

2017 Awards: Show of the Year

It all kind of depends on this no?

Sure there are good matches and good promos, but which of them come together to make the best overall presentation? Some of them are of course better than others and some don't need to exist (which they don't) but when they work well, they can be some of the best shows you'll see in a long time.

We'll start things off at the beginning of the year with Wrestle Kingdom XI. The Wrestlemania of New Japan almost never fails to impress. The main event was one of the best matches of the year and while I liked Kushida's match better (which tends to be the case more often than not), this was an excellent show from top to bottom. A bit long for my taste, but the biggest show of the year should be longer.

Speaking of the New Japan Wrestlemania, I'll throw in the WWE's Wrestlemania as well. The show didn't quite live up to the standards of some of its predecessors but that's not to say it wasn't very good. The Hardys return was a great surprise and the ending made it feel historic, definitely giving this some great moments top to bottom. If this had that one blow away match, it would probably win the whole thing.

We'll wrap up the main roster portion here with Royal Rumble, which did have that blow away match as John Cena defeated AJ Styles to win his sixteenth World Title. The Rumble itself might not have been the classic it needed to be, but the drama near the end was very good and there wasn't a really bad match on the show. It's one of my favorite shows of the year and this one didn't disappoint whatsoever.

But yeah, this is all about Takeover and that's really not a surprise. We'll start with Takeover: Chicago, which had the Match of the Year in Tyler Bate vs. Pete Dunne II but also a heck of a ladder match for the Tag Team Titles, followed by

the awesome split of DIY. The triple threat for the Women's Title was very good and the NXT Title match worked as well, because as is the rule in NXT: you really don't have a single bad match.

Overall though, Takeover: WarGames is the Show of the Year and it's not even close. Where do you begin with this one? The NXT Title match was a great surprise, WarGames actually delivered in spades and there's the amazing (and still underrated by me) Velvetten Dream vs. Aleister Black match. The Women's Title was won by someone new and the opening hoss fight were good as well. This one delivered as only NXT can and it beat everything else in the year.

Money in the Bank 2011: Cena vs. Punk I

Given how awesome the main event was last night, the comparison immediately came up to this masterpiece. Let's take a look back at it shall we? The rest of the show is awesome too.

Money in the Bank 2011

Date: July 17, 2011

Location: Allstate Arena, Rosemont, Illinois

Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T, Jerry Lawler

It's Money in the Bank and I'm rather clueless as to who is going to win three of the four main matches. The MITB matches themselves are total tossups and the Punk vs. Cena match could go a bunch of ways. It'll definitely be interesting and will set the stage for at least the next few months worth of shows, if nothing else due to the MITB cases, assuming one isn't

cached in tonight. Let's get to it.

Opening video is of course mainly about Punk vs. Cena, which to be fair is by far and away the biggest match on the card.

Sin Cara vs. Justin Gabriel vs. Heath Slater vs. Sheamus vs. Cody Rhodes vs. Wade Barrett vs. Kane vs. Daniel Bryan

This is going to be a big insane match so it's almost impossible to call what's going on in these things. I'm really not sure who to predict in this. I went with Cody as a more or less random choice mainly out of a lack of anyone else. Big mess to start as these really should only have six people in them. Kane, Barrett and Sheamus clear the ring out and it's a three way staredown.

The Europeans...wait Kane is from Spain. Ok the two guys not named Kane go down and it's ladder time already. Bryan dropkicks Kane down as Slater and Gabriel team up a bit. Cara, who is in white/gray here, gets taken down but the former tag partners fight already. Slater goes for the ladder and is loudly booed. Gabriel goes up but the ladder is way off center. Bryan dropkicks him off but Cody goes up.

Kane sends Sheamus and Cody to the floor but Barrett stops the Big Bald. Kane throws a ladder at Sheamus to take him down. Slater vs. Kane and guess who wins that one. Cara pops up out of nowhere to drill Kane and break up the clothesline. Bryan hits a big dive and Gabriel does the same. Sorry for all the play by play stuff but it's all you can do in these things for the most part.

Cara is like screw you guys I'm the flier here and takes out Sheamus with a huge one. He follows that up by kicking Bryan in the head and hitting the top rope C4 to take Bryan down.

Sin tries to go for the briefcase but can't pick a ladder up and into the ring. Barrett kicks his head off so it doesn't matter. They do the whole set up a ladder as a bridge from the ring to the table thing as is customary.

Cara avoids going through it though and Barrett clotheslines the post. For some reason the masked guy goes in again without a ladder and gets his head kicked off by Sheamus. Not a good night for the Mexican dude. Cara gets powerbombed through the ladder to more or less kill him. BIG pop for Sheamus for that one. Sheamus is controlling almost everyone here as Cara is taken out on a stretcher.

Kane and Sheamus are in the ring and fighting over a ladder. Scratch that as all three go to the floor. Bryan, Kane and Cody are all in the ring with ladders now. The small guys work together to take Kane down and there goes that partnership. Cara is gone now, as in out of the entire arena via a stretcher. Kane has the big ladder set up in the ring and everyone comes in. Cody makes an attempt but all the small guys make a save.

The former Nexus triple teams Bryan and then the tag team tells Barrett to go ahead. Barrett proves why British wrestlers are stupid as he goes up and is pulled down just a few seconds later. Both of them go up but Rhodes shoves the ladder down. Cross Rhodes takes someone down and it's time for Barrett and Rhodes to fight over the ladder. Cross Rhodes takes Barrett out but Sheamus makes the last second save.

There's an Irish Curse and Pasty goes up, only for Bryan to make the save. Bryan rams him into the ladder a few times and goes up at the same time. Sheamus and Kane combine for a Doomsday Device to END Bryan. Kane and Sheamus are alone in the ring now. Well other than a ladder but that doesn't count I don't think. The big ladder is in the ring and a regular one is set up as a bridge against the middle buckle.

Kane escapes though and chokeslams various small people. Big Bald goes up but Bryan makes ANOTHER save despite being legally deceased I believe. Bryan goes up and almost gets the LeBell Lock on the ladder. That would be awesome. Bryan manages to knock Kane to the floor but Slater stops him. Bryan saves AGAIN as he's been insane so far tonight.

Slater goes up one more time but Barrett saves. Time for Barrett vs. Sheamus which doesn't sound all that appealing. Thankfully they team up and stop Slater, using a ladder like a fork to stop Slater and shove him off the top. That was cool. Sheamus goes nuts and takes out a lot of people so he can climb. Naturally he's not that smart so he sets up another ladder on the top rope.

Sheamus is just beating people up at the moment and not really trying to go after it. Even Booker is saying GO FOR IT. Ok now he's going up but Kane pops up from nowhere to stop him. Sheamus has a bridge ladder beneath him. He goes onto it but doesn't break it. FREAKING OW MAN! Wasteland hits Kane and Gabriel climbs a ladder and hits 450 in the tightest space possible. That was AWESOME.

Bryan and Cody go at it on the ladder as everyone but Barrett is down. Wade comes up as Bryan tries to choke Cody out because he's an idiot. Cody goes down and Wade takes an elbow to knock him backwards a bit. Bryan is alone up there and Wade is on the bridge. Bryan kicks him down and WINS THE CASE! Totally didn't see that one coming.

Rating: A. I liked the storytelling aspect of this as Bryan was the MVP of this thing. He made a ton of saves and certainly deserved to win it in the end. The spots in this were great and Cara going out might have been due to prevent him from botching something major, which says a lot. I'm not sure I can see Bryan winning a title but stranger things have happened. GREAT match though.

Vince is here. Hokey smoke that's Johnny Ace with him.

Apparently Punk hasn't signed yet but is in a meeting for a last second negotiation.

Divas Title: Kelly Kelly vs. Brie Bella

Booker says he never dressed like his brother in Harlem Heat. Is his memory failing or something? No idea what you want me to say here. They're both hot, they're both inept, the match is slightly longer than a regular match they have on Raw. Kelly is champion in case you're reading this like three years from now. It's a totally boring match and it's a total food break for the crowd. Oh and Eve is with Kelly at ringside here. Crowd is dead here. K2 ends this at like four minutes. Total filler and it knows it.

Rating: D. What do you want me to say here? This match was nothing but the girls looked good so I can't call it a failure. The division is horrible since Kharma got pregnant and Laycool went down at the same time. Not a horrible match but just an extended Raw thing really. It served its purpose though I guess.

Summerslam ad. It's in the summer you know. Eh Divas in bikinis is never a bad thing.

We recap Henry vs. Show. They're both big, they're both strong, they both hurt people. Yeah that's about it.

Mark Henry vs. Big Show

Henry is in blue here. They slug it out to start and Show

JUMPS at him with a shoulder block to take Mark down. Out to the floor early and Show loads up a chokeslam through the table but Henry breaks it up. Show shoves him over the steps and the bald one is in control. Scratch that as Henry sends him into the steps and Show goes back in. Henry goes for the knee with a chop block and Show is in trouble.

Boot to the head gets two. Half crab goes on which makes sense for once. Henry? Psychology? What's in this lemonade I'm drinking? Show grabs a rope and manages to kick Henry off which looked rather cool. Splash/running clothesline hits Show in the corner and Henry is all angry and such. Show GOES UP and hits a shoulder block off the middle rope but he hurts his knee again.

Both guys are down now and the count gets like three. Show loads up the chokeslam but Henry kicks him in the knee to break it up. World's Strongest Slam but it only gets two. Dang I would have thought that was the ending. Another World's Strongest Slam and a pair of splashes and Show is finally done.

Rating: C+. Call me crazy but I liked it. They were going at it out there and more importantly than anything else, it was short. That's a very key thing to this match and it made things work a lot better overall. Henry's push probably won't go anywhere (at least I hope not) but a win like this is perfectly fine.

Post match Henry Pillmanizes Show's leg with a Vader Bomb. Show goes out on a stretcher saying it's broken to fill in some time.

Vince is saying this is a nightmare as Josh comes in to ask if Punk has re-signed. He hasn't apparently but Vince offered him a huge contract. Vince talks for a bit and ultimately says if Punk leaves with the title, may God have mercy on Cena's soul.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Kofi Kingston vs. Jack Swagger vs. Evan Bourne vs. R-Truth vs. Alex Riley vs. The Miz vs. Rey Mysterio

Everyone grabs a mini ladder as they come into the ring. Rey comes out last and gets almost ZERO reaction. Everyone has a ladder and they surround Del Rio, beating him down rather easily. Booker picks Evan Bourne which Lawler is surprised at. Some of the guys are out of the ring now and Swagger is thrown out for the second time. Truth and Miz have a stand off and duel a bit.

Swagger takes them both out because that's just smart. He sets up a ladder but Kofi and Bourne run in at the same time for an attempt to go up. Now they team up and take out some heels. Rey gets a rana to take Swagger to the floor again and Truth takes Kofi out. Riley crotches him on a ladder and is the only one standing. Miz comes in for the save but all the ladders are too short anyway so it's not like it matters.

Riley dives over the top and takes out Swagger and Miz in a nice spot. Truth dives over to take out all three of them. Kofi and Rey do a double dive to take all of them out. Bourne goes up and everyone gasps. SHOOTING STAR PRESS ONTO ALL FIVE GUYS!!! Bourne goes up a big ladder but Miz makes the save. Bourne gets a hand on it but so does Miz. Del Rio pops up and shoves it down as Miz may have hurt his knee.

He landed on it coming down and may have jammed it. I think it's worked but it doesn't look right AT ALL. This might be legit actually. Miz is carried out but can't seem to put any weight on the knee. I think he might be actually hurt if the visual is any sign of it. Truth and Del Rio are both climbed over (literally) by Rey and Bourne. The faces hit stereo ranas to take out the heels. That looked SWEET.

Swagger is all alone but Kofi is like screw that and jumps over him onto the ladder. Swagger puts an ankle lock on him

instead and Riley tries to steal the case but fails. Rey vs. Truth at the moment with Rey taking a ladder to the ribs. He climbs onto a ladder but falls onto it face first. Kofi goes up and uses a ladder as a step down for a Boom Drop onto Truth. Booker of course criticizes him for dancing too much.

This match is a lot more choreographed and you can tell it a lot. Truth messes up a see-saw spot to Swagger. Good thing Swagger was nice enough to sit there and let Truth do it again. Rey and Riley slug it out on the ladder but Bourne and Del Rio get ladders of their own. Down goes Alberto and Rey has his hand on it. All seven guys are on ladders in what looks like a clothed orgy, which kind of defeats the purpose but you get the idea.

Down goes Del Rio and there goes Jack too. Bourne is tossed but the other four are all there still. Truth goes down and Kofi gets a swinging kick to knock Rey off. He's all alone but Swagger makes a last second stop. They both fall and it looked VERY bad as Kofi's knee landed on Swagger's throat. HERE'S MIZ! He literally hops down the aisle on one leg but Rey stops (to huge booing).

Rey and Del Rio fight a bit but down goes Del Rio. Never mind as he's coming back up again. Briefcase to Alberto's head but Rey still can't get it. REY'S MASK IS OFF! Everything falls down and Rey has to cover his face. Alberto goes up as Rey is all terrified. Alberto is all alone and it's over. Didn't see that one coming.

Rating: B. Good, but nowhere near as good as the SD one. The spots here were awesome to say the least but the sloppiness hurt it a good bit. Miz coming back in was great and an awesome false finish. Rey losing his mask was rather surprising and I'm seriously wondering how badly hurt Swagger is because that didn't look like a planned fall at all. Messy but fun, which is about par for the course in MITB to be honest.

You get a relatively clear shot of Rey's face during the highlight package.

We recap Christian vs. Orton, which is more or less Christian can't beat Orton and turned heel because his initial title loss to him was unfair. If Orton gets disqualified or if there's a "bad decision", Orton loses the title.

Del Rio says he shouldn't have had to win but this is his destiny.

Smackdown World Title: Christian vs. Randy Orton

After some big match intros we're ready to go. Christian shows off some nice psychology as he throws a chair in immediately and tries to get Orton to snap. The chair goes to the floor and Orton takes over with relative ease. The crowd is totally behind Christian here. Out to the floor with Orton in control but Christian takes over back inside. These two have had some very good matches so this should be awesome.

They slug it out a bit with Christian mostly in control. Orton grabs a rollup for two. Killswitch doesn't work and they clothesline each other to the floor. Back in and Christian jumps over him and blocks an RKO. Jackknife cover gets two for Randy. There's the Thesz Press as the fans aren't pleased. Elevated DDT doesn't work but Christian tries his spinning dive out of the corner, only to jump into a dropkick to the ribs.

Christian takes over again as he's done a lot in this match. Top rope headbutt gets two. Killswitch hits out of almost nowhere but Orton gets out at 2.999. Even the crowd is into this now. Christian loads up a spear but he hits the post instead. Orton puts Christian in that over the shoulder

backbreaker into the neckbreaker (LOVE that move) for two. He sets for the Punt but Christian moves. Randy settles for the powerslam instead.

There's the elevated DDT and Christian is in trouble. Christian spits in Orton's face to tick him off and Orton goes off on him. He breaks at three though so it's not a DQ. Orton kicks Christian low...and it's a DQ! CHRISTIAN WINS THE TITLE!!! THAT STIPULATION ACTUALLY WORKED!!!

Rating: B-. Good match here but not as good as their usual stuff. I can't believe that ending actually worked either as I've never seen anything like it before. Granted it's probably so Bryan can come out and cash in but that is what it is. Either way this was fine and they continue to have great matches together.

Orton destroys Christian post match, hitting a bunch of RKOs on the table while Teddy tries to calm him down.

Ok if Bryan doesn't come down now, he's an idiot. Apparently he's an idiot because he's not here.

We recap Punk vs. Cena. If you don't know this, you're an idiot. Basically, Punk went on a massive rant against WWE and Cena in a worked shoot. This is his last night with the company and Vince is involved too. If Punk leaves with the title, Cena is fired.

Raw World Title: John Cena vs. CM Punk

And here we go. Punk has an epic reaction as he's the hometown boy. He even has a new shirt. The crowd is rabid for Punk. He sits in the ring and is a total face in the eyes of the crowd. HUGE CM Punk chant goes up as we wait on Cena. I seriously worry for Cena's safety if he wins. OH MAN that

heat is ONS levels. Punk goes out to be near the crowd for Cena's entrance. Total stoic Cena here as everything he does is booed out of the building.

They do big match intros and Punk is as over as free beer. Here we go. I'm so fired up for this it's unreal. TON of time for this too. Punk grabs a headlock and the YOU CAN'T WRESTLE chants start up. We actually do some chain wrestling and Cena is booed out of the building for a snap mare. They do some obvious spot calling while Cena has a headlock. Punk tries to fire off a spin kick but Cena ducks.

YOU CAN'T WRESTLE chants start up and Punk points at himself and asks the fans if they mean him. Punk almost gets an Anaconda Vice but Cena reverses into an armbar. They're working slow here but that's perfectly fine given that they have over 45 minutes if need be. Jerry tries to make Punk out to be the heel here and it's just failing completely. There's the duel and it's all CENA SUCKS rather quickly.

Even Cole is against Punk here. Headlock goes on again as Cena has mostly controlled here, but we're only like 5 minutes in. Hip toss by Punk sets up a dropkick and Punk speeds things up a bit. There's a headlock of his own and Cena is down. We reference Montreal because that's just what we do here in WWE. Punk does You Can't See Me to Cena and they both try their finishers but it's a stalemate.

HUGE CM Punk chant goes up which is par for the course tonight. Punk goes for the knee and takes over again. Cena fires back with the bulldog for two. Off to a front facelock and Punk shakes his finger no. I've never seen as many spots called in a single match. Cena hits a clothesline and Punk might have lost a tooth. Off to an arm trap chinlock which is close to a Crossface with Cena on his back.

Punk gets up and suplexes his way out of it for two. Cena does a Bret Hart chest to the buckle bump which gets two. All

Punk at this point. Cena gets something going and hits a release fisherman's suplex for two. AA is reversed again and Punk gets a quick DDT for two. Triangle choke goes on Cena and we slow it down again. It seems like they're saving energy. They've been at it nearly ten minutes and it's 10:22 so that's a very likely scenario.

Cena counters out of it but Punk throws him to the floor. Punk teases going up but just climbs out instead. The fans applaud Punk just for picking Cena up. The fans chant for Colt Cabana and there's a knee to the back of the neck of Cena while he's hanging off the apron. That gets two back in the ring. Punk charges at Cena but his arm hits the post to buy Cena a few seconds.

And never mind as Punk hits a clothesline for two. Back to the chinlock as this needs to go a long time since the rest holds are getting a bit boring. There are actually some Cena chants and Punk comes off the middle rope with a spinning cross body. Cena might have hurt his knee as he's going to the apron a bit. Punk goes after him but can't suplex him back in. Cena manages to suplex him to the floor and the fans clap for a bit.

I think the knee was a work as he's not even holding it at the moment. Oh wait yes he is. That was more or less an FU off the apron. Back in the ring that gets two as he's rubbing the knee now. He can stand on it and hits another release fisherman's. Elbow drop gets two. Cena sets for what looks like a powerslam but flips Punk forward into a sitout slam for two.

It's only 10:30 and they've been going at it over 15 minutes. The knee looks fine. It's boo/yay time and the yays are winning it. We go WAY old school with an abdominal stretch. HE EVEN HOOKS THE LEG PROPERLY! Punk hip tosses out of it and it's a double clothesline to put them both down. Cena up first and he initiates the ending sequence. The Protobomb is

reversed though and Punk gets the loudest reaction for a rollup you'll ever here.

Protobomb hits this time but You Can't See Me results in a kick to the head. Suicide dive takes Cena down and the fans erupt again. Punk high fives a fan while he's still on the ground in a cool moment. Punk misses a cross body and now he Can't See Cena. Five Knuckle Shuffle hits at about 20 minutes. AA is countered and Punk uses his martial arts for two.

Punk is looking towards the entrance and smiles for no apparent reason. GTS is loaded up but Cena counters into a gutwrench suplex for two. Punk fights back with some knees to the jaw and a bulldog. Springboard clothesline gets two and the fans are still totally into this. The replay shows how sweet those knees were. Out of nowhere Cena grabs the STF and Punk is in trouble! Oh of course he makes the rope but it takes awhile for him to get there.

As Cena goes for Punk again he gets caught in the side of the head with a big old kick for two. Cena rolls through a cross body but the AA is countered into the GTS but Cena grabs the leg and the STF is back on again! Punk can't make the ropes but Cena pulls him back to the middle again. Cole says it's a matter of time and he's right. It'll just be multiple more minutes because Punk manages to counter from the mat into the Anaconda Vice. SWEET!

Cena gets back up there's the AA for TWO. This is getting awesome as they used the slow build. I'm glued to my screen which hasn't happened since a few years ago with Taker vs. Shawn. Top rope legdrop is countered via something like a powerbomb for two. Punk almost Hulks Up and says it's time to Go To Sleep. He loads it up but Cena grabs the rope and clotheslines him on it.

The top rope legdrop hits this time but it only gets two.

These kickouts are incredible. They're not going to end the match but they've built it up so well and the audience being so into them is making up the difference. Cena is getting his 19th wind and looks like he wants the AA. It hits clean again and PUNK KICKS OUT. Cena tries an AA off the middle rope but Punk fights out of it.

He manages to get a top rope hurricanrana but Cena goes to the corner to escape. Corner knee sets up the GTS and Cole is scared to death. The knee only hits the ribs and Cena manages to fall out of the ring instead of being in pinning position. And here's Vince with Johnny Ace. The distraction lets Cena get the STF and Vince sends Johnny Ace to ring the bell. Cena hits the floor and blasts Ace, saying he doesn't want it that way. Vince and Cena have a staredown in the aisle and Cena says it's my way. He charges back into the ring and there's the GTS and PUNK WINS!

Rating: A+. Excellent match as I'm sure you got here as the whole thing came off as completely epic. Cena almost had to lose here due to the sake of his own safety. Vince screwing himself over is a great thing because that's how it had to be. Great stuff here and the show ending with Punk being as popular as anyone imaginable is excellent. Awesome stuff here and an awesome show.

Vince jumps on commentary and says to kill the music. He wants Alberto out here NOW to cash in. Alberto runs out and Punk kicks him in the head almost immediately to take him down. Punk goes into the crowd and that's probably the safest place in the world for him. The bell didn't ring and Del Rio never cashed in officially.

Overall Rating: A. Well that was incredible. From top to bottom this was great stuff and nothing was bad on it at all. Even the Divas had their looks going for them so you can't complain there. Great stuff overall and a shocking ending, which was exactly what this needed. Zero complaints and it

more than lived up to the hype. Can't wait for tomorrow now, which is the whole point of the show. Loved it.

Results

Daniel Bryan won the Smackdown Money in the Bank Briefcase

Kelly Kelly b. Brie Bella – K2

Mark Henry b. Big Show – Splash

Alberto Del Rio won the Raw Money in the Bank Briefcase

Christian b. Randy Orton via DQ – Orton kicks Christian low

CM Punk b. John Cena – GTS

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews

EOTY Awards – Show of the Year

And I mean PPV, not Raw/Impact etc. It's hard to go against Money in the Bank. I mean, you had two great matches and one classic with a great moment to end it. Just an all around great show and nothing all year comes close to it.

Your picks/thoughts?