

Daily News Update – December 16, 2016

We Hope This Slammy Awards Rumor Isn't True. December 14, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/we-sure-hope-this-slammy-rumor-isnt-true/>

Which Big Name is in Talks to Return to TNA? December 14, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/big-name-talks-tna/>

Which Former TNA Champion Has Caught WWE's Eye? December 15, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/former-tna-champion-caught-wwes-eye/>

WWE Signs Three New Female Talents. December 15, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/wwe-signs-three-new-female-talents/>

When is Big Show Planning on Retiring? December 15, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/big-show-planning-retiring/>

Randy Orton Talks Eventual Retirement and Winning More World Titles.
December 16, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/randy-orton-talks-eventual-retirement-winning-world-titles/>

New Column: And the Winners Are...

I critique the Slammy winners.

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-and-the-winners-are/47069/>

Monday Night Raw – December 21, 2015: I'll Accept This Show on WWE's Behalf

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 21, 2015

Location: Target Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

It's the Slammy Awards! Tonight is all about picking the best of the year, or at least whoever the fans pick as the best of the year. The big award is of course Superstar of the Year which is likely going to Roman Reigns again. The other major story though is fallout from last week's World Title change, which likely means Stephanie going after Reigns. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of Reigns beating Sheamus and infuriating the McMahons last week.

Here's a very happy Stephanie to open things up. She thinks we're confused by her mood but it's very simple: McMahons are fighters and tonight is all about a celebration. Cue Roman Reigns who says everyone is in a good mood tonight. Stephanie is really not happy that he's here but Reigns says he doesn't sweat anyone, including the League of Nations, any of the McMahons or HHH himself.

That's too much for Stephanie as she starts shrieking at him to get out of her ring and does her usual whining about her family and her legacy

and all that jazz. Reigns doesn't really care and turns his back on her, eventually leaving very slowly. This makes Stephanie demand that he come back here but Reigns just keeps going. Stephanie says that means consequences so she makes the Usos vs. the New day in a handicap match and Ambrose vs. Sheamus inside a cage. Reigns keeps going up the steps and posing with the title.

It's time for the first award with Dolph Ziggler (in a tuxedo) presenting Breakout Star of the Year. Here are the nominees:

Kevin Owens

Neville

Charlotte

Tyler Breeze

Braun Strowman

After a break, the winner is....Neville. Neville says he's excited about this and completely surprised until Kevin Owens comes out to interrupt. Owens says that's his award and gets in a fight with Ziggler until.....cue the Wyatts for a completely unrelated match.

Bray Wyatt vs. Kane

Bray gets punched into the corner to start but a Harper distraction lets him come back with a big running clothesline. The Wyatts go after Kane so he heads outside after him, drawing a quick DQ at 54 seconds.

Kane gets beaten down post match until the Dudley Boyz and Tommy Dreamer come out for the save because this is still a feud.

Kane/Dudley Boyz/Tommy Dreamer vs. Wyatt Family

This is joined in progress with Dreamer in trouble and the announcers comparing Kane to Chewbacca. Dreamer quickly fights up and makes the tag to Kane for a kick to Harper's face. It's off to Bubba for some house cleaning but everything breaks down a few seconds later. There's What's Up to Harper, which JBL says is like a sofa. 3D to Rowan but Strowman

takes Bubba and D-Von down with a double clothesline. The discus lariat puts D-Von out for the pin at 2:43 shown.

Here's the returning (for one night only I believe) Santino Marella to present the LOL Laugh Out Loudest Moment of the Year. The nominees are:

Edge and Christian vs. New Day in a trombone vs. kazoo battle

The Bushwhackers' Hall of Fame induction speech

Miz's "commercial" for erectile dysfunction

The Authority dances with New Day

R-Truth thinks he's in the Money in the Bank ladder match

After a break, the winner is R-Truth. Well that's one out of two at least. Santino tries to accept the award for himself but Truth comes out and starts a light brawl for the trophy.

We get a quick visit from Old Saint Mick (with elf Noelle). He wishes us all Happy Holidays and says he's very sorry for giving Xavier Woods that trombone last year.

Here's Paul Heyman to present the OMG Moment of the Year Award. After saying that Brock Lesnar should win all the awards save for LOL and Diva of the Year, here are the nominees:

Seth Rollins cashes in Money in the Bank at Wrestlemania

Brock Lesnar the night after Wrestlemania

Kalisto's Salida Del Sol through the ladder at Tables Ladders and Chairs

Wyatt Family kidnaps Undertaker at Hell in a Cell

Sheamus cashes in Money in the Bank at Survivor Series

After a break, Kalisto wins. Really? It was good but biggest shock of the year? Not really. Kalisto is here in a suit and without much to say as an acceptance speech.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Kevin Owens

Ziggler goes right at him to start and tries the sleeper so Owens drops back with all his weight for the break. A big elbow sends Ziggler to the floor and Owens shouts that HE is the breakout star. Well to be fair he's right. We hit the chinlock on Dolph and we actually show the brawl from earlier tonight which set this up. Well at least it's during a hold but dude, it was less than an hour ago.

Back up and Ziggler grabs a rollup for two, only to have his head taken off by a clothesline. After another chinlock, Dolph grabs the running DDT and we take a break. We come back with Owens getting two off a superplex but eating a superkick to put him outside. A quick Fameasser gets two for Dolph (in case you thought Owens was doing it) but Owens comes right back with the Pop Up Powerbomb for the pin at 11:08.

Rating: C. Well at least Owens won. Unfortunately we're still stuck in the same circle of chasing our own tail with the midcard because they had something interesting with Owens and then reverted him back to the same character just a week later. I'm sure it just wasn't getting over because of some social media score determining that people didn't care enough or whatever, because that's what seems to run WWE these days.

Here's Stephanie (of course) to present Superstar of the Year with every member of the roster as a nominee. We get a quick video of everyone on the roster before the nominees are listed as:

Roman Reigns

Sheamus

John Cena

Kevin Owens

Dean Ambrose

Bray Wyatt

New Day (all three members)

Undertaker

Kane

Sting

Brock Lesnar

Seth Rollins

Post break the winner is.....Seth Rollins, who actually limps out on crutches. The fans thank him but he says this was obvious the whole time. Seth does his usual recap of his year and says that his success went away just as quickly as it came. That title is coming back to him in the new year because he will retake what he never lost.

John Cena returns next week to face Alberto Del Rio.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Jack Swagger

I KNEW IT WOULD BE SWAGGER!!! As soon as I saw Del Rio in the ring I knew it would be Swagger. It had to be Swagger because he's Del Rio's personal jobber and that's the only idea WWE has for Swagger. Non-title of course. Del Rio kicks him to the floor and hits a quick baseball slide as we take a break. Back with Del Rio getting two off a DDT but Jack ducks the low superkick and grabs a quick belly to belly. The Vader Bomb gets two and Jack loads up a superplex, only to slip and get caught with the top rope double stomp for the pin at 7:07. Not enough seen to rate but this was the same stuff we've seen from them every time.

The League beats Jack down post match.

Here's Mark Henry to present the new Hero in All of Us Award, which seems to be for best charity work. The nominees are:

Natalya

Roman Reigns

Big Show

Titus O'Neil

John Cena

After a break, the winner is John Cena. He's not here tonight but Henry says that Cena and all the other nominees do this out of the goodness of their hearts rather than for awards. Henry accepts the award on Cena's behalf.

There were some other awards given out before the show went on the air, including:

Rivalry of the Year – Lesnar vs. Undertaker

WWE Network Original Show of the Year – Steve Austin Show

Double Cross of the Year – Damien Mizdow

Extreme Moment of the Year – Reigns attacks HHH

Here's Santa Claus (as played by Bo Dallas) to introduce the Surprise Return of the Year. He's the REAL Santa and not the fat old man at the mall. Here are the nominees:

Dudley Boyz

Chris Jericho

Alberto Del Rio

Kane

Sting

Post break the winner is Sting, who also isn't here tonight either.

New Day vs. Usos

Non-title handicap match. Before the match, New Day blames the fans for spoiling the Tag Team of the Year award. Therefore, they're going to SPOIL STAR WARS! Kofi cuts Big E. off because he hasn't seen it yet. Woods: "YOU HAVEN'T SEEN IT YET?????" Dancing solves the problem and

we're ready to go.

Jimmy and Kofi get things going with the twins starting in on the arm. Kofi works on Jey's arm as well, only to get kicked into the corner. Big E. and Xavier break up the Rikishi attack and all three have to move before the Usos can dive on them. Back with Jey being dragged into the corner for the Unicorn Stampede with Woods dropping to the floor for some musical accompaniment.

Big E. slaps on the abdominal stretch for a bit and gets two off the Warrior splash. Jey fights up and makes the hot tag to Jimmy for some good house cleaning. The Samoan drop gets two on Woods and New Day heads outside, only to have Big E. break up the double dive. Not that it matters as Jimmy rolls Woods up for the pin at 10:59.

Rating: C-. For every few steps this company takes forward, we get something like this. You make this a handicap match so the Usos can lose, but oh no because you need to keep them looking strong for later so let's put them over the champions here because we have no other way to actually get them over. Like giving them an award or something. This is the kind of stuff that drives me the craziest and it just keeps happening over and over. Also there was no mention of the Stephanie/Reigns story from earlier.

Here's R-Truth to present Diva of the Year. The nominees are:

Nikki Bella

Naomi

Paige

Sasha Banks

Charlotte

Back with....Paige winning. Well that's quite the surprise. Oh wait it's actually a Steve Harvey joke because Truth read it wrong. Therefore, Nikki Bella wins. See, in WWE, just saying something exists means that it's funny. Nikki comes out and has Paige stand there next to her as she

dedicates this to every woman in the company. So she's a face again.

Rusev vs. Neville

The League is here and Miz is on commentary. Rusev stomps him down in the corner to start and we hit an early chinlock as Miz says Neville could go even further with the right management. Neville fights up and kicks Rusev to the post, only to be sent into the post. A belly to belly sends Neville crashing down and we take a break.

Back with Neville moonsaulting to the floor as JBL gets in his weekly "THERE'S YOUR SPORTSCENTER HIGHLIGHT" line. Neville loads up the Red Arrow with Rusev across the ring. That goes as well as you would think as he dives into the jumping superkick, setting up the Accolade to give Rusev the win at 7:38.

Rating: D+. So they'll protect the Usos but not Neville, who won an award earlier tonight on the show? Another nothing match here as Neville is still a jobber but at least Rusev got a win for a change. He's still a mess after Lana came back so it's cool to see him acting like his old self for at least one night.

The League beats Neville down as well.

Miz is presenting the THIS IS AWESOME Award. After complaining about not being nominated, he introduces the nominees as:

Brock Lesnar destroying J and J's car

Randy Orton's RKO to Rollins at Wrestlemania

Stephanie McMahon starting the Divas Revolution

The Shield reuniting to beat down Orton

Rock and Ronda Rousey at Wrestlemania

After we come back, Stephanie FINALLY gets her award as Rock and Ronda Rousey wins. Miz accepts on Rock's behalf and plugs Santa's Little Helper.

Becky Lynch vs. Brie Bella

Rematch from Smackdown because it's a meaningless show. Brie takes over to start and puts on a quickly broken chinlock, only to knee Becky down. The YES Kicks get two and we hit a seated abdominal stretch. Well stretch is a relative term as Brie isn't pulling back or anything but she's trying. We hit another armbar as this has been all Brie so far. Becky makes her comeback with clotheslines but THIS IS A BRIE BELLA MATCH so she cuts her down with a dropkick, only to get rolled up into the Disarm-Her for the tap at 5:14.

Rating: D+. As I think we've learned by now, Brie really isn't that good. They had an idea here with the arm but Brie really couldn't carry this to anything beyond the run of the mill Divas match. She still has no idea if she's a face or a heel and it makes for some really awkward matches.

Ric Flair introduces the nominees for Match of the Year:

John Cena vs. Brock Lesnar vs. Seth Rollins – Royal Rumble

Sting vs. HHH – Wrestlemania

John Cena vs. Kevin Owens – Elimination Chamber

Roman Reigns vs. Dolph Ziggler vs. Kevin Owens vs. Alberto Del Rio – Raw
– October 26

Undertaker vs. Brock Lesnar – Hell in a Cell

The final award of the night goes to Undertaker vs. Brock Lesnar and for the fourth time tonight, the big name isn't here to accept. Heyman comes out instead and says Brock doesn't come out and accept awards. Brock wants a fight but no one in the back is man enough to face Brock Lesnar. One phenom this year stood up and took a beating but there is only one conqueror.

The cage is lowered.

In the back, the League attacks the Usos with Rusev and Del Rio putting on their submissions. Both of them get Brogue Kicks as well.

Ambrose defends tomorrow night against Kevin Owens and Dolph Ziggler. Why should Ziggler get a shot when Owens pinned him earlier tonight?

Sheamus vs. Dean Ambrose

Non-title. Sheamus Brogue Kicks Dean before he can get inside and since referees have no authority in WWE, the match starts anyway. We get the ten forearms to the chest as the fans chant SHEAMUS IS BORING. Sheamus actually acknowledges them and waves the chants on, only to get backdropped into the cage wall. Dean goes for the climb but Sheamus is right up after him for White Noise off the top for two.

Now it's Sheamus going up but getting crotched down, only to be met by the League as he tries to escape. That's fine with Dean as he dives down onto Sheamus with the elbow for a VERY close two. Del Rio slams the door on Dean's head though, drawing out Reigns to take out the League with a chair. Thanks for coming BEFORE they cost your buddy the match Roman.

The League runs off and Sheamus climbs up, only to have Reigns waiting on him with a chair. Roman throws it to Dean and Sheamus is caught. Dirty Deeds onto the chair doesn't even get a cover as Dean climbs, allowing Sheamus to catch him on top. They slug it out on top of the cage and slowly come down with Dean getting headbutted off for the win at 10:45.

Rating: C. This was fine with Ambrose and Reigns surviving one more time. They've done a great job of setting those two up as unbreakable brothers, meaning that the eventual split is going to be even better. Sheamus losing here is fine enough because no one buys him as a real threat to win the title again and his rematch is likely coming on the first Raw of the year instead of at the Rumble or on any other big stage.

Tom Phillips asks Stephanie for her reaction so she beats him down with slaps. Tom sells them like death to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. I'm a big sucker for the Slammy Awards but this didn't do it for me. The big stars not being there to accept really crippled things and most of the award picks were fine, meaning there wasn't much to get annoyed about. Cena being back next week will help and there are places they can go from here, but the show as a whole was

really nothing great. That puts it WAY ahead of recent weeks though so it's definitely not horrible, but still nothing I'm going to remember by the new year.

Results

Kane b. Bray Wyatt via DQ when the Wyatt Family interfered

Wyatt Family b. Tommy Dreamer/Dudley Boyz/Kane – Discus lariat to D-Von

Kevin Owens b. Dolph Ziggler – Pop Up Powerbomb

Alberto Del Rio b. Jack Swagger – Top rope double stomp

Usos b. New Day – Rollup to Woods

Rusev b. Neville – Accolade

Becky Lynch b. Brie Bella – Disarm-Her

Dean Ambrose b. Sheamus – Ambrose escaped the cage

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<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0188BJRGU>

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<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Coca Cola Sponsoring the Slammy Awards and Tribute to the Troops

<http://411mania.com/wrestling/wwe-news-company-scores-major-sponsorship-signs-new-toy-deal/>

That's big. Like that's REALLY big. Coca Cola is one of the biggest brands in the world and having them say WWE is worth sponsoring is a hugely positive sign for WWE going forward. That means some serious advertising money coming in from more companies that want to be part of WWE because it's worth the investment. Raw may be boring these days, but if it gets them stuff like this, that's not going to change anytime soon.

Reviewing the Review – Monday Night Raw: December 8, 2014

Monday was another special edition of Raw that really didn't feel all that special. We had the annual Slammy Awards and they really didn't feel like they meant anything this time around. Other than that it was the go home show for TLC, meaning it's time for Big Show vs. Cena. Again. Let's get to it.

I already wrote a full column on the awards themselves so I'll skip over talking about them here.

Seth Green was the guest host and was fine in the role. Well as fine as a totally unnecessary guest host can be on this show.

The Stooges helped Rollins beat Ziggler. This was one of those little things that help me get through a match, as Ziggler didn't do a clean job. You know, meaning he's not Rollins or Harper against Ryback but that's another story for later in the week. The match was nothing special due to time constraints.

Kofi beat Stardust in another nothing match. New Day is growing on me and a win over the Dusts on Sunday's pre-show should help things out a good bit.

We got an interesting exchange between Heyman and Rollins with Paul trying to fire Seth up before his tables match on Sunday. I like that little hint that Heyman and Lesnar are scared of Cena as it plays up the continuity of Cena having Lesnar beaten in their last match. Actually this is the kind of thing that makes the rest of the show so frustrating: they're clearly capable of having a well thought out story like this but it gets weighed down by so many other things that it's almost impossible to get through the rest of the show.

Charlotte debuted and got pinned by Natalya in two and a half minutes. My guess is WWE thinks the fans aren't going to remember this in a few months when Charlotte shows up again. This would be the opposite of what I saw in the previous segment: instead of thinking their way through a well done story with good continuity, they're basically saying "eh screw it. No one is going to care." It's a problem that could be solved so easily: either don't have Charlotte appear here, have her appear with some other NXT girl, or have her win. Seriously you couldn't put her out there against Rosa?

Bray came out and explained that the rocking chair used to belong to Abigail and that he first saw her sitting in it. I love the little bits we get of Bray's backstory but most of it is left to our own imaginations, which is how something like that should be. Dean returned (did he ever actually leave?) and had another great moment by returning in an ambulance, complete with smoke coming out of the back. They had a big brawl and Bray ran off with Dean laying on the table, begging him to come back. It's an awesome visual, but it makes me wonder what the point was in having Dean do a stretcher job when they're just going to ignore

it like three days later. Again with the continuity issues.

Cena promised to put Rollins through a table in serious mode.

Harper and Rowan had a very quick brawl ending in a DQ. Again, save that big match for a PPV showdown like you should. Doing something like this was fine though because it didn't matter and didn't end in a fall. Then again this was Harper vs. Rowan so WWE actually cares about them, unlike Charlotte.

Naomi is going to Hollywood for an audition but Jimmy is worried about Miz. This makes Naomi think he doesn't trust her as this story continues to be one of the best done things they have going on right now.

The Russians admitted they hurt Zeb, drawing out Swagger to try and break Rusev's ankle. This ends how you would expect it to.

Ryback/the Usos beat Miz/Mizdow/Kane with Ryback pinning Miz, BECAUSE WE CAN'T FREAKING PIN KANE AND A CHAMPION HAS TO DO A FREAKING JOB! More on this on Smackdown.

AJ made Summer tap to the Black Widow in yet another nothing match.

The Stooges still won't let Big Show do a job as they ran in to give Cena the DQ win. Again, we can job a champion on Raw (and another on Smackdown) but Big Show has to be protected. This is the most perplexing thing going on in WWE at the moment and I really do not understand it.

The show ended with the Survivor Series teams brawling and Cena going through a table. I couldn't remember this ending earlier today when I was watching Smackdown because it's so similar to the endings we've seen in the last few weeks. That's a really bad sign.

Overall Raw was the exact same thing we've seen for weeks but with an awards ceremony going on in the background. WWE is really needing something to freshen things up at the moment and it's getting harder and harder to sit through these shows. You'll occasionally get a flash of good but it gets dragged right back down into the same drek that we've been sitting through for months with one idea being repeated for months and long promos that set up another Cena vs. Lesnar match that people

don't care to see.

Between that and Kane/Big Show not being allowed to job but champions or young stars losing almost every week, it's really hard to get behind something in WWE. That's what NXT is for I guess, which continues to be by far and away more entertaining because they don't try to do so many other things besides just have a wrestling show.

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<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00PZ1GR7E>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Finally, I'm holding a Holiday Special for my e-books: any two of them for just \$5. Check out the details here.

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2014/11/28/holiday-sale/>

New Column: Insert Your Own Witty Slammy Line Here

Simple one here as I pick my own Slammy winners.

<http://www.wrestlingrumors.net/kbs-review-insert-witty-slammy-line/32663/>

Pre-Show Slammy Award Winners

Some of these are actually big deals.

Breakout Star of the Year: The Shield

"This is Awesome!" Moment of the Year: Big Show knocks out Triple H

Trending Now (Hashtag of the Year): #BelieveInTheShield

Beard of the Year: Daniel Bryan

The following Slammy Awards were given out on WWE.com today:

"What a Maneuver!" Award: Roman Reigns' spear

Faction of the Year: The Shield

"You Still Got It!" Award: Goldust

Couple of the Year: Daniel Bryan & Brie Bella

Tag Team of the Year: Cody Rhodes & Goldust

Feat of Strength Award: Mark Henry pulls two trucks with his bare hands

"Say What!?" Quote of the Year: Dustry Rhodes "huckleberry" promo

Best Dance Moves: The Funkadactyls

Favorite Web Show: The JBL & Cole Show

Best Crowd of the Year: Raw after WrestleMania 29 (East Rutherford, NJ)

Catchphrase of the Year: "YES! YES! YES!"