

Thought of the Day the Sequel: Cena's (Kayfabe) Priorities

Anyone that follows my stuff knows I'm relatively neutral on Cena. I respect his work and think he's one of the greatest superstars ever, However lately his character has had some continuity issues. Note that this is all in kayfabe of course. 1. Over the summer, Cena says that Big Show winning the title would be disastrous. Well Big Show won the Smackdown Title two months ago and Cena doesn't seem to be running through the streets saying the sky is falling.

2. Last night Cena says how much he respects Flair, but he's perfectly fine with Shield beating him up. However, when Zigler, a guy that beat him clean the night before (no rules means interference is clean) tries to legally cash in a MITB case, Cena runs to the rescue. Was he in a rousing game of pinball earlier?

Monday Night Raw – December 17, 2012: Raw FINALLY Stops Taking Itself So Seriously.

Oh And He's Back!

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 17, 2012

Location: Wells Fargo Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

It's the Slammys! The catch this year is the voting is all done on the WWE App, which is supposed to be interesting or mean something or other. This is the night after TLC and the main change is that AJ has turned on Cena, possibly to join Ziggler but that hasn't been confirmed. This is a three hour show instead of a three hour special, because that's how Raw works anymore. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of the PPV last night as expected.

Rey Mysterio vs. Damien Sandow

Sandow takes over to start and sends Rey out to the floor with Rey's signature chest first bump. Back in and the Wind-Up Elbow gets two and let's hit that chinlock. Rey comes back with a headscissors and a seated dropkick for two of his own. It's Scholars vs. HELL NO on Wednesday at Main Event. If that's not enough of a clue as to what's coming, I don't know what is. Indeed there it is, as Rey hits the 619 and top rope splash for the pin at 3:14.

Rating: D+. What in the world was the point of this? They already say that the Scholars are getting the title shot in two days, so what in the world is the point here? The match wasn't even any good and Sandow looked like a jobber, which is the last thing he needs to be right now. No idea what they were going for here.

Here's Booker to present the Tell Me I Did NOT Just See That Award for Biggest Surprise. After explaining that we have to download the WWE App for the 1000th time, we're ready to go. The nominees are:

Brad Maddox's Low Blow on Ryback (Hell in a Cell)

18 Seconds (Wrestlemania 28)

Kofi's Miracle Save (Royal Rumble)

The Rock Gets Punked (Raw 1000)

Before the winner is announced, here's the FREAKING BOOGEYMAN. He's got the clock and the worms and apparently we're taking a break before the award is announced. Well sure why not. Post break, Brad Maddox comes out to stand next to Booker, but Kofi wins. Nothing of note in the acceptance speech.

Kaitlyn vs. Eve Torres

Kaitlyn jumps her to start and pounds away and we head to the floor. The champion (this is non-title) gets pounded on even more and freaks out because Kaitlyn hits her in the face. Back in and Eve pounds away on Kaitlyn, but Kaitlyn comes out of the corner with a gutbuster for the pin at 2:08. Back to the old formula for the Divas I guess.

To present the Comeback of the Year Award, here are the New Age Outlaws, complete with the PG version of their entrance. Billy has to read his line off his hand in a funny bit. The nominees are:

Brock Lesnar

Chris Jericho

DX

Jerry Lawler

We take a break before the awards which I think is going to be a trend tonight. Lawler wins to the shock of no one. He jogs up the ramp and says nothing of note.

Kofi Kingston vs. Tensai

Tensai hits the Vader Bomb in the corner and walks into Trouble in Paradise for the pin at 1:10. Fire him. Please.

Post match Wade Barrett lays out Kofi with the Bull Hammer.

Here's hot to vote! AGAIN!

Here's Vickie to present Kiss of the Year. The nominees are:

AJ and Daniel Bryan

AJ and Kane

AJ and CM Punk

AJ and John Cena

Vickie has something to say before the winner is announced. She'd NEVER be nominated for this award because she wouldn't abuse her position like this. The winner with AJ is Cena. This exists to have AJ come out and explain herself, but she says she doesn't owe anyone anything and she shoves Vickie away. Ziggler comes out and separates them, so AJ kisses Dolph. He's into it as Vickie EXPLODES. AJ skips away and Ziggler chases after him. It's about freaking time.

Great Khali vs. David Otunga

Khali forearms him down and chops him in the corner. A second one is even LOUDER but he misses a big boot in the corner. David stomps away on the leg in the corner but it's shrugged off and the big chop gets the pin at 1:57.

Ric Freaking Flair is here to read the nominees for Superstar of the Year. There's a surprise. Since this is Philadelphia, it might as well be God walking onto the stage. This would have been a bigger shock if they didn't play WOO and have his voice saying the names before the break.

Sheamus

John Cena

Big Show

CM Punk

Cena wins and is of course booed out of the building. For some reason he gives the Slammy to Flair...but here's Punk with something to say. Heyman of course gets an ERUPTION. Punk goes on a big rant about how he should be Superstar of the Year because Cena keeps losing and hasn't done anything all year. Flair looks at his Rolex and makes fun of Punk but Punk says Flair can't talk about baggage. Flair asks if he means his two Hall of Fame rings or his four ex-wives. Naturally Ric wants to fight and we take a break.

Back with Punk limping into the ring to face Flair and he blasts Flair in the ribs. Flair pokes him in the eye and hits Punk with the crutch before throwing Heyman in the Figure Four. Naturally Flair has something to say, so he says welcome back Jerry Lawler. If he's going to die in a ring, he wants it to be in a WWE ring or with a woman from Philadelphia. He sucks up to Philly a bit more but here's the Shield.

Post break, Ambrose is laying out Flair before heading back to the floor to fight HELL NO who apparently came out during the break. They load up Flair for the SuperBomb, but here's Ryback to a BIG pop for the save. No Cena for no apparent reason. Rollins gets dropped on the announce table and the Shield is beaten down. Flair shakes all of their hands and the good guys stand tall. Well Bryan stands medium height but you get the idea.

Post break again, Flair and HELL NO celebrate in the back and Flair gets into the YES/NO thing. Ron Simmons comes up and you know where this is going.

Brodus Clay vs. JTG

It's an old school Brodus squash with JTG only hitting a decent looking Blockbuster. Total domination with Brodus hitting his usual stuff and winning with the splash at 1:52.

Here are Santino and Tensai to presents LOL Moment of the Year. Tensai falls down coming through the entrance and has a big bandage and ice pack on his head. Santino cracks up looking at Tensai. He calls him Albert and makes fun of him for a bit. Apparently Tensai means Fat Albert. Tensai grabs him and speaks in that thick Boston accent of his.

The Rock throws Cena merchandise into the Boston Harbor

HELL NO at Anger Management

Randy Orton beats up Ricardo and Striker with food

Vickie Guerrero dances

Rock wins because the WWE Universe has no taste. Naturally he's not here so Santino accepts on his behalf. Bryan comes out to say NO because this should be his Slammy. PREACH IT BROTHER!!! Kane drags him away.

Sin Cara vs. Cody Rhodes

Cara's knee is still messed up from last night. Cody takes over quickly as we've got the dark lighting. Cody hits the delayed release gordbuster for two and cranks on Cara's arm. He pounds away for a bit but gets caught by a springboard missile dropkick. There's a rana to put Cody down but he catches Cara in the Cross Rhodes out of nowhere for the pin at 4:15.

Rating: D+. Stupid psychology aside, this wasn't anything of note. What's the deal with the lighting anymore anyway? It's been done for months now, so why bring it back every now and then? Was there really a demand for that stupid thing? Nice to see Cody actually winning a match before his title shot in two days.

Here are Zack Ryder and Layla to present the award for Trending Now Hashtag of the Year. I swear this is a real thing.

Feedmemore

Peoplepower

LittleJimmy

WWYKI

Ryback wins and that's about it.

Here's Big Show with that massive chair of his. He's not surprised that

he got the shaft for losing Superstar of the Year. He's still World Champion though and the fans can't handle that. The fans chant boring but Show threatens to sit in the chair all night. Cue Sheamus because three straight losses aren't enough. Sheamus says that he doesn't want to fight tonight and he has no regrets about last night. Last night, Show was the better man.

Show of course rubs it in but Sheamus says there's nothing more to it than that: Show deserves to be champion. He offers Show a handshake and Show of course isn't sure. The champion shakes his hand but Show says go to the back of the line "you potato eating Irishman." Show keeps running his mouth and the brawl is on. Sheamus gets the big chair and pounds away with the huge chair before laying Show out with a Brogue Kick.

Show is out cold.....AND HERE COMES ZIGGLER!!!

Smackdown World Title: Dolph Ziggler vs. Big Show

Cena sneaks in from behind and beats up Dolph so I don't think there's an official cash in. The bell never rang and Show is getting up. Ziggler gets beaten up badly and it's officially not a cash in. Why not? The bell should have rung.

3MB vs. Alberto Del Rio/The Miz/Tommy Dreamer

Before the match we take a break and when we come back, Ziggler is looking for Vickie. Eventually she yells at him for the stuff with AJ but Ziggler says it's over with Vickie. He tired of her jealousy and says she's getting old and ugly. She makes Ziggler/AJ vs. Vickie/Cena. Oh geez.

As for the match, we still have to have a third partner announced for Miz/Del Rio, which you've already seen by now. The reaction for Dreamer is great of course. Del Rio and McIntyre start things off with Alberto pounding away. Off to Dreamer for some bad dancing and a flapjack. Everything breaks down and the Band is sent to the floor. Del Rio dives onto all three, as does Dreamer. For reasons I can't comprehend, we take a break.

Back with Dreamer suplexing Mahal down and it's off to Miz. The fans in Philly are actually into him as he hits the corner clothesline on Slater. McIntyre breaks it up though and the Band takes over. Mahal comes in to drop a knee and hook a chinlock. Back to Slater who hooks a front facelock for a few moments before it's back to Drew. Miz grabs a rollup for two but can't make a tag.

Drew puts Miz in a fireman's carry and does a little strut before dropping Miz down on his face. Slater breaks up the tag again but Alberto makes the tag and cleans house. A big kick to Slater's head gets two and Del Rio clears the ring out. The armbreaker is broken up but he hits the corner enziguri to Slater anyway. He loads up the armbreaker again but instead tags Dreamer in. Dreamer comes in for the pin at FOURTEEN MINUTES AND THIRTEEN SECONDS.

Rating: D+. WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD THIS FREAKING MATCH GET FIFTEEN MINUTES??? I mean dude, come on. We couldn't get ANYBODY else out there to fill in this kind of time? The match was nothing special, and it's still hard to buy Miz and Del Rio as faces because they never really had a big moment to turn. Del Rio's turn last night was really quick and didn't have a chance to sink in. That's a problem that it's going to take time to get over.

Sheamus comes out to present Newcomer of the Year.

Antonio Cesaro

Brodus Clay

Damien Sandow

Ryback

If you're not sure who wins here, I can't help you. The fans actually cheer for Ryback pretty well. He starts a FEED ME MORE chant and that's about it.

Ryback vs. Antonio Cesaro

This should be good. Non-title of course. Cesaro pounds away to start and

let the Goldberg chants begin. Ryback counters a suplex into a delayed one of his own for one. Cesaro comes back with a spinebuster but Ryback backdrops out of the Neutralizer. There's a spinebuster from the good guy but Cesaro rolls away from the Meat Hook. He gets his belt but Ryback gorilla presses him back into the ring. Cesaro tries to run again and it's a countout win for Ryback at 2:08. That's the smartest thing they could have done.

Here are Gene Okerlund, Ricky Steamboat and JR to present the Match of the Year Award.

Undertaker vs. HHH (Wrestlemania 28)

Brock Lesnar vs. John Cena (Extreme Rules)

Sheamus vs. Big Show (Hell in a Cell)

The Rock vs. John Cena (Wrestlemania 28)

There are three VERY strong contenders here and it goes to Taker vs. HHH. I have no issue with that winning at all. HHH makes fun of his short hair but is immediately drowned out by a WE WANT TAKER chant. He sucks up to the crowd for a bit and the fans say thank you. We haven't seen the last of the Undertaker apparently.

In the back the Shield is destroying Tommy Dreamer. Ricardo of all people tries to stop them and is beaten down as well. Referees eventually chase them off.

Here's AJ for the main event but she asks for a ladder to be set up for her. Post break AJ is on top of the ladder and says everyone has been asking her why she did it. She's about to explain when Vickie interrupts her.

Dolph Ziggler/AJ vs. Vickie Guerrero/John Cena

It's after 11pm already so this isn't going to last long. The guys start things off with Cena escaping a hammerlock. Off to AJ which means Cena has to tag Vickie. I think Vickie is supposed to be a face here. She pounds AJ down and AJ walks out, making it a handicap match. Now Vickie

leaves and Ziggler escapes the AA. The jumping DDT gets two on Cena but John ducks a superkick and puts on the STF. AJ and BIG FREAKING E LANGSTON come in for the DQ at 4:29. If you don't know who Langston is, I feel sorry for you.

Rating: N/A. I rarely use this but seriously, there's nothing to talk about here.

Overall Rating: B+. I dug this show WAY more than any Raw in probably six months or so. They had a fast paced show tonight where they mixed things up and didn't keep anything (aside from the six man tag) out there longer than it should have been. This was a much more laid back show that didn't take itself too seriously, which has been one of Raw's biggest problems tonight. Good show and one of the best wrestling TV shows in months.

Results

Rey Mysterio b. Damien Sandow – Top Rope Splash

Kaitlyn b. Eve Torres – Gutbuster

Kofi Kingston b. Tensai – Trouble in Paradise

Great Khali b. David Otunga – Chop to the head

Brodus Clay b. JTG – Splash

Cody Rhodes b. Sin Cara – Cross Rhodes

Alberto Del Rio/The Miz/Tommy Dreamer b. 3MB – DDT to Slater

Ryback b. Antonio Cesaro via countout

Vickie Guerrero/John Cena b. Dolph Ziggler/AJ via DQ when Big E. Langston interfered

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Thought Of The Day Again: Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

So apparently WWE is worried about Ryback for not getting a big reaction last night in Brooklyn. Gee, could that be because.... He hasn't won a major match since he moved up to the main event? He lost at HIAC, he lost at Survivor Series, he lost at TLC. Yeah there were circumstances on the side every time, but at the end of the day he lost. Every time. But hey, it must be his fault because everyone loves to cheer for losers right? On top of that, IT WAS FREAKING BROOKLYN. You know, the place that boos Cena out of the building every night and thinks Daniel Bryan is the greatest thing since free refills. Also they can ignore the Ryder chants, because his reactions don't count right?

Tables Ladder and Chairs 2012: The Shield Has Arrived And They Picked A Great Show To Do It At

Tables Ladders and Chairs 2012

Date: December 16, 2012

Location: Barclays Center, Brooklyn, New York

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

This is the final stop before we get to the Rumble where Rock can finally get his title shot, meaning we can stop having everything lead up to that instead of having stuff that matters. The main event is a six man tag

because Punk is injured. Other than that we've got Cena vs. Ziggler for the MITB case and Sheamus vs. Show in a chairs match for the Smackdown Title. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Divas Battle Royal

Layla, Kaitlyn, Alicia Fox, Natalya, Tamina Snuka, Aksana, Rosa Mendes, Cameron, Naomi

The winner gets the title shot presumably later tonight. They're all in Santa outfits here and Eve is on commentary. Rosa is put out quickly and the Funkadactyls do some splits on I think Alicia. I think Cameron is put out and Aksana lays on the ropes like an idiot. She deserves the elimination she gets. Striker says that there might be a dancing basketball rivalry because Layla and Eve danced for different NBA teams.

Tamina eliminates Layla and Kaitlyn dropkicks Nattie out. We've got Kaitlyn, Naomi and Tamina left as Alicia was put out off camera earlier I guess. Naomi actually puts out Tamina and we get a rematch of NXT Season 3. Kaitlyn spears her down but misses a dropkick. Naomi puts her on the apron and Layla adds a slap, allowing Naomi to dropkick Kaitlyn out for the win at 5:26.

Rating: D. Yes, one of the Funkadactyls, the dancers of Brodus Clay who hasn't been on TV in weeks, is the #1 contender to the Divas Title. Has she ever spoken a word on television or been seen on her own? Wait why am I even trying to figure this out? It's the freaking Divas division so what difference does it make?

The regular show opens with a twenty six bell salute to those who died in the shooting in Connecticut.

There are ladders EVERYWHERE, including hanging from the rafters over the stage.

Rhodes Scholars vs. Rey Mysterio/Sin Cara

Tables match where only one member has to go through for a win. The winners get a title shot at some point in the future. Sandow wants to know if there's anyone lower in life than the Brooklyn hipster. They're

literally the unwashed masses. Cody makes fun of facial hair and we're ready to go. Thankfully we don't have tags and Rey sends Cody to the floor very quickly. Sandow is sent out as well and there are stereo dives by the masked men.

Rey and Cara pull out a table and ram both Scholars with it. Rhodes has to save Sandow from being slammed through the table and Rey is sent out to the floor. Mysterio saves Cara from going through the table, allowing Sin to hit the armdrag out of the corner on Rhodes. There's the Disaster Kick to Cara though and everyone in a mask is down. The Scholars slam Cara into the steps and Rey goes into the barricade. The Mustache gets another chant as the Scholars set up a pair of tables.

After walking around forever, Rey trips up Sandow and hits the seated senton. Cody's powerbomb is countered into a rana to send him to the floor. Cara takes out Sandow with a springboard cross body and a rana that slips a bit. A corkscrew plancha to the floor takes Damien out again and Rey hits the 619 on Cody. Sandow breaks up the top rope splash through the table though as Cole lists off some Tweets. Cara kicks Sandow in the head and kicks Cody to the apron. After firing off about eight kicks to the head from the apron, Cody knocks Cara off the top rope and through a table for the win at 9:36.

Rating: D+. Not the best opener in the world here as they spent a lot of time walking around looking for a spot to do. The Scholars were the obvious winners here and there's nothing wrong with that, but it doesn't make for the most entertaining match in the world. It was probably a good idea to get this out of the way though.

We get another Joker Shield promo, saying about what you would expect them to say: they're going to take out Ryback and HELL NO one by one tonight and that's about it. The main reason they want to beat those three up though: they just don't like them. How simple yet effective.

US Title: Antonio Cesaro vs. R-Truth

Cesaro is defending in what should be a layup for him. We start with a clean break in the corner and Truth does his pelvic thrusting. Cesaro throws Truth around before getting rolled up for a few two counts.

Antonio works on the ribs as the fans chant for the USA. Off to a modified cobra clutch by the champion which goes on for a good while.

Truth fights up and hits the spinning forearm followed by the ax kick for two. A side kick puts Cesaro down for two more and the fans start a Little Jimmy chant. Cesaro escapes the suplex into a stunner before hitting the European uppercut to the back of the head. Neutralizer (BIG pop for that) retains the title at 6:44.

Rating: C. This was better than I was expecting, which isn't saying much as I was expecting a basic TV level match. Truth is just filling in a spot here and there's nothing wrong with that, but we're just waiting for a big time AMERICAN to come in and save the title for the country. Decent enough match here though.

Post match Cesaro says that when the fans boo him, they're booing themselves.

Some people from Tribute to the Troops don't have much to say.

Ziggler says Cena is going to try to steal the case from him tonight. Cena already lost his own case earlier this year, so why should Ziggler have to earn it a second time? Ziggler says Cena's career should be over if John loses tonight.

Here's 3MB on MizTV to waste some time. Apparently they're going to finally perform tomorrow night on Raw. Mahal makes fun of the Spanish announce team, telling them to speak AMERICAN. The bullying goes on until Ricardo Rodriguez of all people makes the save. 3MB beats on him too until Del Rio makes the save. Is that a face turn? Miz and Del Rio wind up cleaning house. A six man is proposed to fill in some time later. The fans want Ryder to be Miz and Del Rio's partner.

Rock will indeed be at the Rumble.

HELL NO fires themselves up and talk about how hard it is to talk to Ryback. Tonight, they'll feed all of the Shield to him.

Wade Barrett says he's going to take out Kofi tonight.

Intercontinental Title: Wade Barrett vs. Kofi Kingston

Kofi is defending. Barrett takes it into the corner to start and pounds away for two. There's the bouncing elbow by Kofi for two but Wade clotheslines him out to the floor. Kofi slides back in and hits a suicide dive to take Wade right back out. Back in and momentum shifts again, this time with Barrett kicking Kofi in the ribs.

A backbreaker gets two for Wade and it's off to a bow and arrow with a knee in Kofi's back. That doesn't last long so Wade settles for two off a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. Back to the chinlock for a bit, followed by Kofi fighting up and hitting another clothesline to take Wade down. There's the Boom Drop but Trouble in Paradise misses. The Boss Man Slam is countered into the SOS for two for Kofi.

A spinning full nelson slam gets the same for Barrett but Wade is getting frustrated. I love Wade moveset as he constantly mixes in new things. Kofi's top rope cross body is rolled through for two, followed by a Boss Man Slam for the same result. In another sudden ending tonight, the Bull Hammer is countered into Trouble in Paradise to retain at 8:19.

Rating: C+. Nice back and forth match here with a surprising ending. This could have been on Smackdown but it wasn't out of place on PPV. Kofi winning is the surprise though as he would seem to be set up to be fed to Barrett. Odds are there will be a rematch though, because clearly a clean win isn't enough to warrant the end of a program right?

Punk and Heyman are in a sky box and Punk says the status of his knee is none of their business. Punk talks about how he would have destroyed Ryback tonight and how he'll be champion for as long as he likes. Oh and he's not associated with the Shield.

Ryback/HELL NO vs. The Shield

It's a TLC match but you can win by pin/submission because there's nothing to hang above the ring. Shield comes through the crowd of course. The brawl starts on the floor of course with Bryan vs. Rollins, Kane vs. Reigns and Ambrose vs. Ryback. Ryback and Ambrose get in the ring and the smart aleck fans just have to chant Goldberg. Shield gets Ryback 3-1 but

he shrugs them off. Kane tries to bring in a ladder but Rollins dropkicks it into the monster's ribs.

Bryan takes a ladder to the face as well but here's Ryback to beat them all up. Reigns takes Kane down with a chair but Kane makes the save. I think Ryback is busted a bit. Bryan kicks Reigns in the corner and the fans are WAY into Danny boy. Reigns is thrown into a ladder which gets two for Kane. Bryan saves Ryback and the fans want tables. Rollins jumps into a Kane uppercut for two before getting put inside a ladder. Kane beats on the ladder with a chair for a bit but Ambrose takes Kane out with a DDT onto the chair.

Ryback rams Rollins and Ambrose into the corner and there's another Goldberg chant. The fans still want tables. Ryback blocks a beam into the ladder in the corner and pounds Ambrose and Rollins down again. A splash crushes both of them against the ladder, followed by a suplex from Ryback to put both of them on the ladder. Reigns breaks up the double Shell Shock and it's another three on one beating. Where did HELL NO go?

Shield loads up the triple powerbomb...and it actually works. Seriously, no save from the champions until a few seconds later. Bryan goes off on everyone but gets caught in the numbers game. Kane finally comes back but gets beaten down as well. Back into the ring and it's time for the chairs portion of the match. Bryan gets beaten down before being double superplexed off a table on the top. Kane barely makes a save but he gets beaten down by the chair as well.

Ambrose and Rollins try the double superplex on Kane as well but he shoves Rollins to the floor and clotheslines Ambrose down. The side slam puts Reigns down but Dean makes the save. Instead of I think a DDT on Kane though, it's a chokeslam for Dean through the chair for two. Back to the floor and Reigns spears Kane through the barricade to a BIG reaction. Kane gets buried under a bunch of stuff, but in the chaos, Bryan grabs the NO Lock on Ambrose. He eventually gets it on all three guys but the numbers catch up to him.

Bryan fights back AGAIN with a bunch of kicks but eventually he falls prey to the Blackout (running curb stomp) onto the EDGE OF THE CHAIR from

Rollins. FREAKING OW MAN!!! Ryback is up though and house is cleaned. Rollins is thrown onto Ambrose and it's chair time for Reigns. Ambrose comes back AGAIN but gets speared down. There's a Meat Hook for Dean followed by Shell Shock for two as Rollins saves. Ryback goes to the floor but gets caught by some chair shots. Ryback charges at Reigns to tackle into whatever is in his path in a cool visual.

The Shield and Ryback are all up by the entrance and Ambrose chairs him in the back to take him down again. They shove a ladder onto Ryback and destroy him with some chair shots and put him on a table. There's a HUGE, as in bigger than the usual HUGE ladders, and Rollins climbs up. Ryback fights up though and Rollins is in trouble. Ryback throws Seth through a big stack of tables, but Ambrose and Reigns are double teaming Bryan in the ring. Reigns superbombs Bryan through the table for the pin at 22:55.

Rating: A. AWESOME brawl here with a great story being told throughout. Ryback gets two do the big spot to look strong and the Shield's pack mentality worked very well too. Great match here and definitely better than I was expecting. Shield looked like they could more than hang in there, and that was the main thing they had to worry about. Great stuff.

Carnage is removed for a bit. Rollins took a NASTY bump into the table on that fall, slamming his head onto the edge.

Divas Title: Naomi vs. Eve Torres

Naomi does her flashy stuff to start and Eve hides on the floor. The reaction to taking the champ out? DANCE TIME! Naomi fakes her out a lot, botches a jump to the top, and misses a spinning cross body. Eve's neckbreaker ends this at 3:08.

Rating: D. Eve is hot and Naomi can shake her hips so I can't call this a failure. The division is such a joke anymore and AJ isn't going to fix anything immediately. They need to get this Kaitlyn title reign over already though because it's already past the point where it should have happened. Nothing to see but Eve's legs here as usual.

Eve does her posing thing post match which is pretty awesome.

Big Show says Sheamus has no chance to get the title back tonight.

We recap Sheamus vs. Show. Show won the title at TLC and retained it at Survivor Series, but after the second match, Sheamus hit Show 31 times with a chair. The chairs match stipulation tonight was obvious.

Smackdown World Title: Sheamus vs. Big Show

Note that with the Raw Champion off the show, this was never once mentioned as a possible replacement main event. This is a chairs match, which means chair shots are legal. Sheamus pounds him down to start and goes for the knee. The first chair is brought in but Sheamus is knocked to the floor. Show superkicks the chair into Sheamus' face and there's the LOUD chop. Sheamus comes back with the shoulder off the apron and we head inside again.

Show pounds him down again but Sheamus slams him down for two. Why is it a surprise that he kicked out of that? It's just a slam. A top rope chair shot puts Show down but a second attempt is countered with a spear out of the air to take him down. Back in and Sheamus pounds away but charges into a chokeslam for two. Show goes under the ring and pulls out a bunch of chairs.

A Vader Bomb onto a chair onto Sheamus gets two so Show loads up two chairs in the middle of the ring. Sheamus fights back and hits White Noise onto both chairs but it only gets two. Sheamus gets all fired up but the Brogue Kick hits the rope instead. The WMD lays Sheamus out but it only gets two. In a pretty dumb ending, Show pulls out a GIANT chair and clocks Sheamus in the head with it to retain at 14:40.

Rating: B-. Good match here but it was several steps below what they've done before. I really didn't know who was winning here and with Show winning, I doubt we're going to have a cash in tonight, which is probably the right call. Decent but not great match here, which surprisingly enough is a downgrade for this feud. Hopefully this is the end for these two here.

AJ comes up to Cena in a cutoff Cena shirt. Good look on her. Basically he says she can thank him after he wins.

3MB vs. Alberto Del Rio/The Miz/Brooklyn Brawler

You know what? Why not? He's in a Brooklyn Nets jersey as apparently he's abandoned the Yankees (Bronx, not Brooklyn) shirt. Ignore those RYDER chants of course. Del Rio and Slater start things off with Alberto in control. Off to Brawler who beats up Mahal a bit before getting punched down by Heath. Brawler avoids a middle rope knee drop as we hear about 3MB having their tattoos messed up. Not hot tag brings in Miz who gets two on Jinder off a DDT. Del Rio drives Drew into the remnants of the announce table. The Finale takes down Mahal and the Brawler gets the win off a Boston Crab at 3:37.

Rating: D. It should have been Ryder. Seriously, what else do you want me to say here?

We recap Ziggler vs. Cena, which is more about AJ and Vickie than anything else. Eventually Dolph and Cena got dragged into it and Ziggy's MITB case was put up for grabs in a ladder match.

Dolph Ziggler vs. John Cena

Ladder match for the case here. Cena runs him over with a shoulder to start and they stare at each other for a bit. The fans are almost universally behind Dolph here. Cena takes him down with a headlock, probably for the first time in the history of ladder matches. He works on Dolph's arm and hits a fisherman's suplex. There's a monkey flip out of the corner and Ziggler is sent to the floor.

Ziggler gets a chair to take Cena down and wedges it between the top and middle rope. We get the first ladder brought in but Cena rams it into Dolph's face. Cena might be cut over the eye. The dueling Cena chants begin as he crushes Ziggler's head with the steps. It's table time but Dolph knocks Cena down and goes for a climb. They slug it out and it's boo/yay time. Dolph hooks the sleeper and Cena turns red, but he climbs the ladder anyway with Ziggler on his back.

This of course goes badly and they crash backwards through a table in the ring. In a very cool spot, Ziggler goes up the ladder, so Cena PICKS UP THE LADDER FOR THE AA. Ziggler escapes what would have likely resulted in

death and hits the Fameasser to put both guys down. Cena puts on a quick STF but Ziggler escapes the AA and hits the Zig Zag. Ziggler seems to be a big ginger on his leg as he gets another table.

The table is placed in the corner but Cena hits four of the five moves of doom. Dolph counters the AA and hits the jumping DDT to put Cena down again. Ziggler goes for the big ladder but Cena stops him at the top. They slug it out up there with Cena shoving Ziggler off. There's no one to stop Cena...except himself as Cena does the stupid VERY slow climb, allowing Ziggler to take him down. Ziggler rams the bad eye into the ladder but Cena BUSTS OUT A FREAKING HURRICANRANA to send Ziggy through the table in the corner.

John pounds Ziggler into the corner and puts him on the top rope. Ziggler shoves him away and tries a top rope cross body, but Cena rolls through into the AA. That gets countered too and a chair shot puts Cena down. Ziggler misses a kick and there's an AA. There's nothing in the ring at the moment though so here's Vickie with a chair. Cue AJ to take Guerrero down with the Five Moves of Doom. Well close enough I guess. Cena climbs the ladder and AJ shoves it down, turning heel. Ziggler has no idea what's going on but AJ goes all happy psycho again. Ziggler retains the case at 23:38.

Rating: B+. I'd like this a lot more if it wasn't about AJ. At the end of the day, I get that she's nuts but she's gotten WAY too much focus and it means this story must continue. I get what they're going for here, but man alive they've run this story into the ground for so long that I don't care anymore. The match was very good though as the ladders were props in the match, which is what makes the best ladder matches.

Ziggler celebrates a ton to end the show.

Overall Rating: A-. Once we got by the obvious matches to open the show, this turned into the usual excellent show that TLC is. It's not so much about the quality of it, but it's FUN, which is a good idea to end the year with. Things get serious now as the Road to Wrestlemania begins. Very fun show here with a serious match of the year candidate included. Check this one out.

Results

Rhodes Scholars b. Rey Mysterio/Sin Cara – Rhodes shoved Cara through a table

Antonio Cesaro b. R-Truth – Neutralizer

Kofi Kingston b. Wade Barrett – Trouble in Paradise

The Shield b. Ryback/HELL NO – Superbomb to Bryan

Eve Torres b. Naomi – Spinning Neckbreaker

Big Show b. Sheamus – Chair to the back

Albeto Del Rio/The Miz/Brooklyn Brawler b. 3MB – Boston Crab to Mahal

Dolph Ziggler b. John Cena – Ziggler pulled down the case

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That Six Man TLC Match

Might make my match of the year list. And yes that's coming within this coming week. Check this match out as soon as you get a chance. It's well worth it.

Tables Ladders and Chairs

2012 Preview

The show is tomorrow and the Rumble I'm watching is really boring so let's get to it. Let's get the obvious ones out of the way:

Cesaro retains and the Scholars get the title shot. Those are about as obvious as you can get.

As for the other four matches, all of them could really go either way.

I'll take Barrett to win the title, as Kofi really has nothing left to do with it. He's the king of the transitional champions, so losing to Barrett is what he's designed for here.

The TLC match is a very tricky one as you can't imagine the Shield can hang with these three guys in a match with no advantage, but at the same time you don't want the Shield to go down in their first match. I'll go with Shield to add more members and win.

Now the next two matches are connected, as it's going to depend on which order they go in and who wins which one. I'll go with Sheamus to win the title, but for Big Show to lay him out afterwards, allowing Zigler, the winner of the ladder match, to cash in and win. That's a BIG stretch and if I'm wrong I won't be surprised in the slightest.

Overall this show is usually pretty fun and this one should be as well, but the booking is very hard to predict. Also as usual, everything is capped off by Rock next month anyway, making this show really just a pit stop on the way.

Thoughts/predictions?

Smackdown – December 14, 2012: It's Like They're Making This Up As They Go

Smackdown

Date: December 14, 2012

Location: Webster Bank Arena, Bridgeport, Connecticut

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Josh Matthews

It's the final show before TLC and most of the show is set. We've got Big Show vs. Sheamus not being able to fight each other (despite having dark matches at these TV tapings) until their chairs match on Sunday. We've also got the potential of the Shield attacking again which should be interesting for the most part. Other than that it's likely to be another dull show. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the end of Raw with the massive brawl between Shield, HELL NO, Ryback, Cena, Show, Sheamus and Zigler. We also cover the major feuds going into Sunday.

Big Show vs. R-Truth

Sheamus and Cesaro are both on commentary. Show pounds away on him to start and beats him into the corner with a shot to the ribs. We head to the floor where Truth gets beaten up even more, including being bounced off the ropes to crash onto the floor. Cesaro looks to interfere but Sheamus shoves him back into his chair. After Show yells at Sheamus a bit, Truth FINALLY gets his feet up in the corner and chokes Show a bit.

Show misses an elbow and Truth hits the ax kick for two. The Little Jimmy is countered and the WMD gets the pin for Show at 4:44.

Rating: D. Nice to see a guy that is treated as someone who doesn't have much of a chance to win the title on Sunday getting destroyed here on Smackdown. Truth got in like two kicks and that's the extent of his offense here. In other words, the #1 contender to the US Title is being treated like a jobber. Why is anyone surprised the midcard titles mean nothing?

Show gets in Sheamus' face post match and Cesaro jumps Sheamus from behind, sending him into Show. Show laughs and shouts that Sheamus touched him so the match is off.

Post break Show tries to talk Booker into calling off the match because of Sheamus hitting him. Booker says that it was because of Cesaro so the match is still on. What an excessively pointless segment.

Here's Damien Sandow (with what sounds like new music) to search for an apprentice. Instead of looking tonight though, he brings out Cody for their match. Cody's mustache gets another chant which is at least a reaction for him. Cody starts to talk about Miz but the Usos' music cuts him off.

Rhodes Scholars vs. Usos

This is joined in progress after a break with Jimmy hitting a clothesline on Cody. Off to Jey who gets distracted by Sandow, allowing Cody to crank on the arm. Sandow comes in and drops a knee for two. We hear about Sandow graduating from high school at 12 and being valedictorian. The Wind-Up Elbow gets two and here's Cody again. After a release from suplex, Rhodes hooks a seated full nelson.

JBL talks about how Cody's mustache looks (JBL: "He looks like a bowed up

Freddie Mercury.” Josh: “I’ll have to Google him later.”) until it’s a hot tag to Jimmy who cleans house. Jimmy loads up the splash but Cody crawls over to Sandow for the tag. Everything breaks down and Sandow rolls up Jimmy for the pin with a handful of tights at 3:52.

Rating: C-. JBL’s mustache lines made this match better but it was fine in its own right. This was about giving the Scholars momentum going into Sunday and it did that well enough. The one thing I really liked here was Josh mentioning Sandow’s background. Making up stuff about characters is a great way to push them forward, yet for some reason it’s been decided that such an idea is evil. I’d love to see it make a comeback.

Show talks to Otunga about the no contact clause.

Here are Show and Otunga in the ring for another legal issue because we haven’t had one of those angles in a few months. David talks about how Booker is clearly biased and they’re going to the Board of Directors. Otunga is going to demand that the chairs match be called off and that Booker be thrown out as GM. Booker comes out and says that the match is still going to happen, but Otunga says that just because Booker was in prison it doesn’t make him a legal expert. Also they’re going to get Sheamus fired too.

Cue Sheamus with a chair and a microphone. He says if there’s no match, there’s nothing stopping him from beating up Show right now. Show, the ferocious monster, says the contract is still valid and the match is still on. You know, because THE BIG SHOW has to be a coward heel as well. Brogue Kick lays out Otunga.

We get a clip of Orton destroying Brad Maddox two weeks ago. They might as well show the whole match as it wasn’t even 90 seconds long. This led to the Shield attacking Orton

We come back from a break to see Orton being destroyed by the Shield after apparently putting him through a table. I believe he has a wrist

injury so there's his exit off TV. Orton is injured. Imagine that.

Kaitlyn vs. Aksana

Aksana hits a knee to the ribs and hooks a headlock to take over on the mat. Kaitlyn fights up and flips Aksana forward but can't break the hold. Some forearms get two for Aksana and it's off to a chinlock. Josh keeps asking why the Shield would do that to Orton, causing JBL to go into a hilarious rant against Josh, telling him to take his spiky hair and go ask them.

Back to the chinlock by Aksana which can't even be broken by a side slam. This match has been going on for three and a half minutes and Aksana has had a head/chinlock on for about three minutes out of that. Kaitlyn comes back with forearms and a beal to set up a gutbuster for the pin at 4:18.

Rating: D-. This had to be a rib right? Aksana was basically no selling everything that Kaitlyn did to her by not letting go of that hold, which doesn't really do any good for anyone here. The Divas are somehow getting worse over time, which completely boggles my mind. Aksana may very well be the worst in ring working chick I've ever seen. Let that sink in for a bit.

Orton has a separated shoulder and might have a concussion.

Here's MizTV with special guests HELL NO. Bryan says that he doesn't want to talk about how he's feeling, because it's time to unleash all of the anger that he apparently has in him. He'll do that on Sunday with tables, ladders and chairs. When the Shield is begging for mercy, Bryan is going to tell them NO. Kane talks about looking forward to using everything they can on Sunday and Bryan says YES they will.

The champions are cut off by another Joker style promo from the Shield, who say you can ask Randy Orton what happens when you mess with the

Shield. They say Bryan can't hide behind Kane and that the sword of justice will be served. Kane says why wait until Sunday and Shield says they agree. Miz is gone as Kane and Bryan look for the Shield. They're in a sky box and slowly come down, but cue Ryback before Shield can make it to the ring. Shield turns and walks away.

Great Khali/Hornswoggle/Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel vs. Epico/Primo/Prime Time Players

Titus vs. Khali to start things off with Khali chopping him down quickly. Young gets a chop as well before it's off to Horny for some comedy spots on O'Neal. Young comes in to try to take over on Horny as Josh doesn't know who Harpo Marx is. Tyson comes in but is almost immediately stomped down. Primo gets in some shots before it's off to Epico who gets two off a slingshot elbow. Natalya and Rosa get in a fight on the floor as Primo gets two off a dropkick. In a cool ending, Tyson tries a sunset flip but Primo falls on top in a cover, but Kidd rolls backwards into a sunset flip for the pin at 3:19.

Rating: D+. I really would love it if Kidd and Gabriel could do something other than fill in spots in a stupid tag match like this. Khali and Horny are your usual opposites tag team who do nothing new but are there for the kids and the heels are all relatively entertaining. For some reason this is the best spot that Kidd and Gabriel can get. Welcome to modern day WWE.

Post match Horny dives on Titus and has to be saved by Kidd and Gabriel.

Kofi Kingston vs. Alberto Del Rio

Del Rio takes him into the corner to start as JBL talks about how awesome his Spanish is now. Kofi speeds things up and does his double leapfrogs before hooking an armbar. Del Rio takes it to the mat to take over before missing a charge in the corner. Ten punches in the corner stagger Del Rio and a European uppercut gets two for Kingston. Alberto works on the back

and arm for a bit before Kofi climbs the corner and hits a top rope chop. The Mexican is sent to the floor and Kofi hits a big dive to take him out. Del Rio shoves him into the post on the apron as we take a break.

Back with Del Rio putting on a reverse chinlock which doesn't last that long. Almost none of the spots or holds in this match are lasting long at all. Kofi tries to speed things up but walks into a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for two. Alberto loads up Trouble in Paradise (you read that right) but Kofi sends him into the corner instead. Del Rio does the exact same thing to take over again before hitting the running enziguri for two. Back to the reverse chinlock for a few moments, followed by a belly to back suplex for two on Kofi. Out of nowhere, Kofi escapes another belly to back into a rollup for the pin at 8:37 shown of 12:07.

Rating: D+. Alberto Del Rio is very uninteresting. He's long since reached one of the worst points you can reach in wrestling: he's just there. There's nothing going on with him but he keeps appearing on TV to remind you that he does in fact still exist. I've heard rumors of turning him face, but unless they give him a character, nothing is going to come from it.

Kofi goes to the ramp and ducks a charging Barrett before kicking him in the face.

The Raw ReBound is Ziggler's promo from the opening of the show, the interaction with Show vs. Sheamus, AND most of the match with Ziggler vs. Sheamus. I'm very curious if they aired the whole thing on the regular broadcast as the international broadcast that I watch is often changed. Upon watching the regular version, it is indeed different. Instead of the match, it's a LONG recap of the entire Cena vs. Ziggler buildup. That's rather interesting.

We run down the PPV card.

Now we look at the Sheamus/Show/Otunga segment from earlier.

Regal is in the back with Show and says stay calm but don't take Cesaro lightly. Sheamus says he'll lay Show out on Sunday with chair shot after chair shot.

Sheamus vs. Antonio Cesaro

Cesaro rams into him to start, knocking Sheamus down. Sheamus does the exact same thing and it's a standoff. Apparently Orton doesn't have a concussion. Sheamus hits a shoulder in the corner and a running knee lift for two. Antonio tries to jump over Sheamus out of the corner but gets caught in a Regal Roll for two instead. Sheamus gets sent to the floor but gets caught with a knee coming back in.

Off to a kind of chinlock by Antonio, followed by a European uppercut to the back of Sheamus' head for two. The gutwrench suplex gets the same in an impressive display of strength. They slug it out with Sheamus taking over, including a top rope shoulder for no cover. There are the ten forearms in the ropes...and here's Big Show on the stage with an injured Regal in front of him. Sheamus goes to get him but Show cracks Regal with a chair. Cesaro wins via countout at 7:24 to end the show.

Rating: C+. Cesaro continues to impress and it's a good sign that they're keeping him this strong. Truth has zero chance of taking the title on Sunday and that's a good thing, as Cesaro isn't quite ready for the main event yet but he's making a strong champion. Other than that, Sheamus could indeed win the title back on Sunday and this loss allows for him to be kept strong while advancing the title match as well. Good little main event here.

Overall Rating: C+. This show was like a car that kept trying to start but it couldn't quite get going. They did a decent job of setting up the PPV, but at the same time there was a lot of filler in this. Some of the matches felt like they were just there to fill in time, but on top of that we had the show contained angle of Show trying to get out of the title match. That added more or less nothing other than making Show look

like a coward which seemed to be forgotten by the ending.

It's almost like they have no idea what to do with the huge roster they have and throw out random things that are somewhat related to their active stories to fill time. Nah that can't be right. I clearly just don't get the nuances of the stories they're telling. Decent go home show this week but not a good show overall if that makes sense.

Results

Big Show b. R-Truth – WMD

Rhodes Scholars b. Usos – Rollup to Jimmy with a handful of tights

Kaitlyn b. Aksana – Gutbuster

Hornswoggle/Great Khali/Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel b. Epico/Primo/Prime Time Players – Sunset Flip to Primo

Kofi Kingston b. Alberto Del Rio – Rollup

Antonio Cesaro b. Sheamus via countout

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Monday Night Raw – December 10, 2012: WWE Is Inching Closer To Being On A Roll

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 10, 2012

Location: Prudential Center, Newark, New Jersey

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

It's the go home show for TLC and the main event has been changed to the six man tag instead of the regular TLC match due to Punk's knee injury. Other than that we've got more Cena vs. Ziggler stuff tonight as the focus is going to be on getting ready for Sunday. Hopefully unlike last night's TNA PPV, we can actually have something happen at TLC. Let's get to it.

After the usual voiceover, here's Ziggler on a ladder in the middle of the ring. He says tonight he's here to talk about the numbers six and fifteen. It's six days until TLC and fifteen days before Christmas. Cena has already cashed in one case and lost, but he still gets shot after shot after shot. Ziggler is going to cash in and become the best world champion ever.

Cue Sheamus who spends about two minutes talking and says he'll win and Ziggler will lose on Sunday. Show comes out and says both of them are delusional and that he'll beat either of them. Sheamus says he can't attack Show before Sunday, but he can have contact with someone else. He shoves Ziggler off the ladder and out to the floor. Nice guy that Sheamus.

Vince is here.

R-Truth vs. Wade Barrett

Kofi and Cesaro are on commentary. Before the bell though, here's a nearly dancing Vince. Vince hypes up the main event tonight and brings out Vickie to praise her for the main event she made. However, we need a second main event. Vince prods her into making Sheamus vs. Ziggler. That's STILL not enough though because he wants a third main event. Vickie comes up with AJ in a handicap match but Vince changes it to AJ vs. Vickie. Yep, we have a blowoff match....I hope.

Barrett takes him to the floor to start as there are probably fifteen ladders spread around the arena. Kofi lists off his resume as Barrett stops Truth's comeback. The pumphandle slam is countered into a rollup for the pin for Truth at 1:50. Yep, I totally buy Barrett as a threat to Kofi now.

Kofi hits a springboard cross body to Barrett post match.

AJ is REALLY excited about the match tonight and tells everyone about it. She goes to find Cena and goes into the locker room. Comedy ensues because she isn't supposed to see some stuff.

Prime Time Players vs. Rhodes Scholars vs. Usos vs. Epico/Primo

Eliminations rules here and the winners get to face Mysterio and Cara in a tables match on Sunday. The winners of THAT get a title shot. I've heard stupider stipulations. Jey and Epico start but it's quickly off to Jimmy who gets two off a double elbow. Primo comes in for an enziguri (that part clearly missed)/downward spiral combo which thankfully only gets two. Primo dropkicks Jey's knee out and steps on him a bit but it's quickly off to Jimmy for a superkick. Jey takes out Epico and the Superfly splash from Jimmy eliminates the cousins.

Titus takes Jey's head off with a clothesline and we take a break. Apparently the Players got eliminated via a superkick and Superfly Slash to Darren while we were away. So it's Rhodes Scholars vs. Usos for a shot at Mysterio/Cara. Gee I wonder where this is going. Sandow comes in and is immediately knocked down by Jimmy for two. Back to Jey for a modified Demolition Decapitator, but Sandow gets a boot up in the corner to break up the momentum.

Cody comes in sporting a mustache and we get a CODY'S MUSTACHE chant. Rhodes doesn't do much and it's quickly off to Sandow for the Wind-Up Elbow. Cody's bulldog is countered and the tag brings Jimmy back in. I don't think Cole knows which Uso is which. There's the Samoan Drop to

Cody followed by the running Umaga attack in the corner. The Usos load up the Superfly again but Cody gets his knees up. Cross Rhodes give the Scholars the match at TLC at 10:56.

Rating: C+. As is the trend on Raw tonight, they're keeping things fast paced tonight. Nothing tonight has felt long and that's making things a lot better. Cody's mustache and the Usos were definite highlights, and I like this idea of getting rid of a team during the break. Seriously, we didn't need to see the Players get put out and why extend a match even longer than they need to?

Alicia Fox vs. Eve Torres

Non-title I believe. Apparently the Muppets are the social media ambassadors tonight. Jerry: "How does Miss Piggy type with those hooves?" Cole: ".....that's a really good question." It's your standard gymnastics stuff with Eve being sent to the floor. Claims a knee injury but Alicia doesn't seem to care. A northern lights' suplex and a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker both get two for Fox, but Eve pulls her off the top and hits the spinning neckbreaker for the pin at 2:30.

Eve calls the ringside photographer into the ring to take pictures of her post match.

Punk and Heyman are here with the champ on crutches.

Here's Punk on crutches. He says there's nothing to the theories that he's faking the injury because he doesn't want to face Ryback on Sunday. We get a clip of the end of Raw on Monday where the injury apparently was exacerbated. The fans chant FEED ME MORE and Heyman says that's ticking him off. He talks about how Punk is a legitimate champion who doesn't have a stunt double like the Rock. Punk isn't thinking about Ryback anymore, because Ryback isn't in front of him anymore.

As for those people that think he should be stripped of the title, which must be Ryback fans for the most part, come and try to do it. No one has been able to take the title from him and he lists off all the names that he's beaten in his reign that he's beaten. At the Rumble, Rock will be another name on that list. Punk will be at the PPV on Sunday to watch the Shield, who he is NOT affiliated with, beat up HELL NO and Ryback.

We recap the announcement of Vickie vs. AJ, which is literally just the match being announced. Why bother showing this?

Sheamus vs. Dolph Ziggler

Sheamus takes over to start and goes after Ziggler's leg, which apparently was injured in the ladder fall earlier. The fans get behind Ziggler I think and he rakes the eyes to slow Sheamus down. There's a dropkick by Dolph but he gets backdropped to the floor as we take a break. Back with Ziggler holding a chinlock and sending Sheamus out to the floor. Back in and a neckbreaker gets two for Dolph but Sheamus sends him into the buckle. Sheamus starts his comeback but misses a charge, sending him shoulder first into the post.

Ziggler goes up but jumps into the fallaway slam followed by the forearms in the ropes. Sheamus goes up but gets crotched, allowing Dolph to hit a top rope X Factor for two. The Cloverleaf is escaped but there's the Irish Curse for two. These near falls are getting really close. Ziggler rolls away from a Brogue Kick and gets a chair, whacking Sheamus for the DQ at 15:12.

Rating: C+. The ending was annoying but it was really the best idea at the end of the day. You don't want to have one of your main event guys losing on Raw six days before the PPV. Ziggler looked aggressive here which is the right idea for him, but shouldn't he be using a ladder instead of a chair here?

Shemus kicks the chair into Ziggler's face post match.

Khali and Horny come in to help Vickie stretch when Vince walks in on a compromising position. Vince: "I thought this was supposed to be a family show."

We get a video of the Shield's attack on Kane on Smackdown. This is followed by I think the same holding the camera promo from the Shield from Friday.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Zack Ryder

Ryder gets a forearm in to start and hooks a very fast chinlock. The fans are way behind Ryder because of the location of the show and the fact that he's facing one of the least interesting wrestlers in years. He sends Del Rio into the corner but gets kicked in the ribs for his efforts. The kick to the arm keeps Ryder down and we hit a chinlock.

Ryder comes back with a sunset flip but walks into a German suplex for two. After another chinlock, Ryder comes back with a backdrop over the buckle in the corner to send Del Rio outside. There are the double knees in the corner but the Broski Boot misses. Cross Armbreaker ends this at 6:30.

Rating: D+. Not much to see here but it's good to see them bring out someone other than the usual guys we see all the time as jobbers. Anyway, Ryder continues to be nothing in WWE anymore but at least he was there for a bit right? Del Rio on the other hand continues to be the least interesting wrestler in YEARS.

AJ vs. Vickie Guerrero

Big reaction for AJ of course. Vickie yells a lot...and we have no referee. The referee is apparently going to be Brad Maddox. Vickie yells a lot more and jumps AJ as AJ is glaring at Maddox. Vickie beats on AJ some more until AJ goes into psycho mode. She kind of spears Vickie down

and Vickie runs up the aisle. Back in and Vickie gets beaten on some more and slapped down, but Maddox won't cover. Vickie rolls up AJ for the pin at 2:12. Yep, again, Vickie gets the last laugh. As always.

AJ goes nuts and turns over some ladders at ringside before slapping the ring announcer.

Post break AJ is still going nuts when Cena comes up to try to calm her down. He hugs AJ and the look on his face is a bit awkward.

Kofi Kingston vs. Antonio Cesaro

Antonio does his schtick before the match starts. Cesaro takes over to start and muscles Kofi down into a headlock. Kofi fights up but gets his arm draped over the top rope as Cesaro keeps control. Kingston tries a springboard chop but gets punched in the ribs on the way down. All Antonio so far and the crowd isn't that interested in what's going on.

An elbow drop gets two on Kofi but he finally starts his comeback. Antonio rolls away from the Boom Drop so Kofi monkey flips him down instead. Cesaro gets a boot up in the corner and we take a break. Back with Kofi escaping a body vice and getting two off a sunset flip. The gutwrench suplex gets two for Cesaro as does a spinebuster. Back to the body vice for a bit but Kofi comes back for a bit.

The SOS is broken up though and a European Uppercut to the back of the head puts Kofi down for two. The SOS connects but Cesaro grabs the bottom rope. In an AWESOME move, Kofi goes up for the cross body but Cesaro pulls him out of the air and into a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. The Neutralizer gets the pin at 13:46.

Rating: B-. Another good match between these two and while it's likely the right move to have Kofi lose here to keep him even with Barrett tonight, it would have been better to have Wade come out to cause the

loss given the attack earlier. Cesaro is being pushed STRONG lately as even Sheamus didn't get a clean win over him. Hopefully they don't screw him up as is usually the case with hot new guys.

The Rhodes Scholars are the guests on MizTV. Rhodes is reintroduced to the crowd after being gone for a few weeks. He makes fun of Miz for not meaning anything in years before Miz makes fun of Cody's mustache. Gay jokes are made and Sandow suggests that Miz has lost touch with reality. Miz says that the Scholars are going to hit the mat harder than Pacquiao did in the sixth round. I believe it was the fifth but whatever. Sandow: "You're not a very good host are you?"

Miz asks Cody how it felt when Sandow didn't come visit him in the hospital. How does it feel when Sandow says Cody is the Jannetty to his Shawn Michaels? Cody is getting ticked off now. Miz goes on a mini-rant against Cody but Rhodes cuts him off. He says he's heard all of this before and says that he's not going to listen to this nonsense anymore and the interview is over. Miz renames the Scholars the Pink and the Stink. What in the world was the point of this segment?

AJ wants to join Cena at ringside tonight. He doesn't think so because he'd be worried about her getting hurt. AJ finally says ok she'll stay in the back.

John Cena vs. Big Show

Ziggler is on commentary of course. Show headbutts Cena down to start and then does it again. A splash in the corner puts Cena down in the corner but Show yells at the crowd instead of following up. Cena tries the tried and true method of jumping on Show's back to choke him out. That only gets a one count so Cena tries the AA. Since it's the first time, Cena collapses under the weight.

We take a break and come back with Cena countering a chokeslam into a DDT. Show comes back with a side slam for two as Ziggler says Cena is

actually impressing him here. Cena fires away with some punches but Show spears him down for two. A BIG elbow drop gets the same for Show and we hit the bearhug. Cena fights out but the STF is easily shrugged off.

They head to the floor for a bit with Show sending Cena into the barricade. Show palms Cena's head to pull him back up to the apron. That's SCARY strength. The Vader Bomb actually hits for two and Show does his usual blank stare. An attempt at a second one misses so Cena hits the ProtoBomb and Shuffle but Show no sells them both. The chokeslam gets two so Cena hits the AA. And here's the Shield for the DQ at 13:52.

Rating: C. It's Cena vs. Show so you know what you're going to get here. Also given the absence of the six guys in the TLC match on Sunday, you knew there were going to be shenanigans going on here. Not a terrible match or anything and the AA is always a cool thing to see on Big Show. This was what you would have expected.

The Shield destroys Cena until HELL NO runs in for the save. Show and Ziggler get involved so here's Sheamus to take out Ziggler. Cena spears Show through a table the Shield set up but the numbers are still in the Shield's favor. Cue Ryback who throws a ladder into the ring to take out all three Shield members. A HUGE brawl ends the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This show worked better because they kept the show moving at a much faster pace. Nothing here dragged on too long and the show was MUCH easier to get through as a result. They hyped up the major matches for Sunday other than the six man which didn't get much time at all until the end of the show. Still though, fun show here and if they can keep up this pace (which I highly doubt), the show would be WAY easier to get through.

Results

R-Truth b. Wade Barrett – Rollup

Rhodes Scholars b. Prime Time Players, Primo/Epico and Usos – Cross

Rhodes to Jimmy Uso

Eve Torres b. Alicia Fox – Spinning Neckbreaker

Sheamus b. Dolph Ziggler via DQ when Ziggler used a chair

Alberto Del Rio b. Zack Ryder – Cross Armbreaker

Vickie Guerrero b. AJ – Rollup

Antonio Cesaro b. Kofi Kingston – Neutralizer

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Monday Night Raw – December 3, 2012: Now With Reduced Levels Of Suck

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 3, 2012

Location: Greensboro Coliseum, Greensboro, North Carolina

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

It's the final month of the year and we've got two more episodes before TLC. The main story tonight is that Vince is here apparently, which is probably a good idea. Other than that, we've got more with Ryback vs. The Shield, who I'm sure would NEVER interfere in the main event of a PPV or anything like that. Let's get to it.

The usual recap opens the show, and tonight it's Sheamus/Cena vs. Ziggler/Show.

HELL NO vs. Prime Time Players

The Shield is watching from the top of the arena so Kane calls them down. Titus and Kane get things going and O'Neal is quickly knocked to the floor. Cole talks about "Daniel Ambruce" saying something last week. Rollins and Reigns have gone somewhere else apparently. Kane and Bryan work on Darren's arm as Reigns is now down in the arena. The Players double team Kane in the corner and Reigns moves down the steps. Ambrose is down in the arena as well. Rollins is nowhere in sight.

Bryan hits his running knee of the apron as the match is now all about looking at the Shield. We go to a break and come back with Titus clotheslining Kane down. Reigns and Ambrose are still in the crowd. Back to Bryan with a running dropkick in the corner for two. GOOD GRIEF stop showing the Shield guys. We get it already. Young comes in and is put in the NO Lock but everything breaks down. Ambrose and Reigns are at the barricade now as the match has more or less stopped, allowing Darren to roll up Bryan, who reverses it into a rollup on Young for the pin at 11:28.

Rating: D. I have no idea if the match was good or not, because they kept cutting away to show the Shield guys. I really hope this isn't Nexus all over again because it's really shaping up to be similar to it. The Players will likely get passed over again as it looks like Shield might get the tag titles soon. Nothing to see here, almost literally.

Post match the Shield runs in and crushes Kane's arm under the steps. Bryan gets beaten down as well as Rollins runs in. The Superbomb leaves Bryan laying.

Sheamus and Cena are talking in the back and I think they're talking about soccer. Apparently after Smackdown they went out for 15 pints or so. Sheamus says he'll be focused tonight.

AJ vs. Tamina Snuka

Happy blowoff match people. AJ jumps on Tamina to start and then does it again. Tamina slams her off the top before putting her right back up there. An over the shoulder backbreaker...is released a few seconds after Tamina puts it on. Tamina keeps pounding away as this is going about as far as you would expect AJ vs. Tamina to go. The splash is loaded up but AJ rolls Tamina up for the pin at 3:24.

Rating: D-. What are you expecting here? The match was nothing of note and they didn't do anything special. Was anybody expecting Tamina to add anything to this story at all? Nothing to see here at all and as usual, the Divas continue to be a complete waste of time. I'll say this though: AJ can rock a pair of shorts.

Here are Punk and Heyman with something to say after a break. Post break Heyman complains about the new and updated WWE Encyclopedia because there isn't enough in it about CM Punk. Heyman does however give credit to them for having a list of WWE Championship Reigns in it, and at midnight tonight Punk will tie Cena's record and tomorrow night at midnight, CM Punk will be the longest reigning WWE Champion of the last 25 years, which is the modern era. Heyman says Punk should be front and center on WWE's Mount Rushmore.

Punk says that he's still unfairly persecuted, because he's still the best in the world. That's not just a catchphrase, because he's the best of all time. Punk makes fun of some fans for not having jobs or marriages lasting as long as his title reign. He talks about how the fans credit either Maddox or the Shield for keeping the title on Punk. Punk says that he's got nothing to do with either of them, but he's the reason everyone is here tonight. He's the hottest thing in WWE today and he tells us to change the channel if you don't believe him. Or get up and leave his arena right now.

He's interrupted by.....The Miz? The fans are getting into the REALLY chant now. He tells the fans to sit down and enjoy themselves, because no one buys what Punk is saying. Punk wants to know who Miz is, so Miz says he's

the one who took every shortcut he could as WWE Champion, but at least he admits it. Punk has been bailed out time after time by Maddox and Shield...so Punk insults Miz's shoes.

Miz doesn't want a fight, but wants Punk to come on MizTV to take a lie detector test. This leads to Miz calling Heyman a walrus, starting a chant. Punk DEMANDS an apology from the fans, so Miz keeps goading Punk into a test. He says Punk doesn't want an asterisk by his name, so Punk goes for the idea. We spent over ten minutes to get there? Seriously?

John Cena/Sheamus vs. Dolph Ziggler/Big Show

Sheamus vs. Ziggler to get things going. A shoulder puts Ziggler down, as does a slam and it's off to Cena. We hit the chinlock but at least this one is short. Cena speeds things up and takes Ziggler down with an armdrag. Off to Big Show who shoves Cena away. Why exactly does this surprise Cena? Cena tries the shoulder and literally bounces off Big Show.

Show hits the big chop in the corner and falls on Cena in a slam attempt. Off to Ziggler for some fast elbow drops for two. Cena avoids a splash in the corner and it's off to Sheamus vs. Big Show. A knee lift and a running double ax put Show down, but the Battering Ram is blocked by a spear out of the air.

We take a break and come back with Show still working over Sheamus. Ziggler hooks a chinlock with a bodyscissors but Sheamus fights back with the Irish Curse. Hot tag brings in Cena, house is cleaned like the boss is on his way home, and it's White Noise to Show while Cena hits the AA on Ziggler for the pin at 11:52. Ziggler got up too early after the Protobomb and they had to rush to the finish.

Rating: C. Standard main event style tag match here and I'm always a fan of mixing the feuds up like this. Sheamus holding Show there for White Noise for that long is a really cool visual, but it's nothing we haven't

seen before. Also Cena pins Ziggler. Again. Not much to see here but it was fine I guess.

Cena and Sheamus celebrate way more than they should post match.

We recap the Punk/Miz stuff from earlier.

The MUPPETS will be at Tribute to the Troops. This results in Piggy hitting on Flo Rida.

Here's Sandow looking for his apprentice again. As usual, Sandow owns this whole segment, berating the guy after he doesn't know an English poet. It's the little insults in this that make Sandow great. He's totally into the character and the line of "ignorance is curable but stupidity is forever" is good stuff. I loved this. Naturally Santino comes out to make the segment stupid. He asks how many shells did she sell by the seashore, making Sandow go into a lecture about crustaceans. Thankfully Damien drops him with one shot. We get a match.

Damien Sandow vs. Santino Marella

This is joined in progress after a break with Santino doing his power walk thing. Apparently Santino won a power walking contest seventeen years ago. Cole gives a story about why that's not true or something like that. Wind-Up Elbow gets two as does a small package from Sandow. Santino comes back with his usual sequence and Damien runs from the Cobra. Sandow catches him coming back in and steals the Cobra. Marella guillotines him on the top but misses the top rope headbutt. Terminus and we're done at 2:40 shown. This was the same match Sandow had with Ryder last week.

TOUT questions to stump Damien with. Oh geez.

Vickie says she's starting to lose faith with Ziggler, so Ziggler asks for another match with Cena at the PPV. Vickie isn't sure but goes into

her office to see Brad Maddox. There's a camera on Maddox in the office. Post break, Maddox is asking for a contract and appeals to Vickie's obsession with her legacy to get a job. He calls himself a Youtube sensation and is told if he wins his match tonight, he gets a contract. I'm thinking Orton for this one.

Sin Cara vs. Alberto Del Rio

Haven't we seen this match a few times recently? Cara grabs the arm to start before Alberto jumps him in the corner. A knee to the head of Cara gets two before Cara comes back with the usual armdrags. Del Rio sends him into the middle buckle and kicks him in the back. A snap suplex gets two and we hit the chinlock. Cara escapes and speeds things up, sending Del Rio to the floor and hitting a rana off the apron.

We take a break (in Del Rio vs. Cara? Really?) and come back with Sin Cara still in control. Alberto is sent to the floor for a second and as Cara sends him back in, Del Rio shoves him off of a springboard attempt. That gets two for Alberto and it's time for a chinlock. Cara's mask goes up a bit and Del Rio gets two off a German suplex. Alberto misses a charge in the corner and Cara hits a solid tornado DDT to put both guys down. Headscissors puts Del Rio down, as does a kick to the head. Top rope cross body gets two, as does a standing Sliced Bread by Cara. The Swanton misses and the cross armbreaker gets the tap at 12:40.

Rating: C-. The match was pretty entertaining, but this is like the opening matches on an old WWF house show: long because we need to fill in the show. Del Rio has now beaten Cara three times in three weeks I believe with the armbreaker. Why did we need to see this match again? Cara doesn't really get anything out of it and the results are the same. Why should I be interested?

Vince wants to talk to Vickie in the ring.

We recap the set up for the lie detector test again.

Here's Vickie to suck up to Vince. She tells everyone to clap, because Vince doesn't get a reaction you know. First up, Vince wants to hear what she's got for the TLC PPV. The match is going to be Cena vs. Ziggler but Vince wants more. She suggests no DQ, but Vince wants more. He whispers something to her and it'll be a ladder match...for the MITB case. Vickie thinks this isn't fair to Dolph because he has nothing to gain.

Vince thinks the AJ scandal hasn't been fair, so maybe Vickie should apologize by making the match official. The match is made, but Vickie stops to dismiss Vince. Oh you are an idiot. Vince understands there's a lie detector test going on tonight. If Punk is proven to be a liar about Maddox and the Shield, there should be a penalty against him. After forever, Vickie gets to the idea of Ryback vs. Heyman next week if Punk is lying.

Brad Maddox vs. Randy Orton

If Maddox wins, he gets a contract. Maddox gets in one elbow before it's a few signature moves and the RKO for the pin at 1:10.

Post match Shield runs in and destroys Orton.

Vickie yells about Shield when Dolph comes in to yell about the ladder match. He says Vickie is becoming just like AJ. Dolph leaves and Heyman comes in to glare at her without saying anything. She finally says that Punk better be telling the truth. Heyman leaves and Cena comes in to gloat, as well as make a joke about Ziggler being the first guy ever to forget the Five Moves of Doom. Vickie has found some Cena bowties in the Divas locker room, which suggests that she's getting obsessed with Cena. Cena goes on a mini rant about Vickie is lying again, saying the ties aren't even the right color.

Kofi Kingston/R-Truth vs. Wade Barrett/Antonio Cesaro

Teddy Long comes out and makes it a four way match for a title. What title would that be though? The audience gets to pick what title is on the line and the results are up after the break. Post break, it's Cesaro's title on the line in a landslide.

US Title: Kofi Kingston vs. Wade Barrett vs. R-Truth vs. Antonio Cesaro

Truth and Barrett are both thrown to the floor quickly and Cesaro gets rolled up for two. Barrett decks Truth on the floor as Kofi sends Cesaro to the outside. The pumphandle slam gets two for Wade on Kofi, who immediately dives onto Cesaro on the floor. Truth comes back in to beat on Wade before gyrating a bit at him. Barrett to the floor, so it's Kofi vs. Truth.

They know each other very well so no one can get an advantage, resulting in a stalemate off a double dropkick. The villains come back in and Kofi/Truth botch a spot where Truth was going to launch Kofi onto Cesaro. Kofi hits a suicide dive on Barrett but Truth misses a dive onto Cesaro. Cesaro throws Truth around a bit more as we take a break. Back with the two champions pounding on each other until Cesaro uses a half crab giant swing on Kofi.

Barrett makes the save and knocks Cesaro to the floor before hitting the Winds of Change on Kofi for two. Truth comes back in with the ax kick for two on Barrett, but Wade comes back and loads up a superplex. Truth knocks him down and Cesaro goes up top with Truth. Kofi runs up the corner and hits an armdrag to take Cesaro down. Wade tries the superplex again and we get a Tower of Doom with Kofi on the bottom. Cesaro makes a VERY close save to break up the pin before getting two of his own off that fireman's carry slam of his. That should be his finisher instead of the Neutralizer.

Truth clotheslines Cesaro and himself to the floor, leaving Wade and Kofi alone. Kofi elbows and dropkicks Barrett down as things speed up. Boom Drop hits but Cesaro breaks up Trouble in Paradise. Neutralizer is broken

up by Truth and there's the Bull Hammer to Truth. Kofi kicks Wade's head off, but Cesaro pulls Kofi off Wade into the Neutralizer for the pin to retain at 12:23.

Rating: B. WAY better match than I was expecting here and a lot of that was because it was a title match. I had a reason to care who was getting those near falls because there was actually something on the line. It gets really dull when these matches have nothing up for grabs, so having something this simple was a nice addition. The only problem I have: why have Kofi get pinned here? Truth was RIGHT THERE but can't take a loss?

We recap Maddox and the Shield saving Punk's title twice now.

We also recap the Vickie/Vince stuff from earlier.

Time for MizTV to end the show. He's got a lie detector test guy here from the sheriff's department, but he says the wrong county. If Punk lies about the important stuff, Heyman has to face Ryback next week. After Miz explains a lie detector, we get on with the test. Miz asks about embarrassing moments in Punk's career, like having Rey shave his head and about facing Orton when Miz was in the main event. There's the walrus thing again. Punk thinks he can beat Ryback by himself, and that's a big lie. The results are on the screen.

Oh apparently Punk COULD be lying. Miz asks about Maddox and the Shield...but here's the Shield to destroy Miz and clear the ring. They hit the Super Bomb and here's HELL NO. The numbers catch up with the champs and Ambrose goes after Kane's arm from earlier. Ryback comes out and throws Ambrose to the floor. Make that into the crowd as the beating is on.

HELL NO beats up the other guys and everyone goes into the crowd. Punk is left alone in the ring with Miz and kicks him to the floor. Punk and Heyman pose but Ryback comes back for the Shell Shock to Punk. Ryback gets a chair and a ladder to beat up the champion. Now it's a table and a

powerbomb through it for the champ to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This was MUCH better than what they've been having lately. First of all, the lack of recaps helps A LOT. We didn't have to waste a ton of time seeing the same stuff five times a show. Second, no stupid AJ/Vickie/Cena stuff. That stuff sucked the life out of shows because it never led anywhere. Now we didn't have that and we got a major PPV match out of it. Throw in a fourway that actually meant something and Maddox getting massacred and you've got a better show. MUCH better than they've had in recent weeks, but three hours is still far too long.

Results

HELL NO b. Prime Time Players – Rollup to Young

AJ b. Tamina – Rollup

Sheamus/John Cena b. Big Show/Dolph Ziggler – AA to Ziggler

Damien Sandow b. Santino Marella – Terminus

Alberto Del Rio b. Sin Cara – Cross Armbreaker

Randy Orton b. Brad Maddox – RKO

Antonio Cesaro b. Kofi Kingston, Wade Barrett and R-Truth – Neutralizer to Kingston

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Monday Night Raw – November

26, 2012: It Could Have Been Worse, And That's High Praise Anymore

Monday Night Raw

Date: November 26, 2012

Location: Cajundome, Lafayette, Louisiana

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

We're getting closer to TLC now and the main story tonight is an interview with the three NXT guys. I'm curious to see where things are going with them as we haven't gotten an explanation yet. On top of that we're likely to get some more matches set for the PPV, including whatever Punk's title match is going to be. Let's get to it.

The voiceover gets us going with a recap of AJ/Cena/Vickie/Dolph. You know, because people aren't going to remember it. Oh and there's stuff about the NXT guys.

Ryback vs. Titus O'Neal

Titus pounds him down to start but walks into the Thesz Press and head smashes. O'Neal wants time out so Ryback runs him over. Darren Young tries to interfere, allowing Titus to hit the Clash of the Titus for one. Ryback shoves the Players together, hits a spinebuster, the Meat Hook and Shell Shock for the pin at 3:17.

Rating: D+. Total squash here as another pair of guys who are likely going to be champions soon lose because Ryback has to squash someone and there's NO ONE but these guys he could do it to. The problem with booking like this is why am I supposed to buy the Players as a major threat now if they just got killed like that? Especially if they're champions, because apparently one guy can beat them up.

Ryback says he's not leaving until he gets Punk, the three guys, or all four.

Security comes out after a break and Ryback destroys one of them. Vickie comes out and says she has no choice but Ryback cuts her off. He wants Punk at TLC but Vickie says he has to leave. Ryback tells her to shut up because he's not finished. He wants Punk at TLC in a TLC match or he'll tear the ring apart. Vickie says ok but get out of the ring. Ryback goes after security but they all leave.

We recap Hornswoggle spraying water on Rosa last week. Earlier today Rosa yells at Horny but he wants to know who would want to kiss her and give her flowers. Alberto comes to her defense but Khali stops Alberto before any damage can be done.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Great Khali

This is joined in progress after a break with Khali chopping Del Rio's chest. Rosa is watching in the back. Horny is at ringside as Khali chops away some more. Del Rio comes back with a shot to the arm and a superkick before hammering on the arm a bit. Alberto charges into an elbow in the corner and some clotheslines from Khali. There's the big chop but Ricardo's distraction stops the Vice. Horny bites Ricardo's pants and there's a kick and Codebreaker to the arm. Armbreaker gets the tap at 3:35.

Rating: D+. I'm glad Khali is back given how bad he was doing there for awhile and it's good to see Del Rio down the card and fighting ANYONE not named Orton for awhile, but this was nothing much. Then again, what do you expect from a guy like Khali? Not much of a match but it did its job well enough I guess.

Punk and Heyman come in to yell at Vickie and accuse her of being biased. She gave him the shot because of the screwjobs Punk has been behind. He denies being behind them but Vickie puts Punk in a match with the winner of the Raw Poll: either Bryan or Kane.

We get a sitdown interview with the three NXT guys from earlier today. Ambrose cuts off Cole and wants to know who is asking about them. Ambrose says they're not working for Punk and Rollins says the question should be why are they doing this. Rollins talks about how everyone has to answer to everyone, but at the end of the day it's a popularity contest that

determines who gets everything in the WWE. He says they're a shield against wrong.

Ambrose says it was wrong to have Punk face guys he already fought and if Ryback had been champion for a year and Punk tried to interfere, they would have stopped him too. Cole asks if Roman has anything to say. He says if he has something to say, he'll say it. Ambrose says they're not the Nexus or the NWO but rather the shield from injustice. Reigns stands up and says this interview is over. They all walk out to end things. Not bad but I'm not wild on the Shield name.

Fandango is coming and we see his face. Egads this is going to SUCK.

Alicia Fox vs. Tamina Snuka

Tamina says this match is a warning to AJ to not mess with Vickie again. Jerry goes onto some small rants about how Shield is crooked. Total squash by Tamina who wins with a Samoan Drop and Superfly Splash in 2:05. Next.

Here's Cena to address the AJ/Vickie stuff. After probably the tenth recap of the kiss, Cena talks about how he's had a ton of moments in his ten years here, but he's never been interrogated more than having people ask if AJ is a good kisses. He's about to talk about it when Vickie comes out to say I told you so. She pulls out a big box (not that kind of box. It's a PG show) and has matching bathrobes for Cena and AJ. Vickie goes on a long rant about AJ and here she comes, looking SMOKING hot in a white top and jeans.

AJ says she's had issues with men over the last year but she's learning from them. Since she's not GM anymore, she can date whoever she wants and can do whatever she wants. She goes to kiss John but Vickie freaks out. Vickie is called a dog, and here's Ziggler to interrupt AGAIN. Dolph asks what's going on with Cena and why Cena attacked him on Smackdown. Ziggler says he's figured it out. Last week when AJ kissed Cena, she was thinking about Dolph the whole time. Cena is about to go after Ziggler but Vickie stops him. It's Cena vs. Ziggler tonight.

Kofi Kingston vs. Tensai

Non-title, because why make it a title match? Tensai knocks him down into the corner so Kofi speeds things up...and has his head knocked off by a shoulder block. Tensai puts on perhaps the least interested looking armbar of all time before Kingston comes back and hits a chop off the top rope.

A clothesline puts Tensai down (ignore that he was clearly falling before Kofi touched him) and there's the Boom Drop. Trouble in Paradise is blocked and Tensai catches the pendulum kick in the corner. An elbow gets two but a Vader Bomb misses. Kofi hits Trouble in Paradise from the floor and wins with a top rope cross body at 3:30.

Rating: D. This was really sloppy and should have ended with the first Trouble in Paradise attempt. Tensai clearly just does not care at all anymore and why should he? He's a pure jobber to the stars and not a very good one at that. This was a dull match that was there so Barrett can look at Kofi some more.

Barrett hands Kofi the title post match.

Bryan shows Kane a voting map which proves how much more popular he is than Kane. Unfortunately they don't have polling data where Kane comes from so Kane can't win. Kane offers to send Bryan there to find out but we get the poll results instead. Kane wins 59-41, in a surprising result. Bryan gets Rey Mysterio as a consolation prize.

Daniel Bryan vs. Rey Mysterio

Feeling out process to start with Rey sending Bryan to the floor, only for Daniel to slide back inside and hit a running knee to the face from the apron. Back in and Bryan cranks on the arm in a move that looks SICK. He has an armbar on but bends Rey's arm back so far that he can stand on it for two. FREAKING OW MAN! Both guys get sent to the floor as the other one slides back in and we take a break.

Back with Rey getting crotched and Bryan firing away kicks to Rey in the Tree of Woe. Bryan puts on a surfboard for a bit before sending Rey into the post on the floor. That gets two so Bryan loads up a superplex. Rey fights out and hits the seated senton as things speed up. Rey escapes a

sunset flip and kicks Bryan in the head for two. Bryan gets sent into the corner where Rey hits a 619 around the post and the top rope splash for the pin at 12:43.

Rating: C+. Not bad here and it was nice to see a clean pin. I have less of a problem with a tag team champion losing in a singles match, especially when it could set up a title match later on between the two teams. This show has been having bad match after bad match so far so this was a nice change of pace. Decent stuff here, as expected.

Alberto winks at Rosa and walks away with Ricardo. Who is he more interested in anyway?

We recap Raw from last week AGAIN. Dear freaking goodness WE GET IT.

Now we recap the end of Smackdown with Ziggler pinning Orton and getting taken out by Cena to end the show.

Dolph Ziggler vs. John Cena

Feeling out process to start with neither guy being able to get an advantage, likely because they're just feeling each other out. Ziggler takes Cena down and we take a break. Back with Cena on the floor, apparently after having been rammed into the steps. Ziggler throws him back into the ring and does situps while using Cena to hold his feet down. Cena pops up and starts his finishing sequence, but the Shuffle is broken up by a kick to the face. A jumping DDT gets two for Ziggler and it's sleeper time.

Cena rams Ziggler into the corner to counter and puts on the STF but Ziggler does the crawl to the ropes to escape. Cena staggers around and walks into a BIG dropkick to put both guys down. Ziggler goes up top for a cross body but Cena rolls through into the AA. Dolph kind of botches the counter as he lands on his legs instead of his feet, but he comes back with the Zig Zag for two.

Cena hits the spinning slam and loads up the Shuffle again, but the knee gives out. John rolls to the floor and Ziggler unhooks a buckle pad. This draws out AJ to stop him but Vickie comes out as well and pulls her off

the apron (doesn't that mean she's fired?). Dolph tries a shot with the case but but Cena ducks and hits the AA for the pin at 11:50.

Rating: B-. Another good match between these two, but it makes me wonder what we're building to with this story now. It would have seemed to be for this match, so maybe it's a mixed tag or something? I certainly hope not, because that would be more than a waste of time. The match here was good though, which is always a good thing.

AJ kisses Cena again post match.

Sheamus vs. Antonio Cesaro

Time for a match to be stretched to about fifteen minutes because we need a match to be stretched to about fifteen minutes. Sheamus pounds away on him in Sheamus-esque fashion before we head to the floor. Cesaro whips him into the steps and we take a break. Back with Cesaro getting two off a clothesline and the same off a gutwrench suplex. Irish Curse gets two for Sheamus but White Noise is countered.

Instead Sheamus gets two off a powerslam, but Antonio comes back with a kind of reverse Angle Slam, where he slammed Sheamus forward instead of backwards. I've never seen that before and it gets two. Sheamus kicks him away and pulls himself to the top. The shoulder jumps into the uppercut though, drawing a gasp from the crowd. The Neutralizer is broken up and the Brogue Kick sends Antonio to the floor for the countout at 12:52.

Rating: C+. This got good towards the end and I'm glad Cesaro didn't get pinned, but it was really hard to believe that he ever had a legit chance at winning. Sheamus continues to look strong before the match at TLC, where he actually could get the title back. Either way, decent stuff here and thankfully they didn't pin Cesaro.

Show comes out during the referee's count but it means nothing. He has a chair and Sheamus says he'll do it right now if Show wants. Show literally rips and breaks the chair apart.

Damien Sandow vs. Zack Ryder

Ryder's trunks and pads have a Ghostbusters theme to them now. Sandow

gets flipped down and he hides on the floor, only to come back with strikes to the face for two. Off to a chinlock by Damien followed by a knee drop. The Wind-Up Elbow gets two and it's off to a crossface chickenwing. Ryder makes a comeback with a forearm in the corner but Sandow rolls to the floor before the Broski Boot can hit. Ryder goes up, only to get crotched and caught in the Terminus for the pin at 4:50.

Rating: D+. Picture a Sandow vs. Ryder match. This one is the most recent of them. That's all I've got here.

Since we've got time to kill, here's the Shield interview from earlier. As in the whole thing.

Kane vs. CM Punk

Kane slugs him into the corner to start and Punk bails as we take a very early break. Back with Punk working on Kane's leg. Punk goes to the floor and might hurt his own knee in the process. There's already a bandage over his knee so maybe there's something to the knee injury. Anyway the suicide dive takes Kane out but Punk can't follow up immediately. Back in and Punk hits a running knee in the corner followed by a second one. He loads up a third but Kane comes out with an uppercut to take Punk down.

Side slam gets two for Kane as Punk tries to get his knee to work again. Kane goes up top and hits the clothesline but Punk comes back with a swinging neckbreaker for two. Heyman plays cheerleader a bit but Punk springboards into a chokeslam. Heyman, ever the good manager, pulls Punk's feet into the ropes so Kane can't immediately cover. Kane loads up the Tombstone but Punk escapes and hits Kane in the knee. GTS gets the clean pin at 10:20.

Rating: C. Not bad here but I'm a fan of both guys. Kane is fine for a spot like this because he's not going to be hurt badly by a single loss. Either way, decent stuff here and it gave Punk something to do tonight that didn't have anything to do with Ryback. It's nice to get a week off from the same stuff every week before a PPV for a change.

Post match here's the Shield to stare at Punk and attack Kane. Bryan comes in for the save and the tag champs get beaten down. The fans

finally get what they want as Ryback comes down. Punk dives into the crowd and Ryback runs into the ring to fight the whole Shield. He knocks them all down at once and powerbombs Rollins. Meathooks put down Reigns and Ambrose.

Punk tries to come in for the save but gets put in a powerbomb position as well. Reigns spears him down and the numbers catch up to Ryback. The Triple Powerbomb puts him down again. But Ryback is still incredibly strong right? These constant beatdowns by three minor league guys mean NOTHING right? This doesn't hurt his push at all, right? Punk stands tall as Lawler claims conspiracy to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. This show felt especially long tonight because of all the recaps but at least we had some good matches to balance things out. Also none of the matches felt overly long for the same of being overly long, which is definitely a step in the right direction. As usual with the show though, the third hour being there is what brings the show down. Well that and the incessant recaps of the Cena/AJ stuff. This could have been a lot worse though, which is high praise for Raw anymore.

Results

Ryback b. Titus O'Neal – Shell Shock

Alberto Del Rio b. Great Khali – Cross Armbreaker

Tamina Snuka b. Alicia Fox – Superfly Splash

Rey Mysterio b. Daniel Bryan – Top Rope Splash

John Cena b. Dolph Ziggler – Attitude Adjustment

Sheamus b. Antonio Cesaro via countout

Damien Sandow b. Zack Ryder – Terminus

CM Punk b. Kane – GTS

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