

# 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 backplash 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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# Monday Night Raw – November 23, 2015: The Real Injury Problem

## Monday Night Raw

Date: November 23, 2015

Location: Bridgestone Arena, Nashville, Tennessee

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

The end of the year is almost upon us and we're in another Sheamus era. It seems that they're heading towards Roman Reigns playing Daniel Bryan this year because that's totally the same thing. There isn't much else coming out of Survivor Series but we could be in for a few very long months. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the World Title scene from last night.

Here's the Authority to open things up with Stephanie strutting down the ramp. Stephanie talks about opportunity striking very rarely and HHH brings up Reigns being stupid with his decision two weeks ago. Here's someone who seized opportunity when he had the chance: the new WWE World Champion Sheamus. The fans still say Sheamus looks stupid but there's nothing that is ruining his moment.

Last night he kicked Roman off his mountain because just as he promised, he was one Brogue Kick away. Sheamus holds up the title and asks who looks stupid now. Cue Reigns to say he wants his rematch and the fans chant YES. Stephanie is of course right there to make fun of the fans because she needs their balls for her collection.

There's no rematch tonight as Stephanie shouts at Roman to get out of her ring. Roman asks if HHH is hiding behind his wife so we get another staredown. HHH says no rematch tonight and leaves. Cue the returning Rusev to superkick Reigns down, followed by a Brogue Kick from Sheamus. Oh yeah he's the new Bryan. Well at least in WWE's minds. Everyone leaves and HHH makes Sheamus vs. Reigns in a TLC match at the pay per view.

Stephanie adds Rusev vs. Reigns tonight.

Recap of Undertaker and Kane squashing the Wyatts last night.

### Dudley Boyz vs. Luke Harper/Bray Wyatt

Harper chops Bubba in the corner to start as the Wyatts are looking more aggressive tonight. Bubba kicks Harper in the face and it's off to D-Von for the reverse 3D. Bray saves his buddy from the regular version and we take an early break. Back with Bray chinlocking D-Von before switching things up with a nerve hold. D-Von fights up and makes the hot tag as everything breaks down. In the melee, Harper's discus lariat puts Bubba away at 7:53.

**Rating:** D+. Barely enough to rate here because of the big commercial break right in the middle. It's good to see the Wyatts win again, but does anyone believe that they're going to do anything after this? They're the biggest chokers in the company and it's getting harder and harder to buy them as contenders to anything. On the other hand, it's cool to see the Dudleys out there putting people over like they should be doing.

Post match Rowan and Strowman come in to continue the beatdown.

Video on Undertaker's career, the same from last night.

### Sasha Banks vs. Becky Lynch

This starts after a commercial, the fourth in forty five minutes. Sasha takes over to start and chokes Becky on the ropes as we hear about the Irish dominance of WWE at the moment. Tamina gets in a cheap shot to give Sasha two and we hit the bow and arrow. Back up and Becky grabs a t-bone followed by the Disarm-Her but Tamina's distraction lets Naomi pull her under the ropes. A quick rollup with trunks gives Sasha the pin at 4:08.

**Rating:** D+. This is every problem the Divas have had in the last year: no characters, no personalities, no reason to care and no time for the match. The team thing is still annoying and it's one of the same ideas that the heels have used for the better part of ever in this company. These two can have matches but only Nikki Bella is allowed to have a personality around here.



Cole says Sasha might be in the running for #1 contender but Paige cuts him off and shows a clip of Charlotte's arm being under the rope in the Figure Eight last night. Charlotte is just a dirty cheater like her old man and Paige is going to prove it tonight.

Here's the New Day for a country music jamboree to celebrate their first anniversary as a team and to issue an open challenge. They come out on pink stick unicorns with Big E. wearing a cowboy hat. This is already funny by definition but JBL singing the Rawhide theme hurts it a bit. Big E.: "YIPPIE KAY AY MOTHER....." Kingston: "Shut your mouth!"

They can't bring themselves to say that they're in the capital of country music so they make fun of the genres tropes of losing your girlfriend, your truck breaking down and your dog running away. Big E. goes on a rant about tractor songs and says that's enough country music for a lifetime. Kofi, with a braided horn on his head, sums it up by saying this is the truth and it's not even coming from his character: country music SUCKS.

The open challenge is on and we've got some challengers in the form of the Lucha Dragons. Actually wait as the New Day goes to leave but get cut off by the Usos. Woods: "BAD JIMMY! BAD JEY!" Big E: "SIT! STAY!" The open challenge was just a figure of speech according to Kofi but Cara says let's make it a triple threat. New Day doesn't like this spotlight stealing and says no title match because the challenge is canceled. The Dragons and the Usos attack anyway and the champions are cleared out.

Charlotte is ready to defend her title against Paige in a rematch tonight.

### Mark Henry vs. Neville

Henry throws him into the corner to start and Mark gets annoyed at Neville for fighting back. A BIG throw sends Neville outside and Henry looks conflicted. Back in and Neville escapes the World's Strongest Slam before kicking Henry in the head. For some reason we cut to Miz in the back before the Red Arrow pins Henry at 2:22, even though he looked like he kicked out at two.

Henry shakes his hand post match and tells Neville he's going to be good.

Stardust is raving about Cesaro and Goldust when Titus O'Neil comes in. They talk about science and Titus barks at him. That's your random segment of the week.

### Stardust/Ascension vs. Goldust/Prime Time Players

Byron on Stardust and the Ascension: "They look like they had a big gulp of evil." The Dusts start things off but it's off to Konnor before any contact, just like last night. Viktor comes in before any contact as well so Goldust armdrags him down. Darren comes in to stay on the arm before Titus suplexes him onto Viktor as normal.

A belly to belly gets two for Darren and it's off to Stardust who eats a discus forearm. Viktor comes in off a blind tag to take over and I don't remember the last time a crowd was this silent. Stardust charges into a boot in the corner and the hot tag brings in Titus. Everything breaks down with Goldust clotheslining his brother to the floor, leaving Titus to hit the Clash on Konnor for the pin at 6:30.

**Rating:** D. The action wasn't that bad but there was nothing to care about here and the crowd made that clear. It picked up a bit at the end but there's only so much I can get out of watching Darren get beaten up for a few minutes. It doesn't help that neither regular team is going anywhere and Goldust vs. Stardust wasn't any good.

The winners dance after the match.

Here are Zeb Colter and Alberto Del Rio for the state of the MexAmerica union. MexAmerica was supposed to be a perfect nation but the early growing pains have been turned into fuel for all the haters on social media. Del Rio talks about everyone wanting to see something great but not being entertained enough. Therefore, the borders of MexAmerica are closed forever.

Cue Jack Swagger because he hasn't lost to anyone recently enough. How many people are there that could stand up for America or just call Colter and Del Rio out for being stupid to get a rub? No instead here's good old Jack Swagger to get built up and then lose the big match AGAIN because we haven't done that recently enough. Swagger says Colter used to stand for

something but now he's just complaining all the time. Jack comes to the ring but Del Rio holds up the title and backs off. Swagger does WE THE PEOPLE as they leave.

### Divas Title: Charlotte vs. Paige

Charlotte is defending after beating Paige last night. After some big match intros they fight over a lockup, already showing more intensity than they had last night. They slap each other rather hard before Charlotte throws her face first onto the mat. A Fujiwara armbar sends Paige to the ropes and she yells at the fans to blow off some steam. Some knees to the chest get two for the champ and she puts on the figure four neck lock for those flipping slams.

Paige pulls her out of the corner for a crash and puts on a chinlock. That goes as far as a chinlock is going to go so Paige puts on her own figure four neck lock. A low superkick gets two and a suplex into the ropes gets the same. Paige gets tired of the submissions and hits Charlotte in the face a few times for two. After a leg lock from Paige, both of them score with kicks to the face as we take a break.

Back with the match turning more into a brawl until Paige kicks her down and nips back up. Charlotte puts on a rear naked choke of all things before spearing Paige out to the floor. I'm kind of digging this submission battle. At least it's better than last night. Paige throws her into the barricade but it's still a double countout at 15:02.

**Rating:** B-. WAY better than last night as there was some actual intensity and a much better story with Paige trying to do the submissions to match Charlotte because she wanted to prove she was better. It's amazing what you can do when you actually have personality and character instead of interchangeable people like most of the roster. This was WWE's way of saying "yeah we know last night sucked."

Paige sends her into the steps and puts on the PT0 on the table.

We recap how the main event was set up.

Here's Heath Slater with a guitar to show us how real country music goes.

He can't even get a note off before Ryback interrupts. The guitar to the back has no effect and there's the Shell Shock. I'm hoping Ryback at least mentions pinning the new World Champion last night.

### Dean Ambrose/Dolph Ziggler vs. Kevin Owens/Tyler Breeze

Ziggler and Ambrose start things off with Tyler grabbing a wristlock. It's quickly off to Owens vs. Ambrose but Kevin tags right back out. A quick kick to the face puts Dolph down and the heels take over. The double teaming has Dolph in trouble until he comes back with a dropkick to set up the diving tag. Dean's suicide dive drops Breeze but he walks into a superkick from Owens. Not that it matters as Dirty Deeds puts Breeze away at 5:30. Owens stood by and watched the pin.

**Rating:** C. This was fine though I have no idea what it accomplished. In theory Owens vs. Ambrose is set up off last night so they could have found a way to do this without having Breeze lose. Like, Ziggler could have lost instead again, but I guess they need to make sure Tyler doesn't get too strong or whatever.

Earlier today, JBL and El Torito argues over whether to eat Tex or Mex food. Mark Henry was brought in to decide, leading to a dream sequence where Torito did JBL's entrance and it turns into a Hardee's commercial.

We look at the end of last night's show.

### Rusev vs. Roman Reigns

Sheamus is in Rusev's corner. Cole says Rusev wrestles Reigns to the ground to start and probably gets yelled at as a result. Reigns pops him in the jaw and gets two off a running neckbreaker. Back up and Rusev starts kicking Reigns in the face, only to eat a big boot to send him outside. A whip sends Rusev into the barricade and we take our last break.

Back with Rusev holding a chinlock and throwing Reigns outside for a shot from Sheamus. The champ throws him back inside and Rusev starts setting up for the Accolade. That lasts all of ten seconds before it's off to a cravate instead. Sheamus trips Reigns again and finally gets ejected. The

Samoan drop puts Rusev down but Reigns can't follow up.

The clotheslines in the corner stagger Rusev but he comes back with a spinwheel kick. A top rope headbutt gets two on Roman and Rusev loads up the Accolade. Reigns doesn't even bother letting it go on and comes back with a Superman Punch for two. Rusev bails to the floor before the spear can launch and superkicks Reigns to stop a charge.

Roman gets rammed into the announcers' table a few times but comes back with the knees to the face inside, followed by a Superman Punch to knock Rusev off the apron. A countout doesn't sound good for Reigns so he goes out to get Rusev, only to have King Barrett jump him for the DQ at 16:16.

**Rating:** C+. Good brawl and I like the ending with Reigns now having to fight the entire trio instead of just one at a time. It's a good alliance and makes all three of them look better as a unit. Unfortunately it stills feels like it should be over the Intercontinental Title but they're making do with what they can due to all of the injuries.

Barrett gets a chair but Reigns fights off Rusev, Barrett and the invading Sheamus to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D. You can really see where all the injuries are starting to mount up. The problem here isn't the lack of star power but the lack of an ability to cover three hours. Rollins may have been failing near the top, but he was taking up A LOT of TV time which has to be filled. Cena, Orton and Cesaro aren't there to do it either and it's really starting to show. The stuff like Neville vs. Henry and the Ryback segment were acceptable but nothing that's going to make me want to keep watching. They need to stir things up a bit and making fun of country music because Vince finds it funny isn't going to solve that.

## Results

Luke Harper/Bray Wyatt b. Dudley Boyz – Discus lariat to Bubba

Sasha Banks b. Becky Lynch – Rollup with a handful of trunks

Neville b. Mark Henry – Red Arrow

Goldust/Prime Time Players b. Stardust/Ascension – Clash of the Titus to Konnor

Paige vs. Charlotte went to a double countout

Dolph Ziggler/Dean Ambrose b. Tyler Breeze/Kevin Owens – Dirty Deeds to Breeze

Roman Reigns b. Rusev via DQ when King Barrett interfered

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# Survivor Series 2015: Rise and Fall

## Survivor Series 2015

Date: November 22, 2015

Location: Phillips Arena, Atlanta, Georgia

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

This is a special show for two reasons. First of all, tonight is twenty five years to the day that the Undertaker debuted. It's rare to see someone last ten years and Undertaker is still having good matches twenty five years later. That's one of those statistics that isn't going to be

broken and is really remarkable when you think about it. Other than that, we have the finals of the WWE World Title tournament for the title vacated after Seth Rollins' knee injury. Let's get to it.

### Pre-Show: Team Miz vs. Team Neville

Miz, Bo Dallas, Stardust, Ascension

Neville, Dudley Boyz, Titus O'Neil, Goldust

Survivor Series match and you have to believe they're doing another one on the show because there are only six other matches. This is Goldust's return after a long absence due to a shoulder injury. Goldust and Stardust start and a few right hands send Stardust over for a tag to Viktor...who is put out off a Goldust powerslam at 30 seconds. That sounds like an injury elimination.

Off to Konnor vs. Titus with O'Neil chopping away in the corner and slamming Konnor down. What's Up sends Konnor to the floor and the Dudleyz deposit his partners next to him, setting up Neville's big dive. Back from a break with Bubba Rock Bottoming Konnor for the elimination at 5:34.

Stardust comes in to take D-Von into the corner as we hear about the Gobbledy Gooker debuting 25 years ago today. Off to Miz who keeps up the beating, only to walk into a spinebuster. Neville comes in to clean house with his variety of kicks and a snap German suplex. A surprise Bodog and the Skull Crushing Finale take Neville out at 8:52, only to have Goldust roll Miz up for the pin at 9:03.

We're down to Dallas/Stardust vs. Titus/Goldust/Bubba/D-Von. Back from another break with Dallas putting Goldust in a chinlock and Stardust telling the fans that there will NOT be any tables. It's off to Stardust for a chinlock of his own, followed by another from Dallas. Goldust finally fights up and hits a clothesline, allowing for the hot tag to Titus. Everything breaks down and it's a quick Clash of the Titus to put Dallas away at 17:13. Stardust tries to walk away but walks into 3D for the final pin at 18:03.

**Rating:** C-. Totally fine way to kill the pre-show time and give the fans something to watch. Goldust returning is cool and it seems to set up the idea for the show. The wrestling wasn't anything great but for a match thrown together, it's hard to really complain about the quality. Good enough here.

We open with Lillian Garcia singing the National Anthem as the middle finger to the ISIS threats.

The opening video focuses on both major stories with Undertaker's anniversary and match with the Wyatts, followed by a tournament recap. There's a great line of history being written by the survivors.

### WWE World Title Tournament Semifinals: Alberto Del Rio vs. Roman Reigns

Non-title of course and the fans boo Reigns out of the building as soon as his music hits. They slug it out to start with Del Rio scoring with some kicks in the corner. Outside now with Reigns going into the barricade before Del Rio starts in on the arm, which Cesaro worked over Monday. A tilt-a-whirl slam gets a quick two for Roman as he's hearing the dueling chants.

The bad arm goes into the steps as we see HHH watching in the back. A top rope shot to the head gets two for Alberto and we hit the chinlock. They're moving here. The bad shoulder is sent into the post but Reigns pops right back up and nails a quick apron boot. The arm is hanging though as Reigns fires off the corner clotheslines. A Superman Punch is countered into the Backstabber for two.

The low superkick (hey he still uses that) is countered into a Samoan drop for the same. Roman tries to go aerial with a superplex but gets caught in the double stomp position (one of the only realistic ways for that to be set up). Of course it misses here though and Reigns nails the Superman Punch. Del Rio takes a long time getting up after landing on his knee but it's all goldbricking with the spear charging into a superkick for a really close two.

For the first time since he's been back, Del Rio tries the armbreaker but gets rolled up for another near fall. The armbreaker goes on a few



seconds later and the announcers are freaking out. I have no idea why as it's not the arm Del Rio had been working on. Reigns makes the rope and Alberto goes up for no apparent reason, only to miss some nondescript move, allowing Reigns to spear him down for the pin at 14:22.

**Rating:** B. Well duh. This was the biggest layup all night long but at least we had a hot match instead of the boring stuff Del Rio has been doing. It's amazing what happens when he actually tries the logical moves instead of whatever co-operative nonsense he has to do to get the double stomps. Reigns' arm could come into play later too.

Reigns wishes Ambrose luck and says they'll fight next. Owens comes in and lists off Reigns being close before but always missing in the end. Tonight Owens is adding his name to the list of people who stop Reigns at the last second. Reigns still picks Dean. I know it's not likely, but they've got me thinking it could be Owens.

#### WWE World Title Tournament Semifinals: Dean Ambrose vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title again. Dean starts with some headlocks and armdrags (straight out of an old Aiden English song) but Owens crotches him on top. The Cannonball is only good for one but the backsplash gets two. We hit the chinlock (Owens: "CHINLOCK CITY BABY!") and HHH is shown watching again. Dean suplexes him down and they slowly get up with Owens getting the better of it.

A moonsault (you don't see him try that one too often) misses Ambrose and the top rope elbow gets two more. They fight over a superplex with Dean running the corner to try it again, only to get caught in the swinging fisherman's superplex (I love that move) for the nearest fall so far. The rebound lariat staggers Owens but he sends Dean outside for a drop onto the table. Back in and two straight superkicks knock Dean even sillier but he counters the Pop Up Powerbomb and grabs Dirty Deeds for the spot in the finals at 11:20.

**Rating:** B-. Owens continues to look like a star but that's the second champion to lose in a row because they didn't think this thing through that well. Either that or they don't think anything of the title. Either way, this was the good brawl you would expect from these two with the

guys beating each other up for as long as they were allowed, which is the best thing you can ask for. Neither match was great but they were a really good way to spend forty five minutes.

We look back at Undertaker's debut and the length of his career, mainly comprised of clips of Legends With JBL.

### Team Ryback vs. Team New Day

Ryback, Lucha Dragons, Usos

New Day, King Barrett, Sheamus

The hometown boy Xavier Woods has a new haircut (like a pompadour) and Big E. wants us all to cheer for it. New Day rips on the Dragons for being small, the Usos for being injured and Ryback for being bald. Sheamus wants to get jiggy on these posers and you can feel the air go out of the place in a funny bit. Kofi: "I think what he meant to say was NEW DAY ROCKS!"

Woods and Jimmy get things going with the hair being completely off limits. Jimmy of course drags him across the ring by the hair and it's off to Jey for some chops. Cara comes in to chop Kofi as we hear about the mini Kings back in 1994. Sheamus misses a charge and falls to the floor with his partners joining him. Everyone not named Ryback dives at the same time, leaving Ryback to dive onto all nine of them. Back in and Barrett crotches Jey on top to give Sheamus two.

The Unicorn Stampede means it's time for some tromboning to start a dance party. Kofi puts on a chinlock but an enziguri allows the tag off to Jimmy. Woods gets thrown into the corner so Barrett comes in and slugs Jimmy in the face. Jimmy superkicks him right back and a swanton from Cara gets rid of Barrett at 7:46. It's off to Kalisto for the monkey flip splash to Kofi for two before Jimmy comes back in pretty soon after tagging out. That would be too soon as Kofi grabs a backbreaker and Woods adds a top rope knee for the pin at 9:24.

Big E. spears Cara through the ropes but comes up holding his arm, leaving Sheamus to Brogue Kick him for the pin at 10:46. Sheamus and Big

E. argue over the blind tag so Sheamus lets him come back in, only to have Ryback run him over. Jey adds a Superfly Splash to get rid of Big E. at 11:38. So we're down to Jey/Ryback/Kalisto vs. Woods/Kingston/Sheamus. Kofi and Woods walk out with Big E. at 12:30 so it's 3-1. Sheamus starts pounding on Kalisto until it's off to Jey for a high cross body.

The Irish Curse gets two and puts Jimmy in trouble but again Sheamus lets him tag. Ryback comes in with the clotheslines and a spinebuster but a tilt-a-whirl slam stops the Meat Hook. The numbers are really getting on Sheamus' nerves though and it's a blind tag to bring in Kalisto for a top rope hurricanrana. Sheamus blocks it but Jey tags himself in and superkicks Sheamus, allowing Kalisto to hurricanrana Sheamus into Ryback (who tagged himself in as well) for the Shell Shock at 17:34.

**Rating:** C. Again this was fine with ten guys barely affiliated having a match for the sake of filling in a spot on the card. New Day walking out was the right call as you don't want three champions losing in three matches. This was basically a bonus and another good match as we're waiting on the big stuff.

We recap Paige vs. Charlotte without a single reference to the big issues on Monday. Basically it's back to being fallout from PCB splitting, which isn't great but it's much more in WWE's wheelhouse.

#### Divas Title: Paige vs. Charlotte

Charlotte is defending and starts this big rivalry match with a waistlock. Paige takes over with some brawling before taking it outside. The champion is sent ribs first into the announcers' table, setting up an abdominal stretch back inside. Given that an abdominal stretch hasn't won a match since about 1972, Charlotte quickly escapes and kicks Paige in the face. There's the Figure Four (not eight) until Paige makes the rope.

Charlotte takes it outside again and drops Paige face first onto the apron. Back in and we get a figure four neck lock with some rolls to slam Paige into the mat. Charlotte tries to go too fast though and charges into the post. For some reason that means it's time for Paige to work on the ribs with a bodyscissors.

That doesn't last either and it's time to slug it out, followed by Charlotte scoring with the spear. The unnamed Natural Selection sends Paige to the floor but she pops right back up. They get on the barricade for no apparent reason, allowing Charlotte to hit another big spear. Back in and the Figure Eight makes Paige tap at 14:20.

**Rating:** C-. The story killed this one as I'm really not sure what they were going for. I mean, I get that Paige was trying to get in her head but they don't just insult Ric instead? It wasn't bad or anything but some of the psychology was off and took away some of my interest. Watchable but not much more.

Reigns and Ambrose are ready to fight like brothers.

### Tyler Breeze vs. Dolph Ziggler

This is trying to salvage something from the Rusev/Ziggler/Lana story. Breeze takes him down to start and lays over the top like he should be doing. A headlock puts Tyler down as well and now it's time for Ziggler to have a rest on top too. They head outside with Breeze hiding behind Summer, allowing him to send Ziggler into the steps. Back in and Ziggler gets caught in a half crab but it's quickly off to the ropes.

Ziggler makes his comeback with the normal stuff, including a neckbreaker and the big elbow for two. A nice pinfall reversal sequence gives us a bunch of two counts before Dolph just slams him face first into the mat. Breeze bails to avoid the superkick (like any model would do) and kicks him in the knee, setting up the Unprettier to give Tyler the clean pin at 6:45.

**Rating:** C-. Ziggler jobbing isn't a story again but at least Breeze won clean in his big match debut (yeah the tournament wasn't really a big match as everyone knew what was going to happen there). I don't think Breeze is ever going to be more than a jobber to the stars but at least he had a good debut.

We recap the Wyatts vs. the Brothers of Destruction. Bray targeted Undertaker at the end of Hell in Cell before kidnapping Undertaker and Kane. He stole their souls (whatever that means), setting up this regular

tag instead of what could have been a cool elimination tag).

### Bray Wyatt/Luke Harper vs. Undertaker/Kane

Undertaker gets the big entrance for his anniversary, though I'm sure more is coming. Rowan gets chokeslammed before the bell, leaving Harper as the official partner, which hadn't been announced yet. Kane works on Harper to start before it's off to Undertaker to really wake the crowd up. Harper has to get out of the Tombstone and it's off to Bray who eats the jumping clothesline.

That's it for Bray so Harper takes Old School as the fans tell Undertaker that he still has it. The apron legdrop has Harper in more trouble and Kane goes after Bray, only to have Strowman throw him over the announcers' table. That's not a DQ though and the Wyatts take over on Kane. The running cross body takes Kane down but Bray takes too much time mocking Undertaker and gets slammed down for his efforts. It's already hot tag time (seven minutes in) for Undertaker and house is cleaned again.

Bray and Luke clothesline him to the floor though, only to have Strowman take the double chokeslam through the table. Back in and Sister Abigail out of nowhere gets two on Undertaker and Luke clotheslines Kane. No cover of course as Bray is busy doing the Spider Walk. The Brothers do the stereo sit up and it's a double chokeslam to the Wyatts. Harper takes the Tombstone for the pin at 10:21.

**Rating:** D+. At least it wasn't Bray. This was a post show dark match aired on pay per view and that's not what they needed to go with here. I get the idea of the big moment for Undertaker but he's had big moments at the last few pay per views now. Harper getting pinned makes sense and it's not the worst loss in the world, but Undertaker needs to put Bray over soon.

Nothing special for Undertaker after the match as he and Kane just do their signature pose.

### WWE World Title: Roman Reigns vs. Dean Ambrose

Ambrose has already lost his shirt and they go at it right after the big match intros. A clothesline puts Reigns on the floor and Dean follows with the suicide dive. Back in and Dean hammers away until Reigns powerbombs him out of the corner ala Undertaker. Reigns gets two more off a sitout powerbomb but Dean runs him over. The top rope elbow is blocked with a Superman Punch though and both guys are down.

Neither finisher can hit (way too early) but the rebound lariat is countered into a spear for two (shows what I know). There was almost zero hit on that near fall. A second spear hits post and Dirty Deeds gets two on a much hotter cover. Both guys sit up so they slug it out from the mat. Back up and the spear out of nowhere gives Reigns the title at 8:39.

**Rating:** D. Wait what? Like seriously, what? It's 10:38 and the main event just ended in less than nine minutes. The fans didn't react and there's no reason to care with a win that fast. Reigns getting the belt is a good idea but that's really the best way they can do it? That really doesn't work and I'm guessing they're using the time for an Undertaker celebration but this was a bad, bad move.

Dean hugs his friend and leaves as confetti falls. Cue a smiling and applauding HHH to offer a handshake but Reigns spears him instead. Sheamus comes in for a Brogue Kick and here we go.

#### WWE World Title: Roman Reigns vs. Sheamus

The Brogue Kick only gets two but a second gives Sheamus the title at 39 seconds. So was Ambrose off checking the Bengals score?

HHH and Sheamus leave together to end the show, but we cut back to the arena as Reigns gets up....and leaves to add nothing else.

**Overall Rating:** C-. The wrestling was mostly good but I only started getting excited in the last five minutes because it was a title change. Reigns can rise up again and win the title later, but sweet goodness that match was nothing to see and Reigns is just dying to turn heel. Sheamus is clearly just a placeholder champion and that's fine, but it was a pretty lackluster ending. The opening two matches are both good though and it was certainly a big ending so I'll call the show passable but a

letdown given what else they could have done.

## Results

Roman Reigns b. Alberto Del Rio – Spear

Dean Ambrose b. Kevin Owens – Dirty Deeds

Team Ryback b. Team New Day – Shell Shock to Sheamus

Charlotte b. Paige – Figure Eight

Tyler Breeze b. Dolph Ziggler – Unprettier

Undertaker/Kane b. Bray Wyatt/Luke Harper – Tombstone to Harper

Roman Reigns b. Dean Ambrose – Spear

Sheamus b. Roman Reigns – Brogue Kick

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# Survivor Series 2015 Preview

For some reason Survivor Series continues to be the show that sees a lot of big stories like this year's World Title tournament. Either it's Sting/Rock/Kurt Angle/Shield debuting or a World Title tournament but

this show is always getting something huge. Unfortunately the rest of the show is really not clicking but I've been surprised before. Let's get to it.

We'll get the most obvious match out of the way first: Reigns beats Del Rio and he does it going away. Reigns is the heavy favorite to win the whole thing and they're not about to have Del Rio be the one to mess that up in the semifinals. I know Vince loves the guy no matter how boring he is (and he is indeed quite boring as I'm sure you've learned in recent weeks) but Del Rio just isn't winning here.

As for the other semifinal, as much as I'd love it to be Owens, people have been saying it's a Reigns vs. Ambrose final since the beginning of this tournament (which to be fair was less than two weeks ago) and I can't see any reason to change that pick now. Ambrose wins, likely setting up an Intercontinental Title match down the line (assuming no one does a big turn at the end) because of course you can pin a champion and not worry about it. Owens is awesome, but the better story here is to have Ambrose go forward to fight his brother. An upset (as in the champion winning) is possible but I'll go with Ambrose.

For the final.....yeah I think Reigns goes heel and wins the whole thing. At the end of the day, the guy is the most natural heel they've had in a long time (just imagine that smirk he does as a heel move) and it would be a great moment to see Dean's reaction. Above all else though, who is Reigns supposed to fight if he wins the title as a face? People he's already beaten when the title wasn't on the line? Kane? See what I mean here? Heel Ambrose winning is always a chance but I really can't imagine it happening. No cash-in either because they haven't dragged that out long enough yet.

I'll take Breeze over Ziggler, even though it's not going to mean much either way. This really isn't much of a feud as the whole Summer angle has been forgotten by this point. It's still not a good story but there's no reason for Ziggler to win here. The guy is a jobber to the stars at this point so just let Breeze get a big win before he becomes a jobber to the stars as well.



Charlotte retains over Paige because it's her big redemption story. The whole Reid Flair story (In case you didn't know what Charlotte and Paige were talking about on Monday, which I think is the case for the masses. I still don't get why they didn't talk about Ric instead.) is a big mess and it's so stupid that WWE is basically dumping the whole thing on Charlotte. For some reason I don't believe that it was Charlotte pushing for the idea the whole way. It was cool to see something serious in there but it really didn't work the way they wanted it to. Either way, the winner should be keeping the title warm for Sasha anyway.

That leaves us with the most frustrating match on the show in the Brothers of Destruction vs. the Wyatts. Which Wyatts? Well that's not important enough to mention. In other words, they're making no secret of the fact that this is ALL about Undertaker and Kane. The whole focal point of the build has been on the Undertaker 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (at least WWE has learned how to count since Wrestlemania XXV) and there's little doubt that Undertaker goes over here.

My biggest issue with this match is wasted potential. As soon as they started going after Undertaker and Kane, it turned into a question of who joins them against the four Wyatts. They even had the Wyatts in a Survivor Series match a few weeks ago on Smackdown. That had a lot of potential for a big, wild brawl with people just laying into each other and maybe Undertaker being left alone for Bray to get the pin.

Instead though, let's just have the Brothers reunite one more time with no real explained story (other than the soul stealing and then apparently letting Undertaker and Kane go) and the Wyatts all getting beaten down over in England. It seems like it's Strowman/Bray for the Wyatts....and I'm going to pick them. I know I said there's little doubt that Undertaker goes over, but I think Bray actually pulls it off, likely beating Kane in the process and setting up a showdown at TLC. That's how I would do it at least, which is why it isn't likely happening. That's my big surprise pick this time, even though I know it's not happening.

There's also a traditional Survivor Series match with participants to be named. I'll say it's the Usos/Lucha Dragons/Ryback beating New Day/Ascension in a match that could be a lot more entertaining with

better participants.

Overall I'm very very cautiously optimistic for this one but I won't be surprised if the show winds up being a disaster. The tournament has the potential to set up a lot of good things going forward (heel Roman vs. Ambrose, then Cena then Brock anyone?) and they could FINALLY pull the trigger on Wyatt (they won't) to make this something entertaining. Of course there's always the chance that they'll do the stupidest things possible (Ambrose heel turn, Reigns wins clean or Sheamus cashes in and wins) but it's the holiday season so I'll go with some good old false hope.

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# Monday Night Raw – November 16, 2015: How Low Can You Go?

## Monday Night Raw

Date: November 16, 2015

Location: Bon Secours Wellness Arena, Greenville, South Carolina

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton, Michael Cole

It's all about the tournament again tonight with the four quarterfinals leading in to Sunday's Survivor Series. We might also get some more about

the Authority recruiting Reigns to the dark side. Other than that we should find out some more of the card as very few of the matches have been announced yet. Let's get to it.

The roster stands on the stage in a moment of silence for the victims of the terrorist attacks in Paris. Nothing wrong with that.

Opening sequence.

Recap of the tournament and the quarterfinal matches.

We've got druids to open things up, followed by the Brothers of Destruction. Undertaker talks about how no one can take away their souls (Yeah what was up with that? Did the Wyatts take their souls or whatever and then just let them go?). Kane has a place prepared for the Wyatts to suffer in the fire. Undertaker says Bray can select the two members for the sacrifice because they will never rest in peace.

Cue the Wyatts so Bray can talk about twenty five years being long enough. He is the one to take down the brothers and the creatures of the night are his. The lights go out again but the Wyatts are still there. The druids are now in sheep masks and charge the ring, only to be easily beaten down. Undertaker waves the Wyatts down but Bray stops them. This would work so much better if I thought the Wyatts had any chance.

#### WWE World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Neville vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title. Neville works on the arm to start but gets caught in a headlock. Back up and the threat of the Red Arrow sends Owens running so Neville drops him with a top rope moonsault. Back from a break with Owens running Neville over and slapping on a chinlock. Neville tries to speed things up and flips to the apron (this guy's balance is insane), only to eat a superkick (that's one) for a nine count. Owens gets two more off a gutbuster but misses a charge in the corner and gets caught in a snap German suplex.

The middle rope Phoenix splash (You should not be able to do that. Like, no one should.) gives Neville two but Owens shakes the ropes to break up the Red Arrow. The Pop Up Powerbomb is countered into a superkick (that's

two) and a reverse hurricanrana for a very close two. Neville has to bail out of the Red Arrow again and it's the Pop Up Powerbomb to send Owens to Survivor Series at 10:46.

**Rating:** B-. This got a lot better after the commercial when they let both guys just go. That's the NXT style and it works just fine on the big stage. Owens winning by pin will help a lot when he goes down on Sunday, either to Ambrose or Reigns. Either way I hope it's not clean, but you know that's coming eventually.

We look at Paige debuting the night after Wrestlemania XXX and winning the Divas Title, which is her claim to starting the Divas Revolution.

HHH and Kevin Owens shake hands in the back while talking about something we can't hear.

Clip of Reigns beating Big Show last week.

Update on Rollins' knee injury.

### Tyler Breeze vs. R-Truth

Truth slams him down to start and does a little dance before dropping a leg for two. Another suplex puts Tyler into the corner and we stop for some lip balm. It seems to work as Tyler cranks on a half crab for a bit, only to have Truth fight up with that sitout gordbuster. The two kicks set up another gordbuster but the Beauty Shot puts Truth away at 4:10.

**Rating:** D+. Standard "let's have R-Truth lose to someone because Truth is still over with his rapping" match here which is like your first merit badge on the main roster. Truth is still fine in the role and can do this for a long time to come. Breeze is going to be fine if he gets a decent feud, but I'm not sure where he goes to start.

### WWE World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Dolph Ziggler vs. Dean Ambrose

The winner gets Owens. Feeling out process to start with both guys working on the arm until it's a standoff. Dean tries Dirty Deeds but Ziggler gets away because it's way too early. The announcers talk about how the champ is going to be on various talk shows because that's what

we're still supposed to believe.

Ziggler takes him down and puts on a surfboard followed by a cravate into a rollup for two. A nice dropkick staggers Dean and a backbreaker does the same to Ziggler. Dean grabs a half crab of his own for all of ten seconds before going with the top rope standing elbow drop. Ziggler's sleeper doesn't go anywhere so he settles for two off a sunset flip. Dirty Deeds is broken up again and they cross body each other. Both guys go up top and fall out to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Ziggler getting two off a Fameasser. He loads up a superkick (Cole: "Looking to pay homage to Shawn Michaels!" If that's the case then Shawn is now the world's fourth largest religion.) but has to settle for a sleeper instead, which Dean counters into the rebound lariat for two. Dean's small package and Ziggler's superkick (that's three) get near falls each. Back up and Ambrose slugs away until he gets rolled up for two, only to come back with Dirty Deeds to advance at 16:47.

**Rating:** C. This was watchable but it felt like they were trying to have a big match which almost never works. I wasn't wild on the idea of these two working together and the result was about what I was expecting. I'm not sure who wins between Ambrose and Owens but it has the potential to be a better match than this. It wasn't a bad match but I really didn't like how it went.

Post match Dean says he's turning the place upside down if he wins. No more suits, more pyro, less talking, we'll replace Michael Cole with a fish tank and have breakfast for dinner.

We look at Stephanie McMahon starting the Divas Revolution four months ago. So why are they still arguing about who started it? And can we please never see this again? That would be nice.

Here's New Day to say we should be talking about the one year anniversary of the New Day. They didn't get an invite to the Tonight Show or a chance to be on Sportscenter. Woods brings up Jey's shoulder injury and Big E. has a little impression. Big E.: "WHEN I SAY US, YOU SAY OW!" As for Ryback, don't let him drag you down into the much of negativity because NEW DAY ROCKS.

## New Day vs. Ryback/Usos

Jey and Woods start things off while Cole tells us about Kevin Owens and Melissa Joan Hart feuding on Twitter. After some dives from the Usos, Jey gets caught in the Unicorn Stampede as Woods plays the trombone. Now it's off to a discussion of Patrick Swayze movies as Big E. gets two off the Warrior Splash. There's the abdominal stretch to put Jey in more trouble before it's off to Kofi for a middle rope stomp. Jey gets over for the tag but the referee didn't see it (now there's an old trope I'd like to see make a comeback). Ryback comes in anyway and cleans house, eventually shoving the referee for the DQ at 5:49.

**Rating:** D+. The time killed this but you know we're getting the Usos vs. New Day on Sunday. I'm still not sure what that leaves Ryback with as they're not going to do Woods vs. Ryback. Unless there's a rematch of this, Ryback might be left off the card. Also, no mention of Ryback losing to Kalisto. We did however about Terry Funk being in Road House.

Post match New Day is dispatched, including a double superkick from the Usos (that's four and five).

Clip of Charlotte winning the Divas Title from Nikki Bella. They're pushing the heck out of the contract signing later.

HHH suggests that it might be time for Cesaro to grab the brass ring. He'll be watching to see if Cesaro takes that next big step tonight. Hey stop laughing. It could....I mean it's possible.....who am I kidding.

Here's Roman Reigns to ask if the Roman Empire is here tonight. He recaps HHH's offer and says he thought it it very hard, but he'll never sell out. The road is going to get harder but it ends with him as WWE World Champion. Believe that.

## WWE World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Roman Reigns vs. Cesaro

Cesaro takes Reigns into the corner to start but lets go with a clean break. A top wristlock doesn't get Cesaro anywhere so Reigns puts him on the top, only to have Cesaro cartwheel off. Cesaro gutwrench suplexes him for two as JBL talks about the Buffalo Bills losing all the time back in

the day. Reigns misses the running clothesline and the springboard spinning uppercut (that always looks great) drops him again. Things get even worse for Roman as he's sent shoulder first into the post, followed by a running uppercut against the barricade as we take a break.

Back with Reigns being thrown to the floor but Cesaro gets kicked in the face. Reigns takes him inside and slugs away with the bad arm, only to have the apron kick caught and countered into the Cesaro Swing. Cesaro takes him over into the Sharpshooter and then the Crossface on the bad arm. That's still not enough to beat Reigns as he powers up into a Samoan drop for two. A backdrop sends Cesaro over the top and he goes elbow first onto the apron.

Back in and Reigns fires off clotheslines with the bad arm until Cesaro punches the arm away. So Cesaro's fist is much harder than his chest. Cesaro grabs the arm but gets lifted up into a sitout powerbomb for two. The Superman Punch is countered into Swiss Death for two more as these near falls are getting nuts. Cesaro loads up the apron superplex but Reigns escapes and hits a quick Superman Punch. Back in and the spear is blocked by another uppercut. The Neutralizer is countered but Cesaro grabs a backslide, only to take the Superman Punch and the spear to send Reigns to Survivor Series at 20:24.

**Rating:** A-. Outstanding power match with both guys just beating the heck out of each other. They had me for a second with Cesaro getting in those last few counters at the end. There was no way Cesaro was going to win here but it was awesome to see them get a lot of time and just beat the tar out of each other like this.

Clip of Paige turning on Charlotte. So is the contract signing closing the show? Really?

In Memory of Nick Bockwinkel graphic, with thirty five minutes to go in the show.

### Dudley Boyz vs. Ascension

Viktor grabs a headlock on Bubba to start and gets kicked in the face for his efforts. Bubba gets taken into the corner for some right hands from

Konnor, who is quickly put down with a Rock Bottom. The hot tag brings in D-Von and the 3D puts Viktor away at 3:13.

**Rating:** D. Was the show running short or something? I had almost forgotten that the Dudleyz were back as they haven't done anything since the last match against New Day. Ascension on the other hand hasn't done anything since they debuted because WWE wasted all the effort put into them, but I'm sure they're just having fun while they fight on Friday night, which is the best night in the world of sports entertainment right Maggle?

Colter brags about how awesome MexAmerica is because it has no crime or taxes. HHH comes up and suggests Del Rio could be more than he is now.

#### WWE World Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Kalisto vs. Alberto Del Rio

Non-title. Kalisto says flukes don't happen when you're fighting for your dreams. Del Rio starts fast in the corner but misses a charge to the floor, allowing Kalisto to snap off a hurricanrana from the apron. Back with Alberto getting two off a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker and tying Kalisto in the Tree of Woe.

Alberto rips at the mask and stomps away, only to miss a charge into the post (popular mistake tonight). Kalisto hits his corkscrew cross body and the hurricanrana driver for two but the Salida Del Sol is countered with Del Rio dropping him on the top rope. Del Rio gets him in the Tree of Woe for the double stomp to go to the semi-finals at 10:26.

**Rating:** D+. It wasn't a total squash but DEAR GOODNESS I can't stand that stupid stomp. It's the new 619, though less exciting. Yeah it looks cool, but couldn't they find something new to set it up other than whatever TOTALLY NATURAL way they have that week. Kalisto was never going to win here so the ending is fine, but I could have used a few more hope spots for him.

Here are the semi-finals.

Roman Reigns

Alberto Del Rio



Kevin Owens

Dean Ambrose

It's time for the contract signing, which is actually the closing segment. Cole asks where this friendship went wrong. Paige says there is no friendship and she'll prove it on Sunday. Charlotte asks what happened to Paige because they started off cut out from the same mold. She even wanted to be like Paige when she got here. Charlotte got into the business because of her brother, who isn't alive to see her success.

She starts to cry so Paige makes fun of her as a heel should. Paige rips on the idea of PCB because she didn't need them anymore. Charlotte isn't going to be champion forever but when she loses the title it won't be to someone like Paige. A brawl is about to start when Paige rips on Ric for not being here and being way over the hill.

Paige brings up Charlotte's brother again and the fight is on with Charlotte taking it to the floor and beating Paige down. They get back in and Paige throws a table at her before they brawl in the corner again. The crowd is mostly dead for all of this and that's not a good sign. They're finally pulled apart and stare at each other to end the show. Charlotte was in WAY over her head here as she just isn't ready to do this kind of talking and it showed badly. They tried something new here and it's really hard to call it anything but a failure.

**Overall Rating:** C-. The wrestling alone makes it a passable show but this was the awkward part of the tournament where you knew what you were getting and just had to clean out all the people who didn't have a chance. On top of that we still only have five matches announced for Sunday (Divas Title, Wyatts vs. Brothers and the three tournament matches) though you can probably pencil in a few others. The show felt uneven as they were trying to have a regular show while also focusing on the tournament the entire time.

I'm still trying to get over the idea that the contract signing closed the show. It's a very different idea and I'm guessing they went with it as a hail Mary to mess with the sagging ratings. Charlotte's story about her brother was good but it would have been better if she had been able

to go into details. A heroin overdose isn't going to fly on today's show though so there wasn't much they could do. Anyway, good show at times tonight but it felt all over the place.

### Results

Kevin Owens b. Neville – Pop Up Powerbomb

Tyler Breeze b. R-Truth – Beauty Shot

Dean Ambrose b. Dolph Ziggler – Dirty Deeds

New Day b. Ryback/Usos via DQ when Ryback shoved the referee

Roman Reigns b. Cesaro – Spear

Dudley Boyz b. Ascension – 3D to Viktor

Alberto Del Rio b. Kalisto – Top rope double stomp

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# Monday Night Raw – November

# 9, 2015: It's A Tournament! Uh, Yay!

## Monday Night Raw

Date: November 9, 2015

Location: Manchester Arena, Manchester, England

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

We're across the ocean for the annual European tour and for once it's a big night as the World Title tournament begins. Seth Rollins is out due to a torn ACL, meaning it's time to have a tournament for the vacant title. The brackets will be revealed tonight and it should be interesting to see what they have planned. Let's get to it.

We open with the title on a stand in the middle of the ring as Cole recaps Rollins' injury.

Here's HHH to address the title situation. HHH thanks Seth for always living up to the expectations the Authority had and pauses for a THANK YOU SETH chant. There's going to be a tournament set up with the winner becoming the new champion at Survivor Series. A few weeks ago though, we crowned a new #1 contender so HHH would like Reigns to come out here right now.

While it's true that there's a tournament, it seems unfair to HHH that Reigns should have to walk through the tournament with no advantage. Instead, HHH offers to let Reigns advance to Survivor Series to face the winner of the tournament. The reality is that the Authority was thinking about giving Reigns the spot before they picked Rollins. HHH saw so much potential in Reigns and thinks he could have been the biggest star in the business.

Could Reigns have fought and beaten Brock on his own and then held the title as long as he wanted? It would have been interesting to see. What HHH has seen is Reigns going up against wall after wall and never quitting. All Reigns has to do now is be HHH's man, which Reigns calls selling out.

HHH doesn't like that term and says forget all these morals because he could be given everything that he deserves. He even gets more serious by bringing up Reigns' family. Roman could secure his daughter's daughter's future by just saying yes. The fans still say NO and Reigns says the same because he wants to do it his way. HHH thanks him for reminding him why he didn't pick Reigns in the first place, so welcome to the back of the line. Reigns' first match is right now. This opens a few doors as Reigns could change his mind or someone else could take the spot instead. Most interesting indeed.

### WWE World Title Tournament First Round: Roman Reigns vs. Big Show

Show headbutts him down to start and they go to the floor with Show throwing him over the bottom rope and back inside. See, Show is big and strong. That makes him entertaining in case you haven't gotten it in the last nearly seventeen years. Reigns dives into a chop to the chest and gets whipped across the ring as this is one sided so far. Show's splash gets two and he throws Reigns down again as we take another break.

Total dominance so far but at least we're getting this thing out of the way in the first round instead of sitting through a bunch of Show wins. Back with Reigns firing off right hands but getting caught in a bearhug (that felt like they came back a few seconds early). Reigns throws him off and grabs a Samoan drop, followed by the corner clotheslines. That earns Roman a chokeslam for two but the Superman Punch and spear advance Reigns at 11:57.

**Rating:** C-. Remember all those other matches they've had before? This is the most recent one. There's nothing interesting between these two and no one on the planet believed Reigns wasn't advancing here. At the end of the day, Roman Reigns vs. Big Show is the most simple idea that they have anymore and it's really not working. Find someone else for Reigns to beat up because this match is already rammed into the ground.

Here are the full brackets.

Roman Reigns

Cesaro

Sheamus

Alberto Del Rio

Stardust

Kalisto

Ryback

Titus O'Neil

Kevin Owens

Neville

King Barrett

Dolph Ziggler

Miz

Dean Ambrose

Tyler Breeze

That's uh...pretty lame. You can almost see the finals from here, save for a quick swerve. If they do turn Ambrose heel against a face Reigns, sweet goodness they've lost their minds even more than I thought they had.

Quick video of Undertaker and Kane during their most dominant days. The Wyatts will be paying respect to them later.

Wayne Rooney of Manchester United is here.

WWE World Title Tournament First Round: Titus O'Neil vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title of course. Before the match, Owens says you can buy his theme music on iTunes and put some change in his pockets. "And yes, I actually have pockets on my wrestling gear. That's how awesome I am." Owens talks about how WWE needs change right now and what better place than in the smartest fans in the world here in England. However, Owens thinks they're

dumb for following something like the Royal Family. The change is all about Owens though, because this is his show.

Kevin fights out of the corner to start but gets kicked in the face to knock him outside. We take an early break and come back with Titus fighting out of a chinlock. Titus is told that he isn't on Kevin's level and pounds away in the corner, followed by the dog bark and a missed charge. The Pop Up Powerbomb ends Titus at 6:56.

**Rating:** D. Well at least it's over. This was just an extended workout for Owens and the kind of match he should win with ease. I'm glad we're getting these lame matches out of the way in the early rounds and at least they're keeping them quick. Owens could make a real run in this thing and I hope he doesn't lose clean whenever he's eliminated.

Owens steals JBL's hat. Thank goodness that won't lead to a feud.

Paige thinks Becky Lynch is a rat and the only thing better than beating Baby Flair for the title is beating the B and then taking out the C. I kind of dig that.

Clip of Undertaker beating Sid for the title at Wrestlemania XIII and one of Kane cashing in Money in the Bank to win the title at Money in the Bank 2010.

### Paige vs. Becky Lynch

So do they keep the #1 contender strong or have her lose at home instead? They brawl to start with Becky in trouble against the home country star. The fans quiet down until THIS IS MY HOUSE wakes them up all over again. Paige puts her in the Tree of Woe and pulls back on Becky's arms in an incredibly painful looking hold. They trade abdominal stretches until Becky charges into a superkick (of course) for two. The Rampaige gets the same as Becky is too close to the ropes. Paige loads up the PT0 but Becky rolls her up for the pin at 5:00.

**Rating:** C. They had two options here and they picked the stupid one because this is WWE and that's all they know how to do. Becky and Paige could do something great but that's hard to do in just five minutes. It's

very nice to see Becky get a win for a change though as she hasn't won anything on her own on TV since August.

Post match Paige puts Becky on the table for the PT0 (It's like the same move! BUT ON A TABLE!) until Charlotte makes the save.

Video on Wrestlemania tickets going on sale.

### WWE World Title Tournament First Round: Dolph Ziggler vs. The Miz

They start fast with Ziggler grabbing a leg but having to escape the Skull Crushing Finale. Miz bails from a superkick but walks into a clothesline. Dolph misses a charge into the corner and Miz starts in on the knee. Now it's Miz's turn to have a charge hit buckle and Dolph gets two off a backslide. Miz kicks him in the head and puts on the Figure Four though. Dolph finally makes the rope, pops up and superkicks Miz for the pin at 5:07.

**Rating:** D+. Logical story with the leg work aside, I really wasn't feeling this one. The ending felt completely out of nowhere as Ziggler just popped up and hit his secondary finisher. Shouldn't it at least have been weakened due to the knee injury? Not the worst match here but it's clear that this generation (as in the pre-NXT generation) really doesn't get how to put a match together.

Dolph holds up the title. I wouldn't get used to that Ziggy.

Undertaker dominated people at Survivor Series 2005 and Kane won the Tag Team Titles with Daniel Bryan at Night of Champions 2012.

Here's MexAmerica to say they don't want England around because they're just so hateful. Now England is listening to Germany and Russia and they're despised around the world. Del Rio calls them all haters and Zeb thanks HHH for the first round title match on Smackdown. Wow that's not something you hear on Raw anymore. And when is the last time we saw a promo with no action?

### Natalya vs. Naomi

Natalya's epic FACEBOOK challenges continue as she keeps trying to figure

out who leads Team Bad. Naomi accepted the challenge on Twitter, which may or may not be on the same footing. Natalya helps the fans with the WE WANT SASHA chants. They go to the floor very quickly with Sasha sending Natalya into the post and messing up her leg. Back in and we're already on the chinlockery until Natalya fights up with a clothesline. Natalya: "WE WANT SASHA!" The Rear View misses and Natalya sends Naomi into Tamina for a rollup at 2:05.

Sasha comes in post match and is put in the Sharpshooter until Tamina saves for a beatdown.

Undertaker beat up Edge in the Cell in 2008 while Kane destroyed a wedding in 2005.

#### WWE World Title Tournament First Round: Sheamus vs. Cesaro

The winner gets Roman Reigns and King Barrett is in Sheamus' corner. During the break after Sheamus' entrance, Barrett got in an argument with Wayne Rooney to continue a Twitter feud they had earlier in the year. They brawl into the corner to start as is their custom, while JBL goes on about European sports that most Americans don't care about as is his custom. Sheamus comes back with a quick throw and pounds away with the forearms to the chest as we take a break.

Back with Cesaro fighting out of a chinlock but getting crotched on the top. Cesaro spins around Sheamus' arm and runs him over, only to have both guys fall out to the floor in a big crash. Cesaro is holding his arm and both guys dive in to beat the count at nine. Sheamus drives him into the corner and loads up a Brogue Kick but Cesaro ducks under a Brogue Kick and tries the Sharpshooter, sending Sheamus bailing to the ropes.

Cesaro uppercuts with the bar arm and dropkicks Sheamus off the top to the floor. There's another uppercut against the barricade but Sheamus and Barrett start arguing with Rooney. Wayne slaps Barrett in the face and a running uppercut sets up Cesaro's arm trap small package for the pin at 15:35.

**Rating:** B-. Take two big, strong guys and let them hit each other for a long time. Sometimes you just need a power brawl and that's what you got



here. Cesaro has no chance against Reigns so we'll call this his latest win to make you believe he might be a player a few times before he loses three or so in a row. Good stuff here though, as always between these two.

Tyler Breeze calls Renee ugly and wants to get rid of Dean Ambrose's ugly clothes.

### WWE World Title Tournament First Round: Dean Ambrose vs. Tyler Breeze

This is Breeze's main roster debut. Tyler ducks a clothesline to start and hides in the ropes. Dean loads up a suicide dive but Summer takes Tyler's place and screams to stop Dean. Ambrose takes him down on the other side of the ring and lays on the barricade as we take a break. Back with Dean hammering away in the corner until Breeze throws him to the floor and takes over. Cole lists off all of Breeze's nicknames and we get a nice pinfall reversal sequence.

A rollup out of the corner with feet on the ropes gives Tyler a two count. Dean goes up for a missile dropkick but stuns himself on the landing, possibly injuring his shoulder. If it wasn't hurt though, Tyler sends him into the post twice in a row to make sure it's hurting. A Fujiwara armbar makes Dean scream but he makes the rope for the break. Tyler gets kicked to the floor and a kid who sounds about five says "THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR MESSING WITH DOLPH ZIGGLER!" Back in and Dean grabs a small package for the pin at 11:05.

**Rating:** C+. Good debut for Breeze here, save for the whole losing thing. Why they would put him in a match like this for his debut can only be summed by "WWE is stupid and doesn't get it" but at least it wasn't a squash. You have to assume Ziggler vs. Breeze for Survivor Series, which should be a Tyler win but stupider things have happened.

Here are the updated brackets.

Roman Reigns

Cesar

Alberto Del Rio

Stardust

Kalisto

Ryback

Owens

Neville

King Barrett

Ziggler

Ambrose

The next Undertaker/Kane moments are Wrestlemania XXVIII for Undertaker and the 2001 Royal Rumble for Kane.

The other three first round tournament matches will take place on Smackdown.

Here's New Day to complain about being left out of the tournament. Big E. declares it outrageous that they're being treated like outcasts, even while they stand here so fresh and clean. It wasn't long ago that they laid out Dolph Ziggler (Big E. faints here), took out their childhood favorites the Dudley Boyz and put out John Cena. This match is for their captain Seth Rollins, so get your horns out. Actually never mind because European magic is gar-bage. Kofi: "And Harry Potter sucks."

#### Neville/Usos vs. New Day

A chop sends Woods to the floor and we take a break 32 seconds in. Geez just don't start the match then. Back with Jimmy caught in the Unicorn Stampede but being able to avoid the Warrior Splash. It's off to Neville for the fast kicks and a standing moonsault to Woods, followed by the double superkicks and dives from the Usos.

Neville dropkicks Woods onto his partners and it's time for a big corkscrew moonsault off the top to the floor. Big E. runs over an Uso and Neville goes up for the Red Arrow, only to have the trombone thrown in

for a distraction. Big E. shoves Neville off the top and Xavier grabs a rollup with feet on the ropes for the pin at 8:37.

**Rating:** C. This was exactly what you would expect when you have these six in there. It's good enough with the high flying and fast tags but New Day is much more entertaining when Woods is on the floor being goofy. The Usos will get their rematch and probably the titles back and I'm ok with that at this point. Fun match here but nothing great, ignoring Neville, as in a guy in the tournament, taking a pin of course.

We see the Wyatts taking out Undertaker and Kane recently.

Here's Bray Wyatt to eulogize the Brothers of Destruction. Bray says change is a part of life and determines who you are. They have been the benchmark for over twenty years and they have reigned supreme. He asks us to bow our heads in remembrance but calls the fans fools for chanting Undertaker's name. There was no passing of the torch because Bray took the torch and burned both of them into ashes.

Now he controls the thunder and lightning and the demons respond to his commands. The apocalypse is here. Bray kneels and an Undertaker and Kane highlight video starts playing in reverse before going normally. Bray looks upset and Undertaker's voice says REST IN PEACE. Lightning makes fire come out of the posts and the gong sounds.

Cue Undertaker and Kane to scare Bray even more. They stare him down but the lights go out again (pay your bills you deadbeats) and the other three Wyatts are here. Undertaker punches Bray down and Harper and Rowan are punched away as well. Strowman gets in and takes off his mask but Harper and Rowan have to be chokeslammed first. A double clothesline to the Brothers just causes a double situp and Strowman is sent to the floor. Bray is all alone but Braun has to be sent over the announcers' table. Bray gets chokeslammed to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. I don't like tournaments. They're a fun idea in theory but you wind up seeing the same people fight multiple times and dragging out a concept longer than it needs to go. Now this show did a good job of keeping things moving and at least seemed to set up the semi-finals and finals at Survivor Series. Some of the matches are lame and

you can see where they're going with it, but at least the final match should be fun and there are several seeds being planted for later. Good, efficient show this week but the big stuff is coming soon.

### Results

Roman Reigns b. Big Show – Spear

Kevin Owens b. Titus O'Neil – Pop Up Powerbomb

Becky Lynch b. Paige – Small package

Dolph Ziggler b. The Miz – Superkick

Natalya b. Naomi – Rollup

Cesaro b. Sheamus – Arm trap small package

Dean Ambrose b. Tyler Breeze – Small package

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# Monday Night Raw – November

# 2, 2015: Surviving The Superkick Party

## Monday Night Raw

Date: November 2, 2015

Location: Pepsi Center, Denver, Colorado

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

We're still in the build towards Survivor Series and tonight we might find out who is likely to join Undertaker and Kane in what seems to be a Survivor Series elimination tag against the Wyatt Family. Other than that it's time to build towards Roman Reigns vs. Seth Rollins for the World Title. Let's get to it.

Here's Roman Reigns to say he's glad to be here as the #1 contender and the next World Champion. Rollins on the other hand is a brown nosing kiss up and his luck runs out at Survivor Series. This brings out Rollins who knows that Reigns is good. If he wasn't good then Seth wouldn't have recruited him into the Shield. Rollins hits the verbal recap button (can we please get him to cut that out) as he brings up Wrestlemania but Reigns wants to fight right now.

The champ starts towards the ring and it's the Authority to make sure nothing happens without their approval. Stephanie teases doing the match tonight but says you'll have to watch Survivor Series. So they're heels this week. HHH thinks we should have a five on five elimination tag right here tonight (because building that up for NEXT week is such a bad idea) with Reigns and Rollins as captains.

## Kevin Owens vs. Dolph Ziggler

Non-title. In an inset promo, Owens says he doesn't care about people booing him because no one can beat him. Owens starts right in on Ziggler's bad knee and mocks him as only the champ can do. Ziggler misses a charge in the corner and bangs up the knee again (Owens: "THIS CLOSE!"). Kevin misses the backsplash though and the running knee sends him to the floor. Tyler Breeze and Summer Rae come out as we take a

break.

Back with Breeze and Summer in their roped off seats as Owens chinlocks Ziggler. Dolph finally jawbreaks his way to freedom and limps into a neckbreaker to put Owens down again. A couple of rollups get two each for Dolph but he stops selling the knee so Kevin sends him flying with a release German suplex. The Cannonball is blocked with a superkick but the camera cuts to Tyler and Summer taking pictures instead of watching the near fall. Well to be fair Summer is streaming on something and that's what matters in WWE. Tyler's distraction lets Owens grab the Pop Up Powerbomb for the pin at 11:02.

**Rating:** C-. Not great here and I could have done without hearing about Summer streaming video on whatever she was doing. Back in my day, you watched the video of the match during the match instead of trying to find some video on the internet. Owens is still on a roll though and Breeze gets to mess with Dolph even more so well done.

Post match Tyler goes to pose over Ziggler but gets punched in the face. That earns Ziggler a Beauty Shot as Summer continues to stream.

We look back at 1987 when the first Survivor Series took place on Thanksgiving night. That was a great show.

Rollins recruits Owens for his team tonight with promises of a title match at Wrestlemania.

We look at Paige going full heel last week.

Becky Lynch says the only B in PCB was Paige. Brie comes up and says she's winning the four way for the #1 contendership instead of Charlotte's wacky sidekick. Becky calls Brie her sister's doormat and Renee finds this awesome.

### Cesaro vs. The Miz

Byron: "I've got to get me a section like Cesaro." Cole: "Byron no one likes you." Cesaro nips up out of a wristlock to start but gets sent into the post and barricade to put Miz in control. Back in and we hit the chinlock as Stardust and the Ascension are still watching from the crowd.

The Skull Crushing Finale is broken up and we hit the Cesaro Swing for a LONG time. The Sharpshooter makes Miz tap out at 4:49.

**Rating:** C. Not bad here and it's nice to see Cesaro get a win, even if it's not going anywhere anytime soon. It would be nice to see this Cesaro vs. Stardust thing go anywhere other than just watching for weeks on end but I'm sure that's coming soon enough. I miss the days when you would have matches that didn't have much of a meaning like this one. You can't do that all the time but it's nice once in a while.

Here are the Wyatts with something to say. Bray says every night is special but tonight he wants to give the people something even more important. Everyone here has recently seen Bray and his brothers taking care of Undertaker and Kane but it's not about taking their bodies. The bodies are temporary but their souls live forever.

Unless the souls are consumed by a higher power (there would be a Vince joke here but all of the good ones are probably already covered) like Bray, who has already harvested the souls of Undertaker and Kane. Bray summons the thunder and lightning (thunder rolls and purple lightning comes out of the posts) because he now controls the powers of darkness. A bunch of fireworks go off and we see a highlight video of the Brothers of Destruction. Cool segment but go win something.

#### Lucha Dragons vs. King Barrett/Sheamus

We actually get a video on the Dragons before the match so they must be the next New Day challengers. Kalisto kicks at Sheamus' leg to start but gets shoved away. It's off to Barrett for a kick to the head before Cara monkey flips Kalisto into a 450 for two. The King finally gets going and sends Kalisto outside and into the barricade as we take a break.

Back with Sheamus hammering Kalisto in the corner but he rolls away and makes the tag off to Cara for some house cleaning. A suicide dive takes Barrett out and Sheamus misses a charge into the post. Barrett knocks Cara off the top and onto Sheamus' knees before driving Cara back first into the barricade for two. We hit the chinlock for a bit before Barrett does his kick to the ribs in the corner.

Sheamus gets two off a suplex before it's back to Barrett for the knees against the ropes. The King even does the Dragons pose with a EU-ROPE chant. Cara counters Sheamus' suplex into a DDT and it's back to Kalisto with the real hot tag. A quick rollup gets two but Barrett takes him down and loads up the Bullhammer, only to charge into the Salida Del Sol for the pin at 13:38.

**Rating:** C+. Who had three weeks in the "how long before Barrett gets pinned in an upset" pool? You knew it was coming, I knew it was coming, Barrett knew it was coming. I liked that they're getting the Dragons ready, but you have the Ascension on the roster for this same match. Oh wait we can't do that because having teams go across to a different story might get too complicated.

Jack Swagger comes in to see Zeb Colter and doesn't like the idea of MexAmerica. Colter puts over the idea while also taking a jab at Canada. The camera pans over to Del Rio, who tells Swagger to stay away. Was he just standing there the whole time and no one acknowledged him? Well it makes sense on sitcoms and WWE is a step beneath those so this works.

#### Alberto Del Rio vs. R-Truth

Non-title and in case Del Rio squashing him on Smackdown wasn't enough for you. Truth charges to start and Alberto goes to the floor. Back in and Del Rio grabs the armbreaker across the top rope. Truth comes back with some clotheslines (he wasn't in the armbreaker that long) followed by the ax kick for two. Del Rio kicks him in the head and ties Truth in the Tree of Woe for some kicks to the chest, followed by the top rope double stomp (and yes Truth is still in the Tree of Woe for those of you who ask me if Del Rio is using Finn Balor's move every time) for the pin at 3:23.

**Rating:** D. This could be subtitled "Even we don't watch Smackdown" because it's the same match (plus two minutes) that these two had last week. As usual it makes me wonder why I waste my time on that show when they're not even going to mention it on Raw and just do the same match. Boring match both times too.

Clip of the Raw vs. Smackdown Survivor Series match in 2005.



Rollins lets Big E. and Kofi (still no Woods) join the team if they can find a fifth man. They hold up the unicorns and look like they have ice cream headaches until Xavier returns to complete the team. A TEAM ROLLINS dance party starts but Seth walks off.

Sasha knows the fans want her because she's the Boss. She also reminds JoJo that Halloween was Saturday.

### Sasha Banks vs. Brie Bella vs. Becky Lynch vs. Paige

Winner gets the shot at Survivor Series. No Nikki, who is out with an injury. Brie and Sasha shove each other around to start until Becky dropkicks them down and nips up. Sasha and Becky trade some rollups for two each but Becky starts going after the knee to take over. Brie finally comes back in with a double middle rope dropkick. We get some running BRIE MODE (which now means no facial expressions instead of getting smashed) knees but Paige superkicks Brie down.

Becky and Paige get in a brawl with Lynch going into the steps. Sasha gets two off the double knees in the corner but gets sent throat first into the middle rope. Brie misses the middle rope dropkick and Paige gets a quick two as we take a break. Back with Brie doing the YES Kicks because she doesn't know how to be a heel.

After taking their sweet time we get a Tower of Doom with Sasha taking the superplex and Becky powerbombing everyone down. The Disarm-Her has Brie in trouble but Sasha makes the save and gets two on Becky off a neckbreaker. The Bank Statement has Becky in trouble (she looked like she was tapping) but Paige breaks it up and hooks the Rampaige to pin Becky at 13:18.

**Rating:** B. Now that was more like it. This wasn't about teams or ESTABLISHING CONTROL or who started a revolution because the stupid Stephanie part was erased from existence. This was four women fighting for a title and personal issues, which makes a match so much more interesting than what we've sat through for months.

Paige says anyone who cheered for any of the other three is a loser. Anyone who cheers for Charlotte will be a loser too because she's going

to lose at Survivor Series. Simple words here but it got the point across.

Clip from last year's Survivor Series main event with no mention of Sting. So the show debuted, then nothing happened for 18 years, then it was last year.

### Team Rollins vs. Team Reigns

Seth Rollins, Kevin Owens, New Day

Roman Reigns, Unknown, TBA, TBD, A mystery partner

Elimination rules and New Day comes out first. Woods: "You know we're going to talk so SHHHH!" Big E. talks about surviving the Dudleyz and Kofi says the New Day's favorite band is Survivor. Their favorite reality show? Survivor. Their favorite Destiny's Child song? Survivor. Favorite book and movie? Lone Survivor. Woods: "Technically Last Unicorn but regardless."

First up for the partners: the returning Usos. During their entrance, Cole sounds shocked, until he announces that they'll be on ESPN tomorrow night. The other two are Ryback and Ambrose, neither of which are any sort of surprise. Not that there's anything wrong with that. Woods charges into a superkick to start and Jey adds the Superfly Splash for the elimination at 37 seconds.

Back with Jey taking the rotating stomps in the corner which JBL names the Unicorn Stampede. I can't stand JBL but that's the best name I've heard in years. Owens hits the Cannonball but Jey escapes a chinlock and dives over for the tag to his brother. Big E. gets low bridged to the floor and the double dive takes New Day out. Back in and a frog splash eliminates Kofi at 7:45 to make it 5-3.

An enziguri and a superkick drops Big E. but he crotches Jey on top. The Big Ending makes it 4-3 and a Pop Up Powerbomb takes Jimmy out to tie things up at 9:02. Reigns comes in to clean house and everything breaks down until Owens superkicks Reigns and takes us to a break. Back with Rollins coming in to stomp on Reigns like a good heel should do. After a

long chinlock it's back to Owens for a backplash and some hard right hands to the head.

Reigns slugs away at Rollins but Seth is smart enough to knock Ambrose off the apron to make the hot tag a bit more difficult. It's a double tag to bring in Ryback and Big E. and everything breaks down again. Ambrose does his slide under the bottom rope into a clothesline on Owens but gets sent into the steps. Ryback slips out of the Big Ending and Shell Shock gets rid of Big E at 21:30. Rollins is right there to Pedigree Ryback at 21:50 and we're down to Ambrose/Reigns vs. Ryback/Rollins.

Ambrose gets thrown in for a fight with Rollins and the top rope standing elbow gets two on the champ. Back to Owens for a fireman's carry gutbuster and a lot of trash talk. I could go for Owens vs. Ambrose, even if it's them playing Parcheesi. Seth's top rope knee to the head gets two on Dean and the frustration sets in. Owens stops the comeback with a superkick but Seth knees his partner by mistake.

Dirty Deeds gets rid of Kevin at 27:30 and it's Ambrose/Reigns vs. Rollins. Seth tries to run but keeps getting caught and the beating is on. Rollins is finally caught in the corner for the rapid fire clotheslines. He manages to escape the Doomsday Device but Ambrose keeps him out of the crowd. Rollins grabs a chair though and it's a DQ at 30:03.

**Rating:** B-. First of all: the following people use superkicks.

Paige

Jimmy Uso

Jey Uso

Alberto Del Rio

Luke Harper

Seth Rollins

Dolph Ziggler

Rusev

Kevin Owens

Tyler Breeze

And I might be forgetting some. I know the company edict is that Shawn Michaels is the greatest of all time but LEARN SOMETHING NEW. Even the Young Bucks do something else every now and then.

The match itself was a good, long Survivor Series match and that....doesn't make a lot of sense. The ending is fine, but why in the world would you do a thirty minute main event style match here when you have a pay per view for them in twenty days? This is the annoying thinking that WWE has lately and it drives me crazier every single week. Put the eight guys into a match at the pay per view with title shots on the line or something but don't do it this way. The action was good though and the Usos are clearly going for the titles sooner rather than later.

Rollins cleans house with the chair but Reigns gets in a Superman Punch to send him running to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This show had some major faults and it's really not as good as last week. The main event was a fun idea but again: WHY IS IT HAPPENING THE NIGHT IT'S ANNOUNCED??? Give both guys a week or two to set up their teams and do it on the go home show or something but stop announcing the match and doing it in the same night.

The Wyatt promo was good but I'm always skeptical about believing in Bray's latest push. Let him win something big and I'll buy into him more but until then I'm waiting on the loss in the big match. The Divas match was good and logical, probably because Nikki wasn't there to be treated as the star of the whole thing.

This show worked but the whole idea of having a Survivor Series match three weeks before Survivor Series makes my head hurt. It's the same old WWE booking theory: let's give them the same thing over and over again and then ask them to pay to see it again on a different night. The show

is still WAY better than it was a few weeks ago though and that's a good sign going forward.

### Results

Kevin Owens b. Dolph Ziggler – Pop Up Powerbomb

Cesaro b. The Miz – Sharpshooter

Lucha Dragons b. Sheamus/King Barrett – Salida Del Sol to Barrett

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

Paige b. Becky Lynch, Sasha Banks and Brie Bella – Rampaige to Lynch

Team Reigns b. Team Rollins last eliminating Seth Rollins

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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 us 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 Zigler is dressed as Nikki Sixx. Miz kicks some pumpkins around to start but Zigler holds onto the ropes to block a catapult. As Zigler pulls himself back in, Miz finds a plastic sword. That's fine with Zigler 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 Zigler 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 Zigler 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. Zigler pinning Miz doesn't mean much as Miz can bounce back in no time and Zigler 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.

Zigler 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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# NXT – October 28, 2015: I'm Running Out Of Ways To Say This Show Is Good

## NXT

Date: October 28, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Rich Brennan, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

Things are still picking up around here and we have what should be a good featured match tonight with Samoa Joe vs. Tyler Breeze. Tyler eliminated Joe from the battle royal a few weeks back and has been laughing at Joe for costing him a shot at the title. Other than that we also get part two of Apollo Crews' sitdown interview which should set up a good title match against NXT Champion Finn Balor next week.

Opening sequence.

### Emma vs. Shazza

Two Australians here. Fans: "AUSSIE AUSSIE AUSSIE! OY OY OY!" They stare at each other to start until Emma dropkicks her down against the ropes and stomps away. Dana: "BREAK HER!" After Emma has to kick out of a quick rollup we hit the neck crank on Shazza. Back up and Emma charges into some boots in the corner but Emma comes right back with the Emma Lock for the submission at 4:21.

**Rating:** D+. This was your traditional "here's a new Diva now watch her get squashed" match and that's fine all around. It's a formula that works perfectly well in NXT so why mess with the plan? Building Emma back up before she gets squashed by Asuka is a fine move as it extends the feud for a few more weeks. That's an area where NXT shines and it's a shame so few companies can pull it off.

We look back at James Storm's debut last week.

Storm quotes his old TNA to sum up his character and says he loved to hear the fans tell him he deserves to be here. If anyone has a problem with that, sorry about their luck.

Video on Finn Balor with fans talking about how cool he is and clips of his time in New Japan.

### Tommaso Ciampa/Johnny Gargano vs. Jason Jordan/Chad Gable

The fans are behind Gable again and he starts with Ciampa. They fight over a test of strength with Gable not being able to break it with a monkey flip. The grip continues as they're on the mat for a string of near falls. Gable finally takes over with an armbar and the fans are eating this guy up. Jordan comes in (Fans: "THIS IS WRESTLING!") but can't stop the tag off to Gargano who helps with some double team strikes to the face.

Gargano's front facelock doesn't go anywhere so Jordan picks him up and drives Johnny into the corner. It's back to Gable and the fans are right back at their chanting. Chad's armbreaker over the rope has Gargano in even more trouble but it's quickly back to Ciampa who has even worse luck. The fans think this is awesome and are even happier when Gargano slingshots in with a spear for two on Gable as we take a break.

Back with the fans wanting the Gable to be saved but Ciampa puts a knee into Chad's ribs. Ciampa and Gargano take turns on an abdominal stretch with Gargano adding a running dropkick to the back of the head. Gable finally comes back with a judo throw and makes the tag to Jordan for some dropkicks.

There go the straps (I didn't know we were in Memphis) and it's time for a bunch of suplexes (I didn't know Memphis was next to Pittsburgh). Everything breaks down and Gargano slingshots in with a DDT for two on Jordan. Jason slips out of a double suplex and brings in Chad for the Grand Amplitude for the pin on Ciampa at 14:53.

**Rating:** B. The length surprised me here but they barely stopped the whole

time out there. I'm really glad they just turned Gable and Jordan face because the fans were going to cheer for someone like Chad no matter what he did. Really fun and long match here with a ton of energy that you don't usually see on TV.

Bayley loves the fact that she's the Women's Champion and has no idea why Alexa Bliss has so many problems with her.

Eva Marie is in front of the Moulin Rouge. She's coming back very soon though. Sweet goodness they're embracing this one full boar.

#### Nia Jax vs. Kay Lee Ray

Nia throws her into the corner to start, rag dolls her a bit and puts her in a Canadian backbreaker. That's actually not the submission though and Ray rolls Jax up for two. Kay tries a springboard though and gets caught in a spinebuster. A big legdrop (with an even bigger smile) give Jax the pin at 2:38. That smile runs in the family.

#### Enzo Amore/Colin Cassady vs. Scott Dawson/Dash Wilder

Dawson and Wilder jump them during the entrance and crush Cassady's leg against the video board. I knew those things were going to get someone hurt someday. They work over the leg as Enzo is down and that's how Cass will be written off TV for a legitimate leg injury. No match.

Alexa Bliss challenges Bayley to find a team for a six person tag at some point in the future.

It's time for part two of the Apollo Crews video. He can't believe he's here and that he wrestled in front of 16,000 people in Brooklyn on his birthday. Crews' sister can't believe he's been this successful because she sees him as her little brother. The battle royal was another way for him to prove that he can hang with anyone in NXT and now he wants his chance at his friend's NXT Title.

#### Samoa Joe vs. Tyler Breeze

Breeze bails to the floor to start and the threat of a stomping keeps him on the floor. Back in and Tyler gets in a few shots to the back and poses

on the ropes. That's enough for Joe and he hammers away in the corner to send Tyler back outside. A suicide dive crushes Breeze and takes us to a break. Back with Joe hammering away with the usual including the corner enziguri.

Tyler grabs a quick backstabber for one and a dropkick gets two. A chinlock doesn't get Breeze anywhere as Joe fights up with his variety of strikes and the backsplash for two. The Rock Bottom out of the corner sets up the Muscle Buster but Tyler escapes into a rollup for two more. Breeze nails a quick Supermodel Kick for two and both guys are down. It's time to slug it out with Breeze trying an O'Connor Roll, only to get flipped into the Koquina Clutch (Normally I would ask if he had ever watched a TNA match but that's a very stupid question.) for the tap out at 12:08.

**Rating:** B-. As usual Breeze is good for a solid performance against anyone he gets in the ring with and is still an awesome gatekeeper to get into the NXT main event. This wasn't a classic or anything but for a quick match to further establish Joe as a player in NXT, this did everything it needed to.

Finn Balor is ready for Apollo Crews, who has beaten everyone he's fought. He hasn't fought Finn Balor though, and Crews isn't becoming champion next week.

**Overall Rating:** B. Another week and another efficient use of NXT's time. They did everything they needed to do this week and set up the non-Takeover big show next week with Crews getting his title shot. It's probably too early for him to have a major shot at Balor but it's still cool to see the champ in action. Good show here, as is definitely the standard for this promotion.

## Results

Emma b. Shazza – Emma Lock

Jason Jordan/Chad Gable b. Tommaso Ciampa/Johnny Gargano – Grand Amplitude to Ciampa

Nix Jax b. Kay Lee Ray – Legdrop

Samoa Joe b. Tyler Breeze – Koquina Clutch

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## **The Open Challenge Was Answered By.....**

A surprise.... ..AND HIS NAME IS ALBERTO DEL RIO!!!! As managed by none other than Zeb Colter. This is quite the surprise but why not.