

Smackdown – December 10, 2015: Waste Of My Time

Smackdown

Date: December 10, 2015

Location: Jacksonville Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Jacksonville, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Jerry Lawler, Booker T.

It's the go home show for Tables Ladders and Chairs and the show isn't looking like the most interesting in the world. Most of the card is set though and that means tonight is all about the build. I have a feeling we'll be seeing more about the main event, which is a bit of a shame as Smackdown was getting good about building up the midcard. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Roman Reigns vs. Alberto Del Rio

Non-title because I don't think Del Rio has defended the thing since he won it. Swagger vs. Del Rio on Sunday is officially a chairs match. The rest of the League, Ambrose and the Usos are at ringside. Del Rio takes him into the corner for a kick to the back to start but Reigns pounds him in the head. Alberto comes back with some kicks and a way too early chinlock (Sheamus: "SQUEEZE THE LIFE OUT OF HIM!"). That doesn't exactly work as Reigns fights up, only to be greeted by what sounded like a Y2J chant.

Reigns takes it to the floor but gets in a staredown with Sheamus, allowing Del Rio to kick him in the ribs as we take a break. Back with Del Rio coming off the top with a right hand to the head for two. With the everything else not working, Del Rio puts on the armbreaker over the top rope for all of four seconds until Reigns powers him off the ropes and out to the floor. As usual, I don't know why I'm supposed to cheer for Reigns when he can do anything. Well aside from get the ratings up that is.

Reigns wins a slugout (duh) and fires off the clotheslines in the corner. The Superman Punch is countered into the Backstabber for two but Reigns does his rollup into a powerbomb for two. A Sheamus distraction lets Del Rio get in the enziguri for two of his own but there's the Superman Punch for two with the League pulling Del Rio away. The big brawl is on and it's a double DQ at 14:38.

Rating: C+. They work well together but as usual this was an obvious ending and not for the title because Reigns is programmed for the World Title and therefore doesn't care about the US Title. It's the same, standard operating procedure stuff and I'm getting really tired of it, as are most of the fans it seems.

There's going to be an eight man tag main event. That's not all though as we also get a CONTRACT SIGNING between Ambrose and Kevin Owens. Good grief this is like a Greatest Hits Smackdown.

Tyler Breeze vs. Dolph Ziggler

Speaking of the exact same things we've seen time after time, here's Dolph Ziggler in the second segment of the show for I think the third show in a row. Oh and it's in a rematch too because this was screaming for a trilogy. They fight over arm control to start until Tyler grabs a headlock. A nice running dropkick gets two for Breeze and he starts in on the leg.

Ziggler tries to roll out of a knee bar but gets caught in a half crab instead. With that broken up, Breeze tries to wrap the leg around the post but gets pulled face first into the steel instead (with no mention of this from the commentators because Lawler is reading a line about selfies). Back in and the superkick ends Breeze at 4:44. That was Ziggler's only major offensive move of the match.

Rating: D+. So let's see. Breeze arrived about a month and a half ago and already has a losing record in general and to Dolph Ziggler. I'm so glad we saw him go through all that work down in NXT, only to have him come up here and lose a feud to the perennial jobber to the stars, who TOTALLY needed to win this feud. As usual, it's the same old things that we've seen for years that don't work but they keep doing because they're sure

it's a brilliant idea.

We recap Ryback vs. Rusev. I'm assuming they'll fight on Sunday.

Here's New Day and since it's Smackdown, this is probably their only appearance for the night. Before their match, Kofi talks about LeBron James just signed a lifetime deal with Nike. Big E.: "Lifetime? As in like it and put a ring on it?" Kofi shows off his shoes as E. gives us a quick commercial. As for Sunday, they're defending their titles in a triple threat ladder match, but getting the belts off of them is harder than getting Adele to answer a phone call. Why you ask? It's because NEW DAY ROCKS of course.

New Day vs. Lucha Dragons

Again non-title and a rematch from Raw, though this time it's Big E. on the floor. Kalisto flips Kofi down to start but both guys try a dropkick to give us a stalemate. The Dragons take over again with Cara monkey flipping Kalisto onto Kofi for two. New Day finally gets it together with Kofi sending Cara to the floor as we take a break. Back with Woods stomping in the corner and Big E. not being able to master the trombone.

We get an awkward sequence where Woods misses a clothesline and then hits it a second later with Cara standing there so he can hit it. Cara lifts Kofi up into a powerbomb (ala Reigns), finally allowing the hot tag to Kalisto as things speed way up. The hurricanrana driver gets two with Kofi making the save. When that doesn't work, Kalisto kicks Xavier in the head and hits the Salida Del Sol for the pin at 8:14.

Rating: C-. This didn't have much time due to the break and was another rematch from Raw. Just like with Owens in the Intercontinental Title feud, the Usos have been completely forgotten in this whole thing and should have been in this match instead of the rematch with the Dragons where New Day loses AGAIN. In other words, they're using the same idea in the Tag Team Title feud that they're doing in the World Title feud. And people wonder why this isn't the most well received time in creative's history.

It's time for the contract signing for Owens vs. Ambrose. Dean comes out

first and has to yell at Owens' attorney. Owens has an attorney? That doesn't fit for some reason. Owens has been instructed to not show up tonight because it's not a safe working environment. Oh sweet goodness with the legal storylines. That's another trope you can check off the list for this show.

Dean says he was hoping for a quick beatdown tonight instead of having to actually do something. He goes to sign but here's Owens, blowing off the ploy a good three minutes after it started. Dean is sent into the barricade but whips Owens into the steps and takes out the attorney as a bonus. Owens bails and the attorney gets Dirty Deeds before Dean signs.

Ryback vs. Ascension

Lana and Rusev are on commentary. Ryback throws Viktor around to start and plants Konnor with a spinebuster. The Meat Hook and Shell Shock put Viktor away at 1:29.

If you're going to do that, BRING BACK JOBBERS! Good grief man. Someone explain to me the reason why we need to beat down a team that could be used somewhere else for the sake of pushing this midcard feud. If you're going to have someone lose in 90 seconds, bring in jobbers who have nothing to lose. I know Ascension doesn't have much to lose, but they COULD mean something if they're built up. Add this to the list of annoying things WWE doesn't understand that gets on my nerves because they're so obsessed with this way of thinking and no one comes in and says "hey, that's stupid."

Ryback stares at the Russians or whatever country they're from this week.

Recap of Rhyno returning Monday.

Becky Lynch vs. Paige

Paige's early headlock doesn't get her anywhere so she punches Becky in the ribs instead. Some knees to the head set up a chinlock on Becky but she comes back with some hard uppercuts. A double clothesline puts both of them down but here's Charlotte coming to the ring, complete with full music. The distraction only works on Paige (because they're feuding you

see) and the Disarm-Her makes her tap at 3:23.

Rating: D+. So instead of having the champion get beat, let's have the challenger get beat so we have even less of a reason to like her. I think they're trying to make Paige the face here but much like everything else, they have no idea how to make the women likeable either. I'm sure the solution is to have her take credit for the Divas Revolution though and then have her be catty with everyone else.

Long video on Reigns vs. Sheamus. As I've said ever since it started: it's a great Intercontinental Title feud but a lame main event.

League of Nations vs. Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose/Usos

Alberto shoulders Jimmy down to start but Jimmy (who Booker identifies as having the facepaint on the right hand side, even though they're exactly the same in the ring) comes back with a loud uppercut. Off to Jey vs. Rusev with the Bulgarian taking over as you would expect. Sheamus comes in with a kick to the head and we take a break. Back with Jey having his shirt ripped open for some forearms to the chest.

Reigns has to be held back from interfering but the distraction allows the tag to Ambrose but the fans aren't ready to react. The middle rope dropkick puts Sheamus down and the bulldog sets up the strikes against the ropes. Barrett finally does something by tripping Ambrose from the floor, allowing Rusev to come in and choke away. Del Rio comes in for another chinlock (he's a big fan of those tonight) and a Backstabber for two.

Sheamus' suplex slam gets two and it's off to another chinlock. Back to Rusev for a bearhug but Dean counters into a neckbreaker. A tornado DDT to Del Rio is enough for the hot tag to Reigns, though the crowd doesn't seem that thrilled to see him again. Everything breaks down and the Usos take out Sheamus and Del Rio with stereo dives. The spear finishes Rusev at 13:47.

Rating: D+. Totally uninteresting main event here with nothing standing out. Reigns wins again before he gets screwed over on Sunday like we're all expecting because that's what the fans want to see: more of the same

thing we've seen for a year now while we keep pedaling towards the carrot on a string that we can never reach.

Overall Rating: D-. I don't say this often but this show was a huge waste of my time. I understand that this was the same taping as Tribute to the Troops but this felt more like that "special" ("Yeah it's for the troops and totally not just us taping a house show so we can feel good about ourselves. USA!") than a regular show.

Almost every single thing that happened on this show felt like it came from the book of WWE Easy Ideas and that's not how you ever want a show to go. Between the champions losing, the contract signing and the tag team main event, I saw nothing on this show that makes me care about TLC. Nothing. Not a single thing. I'm sure the show will be fine, but this was a waste of my time.

It's very clear right now that WWE isn't trying. I know it happens every year at this time when the creative team basically puts it on autopilot and throws their feet up for the holidays, but this is the kind of show that makes me wonder why I should bother at this time of year. I never had that feeling before but it's happening almost every November and December in recent years because WWE is stuck with five hours of TV a week and nowhere near enough ideas.

They need to give me a reason to care in a hurry (hint: you can have a face hold the title for more than five minutes in fifteen months) because this is getting old. Stop having champions lose, stop treating these shows like they don't matter, stop repeating the same matches with guys trading meaningless five minute wins and stop using the same ideas every few weeks and expecting us to care. I usually give WWE the benefit of the doubt (more often than I should) but this is the kind of show that makes me feel like I've wasted my time and that's the last thing I should feel when I'm watching something that should be entertaining.

Results

Roman Reigns vs. Alberto Del Rio went to a double DQ when the League of Nations, the Usos and Dean Ambrose interfered

Dolph Ziggler b. Tyler Breeze – Superkick

Lucha Dragons b. New Day – Salida Del Sol to Woods

Ryback b. Ascension – Shell Shock to Viktor

Becky Lynch b. Paige – Disarm-Her

Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose/Usos b. League of Nations – Spear to Rusev

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Smackdown – December 3, 2015: Back To The Minor League

Smackdown

Date: December 3, 2015

Location: Giant Center, Hershey, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Booker T., Jerry Lawler, Rich Brennan

Things started to pick up a bit on Monday as we saw the formation of a new team in the League of Nations. This gives Reigns some more odds to overcome (again) as he gets ready for his second shot at Sheamus in a week and a half at TLC. The only match tonight is Bray Wyatt vs. Bubba

Ray Dudley. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of the Sheamus vs. Reigns issues from Raw, including the formation of the League of Nations.

Reigns, the Usos and Ambrose are in the ring to start with Roman talking about being in the ring with his family. All three of these men are like brothers to him and he hugs Dean, who he's known for five years but there have been enough memories for thirty. Reigns wants to get his hands on Sheamus and the League of Nations tonight so here are Sheamus and company. The fans chant USA but Sheamus says the four of them all have Green Cards. Well Rusev doesn't but he's working on it.

Sheamus brings up Reigns' five minute title reign but it's worth it because now there's the cool Sheamus 5:15 shirt. There has been an eight man tag made for tonight and Sheamus lists off all eight men in the match to fill in even more time. This brings out New Day for some reason with Woods asking why Reigns is so serious. Big E. renames Roman the Ruiner and Kofi has a new match to announce for later tonight: New Day vs. Usos/Ambrose and if the Usos and Ambrose can't win, Reigns is going to fight the League of Nations on his own tonight.

I'm liking the League of Nations idea and it's a lot more interesting that having Reigns out there to talk about his match with Sheamus on his own. That's not Reigns' strength as he's much better with someone to bounce off of. The League offers several options for Reigns to feud with as well as making Sheamus feel like a much bigger deal instead of just that guy who won the title because of a briefcase.

Tyler Breeze vs. Neville

Dolph Ziggler is on commentary. Neville flips over Breeze for a rollup out of the corner to start and we hit an armbar. Dolph recap his history of trading wins with Breeze as Neville sends him to the floor and we take a break. Back with Neville throwing Breeze off a front facelock and clotheslining him out to the floor for a big flip dive.

A standing shooting star press gets two for Neville back inside as the fans are trying to get into this but can't keep cheering for very long.

The Supermodel kick gets two for Breeze, only to have Neville come back with one of his own. Summer offers a distraction though and the Unprettier puts Neville away at 7:56.

Rating: C. Breeze is another example of a guy who could do something if they would stop having him lose so many matches. He surprised people when he was down in NXT and could do the same thing here with pure hard work and it's something that is always going to work in WWE, assuming you don't job him out every week. Unfortunately the same could be said about Neville.

We take a quick look at Charlotte beating Becky Lynch with a handful of trunks.

Becky says she understands why Charlotte did what she did and they're still best friends. Brie Bella and Alicia Fox come in and to call her naïve until Charlotte comes in to say this is a new generation. Becky and Charlotte are still a bit tense but it seems to be ok.

Brie Bella vs. Becky Lynch

Alicia and Charlotte are here as seconds as Booker says he doesn't like the factions idea. Becky armdrags her to start and Brie fakes an ankle injury to mock Charlotte, earning her a dropkick to the face. Brie starts in with the YES Kicks as we cut to the back where Tamina is holding a pinata while Naomi swings a stick.

The BRIE MODE knee gets two and we hit a seated abdominal stretch. Becky quickly gets up and makes her comeback with a dropkick and t-bone suplex for two. The threat of the Disarm-Her sends Becky running to the ropes and into Charlotte. Now the Disarm-Her goes on but Charlotte comes in to go after Brie for the DQ at 2:54. Lawler defends Charlotte but that's totally on her. How dare she make us listen to BRRRRRRRIIIIIIEEEEE MODE all over again.

Becky is ticked post match.

Neville is in the back when Miz stops him to make fun of his ears. Social media doesn't like Neville's lack of personality so Miz offers to mentor

him. Neville reminds him of Daniel Bryan and look what Miz did for him. Neville takes his card and a copy of Santa's Little Helper on DVD.

Rusev and Lana (in a dress and with her hair in a braided ponytail) call Ryback a barbarian (not the Barbarian of course). Lana's accent slipped a lot during this.

New Day vs. Dean Ambrose/Usos

If the New Day wins, Reigns is in a 4-1 handicap match tonight. Jey chops Woods down to start and it's already time for the imitation Unicorn Stampede for Xavier. Jimmy gets dragged into the corner for some New Day stomping (showing them how it's done) and Big E.'s elbow to the jaw for two. Woods' chinlock doesn't go very far as Jimmy fights up and makes a quick tag off to Dean.

Everything breaks down for a bit with Ambrose clotheslining Big E. on the floor but getting crotched on the top back inside. Woods asks what happened to Dean as we take a break. Back with the real Unicorn Stampede keeping Ambrose in trouble, meaning it's time for some tromboning and dancing. A big kick gets two for Kofi and Big E. gets the same off a belly to belly. Dean finally gets smart and low bridges Big E. to the floor but has to roll through Kofi's cross body instead of tagging.

The rebound lariat allows the tag to Jey a few seconds later and it's time for some serious house cleaning. Woods takes the pop up Samoan drop for two but Big E. catches a diving Ambrose. Big E. is nice enough to hold him there for a suicide dive from Jey in a really staged looking spot. Jimmy dives at Kofi but tweaks the knee from Raw, which gets tied in the ropes to make it even worse. Woods adds a Shining Wizard to pin Jimmy at 14:00.

Rating: C+. New Day reminds me more and more of Edge and Christian every time I watch them. They can nail the comedy but just as importantly they can have a good match when they need to. This sets up the main event and gave us a good stretch of wrestling in the process. That's exactly what they needed it to be and everything worked well here.

The Wyatts tell the Dudleys they're here.

D-Von Dudley vs. Bray Wyatt

Again, can't they keep a match that they set up the day before this was taped? It doesn't really matter which Dudley it is but since that's the case, why bother switching it? Dreamer is here with the Dudleys. The Wyatts' entrance starts and.....R-Truth is on the stage in Wyatt gear. After a wave, here are the real Wyatts with Truth gone. I can get behind this gag.

An early Rowan distraction doesn't work and D-Von takes over with a Thesz press. Bray quickly snapmares him down and puts on a chinlock though, allowing Bubba to play cheerleader. You can say a lot of things about Bubba, but he is never one to sit around and do nothing during a match. Back up and Sister Abigail puts D-Von away at 1:55. That was quick.

Post match the Wyatts load up a table and Strowman chokes Bubba out. Dreamer takes the table bump and Harper welcomes him home. The ECW guys are all stacked up and Bray poses over them.

Roman Reigns vs. League of Nations

4-1 handicap. Still no Lana or Colter out with the League. Before the match, Reigns says the important thing is Jimmy's being ok. Renee Young comes up to say Reigns has to go out there on his own but he's ready to bring the pain. Del Rio starts for his team and gets punched into his corner. Booker: "Roman Reigns is a man alone on an island right now. Like Gilligan." Thankfully Lawler is there to correct him as Sheamus comes in and goes right after Reigns, dragging him into the wrong corner.

Reigns fights back until Barrett trips him from the floor.....which is good for an elimination. Lawler calls him Wade (probably earning himself a fine) and the League is rightfully ticked off as we go to a break. Back with Del Rio punching in the corner and Rusev getting two off a belly to back suplex. Rusev throws him to the floor for a beating from the partners as the numbers are dominating.

Sheamus' release suplex gets two and we hit the chinlock. Roman finally gets up a boot to stop a charging Rusev and scores with a Samoan drop. The fans think this is awesome. What the heck are they watching? It's not

bad but it's certainly not awesome. Roman gets up and isolates Del Rio but Rusev comes in for a distraction. The Backstabber gets two for Del Rio but Reigns nails a quick spear for the same with Sheamus making the save. The apron boot hits Rusev and a clothesline off the steps drops Sheamus. Del Rio gets thrown over the announcers' table and Reigns beats the count back in at 15:22.

Rating: C. That ending felt like something out of an old Smackdown game. That's the strategy you would use if you were in a big handicap match and you knew that you weren't going to win even in a video game because it was too ridiculous. There would have been nothing wrong with the League getting disqualified here or Reigns brawling to a double countout but there's something wrong with Reigns winning.

Ambrose and the Usos come out for the save to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. I've been enjoying this League of Nations idea, even if it's just something short term. Sheamus vs. Reigns isn't a feud that is going to work on its own so why not throw in most of the upper midcard and main event scene to mix it up and strengthen the story a lot? The rest of the show was a bunch of quick stuff but they're doing the important story right and that's what matters right now.

Results

Tyler Breeze b. Neville – Unprettier

Brie Bella b. Becky Lynch via DQ when Charlotte interfered

New Day b. Usos/Dean Ambrose – Shining Wizard to Jimmy

Bray Wyatt b. D-Von Dudley – Sister Abigail

Roman Reigns b. League of Nations via countout

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Smackdown – November 26, 2015: Thanks For Something No One Will See

Smackdown

Date: November 26, 2015

Location: Bankers Life Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, Indiana

Commentators: Booker T., Rich Brennan, Jerry Lawler

First of all, Happy Thanksgiving. We're in a strange period at the moment as we're waiting on TLC and the fans don't seem to be thrilled. Sheamus is World Champion again as Roman Reigns somehow managed to get screwed out of the title again. Those five minutes he held the title were the only five minutes a true good guy had held the title since Summerslam 2014. Let's get to it.

Here's Reigns to open things up with a table, a ladder and a chair in the ring. Reigns talks about wrestling with the Usos in the house, in the yard, at the beach and all over the streets. Their favorite spot was always on the trampoline though because they would always dream of winning the World Title. That actually happened this Sunday but it was a short dream because Sheamus crushed his face with a Brogue Kick.

This brings out Sheamus, which is probably best as they're keeping Reigns' talking short. Sheamus calls Reigns a walking Adele song and says he's been in elevators longer than Reigns was champion. You can't even

heat up a frozen burrito in the time Reigns held the title. The fans (or at least the ones recorded and played back here) don't like these comments so Sheamus goes on about Reigns' success this past Sunday. All Reigns had to do was shake HHH's hand on Sunday but Reigns speared the boss instead. That was all Sheamus needed to see before he came down to the ring and snatched the title away.

Reigns says come down here and see what happens in five minutes. Sheamus comes down but of course stops and laughs. He'll see Reigns in his nightmares, fella. Reigns wants a preview of TLC, where he's going to break Sheamus' jaw with a Superman Punch. Then he'll break his back with a chair and powerbomb him through a table. When Sheamus can't get up, Reigns is going to climb up and win the title all over again. This was good and would make for an awesome midcard title feud, but Sheamus just does not fit as the World Champion after how horribly he's been booked in recent months. You can't just erase that time.

Dudley Boyz vs. Erick Rowan/Braun Strowman

Sequel to Monday where Harper and Wyatt beat the Dudleyz. D-Von hammers on Rowan to start and clotheslines him into the corner for the tag off to Bubba. Strowman is requested though and Bubba grabs a headlock. That actually works for a few seconds before Strowman throws him into the corner and blasts Bubba with a clothesline. Rowan wraps Bubba's arm around the post and we take a break.

Back with Strowman staying on the arm. A guy his size working on an armbar really doesn't look right. Rowan kicks Bubba in the face but eats a clothesline, allowing for the tag off to D-Von. Some clotheslines put Rowan down and everything breaks down. It's table time but Harper comes in with a superkick for the DQ at 9:25.

Rating: C. Totally fine but I'm over the Wyatts at this point. There's no reason to believe that this is going anywhere but at least they're fighting a team they could conceivably beat. The long term solution for the Wyatts is to have them actually win something as they don't have any real accomplishments to make you believe they could pull off something bigger.

Post match Strowman chokes D-Von out and puts him through the table.

New Day shills merchandise better than anyone since DX.

Becky Lynch vs. Paige

Becky armdrags her around to start and a dropkick puts Paige on the floor. Back in and some legdrops get two each for Becky but a quick fall away slam gives Paige control as we take a break. Back with Paige cranking on both arms before missing a big kick to the head. Becky's t-bone suplex gets two but she can't get the Disarm-Her. Instead Paige sends her throat first into the middle rope and grabs a rollup for the pin at 9:03. It sounds a bit lame but Paige couldn't get her feet onto the ropes to cheat, which would have made it a lot better.

Rating: C-. The ending hurt it as it Becky just got pinned off a lame move but at least they were trying. Paige probably should have grabbed some trunks or something to save the scene but it's Smackdown on a holiday so they'll be lucky to only set a new record for viewership futility. Not very good, though it's nice to see Becky getting ring time for a change.

The New Day is holding a potluck dinner and Big E. is in a chef's hat. The Divas seem more interested in his tricep meat and it's time to dance while they clap THANKS TO US. Heath Slater brings in Slater Slaw but Big E. finds a Band-Aid. Adam Rose offers some rabbit stew to freak Big E. out even more. The Ascension brings desolation and destruction so they're thrown out.

There's a disagreement over who was supposed to bring the turkey but here's Gobbledy Gooker, as played by Xavier Woods. It was the Gooker's anniversary this Sunday too and it's time to dance. Lawler: "Somewhere the real Gobbledy Gooker is rolling over in his gravy." Dang it Lawler stop making me chuckle at bad jokes.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Jack Swagger

Non-title of course. Before the match, Colter talks about not knowing Swagger anymore due to Jack's blind American loyalty. Del Rio says that

Swagger is going to be thankful that he can walk out of the building. Alberto kicks him into the corner to start but a double leg takedown puts Del Rio on the mat.

Never mind though as he plants Jack with a DDT and stomps away even more. Then to really mix it up, he stomps away from the middle rope. A quick powerslam gets two for Jack and they head outside for a clothesline to put Alberto in the timekeeper's area. Swagger looks at Colter so Del Rio chairs him in the back for the DQ at 3:08.

Rating: D. Dang it this is going to continue. Swagger is such a lame duck challenger and has been for years but that won't stop them from pushing him as an American. I mean, it's a really important and valuable character to have and it's not like THEY COULD GIVE IT TO SOMEONE ELSE instead right? This was story advancement and likely a way to set up a chairs match for the title at the pay per view.

Post match Jack gets the chair and chases them off.

The Usos run into the Gobbledy Gooker and Jimmy has an idea.

Lucha Dragons vs. New Day

Non-title. The Gooker is accompanying Big E. and Kofi here. Kofi and Kalisto start things off as the fans seem to be behind New Day. Cara comes in and drops Kalisto into a backsplash for two as the Dragons take over. Kofi's hurricanrana is countered into a sunset flip for two more but it's quickly off to Big E. to change momentum. The Gooker gets on the apron for some dancing (Lawler: "A turkey twerk?") and some interference by pulling Cara out to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Cara suffering the Unicorn Stampede (it's deadly you know) and the Warrior Splash for two. Another splash misses though and it's off to Kalisto to speed things up. The hurricanrana driver plants Kofi and a springboard kick to the head knocks E. to the floor. Kofi tries a rollup and puts his feet on the ropes but the Gooker shoves them away, setting up a springboard Salida Del Sol for the pin at 8:25.

Rating: C. I think you know what's coming after the match so I don't

think it's a spoiler to suggest a triple threat tag match, preferably with ladders involved, at TLC. This is another match that didn't have enough time to go anywhere but it could be entertaining if they were allowed to go somewhere.

Of course the Gooker is revealed as an Uso. The other one brings out Woods in his underwear with his hands taped together. The Usos superkick and splash the helpless Woods. Dude that's evil.

Tyler Breeze is ready for his match against Dean Ug-brose and Dolph Ziggler. They're just jealous of Breeze's style and tonight it's time to get gorgeous.

Undertaker anniversary video.

Renee Young (looking better than usual tonight) asks Dean Ambrose about his #1 contenders match for the Intercontinental Title tonight. Ambrose says the win over Owens on Sunday wasn't luck and neither was Reigns beating him because Reigns was the better man. He doesn't believe in luck though and tonight he's winning because he's the better man.

Tyler Breeze vs. Dean Ambrose vs. Dolph Ziggler

Winner gets an Intercontinental Title shot, likely at TLC. Champion Kevin Owens comes out to watch do commentary. Owens during Dolph's entrance: "Hang on. He's going to show the world." Ambrose throws his hoodie at Owens but Kevin says the joke's on Dean because now he gets a free hoodie. Breeze gets sent to the floor to start, leaving Dean to send Ziggler outside as well. Dean dives onto Breeze but gets superkicked down. Ziggler stares at Owens ("You want the hoodie?") as we take a break.

Back with Breeze shoving Ziggler off the apron before focusing on Ambrose. The rebound lariat is broken up as Ziggler superkicking Ambrose when he's bouncing off the ropes in a cool break. The Fameasser gets two on Ambrose and now the rebound lariat takes Ziggler down. Breeze throws Dean to the floor but gets taken down by Dean's top rope elbow.

All three are back up so Dean and Ziggler try cross bodies at the same

time, only to crush Breeze in the middle instead. Why that puts Ziggler and Ambrose down when they just hit a regular move isn't clear. The Zig Zag gets two on Dean with Breeze making the save. There's the Beauty Shot to Ziggler but Dean hits a quick Dirty Deeds to Tyler for the pin at 10:52.

Rating: B. Since when is Ziggler not allowed to do jobs in matches like this? The entire point to having him out there should be to avoid having the newcomer take a fall, but I'm sure they have BIG plans for Dolph in the future. This was a really fun match though with some actually fresh spots and Owens killing it on commentary. It's really cool to see the midcard title getting some focus here and they would be well served by having more #1 contenders matches.

Owens and Ambrose stare each other down to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This was exactly what you would expect from a holiday show that no one is going to watch. Ambrose winning was the only storyline advancement, which is probably more than you would expect out of most Smackdowns. The New Day stuff was funny of course and the whole thing felt like a big, easy week, which is all it needed to be.

Results

Dudley Boyz b. Erick Rowan/Braun Strowman via DQ when Luke Harper interfered

Paige b. Becky Lynch – Rollup

Jack Swagger b. Alberto Del Rio via DQ when Del Rio used a chair

Lucha Dragons b. New Day – Springboard Salida Del Sol to Kingston

Dean Ambrose b. Tyler Breeze and Dolph Ziggler – Dirty Deeds to Ambrose

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Smackdown – November 19, 2015: They're Getting Better At This

Smackdown

Date: November 19, 2015

Location: Thompson-Boling Arena, Knoxville, Tennessee

Commentators: Booker T., Jerry Lawler, Rich Brennan

It's the final show before Survivor Series and the big draw tonight is the four semifinalists in the WWE World Title tournament appearing on MizTV. For some reason I have a feeling this winds up in a tag match, even though the heels should walk out on it immediately to prevent too much damage before this Sunday. Let's get to it.

In Memory of Nick Bockwinkel. It's nice of them to put that up at first instead of right before the last half hour like on Friday.

The announcers preview the semifinals and the tag match is indeed happening. It might have been a bit more interesting if they didn't go with the obvious pairings.

It's time for MizTV to open things up with the title in the ring. Miz sums up the tournament but Owens interrupts him. Miz isn't pleased but this is now the Kevin Owens Show. Owens promises to win the title and have two belts (of course he doesn't say belts because that word might make the fans (dang it I can't say that either) think this is fake or

something) at once.

Del Rio and Colter interrupt to call Miz a hater who wants a gotcha question. Oh yeah you can tell it's political season because Vince has a character out there to reference whatever is going on in politics at the moment. Miz says this isn't how that's going to go but Colter compares this to Blue's Clues. Owens is not better because he must have ice skated across Lake Michigan one night. Del Rio offers Owens the job of cleaning the pools in MexAmerica but Kevin's big comeback is saying no one missed Del Rio while he was gone.

Now it's Ambrose interfering and telling Miz to sit down. Dean gets right to the point by getting in Del Rio's face and saying take your best shot but here's Reigns to interrupt Miz as well. Miz tries to calm things down but here's R-Truth for no logical reason. After asking what's up, Truth says he's been the underdog his whole life but he's always been a survivor.

At Survivor Series he's going to survive again and become the new WWE World Heavyweight Champion. Miz: "You're not in the tournament." Truth: "What did you say?" Miz: "It's been going on for two weeks and you're not in it." Truth: "They told me....well ain't that something. University of Tennessee, this one's on me." He wishes Reigns and Ambrose and leaves. Miz yells about how this whole thing has been going wrong and wants to really preview the tournament. Roman says Miz is the director and needs to say action. Miz: "ACTION!" Dean knocks him out with one punch and we're done. This was hilarious.

Post break Miz is still in the ring and says his match should be canceled. Here's what he gets instead.

The Miz vs. Cesaro

Miz gets in some left hands to start but Cesaro headscissors him into the Crossface for the submission in 48 seconds.

Cesaro goes to leave but gets cut off by Stardust and the Ascension. It's still not time for this....whatever it is (I think you need to actually have a match to call it a feud) to go anywhere though as Stardust lets

Cesaro pass.

Neville/Dudley Boyz vs. Stardust/Ascension

Viktor and Neville start as the announcers immediately want tables. It's quickly off to Stardust for some right hands in the corner but Neville does all of his flips until Konnor opens the ropes to send him crashing to the floor. Neville can barely get up so Stardust sends him face first into the announcers' table. Thankfully we don't take a break two minutes in and get to stick around for Konnor kicking Neville in the face.

Now we get the break and come back with Viktor putting Neville in a chinlock. Stardust stomps him down as Booker calls this the learning tree. A Tree of Woe doesn't work on Neville as he's still able to kick Stardust in the face, allowing the hot tag to Bubba. Viktor takes the Rock Bottom and Stardust gets the Flip Flop and Fly (Bubba: "THIS IS FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM!"). What's Up keeps Konnor down and it's table time because the Dudleyz have no regard for law and order. Stardust kicks Bubba down but Neville kicks him in the head. 3D puts Viktor away at 9:24.

Rating: C-. Quick six man here and it's good to see Neville winning but it's not a good sign that I could have penciled in Viktor taking the fall to the 3D as soon as the participants were announced. That's what they did on Monday so it was time for the same result just three days later. WWE is nothing if not predictable and that's not a good thing most of the time.

Video on the Wyatts vs. the Brothers of Destruction.

Tyler Breeze vs. Zack Ryder

Before the match Breeze rips on Ryder's fashion sense ("That's 1980s NEVER!") before going on about Summer wanting an upgrade over Ziggler (so those two were together?). The world wanted one too and they got perfection. Summer says this Sunday, Ziggler will come up short all over again. Of course this brings out Ziggler to take over Summer and Tyler's VIP area, freaking Summer out. Ryder can't get anywhere working on the arm and a quick Unprettier puts him away at 1:15

Ziggler charges in and superkicks Tyler's head off post match.

Here are the druids in sheep masks followed by the Wyatts. Bray wants it to be known that he is an honest man. The Brothers of Destruction are not whole because a piece of them still lives in Bray. They will fail this Sunday but the question is how. Will they fall at the hands of Erick Rowan? A man tossed aside like a piece of unwanted garbage (isn't that redundant?).

Maybe it's Luke Harper, a man with a moral code which allows him to create destruction. Or could it be the black sheep himself? Strowman promises to shatter Kane and Undertaker's bones and bring the apocalypse. Undertaker appears on screen and says Bray thinks he has all the cards but it's really a dead man's hand. Kane burns a sheep mask before Undertaker promises that the Wyatts will rest in peace. I know they won't, but please let the Wyatts win. Please?

Long clip of Charlotte and Paige's exchange on Monday.

Brie Bella vs. Charlotte

Non-title. Charlotte goes for the leg to start but gets caught in a headlock takeover. Back up and Charlotte's figure four neck roll knocks Brie silly, setting up a rollup for two. Brie comes back with her running knee and a dropkick for two of her own. The YES Kicks have Charlotte in trouble but a double clothesline puts them both down. Charlotte makes her comeback with a WOO and a big boot for two more. The spear and Figure Eight take care of Brie at 4:36.

Rating: C-. This was better than I was expecting as they had Brie present a much better threat than she normally does. Charlotte should retain the title on Sunday but they're better off keeping away from the Reid Flair stuff, which is a big ordeal now, meaning WWE's "any news is good news" theory gets thrown out again.

Paige says she isn't responsible for Monday.

Kalisto vs. Big E.

Before the match, New Day wants to know why Kalisto was in the tournament

but not any of them. Ryback couldn't even hold their unicorn horn. Kalisto, Big E.'s opponent tonight, is a luchador in an ugly mask. Kalisto handsprings around to start and scores with a few kicks to the head. The hurricanrana driver is followed by a dive to take out Woods and Kingston but Big E. runs him over. A Warrior Splash puts Kalisto away in 1:19.

New Day stays on Kalisto post match and takes out Sin Cara as well until Ryback makes the save.

Clip from Paige and Miz's Santa's Little Helper.

Ziggler vs. Breeze is official for Sunday.

Reigns and Ambrose say they're on the same page tonight but they'll fight on Sunday if they have to. Both guys are cool with doing what they have to do and they'll jump off that bridge together. You can almost see the swerve from here.

Kevin Owens/Alberto Del Rio vs. Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose

Ambrose and Owens start things off and it's Reigns quickly coming in to clear the ring as we take an early break. Back with Reigns shoving Alberto out of the corner and making the tag off to Ambrose for a running forearm. Del Rio gets in a kick to the head and sends Ambrose into the steps as we're now into the tag team formula. Back to Owens for a chinlock and some corner choking.

Owens calls Brennan an idiot and tells Del Rio to come in and go nuts. The running enziguri knocks Dean even sillier and we really mix things up with an Alberto chinlock. A Backstabber gets two but Dean blocks the superkick (Which put John Cena out. I didn't know if you remembered because Del Rio and Colter don't feel it's important enough to mention.) and makes the hot tag to Reigns. A bunch of kicks to the face and the corner clotheslines until Alberto makes a save. Everything breaks down and Ambrose knocks Del Rio over the announcers' table. Del Rio takes a Superman Punch and it's a double countout at 11:55.

Rating: C. This was the best option they had and I'm glad they went with

this instead of having one of the four get pinned. Let them beat each other down post match but don't beat someone going into a major match on Sunday. This wasn't the best match in the world but it's just a preview for Sunday anyway.

Post match Reigns and Ambrose clean house to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. I liked this more than I thought I would as it felt like a proper go home show for a change. Most of the show is set save for a Survivor Series match and what I would assume is the Lucha Dragons/Ryback vs. the New Day. This wasn't the strongest show on its own, but it got me more interested in Sunday which was all it needed to do.

Results

Cesaro b. The Miz – Crossface

Neville/Dudley Boyz b. Stardust/Ascension – 3D to Viktor

Tyler Breeze b. Zack Ryder – Unprettier

Charlotte b. Brie Bella – Figure Eight

Big E. b. Kalisto – Warrior Splash

Dean Ambrose/Roman Reigns vs. Alberto Del Rio/Kevin Owens went to a double countout

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Smackdown – November 12, 2015: Tournaments Actually Are Awesome

Smackdown

Date: November 12, 2015

Location: Manchester Arena, Manchester, England

Commentators: Booker T., Jerry Lawler, Rich Brennan

For the first time in a long time, there's actual important stuff going on tonight. We're getting the final three first round matchups in the WWE World Title tournament, which hopefully is the start of a shift back to making Smackdown mean ANYTHING. Then again it could just be laying the groundwork for the move to USA in January so they can pretend it means something and then drop it back to reality. I'll take what I can get though so let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Rollins destroying anything that ends in CL and being put on the shelf for the better part of a year.

We look at the brackets and recap Monday's tournament matches.

Here are the Wyatts with something to say, which I'm assuming will involve no selling Monday's beatdown. Harper says this is how the world works: when the Wyatts show up, blood runs cold. So that's what happened go Glacier. Tonight they're sacrificing the Usos to Bray Wyatt. Rowan says Bray brings vengeance and sorrow to all who oppose him so tonight they're bringing pain and humiliation to those who oppose them. Strowman wants us to look at his face and see our annihilation because he will pile the bodies to the sky for the eater of worlds.

Bray isn't worried about Undertaker and Kane being back because he's taken pieces of them that they can never recover. Now he lives in the

monster's nightmares and would like to issue a challenge for Survivor Series: their family against his family, two on two. They have until the end of the night to respond. So after losing 4-2, they want to fight 2-2? I think I'll take the Glacier match instead.

Braun Strowman vs. Fandango

They're Fandangoing in Manchester. For some reason this doesn't surprise me. Fandango goes right at Braun to start and it goes as well as you would expect. Braun clotheslines him out of the air and the standing choke makes Fandango tap (the first man to do that) at 1:30.

WWE World Title Tournament First Round: King Barrett vs. Neville

The winner faces Owens. Neville promises to finish what Wayne Rooney started on Monday. Barrett gets rolled up for an early two and it's off to a headlock. A cross body gets two more for Neville so Barrett throws him to the floor and kicks him in the face. Nice strategy. Neville is bounced off the announcers' table a few times and we take an early break. Back with Barrett getting his own near fall off a pumphandle slam.

Neville fights out of a chinlock and tries to flip out of the corner but gets kicked in the ribs to put him down again. Barrett kicks him to the floor again and gets in some posing to annoy the crowd all over again. That's becoming too lost of an art. We hit the chinlock for a bit before the Winds of Change is countered into a crucifix for two. Barrett throws him to the floor again (Lawler: "I think gravity just remembered him.") but stops to yell at the announcers, allowing Neville to run the barricade for a front flip onto the King. As in the British king.

Back in and a standing shooting star gets two for Neville but Barrett kicks him in the ribs (I'm adding him to the list of people who use superkicks) for a string of two counts. Barrett to the referee: "How much is he paying you?" Neville's lifting German gets two but a release Winds of Change gets the same. The Wasteland is countered into a DDT, setting up the Red Arrow for the pin at 15:28.

Rating: B. Nice long match here with both guys looking good. This is Barrett's place in the company though: he's built up for a little bit and

then loses several matches in a row. There's no point in thinking anything else is going to happen so I'm not going to bother anymore. Neville is the same way but it's cool to see that he can hang in there for a longer match.

The Usos are very excited to face the Wyatts tonight because there's been a rivalry for years.

We're going to step away from the show itself for a minute here as the version of the show I watched online before the TV broadcast includes a dark segment so here's a bonus.

King Barrett is still in the ring and says that's not exactly how he planned this. Rooney slapping him on Monday screwed him up and that's the only reason he lost here. He's been doing this for twelve years now and with all the titles he's won, he's certainly a Hall of Famer. There go the lights and we've got Undertaker. After his forty eight minute entrance (complete with thunder as he takes off the hat), Undertaker stares Barrett down.

Barrett: "Can I help you?" Undertaker is on the wrong side of the tracks because this is northwest England. Barrett is the Preston Panther and doesn't like people coming to his place and staring at him. He explains the process behind the Bull Hammer but says he has bigger fish to try. The cheap shot doesn't work and Barrett takes a chokeslam.

Undertaker leaves to no music but stops and turns around, much to the fans' delight. There goes the throat slit and Barrett takes a Tombstone. The fans want one more and who is Undertaker to turn them down. Nothing much here but it was cool for the fans live and that was the entire point.

WWE World Title Tournament First Round: Ryback vs. Kalisto

Kalisto says it's the size of the fight in the dog but Ryback says feed him more. Some kicks to the legs stagger Ryback and Kalisto slips out of a gorilla press. A very early Salida Del Sol gets two and Ryback throws him to the floor on the kickout but is very staggered. Back from a break with Kalisto getting caught in a spinebuster and a pair of powerbombs.

Ryback stays on the back with a hard knee and a delayed vertical suplex but Kalisto knees him in the head to break it up.

Some stomps to the ribs set up a bearhug on the mat as Ryback has easily slipped into the default heel role. Off to a waistlock for a bit before a big boot puts Kalisto down again. Another big boot misses though and Kalisto knocks him to the floor with a dropkick. Kalisto tries an Asai moonsault but gets caught and kind of slammed on the outside. Back in and the hurricanrana driver is countered into Shell Shock but Kalisto rolls through into a sunset flip for two. The Meathook gets the same and Ryback sets up a belly to back superplex, only to get caught in a super Salida Del Sol for the big upset at 13:11.

Rating: B-. If they want to set Kalisto up as the next lucha star, this was a great starting point. The match told a really good story of Kalisto hanging around and never giving up until he pulled it off. One thing that's going to work in his favor is his finisher as he can hit it from pretty much anywhere, unlike the 619 which took a lot of unrealistic luck. Good match here and what could be a big starting point for Kalisto, though I wouldn't get my hopes up.

They shake hands post match and Ryback raises Kalisto's hand. Ryback did a really good job here of playing the heel without going over to the dark side.

Video on Wrestlemania tickets going on sale.

Here's MexAmerica before Del Rio's match. Colter says this should be the Divided Kingdom because all of the countries hate each other. Del Rio brings up the two soccer team in this city and suggests they unite. They promise to unify the World and US Titles into the MexAmerica World Title. This gimmick started off as lukewarm and has gotten even worse. Colter is great on the mic but there's nothing for him to work with here.

WWE World Title Tournament First Round: Stardust vs. Alberto Del Rio

Stardust now has Ascension style attire. Stardust starts fast with right hands and a clothesline to send Alberto outside but Del Rio sends him shoulder first into the post. Stardust: "OW! MY SHOULDER!" See? It hurt

his shoulder. Back from a break with Del Rio kicking him in the head, followed by the corner enziguri for two.

After a quick armbreaker over the ropes, Stardust comes back with some clotheslines but walks into the Backstabber for two. A quick Disaster Kick gets the same for Stardust and he's polite enough to climb up top with his back to the ring so Del Rio can kick him down into the Tree of Woe. The top rope double stomp advances Del Rio at 10:24.

Rating: D-. This is definitely the worst match of the tournament so far. The shoulder stuff before the break didn't go anywhere and the ending had the same stupid problem that Del Rio's finisher always has. There was no logical reason for Stardust to go up top other than to get kicked back down so Alberto could do his finisher. It was a lame squash until then and then the ending made it even worse. Bad match here and I expected better from both guys.

Here are the full second round brackets:

Roman Reigns

Cesaro

Alberto Del Rio

Kalisto

Kevin Owens

Neville

Dolph Ziggler

Dean Ambrose

We recap Becky Lynch beating Paige on Raw with a handful of trunks, earning her a post match beatdown.

Roman Reigns talks about the WWE Championship being his Mount Everest over the last year. The higher you get, the weaker the footing is. Every time you go 100 feet forward, you fall back another 50. This Monday he

has Cesaro who is going to uppercut his face off. Reigns isn't going to stop no matter what though, because that's the kind of man he is. As for HHH's offer on Monday, he doesn't take handouts because he isn't like Seth Rollins. He's bringing the big fight to this tournament so he can be the sole survivor.

Usos vs. Wyatt Family

The lights go out and the Wyatts just appear at ringside for a nice change of pace. Harper and Rowan hit the ring and clean house before the bell. Jey breaks up a double chokeslam and the brawl goes outside as we're still waiting on this to officially start. The bell rings with Jey and Rowan getting things going with Erick throwing him to the floor for a clothesline from Harper and we take a break.

Back with Jey in Rowan's head vice and losing his shirt. It's off to Harper who eats a right hand to the jaw so Rowan comes in to rip at Jimmy's nose. Jey can't slam Rowan and the fans want Harper. Rowan misses a charge and it's off to Jimmy for two off an enziguri. Jey's running Umaga attack is broken up by Rowan as everything breaks down. Jimmy gets two off a high cross body to Harper and a Whisper in the Wind to send Rowan outside.

Harper kicks Jimmy in the face and plants him with a Batista Bomb, only to have Jey come back in with a Superfly Splash for two. Luke no sells a superkick but a second knocks him to the floor. A double superkick does the same to Rowan and there's the double dive. That's enough for Bray so he and Strowman come in for the DQ at 12:12.

Rating: C+. This was the normal fun match that these teams have and it's nice to see them not have the Usos job so soon after coming back. The idea of having all four Wyatts come together to clean house is cool but doesn't matter considering it's going to be two on two at Survivor Series. Good match here but the time and ending held it back.

The Usos are beaten down until Undertaker's voice promises to make the Family rest in peace at Survivor Series. If (presumably) Braun and Bray win, that beatdown on Monday is forgotten, which is best for everyone.

Overall Rating: B+. It's amazing how much more easier this show is to watch when it actually matters. The show felt important for a change as the brackets were filled out. I don't think it's going to happen but there's a chance that they might do the semi-finals here next week. It was a fun show this week with some important matches and a major Survivor Series match being set up.

Results

Braun Strowman b. Fandango – Standing choke

Neville b. King Barrett – Red Arrow

Kalisto b. Ryback – Super Salida Del Sol

Alberto Del Rio b. Stardust – Top rope double stomp

Usos b. Wyatt Family via DQ when Bray Wyatt and Braun Strowman interfered

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Smackdown – November 5, 2015:

The Calm Before The Tournament

Smackdown

Date: November 5, 2015

Location: World Arena, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Rich Brennan, Booker T.

As inconsequential as Smackdown is most of the time, this show is even moreso than usual. Last night at a house show in Ireland, Seth Rollins ripped his knee to shreds and is out until next summer. The title has been vacated for a tournament at Survivor Series but this show was already taped in advance so most of this isn't going to matter. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

There's another Survivor Series match tonight with the Prime Time Players and Lucha Dragons vs. the Wyatt Family. So yeah, they've built up the Dragons and now they're feeding them to the Wyatts three days later.

Here's MexAmerica to open things up. Colter talks about how there will be no hatred in MexAmerica. We don't need borders in our lives because we will all be one great nation. There are black hearts out there who lie about hating at least one person in the world and they don't belong. Viva MexAmerica.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Neville

Non-title. Del Rio starts with the kicks in the corner and another to the back for an early two. A quick headscissors takes Alberto down and Neville gets two of his own off a standing shooting star, only to have a Backstabber send him to the floor. Back from a break with Del Rio in control until Neville sends him outside for a moonsault to the floor. Neville slams him on the top of his head with a hurricanrana (intentionally, called a spike rana by Brennan). He tries a few too many flips though, allowing Del Rio to kick him off the top and into the Tree

of Woe, setting up the double stomp for the pin at 9:46.

Rating: C+. Fun back and forth match here and I'm very glad that Del Rio isn't using the superkick as often as he's done before. It's kind of odd that they would have that move get him the big win against Cena and then he goes with something else for most of his matches. Maybe the superkick is supposed to be his big finisher that he only uses for major matches?

Post match Del Rio hits the low superkick. So much for any rhyme or reason. Neville gets put in the cross armbreaker but Jack Swagger makes the save.

Usos vs. Ascension

Again the booking makes little sense. You can throw Ascension out here to job but you can't put them out against the Dragons on Monday and sacrifice Barrett and Sheamus instead? Jimmy and Viktor start and after ducking Viktor's leapfrog, it's time to dance. Viktor doesn't like dancing (there's a Footloose joke in there somewhere) and sends Jimmy to the floor, followed by a catapult into Konnor's spinebuster.

Booker talks about training the Usos in an interesting bit as we hit the chinlock. An enziguri gets Jimmy out of trouble and it's the double tag as everything breaks down. Here's the finishing sequence: superkick, double superkick, double superkick, Superfly Splash to Viktor for the pin at 4:14.

Rating: C-. I am so, so sick of superkicks. There are now at least ten people on the active roster that uses them in one form or another. I mean.....do something else! The Usos looked good here and should be a nice set of challengers for the New Day. They've been out long enough that they feel fresh again and can certainly back it up in the ring.

We look at Bray's speech and fireworks display on Monday.

Wyatt Family vs. Prime Time Players/Lucha Dragons

Survivor Series rules but they still don't know if 4 on 4 or 5 on 5 is the traditional format. Rowan throws Young around to start and it's off to Harper vs. Titus. We get the traditional reference to Lawler's mini

Kings as Bray comes in to destroy Young. With the situation well in hand, it's back to Harper for a catapult into the bottom rope. The announcers bring up the idea that the Wyatts injured Orton's shoulder for a nice surprise.

Bray hits Darren in the face to stop a comeback and it's off to Strowman who has really cooled off in the last few weeks. Strowman chokes Young off on the apron but drops him at five, giving us a countout elimination at 5:13. Back from a break with Titus as the next designated victim. Harper takes him into the corner where Titus tries a comeback, only to get dragged to the bad corner again.

O'Neil finally escapes and makes the tag off to Cara as things speed way up. A suicide dive takes out Rowan and a hurricanrana gets two on Harper. Rowan breaks up another cover but Kalisto knocks him to the floor. The discus lariat knocks Cara out cold for the elimination at 12:54. Kalisto comes in for his kicks but walks into a half nelson suplex. It's back to Rowan for his fist head vice for a bit before Kalisto manages to low bridge him to the floor.

Strowman pulls Titus off the apron, leaving Kalisto to kick Harper down. A handspring into an enziguri staggers Bray but Rowan gets in a full nelson slam to put Kalisto out at 16:01, leaving Titus alone 4-1. Rowan starts so Titus fires off right hands and a clothesline. The Clash of the Titans puts Harper down but Bray and Erick make the save. Strowman chokes him out and Sister Abigail FINALLY ends this at 19:59.

Rating: D-. What the heck was the point of this? This is supposed to make me want to watch Survivor Series? A twenty minute squash where you knew what the lone high spots were Kalisto and Sin Cara doing their stuff before getting squashed as you knew they were going to be? Bad idea here in a match that should have taken half as long.

Ambrose talks about waking up this morning at 11am for a chat with the spirit of John Denver, who gave him a new song and told him that he would have a match tonight. Owens comes in to say Dean is annoying Renee and remind him of what he has to do tonight to be a champion. Tonight won't be like the ten man circus on Monday. Dean: "John Denver warned me about

that guy.”

King Barrett vs. Ryback

They're on the floor in a hurry with Barrett posting him a few times in a row. A big boot gets two for the King and a Boss Man Slam gets the same. We hit the chinlock for a bit and Barrett even jumps onto his back, only to be moved over into the Shell Shock for the pin at 2:20. Raise your hand if you believed Barrett's latest push was going to make it a month before falling apart.

Recap of Team Bad beating Natalya down last week.

Team Bad laughs at Natalya for getting annoyed at the attack last week. Natalya has gone nuclear and gone to FACEBOOK to challenge Team Bad's leader. Sasha seems to think that's her so I guess that's our match.

Natalya vs. Tamina

This is decided after a brief argument between the other two. Tamina runs Natalya over to start and drops a knee. Booker: “When you need a job done, you call Tamina.” There's a lot of truth in that. Fans: “WE WANT SASHA!” Tamina: “YOU CAN'T HAVE HER!” You know what they can have though? A superkick! Off to a chinlock for a bit before Natalya hits a quick discus lariat. Sasha's distraction breaks up the Sharpshooter though and it's a Samoan drop to put Natalya down again. The Superfly Splash hits knees though and Natalya grabs a rollup for the pin at 3:49.

Rating: D. Well she certainly did the job. I'm hoping this leads to the end of Team Bad and the teams in general as there's has been no reason for them to exist for the last several months. Keep in mind that they've only been around for about three months now and I think you get the idea.

Recap of the Survivor Series match from Monday.

We get an inserted announcement of Rollins' injury and the tournament.

Dean Ambrose vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title because of course it is. This is another thing I don't

understand: assuming Ambrose doesn't pin him here, why not make this a title match? Dean pinned him on Monday so why not do it here and potentially build to a rematch at the pay per view? Either that or don't do this match here. Lawler: "Owens has been in the hospital several time for narcissism treatment. He keeps checking himself out." Dang it why did that make me chuckle? They trade headlocks to start (Kevin: "My headlock is better than yours!") and Dean armdrags him to the floor.

Back from a break with Dean cranking on an armbar before clotheslining Owens over the top. Kevin sends him hard into the barricade to take over though, followed by the backsplash inside. Owens takes too much time yelling at Lawler though, allowing Dean to get in a superplex. The standing elbow drop gets two and a missile dropkick puts Kevin down again. Owens superkicks him into the ropes for the rebound lariat (thankfully not called the Lunatic Lariat) but Owens claims a low blow off a kick and that's a DQ at 13:47.

Rating: C+. I could see these two having a really good feud if they're allowed to go off the rails a little bit with the promos and build. Then again it's hard to say if the match is going to happen as these two are strong candidates for the upcoming tournament. Good enough here though and I liked the twist on the ending instead of Owens just walking out.

The replay shows that the kick was way above the waist. Dean goes after him but Owens bails into the crowd to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. That Survivor Series match really brought this show down as the rest of it was pretty good. As I said though, it's really hard to know where Survivor Series is going as a lot of the show is going to be dedicated to the tournament, but there's not much else they can do. Good enough show here though as Smackdown has been doing a bit better lately.

Results

Alberto Del Rio b. Neville – Top rope double stomp

Usos b. Ascension – Superfly Splash to Viktor

Wyatt Family b. Prime Time Players/Lucha Dragons last eliminating Titus O'Neil

Ryback b. King Barrett – Shell Shock

Natalya b. Tamina – Rollup

Kevin Owens b. Dean Ambrose via DQ when Ambrose kicked him low

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Smackdown – October 28, 2015: A Holiday Treat

Smackdown

Date: October 29, 2015

Location: Talking Stick Resort Arena, Phoenix, Arizona

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Rich Brennan, Booker T.

We're coming off a good Raw and we now have a fresh #1 contender in Roman Reigns. The other big story however is Bray Wyatt kidnapping both the Undertaker and Kane in order to feast on their souls. It's pretty clear that this is leading to a Survivor Series match but the Brothers of Destruction need partners. Let's get to it.

We open with a narrated recap of the Wyatts' recent actions.

The Wyatts say the spirits that fueled the Brothers of Destruction now belong to him. To celebrate the fallen sons on the day of the dead, Bray issues a challenge to any three souls brave enough to face his monsters. Fitting for a Halloween show. Rowan says he was never allowed to dress up for Halloween because it was too sinful. Harper says evil is very real and these aren't costumes. Bray wishes his condolences to anyone who faces them and pulls out Kane's mask. He hands it to Strowman, who promises annihilation awaits. Run.

Opening sequence.

The arena is full of Halloween decorations to give it a more festive feeling.

Here's Reigns to open things up. Reigns has had one goal since he's been here and that is to be the WWE World Heavyweight Champion. He's been knocked down a lot but he's dusted himself up and now he's back in the fight. The only man left in front of him is Seth Rollins but here's Kevin Owens to add himself to the mix. Owens says Reigns stole one from him on Monday. "YAY! YAY! EVERYBODY YAY! GO ROMAN!"

Monday wasn't Reigns overcoming the odds because it was just a fluke. Roman must know that he was a second away from being powerbombed and pinned. Believe that. Reigns thinks that sounds like an excuse because it was straight skill that beat Owens. Kevin can whine Owens whine, or he can come in here right now and fight Owens fight.

Roman Reigns vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title. A quick point before we get going: as Owens came out, Brennan said they were scheduled for a match tonight. I'm so glad they actually announced that for once instead of just having a spontaneous match. It helps the show feel realistic for a change and that always helps. Reigns shoulders him out to the floor to start and scores with a neckbreaker as we take an early break. Back with Reigns putting him on the floor again but getting sent into the barricade this time around.

Owens throws him with a fall away slam for two back inside but Reigns kicks him in the face for two. See? There are moves other than clotheslines. Owens one ups him with a superkick but Roman breaks up the Cannonball with a clothesline. The threat of the Superman Punch scares Owens to the floor but he escapes a Samoan drop. Roman breaks up the swinging fisherman's superplex (I miss that move) and Superman Punches Kevin to the floor. That's enough for Owens and it's a countout at 11:15.

Rating: B-. Well done here by not having Owens get pinned. You can tell when the company has flipped the switch and gone back to work because they don't do stupid stuff like having their champions get pinned in a meaningless match. Reigns winning via countout is fine here and leaves the door open for a bigger rematch down the line. Owens looked competitive here which is all you can ask for against a main event star.

Ambrose, describing himself as ruggedly handsome, tells Renee (in a green fairy costume) to ask if he's going to accept the Wyatts' challenge. Of course he is because he slays monsters. He'll be waiting to find out who is joining the ghostbusting monster squad but he'll fight alone if he has to. Dean leaves and a ghost comes up behind Renee. It's B00 Dallas, who promises to scare someone tonight.

Dudley Boyz vs. Ascension vs. Lucha Dragons vs. Sheamus/King Barrett

This is called Tag Team Terror which means fatal four way. New Day comes out on commentary and they now have unicorn horns. Kofi doesn't like the four teams not wearing costumes because it means it means they don't believe in magic. Big E.: "SHAME!" Kofi and Big E. join in on commentary as Kalisto headscissors Sheamus down. Bully and Barrett come in as New Day does their reporter voices.

The Dragons dropkick Ascension and the good guys clear the ring as we take a break. Back with Bubba yelling at New Day (Kofi: "THIS IS NOW THE HALLOWEEN SPIRIT!") and D-Von elbowing Sheamus in the face for two. Kalisto comes in and is promptly stomped down by the pasty one (Big E.'s words), followed by a chinlock. Big E. thinks Sheamus is a carpenter because he's hitting Kalisto like a hammer. Kofi: "YOU SEE WHAT HE DID THERE??? YOU SEE WHAT HE DID THERE???"

Off to Viktor for a spinebuster on Kalisto as Big E. tells Brennan to take notes. Konnor goes shoulder first into the post and it's Sin Cara coming in off the hot tag. Cara's hurricanana gets two on Konnor but everything breaks down with the Dudleyz coming in to hold Sheamus and Barrett for a double What's Up. The Dragons get backdropped onto Ascension as Kofi and Big E. have completely taken over commentary with their nasal voices. A blind tag brings in Kalisto for a Salida Del Sol from the apron to pin Viktor at 10:32.

Rating: C. Another entertaining match with the Dragons getting a nice win. As usual though, New Day stole the show here as they jumped from their usual commentary to some hilarious comedy with the voices. Kofi's was shockingly good and I forgot who I was listening to at times. Oh and again: the up and comers don't get pinned. Fun match, outstanding commentary.

Lawler has an idea for a costume: write LIFE on a shirt and hand everyone lemons. Brennan: "Why not pennies?" Lawler: "You idiot."

Ambrose can't figure out Cesaro's costume. Cesaro is in a suit and sunglasses but that's just how he normally dresses. He offers to be Dean's partner tonight but Dean insists that Cesaro swing them around so many times that their beards fly off. Cesaro: "You can be Jason Vorhees or something." Dean: "I'll just be me." They leave and B00 Dallas appears again.

We recap last week's MizTV with Tyler Breeze debuting to beat up Dolph Ziggler.

Dolph Ziggler vs. The Miz

Trick or Treat street fight, meaning the ring is surrounded by Halloween decorations, including about twenty pumpkins around the apron. Lawler says Ziggler is dressed as Nikki Sixx. Miz kicks some pumpkins around to start but Ziggler holds onto the ropes to block a catapult. As Ziggler pulls himself back in, Miz finds a plastic sword. That's fine with Ziggler who has a kendo stick painted like candy corn.

The duel goes to Dolph and he shoves Miz's face into a bowl of apples and

water. That's not enough as Ziggler puts a pumpkin over Miz's head and breaks it up with a superkick. Miz has had enough of these shenanigans and starts going after the knee with a stick shot. The leg is wrapped around the post and Miz crushes it with a chair. It's Figure Four time but Ziggler counters into a small package for the pin at 4:48.

Rating: C-. This was fine. They kept the jokes short enough that it didn't seem corny and it was fun enough while it lasted. Ziggler pinning Miz doesn't mean much as Miz can bounce back in no time and Ziggler is moving on to Breeze anyway. The match was fun enough and they didn't get stupid like they so often do with these theme matches.

Ziggler is down post match so here's Breeze to go after the knee with the kendo stick.

We recap Paige going full heel on Monday.

Paige vs. Natalya

Paige superkicks Natalya at the bell and slowly stomps her down in the corner. Natalya comes back with a quick suplex to put Paige on the floor but here's Team Bad to say Natalya has their attention. The distraction lets Paige grab a Rampaige for the pin at 2:16.

Post match Team Bad lays Natalya out. This includes Tamina becoming the fourth person tonight to use a superkick.

Breast cancer segment from Monday.

Ryback offers to be the third partner. Dean: "Yep, you'll do."

Here are Del Rio and Colter with something to say. Colter calls Del Rio virtuous and is so proud to be one of the first citizens of MexAmerica. That title now represents MexAmerica and Del Rio promises to make it great by renaming it the MexAmerica Championship.

Alberto Del Rio vs. R-Truth

Non-title. Truth starts fast with the gordbuster but Alberto goes after the arm to take over. Del Rio goes up top and ties Truth in the Tree of

Woe for the double stomp and the pin at 1:27. I like the move but there's a danger of it becoming like the 619 where there are only so many realistic ways to set it up.

B00 Dallas tries to scare Mark Henry and gets punched in the face. I guess that ends the joke.

Ryback/Dean Ambrose/Cesaro vs. Wyatt Family

Bray is the odd man out here. Ryback shoulders Harper down to start and Luke's shirt is torn. It's off to Strowman but Ryback goes right after him with right hands to stagger the monster. A suplex doesn't work so well but Braun easily suplexes him down. We take a break and come back with Harper getting two on Ryback off a slingshot hilo. Back to Rowan for the double fist head vice but Ryback fights up (because it was a lame hold) and grabs a quick spinebuster.

Ambrose gets the tag to give the fans something to cheer for. Dean sends Harper and Rowan to the floor for the big dive off the top but Rowan kicks him in the face (NOT a superkick for a change) for two. Dean fights up again and makes the tag off to Cesaro for your athletic freak of the night phase. Harper takes the running uppercuts and that reverse Angle Slam that needs a name.

There's the crossface from Cesaro as everyone else fights on the floor. A suicide dive knocks Strowman against the announcers' table and Ryback knocks him over for good measure. The crossface goes on Cesaro again but Rowan makes the save, only to get nailed by Dean. The superkick party continues with Harper kicking Dean's head off but walking into the springboard discus uppercut. Strowman gets up for a distraction though and the discus lariat ends Cesaro at 11:48.

Rating: C+. Nice main event here as the Wyatts get to look dominant over a thrown together team. They did a good job of keeping Strowman looking like a monster again as Ryback could barely move him. It's going to be a big deal when someone beats him if they do it right and so far that's where we're going. There was little doubt as to who was winning this given what the Wyatts are doing at the moment and that's not a bad thing.

Overall Rating: C+. I had a good time with this show as you can see that the company is taking things seriously again, likely due to their perceived break being over. It's still not must see TV or anything but at least we had a fun two hours for a change instead of the same stuff we get every week.

Results

Roman Reigns b. Kevin Owens via countout

Lucha Dragons b. Dudley Boyz, Ascension and King Barrett/Sheamus – Salida Del Sol to Viktor

Dolph Ziggler b. The Miz – Small package

Paige b. Natalya – Rampaige

Alberto Del Rio b. R-Truth – Top rope double stomp

Wyatt Family b. Cesaro/Ryback/Dean Ambrose – Discus lariat to Cesaro

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Smackdown – October 22, 2015: Prince Pretty's Here

Smackdown

Date: October 22, 2015

Location: Frank Erwin Center, Austin, Texas

Commentators: Booker T., Jerry Lawler, Rich Brennan

It's the final show before Hell in a Cell and we might get some build towards the World Title match after it got little more than lip service on Monday. Aside from that I'd assume we're in for a lot of video packages on the other big matches and maybe another cryptic promo from Bray, possibly including the prophecy he was supposed to give on Monday. Let's get to it.

We open with Seth Rollins walking through the back when he runs into Kane. That would be Corporate Kane, not Demon Kane, Harlem Heat Kane or Kane the Undertaker. Kane has a match for him tonight and threatens violence if Rollins tries to run again. Rollins leaves and Kane finds Kofi and Big E., both of whom have XW bands on their arm. Those dastardly Dudleyz put Woods through a table on Monday and now there are just two unicorns. Kofi: "What do you see in front of you right now?" Kane: "Men with fingers on their heads." Kane plays a tiny trombone for them and makes the two of them vs. Ambrose/Reigns for later.

Seth Rollins vs. Cesaro

Non-title. Cesaro takes him to the mat and rides the champ before gutwrenching him for two. Seth bails to the floor and we see Stardust and Ascension in the Stardust Section again. The champ grabs his belt and thinks about leaving but changes his mind and goes back inside for the running uppercuts instead. Another bailout attempt is broken up by Cesaro but Seth sends him into the steps as we take a break.

Back with Seth getting two off the springboard knee to the head. It doesn't seem to have much effect though as Cesaro dropkicks him off the top and out to the floor, followed by the running uppercut against the

barricade. Back in and Seth's enziguri sets up the low superkick for two, only to charge into Swiss Death. The Crossface doesn't last long and Rollins breaks up the apron superplex, followed by the Pedigree for the pin at 10:35.

Rating: C+. This was the entertaining match you would expect from these two when they're given a bit of time. Cesaro loses of course because that's all he knows how to do these days. The big thing I took away from this though was the Pedigree is so out of character for Rollins. He's a high flying striker and the Pedigree really doesn't fit that style. I know it's going to be part of the HHH vs. Rollins feud, which is still going to start any day now right? Like any day.

The Stardust Section mocks Cesaro.

Miz promises that MizTV will be awesome, unlike Renee's hair.

Breast cancer time.

Here's Paige to address trying to reform PCB and being accused of attacking Natalya last week. Paige says she only cares about what Charlotte and Becky think of her so she'd like them to come out here for her explanation. Becky doesn't care to hear it but Paige talks about being happy when the two of them made it to the main roster. That's all well and good, but Becky doesn't believe it after everything Paige has said and done.

Charlotte says she's going to talk now. Paige had her moment over a year ago and all Charlotte wanted was her own moment to share with the two of them. It's clear that Paige doesn't respect Charlotte because it's not all about Paige for once. Cue the Bellas with Nikki talking about her record and Brie saying this feels like Pretty Little Liars. Charlotte wants a fight but Paige says Nikki has to fight her first. Nikki accepts because she's fearless or whatever.

Nikki Bella vs. Paige

Lawler says Paige has made it all about herself again as Nikki takes over with a facebuster to start. Booker brings up winning the TV Title and how

it messed up Harlem Heat. I'm sure Stevie being out for five months had nothing to do with it either. Nikki sends Paige shoulder first into the post and we take an early break. Back the bad arm going around the post again as Booker thinks Nikki knows about pressure points.

Nikki mocks THIS IS MY HOUSE before slamming Paige down on the arm. Paige comes right back with a superkick for two but walks into a spinebuster for the same. The Rack Attack is broken up and Paige gets two off a fall away slam. Brie: "STAY FEARLESS!" We get what looked like a quick edit to get to an Alabama Slam from Nikki for another two. Nikki finally drills her with the forearm and the Rack Attack is good for the pin at 11:20.

Rating: B-. I'm no fan of the Bellas but this was actually good. They were trading big moves and it worked really well all things considered. It's amazing how much more entertaining these women are when they cut out all the stupid cattiness and just beat each other up. I'm really hoping they don't put the belt back on Nikki but this was one of her best matches to date.

It's time for MizTV with guests Dolph Ziggler and Summer Rae, with Dolph coming out after a long recap of the story since Lana and Rusev's engagement was announced. Miz brings up Ziggler being tossed aside by TMZ of all places despite having more relationships than almost anyone in WWE. Lana is a grown woman who can do whatever she wants and Summer was just trying to use Dolph ("Which I'm usually into") but he wants nothing to do with it. Miz isn't convinced so here's Summer to make it more interesting.

She gets right to the point and suggests that she wants to propose to Dolph. Dolph: "I'm just not that into you bro." Actually that's not what she meant because she's found a new man: Tyler Breeze, complete with NXT theme and entrance. After a quick NXT chant, Breeze says he needs no introduction but Dolph needs someone to bring him beyond 1985.

Tyler has been hearing of Dolph treating his Summer Rae of sunshine so poorly so he flew in from Monte Carlo. Ziggler calls him a whiny millennial but Breeze decks him (and rightfully so. That's quite the insult.) and drives the still injured throat (still injured? It is?) into

the buckle. Referees help Ziggler up so Breeze adds a Beauty Shot before posing for a picture with Summer.

Sheamus/King Barrett vs. Lucha Dragons

Rusev is at ringside. Cara starts with Barrett and kicks him to the mat before monkey flipping Kalisto into a 450 for two. That was cool. It's back to Cara who gets shoved off the ropes and grabs his knee. The knee is fine enough for Sheamus to throw him into the barricade though and a powerslam gets two. Barrett's pumphandle slam is broken up and Cara scores with an enziguri, allowing the tag off to Kalisto. A quick hurricanrana driver plants Sheamus but Rusev pushes Barrett out of the way of a suicide dive. Kalisto dives onto Barrett but the distraction sets up the Brogue Kick for the pin at 4:17.

Rating: C. There's always room for a foreign heel stable. It's like Jello. Besides it's not like most of them are doing anything else so why not throw them together? It worked for Road Dogg and Billy Gunn so maybe it works here too. Good enough match here and it makes the monsters look good before they lose on Sunday for the sake of setting up a rubber match that no one wants to see.

Clip from Raw of Reigns and Ambrose cleaning house of the Wyatts.

Here's Bo Dallas with something to say. He accepts the US Open Challenge for he and his fellow Bo-Americans. His version of Bo say can you see is interrupted and it's time for a match.

Ryback vs. Bo Dallas

Ryback throws him around to start but gets his throat snapped across the top rope as we see Owens watching in the back. Not that it matters as the Meat Hook and Shell Shock end this at 1:39. Nice job of rebuilding Ryback after the totally unnecessary loss on Monday.

Owens says Ryback is a lot of things Owens isn't, including champion. Renee takes this as Owens being arrogant but Owens thinks it means he's better than Ryback. This Sunday it's the Kevin Owens show and he's walking out Intercontinental Champion. Trust him.

Long video on Lesnar vs. Undertaker, which Booker compares to Ali vs. Frazier.

Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose vs. New Day

Non-title. Eden introduces this as a tag team match which will probably get her in hot water backstage. No Woods here due to being put through a table on Raw. It's been far too long since someone was off TV to sell a short term injury like this. A loud NEW DAY ROCKS opens things up as Kofi does the unicorns pose. Ambrose headlocks Kofi to start and brings in Reigns for the jumping clothesline.

Big E. comes in for the hip swiveling and a shoulder to put Roman down. Reigns gets driven into the barricade and it's time for a break. Back with Reigns breaking out of an abdominal stretch and making the tag off to Dean for some right hands. A quick Kofi trip puts New Day back in control though and it's time for the rotating stomps. Big E. sounds like he's on a microphone as he shouts encouragement.

Kofi loads up the Boom Drop, shouts HOPSCOTCH, does a little hopping, and lands on Dean for two. Ambrose makes the quick tag and it's off to Roman to clean house. There's an apron boot to Big E. and another one on the announcers' table to Kofi. Ambrose comes back in with a missile dropkick to Big E. and the champs bail, only to run into the Dudleyz. Back in and Big E. takes a Doomsday Device, followed by a Superman Punch to Kofi. The spear puts Kingston away at 12:07.

Rating: C-. It's really kind of amazing how much less entertaining the New Day is without Woods out there. They're just a basic power and speed team and the HOPSCOTCH thing wasn't enough to get me really into the match. Woods is the heart and soul of the team and I never would have guessed that when they got together in the first place.

Bray pops up on screen and says Roman can't outrun his fear.

Overall Rating: D+. Totally standard go home episode of Smackdown as they've found the safest formula they can come up with and aren't moving away from it until USA drags them to a new night. It was another two hours that came and went with the Divas match actually being the

highlight of the show. Smackdown continues to be the definition of “just there” and I’m getting more and more indifferent to it every single week.

Results

Seth Rollins b. Cesaro – Pedigree

Nikki Bella b. Charlotte – Rack Attack

Sheamus/King Barrett b. Lucha Dragons – Brogue Kick to Kalisto

Ryback b. Bo Dallas – Shell Shock

Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose b. New Day – Spear to Kingston

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Smackdown – October 15, 2015: The Weekly House Show

Smackdown

Date: October 15, 2015

Location: US Bank Arena, Cincinnati, Ohio

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Jerry Lawler, Booker T.

Somehow we're ten days away from Hell in a Cell and it's time to put the finishing touches on the build. The announced main event for tonight is hometown boy Dean Ambrose teaming up with the Dudleyz to fight New Day in a bit of a preview for the pay per view. We might even get more speculation of what Cena is going to do there as well. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Roman Reigns vs. Bo Dallas

Before the match, Bo talks about Reigns going to a scary place at the pay per view. Dallas knows all about scary places because he went to Suplex City, but he actually survived it unlike Reigns. Dallas actually takes him into the corner to start but Reigns drops him with a neckbreaker. A middle rope clothesline to the back of the head gives Bo an opening, only to have Reigns come back with even more clotheslines of his own. Dallas wants time and Reigns stops to smile, only to get annoyed when he takes a kick to the ribs. Now the Samoan drop connects and the two moves end Dallas at 2:58.

Roman talks about Bray referring to himself as the devil. He can get behind that idea because he sees the pure evil in Bray's eyes. Roman is going to bring the big fight because it's the only way to stop the devil. Cue Bray, who says Reigns' sins will be his undoing. It is the sin of pride that will bring Reigns down because he isn't Bray's muse. On Monday, Bray is going to deliver a prophecy to Reigns. Anyone but you.

Cesaro/Neville vs. Sheamus/King Barrett

Rematch from Raw because the writers already came up with their idea for the week. Ascension and Stardust are sitting in the crowd with a STARDUST SECTION sign. Barrett and Neville get things going with Neville starting his kicking regimen early. Sheamus comes in and eventually gets hurricanranaed out to the floor, allowing Cesaro to backdrop his partner over the top and onto the villains in a nice visual.

The referee tells them that they're about to go to a break so we come back with Barrett putting his knee into Neville's back and cranking on the arms. Sheamus stands between Neville and the corner like a good bully

before planting him with a slam. We hit the chinlock from Barrett for a bit before he misses a running boot in the corner. Cesaro gets the tag and fires off the running uppercuts to Sheamus for two. The briefcase is brought in and the distraction lets Barrett get in a Bull Hammer to give Sheamus the pin at 10:10. Stardust and Ascension never got involved.

Rating: C-. This match is a good example of everything wrong with Smackdown. Not only have we already seen it on Raw with the same result but it's a match with no energy. I know it makes for a dull match but can you blame them? None of the matches on this show mean anything and Cesaro isn't going to get a major push because the boss doesn't care for him, so why should they try in a tag match that they've already done before? That's the nature of Smackdown these days and it has been for a very long time. If the wrestlers don't care, I don't get why I should either. At least Barrett/Sheamus have potential as a team.

Summer, guest referee for Ziggler vs. Rusev later tonight, says she's put men down before and is willing to do it again if she has to.

Earlier today, Ambrose unloaded his bag, which included a Slammy, a slinky, a balloon animal, a magic 8-ball....but no Payday. Oh never mind as it fell out of his bowling ball. I hate the fact that I chuckled at this.

Kevin Owens vs. Zack Ryder

Non-title and Ryback is at ringside. Owens shrugs off an early flurry and stomps Ryder down. A quick missile dropkick doesn't have much staying power for Ryder as Owens hits a Meathook, shouts FINISH IT and plants Ryder with the Pop Up Powerbomb for the pin at 1:39. Total squash but effective.

Recap of Rollins and Kane on Monday. That would be another loss for the champ, which of course has nothing to do with the ratings plunging.

Paige stops Natalya in the back to offer an apology for her attitude as of late. The pressure got to her and she couldn't handle Natalya trying to take her place on Team PCB. Paige wants to make it right and just wants to be Natalya's friend again. Natalya says this is a start and

leaves.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Rusev

Summer Rae is guest referee and Dolph doesn't seem to mind when she takes her hair down. Rusev stomps Ziggler in the corner to start as Booker confuses Sherri Martel for his wife Sharmell. Ziggler gets knocked off the apron and into the barricade for a nice crash. Back in and Rusev charges into an elbow, followed by an elbow for a fast two. We get a Danny Davis reference, followed by Dolph's superkick being countered into a catapult into the corner. Rusev's jumping superkick gets the slow count required in a match like this, followed by a slap to knock Rusev into the Zig Zag for the pin at 4:26.

Rating: D+. This was every Rusev vs. Ziggler match you've ever seen plus every lameguest referee trope in the book. They're running out of places to go with this story so instead, why not just do the exact same things over and over again and expect a different result? This was nothing interesting aside from Summer's outfit. I'm curious to see how Lana will be received upon her return as she'll be booed, but I'm not sure how the fans are going to respond to her being stupid for going back to Rusev instead of the normal reasons they booed her.

Post match Summer suggests she and Dolph get back together but Dolph isn't playing those kind of games.

The Dudleyz say they have chemistry with Dean Ambrose. They're already the best team ever and Dean is combustible. Bubba tells Renee to touch Dean's arm. Bubba: "BOOM!" Dean says Dudleyville reminds him of Cincinnati and they're going to take the New Day to the lunatic fringe. BOOM!

Wyatt Family vs. Prime Time Players

Small change here as the Wyatts are in the upper left corner and the Players are in the lower right. You rarely see those changed up. Titus tries his luck against Braun to start and some corner clotheslines stagger the giant. They only stagger him though as Braun throws him into the corner and brings in Harper for a Gator Roll. O'Neil powers over for

the tag to Darren as things speed up. Darren goes after the now legal Strowman but Harper superkicks him into the standing choke for the win at 2:59.

Charlotte vs. Alicia Fox

Non-title. Fox takes over with a quick backbreaker and we hit the chinlock. We see Team BAD watching in the back as Alicia's northern lights suplex gets two. Both of them try big boots at the same time but it's Charlotte up first with the spear and the Figure Eight for the submission at 3:10.

Rating: D. A three minute match shouldn't have a 45 second chinlock. Every day that ticks by as we get closer to the pay per view, the more worried I get that they'll give the title back to Nikki because of her "star power". Also, how could they not throw Sasha in at this point, or at least not have her be the next challenger? She's on fire right now and they would be crazy to not go with it.

Team Bella attacks post match but Paige makes the save.

Post break Paige thinks PCB is back together but the other two aren't convinced. They head into their locker room and find Natalya laid out.

Video on Lesnar vs. Undertaker.

New Day vs. Dean Ambrose/Dudley Boyz

Kofi tells everyone to forget what they learned in science class because the strongest force in the universe is the power of positivity. Cena, Ziggler, Orton, D-Von, "Bully Ray Dudley" and Ambrose have all come to the New Day and gotten dropped. It's all science you see. You could even call it geology because New Day ROCKS. Dean is in a Cincinnati shirt and earns the hometown pop. We take a break before the bell (thank goodness) and start with Kofi headlocking Bubba.

D-Von comes in for a double elbow but Kofi drives him into the bad corner. A low blow gets D-Von down into the corner for the rotating stomps. Woods gets in a running forearm in the corner but D-Von grabs a neckbreaker. Lawler lightens the mood by talking about how the New Day

won't go near a boot because it has a table of contents.

Dean comes in to clean house and Woods eats the suicide dive. The top rope standing clothesline gets two on Woods but Big E. hits a clothesline of his own. Bubba gets the tag for the Bionic Elbow (complete with trombone) to Kofi as everything breaks down. Dean goes up top for a dive on Big E. but Woods shoves him to the floor. Kofi eats 3D but Woods gets in a trombone shot for the DQ at 9:35.

Rating: C. Standard main event six man with Ambrose not really getting to do anything as the hometown boy. To be fair though he already got a big moment in Cincinnati earlier this year and that's more than most people get. They need to do something with the Dudleyz soon though as you can only have them beat New Day by DQ so many times.

New Day lays out the Dudleyz to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. Smackdown feels like a house show. Like I mentioned: there's little reason for the wrestlers to put in much effort, the matches almost never go anywhere or are referenced on Raw and they rarely get time to do anything interesting. What happens here that I would be interested in seeing? These shows aren't bad but they're not important and that makes Smackdown a waste of time.

Results

Roman Reigns b. Bo Dallas – Spear

Sheamus/King Barrett b. Cesaro/Neville – Sheamus pinned Cesaro after a Bull Hammer

Kevin Owens b. Zack Ryder – Pop Up Powerbomb

Dolph Ziggler b. Rusev – Zig Zag

Wyatt Family b. Prime Time Players – Standing choke to Young

Charlotte b. Alicia Fox – Figure Eight

Dudley Boyz/Dean Ambrose b. New Day via DQ when Woods used a trombone

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Smackdown – October 8, 2015: The A-List Superstars

Smackdown

Date: October 8, 2015

Location: Wells Fargo Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Booker T., Jerry Lawler

Things look a bit different coming out of Raw as New Day got all aggressive and violent to end the show. They even left John Cena and a few others laying in their first real display of dominance. It should be interesting to see where they go from here as they've been so goofy but now they have a new edge. Let's get to it.

Here's New Day to brag about what they did on Monday. No one has ever dominated like they did. Not the Shield, the Wyatts, the NWO, the Dungeon of Doom or Los Boricuas. Philadelphia doesn't know what it's like to win and Eagles head coach Chip Kelly (Big E: "Chip?" Woods: "Yes. Grown man and his name is Chip.") even called them for some tips after they lost to the Washington Redskins this past week. However, now they have to deal with the Dudleys, who have politicked their way into ANOTHER title shot

at Hell in a Cell.

It's time for the chants but here's Ziggler (in trunks again) to interrupt. Normally Dolph would be out there one upping every single one of New Day's jokes but tonight is about revenge. The Authority has allowed him a match against any member of New Day he wants so he picks Big E., who cost him a US Title shot on Monday. Dolph even has a way to guarantee it's a fair fight: John and Juan Cena! Actually it's just the Dudleyz. You think a star like Juan would work this show?

Big E. vs. Dolph Ziggler

Ziggler dropkicks him down and hits the running DDT as we take a quick break. Back with Big E. running him over with a clothesline (Woods: "TRICEP MEAT! WE TOLD YOU THE STOCK WAS RISING! HE IS THE CEO OF TRICEP MEAT INC.!") before choking on the ropes. Woods of course gets an interview with Ziggler before throwing it back to Kofi in the studio. Ziggler fights back but his cross body is countered into a backbreaker for two. We hit that trombone with Woods playing Ziggler's music and Big E. slaps on a chinlock.

It's off to a bearhug instead before E. drops him face first onto the buckle. E.'s charge hits the post though and a Fameasser gets two. A belly to belly from E. sets up the Warrior splash for two but Dolph's superkick gets the same. New Day and the Dudleyz get in a fight on the floor and Kofi snaps Ziggler's neck across the top. That's not enough though as he holds Ziggler's foot down so Big E. can pin him at 9:51.

Rating: D+. Not a great match here but it was more about the New Day's antics than anything else. I like the idea of the team having some singles success but I'm more interested in seeing how they write Cena off TV in just a few weeks. Unless they just go with "I'm going home for a few months", something big is going to have to change.

Stills of Lesnar vs. Big Show on Saturday.

We recap Heyman's promo and Lesnar beating up Show on Monday.

We look at Summer proposing to Rusev on Monday.

Summer is wedding planning but Rusev comes up and asks why she's telling everyone about their engagement. You mean the one that was announced in front of millions on Monday? His Russian accent is almost completely gone at this point. Summer has gotten him a match with Ryback tonight and if he wins, he'll probably be #1 contender to the Intercontinental Title.

Team Bella vs. Charlotte/Becky Lynch/Natalya

Becky armbars Fox down to start and it's quickly off to Charlotte for a double elbow into a double nipup. It's off to Natalya vs. Nikki, meaning Brie has to get in the first batch of "COME ON's!". Becky comes in but eats a middle rope dropkick from Brie as we take a break. Back with Fox chinlocking Banks as Booker talks about how beautiful they all look. Brie throws Becky away from her corner but the BRIE MODE (minus shouting BRIE MODE thank goodness) knee misses.

Nikki breaks up the tag but gets sent into the corner, allowing the tag off to Charlotte. The champ cleans house for a bit until Nikki comes back with a Disaster Kick for two. The Rack Attack is broken up though and a spear sets up the Figure Eight. Brie makes a save and helps Nikki roll it over but Becky switches it right back and Nikki taps at 11:07.

Rating: C-. Not bad if you ignore the fact that this is the Wyatts vs. the Shield Boys with Natalya currently playing the third man to help in the war. I'm hoping they add Sasha to this feud as it's finally starting to get interesting. There's really no wrong way to go with the title unless it's back to the Bellas, but NXT can only have these awesome matches for so long before everyone realizes the Bellas are in way over their heads.

Paige thinks Natalya is trying to steal her spot.

Rusev vs. Ryback

Owens is on commentary and he's officially defending against Ryback at the pay per view. Ryback takes him into the corner to start as Owens calls Lawler stupid. Owens: "With all due respect of course. Now that I said that you can't be mad at me." Rusev throws him through the ropes and Ryback gets his hand caught in the ropes to give Rusev a target.

The hand is rammed into the steps and post but amazingly enough that's not enough for a pin. Rusev switches up to just going after the arm as Brennan asks Owens about Renee Young saying he isn't a real Canadian. Owens: "Has anyone ever told you that you look like Millhouse from the Simpsons?" Brennan: "Only you Kevin." Owens: "Well there you go." Ryback's comeback is quickly stopped and it's off to an armbar. A belly to belly gets Ryback out of trouble and he stops a charging Rusev with a boot.

Rusev counters what looked to be a powerbomb and gets two off an Alabama Slam. Off to a sleeper of all things but Ryback escapes with an over the shoulder Stunner. Shell Shock is broken up and Rusev's jumping superkick gets two (with Summer shoving the boot off the ropes). Back up and the Meat Hook and Shell Shock end Rusev at 8:25.

Rating: C-. You can see Rusev's star falling from here as he's now regular losing matches on Smackdown. There's a chance that they're going with Summer costing Rusev matches (not that she did but Rusev is the kind of guy who would blame her for his troubles) and they split as a result. Ryback doesn't really gain anything here but a win is always helpful.

Recap of Kane attacking Rollins again on Raw.

Bray asks if he'll be locked inside the Cell with Roman or will Roman be trapped inside with him. Not that it matters as the result is the same. Tonight, Reigns and Orton face the wrath of the black sheep. Strowman used to catch rabbits and then squeeze them until they crossed over. Run little rabbits.

Video on King Barrett.

King Barrett vs. Neville

Neville flips out of the corner to start but gets slammed into the mat via a hair pull. We take an early break and come back with Barrett tossing him into a boot to the chest for two. Barrett hooks a bow and arrow as the announcers give us a quick history of King of the Ring. An enziguri puts Barrett on the floor and a moonsault to the floor takes him down again. This is almost every match we've ever seen between these two.

Neville gets two off the German suplex but Barrett gets away before he can launch the Red Arrow. The Bull Hammer gives Barrett the in at 8:32.

Rating: D+. Neville loses again and while I could usually get behind the idea of him putting someone else over, it's Barrett. He'll probably be losing to a mascot or an actor or the returning Hornswoggle soon enough. The match was watchable enough but Neville is really in need of some momentum.

Post match Stardust, wearing a card dealer's hat, says it won't be a king, a champion, or Stardust's lady fair. He picks up another card and likes what he sees but doesn't tell us what it is. Lawler's easiest line in a month: "He's not playing with a full deck."

Breast cancer is bad moment of the week.

Roman Reigns/Randy Orton vs. Bray Wyatt/Braun Strowman

No Harper or Ambrose at ringside. Orton and Wyatt get things going with Bray being sent to the apron but escaping the hanging DDT. Back in and Bray hands it off to Strowman who runs Orton over like he's not even there. It's off to Reigns for the big showdown and a shoulder puts Roman down like he's one of the Ding Dongs. Orton makes a blind tag but Strowman shoulders both opponents down with ease. It's back to Bray to stomp away in the corner until Orton scores with his backbreaker. Braun misses a charge into the corner and there's the tag to Reigns.

Roman slugs away and lifts Braun for a Samoan drop but can't get it over. Instead Roman gets him in the ropes and kicks Strowman in the face, eventually Superman punching him to the floor. The camera zoomed in on Roman to make sure we couldn't see Braun down on the floor though. That's a very nice touch as they've done a great job of keeping Strowman looking like an unstoppable monster and he still hasn't been down. Why waste that on Smackdown? Roman goes after Bray on the floor but Wyatt hits him in the ribs with a chair for the DQ at 7:50.

Rating: C-. Another average match here that felt like it was cut really short. I still love how they're booking Strowman as he's going to get beaten one day but they need to build him up as long as they can before

finally having someone take him down. The match was just another step towards the Cell match and I'm assuming Ambrose and Harper will be in part of a tag match at the pay per view.

Post match Orton saves Roman from Wyatt but gets choked out, only to have Reigns score with a Superman punch. Bray can't hit Sister Abigail and it's an RK0 to Wyatt, followed by the spear to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. It was another worthless edition of Smackdown this week and those are getting more and more annoying to sit through. None of the matches felt important and the whole show felt like a way to kill two hours. I've been saying that WAY too often lately and it's even worse when it's something that could be remedied. If no one is watching, give us some nice long matches every week instead of the endless recaps and 8-10 minute matches that change nothing. It's even less effort for the writers as all they have to do is let the wrestlers do their thing. Is that too much to ask for?

Results

Big E. b. Dolph Ziggler – Pin after Kofi Kingston guillotined Ziggler across the top rope

Charlotte/Becky Lynch/Natalya b. Team Bella – Figure Eight to Nikki

Ryback b. Rusev – Shell Shock

King Barrett b. Neville – Bull Hammer

Roman Reigns/Randy Orton b. Braun Strowman/Bray Wyatt via DQ when Wyatt used a chair

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