Owens: "That's what my mom tells me." Jericho comes in and does his usual speech about inventing Money in the Bank but Owens calls him out for never winning the thing.

Alberto comes in (Owens: "Most likely to speak some Spanish.") and they discuss the meaning of perro. Del Rio brags about being the only one to win Money in the Bank but Owens cuts him off to say he needs new material, like Owens, who is always doing cool stuff. Jericho: "The only perros I see here are this pair-o idiots." Jericho offers them the gift of Jericho but both guys leave, allowing Jericho to call them stupid idiots. If Owens was any more golden, he'd be a prize in the Olympics.

Baron Corbin vs. Dolph Ziggler

Because this won't die. The threat of a superkick sends Corbin backing off so he pops Dolph with a right hand to take over. Ziggler tries to send him under the ropes but Corbin swings around the post and comes in with a hard clothesline. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Corbin just stomps away. The fans call this boring so Corbin takes a bit of a bow and picks Ziggler up even slower.

Dolph comes back with some dropkicks but can't follow up. The Fameasser and superkick are both broken up and Corbin blasts him with another clothesline for two. Back up and Ziggler avoids a charge to send him shoulder first into the post, setting up the Fameasser for two. The fans alternate between Bayley and Ryback chants as Corbin bails to the floor to avoid the superkick. That thing better hit at some point.

A Deep Six on the floor gets a nine count. Back in again and End of Days is countered into the superkick for two. Ziggler heads up top but gets caught by a running right hand. Well that's a bit more simple. Ziggler jumps back down and tries another superkick, only to run into End of Days for the pin at 12:24.

Rating: B-. This is a good example of a quality match where the fans just weren't interested and I really can't blame them. These two have fought so many times and there's no reason to want to see them again. That's where WWE gets in trouble so many times: they get something interesting and then don't know when to stop, leaving us with crowd reactions like this. It was good with the nice little story of teasing the superkick but I had no interest in watching them.

Charlotte/Dana Brooke vs. Becky Lynch/Natalya

The announcers point out Natalya losing title match after title match this year. Natalya shoves Dana to the ropes a few times to start so Dana shouts a lot. Becky comes in and we get a Hart Attack on Dana, followed by a baseball slide to put Charlotte on the floor as well. Back in and Natalya gets beaten down as the announcers push the idea that Charlotte has been teaching Dana to get better. Apparently she needs to do more teaching as Natalya gets over for the tag off to Becky for the house

cleaning.

The Bexploder sends Charlotte flying and a double missile dropkick drops the villains. Natalya comes in for the discus lariat on Charlotte, who comes back with a rollup for two with her feet on the ropes. The Sharpshooter has Charlotte in trouble but Dana makes the save, only to have Natalya and Becky collide. Natural Selection ends Natalya at 7:00.

Rating: C. Much like the previous match, I never want to see Charlotte vs. Natalya again. That's like five straight losses for Natalya and there's no reason to see them go at it again. Just let Sasha come up and get the title in a better match like everyone wants to see instead of just doing the same stuff over and over again. Why can't WWE get that simple logic?

Post match Becky apologizes but Natalya blasts her with a forearm for a heel turn. Yeah because that's going to make her interesting. Again, if you want us to care about a character more, DON'T HAVE THEM JOB IN EVERY SINGLE MATCH BEFORE YOU TURN THEM.

Dean Ambrose says we're in the jungle tonight and he's walking out with the title. He doesn't have a comment on the main event other than Reigns is going to have fun beating on Rollins. "Beating up Seth is fun."

Sheamus vs. Apollo Crews

Veteran vs. newcomer. Sheamus jumps him to start and headlocks Crews down. Back up and Crews sends him out to the floor, only to get caught in Irish Curse off the apron and out to the floor. Back in and we hit the chinlock as the fans break out the YOU LOOK STUPID chants again.

The ten forearms to the chest get two for Sheamus and we hit another chinlock. Crews pops back up for his running clotheslines and an enziguri before belly to belly suplexing Sheamus over the top. A moonsault from the apron gets two but Sheamus runs him over again. Sheamus takes it to the top for a super White Noise and two but an argument with the referee allows Crews to grab a rollup for the pin at 8:44.

Rating: C+. I liked this more than I was expecting to as Crews got the

win after hanging in there long enough. It's kind of a fluke but Crews kicked out after a big move and got to show off enough to make it look like a big win. This is what people like Sheamus and Ziggler are good for: having quality matches and putting people over while it still means something.

We recap AJ Styles vs. John Cena. This has been billed as a dream match and that's not too far from the truth. Styles attacked Cena a few weeks back like so many others have done but Cena was more impressed by a moment when the fans were chanting LET'S GO CENA/AJ STYLES. Tonight AJ has his chance to prove that he belongs and has agreed to have the Club barred from ringside.

AJ Styles vs. John Cena

The fans are just coming unglued for this before the bell. They trade takedowns to start and AJ is all fired up. Cena comes right back with some armdrags and a monkey flip of all things but it's way too early for the AA. You Can't See Me is answered with a forearm to the face and AJ starts sticking and moving. That earns him a belly to belly before they head outside. Cena tries to send him into the steps but AJ jumps over them in a sweet counter that leaves Cena shocked.

Back in and a knee drop gets two for AJ, followed by a suplex. AJ: "Is this all he's got?" Cena keeps going simple with a stiff right hand and a backdrop but the flying shoulders are countered with a dropkick. We hit the chinlock for a bit before another comeback is countered by an enziguri.

The Protobomb plants AJ but the Shuffle is broken up as well with Cena being knocked outside. A big flip dive misses though and Cena finally has an opening. Back in and the AA is countered again with AJ hitting the strike rush, only to get caught in the STF. A rope is grabbed so Cena tries a top rope AA but Styles reverses into something like Snake Eyes. Cena tries it again (with some LOUD spot calling, which has been an issue all night) but AJ escapes one more time.

The Phenomenal Forearm is countered into the AA but Cena takes too much time turning to face the camera, allowing AJ to reverse into the Calf

Crusher. John gets to the ropes and hits that big running clothesline to make the comeback when he needs to hit a big move to make a comeback. The AA is countered AGAIN but Cena just muscles him up, only to have AJ kick out again.

Cena is shocked so he goes up top, only to have the Fameasser countered into a powerbomb to put both guys down. That's only good for two as well so it's a Pele into the Styles Clash for two more with the fans getting more and more into the kickouts. The springboard 450 only hits knees though and both guys are down. Neither can hit finishers with AJ landing on his feet to escape the AA but missing the Pele. The Forearm misses and Cena tries another AA, only to have the ref get bumped. Now the AA connects but there's no one to count. Cue the Club for the Magic Killer to give AJ the pin at 24:09.

Rating: A-. I was hoping for a clean finish here as they were nailing it near the end. They were working the big match formula here and the key thing is AJ looking like he belonged in there and even frustrating Cena like few others have been able to. I don't know if I'd say it lived up to the expectations but I don't think anything really could have. Still though, excellent stuff as you had to know was coming..

JBL calls this a cheap victory but it's not clear if AJ knew what happened. I mean, him looking up while the Club ran in would suggest otherwise but I've heard worse storyline explanations. As expected, JBL drives the point into the ground like no one else can.

We get a really cool video on the ladder match with a theme of what the briefcase can mean for you and how it means the world to someone's career.

Chris Jericho vs. Alberto Del Rio vs. Kevin Owens vs. Sami Zayn vs. Cesaro vs. Dean Ambrose

The fans seem split between Owens and Ambrose. Huge brawl to start as you would expect with Ambrose taking Owens down, followed by Sami hitting a big flip dive to take out most of his opponents. Owens kicks Sami in the face though and it's Jericho with a front suplex to send Cesaro ribs first into the ladder. Dean gets back in but gets suplexed onto the

ladder for his efforts. Jericho tries to crush him 69 times with the ladder but Del Rio comes in for the save.

That means it's time for an uppercut party until Owens makes the save and busts out the Cannonballs. Sami comes back in and makes the first real climb but Del Rio makes the save and ties him in the Tree of Woe. Del Rio gives Cesaro the top rope double stomp onto a ladder but makes the slow climb, allowing Jericho to come in for a save. Chris gets pulled down and might have hurt his knee.

Del Rio goes up again but Cesaro makes a save this time, only to get caught in the cross armbreaker on the ladder. Kevin superkicks Del Rio but eats the spinning uppercut. Now it's Ambrose and Jericho back inside with Jericho hitting a Codebreaker but only getting his hand on the briefcase as Sami makes a save.

They're both knocked onto the ropes by an intervening Owens, who is taken down just as quickly with a Backstabber. There's a Cesaro Swing for Del Rio and one for Jericho as a bonus with Cesaro letting him fly into the ladder for a big crash. Ambrose hits the elbow drop on Cesaro but Owens makes another save and crushes Dean with a frog splash onto the ladder.

Sami's Michinoku Driver onto the side of an overturned ladder freaks the fans out all over again and breaks Owens at the same time. Del Rio hits Sami with a ladder over and over for the save before bridging one ladder into the other and draping the end on the middle turnbuckle. Cesaro does the same thing on the other side to make two platforms and all six are on ladders at the same time.

Cesaro and Del Rio fall off and the four others climb the middle ladder at once, only to have Del Rio and Cesaro set up another ladder. That results in a huge crash with Del Rio taking a very nasty fall. Everyone else falls down and Sami goes up, only to have Jericho run across the platform and make a save. Now it's Dean stopping that one and planting Jericho with Dirty Deeds. Owens pulls Sami down and powerbombs him onto the platform. Dean and Kevin fight on the ladder with Owens falling backwards through the ladder and Ambrose gets the briefcase at 21:36 as JBL goes ballistic.

Rating: B+. See, this is what I was hoping for when they announced a six man match. Instead of fighting to get time, this was all about everyone going for the briefcase and surviving until the end when someone could get the briefcase. The ending isn't a shock as you had two main options with Ambrose and Owens and it's hard to argue with Dean winning. Really fun brawl though with some awesome spots, though nothing we haven't seen before.

Long pre-show recap.

US Title: Rusev vs. Titus O'Neil

Rusev is defending and Titus' kids are in the crowd. Rusev goes straight outside and gets in their faces, setting up a double clothesline on the floor. Titus just erupts on Rusev against the barricade before throwing him into said barricade. Rusev sends him into the post for a seven count before getting two off a spinwheel kick back inside. A hard knee has Titus' ribs in trouble and we hit the chinlock.

Titus fights back with elbows to the ribs and a shoulder. Something like a reverse slam gets two but Titus has to get out of the Accolade. A pumphandle powerslam gets two more on the champ, who comes right back with the jumping superkick. Now the Accolade retains the title at 8:15.

Rating: D+. It's almost like the idea of crushing the former champion over and over left Rusev with no one credible to defend against here. Oh wait Titus won some dad award a year or so ago so now he's supposed to be interesting. Boring match here with zero doubt about the end result but that's what midcard titles mean these days.

Rusev laughs at Titus' kids and PLEASE don't mean we get a rematch.

We recap Roman Reigns vs. Seth Rollins with 15 minutes left in the show. They've been involved forever and things were made even worse when Rollins cashed in Money in the Bank to end Wrestlemania XXXI. Then Rollins hurt his knee and Reigns took the title in Seth's absence, setting up this showdown.

WWE World Title: Seth Rollins vs. Roman Reigns

Reigns is defending and the bell rings at 10:54 EST. Feeling out process to start until Reigns drops him with a shoulder. A second shoulder does the same but a third is blocked with a dropkick. Reigns is sent outside for a suicide dive but comes right back with a Samoan Drop for two. The fans don't give Roman an inch as he hits that running clothesline and pounds away in the corner.

It's past 11pm as regular pay per views now have overruns. Roman asks if Seth is ready for this so Rollins slaps him in the face. The comeback is stopped with a right hand and Roman sends him over the announcers' table. Seth whips the champ into the steps but Roman comes right back with a Razor's Edge into a sitout powerbomb for two. The Superman Punch is avoided though and Seth dropkicks him outside for another suicide dive. A big flip dive over the top is followed by a Sling Blade for two back inside.

The Pedigree doesn't work though and the Superman Punch gets two for the champ. Seth enziguris Reigns away and hits the springboard knee to the head. A frog splash gets two on Reigns, allowing JBL to get in his second Eddie Guerrero reference of the night. Rollins is scared to go for the sunset bomb so he switches to a buckle bomb and low superkick for two instead.

Seth has to try three times for a superplex before getting him down, setting up a Falcon's Arrow for two. The Pedigree is broken up again and Rollins gets two more off a powerbomb. The slugout goes to Rollins and there's another buckle bomb, only to have Reigns come out with a Superman Punch for two. Since this hasn't gone on long enough, Rollins goes outside, only to avoid the spear into the barricade.

Medics come out to check on Reigns until Rollins throws him back inside for the Pedigree. That's countered as well and we get a ref bump, followed by the spear for a delayed near fall. The spear is countered into a Pedigree for two and Rollins is stunned. There's a second Pedigree and Rollins is champion at 26:04.

Rating: B+. It was long but the end was a surprise and a good way to wrap things up with Reigns getting pinned clean. This sets up a lot of

interesting stuff with the potential Shield triple threat that should headline Summerslam but more importantly...I hear music so we'll cut this short.

We're not done yet! Ambrose comes in through the crowd and hits Rollins with the briefcase for the cash-in.

WWE World Title: Dean Ambrose vs. Seth Rollins

Ambrose is champion off Dirty Deeds in 9 seconds. More importantly: NO MONEY IN THE BANK FOR A YEAR!!!

JBL sounds like he wants to cry as Ambrose celebrates to take us off the air.

Overall Rating: A-. If not for some of the midcard stuff not exactly living up to the same standards and what seems to be the introduction of overruns on a pay per view (because ten matches over four hours and then three hours and ten minutes tomorrow night isn't enough), this would have been a classic. As it is it's just great and a bit beneath the 2011 edition, though still very good.

That being said, if WWE actually runs the Shield triple threat at freaking Battleground and not on the big stage of say Summerslam's main event, I think my head might explode. That's a Wrestlemania main event level match and there's a chance they'll waste it on the nothing July pay per view. Either way, it's a really good show worth watching, but have your fast forward button ready.

Results

New Day b. The Club, Vaudevillains and Enzo Amore/Big Cass – Kofi pinned English after a Magic Killer

Baron Corbin b. Dolph Ziggler – End of Days

Charlotte/Dana Brooke b. Natalya/Becky Lynch – Natural Selection to Natalya

Apollo Crews b. Sheamus – Rollup

AJ Styles b. John Cena – Pin after a Magic Killer from the Club

Dean Ambrose b. Cesaro, Sami Zayn, Alberto Del Rio, Kevin Owens and Chris Jericho – Ambrose pulled down the briefcase

Rusev b. Titus O’Neil – Accolade

Seth Rollins b. Roman Reigns – Pedigree

Dean Ambrose b. Seth Rollins – Dirty Deeds

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Money in the Bank 2016 Preview

It’s another big time pay per view but more interestingly it might be the last pay per view of this era with the Brand Split changing everything a month after this show airs. They’re building this up as the greatest Money in the Bank of all time and while I have a really hard time believing they can top the 2011 edition, it could be interesting to see what they could do here. Let’s get to it.

The card has actually undergone a few changes so we’ll start with the new

pre-show matches, beginning with Golden Truth vs. Breezango. I know it's not the most popular feud in the world but I've been digging this story as it's gone on for months. The interesting thing here though is I'm not sure who wins goes over. They could finally have Golden Truth get a win but that kind of wraps up the feud. On the other hand they could go with Breezango winning and further the split between Truth and Goldust.

I actually think Breezango goes over as Golden Truth doesn't exactly have much of a future while Breezango could actually be built into a low level team of some value. Yeah I'll take Breezango but I wouldn't be surprised if I was wrong. Either way, this is a good example of how to get WAY more than should be gotten out of a stupid comedy story and I could actually go with these teams going somewhere else.

The other pre-show match is the definition of "here's a match thrown together for the sake of making this show even longer" as the Dudley Boys face the Lucha Dragons. It's really sad to see the Dragons thrown back together after Kalisto lost his US Title and the writers threw him out of their crib like they do with all of their new toys.

I guess we'll go with the Dragons here because....well because they were heads when I flipped a coin in my head. There's really no reason for either team to go over the other so yeah we'll pick the Dragons with at least a 50% confidence rate. This really feels like background noise while you're getting your pizza ready for the main show and that really doesn't need to happen, especially when you already have a pre-show match with so little importance.

Now on to the main card and we'll start with the four way for the Tag Team Titles as New Day defends against the Vaudevillains, the Club and Enzo Amore/Big Cass. In theory this is the Club's match to lose but the more I think about it, the more I think that they're going to let New Day break the record for the titles, which they would by the time Battleground rolls around.

So yeah I think New Day escapes here to set up the big showdown with the Club, though again Club could wind up pulling it off here. I think we can forget the idea of Enzo/Cass or the Vaudevillains getting the titles here

though I can go with the idea of the other two teams being added on to save the big showdown for later. As easily as I could see the Club getting the belts, I'll go with New Day surviving one more month and getting the record before dropping them at Battleground.

I'm sorry for being so back and forth with the picks here but it's that kind of a card. That's not a bad thing either.

In another match that doesn't need to exist, we have Baron Corbin vs. Dolph Ziggler yet again because this is what you do with a young name after you bring him up and give him a big win at Wrestlemania: give him the exact same match over and over again with no one getting anywhere as a result.

In theory this should go to Corbin in what better be this final match of the feud. I can barely remember why they're fighting at this point because they're in the horrible trap of "well we've been fighting for a long time now so let's just keep fighting". Ziggler has nothing to lose at this point but Corbin could move on to fighting for a midcard title after this feud so there's really no reason to not go with Corbin. Yeah Corbin and I'm moving on to the next match before I can change my mind again.

Next up we have what should be a squash in a title match with Rusev beating the barks out of Titus O'Neil. I know he's like the best father ever or whatever that nothing award they gave him was and the show is on Father's Day but I can't imagine they put Titus, who hasn't actually won a match on Raw or Smackdown since February. Of course that's enough for a title shot, mainly because Jack Swagger is too busy in theory.

So yeah, Rusev wins here and absolutely crushes Titus while Lana stands around looking hot. I'm not looking forward to this but it's better than watching Rusev squash Kalisto all over again. They really need to actually have someone built up to challenge him instead of just picking someone off the roster and letting Rusev crush them on pay per view. Still though, at least Titus' energy should help carry some of the match.

In a match I'm actually looking forward to, Apollo Crews will be facing Sheamus in his first major match in the company. This is your standard

“I’m big and you’re small” match and that’s a style that is almost always going to work no matter what you do. Again there’s no reason for Crews to lose as Sheamus has the ability and the resume to pop back up after anything that happens to him. Crews wins here and there’s no reason for Sheamus to even be considered.

One more match before we get to the big stuff as we look at the women’s tag match. What in the world has happened to this division since Wrestlemania? The triple threat there was an absolute spectacle but this never ending Charlotte vs. Natalya feud while the fans are just waiting for Sasha to come out there and take the title has completely burned through all of the momentum they had built up. The wrestling is definitely better and it’s a lot more entertaining than it was but there’s no fire to the matches and that’s not a good thing.

I’ll go with Charlotte/Dana over Becky/Natalya because the latter two are just not allowed to win a big match no matter what they do. There’s no need for this feud to continue but it seems like we’re waiting for August to actually have Sasha come in and win the title she should have gotten at Wrestlemania in the first place. Either way it’s time for some fresh energy (not blood, which is a different thing) in the division, which shouldn’t be the case after one of the best women’s matches in American history just two and a half months ago.

Now we get to the important stuff and we’ll start with probably the least important of the three main events as Seth Rollins faces Roman Reigns. To say this one is confusing is an understatement as Rollins was built up as the sympathetic face with the big documentary and returned to the big face pop at Extreme Rules. On the other hand you have Roman Reigns who certainly does have his fans but is being pushed as one of the awkward faces in history despite being a natural heel while getting booed out of several buildings around the country.

The thing is, there’s almost no way this is going to be the last match between the two, but possibly more importantly it’s going to be the last time they might be on pay per view on the same brand. I’m almost sure there’s not going to be a cash-in but I’d bet on a DQ or countout finish here with Reigns holding onto the belt. Rollins will probably need some

more seasoning before being put back on top of the card, but this should be one heck of a match as Reigns is always good to great once the bell rings.

Next up we have the namesake match with Dean Ambrose, Cesaro, Sami Zayn, Kevin Owens, Chris Jericho and Alberto Del Rio in the Money in the Bank ladder match. In another instance of me having almost no idea who is winning here, this match is basically a pick em save for Alberto who should have as much chance of winning this match as I do of winning Miss Nevada 1973.

I think I'm going with Owens, who would be the best choice for the briefcase long term for the promos alone. Ambrose is a real option too but I can't really picture them going with him actually winning a big match. The same is true of Cesaro and it's too early for Sami. There's a slight chance to get it on Jericho, who they've talked about as never winning the match he's created. Of course that would be ridiculous and not really help anyone but that didn't stop them at Wrestlemania. I'll stick with Owens here but Jericho is a dark horse. Oh and one last thing: well done on keeping it at six. For once I can remember everyone involved.

That leaves us with the main event and sweet goodness this should be fun. There aren't many actual dream matches out there but AJ vs. Cena really is one of them. The buildup has been excellent with that contract signing more than pushing me over the top, which really wasn't hard after the setup.

I'm not sure what else there is to say here as it's AJ Styles vs. John Cena in a featured match on a WWE pay per view. I'll take AJ to win in a masterpiece to set up a bunch of rematches down the line which is fine. Yeah Cena would lose in his big comeback match but it makes the most sense here, meaning it's more than likely to be wrong. The thing is there's no wrong answer here and that's a good sign going into tomorrow night.

It's a rare thing but I actually got more excited for the show going through the preview. This really is one of the most stacked cards I've

seen in a very long time and it has the potential to be some incredible stuff. Maybe not the best Money in the Bank ever but it's going to be a heck of a night of wrestling and that's what these shows should be. Pay per views are almost always awesome these days and I see no reason why that trend won't continue here.

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Monday Night Raw – June 13, 2016: Someone Give Me A Good Title For A Strong Go Home Show

Monday Night Raw

Date: June 13, 2016

Location: Smoothie King Center, New Orleans, Louisiana

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton, Michael Cole

It's the go home show for Money in the Bank so it's hard to say how much will actually happen this week. In this case we'll have the buildup to the actual ladder match but one of the participants will be crossing over to the main event as well as Dean Ambrose hosts a special Ambrose Asylum

with Seth Rollins and Roman Reigns. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

We have a moment of silence for Orlando.

Here's New Day to get things going. During their entrance we see a sign in the crowd reading "The guy behind me can't see." That actually made me groan and furthers my loathing of most wrestling fans. They talk about the upcoming four way but stop to make fun of Kofi for wearing the new Steph Curry shoes, which apparently look old. Kofi: "These shoes are hot on the streets!" Woods: "What streets? The streets of Greenwich, Connecticut?" Kofi: "Those are some mean streets." They promise to keep the titles but here are Enzo and Big Cass to interrupt.

Cass says they're going all in on Sunday and walking out with the titles. He implies that the unicorn horns are made for her pleasure and asks if Kofi is serious with the Jerry Seinfeld shoes. After New Day makes fun of the shoes as well, Cass wants to talk about Francesca. Woods: "That's my girl." Cass: "Well where was your girl last night?" Apparently she was with Enzo, who had his lips all over her like Satchmo.

Woods gets very serious and says he's the only one who blows his girl. Kofi introduces the verbal joust of wits between New Day and Enzo/Big Cass but the Vaudevillains interrupt. English sings about how the new era but Anderson and Gallows cut them off. Gallows makes fun of the New Orleans Saints so Cass calls them S-A-W-F-T.

New Day/Enzo Amore/Big Cass vs. The Club/Vaudevillains

This is joined in progress with Kofi working over Gotch before bringing in Big E. for the Unicorn Stampede. Cass throws in some elbows before Enzo tags himself in so Cass can throw him at Gotch. English shoves Gotch out of the way of a high cross body, only to have Gotch run Amore over. It's time for Enzo to take a beating as all of the villains take a shot at him. English gets kicked out to the floor though and a kick to the chest is enough for the hot tag off to Cass as everything breaks down. Kofi dives on everyone and we take a break.

Back with Big E. in trouble but countering a sunset flip and dropping Gotch with an elbow to the jaw. Gallows gets in a clothesline though and Big E. is in trouble again. The Vaudevillains chop away before it's off to Karl for a kick to the face in the corner. Big E. gets in a shot to the ribs though and it's off to Kofi as things speed up again. A high cross body gets two on Anderson as Enzo and Gotch are sent out to the floor. English does the same to Cass, only to have Big E. LAUNCH him with a belly to belly. Gallows comes in off a blind tag and the Magic Killer puts Kingston away at 13:26.

Rating: C+. That break in the middle hurt this a lot as it felt like nothing more than a way to fill in time rather than something that the match actually needed. That being said, Kofi was on fire here, which is why he just had to take the pin. Big E. or Enzo were available, though they were smart to keep Cass looking strong as he's possibly the biggest prospect in the whole match.

We look back at the debut of the Shield at Survivor Series 2012 to help set up the Ambrose Asylum later tonight.

Bob Backlund/Darren Young segment from Smackdown with Backlund telling him to save money, including only having one pair of clothes.

Shane and Stephanie are bickering over who should run Raw and/or Smackdown when Kane comes in to offer his services. He has a resume and a letter of recommendation from Undertaker so Stephanie lets Shane handle this one.

Zack Ryder is laughing with some random people about Apollo Crews knocking Sheamus down on Smackdown. Sheamus comes in and says he'll beat Ryder up tonight, just like he'll do to Crews on Sunday. Ryder says hi to Crews....who isn't there, allowing Ryder to run away like any former United States and Intercontinental Champion would do.

Clip of Shield's face turn.

The Shining Stars brag about Puerto Rico's water. How is this supposed to make money?

Titus O'Neil comes out for a match but Rusev jumps him from behind and beats him down on the stage. The referees have to come out and break the Accolade.

Clip of Shield breaking up. So to recap: they arrived, they turned face, and they split with nothing in between.

It's time for the Ambrose Asylum with special guests Roman Reigns and Seth Rollins. Before they come out though, Ambrose says he feels like he's just woken up from a coma because this Sunday feels like Wrestlemania. There are two major matches and we're focusing on one of them here. Therefore, let's bring out his first guest, the scum of the Earth, Seth Rollins.

Reigns is brought out as well and we get the big visual of the three of them standing there. Ambrose: "This is great huh?" He asks Rollins about the knee and Rollins is stunned that Ambrose hasn't watched his special on the WWE Network (he should because it's awesome). Dean thinks Seth's face must be hurt because it's killing him. Reigns on the other hand had a great time on Bourbon Street last night.

Dean wants Rollins to calm down and stop being a party pooper. After the party pooper chant dies off, Rollins lists off some fun moments they've had like Wrestlemania XXX, flying in on a helicopter to fight Undertaker and HELL NO in London and finding Dean unconscious next to a dumpster in....what town was that? Seth brings up the matches against Evolution and we get a BLUETISTA chant.

Rollins gets to the Wrestlemania XXXI cash-in and violence starts boiling over. Dean breaks it up and says Reigns beat Ambrose for that title in the first place. Yeah Reigns accomplished a lot in Rollins' absence but he's never beaten Seth one on one. Rollins rants about how he's going to get the title back on his own but Dean laughs the idea off. Reigns actually says Rollins is right because it's going to be one on one Sunday and then they'll call him the guy because he beat Seth. Dean asks the fans which one it's going to be but offers a third option: he wins the Money in the Bank contract and cashes in on either of them.

The music plays and the brawl is on with Reigns throwing Dean away so he

can beat Seth up himself. That earns Seth a Superman Punch but Dean gives Reigns Dirty Deeds because that's what friends do to each other. Ambrose looks up at the briefcase and the fans seem to like the idea.

Back from a break and Stephanie makes Ambrose vs. Jericho for the main event. Over the weekend I made a comment about how Smackdown is worthless because the matches mean nothing and there's a good chance that they'll just repeat a match on Monday anyway and I had a feeling it would be this one because it's the one that didn't need to happen again.

Paige vs. Charlotte

Natalya and Becky Lynch are at ringside. Non-title and the second match of the show starts an hour and twenty one minutes in. Paige runs her over with a knee to start but gets small packaged for two. Charlotte yells at Natalya and walks into the Rampaige for the pin at 2:31. I'm not even going to bother getting mad about this.

Cesaro is about to talk about Money in the Bank when Sami Zayn comes in to give the real answers. Cesaro is ticked off and says Sami is acting like a child but Sami says Cesaro can't talk down to him like this. Apparently they're in the same match tonight so Cesaro says he'll see him out there.

Charlotte yells at Dana for failing and implies that Dana is her assistant. Dana is of course mad but Charlotte says her payment is to be part of Charlotte's legacy.

Sheamus vs. Zack Ryder

This is the second match in a row with no entrances, likely for the sake of more backstage stuff. Sheamus attacks early to start but gets caught by a quick dropkick and the Broski Boot. The Elbro gets two but the Rough Ryder is easily blocked. The Brogue Kick puts Ryder away at 1:53.

Sheamus beats him up even more until Crews runs out for the save.

We get a video of Kane winning Money in the Bank in 2010 and cashing in the same night.

Kevin Owens interrupts Kane and Shane's talk but he wants to talk to Stephanie. Apparently Alberto Del Rio just arrived twenty minutes ago and should be taken out of the Money in the Bank match as a punishment. Del Rio, already in his gear, comes in to blame Owens for calling airport security to get him delayed for five hours. They start yelling in Spanish and French until Kane cuts them off with an idea. How about a tag match against the Lucha Dragons with the winners getting the spot in the ladder match? Shane likes the idea and makes the match.

Sami Zayn vs. Cesaro

Feeling out process to start with Cesaro nipping up out of a wristlock but getting armdragged right back down. A nice tilt-a-whirl backbreaker plants Sami for and Cesaro sends him into the post as we take a break. Back with Cesaro hitting a corner uppercut and stomping on Sami's chest for two. A quick Michinoku Driver gets two for Sami but he takes too long going to the top, allowing Cesaro to power through the apron superplex for another near fall. Back up and the Blue Thunder Bomb gets two, followed by the sunset bomb for....actually for three on Cesaro at 8:06.

Rating: C+. That's one of the few booking ideas I've seen tonight that I really like. Sami (and a lot of other people) have those big moves that never win anything so it's a really good idea to have one get a pin every now and then to make you believe that it could get another one later. The loss doesn't hurt Cesaro either as none of these wins really mean anything heading into the big gimmick match.

It's time for the contract signing between John Cena and AJ Styles as moderated by Michael Cole. Cena hypes up Money in the Bank as a show bigger than Wrestlemania with a match fifteen years in the making. For years, the WWE bosses had told AJ Styles that he didn't belong here. That's nonsense because from PWG to New Japan to Ring of Honor, AJ Styles has been the best everywhere he's gone. Sidebar: Is there any real reason why they won't say TNA? Ring of Honor is arguably bigger and New Japan is definitely bigger but TNA isn't allowed? Unless there's some legal reason, I see no logical justification for not saying it.

Anyway Cena tells Cole to leave because this is going to get rowdy. AJ

comes out and says he's turned Cena's world upside down. Cena agrees that it's been done but there's something up his sleeve. There are two contracts here, one of which says John Cena vs. AJ Styles and the other which says John Cena vs. AJ Styles w/The Club. Cena would love to sign the first one so we can have one heck of a fight on Sunday but if they sign the second one, AJ will win on Sunday and then start complaining the very next night when he doesn't get the same respect.

AJ thinks Cena is so confident because of all the things he's won but Styles wants to know what would have happened if AJ had been here fifteen years ago. My guess is not much because he still would have been a nothing tag guy but I get his point. AJ says he would have been the one on the covers of magazines and in all the movies. Cena cuts him off and says he's heard this before and AJ doesn't get it because he has the chance to prove it on Sunday.

AJ can sign one contract and prove how great he is or sign the other one and be put on a bullet train back to Japan because that's where he left his balls. AJ grabs a pen and looks at the contracts before signing the one on one version. Styles says after Sunday, Cena's time is up. As usual, this was AWESOME stuff.

We see Randy Orton winning Money in the Bank in 2013 and cashing in on Daniel Bryan at Summerslam.

Kevin Owens/Alberto Del Rio vs. Lucha Dragons

The winners are in Money in the Bank. Del Rio beats on Kalisto to start before it's off to Owens who isn't happy with the way Alberto is acting, only to calm down at the threat of a DQ. Owens teases walking out but comes back in when Alberto is rolled up for two. Kevin and Alberto get in a shoving match and get dropkicked to the floor, setting up a double dive from the Dragons as we take a break.

Back with Kalisto eating a clothesline but Del Rio won't tag out. Owens and Alberto get in another argument, allowing Kalisto to hit a quick Salida Del Sol to send Del Rio outside. Kevin throws his partner back in and it's off to Sin Cara for the Swanton, only to have Owens breaks it up at two. The Pop Up Powerbomb ends Cara at 8:15.

Rating: C. I liked the idea of having something on the line here. Of course it wasn't going to happen but it was nice to have a reason to care about the match. The Dragons are just so nothing these days and it's sad to see the promise that Kalisto showed wasted as much as it has been.

Del Rio superkicks Owens post match.

Back from a break with Owens telling Stephanie that Sami Zayn is going to be on commentary for the main event. Stephanie is furious because that's something so horrible so she makes Owens a commentator as well. Del Rio comes in and says he wants to be out there too so Stephanie makes him guest timekeeper.

Stephanie yells at Shane about his decisions so Shane makes Cesaro guest ring announcer. On another note, Kane isn't getting the job running Smackdown. Kane comes in and asks if this is about electrocuting Shane's testicles with a car battery. Shane tells Stephanie they'll keep running Raw but he'll run Smackdown on his own. This is getting old in a hurry and it's only going to get worse.

Chris Jericho vs. Dean Ambrose

All of the other Money in the Bank participants are at ringside. Dean chops him down to start and scores with a quick suplex. Jericho is sent to the floor for a suicide dive before Dean knocks Owens' headset off. Back in and Dean flips out of a Walls attempt but eats an enziguri. The corner dropkick puts Dean on the floor and it's time for the announcers, timekeeper and ring announcer to stare at each other.

We come back from a break with Dean fighting out of a chinlock. Some clotheslines stun Jericho but he counters the top rope standing elbow drop into the Walls. Owens: "I taught him that!" Dean grabs the ropes but can't get Dirty Deeds. Instead Jericho takes him down for two off the Lionsault, only to have Dean get up top for the elbow.

Byron asks how Kevin would handle not winning Sunday. Owens: "I would handle it the same way: I would come out here and slap your face." Dean tries to put on the Walls but settles for a catapult out to the apron. Jericho runs to the top but dives into a kick, only to have the

Codebreaker countered into Dirty Deeds for the pin at 11:58.

Rating: C. This would be the standard reversal of the match we saw on Smackdown because that's what Smackdown is for: a dry run for the following Raw without any mention of the first match. It doesn't help that these two have fought WAY too many times and it's getting less and less interesting every single time.

Everyone brawls after the match with Owens bringing in a ladder, only to have Sami flip dive off the top onto the pile of people. Jericho wasn't in that group though and goes up the ladder to pull down the briefcase to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The wrestling (and lack thereof at times) brings down what was an otherwise very strong show with two excellent talking segments. I'm more invested in the pay per view than I was coming in and that's the point of a go home show. The Cena vs. AJ stuff was excellent as Cena is still the best hard seller in the business and the Shield segment made things feel more personal, especially with Dean at the end to add some flavor. As has been the case so many times, if this was a two hour show, it would have been one of the best in a long time. As it is though, it's still good enough.

Results

The Club/Vaudevillains b. New Day/Enzo Amore/Big Cass – Magic Killer to Kingston

Paige b. Charlotte – Rampaige

Sheamus b. Zack Ryder – Brogue Kick

Sami Zayn b. Cesaro – Sunset Bomb

Kevin Owens/Alberto Del Rio b. Lucha Dragons – Pop Up Powerbomb to Cara

Dean Ambrose b. Chris Jericho – Dirty Deeds

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New Column: Breaking Up Is Hard To Do

Looking at some of the potential perils of the new Brand Split.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-breaking-up-is-hard-to-do/>

Monday Night Raw – May 30, 2016: The Slow Ride To The Bank

Monday Night Raw

Date: May 30, 2016

Location: Resch Center, Green Bay, Wisconsin

Commentators: Michael Cole, Byron Saxton, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's a big night here as we have the return of John Cena since his injury late last year. At the same time though we're probably going to hear the first news about the new Brand Split as Raw and Smackdown will become stand alone shows again starting in July. A lot of the details are still up in the air at this point but it should be interesting either way. Let's get to it.

We open with a moment of silence for Memorial Day.

A bunch of wrestlers quote a Ronald Reagan speech on fallen troops.

Opening sequence.

Here's Shane McMahon to open things up but Stephanie comes out to join him before anything can be said. They mention the Brand Split and Smackdown moving to Tuesdays before New Day comes out for a chat. Big E. likes the idea of bringing the power of positivity to Raw and Smackdown ("That's a lot of P's.") but then it turned into paranoia because the rosters might be split up. After making fun of Kofi for being the oldest member of the team (Woods: "You were my favorite wrestler in middle school."), they get to the point: which show will New Day be on?

Stephanie dodges the question and New Day does a dramatic reenactment of Stephanie dodging it like an invisible ball. Woods goes insane and nearly starts crying over the team being split up and Francesca II being in a broken home. There's also no decision yet on who will be running which show so New Day thinks there should be a dance challenge. Stephanie isn't interested but Shane gets into it to a nice reaction. They finally get Stephanie to join in but the Vaudevillains cut her off.

Vaudevillains vs. New Day

Non-title and joined in progress with Cole welcoming us back to Smackdown. English gets stomped down in the corner as JBL tells us that a herd of unicorns is called a glory. We get the Unicorn Stampede but Gotch pulls Kofi's foot to give the villains control. Gotch headlocks Kofi and knocks him to the floor as we take a break after less than four minutes of action. Back with Kofi taking Gotch down and making the hot tag to Big E. for the overhead belly to belly suplexes on English. As this is going

on though, Karl Anderson and Luke Gallows run in to attack Kofi for the DQ at 8:54.

Rating: D+. I liked the ending as Gallows and Anderson were pretty much the only option to go after the titles at this point and would be a good choice for new champions. The Vaudevillains were just there to give Anderson and Gallows a reason to come out, though at least it was a non-title match and not a rematch for no particular reason.

Anderson and Gallows lay out the champions post match.

Post break Anderson and Gallows say they've just put the tag team division on notice because they can do just as much damage without AJ.

We look back at Sheamus attacking Apollo Crews last week.

Crews is doing pushups when Big Show returns to say hello. Apollo says he's ready to fight Sheamus and Show can admire that. Show knows Crews will make it work because Sheamus is scared of the New Era.

Usos vs. Breezango

Golden Truth is on commentary with JBL ripping on them for being a horrible team. Truth: "JBL they do not allow elephants in here." Fandango hammers on Jey to start but Breeze charges into a superkick on the floor. Back inside, Jey crucifixes Fandango for the pin at 1:48.

Golden Truth beats up Breezango.

Here's Roman Reigns for a chat. Reigns talks about how the Shield broke up a long time ago and until someone takes this title from his shoulder, he's still The Guy. This brings out Rollins for a fight but of course he doesn't get in the ring. Instead he grabs the mic and teases talking but throws the mic down and goes towards the ring instead. This happens five or six times before Rollins just leaves. The fans call this boring because they have the attention span of drunken goats and can't go three seconds without being entertained. Rollins sprints down the ramp one more time but stops at the apron again to wrap this up.

Trailer for Warcraft.

Rusev vs. Zack Ryder

Non-title. Rusev knees him in the ribs to start and drops Ryder with a clothesline. Ryder gets the knees up in the corner and drops Rusev with a middle rope dropkick. The Broski Boot connects for two but the Rough Ryder is easily countered and the Accolade makes Ryder tap at 2:31. That's the sixth time Rusev has made Ryder tap on Raw in just over two years and actually the longest Zack has ever lasted.

Rusev calls himself a real American hero but here's Titus O'Neil to interrupt. Titus says this is Memorial Day and drops Rusev to the floor with a single right hand.

The Shining Stars want us to come to Puerto Rico.

We get a video on Charlotte dropping Ric Flair with comments from various people. This aired on Smackdown.

Earlier today, Stephanie yelled at Charlotte for being a spoiled, selfish brat. She yells a bit more and there's no reaction from Charlotte as Stephanie collects her first set of lady balls. To recap, so far the first Women's Champion has been made to tap out to Natalya more than once, played second fiddle to Ric Flair and not been allowed to say a word when Stephanie, yes STEPHANIE MCMAHON, yelled about someone being a spoiled brat who didn't respect her father enough.

Enzo Amore/Big Cass vs. Dudley Boyz

Before the match, Cass lists off various types of cheese that he's putting on the knuckle sandwiches he's about to hand off. Bubba and Cass lock up to start but both Dudleyz are quickly sent to the floor as we take an early break. Back with Enzo in trouble (as expected) and eating an elbow to the jaw for daring to fight out of a neck crank.

Bubba comes in and drops some elbows for two before ripping at Enzo's face. We hit the chinlock from D-Von for a bit before the hot tag brings in Cass. The reverse 3D gets two on him though and Bubba goes up, only to have an Enzo distraction let Cass slam him down. D-Von takes the big boot and the Rocket Launcher gives Enzo the pin at 9:23.

Rating: C-. This was a really basic match though it's cool to see the new guys getting a clean win like this. I'm really not sure where you go with these two but they've looked awesome so far with Cass more than acting as a solid big man and Enzo as a great mouthpiece. There's no point in them fighting the Dudleyz anymore, so I'm sure we'll see them at Money in the Bank.

Sami Zayn, Dean Ambrose and Cesaro discuss their match against Chris Jericho, Kevin Owens and Alberto Del Rio. They're keeping an eye on their opponents but Dean doesn't seem to think much of Canadians. Sami: "You know I'm Canadian right?" Dean: "...Oh. That explains so much."

It's the top of the third hour and here's the returning John Cena. He looks at the mic and gives a speech about Memorial Day and is very glad that he's back home. However, he wants to thank everyone who has paid the ultimate price to keep our liberty safe. As for the business at hand tonight, the question is whether or not Cena still belongs here. That starts up a YES chant in quite the little surprise.

It's a New Era around here with a bunch of new names and new faces and all of them are thinking that Cena's best days are behind them. The name of this new era doesn't matter because Cena isn't going quietly into the night and the face that runs the place is back so the future must go through him.

Cue AJ Styles for something that would have been a dream match ten years ago. The fans are split (JBL: "The WWE Universe is having fun right now!") until AJ says he's been waiting for this for a long time. He's always heard about Cena being the first in and the last out and now AJ wants to be the first man to welcome him back.

Cue Anderson and Gallows to as they're here for a fight. That sounds like a challenge but AJ blasts Cena in the face and the Club is back together. The big beatdown is on and AJ even goes back in three more times to keep beating on him. Even Anderson and Gallows pull him back.

Natalya vs. Dana Brooke

Charlotte is at ringside as this feud is somehow continuing. Natalya hits

her in the corner but gets taken down, allowing Charlotte to yell a lot. Charlotte distracts her to break up the Sharpshooter and the Samoan Driver gives Dana the pin at 1:20.

Post match Becky Lynch runs in for the save.

Dolph Ziggler is ready to show off tonight against Baron Corbin in a technical wrestling match. Dean Malenko was the Man of 1000 Holds and on the WWE Network you can see Chris Jericho list off his 1004 holds. Well Ziggler knows 1005, which he starts to list. As expected, every other one is armbar. This uh, wasn't funny.

Baron Corbin vs. Dolph Ziggler

This is billed as a technical wrestling exhibition and Dolph puts on headgear. And there's a low blow to Baron for the DQ at 33 seconds.

The fans aren't sure how to react to this so Dolph says the loser of this match is still Baron Corbin.

Miz is on the set of his new movie and needs to get some rest before shooting starts.

Owens, Jericho and Del Rio bicker about the six man tag. They agree to work together but Jericho calls them both idiots after they leave.

Alberto Del Rio/Chris Jericho/Kevin Owens vs. Dean Ambrose/Cesaro/Sami Zayn

Del Rio suplexes Cesaro to start but Cesaro runs to the floor for the running uppercut on Jericho. The Swing is blocked by a rope grab and Cesaro is taken outside for a triple team. Jericho stomps away as the fans chant STUPID IDIOT. Cesaro suplexes his way out and the hot tag brings in Sami to clean house with his clotheslines. The villains get in a fight on the floor and Sami scores with a big dive as we take a break.

Back with Owens dropping Sami ribs first over the top rope and getting two off the backplash. Del Rio grabs the leg to stop a tag and it's back to Jericho who misses a Lionsault and bangs up his own knee. The Blue Thunder Bomb finally allows the hot tag off to Ambrose as house is

cleaned again.

Jericho dives into a kick to the ribs but still blocks Dirty Deeds. Instead Dean hits the suicide dive to take Chris out, only to have Jericho grab a Codebreaker back inside. Owens wants the pin but only gets two. The Canadians start arguing so Cesaro knocks them together and Swings Jericho. Everyone comes in and Owens tries the Pop Up Powerbomb on Zayn, only to get caught in Dirty Deeds for the pin at 17:56.

Rating: B. This was good, albeit a bit pointless. You have to expect things like this over the coming weeks as there isn't much you can do to set up the ladder match other than having mostly meaningless matches like this one. At least the finish was clean though and we have some dissension among people.

Overall Rating: C+. It wasn't exactly a great show but there was more good than bad going on. The problem is you have something like Stephanie yelling at Charlotte without her being able to say a thing because ALL HAIL STEPHANIE but then you have something amazing like AJ vs. Cena being set up which basically makes people hand their wallets over in advance. The rest of the show was hit or miss but I'm really not too excited about so many feuds continuing in the lame duck period between now and the Brand Split.

Results

New Day b. Vaudevillains via DQ when Karl Anderson and Luke Gallows interfered

Usos b. Breezango – Crucifix to Fandango

Rusev b. Zack Ryder – Accolade

Enzo Amore/Big Cass b. Dudley Boyz – Rocket Launcher to D-Von

Dana Brooke b. Natalya – Samoan Driver

Baron Corbin b. Dolph Ziggler via DQ when Ziggler kicked him low

Dean Ambrose/Cesaro/Sami Zayn b. Chris Jericho/Alberto Del Rio/Kevin

Owens – Dirty Deeds to Owens

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The Roman Reigns Problem, Now Featuring Seth Rollins

Kind of a bonus column this week.

So this past Sunday at Extreme Rules, Seth Rollins made his return and attacked WWE World Champion Roman Reigns, seemingly becoming the new top face to take down the rapidly heel turning Reigns. However, the next night on Raw, it was clear that Rollins was in fact still heel and Reigns was in fact still the big dog face that fans are getting very tired of in a hurry. Today we're going to take a quick look at why this continues to make people scratch their heads.

Let's get this out of the way first: Roman Reigns has an audience. Allegedly he's rather handsome and there's something about his arms and hair that appeals to women. If you read most house show results, Reigns gets one of the loudest pops of the night but for some reason that doesn't translate to TV. You can claim that it's the new cool thing to do (which I can completely buy) or whatever, but the fact of the matter is that these reactions are happening and there's no way around them at the

moment.

Reigns has a big value to WWE. He has a good look, he can more than hold his own in the ring and he's getting better on the mic. I don't think anyone would suggest that he's worthless or doesn't belong in WWE and if they did, they're just flat out wrong. However, there's a difference between having a spot on the card and having THE spot.

Here's the thing: there's not much that sets Reigns apart. Yeah he has a good look but so do a lot of people. Yeah he can wrestle a good match but others can do it better. Yeah his talking is improving but that's still not saying much given how bad it was in the first place. Reigns is better than he used to be and has improved by leaps and bounds from just a year ago but he's still missing the big thing: a connection.

Why should I care about Roman Reigns? After everything he's said and done over the years, I have no reason to feel a connection to him. He debuted as part of this elite group where he almost never talked, then became the monster of the team who set a bunch of records and finally became the top dog after the team split, leading to his main event run where he kept beating up everyone in sight because HE IS THE CHOSEN ONE. We don't really have a reason for him getting this spot but he's getting it, he's winning the title at Wrestlemania and there's nothing that's changing that because it's been decided months in advance.

In other words, Reigns is basically Superman: he barely has any weaknesses and he's better than you because everyone is beneath him. There's no personality there and it makes for some really dull exchanges and feuds because Reigns is just going to win no matter what happens. How am I supposed to get interested in something like that?

This is why someone like Daniel Bryan worked. While he was very talented in the ring, he faced a lot of adversity and was held down because of his size, look etc. How many times did you hear the Authority tell him that he didn't have any right to be near the World Title because he belonged somewhere else? In other words, WWE set it up so that people WANTED to see Bryan get this spot. Compare this to Reigns where it was more "Reigns is awesome and is getting the title. You like him!"

Now let's jump back to Rollins. Seth has been presented as the smart one of the Shield, often being referred to as the Architect and an all around mastermind who keeps figuring out a way to escape, normally with the title at the same time. Rollins never lost the World Title and had a reason to immediately challenge his old nemesis Reigns. It helps that Rollins can wrestle one of the most exciting in ring styles of anyone on the roster. This really should have been one of the biggest and easiest layoffs that WWE could do for a very long time.

And then they just didn't do it. Rollins came out on Raw last night acting like a face and then went right back to heeling it up on the audience, no matter what the fans were begging to see. At the end of the day, a lot of the fans want to see something else on top of the company. Whether or not that's Rollins isn't what matters. What matters is that Reigns just is not working as the undisputed face of the company.

But for some reason that only Vince himself can explain, we're getting Roman Reigns as the star of the company. Now a lot of these problems could be changed by a big heel turn, which really seems like what a lot of the fans want to see. I have no idea what WWE is waiting for as there's an army of names ready to challenge a heel Reigns (imagine Sami Zayn as the underdog vs. the big dog for the title) but this is what we're stuck with whether we like it or not.

Rollins is just another name added to that list. The fans were more than ready to cheer him before he got hurt and then they had the face turn set up for them even stronger than before Rollins was hurt. I can more than accept the idea that Rollins is a better heel than a face but this is another case of someone who looks ready to be the good to Reigns' bad, only to have it be the same thing all over again.

At this point Reigns is just in a really weird place. Look back at the AJ Styles feud and tell me who I was supposed to cheer for there. Anderson and Gallows were certainly acting like heels while AJ was getting more aggressive but the Usos lost their big face entrance and generally acted exactly the same way as the newcomers. I really wasn't sure who I was supposed to be for in that feud as Reigns continues to act like a tweener/heel while being presented as the undisputed top face of the

company.

So what can be done about all this? I really have no idea. Basically we're stuck in this same holding pattern of the fans rejecting Reigns as this star until he either changes things up a lot (read as a heel turn to make him the guy that everyone wants to boo) or Vince changes his mind. Really at this point it seems that Reigns is at the top because Vince says so and that's just not going to work for the fans who have rejected him.

The worst part of this is that a lot of the criticism can't be placed on Reigns. It wasn't him that set up this push or had him walk out of the Royal Rumble for half an hour (What was that anyway? Of all the things they could do like having him taken out on a stretcher or just left him there unconscious, they had him get on his feet and walk to the back like a heel. Who thought that was a good idea?) or give the main event of Wrestlemania twenty seven minutes.

Let's talk about that match for a second. What could they possibly have been thinking there? After the show had already gone on for six hours, we got a Mad Max style speech from Stephanie which can be loosely translated as "BOO US! WE'RE EVIL!" to try and get the fans away from booing Reigns out of Texas. As you might have guessed, this really didn't work because that's not what the fans wanted to see.

Then the fans were treated to a match that ran nearly half an hour with a meaningless story of working on a shoulder and capped off by a spear to give Reigns the title (again). Yeah I'm not sure why this third title reign is supposed to be more interesting than the other two times where he won the title clean but apparently this is a much bigger deal.

In that whole big mess of a match, there was one moment that changed the whole thing. At one point, Reigns went for a spear on HHH but hit Stephanie instead. The entire audience suddenly went insane and wanted to cheer him because he did something the fans wanted to see. Stephanie had been the most annoying character in the company for years but never got anything that was coming to her. Then Reigns cut her in half with a spear and he was the most popular thing in the company (for all of five

minutes).

This isn't even the first time this has happened. At TLC 2015, Reigns was up against ridiculous odds as he had to face the League of Nations and the Authority at the same time. There was a moment where Reigns just started firing off Superman Punch after Superman Punch to keep the League at bay as long as he could. It made him feel like a superhero and again, the crowd ate it up and treated Reigns like WWE wants him to be treated. Then Sheamus retained the title anyway because that's what WWE felt was the right idea.

After the match, Reigns completely snapped and annihilated HHH with a bunch of power moves and a powerbomb onto but not through the table (because we needed one more moment to define Reigns' career). Again, this worked PERFECTLY as the fans wanted to see Reigns break away from this mold that he had been stuck in and just act like a 6'4 monster with insane power and some good natural charisma. You know, EXACTLY WHAT MADE HIM COOL WHEN HE WAS IN THE SHIELD. Things got even better the next night when Reigns beat the heck out of Sheamus, Superman Punched Vince in the face and won the title clean.

But after all that and all the face pops we got as a result, it was HHH winning the title at the Royal Rumble, setting up the mess of a title match. All the while, Reigns was back to his cookie cutter self that people didn't want to see but WWE had decided they knew how Reigns should be pushed and the crowd didn't know what they really wanted.

That's where we are now: Reigns has the tools to make the fans cheer him (or boo the heck out of him) but instead WWE is still having him tread water as a lukewarm face while the booing gets louder and louder. There's an army of names waiting to face him (AJ Styles, Sami Zayn, Cesaro, a bunch of people in NXT and I could probably go on) but instead it's the same Rollins vs. Reigns feud that we've seen before (they used to be in the Shield together you know).

Reigns has a big future in front of him and at age 30 (31 tomorrow), he's going to be around for a very long time. I have no idea why WWE is insisting on pushing him this way but as soon as he turns heel (or does

something that people want to see), he's going to explode on WWE and be a much bigger deal. Until then though, this is going to be the same kind of thing we're stuck with for months because WWE has decided that's what we're getting. Rollins is just the latest name on a long list of people that the fans want to see take out Reigns but nah, let's just keep going with what hasn't worked because that's what Vince wants.

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