

Smackdown – October 17, 2017: Hug It And Hold It Close

Smackdown

Date: October 17, 2017

Location: KeyArena, Seattle, Washington

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Corey Graves, Michael Cole

It's time to start getting ready for Survivor Series and if you've seen the rumors, you know what the big match seems to be. The previews for the show suggest that A, they're announcing it tonight and that B, they're actually going through with it. Hopefully I'm wrong though and we won't be subjected to that. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Here's General Manager Daniel Bryan for the big home state reception. The fans chant WELCOME HOME and Bryan finally has to say the show is only two hours long. After previewing some of the show, Bryan wants to talk about Sami Zayn. This brings out a dancing Sami to face off with Bryan. Daniel asks what happened to the Sami he's known for over thirteen years.

Sami says he's the same guy but he's taken control of his career again. Bryan gets the idea but Sami cuts him off. It's true that there are similarities, such as them being great in-ring performers. Sami: "Well, I still am." Management never liked either of them either, but Daniel had the fans. The difference is the fans never got behind Sami like they did with Bryan. They didn't uphold their end of the bargain. If Daniel had worked a little smarter instead of a little harder, he wouldn't have had to retire in this very arena.

Bryan was the performer of Sami's generation and every time Sami started catching up to him, Bryan jumped two more steps ahead. Now Sami would never want to be like Bryan: a retired housewife. Cue Kevin Owens to say the same things until Bryan says he and Shane McMahon did what was best for the fans. Owens doesn't buy this and says Bryan is doing what's best for business, which makes him the authority. Sami calls him a sellout and

thanks Owens from becoming what Bryan is now. Bryan leaves, saying he's going to find a couple of dudes to punch them in the face.

We recap Charlotte's issues with Natalya.

Charlotte/Becky Lynch/Naomi vs. Natalya/Tamina/Lana

Carmella is at ringside with James Ellsworth on a leash. Naomi slaps Natalya in the face to start and it's time for a huddle on the floor. A slingshot dive takes out Natalya and Tamina as Lana looks on and yells a lot. Back in and Becky works on Natalya's arm before dropping a leg for two.

We come back from a break with Lana coming in and grabbing a suplex for one. Naomi gets pulled into the villain corner for some stomping as Charlotte plays cheerleader on the apron. A kick to Lana's chest allows the hot tag off to Charlotte and house is cleaned with some chops (Lana has no idea how to sell them). We get the strut as everything breaks down, including a Figure Eight to make Lana tap at 8:43.

Rating: D+. Lana may be stunning but she's not a great in-ring performer. At the end of the day, you just need more ring time than she has and the only way to get that is to be in the ring. That's not going to do her much good in a place like this, which is why she needed more time in developmental. Or we can just write her off as a failure and go from there.

Post match Natalya grabs a chair but Charlotte uses one of her own to chase them off.

Bryan tells Sami and Kevin that everyone wants to punch them in the face. Therefore, tonight it's going to be Sami/Owens vs. Randy Orton/Shinsuke Nakamura. Bryan does the Nakamura pose and Owens isn't happy.

It's time for Pulp Fashion, which should be amazing to put it mildly. Ascension is now in the opening credits, along with the cast of Pulp Fiction, who will NOT be in this show. The bulletin board is full of Quentin Tarantino references, including John Cena as Mr. Orange. The Ascension is being interrogated with Fandango telling them to be cool

like the Fonz. Konnor: "Like when he jumped the shark?" Viktor: "They already did."

Tyler Breeze, as Uma Thurman from Pulp Fiction, does a dance from the movie and finds a cheeseburger. After more movie quotes, Ascension says Breezango hasn't even figured out the case of 2B. Konnor: "It's obviously the Bludgeon..." Fandango cuts them off though as Breeze has fainted. Ascension still wants to be friends and offers Fandango a huge needle to save Breeze's life. That's a big negative though and Breeze wakes up, having fainted at the idea of a gluten free sandwich. In the melee, someone has stolen the briefcase from their table, meaning this story MUST CONTINUE (sweet).

Baron Corbin vs. Sin Cara

Corbin cuts off Sin Cara's entrance and says the US Open Challenge is done for good. Cara wastes no time in kicking Corbin to the floor for a suicide dive. A big dive off the top takes Corbin down again...and Cara wins by countout at 1:22.

The Usos are talking about having the tag division on lock when Chad Gable and Shelton Benjamin come up and rap about how they'll win the titles soon. The champs go for a handshake but Gable and Benjamin pull the hands away.

Video on the Bludgeon Brothers.

Video on Jinder Mahal in India.

Here are the Singh Brothers and Jinder Mahal for a big announcement about Survivor Series. When he was in India, a young boy asked him what was next. After defeating Orton and Nakamura multiple times, the question was who he would face next. Even after those wins, he doesn't receive the level of respect that he should on Smackdown Live. The fans chant YOU CAN'T WRESTLE but Mahal just holds up the title. In order to achieve respect, Mahal must defeat the undefeatable, which means he wants to face Brock Lesnar at Survivor Series. Cole: "Are you kidding me?"

This brings out AJ Styles to a rather nice reception. AJ doesn't care

about Lesnar, but rather about Mahal saying he's beaten all of the worthy challengers on the show. Mahal calls him a loser, which AJ says means there should be no worries about a title defense then. AJ is called a joke so the beating is on with AJ cleaning house in short order.

Post break, Mahal demands that Bryan make AJ vs. Sumil Singh for next week. Bryan is fine with this.

Bobby Roode vs. Dolph Ziggler

Rematch from Hell in a Cell. Bobby takes it to the floor and drives Ziggler into the barricade as we take a break. Back (after one WWE2K18 ad, meaning it's not even a full commercial break) with Roode fighting out of a chinlock and grabbing a catapult into the corner for a double knockdown. A running forearm and swinging Rock Bottom get two on Ziggler. They trade rollups with tights until Ziggler gets another and grabs the trunks for the pin at 3:55.

Rating: D. Oh my goodness this is continuing. The match being short helped a little bit but this feud (Can anyone explain what the issue here even is? Something about Ziggler thinking Roode is all flash and no substance I think?) is turning into one where they're fighting now because they've fought before and that's not a good thing.

Pay per view rundown.

Aiden English is singing and is annoyed when people aren't paying attention to him. New Day comes in with the trombone and a party breaks out. Rusev comes in to declare it his day again. Kofi: "Again? Time to celebrate!" Woods plays Rusev's theme on the trombone and New Day dances off. English starts singing that it's Rusev Day but Rusev cuts him off. I'm assuming a tag match next week.

Shinsuke Nakamura/Randy Orton vs. Kevin Owens/Sami Zayn

Sami works on Nakamura's wrist to start but gets sent into the ropes for a COME ON. Some kicks in the corner have Zayn in trouble and it's off to Orton. That goes nowhere so here's Owens for the slugout instead. Everything breaks down for a few seconds and it's Owens posting Orton,

followed by a fall away slam into the barricade as we take a break. Back with Nakamura loading Owens onto the top for the running knee but Sami makes the save. The knee crashes into the buckle and Nakamura is in trouble. After a quick mocking of Orton, Owens gets two off the backslash.

We hit the chinlock for a few seconds before Nakamura kicks him away and makes the hot tag to Orton. Everything breaks down with Orton dropping Orton onto the barricade and blocking a Zayn dive. Sami gets suplexed through the announcers' table but Owens makes a save at two. Nakamura comes back in and takes care of Owens, leaving Sami to charge into the scoop powerslam. Sami hits Orton low and the Helluva Kick is good for the pin at 13:02.

Rating: C+. Pretty standard main event tag here and that's a good thing in this case. Sami getting the pin through nefarious means is a great way to start off the new heel run. The wrestling wasn't all that great, but at least they had a good ending with Sami being especially evil to give him the first win.

Post break Owens and Zayn laugh at Bryan, but there's a big surprise: Shane is back next week. Back in the arena, Orton and Nakamura aren't happy but Owens and Sami come back in to celebrate (Owens: "Hug me! Hold me close!") to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. I'm digging the heck out of this new Sami run, especially with he and Owens being all happy with the fact that Shane is back next week. Owens already destroyed him and I'm glad that he really wasn't all that scared. The rest of the show worked well too and it's cool to see things picking up after so many horrible weeks.

Results

Charlotte/Naomi/Becky Lynch b. Lana/Tamina/Natalya – Figure Eight to Lana

Sin Cara b. Baron Corbin via countout

Dolph Ziggler b. Bobby Roode – Rollup with a handful of trunks

Sami Zayn/Kevin Owens b. Randy Orton/Shinsuke Nakamura – Helluva Kick to

Orton

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Monday Night Raw – October 17, 2017: All Your Shields In One Basket

I apologize for the delay but the in-laws are in town and I had to pick them up at the airport. They'll be around for a few weeks so things might be a bit slow. The shows will be up that night but they won't likely be on time. Sorry about that.

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 16, 2017

Location: Moda Center, Portland, Oregon

Commentators: Corey Graves, Michael Cole, Booker T.

It's the go home show for Tables, Ladders and Chairs but tonight we're focusing on a cage match with Roman Reigns facing Braun Strowman. In addition to that though we have Dean Ambrose and Seth Rollins defending the Tag Team Titles against the Bar. There's a good chance of a title change with the TLC match this Sunday. Let's get to it.

As expected, we open with a four minute recap of last week's Shield reunion.

Here's Kurt Angle to open things up. Angle hypes up Sunday's main event but here's Shield, through the crowd, to the old music and in the riot gear, drawing a VERY strong THIS IS AWESOME chant. Now why couldn't they do this last week??? Angle lets them have the ring and it's Rollins saying he can't believe they're back. It's been five years since they debuted and he couldn't be happier than to be here with his brothers again.

Ambrose, looking more fired up and charismatic than he has in years, says they divide and conquer like no one else. Maybe he got a bit ahead of himself last week when he said they could fight four, five or six guys but he'd do the same thing again all over. He wants to fight right now so here are the Bar, Miz and Strowman. Angle cuts them off though and says if this fight happens, there's no cage match later. Tensions cool, at least for now.

Elias is with the Club and has a song but the Club wants to warm up their vocal cords. Gallows sounds like a small dog barking before calling us all nerds. Anderson on the other hand clucks like a chicken...and belts out COOL COCKY BAD! Next up is a song about Jason Jordan, meaning it's time for a six man tag.

Elias/The Club vs. Jason Jordan/Titus O'Neil/Apollo Crews

Titus and Gallows start things off as we hear about Titus trying to recruit Jordan to Titus Worldwide. A big clothesline puts Gallows on the floor and everything breaks down as we take a break. Back with Gallows kicking Crews in the head and handing it off to Elias for some stomping. Crews kicks him in the face and dives over to the hot tag to Jordan so house can be cleaned. A belly to belly gets two and it's time for the

running shoulders all over the place. Crews makes the tag and hits the Toss Powerbomb for the pin on Anderson at 6:48. Not enough shown to rate but this was fine.

Short pay per view rundown.

Video on Asuka.

Emma is sick of hearing about Asuka but here's Alexa Bliss to say she feels the pain. Bliss shifts the focus to Mickie James, who body shamed her last week. They're ready for a tag match later tonight.

Video on Brian Kendrick and Jack Gallagher tormenting Cedric Alexander.

Cedric Alexander vs. Jack Gallagher

Hang on a second though as here's Rich Swann to even the odds against Kendrick and Gallagher. Jack wastes no time in slugging away and drops Cedric with a headbutt. We hit the chinlock for a bit before a dropkick to the back has Cedric in even more trouble. Another kick to the chest and it's off to another neck crank. Kendrick offers a distraction, and gets DDT'd by Swann. The distraction lets Cedric hit a Lumbar Check on Gallagher (with an outstanding sell job) for the pin at 3:21.

Rating: D+. Nothing to see until the ending, though you can see the tag match from here. I'm digging Gallagher and Kendrick as a team as of late and they're good for opponents in a match like this. Unfortunately I'm not sure if they're going to go anywhere near the title, which makes this a big of a waste of time. The sell of the ending was great though.

It's time for MizTV with Miz being flanked by the Bar and Curtis Axel but no Bo Dallas. Miz talked about how they're ready to destroy the Shield right now but they'll wait until Sunday night. Sheamus says the Shield will be broken into three pieces. They're ready to destroy Shield and here's tonight's guest: their partner on Sunday, Braun Strowman.

Braun says it's time to destroy the Shield forever and it starts tonight inside the cage. The fans get in a YES/REALLY battle with Miz, who has a bit of a surprise: there's going to be a fifth member of the team. The fans want Curtis Axel but here's Kurt Angle to say this isn't happening.

Kurt has a deal for Miz though: if Strowman wins tonight, the fifth man can join. If Reigns wins though, Strowman is out and it's 3-3 again. Miz says it's on but Angle says everyone is banned from ringside in both the cage match (kind of redundant) and the Tag Team Title match.

Sasha Banks vs. Alicia Fox

Banks made Fox tap in the elimination match last week. Before the match, Fox says she was scratching her nose last week and deserves more respect. Oh and a t-shirt! Sasha wastes no time in trying the Bank Statement but Fox is in the ropes in a hurry. Fox kicks her down and we hit the chinlock in a hurry. There's a backbreaker into a second chinlock on Banks but Sasha won't have any more of this. The comeback takes all of a moment and the Bank Statement makes Fox tap at 2:51.

Fox screeches after the loss.

Post break, Fox attacks Banks in the back and sends her into various things. More screeching ensues.

Here's Enzo Amore for a chat as Graves wants an air sick bag. He misses his title and we see Mustafa Ali costing him the belt last week. Last week, Enzo got ripped off and Kalisto robbed him of the title. This brings out Kalisto for the trash talk but Drew Gulak, Tony Nese, Noam Dar and Ariya Daivari come in for the long form beatdown. Cue Mustafa Ali for the save until the numbers game gets the better of him. This seems a little Survivor Series-ish.

Tag Team Titles: The Bar vs. Seth Rollins/Dean Ambrose

Rollins and Ambrose are defending. Sheamus starts with Ambrose with Dean stomping him down in the corner. The champs clean house in a hurry to start and the stereo dives put Sheamus and Cesaro down with little trouble. Sheamus forearm Dean down back inside and we take a break.

Back with Rollins fighting out of Sheamus' chinlock but getting caught in the Irish Curse for two. Stereo kicks to the ribs get two on Rollins and he can't power out of Cesaro's front facelock. Cesaro isn't taking the risk though and kicks Dean off the apron. The fans chant for Ambrose but

settle for Seth striking away. Cesaro gets backdropped to the floor and a diving tag brings in Ambrose.

Everything breaks down and Cesaro avoids the catapult into the post ala the teeth incident. Double dives take the Bar down and the top rope elbow gets two on Cesaro. Something like a Hart Attack gets two on Dean but the double crucifix is broken up. Instead it's a pair of superkicks to the ribs, setting up Dirty Deeds to put Cesaro away and retain the titles at 12:10.

Rating: B. These teams work very well together and it's amazing how much more interested I was in seeing them fight when the Club and no one else was around to waste our time. It also helps to have Miz doing most of the talking, which was one of the major issues in the previous part of the feud. Good match here, though nothing was coming close to the previous version.

Post break Axel gives the Bar a pep talk because he wants in the main event. Strowman comes in and the pep talking continues. Axel NEEDS to be in that match and is ready to go fight Reigns right now. Strowman: "Then go find him." Axel: "You mean now?"

We look back at Bray Wyatt becoming Sister Abigail last week.

Here's Finn Balor for a chat. He talks about the Celtic festival of Sowan, which sounds like Halloween cranked up to eleven. Last week Finn say Bray's tricks but he has his own too. This Sunday, the Demon will slay a monster of his own. Finn's demon has no fear...and the Demon paint appears on his face. It disappears and Finn says his Demon dreams of nightmares (paint on and off again) and it wants to meet Sister Abigail. Run. Never let WWE get supernatural.

Emma/Alexa Bliss vs. Bayley/Mickie James

Mickie armbars Emma to start and it's quickly off to Bayley for a double back elbow and a Paisan elbow drop. Bliss comes in and takes a kind of Twist of Fate over the middle rope. Emma breaks it up at two and a bunch of yelling takes us to a break. Back with Emma sending Bayley into the buckle a few times for no effect. Emma going into the buckle has some

effect though and Emma is all staggered. A knee drop gets two on Emma but she sends Bayley outside and into the barricade to take over.

Back in and Bliss hits a running slap to the face, followed by a chinlock to slow things down again. Bayley finally sends her throat first into the ropes and it's a hot tag to bring in Mickie. House is cleaned in a hurry and Mickie's top rope Thesz press gets two with Emma making the save. That's fine with Mickie who superkicks Bliss for the pin at 11:21.

Rating: C. Just a quick match to set up something for Sunday. It didn't have anything special to it of course and Mickie isn't likely to win the title but it's a simple enough story that isn't hurting anything. Mickie is great in this role and helps bridge the gap until we get to another big challenger.

Axel goes after the Shield and we cut to a break.

Miz gives his future team a pep talk but asks where Axel is. Braun tells him the news and Miz looks terrified.

Mickie is ready for revenge on Sunday. Those insults hurt but Mickie is proud of her career. She has a three year old at home and can't wait to bring the title home to him.

Sasha vs. Alicia is the Kickoff Show match.

PPV card rundown.

Miz goes looking for Axel...and finds him hanging unconscious upside down from a forklift.

The cage is lowered.

Miz isn't worried about losing his fifth man, because Axel was never in that spot.

Roman Reigns vs. Braun Strowman

Inside a cage and Miz jumps in on commentary. Strowman sends him into the corner to start but it's way too early for the running powerslam. Reigns slips out and tries to climb, only to get pulled down. Some clotheslines

have almost no effect but some big boots have a big more effect. Strowman goes shoulder first into the corner and there are the rapid fire clotheslines. One heck of a spinebuster gets two on Roman and we take a break.

Back with Reigns tasting the cage a few times. Strowman throws him at the cage so Reigns grabs the top for a climb. Now why did he think that would work with Strowman looking at him. Strowman misses a charge and hits the cage though, allowing Reigns to score with some kicks to the face. A Samoan drop gets two with a heck of a kickout so Reigns makes another escape attempt. Cue the Bar to cut Reigns off so Ambrose and Rollins are outside to cut them off. THEN WHAT WAS THE POINT IN BANNING THEM BOTH FROM RINGSIDE???

Braun gets up in time to pull Reigns back inside with a superplex off the cage. Miz: "COVER!!!" Everyone not in the match brawls up to the stage as we cut away from the match entirely. Miz joins them and the fight heads backstage. Again, we're not even looking at the CAGE MATCH WITH TWO MONSTERS FIGHTING EACH OTHER because we need to see this instead. For all we know there's a tango contest going on at the moment as Miz closes a metal door, locking the four of them in the parking lot.

Back to the ring with Reigns fighting to his feet after suffering from a bad bowl of soup as served up by Chef Strowman (prove that it didn't happen). Miz is back on commentary as Reigns goes up top, only to slip down and crotch Strowman. A Superman Punch staggers Strowman and a second puts him down. Strowman throws Reigns in the air but gets Superman Punched again for two.

It's spear time...and Kane's lights come on. Strowman splashes Reigns but eats a spear anyway. Kane comes up through the mat though and stares Reigns down, followed by a chokeslam. A second chokeslam sets up the running powerslam, followed by a Tombstone for good measure. Strowman adds another powerslam and Reigns is done at 17:24.

Rating: C-. Let me make sure I have this straight. Angle bans everyone from ringside so we have SIX PEOPLE interfere? And Reigns loses his first match after the reunion (not fairly but it's a loss)? Here's the thing:

Kane was in Shield's first match and Reigns retired his brother at Wrestlemania so there's definitely a connection there. Unfortunately we didn't hear anything about that and it's basically just the idea that Miz got Kane to join for no apparent reason. Of course the announcers sold things well here, though there's a better story to tell.

Miz, on top of a ladder, announces Kane as the fifth member of the team to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Sunday really is a case of a one match card and the more they add to that, the less I'm sure it's going to work. Putting eight people into one match isn't often a good idea and it takes away a lot of what you might be able to get elsewhere. Really, what else is there? Sister Abigail vs. the Demon sounds more like a joke than anything else. The women's match feels standard and I'm not thrilled with two cruiserweight matches. There's a good chance I could be wrong, but if that main event doesn't work, they're in major trouble.

Results

Jason Jordan/Titus O'Neil/Apollo Crews b. Elias/The Club – Toss Powerbomb to Anderson

Cedric Alexander b. Jack Gallagher – Lumbar Check

Sasha Banks b. Alicia Fox – Bank Statement

Seth Rollins/Dean Ambrose b. The Bar – Dirty Deeds to Cesaro

Mickie James/Bayley b. Alexa Bliss/Emma – Superkick to Bliss

Braun Strowman b. Roman Reigns – Running powerslam

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Thought of the Day: If That's Foreshadowing... Just Wow

So I'm working on the 5000th review (currently at 25 pages and I'm just over halfway done) and I picked up on something I hadn't seen before. I don't know if this was intentional, but it's such an amazing match that I can buy it being possible. As you've probably seen a million or so times, the theme song to Wrestlemania X7 is Limp Bizkit's My Way. One line of that song says "someday you'll see things my way."

After the main event, Austin shakes Vince's hand and sides with him for the first time ever. In other words, after three years of all out war, Austin sees things Vince's way. If that was the idea, I'm buying a hat to take it off to whoever's idea that was.

Thought of the Day: Never Have They Ever

Ok so this is actually trivia. Booker T. and Shawn Michaels never met in a singles match, including on house shows. They

wrestled in tag matches and against each other in the Elimination Chamber but they never wrestled one on one. You really would have thought that would have happened at some point in their careers.

Judgment Day 2003 (2017 Redo): Judge Not Lest Ye Have To Watch This Show

Judgment Day 2003

Date: May 18, 2003

Location: Charlotte Coliseum, Charlotte, North Carolina

Attendance: 13,000

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz, Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

Let's get this over with. I don't remember a time when the TV leading up to a pay per view has been this miserable and the mere idea of this show is making me cringe. Sometimes a show can throw in a surprise or two but I can't think of a single match that actually gives me hope on this one. Let's get to it.

The opening video is a shot of gallows with kids reciting a rhyme about evil (it's the same one from the Biker Taker vignettes). Basically everything leads us here and it ends tonight.

Here's Steve Austin to open things up with an interview instead of a match. I'm so thrilled already. He's not out here to run his mouth and waste your time because there's a bunch of great matches tonight. Are we looking at the same card? Austin is going to watch in the crowd with the fans...in a sky box, with a bunch of beer. Lawler seems to think a sky box means sitting in the cheap seats as Austin gives Tazz a beer and heads into the crowd.

John Cena/FBI vs. Spanky/Chris Benoit/Rhyno

Cena says that being he's with the FBI giving out black eyes, he'll have the people cheering the bad guys. It's Palumbo/Stamboli with Cena here as this is a bonus match. Spanky dives onto everyone but gets decked by Cena as we start fast. Cole says he knows all about rapping because he's a shoelace. The FBI plants Spanky with a double slam and cranks on his legs for good measure.

Palumbo slaps on a bearhug as Tazz and Cole discuss beer. A hard clothesline cuts Spanky off but he headscissors Palumbo into Stamboli. That's enough for the hot tag to Benoit, meaning it's time for the German suplexes. Nunzio comes in and eats a Gore but he's still able to break up Sliced Bread #2. The distraction is enough for Stamboli and Palumbo to hit the Kiss of Death (Demolition Decapitator with a legdrop instead of an elbow) for the pin.

Rating: D. The match was energetic while it lasted but that's the problem: it wasn't even four minutes long. Why in the world did we need a pay per view opener that lasts as long as a TV match? The people involved in this match deserve a little more than this, though at least they were on the pay per view card.

Austin is in the sky box having a woman make him a hot dog when Eric Bischoff comes in. Everything they have is split between them so Austin gives him the hot dog. Bischoff is annoyed that there's no scotch so he'll have a beer. In a glass that is, which Austin doesn't appreciate.

We recap La Resistance vs. Test/Scott Steiner, which is all about the Iraq War and how horrible you are if you don't completely support it.

Test/Scott Steiner vs. La Resistance

Test and Rene Dupree slug it out to start until a backdrop puts Rene down. It's off to Steiner for some more aggressive offense, including a push-up elbow. Dupree sends him outside though and Sylvan Grenier drives him back first into the apron. The announcers debate France vs. America as Grenier's chinlock doesn't get him very far. A middle rope clothesline gives Grenier two but Steiner suplexes his way to AMERICAN freedom.

The hot tag brings in Test to clean house to silence. Test steals the beret and gets rolled up for two as everything breaks down. The pumphandle slam plants Rene but Stacy Keibler gets on the apron for no logical reason. Dupree dropkicks Test into Stacy, who lands in Steiner's arms. After putting Stacy down, Steiner tags himself in for the reverse DDT on Dupree for no cover. Test boots Steiner by mistake and gets sent outside, leaving Steiner to take the double spinebuster for the pin.

Rating: D. Another TV match here but in this case keeping it short was the right idea. This feud isn't interesting and Test vs. Steiner isn't likely to be much better. Fighting over Stacy is fine, but it would be better if they could have anything resembling a good match. The tag division needs La Resistance though, even if they're not all that interesting of a team.

Stacy stays behind to check on Steiner.

Mr. America arrives and runs into Gregory Helms, who has been told that he's Hulk Hogan. America's sources have told him that Helms is really the Hurricane. They agree that their sources are idiots. Clever idea but it's hard to buy Hogan's push meaning much when he's having a match with Roddy Piper.

Eddie Guerrero has found a replacement partner for the injured Chavo. It's Tajiri, who gets a gold medal and knows that they lie, cheat and steal.

Tag Team Titles: Team Angle vs. Eddie Guerrero/Tajiri

Eddie and Tajiri are challenging in a ladder match. The brawl starts in the aisle as the champs aren't happy with Eddie destroying their framed picture of Angle earlier in the week. Eddie gets sent into the ladder, leaving Tajiri to get double teamed inside. A gorilla press drop onto Haas' knee has Eddie in more trouble and it's time for another ladder. Tajiri seems to mess up a dive over the top so Eddie dives over the top onto Shelton to get the focus back.

The champs go for the belts but Tajiri breaks it up with the handspring elbow. Haas gets crotched by the ladder in the corner and it's time for a

second ladder. Shelton pulls Tajiri off the ladder, sending him face first into one of the rungs for a scary looking crash. Thankfully he's ok, though Eddie isn't quite as good thanks to a powerslam into the ladder in the corner. In a creative spot, Haas puts Tajiri across a ladder and bridges it over the top, leaving Shelton to jump off the ladder, over Haas, and onto Tajiri's back.

Eddie has to make a save with Haas falling out to the floor in a heap but then wedges the ladder in the corner instead of going up. Naturally he gets sent into the ladder for his efforts, satisfying wrestling rule #3. Tajiri is back up with the hard kicks to the face and he runs them over with the ladder for good measure. The Tarantula has Haas in trouble but it's Shelton making the save with a shot from the ladder.

Back in and the champs beat on Eddie but Shelton gets monkey flipped into the ladder into Haas to put everyone down again. Eddie sends Benjamin outside but the champs are back up for the save. Benjamin is knocked right back down, only to have Eddie frog splash him instead of going for the belts for no apparent reason. Charlie and Eddie go up and this time it's a sunset bomb to bring Haas right back down. Tajiri is finally back up to mist Shelton, allowing Eddie to pull down the titles for the win.

Rating: B-. Good though not a great match here. This would have been a much better match with Chavo involved (As in it would have made more sense. Tajiri's work was fine.) but as it is, it feels kind of thrown together. That's not on the wrestlers of course, but at least they made it work as well as they could.

Bischoff and Austin think they should sign Eddie but Austin makes Bischoff eat a hamburger and have another beer. Hang on though as Austin has to make fun of the way Eric drinks, including opening the box to get the crowd even more on his side. This eats up way too much time.

Chris Jericho thinks he'll win the Intercontinental Title when Roddy Piper comes in to make fun of him. They insult each other's talk shows and Chris brings up Piper ripping the kid's leg off on Thursday. That was an accident though, just like Jericho being born. They both promise to win their matches tonight and that's about it.

We get a very nice video on the history of the Intercontinental Title before the battle royal to bring it back. They cover a good chunk of the title's history and show off some great moments. As usual, WWE knows how to do its history well.

Intercontinental Title: Battle Royal

Booker T., Christian, Lance Storm, Chris Jericho, Goldust, Kane, Val Venis, Test, Rob Van Dam

The title is vacant coming in and only Booker isn't a former champion. Naturally, Pat Patterson gets to come out and hold up the title. And yes it's Venis, as the Chief Morely gimmick is officially gone. After some VERY long entrances, we're ready to go. Everyone goes after Kane to start (well duh) but he shrugs them off without much effort and gets rid of Storm. With Van Dam down, the others are able to get rid of Kane but he comes back in to beat everyone up.

Booker is up first and dumps Test, followed by Goldust doing the same to Venis. Jericho tosses Van Dam and we're down to Christian, Goldust, Booker and Jericho in about two minutes. Then why not just do a four way for the title? It turns into a glorified tag match with the good guys fighting back so Goldust can hit Shattered Dreams on both guys. Booker does a Spinarooni to celebrate but Goldust tries an elimination. That's fine with Booker, who dumps him out without too much trouble.

That leaves Booker and the Canadians and the double teaming is on in a hurry. Booker fights off an elimination attempt though and throws Jericho over, only to have him skin the cat in an always impressive move. Back in and the now bloody (not bad) Jericho forearms Booker down but Christian shoves him over the top during a Lionsault attempt.

Booker kicks Christian down and scores with a flapjack but the referee gets bumped. If you can't book a nine man battle royal without a ref bump, you might just kind of suck at your job. As you might expect, Booker dumps Christian but no one sees it, leaving Christian to deck Patterson. Booker gets belted as well and Christian tosses him to win the title. As you might expect, Austin does nothing to fix this and the fans' chants for GOLDBERG go unrequited.

Rating: D. That ending actually made my head hurt. How in the world do you overbook a battle royal that doesn't even last twelve minutes? Christian winning is fine, but there are other ways you can make it work. Have he and Jericho as the final two and then have Christian dump Jericho out. That's not even cheating but makes him look like a villain at the same time. Why is that so complicated?

Sable and Torrie get catty before the bikini contest. I think this is supposed to be Sable hitting on her again. If Sable wants one of the Divas this badly, go after Dawn Marie who seems to be more into it.

We recap Sable vs. Torrie, which is as obvious of an idea as you can get.

Tazz is hosting, which is only slightly better than Lawler. Lillian Garcia sings Torrie to the ring as they're putting a little too much thought and effort into this. She sings the chorus three times as this is going on WAY too long already. Anyway, both get fifteen seconds to disrobe and gyrate.

They both do their thing and the fans say it's a tie, even though Sable's reaction was clearly louder. The fact that her swimsuit was smaller has no bearing on this at all I assure you. Actually hang on though as Sable takes off the swimsuit she's wearing to reveal a smaller one, which is enough for Tazz to give her the win. Torrie gives Sable a rather passionless kiss to end things.

Austin torments Bischoff with more food and beer.

Piper rants to Sean O'Haire about Jericho when Vince McMahon comes in. Roddy better be ready because it's a big night for the boss. Without Piper there would be no Hogan and now Piper is the epitome of ruthless aggression.

We look at Piper attacking the fan who Mr. America had waving the flag, resulting in the fan's artificial leg being ripped off. Piper seemed upset but Vince didn't buy it, which was all the proof he needed to send Piper after America's mask. As usual, there is so much wrong/stupid about that idea, I don't even know where to start so we'll move on.

Roddy Piper vs. Mr. America

America brings out a chair, presumably to counteract Sean. Actually it's for Zack Gowen, the fan whose leg was ripped off. So to clarify: this story is now about Vince, Stephanie, Piper, Mr. America and Gowen. After those five people is Sean O'Haire, whose lone match in this whole thing was a less than five minute match with Rikishi, where Piper had to help him win. And people wonder why this period is so loathed. America gets double teamed to start until Sean is sent outside.

Some right hands get America out of trouble and as the referee yells at O'Haire, the mask comes up to bite Piper. So I'm assuming Vince isn't watching the match and can't see 90% of Hogan's face there? O'Haire pulls America to the floor for some right hands, allowing Piper to whip him with the weightlifting belt. We hit a terrible sleeper until it's time to America up. The big boot connects but here's Vince so Piper can get in a low blow. O'Haire brings in a pipe but hits Piper instead, setting up the legdrop to give America the pin as Gowen holds Vince back.

Rating: F. Of course it was terrible but at least they kept it fairly short. As anyone could have guessed at the beginning of this thing though, it's not doing anyone other than Hogan and Vince any good. Unfortunately that includes O'Haire, who has gone from what should be a can't miss prospect to a bumbling lackey who can't do anything right.

Stephanie McMahon tells HHH to be careful.

We recap HHH vs. Kevin Nash, which is over Nash coming back and not liking HHH and Shawn Michaels fighting. HHH then attacked Nash for not picking the right side and we have a World Title match as a result, despite Nash making Roman Reigns like Hogan in the 80s.

Raw World Title: HHH vs. Kevin Nash

HHH is defending and Ric Flair and Shawn Michaels are the seconds. I'm not sure who was thinking it's a good idea to have Flair come out in his own entrance in Charlotte if they want Nash to be cheered but this show has bigger problems to deal with. The brawl is on in the aisle before the bell with Shawn and Flair fighting to the back. I doubt we'll be seeing

them again.

Nash and HHH slug it out on the floor with the bell ringing shortly thereafter. A backdrop has the champ in early trouble as JR is already saying this isn't going to be the highest quality match. Nash hits a big forearm and flips the hair so you know it's serious. HHH finally gets in a neckbreaker to get us up to about five moves in the first three minutes. Nash is back with more right hands and a shove to the referee, who pulls him off by the hair. He'll never referee in this town again.

HHH gives us the required ref bump and a low blow before taking the turnbuckle pad off. Nash comes back with the usual but gets sent into the exposed buckle. The Pedigree gets two with the kickout earning a slightly disturbing positive reaction. A backdrop puts HHH on the floor and he comes back in with the sledgehammer to knock the referee down for the DQ.

Rating: F+. Only because it was slightly more watchable than Hogan vs. Piper. The match didn't even last as long as their brawl a few weeks back and now the feud gets to keep going because they're friends. Nash showed that he was washed up in 1999 and has only gotten worse in the years since. It was as bad as you would expect and a World Title match going less than eight minutes on pay per view is pretty unacceptable.

Nash beats up HHH because THIS MUST CONTINUE. He grabs the hammer and stalks HHH up the aisle, setting up a Jackknife through the announcers' table.

Austin makes Bischoff eat jalapenos and vomiting ensues.

Women's Title: Jazz vs. Victoria vs. Trish Stratus vs. Jacqueline

Jazz is defending and this is one fall to a finish. It's a brawl to start until the villains are sent outside, leaving Trish to counter an early wristlock. Victoria and Jazz come back in with with the champ hitting some double chickenwing facebusters. Trish gets caught in the STF and Jacqueline puts Victoria in the half crab at the same time.

It's Trish getting to the rope first so Jazz can kick Jacqueline for the save. After a Matrish to avoid a clothesline (Lawler: "Trish just got

reloaded!”), the Chick Kick gets two on Jazz. The Stratusfaction is broken up with Trish being thrown over the top and landing face first on the floor in a scary crash. Back in and Jacqueline suplexes Victoria, only to get DDT'd to retain Jazz's title.

Rating: D. That Trish landing looked great (and rather scary) but the time and a lack of a story killed whatever they could do here. What are you supposed to get out of a sub five minute match that you could probably see on Raw? The division is still dying for some fresh blood as these four can only fight so long. We passed that point months ago but it's still the same lineup every month.

Trish has a cut lip and stares at Jazz, again meaning this must continue.

We recap the main event. Big Show attacked Rey Mysterio at Backlash so tonight it's Brock Lesnar standing up to the monster in a stretcher match.

Smackdown World Title: Brock Lesnar vs. Big Show

Lesnar is defending and you have to put your opponent on the stretcher and get it over the finish line. During the entrances, Cole mentions that this is the first stretcher match in the company in 17 years since Andre the Giant vs. Killer Khan in 1986. You really would think he would get it right after all these weeks but alas, Cole isn't that bright (it was 1981). Also, Show brings a stretcher backboard with him with Mysterio, Benoit and Lesnar written on the back. Only Mysterio's name is crossed off, making Show look even lamer than usual.

Lesnar wastes no time in taking over and hitting Show with the board to knock him outside. A few more shots have Show in trouble and Brock sends him into the board, which is in front of the post. Show is back up and drops him across the stretcher before hitting Brock in the back with the backboard. A chokeslam plants Lesnar in the ring as I wonder why there's a referee inside with them.

Show drops a leg onto Lesnar onto the board and it's stretcher time. The champ kicks his way off though and a few backboard shots has Show in trouble. Some choking with a camera cord and Lesnar puts Show on the

stretcher as the announcers say it can't be done. Seriously it's not that big of a deal. Show fights out again so Lesnar rams the stretcher into his ribs.

A tug of war goes to Show...and he throws the stretcher down and puts its pad on another stretcher. More backboard (albeit from a different backboard) have Lesnar in trouble as this just keeps going. Back up and Brock knocks him off the apron and onto/back off of the stretcher. As Cole incorrectly says the first WWE Champion was crowned forty years ago yesterday (it was forty years ago yesterday that Bruno won the title to become the second champion), Rey Mysterio comes out to distract Show.

The distraction lets Brock drive a freaking forklift into the arena and dive off the thing with a crossbody/clothesline. A suplex into the F5 (more of an AA) allow Lesnar to throw him onto the forklift (Why can't he just put him onto the stretcher then?) and wheel him across the finish line to retain.

Rating: D+. This could have been a lot worse and it needed about five minutes cut out but it was a watchable enough main event. The problem here was the stretcher rule was completely tacked on and Show only having one of the three names crossed off made me shake my head. They should have done a last man standing match here or something like that, though it's not terrible or anything.

Overall Rating: D-. Yeah this really didn't work in the slightest. The ladder match was good and the main event was watchable but everything else was anywhere from terrible to a disaster. Aside from the America vs. Piper match and the awful World Title match, everything on here felt either unimportant or worth your time. Nothing on here felt like it needed to be on a pay per view and that scares the heck out of me considering the single branded shows start in June. Really bad here and that's not surprising when you consider the TV leading up to it.

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Smackdown – May 15, 2003: One of the Only Times WWE Has Disgusted Me

Smackdown

Date: May 15, 2003

Location: 1st Mariner Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

It's the go home show for Judgment Day and I have my notebook ready for all the questions I have regarding the Mr. America storyline. Given how little sense the whole thing makes if you listen to what everyone says, I'm likely to leave far more confused than I was when I came in. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Vince McMahon opens things up and he's SURE who Mr. America is. No one could possibly question the fact that Mr. America is Hulk Hogan. See, Mr. America doesn't uphold traditional American values because he's deceiving everyone around here. After pausing for the WHAT chants, Vince complains about Hogan getting two checks (which would likely be signed by Vince himself, making me wonder who he signs American's checks to) and on top

of that, Mr. America doesn't care that he batters women.

We see a clip of America knocking Vince into Stephanie, though Vince blames her for it just as much. He's not going to deal with Hogan himself though because we're having an open contract at Judgment Day with someone getting to deal with Hogan him/themselves. Cue the FBI of all people with Nunzio offering their services to deal with Mr. America. He even has a video resume of their greatest hits and Johnny promises to be on Hogan like baked on ziti. They'll go talk about it over coffee while Palumbo has a match.

This was WAY too long and really just established that America will have a match on Sunday and the FBI of all people are getting involved. The FBI isn't interesting and are just a step above a Three Stooges sketch. Ignoring the fact that they might make for a better match for Mr. American than Vince or Roddy Piper, this was a really long waste of time.

Chuck Palumbo vs. Rikishi

Palumbo stomps away in the corner but accidentally hits Johnny in the face. A belly to belly gives Rikishi two but Johnny trips him up again. The superkick gives Palumbo two, only to have Rikishi's version knock him into the corner. Johnny breaks up the Stinkface and gets pulled inside, allowing Palumbo to hit a second superkick (in just over three minutes) for the pin.

Rating: D-. So Rikishi is now dealing with the FBI and having bad matches at the same time. At least it's better than wasting people like Chris Benoit on them, though it would be nice if Benoit actually had anything interesting to do at the moment. At least he wouldn't use three superkicks in the same match. He's not a Young Buck after all.

Post match Brock Lesnar arrives and comes to the ring to give Palumbo an F5 in retaliation for last week.

Stephanie cuts Brock off in the back and explains a stretcher match to him in that classic Stephanie style of speech that no one ever uses in the real world. I know most wrestlers do that but no one can make it sound as robotic as she can.

Mr. America visited some wounded troops.

Torrie Wilson comes out to show us one bikini she's considering for Sunday. As usual she looks great but I still don't know why I'm supposed to want to pay to see her in another one when she's in Playboy at the moment.

Stephanie is admiring two sets of flowers (one red and yellow, the other red and white) when Vince comes in. He would have gotten Mr. America's mask off last week if not for her screwing up so he accepts her apology. She's not apologizing though because she's gotten flowers from Hogan and America. Stephanie is leaving because Vince has everything under control tonight. Vince breaks both vases.

Clip of Rey Mysterio being injured at Backlash. He's back for an interview tonight.

Cruiserweight Title: Matt Hardy vs. Tajiri

Matt, who thinks Tajiri weighs too much to be a cruiserweight and can eat more sushi than him, is defending with Shannon Moore and Crash in his corner. Tajiri snapmares him down to start but gets jumped from behind. The kicks have Matt in trouble but Tajiri has to deal with Shannon, allowing Matt to hang him over the top rope. The Side Effect sets up an abdominal stretch from the champ, only to have Tajiri kick him down again. Rapid fire strikes have Matt in trouble and there's the handspring elbow for good measure. Crash breaks up the Tarantula though and it's the Twist of Fate to retain Matt's title.

Rating: D+. Perfectly fine match here but there's only so much you can do with four minutes and three people fighting Tajiri at the same time. Tajiri continues to be one of the most consistent guys on the roster and could do a lot more if he was given the chance. At least he did well while he was out there.

Matt says he has the Mattributes to take care of Mr. America because that story is now invading the cruiserweights.

Eddie Guerrero, wearing the gold medal, is talking to a framed Kurt Angle

photo and talks about Chavo being injured in a match overseas. There's no reason to worry though because he's Latino Heat. He even puts a mustache and beard on Angle's face.

Stephanie runs into Mr. America as she's leaving and asks him to thank Hogan for him. She even throws in a kiss on the cheek.

John Cena vs. Chris Benoit

Cena wants to face Mr. America so he can turn him back into the Hulk so quick you'll think his name is Bill Bixby. As for Benoit, instead of the Canadian Crippler, he'll be the crippled Canadian. Benoit wastes no time in driving him into the corner before getting one off a backbreaker. A heck of a chop has Cena clutching his chest but he's still able to send Benoit shoulder first into the post. The ensuing armbar makes sense but Benoit is right back up with a chop and a snap suplex.

Cue the FBI to distract Benoit so Cena can knock him outside, earning themselves a quick ejection. Back from a break with Cena holding a chinlock and getting two off a shoulder. Cena stomps on the leg but gets sent into the middle buckle off a drop toehold. There's the first German suplex into the Swan Dive but Nunzio runs in. Benoit gets rid of him in a hurry and reverses the FU into the Crossface, only to have Johnny the Bull come in for the DQ.

Rating: C. What does it say that this is pretty easily the best match I've seen on WWE TV this week? Above all else, it's two guys having a match and actually trying for a change, which is a lot more than you can say about almost anything that happens on Raw. Is it that much to ask for some effort in these matches?

Rhyno and Spanky come in to help Benoit clean house.

Video on the UK tour.

It's time for Piper's Pit with Sean O'Haire backing Piper again. Piper talks about the contract because this is the biggest story in the world at the moment. Some people want to collect the bounty for their careers and some people want to do it to suck up to Vince. Well Piper is going to

do it because he hates Hogan.

This brings out Mr. America, who hands the flag to a guy in the front row, which sounds like a plot point. America gets why Piper has issues with Hogan because he remembers Hogan beating Piper up when he was a kid. He's cool with the match with Piper because I guess Mr. America gets to decide who collects bounties on him. Piper says Hogan has never beaten him 1-2-3 (yes he has) and goes on a rant about the kid waving the flag. Sean goes outside to deal with the kid, allowing Piper to jump America from behind.

America fights back but Sean makes the save, only to have the fan jump the barricade and prevent the mask from being taken off. A spear takes the fan down and Piper chokes away, only to yank off his artificial leg. That freaks Piper out and the villains leave. Oh don't worry about it. Nash did it on purpose in 1996 and he's main eventing the pay per view on Sunday. Sean even yells at Piper because cheating on your wife or whatever his thing of the week was ok but attacking an adult fan who jumped you from behind? Not cool bro.

After the entrances to the next match, Vince yells at Piper and O'Haire for messing with a fan like that. Sean: "Mr. McMahon, I had nothing to do with this." YOU SPEARED HIM DOWN SO PIPER COULD BEAT HIM UP! Vince tells them to stay there while he makes up his mind about what he's going to do. Piper stands there, which is way out of character for him. Vince leaves and Sean blames Piper for what happened because his career is on the line.

Shelton Benjamin vs. Eddie Guerrero

Eddie has the picture of Angle and comes out in a sombrero. Shelton takes Eddie down and yells a lot before hitting a forearm to the face. A chinlock slows things down but Eddie is right back up with a middle rope hurricanrana. One heck of a powerbomb plants Eddie for two but also kickstarts his comeback with a couple of dropkicks. Right hands in the corner set up the rolling suplexes but here's Charlie Haas with a ladder. The distraction lets Shelton hit a superkick for the pin. That's totally different than the finish to the opener. This one had a ladder you see.

Rating: D+. Not enough time to mean anything and having the same finish used in two out of four matches is about as pitiful as you can get. Agents should be smarter than that and able to come up with a better finish. If nothing else just ask Eddie what he thinks would work here, as I'm sure he can come up with something other than distraction into a superkick.

Eddie fights them both off and busts the picture over Shelton's head.

Piper and O'Haire haven't moved when Vince comes back in. He buys Sean caring about what happened (as the most interesting part of his character is erased) but Piper doesn't care at all. That's just what Vince wants though and that's why he's facing Hogan on Sunday. My goodness they're actually going there and Vince is actually saying Piper is better than John Cena, the Cruiserweight Champion (and his minions) or the FBI. And people wonder why the future was so bleak.

And now, the Miss Elizabeth piece from Confidential. She passed away from a cause that wasn't determined yet (because it was less than two weeks ago when this aired) and Vince says she was just a commodity in WCW. They talk about her career, the battery charges from Lex Luger, and then her death. In probably the lowest point since...oh I'd think the Melanie Pillman interview, we hear the actual 911 call of Luger saying she wasn't breathing. I'm not even sure how to respond to that so we'll move on. This is of course edited off the Network version.

And now, after hearing a 911 call of a woman dying earlier in the month, Sable comes out and shows off her own bikini. Now pay up if you want to see it again!

Pay per view rundown.

It's time for the Mysterio interview. First of all, he'll be back in the ring in a few weeks and he wants the Cruiserweight Title. He didn't think he'd be able to wrestle again and he wondered if that was it when he was laying in the ambulance. Rey isn't sure about ever facing Big Show again....and Big Show kidnaps him.

Post break Show brings Rey out to the ring while carrying a backboard in

the other hand. Rey tries to fight back and manages a 619, only to get caught in something like a Samoan drop. Lesnar runs out to save Rey from the chokeslam and beats Show down with the board. The F5 connects but Tazz sees a problem: Show is too big to be put on a stretcher! HOW WILL BROCK SURVIVE??? Rey adds in a bulldog to drop Show and then hides behind Brock to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. I only have one question this week: how did the Mr. America storyline manage to take over even more of the show??? Lesnar vs. Big Show isn't interesting but I'll take it over America vs. Piper and Vince running down most of his heels to say that Piper is the best option he has to take Hogan out. There was some passable wrestling on the show this week but the stories are just killing anything that might be seen as positive. Another bad show this week as Mr. America vs. Vince is swallowing the show alive.

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205 Live – October 10, 2017:

It Won't Last Long

205 Live

Date: October 10, 2017

Location: Van Andel Arena, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

It's suddenly a different era on 205 Live as Kalisto won the Cruiserweight Title last night in a big surprise. On the downside though, it seems that we've lost Neville for the time being as he might be leaving the company due to not being happy with a variety of things. Hopefully things get better for both the division and the show so let's get to it.

We open with a four and a half minute recap of last night's events.

Opening sequence.

Renee Young brings out Kalisto for a chat. Kalisto is fired up to have a luchador as champion and brings up dedicating the match to Eddie Guerrero. Cue Enzo and Ariya Daivari to say this party needs the Zo. He put the division on his back but Kalisto just used it like a backpack. Enzo isn't cool with the people he's been carrying lifting Kalisto on his shoulders like it was the end of Rudy.

Then Mustafa Ali attacked him like a guy who needs to stay out of his bag. He accuses Kalisto of stealing the title, just like Eddie Guerrero would have done. Kalisto says he did just what Enzo said to do and that's win at any cost. Enzo says Kalisto is making the title look as disgusting as whatever is underneath the mask and the new champ doesn't have the money that Enzo does. The rematch is on for TLC but the brawl is on right now. Ali runs out for the save and the good guys clean house.

Rich Swann is ready to take TJP out once and for all because their friendship is done.

TJP vs. Rich Swann

2/3 falls. Swann wastes no time with a flip dive to the floor as the

fight starts before the bell. TJP is right back by sending him into the barricade though and now we head inside for the opening bell. The match officially starts and they're already back outside less than fifteen seconds later.

Back in and we hit the kneebar but Swann quickly reverses into a rollup for the first fall. TJP is livid and hammers away for some early near falls. A dropkick staggers Swann but TJP stands around for too long, allowing Rich to hit one of his own. TJP's springboard forearm sets up the chinlock before going into a cross between a Cloverleaf and a Sharpshooter. It's too close to the ropes but at least the move looked good in the first place.

The Detonation Kick is broken up as well and Swann's spinning kick to the head drops TJP again. There's a tiger driver for two more on TJP but the running 450 hits knees. TJP is right back up with a slingshot dropkick to the ribs but is too injured to follow up at first. Back in and Swann kicks him down again, only to get caught in a fireman's carry.

It's the kneebar instead of the Detonation Kick this time though and Swann is in trouble. He tries another rollup but TJP drops down into a cradle for a near fall of his own. Swann grabs a quick Michinoku Driver and a cartwheel into a running Phoenix splash gets two more. The regular version puts TJP away at 11:46.

Rating: C+. This was a good way to wrap up the feud but it wasn't exactly a thrilling ending. I do like the idea of Swann winning 2-0 as it makes him look like the definitive winner, though it didn't feel like a big deal as the fans were expecting a third fall. Good enough, but nothing all that special.

Enzo and Daivari are ready for their tag match later with Amore making a bunch of Lion King jokes. Drew Gulak comes up and seems to agree with Enzo's anti-Kalisto stance.

Akira Tozawa comes out for a match but Gulak jumps him from behind and hits him in the throat with the NO CHANTS sign.

We look back at Cedric Alexander vs. Jack Gallagher/Brian Kendrick.

Alexander doesn't buy what Kendrick says and will be ready for whatever they bring at him.

Enzo Amore/Ariya Daivari vs. Mustafa Ali/Kalisto

Enzo does the insults before we're ready to go. Ali and Daivari start things off with Mustafa being smart enough to stay away from the corner. Instead it's off to Enzo, who gets punched in the face a few times and kicked in the head for good measure. Daivari takes Ali down from the apron though and Enzo adds a Downward Spiral for two. The double teaming ensues with Daivari getting two off a spinebuster.

Nigel starts singing an Aladdin song about Ali and there's a spinwheel kick to knock Enzo silly and bug his eyes out at the same time. The hot tag brings in Kalisto for the house cleaning and a hurricanrana driver plants Daivari. There's the double dive to take the villains down but Enzo posts Ali. Not that it matters as the Salida Del Sol ends Daivari at 6:59.

Rating: C. Ali was doing most of the work here though I'm glad they didn't pull a surprise by having Kalisto lose in his first match as champion. You can pretty much pencil him in for the loss from here and while that's rather annoying, it's nice to have a break from Amore for the time being.

Overall Rating: C+. Like I said, it was nice to have Kalisto get the focus for a bit, but I'm not even going to pretend that Enzo isn't getting the title back at TLC. He's clearly the star of the show and WWE is going to push him well beyond the point of people getting sick of him. The rest of the show was just kind of there, but that's the point anymore.

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The Rumored Survivor Series Main Event

<http://www.f4wonline.com/daily-updates/daily-update-survivor-series-main-event-ufc-fox-gsp-bisping-244441>

I....there are no words. Ok there are some, which include spoilers after the break if you don't want to know.

It's Jinder Mahal vs. Brock Lesnar in a non-title, Champion vs. Champion match.

Of all the nonsense in the world that they could go with, this is the best idea they have? I know Stephanie seems to think the fans determine who produces stars ([seriously](#)) but who in the world thinks this is the right play? Mahal isn't even the third biggest star on his own show (Nakamura, Styles, Owens and I'm probably forgetting people) and he's getting to face Brock at Survivor Series? And the title isn't even on the line? Mahal is as one note of a character as there is in the history of the main event scene and for some reason he's facing Lesnar. If it's non-title there's even a chance that Mahal could win. But hey, at least they can sell some tickets in India!

Main Event – October 12, 2017: Someone Help Dash

Main Event

Date: October 12, 2017

Location: Bankers Life Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, Indiana

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

This week's Raw was kind of a mixed bag and that means it's not clear what Main Event will be like. The show entirely hinges on what kind of stuff we got on Raw, meaning we'll be seeing a ridiculous amount of stuff on the Shield. Their reunion was shown about five times on Monday so it's hard to guess what else they'll put on here. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Heath Slater/Rhyno vs. Dash Wilder/Curtis Hawkins

Oh come on already. This is FIVE STRAIGHT WEEKS of Dash vs. some incarnation of Rhyno and Slater. Rhyno and Dawson start things out with Rhyno scoring a high backdrop. Slater comes in to a heck of a reaction and it's time to crank on that arm. It's off to Hawkins, who gets his arm cranked on until Dawson's cheap shot changes control. We hit the chinlock and Dash actually cuts off the hot tag attempt. Hawkins talks a bit too much trash though and eats a flapjack, allowing the hot tag to connect this time around. Everything breaks down and the spinebuster puts Hawkins away at 5:29.

Rating: D+. Nothing we haven't seen before but they were trying harder than usual here. I'm a bit sick of seeing Dawson lose this match but if it eventually gives us the Revival beating the heck out of Slater and Rhyno, everything will wind up being fine. At the same time though, I fully expect WWE to ignore the whole thing as Main Event means nothing. In other words, it's not a big deal.

Long recap of Miz/Cesaro/Sheamus beating down Roman Reigns, who needs some help.

From Raw:

It's time for MizTV to start things off and we have the Mizzies II! Last week Miz went from the A-Lister to THE GUY but he can't take all the credit for the whole thing. That brings us to our first award for perseverance and the winner is Curtis Axel. The fans think he deserves it and Axel dedicates it to Bo Dallas, who is out injured this week.

Next up is Best Supporting Actors in destroying Roman Reigns and the winners in a tie are Cesaro and Sheamus. The Bar (still a stupid name) comes out to thank Reigns in their acceptance speech but Cesaro wants to remember Seth Rollins and Dean Ambrose for breaking his teeth. Miz grants himself the award for Big Dog and again the fans think he deserves it.

This brings out Reigns but Miz knows he won't come in down 4-1. Miz doesn't want to hear about these lame rumors but Roman doesn't like them being called rumors. This brings out Ambrose and Rollins with Cole saying Miz and the Bar never expected this to happen. Oh shut up Cole. The brawl is on with Miz bailing and the beatdown commences. Miz gets cornered and a TripleBomb plants him, allowing Shield to bring back the signature pose.

From later in Raw, after Braun Strowman beat Matt Hardy:

Strowman carries Hardy up the ramp but gets cut off by the Shield (now in matching t-shirts). Reigns spears him down and the triple beatdown is on. The TripleBomb puts Strowman through the announcers' table.

Again from Raw:

Here's Finn Balor to deal with the potential that Sister Abigail is alive. Balor thinks these threats make Bray feel like he's scared. If that's what Bray is all about, bring on the whole family. We cut to Bray's empty rocking chair but Bray sits down. Bray says Finn may not be afraid of him but he'll be afraid of her. They turned her into a monster but she chose Bray with her final breath. Now, the season of the witch is

upon Balor.

A shawl appears over Bray's face and a distorted voice says men are all the same. They just want to control everything but Bray is special. She's seen what Bray has done to Finn so it's time to punish him and the Demon. Abigail knows about demons and she'll turn it into a dandelion. Her touch could have saved Finn but now her kiss will burn him to the ground. Abigail laughs and Bray returns.

Akira Tozawa vs. Tony Nese

Nese pauses to show off the bicep and gets chopped for his efforts. The standing backplash gets two and Tozawa stomps away in the corner. Nese elbows him down though and we take a break. Back with Tozawa hitting a hurricanrana and a heck of a suicide dive for two more. Nese comes right back with a good looking pumphandle powerslam but his superplex is broken up, allowing Tozawa to hit the backplash for the pin at 8:59.

Rating: C. These cruiserweight matches are still working just fine and there's nothing wrong with that. Tozawa is one of the better members of the division and being a former Cruiserweight Champion is a fine calling card for his skills. I still like Nese as a midcard heel and there's nothing wrong with him filling that role.

Once more from Raw:

Cruiserweight Title: Enzo Amore vs. Kalisto

Kalisto is challenging and it's a lumberjack match. Enzo shoulders him down to start and does a dance, only to have to stare at the lumberjacks. Back up and Kalisto kicks him in the shoulder before a front facelock takes us to a break. We come back with Enzo in control and slowly stomping away until Kalisto kicks him in the head.

A springboard crossbody gets two and Enzo is knocked outside where the lumberjacks get him back inside. Enzo rolls him into the corner to take over and Kalisto is sent outside this time. The villains get in a few stomps until Ali and Alexander make the save. We hit the chinlock for a bit until Kalisto gets in a rollup for two of his own.

The lumberjacks get in a brawl until Kalisto superplexes Enzo onto the pile. Naturally this means it's time to talk about Shield again. Back in and the Salida Del Sol is countered into the Jordunzo but Ali pulls Enzo outside because it's No DQ. Enzo drops Ali with a clothesline and crotches Kalisto on the top. Not that it matters as Kalisto reverses into a super Salida Del Sol for the pin and the title at 14:29.

Rating: C-. Well that was surprising. I can't imagine this lasting long term but it's certainly a nice surprise while it lasts. Kalisto winning opens the door for some more title challengers in the short term, though it's almost a guarantee that Enzo will not only get a rematch but likely get the title back at the pay per view. Still though, good win for the moment.

Overall Rating: C. It's kind of amazing how much better Raw seems when you don't see the same clip about five times in two and a half hours. This show wasn't great by any means but the two original matches were fine and that's more than you often get. Now if we can just find something else for Dawson to do.

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NXT – October 11, 2017: Something About How NXT Is Good

NXT

Date: October 11, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Percy Watson, Mauro Ranallo

It's another pretty big show this week as we have a Takeover: Brooklyn rematch with Johnny Gargano vs. Andrade Cien Almas. The other big story continues to be Sanity vs. the Undisputed Era with Drew McIntyre watching over the whole thing. Roderick Strong is the other factor, as the Undisputed Era seems interested in adding him to their ranks. Let's get to it.

We open with a look at Asuka vacating the Women's Title and the process to crown a new #1 contender.

Opening sequence.

Peyton Royce vs. Liv Morgan vs. Nikki Cross

The winner is in the Women's Title four way at Takeover. Cross and Morgan yell at Royce to start and a double clothesline puts her on the floor. Nikki immediately goes after Morgan with a sleeper on her back but it's quickly broken. Royce is back in to yell at Morgan before kicking her down without too much effort. A modified Tarantula has Morgan in more trouble but Cross makes the save by pulling Royce out to the floor in a nasty looking crash. All three are back in now and it's Cross beating the heck out of both of them.

A crossbody takes Royce and Morgan down and a neckbreaker gets two on Morgan. Peyton throws Nikki down for a second but she takes too long trying for a superplex on Morgan, setting up the Tower of Doom. Cue the Undisputed Era of all people with Taynara Conti from the Mae Young

Classic. She comes to the ring to trip Cross, though it doesn't really do much damage. Cross neckbreaks both Royce and Morgan but Conti pulls her out at two. The chase is on and Royce catches Cross in the fisherman's suplex for the pin at 7:16.

Rating: B-. I'm a bit surprised and I like the twist they threw in there. That being said, I'd be shocked if Cross didn't wind up in the title match somehow. She's one of the biggest stars the division has left and it could be interesting to put the title on someone as crazy as she is. The Undisputed Era potentially adding a female member is interesting and makes the team feel even bigger.

Lio Rush vs. Velveteen Dream

Rush slaps him in the face to start and is way too quick for Dream to catch up with. A pair of kicks to the head rocks Dream but he gets sent hard into the corner. Dream beats him down and keeps telling Rush to say his name. Rush spins around into a tornado DDT but gets caught in a Death Valley Driver. The Purple Rainmaker puts Rush away at 2:46. Rush looked good while he had the chance but this was WAY too short to be any kind of a showcase for him.

We look back at Lars Sullivan destroying Oney Lorcan two weeks ago.

Lars Sullivan vs. Danny Burch

Burch gets right in Lars' face and gets in a shot to the face, only to take a knee to the ribs to cut him off in a hurry. Lars runs him over with a shoulder and a delayed vertical suplex, followed by a clothesline to cut Burch off. The standing Boss Man Slam is good enough to put Burch away at 2:59.

We look back at the end of last week's title match with Drew McIntyre successfully defending against Roderick Strong. After the match they shook hands but the Undisputed Era spoke to Strong on the stage.

Street Profits vs. Damien Smith/Marcos Espada

The Profits are really starting to grow on me. Ford shouts a lot and gyrates at Smith to start things off. The Profits waste no time in

hitting the World's Greatest Tag Team's (or the Beverly Brothers' for you older fans) jump over the back onto your opponent's back spot but Ford heads outside to bark. Dawkins splashes Smith in the corner and it's a spinebuster into the frog splash for the pin at 53 seconds. Well that worked.

The Profits celebrate in the crowd.

Next week: Ember Moon vs. Ruby Riot vs. Sonya DeVille in a Women's Title qualifying match.

Also next week: Sanity vs. Undisputed Era in a six man tag.

Johnny Gargano vs. Andrade Cien Almas

Takeover: Brooklyn rematch. Feeling out process to start as the announcers discuss what the name Johnny Wrestling means. I'd think it was pretty self explanatory but that's never stopped WWE before. Gargano grabs a front facelock so slow Almas down but they roll up to a standoff. An elbow and a shoulder have Johnny in some early trouble and Almas has a breather in the ropes.

It's WAY too early for the Gargano Escape as Almas is too close to the ropes. Back in and a dropkick gives Gargano a cover but not even a one count, which you don't see that often. We take a break and come back with Almas grabbing an armbar over the top rope and kicking Gargano in the side of the head for a rather cocky two. Johnny is right back with a DDT on the arm and it's off to a slugout. A tornado Flatliner of all things drops Almas but the spear through the ropes is caught.

Johnny sends him outside though and there's the suicide dive. Back in and Gargano kicks him in the head but his reverse tornado DDT is countered into something like an Iconoclasm for two. An arm trap German suplex gives Almas the same but the second armbar over the ropes is broken up with some kicks to the back. Another slugout sees Gargano get two off a superkick and it's time to go up.

Almas shoves the referee into the ropes for a crotching but Johnny isn't about to take a super hammerlock DDT. Instead it's a clothesline off the

top and a lawn dart to send Almas into the corner. The Gargano Escape goes on but Vega takes off her jacket to reveal the DIY shirt. The distraction lets Almas get to the ropes and Gargano goes to yell at Vega. A pinfall reversal sequence goes nowhere but Gargano is sent into the corner for the double knees to the back of the head twice in a row. The hammerlock DDT ends Gargano at 16:48.

Rating: B. I'm really curious about where this Gargano story is going as they have something with him not being able to get past the DIY stuff. They can fill in a lot of time until Ciampa is back for the big showdown and Gargano can pretty much lose everything until we get to that point.

Overall Rating: B+. Five matches in less than an hour is a rather impressive performance and yet I'm not even surprised they were able to pull it off. Anymore you're lucky to get two on any given Raw or Smackdown and yet NXT manages to pack more in and feel more entertaining at the same time. It's another good show this week as a lot of the stories have me wondering where they're going next, which is the polar opposite of the main roster right now. Good stuff, as usual.

Results

Peyton Royce b. Liv Morgan and Nikki Cross – Fisherman's suplex to Cross

Velveteen Dream b. Lio Rush – Purple Rainmaker

Lars Sullivan b. Danny Burch – Standing Boss Man Slam

Street Profits b. Damien Smith/Marcos Espada – Frog splash to Smith

Andrade Cien Almas b. Johnny Gargano – Hammerlock DDT

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