

Big Name Returning To WWE, Possibly At Royal Rumble

As mentioned by a ticket site for a show in February. Spoilers ahead. The word on the street is that Batista will be returning for a few months with the company. The theory is he'll be in the Rumble and stay at least through Wrestlemania. I never was a big Batista guy but bringing a former world champion and actor in the Marvel Universe back into the fold is never a bad thing.

Smackdown – December 20, 2013: Wasn't He... And Weren't They... I Give Up

Smackdown

Date: December 20, 2013

Location: AT&T Center, San Antonio, Texas

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

We're getting closer to the end of the year and the main story coming out of Monday is the potential for a three way feud between Cena, Orton and Bryan. Daniel had the champion beaten but Orton cheated to get out of the match, drawing in Cena for the save. It should be interesting to hear Bryan's thoughts on Cena running in to help him. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap from Monday with Cena cutting Orton off and the Authority giving Orton a match with Daniel Bryan, because the last few months of the Authority trying to crush Bryan are completely forgotten.

The match recap doesn't do it justice.

Here's Orton to brag about becoming undisputed champion some more. He only has the WWE Championship this week. Orton says the Authority rewarded him with a match against Daniel Bryan. Randy beat him then beat John Cena when he tries to interfere because he just doesn't care. This brings out Cena as they're moving fast tonight. Orton says Cena needs to respect him but Cena says he's here to keep Orton from looking like a fool. If Orton doesn't want to be a champion he should get out.

Orton is the center of the WWE and everyone is going to be hunting him. It's up to Orton to determine how he wants to be remembered and on Monday he was a giant coward. Orton says he did what he had to do to win, but Cena points out the truth: Bryan won by DQ. Cena spent weeks telling us that Orton always runs away and takes the easy way out, hoping that Orton would come to fight at TLC. That's exactly what happened, but the next night Orton was taking the easy way out again.

Randy says Bryan isn't getting another rematch but here's Daniel with something to say. He understands Orton is too afraid to give him a rematch because when Bryan beats him, the myth that Randy Orton is the best comes tumbling down. On top of that, Bryan knows that when Cena beats Orton for the title, he'll get the shot he deserves. Orton says that's never going to happen because the Authority won't allow it. The fans don't like that idea but here's Shield to interrupt some more. Orton bails to the floor but here's Punk to even the sides before Shield gets to the ring. Vickie comes out and makes one heck of a six man for later.

Jack Swagger vs. Big E. Langston

Colter has a sign saying Deport Santa Claus because he's that awesome. This is non-title of course and was set up by the tag match from Raw. Zeb sits in on commentary and talks about confusing Santa Claus with Santa Anna since they were both singing Feliz Navidad. Langston runs Jack over to start but Swagger takes him into the corner to take over. A

clothesline gets two and Langston gets caught in a front facelock. Big E. fights out of the hold and throws Swagger down, setting up the Warrior Splash for two. Henry runs Cesaro over for no apparent reason and the distraction lets Big E. hit the Big Ending for the pin at 2:54.

Tamina Snuka vs. Brie Bella

AJ sits in on commentary and we get a clip of that great superkick to Nikki from Raw. Brie hits a quick cross body for two and sends Tamina out to the floor before slapping Snuka in the face. Tamina slams Brie down and kicks her in the ribs a few times. A knee drop gets the same as AJ wants to know why she has to keep defending against the same girls over and over. Cole asks if Tamina could get a shot but AJ says Tamina knows where her bread is buttered. "And she should know because I make a mean breakfast."

Brie comes back with a running knee to the face and a middle rope dropkick. Cole talks about Brie getting engaged on the season finale of Total Divas, giving AJ this great jab: "She's engaged? That should make her #1 contender!" As a follow up Cole asks if AJ has been asked to be part of season two. "No. I was hugged as a child and don't need the attention." Tamina comes back with a superkick but the Superfly Splash hits knees, giving Brie the rollup pin at 3:04.

Rating: C-. The match was nothing special outside of that superkick but AJ's commentary made this far more entertaining. The line about making Tamina breakfast got a laugh out of me and everything she said about the reality show is true. Why should she keep defending the title against the same girls she's beaten time after time? Some of the comments she made could be planting seeds for Tamina to turn on her as well which makes things more interesting.

Brie shoves AJ down post match.

Sin Cara vs. Drew McIntyre

Drew is quickly sent over the top rope, followed by a nice flip dive by the masked man. Back inside and a high cross body gets two on McIntyre but he throws Sin down. A knee drop has Cara in trouble but he jumps over Drew in the corner and armdrags him down. I can't imagine how badly the original Sin Cara would have botched that. A handspring elbow gets two on McIntyre before a kick to the head sets up a Swanton Bomb for the pin at 2:05. Just a step above a squash here. JBL gets in his line about how it's like a new Sin Cara.

Brodus Clay vs. Tensai

Tensai takes him into the corner and drives shoulders into Brodus' ample gut. A clothesline drops Clay but he avoids the backsplash. Clay hits a pair of splashes in the corner and a running splash gets two. Another splash gets no cover and Brodus does the dinosaur claws dance. Cue the Funkadactyls with Xavier Woods for the distraction and, say it with me, Tensai rolls Brodus up for the pin at 1:45. I have no idea how this is supposed to help either guy but I'm sure it will be explained to me later.

Tensai and Woods beat up Brodus post match, setting up a dance party.

Cody Rhodes/Goldust vs. Wyatt Family

Non-title again, meaning you can probably pencil in the brothers for a loss. Goldust and Erick get things going but Rowan doesn't move for the deep breath. Instead Goldust punches the mask off of him, only to get shoulder blocked down. Goldust comes back with some right hands, sending Rowan off to the corner for the tag to Harper. Off to Cody who brings Harper into the champions' corner before bringing Goldust right back in.

Luke takes over with some uppercuts to the jaw and drags Goldust out to the corner for the tag to Rowan. Erick is at the top of his weak offensive game here with choking, stomping and right hands. Harper comes back in with an uppercut for two with that disturbing look on his face.

Goldust fights back but misses a cross body, sending him out to the floor and right in front of Wyatt as we take a break.

Back with Harper Gator rolling Goldust as Cole asks about Sister Abigail. Rowan comes back in for a claw hold and a big toss across the ring. Goldust finally gets an elbow up in the corner to stop a charging Rowan but Harper breaks up the hot tag attempt. A DDT puts Harper down a second later and there's the tag off to Rhodes.

Cody speeds things up with a springboard missile dropkick followed by the Disaster Kick to Harper. The moonsault press gets two but Rowan makes the save. Goldust sends him to the floor and dives off the apron to take him down, but Wyatt hits a quick big boot to Goldust's jaw. Harper picks Cody up by the ears (this guy really is evil) and takes his head off with the discus lariat for the pin at 11:04 shown of 14:34.

Rating: C+. The losing streak is here and there's nothing that can be done about it. These recurring ideas are all the proof you need that a change in the booking is desperately needed. Earlier tonight we had the distraction into the rollup and now we have the losing streak. That's roughly 40% of all the ideas they have and they used them in less than half an hour.

Post match Bray leans upside down in the corner as he goes after Cody, drawing out Bryan with a chair to take out the Family. He takes Bray down and pounds away but has to fight off Rowan which allows Bray to escape.

Damien Sandow doesn't like Christmas. It's nothing but a bunch of adults asking for stuff they don't need, children asking for things they haven't earned, and filthy houses with ugly decorations. That's why he's going to cancel Christmas this coming Monday, but he's cut off by...Miz, who I thought was a heel. Miz gives him the "really" treatment and says he knows Santa. They celebrate Santa where he comes from and Sandow couldn't carry Santa's sack.

The Miz vs. Damien Sandow

Miz takes him into the corner to start and scores with some clotheslines. Sandow tries to get a boot up in the corner but Miz wraps it around the ropes and kicks at the knee. The Figure Four goes on but Sandow gets to the rope. A rollup with a handful of trunks is enough to pin Miz at 1:28. I have no idea what the point of this match was as the promo could have done the same thing. Mark Henry fighting to save Christmas from the Latin speaking Sandow Claus is going to be glorious though.

Ad for the History of WWE DVD.

Kofi Kingston vs. Fandango

Kofi gets the jobber entrance as JBL calls Fandango a male Shakira. "His hips don't lie." Cole: "...oh God." Fandango grabs a headlock to start but Kofi comes back with a dropkick. A clothesline gets two on Kingston and Fandango pounds some elbows into Kofi's chest. We hit the chinlock for a bit but Kofi avoids a middle rope knee drop. Kofi comes back with some chops and a dropkick followed by the Boom Drop. Fandango bails to the floor to avoid Trouble in Paradise and trips Kofi to send him to the mat. The guillotine legdrop gets the pin at 3:40.

Rating: D. I guess it's time to push Fandango again and we're going with Miz as a face again. Fandango has potential and thankfully his character has evolved past the point of just dancing and saying his name. Kofi continues to be in the same spot on the card as always and he'll still be over no matter what happens to him.

The Wyatts jump Bryan in the back, presumably taking him out of the six man later. Bray drops to his knees and says "ashes ashes, we all fall down." The Family throws him off a ledge which appeared to be a few feet high.

Shield vs. CM Punk/John Cena

Still works for me. Punk and Ambrose get things going with CM going after the arm. Ambrose is driven into the corner and it's off to Cena for a shoulder block. The bulldog puts Dean down again and it's back to Punk who gets two off a middle rope elbow. We take a break and come back with Reigns holding Cena for a kick from Rollins. Back to Ambrose to pepper Cena with with right hands but John belly to back suplexes him to get a breather.

The rest doesn't last long though as Reigns comes in with headbutts and a lot of shouting. There's the awesome Superman Punch before it's off to Rollins for a forearm to Cena's face. Cena avoids a charge in the corner but rolls towards Shield, allowing Rollins to tag out to Ambrose. Dean hits a dropkick up against the ropes before it's back to Rollins for some right hands in the corner.

Cena is sat on the top rope but headbutts Rollins down to escape a superplex. Ambrose comes back in but walks into a tornado DDT. There's the hot tag to Punk who takes Ambrose down with a leg lariat and hits a running knee to Rollins' chin. Seth rolls to the floor for a suicide dive followed by the running knee in the corner back inside. The Macho Elbow looks to set up the GTS but Ambrose breaks it up. Punk drops of them with the neckbreaker/DDT combo for two on Rollins. Reigns makes the save and Shield triple teams Punk for the DQ at 9:48 shown of 13:18.

Rating: C+. Good match as you would expect from these guys but the ending was lame. Cena sold the heck out of that beating by staying down as long as he did but there might have been more done to him on the floor. This keeps the Punk vs. Shield going which could keep tying him into the Authority.

Cena comes in for the save but Reigns hits the spear to take him down. Punk is about to take the Triple Bomb but Cena makes another save. The superheroes are in trouble but here's Big E. Langston for the real save.

Ambrose and Rollins are sent to the floor and we get the showdown between Langston and Reigns but Punk gets a chair, sending Roman out to the floor. Shield backs off to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. Langston interfering to end the show is a really interesting idea as his NXT work has shown how capable he is of being a monster face. Unfortunately that's about all that held my interest tonight other than AJ's commentary. There's just nothing here of interest with a bunch of squashes complete with overdone finishes plus Miz being a face again for no apparent reason. Not an interesting show here but it wasn't the worst two hours ever.

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2013 Awards: Worst Match Of The Year

Again, not something that took long to think of. It's the Total Divas vs. True Divas match from Survivor Series. Not only was the work horribly sloppy, but Cole lost track of who was still in. Yeah the girls look great in their tiny outfits, but that doesn't mean the match is worth watching.

The runner up is Big Show vs. Randy Orton from the same show, though I didn't find it nearly as bad as everyone else. That

being said, one thing is clear: Survivor Series SUCKED.

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NXT – December 18, 2013: NXT Does The Anniversary Show

NXT

Date: December 18, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Byron Saxton, Tensai

Tonight is the 200th episode celebration and believe it or not, that's actually an accurate count for a change, assuming you consider this the same show as the original competition show. The main stories tonight are an appearance by HHH and an NXT Title defense with Bo Dallas defending against Adrian Neville in a lumberjack match. NXT has a good history of making their big shows work so this has good potential tonight. Let's get to it.

Here's HHH to open the show instead of Welcome Home. The boss says he loves hearing those NXT chants. We're here to celebrate the 200th episode of NXT which has seen people like Damien Sandow, Shield and the Wyatt come through here. The fans chant FIVE and HHH adds Big E. Langston to

the list. With the new Performance Center, the next two hundred episodes are going to be even better. HHH tells the fans to give themselves a standing ovation because this is their house. The question now: are we ready?

Welcome Home.

Sami Zayn/Tyson Kidd vs. Leo Kruger/Antonio Cesaro

Leo's Real American trials continue. The bell rings twice for some reason before Kruger knees Kidd in the ribs to start. Tyson comes right back with an armdrag into an armbar Sami gets the tag and Kruger runs straight to the corner for the tag to Cesaro. The fans immediately chant MATCH OF THE YEAR until Cesaro grabs a top wristlock. Sami shoves him into the corner but the referee pulls him down because he loves AMERICA.

Kidd comes in with a quick rollup for two but Cesaro catches his cross body in mid air and puts Tyson down with a backbreaker. We take a break and come back with Kidd fighting out of the heel corner and getting two off a rollup on Kruger. Leo stops the hot tag with a spinebuster for two of his own though and it's back to Cesaro. The gutwrench suplex gets two and we hit a quickly broken chinlock. Cesaro kicks Sami off the apron to give Leo a two count and a chinlock of his own.

Back up and Tyson low bridges Kruger to the floor and avoids a charging Cesaro in the corner. Sami finally comes in off the hot tag to clean house and gets two on Leo off a high cross body. The Slice is countered into a sitout powerbomb for two but Cesaro makes the save. Kidd dives on Cesaro and Sami hits a running boot in the corner to pin Kruger at 8:17 shown of 11:47.

Rating: B-. Did you really expect anything other than a good match here? Sami getting a pin on Kruger is a good thing as he's been losing way too often lately. Kidd and Cesaro could have some awesome matches if given the time, which keeps my head shaking at how Cesaro is used on the main

shows.

Emma does her dance in the back and nearly pokes Natalya in the eye. Natalya gets annoyed and Emma accuses her of going Hollywood and forgetting the little people down here in NXT. Natalya says Emma got her title shot through a dance off so she has no room to talk. Emma says wrestling brought her to the dance so Natalya offers to let Emma tango into the Sharpshooter. A #1 contenders match is made and both girls walk off.

We get a clip from the first episode of NXT. Daniel Bryan used to be even smaller than he is today. That match with Jericho he had on the first show was great stuff.

There was a special meet and greet for the first 200 people at the taping. That's a cool idea.

Sasha Banks vs. Paige

Non-title. Sasha slaps Paige into the corner to start before slamming her face first into the mat. Paige gets stomped in the corner and Banks throws in a mockery of Paige's scream. Off to a chinlock with a bodyscissors on Paige until the champion fights up and wristdrags Sasha off the top. Summer tries to get involved but Banks accidentally kicks her in the chest, setting up the Paige Turner for the pin on Sasha at 3:38.

Rating: D+. Paige was on defense for most of this match and it didn't work very well. She's still miles ahead of most of the girls on Raw or Smackdown though, meaning she isn't going to see a main show for a long time. After all, she's not even dating one of the top guys in the company so why would the fans want to see her?

Enzo Amore (YES!) and Colin Cassady are talking lawsuits against a

parking lot without handicap accessibility (Enzo is in a wheelchair due to a leg injury) when Aiden English interrupts. Enzo says Colin can out sing Aiden and an argument over the meaning of the word moi. A singing competition is set between English and Big Cass. English: "Mi-mi-mi-mi-mi-mi-mi-mi." Cass: "Sa-sa-sa-sa-sa-SAWFT!"

Ascension vs. ???

This is the open challenge for a non-title match. The opponents are the American Pitbulls: Derrick Billington (originally John Cahill) and John Cahill (originally Eric Philbin), more famously known as Davey Richards and Eddie Edwards respectively. Thankfully their new names aren't horrible. The fans are entirely behind the Pitbulls and actually don't call them the Wolves. Billington grabs a wristlock on Viktor to start before it's off to Cahill for more arm cranking. Ascension drags him into the corner and brings in Konnor but the Pitbulls take him down with a double Japanese armdrag.

Viktor is sent to the floor but Konnor takes Cahill's head off. We get a mild Davey Richards chant as Ascension takes turns destroying Billington. Derrick backflips out of a suplex and kicks Viktor in the chest to make the tag to Cahill. A running knee to Victor's chest gets two as everything breaks down. The champions are sent to the floor for stereo dives by the Pitbulls for a near fall. Billington goes up and howls before hitting a flying headbutt for two. Viktor will have none of that though and blasts Cahill in the head, setting up Fall of Man for the pin at 4:22.

Rating: C+. This could have been a lot worse. First and foremost, this was not a squash. The Pitbulls got in a good amount of offense and got a near fall towards the end. I'm not a fan of Richards at all and Edwards is only tolerable (I'm not big on indy wrestling at all for the most part) but they deserve jobs after this match, or at least more appearances.

Hunico and Camacho come out to talk trash so Ascension beats up Cahill a little more.

Kofi Kingston is rocking a suit and is happy to be here. Lana comes up to speak some Bulgarian before challenging Kofi to a match with Alexander Rusev for next week. One minor note here that makes NXT that much better: Kofi was shown as part of the meet and greet earlier so he has an actual reason for being here tonight instead of just showing up because the script called for him to.

Next week is a year in review special plus Regal vs. Cesaro.

NXT Title: Bo Dallas vs. Adrian Neville

This is a lumberjack match with Dallas defending. As a special treat, THE FINK does the announcing. The fans think Breeze is gorgeous before shifting to a Let's Go Neville chant. Dallas has some awesomely evil pure white gear this week. Bo is quickly sent to the floor but runs back inside to avoid the lumberjacks. A rollup gets two for Neville but Dallas sends him outside. Breeze gets in Adrian's face and earns a slap, sending the crowd into a quick freazy.

We take a break (including another NXT moment with Rollins becoming the first NXT Champion) and come back with Neville taking Dallas down for some kicks to the chest. Dallas gets in a shot to the ribs and drops some knees for two. Tyler Breeze is seated next to the barricade and looks livid. A cravate keeps Neville on the mat and a kick to the head gets two. The fans chant DROP THE TITLE as Bo drives elbows into Neville's head. A hard clothesline flips Neville inside out for two and Dallas is frustrated.

Adrian escapes the bulldog out of the corner and scores with a running forearm. Some kicks get two on Bo and an enziguri sets up a standing shooting star for two. The fans threaten to riot if Bo wins but the champion bails to the floor before the Red Arrow launches. All of the

lumberjacks stop him so Adrian dives on EVERYBODY in a great visual. Back in and Adrian loads up the Red Arrow but Breeze pulls Dallas out of the way, giving Bo the pin at 9:50 shown of 11:50.

Rating: C+. I like the story here as it keeps the belt on Dallas and sets up Breeze vs. Adrian down the line. Again, it's the difference between booking and writing with the former almost always being better. The pop when Dallas finally loses is going to be nothing short of unholy.

Overall Rating: B. Another great show here with everything fitting perfectly and putting together an entertaining hour. As usual, NXT knows how to build to a big show and then actually deliver on the payoff, which is more than you get from any major wrestling show at the moment. Good stuff.

Results

Sami Zayn/Tyson Kidd b. Leo Kruger/Antonio Cesaro – Running big boot to Kruger

Paige b. Sasha Banks – Paige Turner

Ascension b. American Pitbulls – Ascension

Bo Dallas b. Adrian Neville – Pin after a missed Red Arrow

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2013 Awards: Best Non-Wrestler

I'm not going to waste your time here. Paul Heyman wins and he wins by a lot. There really isn't much to explain here, but there are two others I want to spotlight for a bit.

Zeb Colter has been responsible for making Jack Swagger something resembling interesting again. That's nothing short of a divine act.

Then there's someone who goes higher and higher every time I watch a show: Renee Young. This girl has everything you could want from someone in her job. First and foremost, she's incredibly cute. Usually the first thought about a Diva is that she's gorgeous or sexy etc, but Young is more reserved, wearing blouses or full outfits which is a very nice change of pace. She has a very cute look to her face as well and it works very well for her.

Second, and this is something you get if you watch NXT, she's very intelligent and witty on commentary. Above all else though, she comes off as natural. She sounds like someone watching a match and giving some intelligent thoughts on what she's seeing instead of reading from a script or reciting lines fed into her earpiece. It's very different and works really well. I could easily see her being a big media personality on a major network or an NFL reporter etc.

BUT yeah, Heyman wins.

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On This Day: December 19, 2010 – Tables Ladders and Chairs 2010: Wade Barrett's Burial

Tables Ladders and Chairs 2010

Date: December 19, 2010

Location: Toyota Center, Houston, Texas

Commentators: Michael Cole, Matt Striker, Jerry Lawler

It's the all gimmicks all the time show which was fun last year so we have that to hope for at least. The card looks decent and I'd expect a seventh match to pop up on here. The show is kind of predictable in theory though, but it's nothing I'm worried about. Well I'm out of filler lines and the show is starting so let's get to it.

Opening video/montage is about Cena vs. Nexus. Never mind as apparently it's about champions, which makes more sense. The video is getting me hyped up at least so that should be a good sign.

Intercontinental Title: Kofi Kingston vs. Jack Swagger vs. Dolph Ziggler

That's what I figured would be the opener. Nothing like a hot opener to be, you know, the opener. King says that Vickie

isn't as cute as Bill Dundee in another line that most people won't get at all. Weird kind of three way brawl to start and we get a LOUD Kofi chant. Ziggler to the floor and Cole and Lawler start chatting about ladder matches which should be interesting.

First ladder brought in by the champion but both challengers shove him off as the champion touches the belt. Sweet dropkick by Kofi takes down Swags. In a smart spot Kofi shoves the ladder down onto Swaggers' hands/arms as he's using the ropes to get up. Another ladder in now, also by Ziggles. Swagger has to get his arm looked at as Kofi lands back first on a ladder.

Slingshot from the mat into the ladder draped over the middle rope. It may help if I say Swagger launched Ziggler into it. This is going WAY too fast to call play by play and such. Ziggler hits a Fameasser onto Kofi onto a ladder onto Swagger. Everyone is out so Vickie comes in. Lawler: who does she think she is, Michael Cole? She tries to go up for no adequately explored reason so Kofi starts to tip over the ladder until the heels make the save.

Everyone on the floor now as the fans are WAY behind Kofi still. He goes up the ladder but Swagger grabs the ankle lock. Ziggler climbs up their backs and nearly pulls it off. Ziggler vs. Kofi on top as Jack is down on the floor. Big BOMBS being thrown here. Dolph manages to get the freaking Sleeper on top of the ladder! He fights out and gets a big shot to put Dolph down a bit.

TEST OF STRENGTH on top of the ladder but Kofi shoves Dolph off. Swagger goes up now as this is awesome stuff with incredible balance. Both guys pull down the title...and Ziggler grabs it off the mat to retain. The fans boo the heck out of it but Striker points out you have to have possession of it which while a stretch does actually make logical sense. If nothing else we got to hear Lawler say "he's clutching it to his bosom."

Rating: B. This was more of an intellectual ladder match which is something you don't see. They brought out some leverage and thinking spots which work far better than the usual high spots which we'll get later on with Morrison. This was much better than I was expecting and sets a very good pace for the show.

Barrett addresses Nexus and we have a tag title match tonight apparently. Cena is a cancer, Nexus is united tonight, you know the drill I'm sure.

Beth Phoenix/Natalya vs. Laycool

Quick recap video which is of the table on Friday which didn't work. No tagging here thank goodness. The pink table with the painting from Friday is brought in as Laycool is down early. Crowd is QUIET here. Lawler says he's never seen a Diva go through a table. That's just amusing. Double fireman's carry by Beth is very impressive. Striker makes an important point: any method of going through the table counts. Also it's only one Diva required for a win.

Laycool in control now as the fans do not care at all. Beth is on the floor now as Laycool takes over. SICK landing by Beth as her foot gets hooked on a rope and she lands straight on her back/head. That was painful as all goodness, it had to be. Michelle sets for a Faithbreaker (Styles Clash) through a table on Nattie but Beth comes back for the save.

Not table for Michelle ("JUST WAIT UNTIL MARK HEARS ABOUT THIS!!!") as Layla rakes Beth's eyes. Layla beats on Beth for awhile but can't suplex her through it. Double gorilla press by the blondes to Layla until Michelle kicks both in the ribs. Beth may have fallen out for a bit. HOLY CRAP!!! Natalya puts Layla on top of Michelle and puts them BOTH in a Sharpshooter at the same time. TAKE THAT BRET!!!

The nice chicks set up the tables but Michelle sends Beth to the floor to make it 2-1 again. They set for a double superplex but Beth saves again. A lot of near finishes in this

one indeed. Down goes Beth so they set for it again but they're shoved off. The table DID NOT BREAK so Natalya is like screw it and splashes them through it to end this.

Rating: C+. This wasn't as bad as you would have thought as Laycool fought them off far better than people would have predicted. It was a good match even but did anyone ever think Laycool had a realistic shot out there? Not a bad match or anything but at the same time it didn't really get me into the match and it kind of dragged. Still fun though and that Sharpshooter was GREAT.

Ad for WWE Week which is cool indeed.

Kane talks about his childhood sucking but this year he gets toys: tables, ladders and chairs. He beats the tar out of a bunch of Christmas decorations while shouting MERRY CHRISTMAS. Oddly good actually.

Tag Titles: Santino Marella/Vladimir Kozlov vs. Heath Slater/Justin Gabriel

Santino does his usual funny stuff about how awesome he and Kozlov are. McGillicutty and Harris are with the guys in yellow. Santino vs. the homeless South African guy to start as this is a standard match. Surprisingly this is a pretty solid technical showdown to start. Off to the Wendy's chick/man now with a hot crowd doing a Santino chant. The Cobra is the TLC tonight: Totally Lethal Cobra.

Now the fans like Kozlov. Harris clips him and the evildoers have won the day! Ok so they're just in control but it sounds more triumphant the other way. Big Wendy's chant now as we're still being funny and not getting into TNA territory. Vlad gets beaten down for awhile until he uses his head to get Santino in. Santino raises the roof and cleans a few rooms. Cobra is set up but McGillicutty runs in for the LAME DQ.

Rating: D+. Nothing here at all and Santino is the guy getting

hot tags now? Just a quick match but apparently they're setting up the post match thing which is coming here. Nothing that couldn't have been done on Raw here, but at least Nexus got their rematch out of the way now.

Nexus beats the champions down with Barrett coming down and killing Santino and Kozlov with a chair which makes sense.

Don't try this at home. Try it in a place that I haven't made a joke about a dozen times already.

Sheamus vs. John Morrison

Oh yes. These two have that weird chemistry that guys like Warrior and Rude did: you can't explain it but it's definitely there. Lawler will not shut up about Cole costing him the title still. They actually hit the mat almost immediately which is odd indeed. We hit the floor and Sheamus sets up a ladder early. Winner is #1 contender if I forgot to mention that.

Morrison slides under the ladder that is set up between the announce table and the apron. He teases Sheamus to get him to also but the big white dude can't do it and gets kicked in the head. A fan calls Sheamus Casper which cracks me up. Morrison jumps over part of the crowd to hit a forearm, which is a former AJ move. Into the ring and they fight over a ladder which results in Morrison diving over a ladder to take down Sheamus.

Morrison goes up but isn't in the right position and down he comes. He gets hung upside down with his leg getting caught and he's stuck hanging upside down. Sheamus' solution: shove him forward which could hurt his knee and head as well. Sheamus works the knee as a smart Irishman. The fans seem to be divided here but not equally. I think they're for Morrison but I'm not sure.

Cole tries to make this tank vs. fighter jet which is a cool

analogy. Morrison is somehow able to stand after a beating like that one. That's quite impressive. After a slam onto a ladder where Morrison's knee gets caught, Sheamus heads up. He naturally takes too long and here comes Johnny Boy. Sheamus charges at him with a ladder but Morrison gets a drop toe-hold to send the King's face into the ladder.

BIG kick puts Sheamus down and we're getting good now. Irish Curse takes down Morrison again though and he hits the floor. Both guys have ladders so they slug it out with the ladders and Sheamus gets his hand hurt. Morrison's next step? CHUCK THE LADDER AT SHEAMUS' HEAD!!! Why mess with the basics I guess. Atomic drop onto the ladder makes Jerry squeak in a loud voice.

Instead of climbing immediately John throws a ladder over the top to crush Sheamus all over again. Hand on the contract but a Brogue Kick to the knee/ladder brings Morrison down to the floor. Sheamus goes up but the contract is flying all over the place. Here comes Morrison but the both go down again. Headscissors sends Sheamus to the floor and here goes Morrison again. ALMOST but Sheamus shoves the ladder down for the save. Sweet stuff so far.

Sheamus backdrops Morrison over the top where he crashes to the floor but luckily he didn't land on the ladder which is still bridged from the beginning of the match. They fight on the same ladder with their backs to the bridged one. Both guys fall backwards, Morrison to the floor and Sheamus THROUGH THE LADDER. That spot never gets old, period. Morrison is all alone in the ring, other than a ladder that is, but here comes Sheamus somehow! Cole asks if he's the Terminator and I might believe it. Morrison KICKS HIM IN THE FACE and is the #1 contender, more or less sealing Miz retaining later on.

Rating: A. That's probably a bit overrated but DANG this was good stuff. The se two have MAD chemistry together and every single one of their matches have been awesome. The announcers

say this is Morrison's best match ever, and I can't really argue against it. Morrison vs. Miz is going to be sweet stuff at the Rumble indeed. Great match.

Miz says that he's the new face of the company. Everyone has said he can't do it and he's proven everyone wrong. Indeed he has.

Barrett won't talk to Grisham as it's powwow time. Nexus is LAID OUT with chairs everywhere and only Harris, who was with Barrett, left standing. I smell a setup.

Raw World Title: The Miz vs. Randy Orton

Orton is power walking down to the ring. This is a tables match remember. We get a quick recap video of Miz cashing in which while semi-predictable was still great stuff. Big match intros are always sweet. Orton pounds him down early and we're off. Miz is in gold trunks, just like Sheamus was. Orton misses a charge and eats buckle as Miz takes over. We get into the Superstar of the Year argument again which goes nowhere.

Orton hits the floor and grabs a table from under the ring as I guess the seven or eight in the aisle aren't good enough for them. Riley moves the table to save his boss/friend/teacher/dom to his sub. Orton gets his sweet dropkick. Miz gets in a cheap shot and here comes Miz, setting up a table. Orton is sent into the steps and it's table time all over again.

Miz's table breaks/falls apart though. Clearly not an awesome table. Miz goes up but Orton rolls off the table which was stupid because he could have won if he hadn't moved early. Table #3 pulled out by Miz. Even the Artists Formerly Known as the Dudleys say REALLY to that many being brought out by one guy. Running clothesline in the corner has Orton in trouble.

Angle Slam by Orton and he puts Miz on the top. Superplex off the top but Riley again moved the table. There's the snap

powerslam and the elevated DDT. Riley moves the table again so Orton puts him down for fun. Table set up in the middle of the ring and we have an RK0 chant. Backbreaker keeps Miz down. Orton sets for the RK0 but Riley comes in AGAIN.

Skull Crushing Finale is blocked and we lose a referee. Powerbomb to Riley through the table but there's the Skull Crushing Finale to Orton. I think I know what's coming. Yep, Miz moves Riley off the broken table and puts Randy on it. The referee wakes up and Miz retains the title! AWESOME!

Ok wait maybe not as the referee sees the video and we're on again! Orton hammers away and boy is he ticked off. And never mind as Riley shoves Orton off the apron and through the table to tapdance on the pieces of the broken hearts of the fans while the magic fairies of instant replay were repairing them. AWESOME AGAIN!

Rating: B-. I loved the ending here as it played into the whole Miz defies the odds thing. They also covered that this is fair. It's probably a bit too highly rated but I had a lot of fun in this one. Also the right guy won as Orton goes back a bit now so we don't have to deal with him for awhile. I liked it a lot as this whole show has been awesome.

Royal Rumble ad which is about how one person is going on while 29 aren't. Other than the other guy getting a title match that is.

Off to Alberto and some hot chick in the back near his car. Edge is standing in it and bouncing up and down. He offers an alliance between the three of them to take out Kane. Alberto thinks about it but Edge says no not really as that never works.

Smackdown World Title: Edge vs. Kane vs. Alberto Del Rio vs. Rey Mysterio

You win by gaining custody of the title. Dang it Rey has the

advantage now since he had a custody ladder match before! Rey is dressed...like Gene Simmons of KISS? Really? Entrances take a very long time here. Kane goes straight for Edge as the expected pairings go off together. Striker goes through everyone's experience in four ways or TLC matches to waste some time.

Alberto shoves Rey off a ladder as Rey jumps onto Kane and Edge, taking them both out with ease. Rey hits a Seated Senton onto the ladder onto Alberto which was cool. The problem with these matches becomes apparent very early as we know the match isn't ending this early. Chokeslam is countered into an Edgecution by Edge to put the champion down.

Baseball slide to the ladder puts Kane down again, ticking off Cole since it knocked down his Slammies. Alberto and Mysterio kind of disappeared and we have the original title match now. Ah there's Alberto with all four guys on the floor. Kane rips the legs of a table off which is rather impressive strength. Edge is in the crowd now and not by his own choice.

For some reason he jumps off the barricade to break up a double chokeslam on both Spanish speakers. Everyone but Del Rio combines to put Kane through a table, leaving only Rey to climb the ladder. Running enziguri in the corner has Rey down so Alberto speaks some Spanish. For no apparent reason Del Rio pauses to go get a chair which doesn't work. Spears for both Del Rio and Rey and Edge climbs up.

Kane is back though and Edge's balls get a bit too acquainted with the top rope as a result. Out to the floor (again) with Kane killing everyone (Katie Vick anyone?) with a chair. Everyone but Rey is on the stage where Edge spears the champion down. Rey climbs up onto the tables that hang from the ceiling to take down Kane with another seated senton. Everyone else is down so Rey is like screw it and hits the ring but is too small to get the big ladder up, allowing Del Rio to stop him again.

619 for both Edge and Del Rio but Edge stops his with a chair shot. Two ladders go up, one of which Edge couldn't reach the title from the very top of. Edge and Rey go up the huge ladder but crash down in a painful looking drop. Ricardo tries to get Del Rio up before going up the ladder himself. And never mind as Kane is back. Chokeslam to "Eddie Munster (I love Striker)" and one to Alberto as well.

Edge through a table now as Rey gets rid of the ladders and beats on Kane for a bit. Del Rio somehow stops him from getting up the HUGE ladder and there's the Cross Armbreaker which Rey taps to, not that it means anything. Striker thinks you can't climb a ladder with a bad arm. Morrison did it earlier with a bad leg but you can't do it with a bad arm? And people wonder why teachers get so little respect.

Alberto goes up and gets his hands on the belt but Rey saves by shoving the big ladder over, sending Alberto CRASHING through two tables on the floor. Big old sick spot there. Kane saves again and a Tombstone flattens Rey one more time. The top of Kane's head is cut a bit. Kane goes up but Edge pops him a few times with a chair. I think our announcers are out. Edge spears Kane off the apron and there he goes and there's World Title #10. Riveting.

Rating: B. Fun match but it was a step behind what I thought it would have been. This is LIGHT YEARS ahead of what Edge vs. Kane would have been though so that's a perk. There wasn't a good pick to win this one really as everyone would be pretty boring. Somehow this is the weakest big match so far, which is saying a lot as it was still good stuff. Good match, but nothing legendary.

And here's Cody Rhodes. Uh why? Rhodes is straight up ROCKING the suit he's in. He talks about the jewel (not a typo) which is where the jaw meets the chin or something. He runs down Houston for some cheap heat which is perfectly fine. Houston is the fattest city in America apparently. And here comes

Santa with the Bellas. It's Santa Show this time. Jerry: it looks like Santa got bigger this year. Striker: if I was around the Bellas I'd get bigger too.

Show and the Bellas throw out DVDs which apparently are all of Knucklehead. Not a bad thing for free I guess. Cody makes fun of Show in his underwear on the DVD cover. Show shills the DVD and makes fun of Cody. Cody says Show looks like a vanilla Shrek. Show threatens Cody with being in Knucklehead II. Spinebuster to Cody and the suit gets ripped off. Cody has Sunday written on his underwear.

Cena takes out Harris and says see you out there to Barrett, who was next to Harris when he got cracked by a chair. Cena is a ninja!

And here's CM Punk, apparently taking over for Striker for the main event.

John Cena vs. Wade Barrett

This is PPV main event number.....five for Barrett in his seven months on the main roster. Not that WWE made a new star or anything. BIG reaction for Cena as this is a chairs match. DUELING CHANTS!!!! Barrett hits the floor and Cena cuts him off as the fight is on. There must be twenty chairs at ringside. Barrett gets the first one so instead of picking up another, Cena slowly backs up and tries to keep fighting.

Both guys in the ring with chairs which last a few seconds as we're back to the slugout. The idea here is that neither guy can get to the chair which they're treating as something special here, which I like. They hit the floor with Barrett in control. Barrett gets a chair shot to the back of Cena but it's in the aisle. Barrett sets up the steps which would be illegal wouldn't they?

Cena slams him on the stage and goes to the back. He comes back with a rolling chair in a rather funny moment. He puts

Barrett in it and wakes him up with some water. Cena gets a running start and throws Barrett down the ramp in the chair into the steps. Awesome spot and kind of funny at the same time. Barrett gets control way too quickly and we're back in the ring and the English dude has a chair.

He chokes away with it as someone as the announce table can't stop coughing. In an amazing strength move, Cena has Barrett sitting on the chair on top of him. Cena says screw it and bench presses his way out of it. HOW STRONG IS THIS GUY? Barrett gets a chair up to stop a shoulder block and Cena hits the floor. Cena gets tied up in the ropes and Barrett has a freaking field day on him with the chair.

Cena fights out and hits the Protoplex and the Shuffle but can't get the FU. Bossman Slam gets two. Chair is wedged in between the top and middle rope. STF is countered with Cena being launched into the wedged chair. Barrett goes up with the chair and dives off (think Foley diving off the apron with one) but gets canvas instead. Top rope Fameasser with the chair but Cena won't cover.

He sets up about six chairs in a two rows of three facing each other. I think I see an FU coming. Hey what do you know I'm right. In the FREAKING OW MAN spot of the night, the chairs DON'T MOVE and Barrett just stops cold. The pin is academic and for once and for all, the feud is OVER.

Maybe it isn't as Barrett crawls away and Cena picks up another chair. Let the beatdown begin. They're up by the stage and Cena gets some kind of a metal pallet thing. Cena looks up at all the chairs hanging from the ceiling and THEY ALL FALL ON BARRETT. Nice job as Barrett is BURIED to end the show and the year. The visual on the replay of a bunch of them just falling straight down is great.

Rating: B. Not a great match or anything, but it certainly worked. I don't usually do this, but I'm going to include the

post match stuff in the rating for this one. That part is the real aspect here, as Cena didn't beat Wade Barrett. He defeated him. That's a key difference here. Cena did exactly what he said he'd do: he defeated Nexus. It's not a great match, but it's a great ending. That's what the important thing is here, and it worked like a charm.

Overall Rating: A. This show was fun. That's the best possible description that I can give it. You have at least one great match with Morrison vs. Sheamus and depending on your tastes another in the TLC match. There wasn't a single bad match here with the worst certainly being the tag titles, but that was under seven minutes and really not that bad. Also it's early enough in the show that it doesn't hurt anything, plus it was a bonus match so it's not like anyone has anything to be disappointed in either.

The key thing to me though is that for once we got the END of an angle here. That's the important part of this show to me. Instead of having a show just be the next chapter in a story, it was the final chapter in it and the whole thing is done. It's a perfect way to close out the year and it worked very well. Excellent show and exactly what it was supposed to be: incredibly violent and fun. No complaints at all.

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2013 Awards: Moment of the Year

This one took some time. There are a lot of options to go with here so let's look at some of the possibilities.

Dolph Ziggler cashes in MITB. The pop for this is absolutely amazing with the New York fans going insane for the smark hero of the day winning a world title. The problem with this is it doesn't really mean anything long term as Ziggler was having a musical instrument match with Sandow seven months later. Still though, awesome moment.

Rhodes Brothers get their jobs back. This is one of the rare stories that connected with people on an emotional level. You have Cody who gets fired because he dared to stand up to the boss and had to fight for his job while Goldust needed a job as well. This was about standing up to the man and the fans bought into it. The match was awesome as well and the celebration with Dusty was a great moment.

Orton cashes in. This is one of those ideas where people knew it was coming but it was still awesome. That slight delay after Bryan wins the title before Orton's music hit made me wonder what was going to happen. That's what makes a moment work to perfection and the shock was great. HHH turning heel makes it even better and sets up the next four months worth of stories. It was much more about the surprise than anything else and that's a good thing.

Undertaker's tribute to Paul Bearer. I don't think this really needs an explanation.

That brings us to the winner.

John Cena selects Daniel Bryan. This promo was the culmination of Daniel Bryan having the year of his life and being rewarded for it. Cena comes off looking like the people's champion, the fans feel like their influence meant something and we got a classic match to close out the best show of the year as a result. When a moment is awesome as well as sets up months worth of stories and an awesome match, what more can you ask for?

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On This Day: December 16, 2012 – Tables Ladders and Chairs 2012: Ziggler's Shot

Tables Ladders and Chairs 2012

Date: December 16, 2012

Location: Barclays Center, Brooklyn, New York

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

This is the final stop before we get to the Rumble where Rock can finally get his title shot, meaning we can stop having everything lead up to that instead of having stuff that matters. The main event is a six man tag because Punk is injured. Other than that we've got Cena vs. Ziggler for

the MITB case and Sheamus vs. Show in a chairs match for the Smackdown Title. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Divas Battle Royal

Layla, Kaitlyn, Alicia Fox, Natalya, Tamina Snuka, Aksana, Rosa Mendes, Cameron, Naomi

The winner gets the title shot presumably later tonight. They're all in Santa outfits here and Eve is on commentary. Rosa is put out quickly and the Funkadactyls do some splits on I think Alicia. I think Cameron is put out and Aksana lays on the ropes like an idiot. She deserves the elimination she gets. Striker says that there might be a dancing basketball rivalry because Layla and Eve danced for different NBA teams.

Tamina eliminates Layla and Kaitlyn dropkicks Nattie out. We've got Kaitlyn, Naomi and Tamina left as Alicia was put out off camera earlier I guess. Naomi actually puts out Tamina and we get a rematch of NXT Season 3. Kaitlyn spears her down but misses a dropkick. Naomi puts her on the apron and Layla adds a slap, allowing Naomi to dropkick Kaitlyn out for the win at 5:26.

Rating: D. Yes, one of the Funkadactyls, the dancers of Brodus Clay who hasn't been on TV in weeks, is the #1 contender to the Divas Title. Has she ever spoken a word on television or been seen on her own? Wait why am I even trying to figure this out? It's the freaking Divas division so what difference does it make?

The regular show opens with a twenty six bell salute to those who died in the shooting in Connecticut.

There are ladders EVERYWHERE, including hanging from the rafters over the stage.

Rhodes Scholars vs. Rey Mysterio/Sin Cara

Tables match where only one member has to go through for a win. The winners get a title shot at some point in the future. Sandow wants to know if there's anyone lower in life than the Brooklyn hipster. They're literally the unwashed masses. Cody makes fun of facial hair and we're

ready to go. Thankfully we don't have tags and Rey sends Cody to the floor very quickly. Sandow is sent out as well and there are stereo dives by the masked men.

Rey and Cara pull out a table and ram both Scholars with it. Rhodes has to save Sandow from being slammed through the table and Rey is sent out to the floor. Mysterio saves Cara from going through the table, allowing Sin to hit the armdrag out of the corner on Rhodes. There's the Disaster Kick to Cara though and everyone in a mask is down. The Scholars slam Cara into the steps and Rey goes into the barricade. The Mustache gets another chant as the Scholars set up a pair of tables.

After walking around forever, Rey trips up Sandow and hits the seated senton. Cody's powerbomb is countered into a rana to send him to the floor. Cara takes out Sandow with a springboard cross body and a rana that slips a bit. A corkscrew plancha to the floor takes Damien out again and Rey hits the 619 on Cody. Sandow breaks up the top rope splash through the table though as Cole lists off some Tweets. Cara kicks Sandow in the head and kicks Cody to the apron. After firing off about eight kicks to the head from the apron, Cody knocks Cara off the top rope and through a table for the win at 9:36.

Rating: D+. Not the best opener in the world here as they spent a lot of time walking around looking for a spot to do. The Scholars were the obvious winners here and there's nothing wrong with that, but it doesn't make for the most entertaining match in the world. It was probably a good idea to get this out of the way though.

We get another Joker Shield promo, saying about what you would expect them to say: they're going to take out Ryback and HELL NO one by one tonight and that's about it. The main reason they want to beat those three up though: they just don't like them. How simple yet effective.

US Title: Antonio Cesaro vs. R-Truth

Cesaro is defending in what should be a layup for him. We start with a clean break in the corner and Truth does his pelvic thrusting. Cesaro throws Truth around before getting rolled up for a few two counts. Antonio works on the ribs as the fans chant for the USA. Off to a

modified cobra clutch by the champion which goes on for a good while.

Truth fights up and hits the spinning forearm followed by the ax kick for two. A side kick puts Cesaro down for two more and the fans start a Little Jimmy chant. Cesaro escapes the suplex into a stunner before hitting the European uppercut to the back of the head. Neutralizer (BIG pop for that) retains the title at 6:44.

Rating: C. This was better than I was expecting, which isn't saying much as I was expecting a basic TV level match. Truth is just filling in a spot here and there's nothing wrong with that, but we're just waiting for a big time AMERICAN to come in and save the title for the country. Decent enough match here though.

Post match Cesaro says that when the fans boo him, they're booing themselves.

Some people from Tribute to the Troops don't have much to say.

Ziggler says Cena is going to try to steal the case from him tonight. Cena already lost his own case earlier this year, so why should Ziggler have to earn it a second time? Ziggler says Cena's career should be over if John loses tonight.

Here's 3MB on MizTV to waste some time. Apparently they're going to finally perform tomorrow night on Raw. Mahal makes fun of the Spanish announce team, telling them to speak AMERICAN. The bullying goes on until Ricardo Rodriguez of all people makes the save. 3MB beats on him too until Del Rio makes the save. Is that a face turn? Miz and Del Rio wind up cleaning house. A six man is proposed to fill in some time later. The fans want Ryder to be Miz and Del Rio's partner.

Rock will indeed be at the Rumble.

HELL NO fires themselves up and talk about how hard it is to talk to Ryback. Tonight, they'll feed all of the Shield to him.

Wade Barrett says he's going to take out Kofi tonight.

Intercontinental Title: Wade Barrett vs. Kofi Kingston

Kofi is defending. Barrett takes it into the corner to start and pounds away for two. There's the bouncing elbow by Kofi for two but Wade clotheslines him out to the floor. Kofi slides back in and hits a suicide dive to take Wade right back out. Back in and momentum shifts again, this time with Barrett kicking Kofi in the ribs.

A backbreaker gets two for Wade and it's off to a bow and arrow with a knee in Kofi's back. That doesn't last long so Wade settles for two off a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. Back to the chinlock for a bit, followed by Kofi fighting up and hitting another clothesline to take Wade down. There's the Boom Drop but Trouble in Paradise misses. The Boss Man Slam is countered into the SOS for two for Kofi.

A spinning full nelson slam gets the same for Barrett but Wade is getting frustrated. I love Wade moveset as he constantly mixes in new things. Kofi's top rope cross body is rolled through for two, followed by a Boss Man Slam for the same result. In another sudden ending tonight, the Bull Hammer is countered into Trouble in Paradise to retain at 8:19.

Rating: C+. Nice back and forth match here with a surprising ending. This could have been on Smackdown but it wasn't out of place on PPV. Kofi winning is the surprise though as he would seem to be set up to be fed to Barrett. Odds are there will be a rematch though, because clearly a clean win isn't enough to warrant the end of a program right?

Punk and Heyman are in a sky box and Punk says the status of his knee is none of their business. Punk talks about how he would have destroyed Ryback tonight and how he'll be champion for as long as he likes. Oh and he's not associated with the Shield.

Ryback/HELL NO vs. The Shield

It's a TLC match but you can win by pin/submission because there's nothing to hang above the ring. Shield comes through the crowd of course. The brawl starts on the floor of course with Bryan vs. Rollins, Kane vs. Reigns and Ambrose vs. Ryback. Ryback and Ambrose get in the ring and the smart aleck fans just have to chant Goldberg. Shield gets Ryback 3-1 but he shrugs them off. Kane tries to bring in a ladder but Rollins dropkicks it into the monster's ribs.

Bryan takes a ladder to the face as well but here's Ryback to beat them all up. Reigns takes Kane down with a chair but Kane makes the save. I think Ryback is busted a bit. Bryan kicks Reigns in the corner and the fans are WAY into Danny boy. Reigns is thrown into a ladder which gets two for Kane. Bryan saves Ryback and the fans want tables. Rollins jumps into a Kane uppercut for two before getting put inside a ladder. Kane beats on the ladder with a chair for a bit but Ambrose takes Kane out with a DDT onto the chair.

Ryback rams Rollins and Ambrose into the corner and there's another Goldberg chant. The fans still want tables. Ryback blocks a beat into the ladder in the corner and pounds Ambrose and Rollins down again. A splash crushes both of them against the ladder, followed by a suplex from Ryback to put both of them on the ladder. Reigns breaks up the double Shell Shock and it's another three on one beating. Where did HELL NO go?

Shield loads up the triple powerbomb...and it actually works. Seriously, no save from the champions until a few seconds later. Bryan goes off on everyone but gets caught in the numbers game. Kane finally comes back but gets beaten down as well. Back into the ring and it's time for the chairs portion of the match. Bryan gets beaten down before being double superplexed off a table on the top. Kane barely makes a save but he gets beaten down by the chair as well.

Ambrose and Rollins try the double superplex on Kane as well but he shoves Rollins to the floor and clotheslines Ambrose down. The side slam puts Reigns down but Dean makes the save. Instead of I think a DDT on Kane though, it's a chokeslam for Dean through the chair for two. Back to the floor and Reigns spears Kane through the barricade to a BIG reaction. Kane gets buried under a bunch of stuff, but in the chaos, Bryan grabs the NO Lock on Ambrose. He eventually gets it on all three guys but the numbers catch up to him.

Bryan fights back AGAIN with a bunch of kicks but eventually he falls prey to the Blackout (running curb stomp) onto the EDGE OF THE CHAIR from Rollins. FREAKING OW MAN!!! Ryback is up though and house is cleaned. Rollins is thrown onto Ambrose and it's chair time for Reigns. Ambrose comes back AGAIN but gets speared down. There's a Meat Hook for Dean

followed by Shell Shock for two as Rollins saves. Ryback goes to the floor but gets caught by some chair shots. Ryback charges at Reigns to tackle into whatever is in his path in a cool visual.

The Shield and Ryback are all up by the entrance and Ambrose chairs him in the back to take him down again. They shove a ladder onto Ryback and destroy him with some chair shots and put him on a table. There's a HUGE, as in bigger than the usual HUGE ladders, and Rollins climbs up. Ryback fights up though and Rollins is in trouble. Ryback throws Seth through a big stack of tables, but Ambrose and Reigns are double teaming Bryan in the ring. Reigns superbombs Bryan through the table for the pin at 22:55.

Rating: A. AWESOME brawl here with a great story being told throughout. Ryback gets to do the big spot to look strong and the Shield's pack mentality worked very well too. Great match here and definitely better than I was expecting. Shield looked like they could more than hang in there, and that was the main thing they had to worry about. Great stuff.

Carnage is removed for a bit. Rollins took a NASTY bump into the table on that fall, slamming his head onto the edge.

Divas Title: Naomi vs. Eve Torres

Naomi does her flashy stuff to start and Eve hides on the floor. The reaction to taking the champ out? DANCE TIME! Naomi fakes her out a lot, botches a jump to the top, and misses a spinning cross body. Eve's neckbreaker ends this at 3:08.

Rating: D. Eve is hot and Naomi can shake her hips so I can't call this a failure. The division is such a joke anymore and AJ isn't going to fix anything immediately. They need to get this Kaitlyn title reign over already though because it's already past the point where it should have happened. Nothing to see but Eve's legs here as usual.

Eve does her posing thing post match which is pretty awesome.

Big Show says Sheamus has no chance to get the title back tonight.

We recap Sheamus vs. Show. Show won the title at TLC and retained it at Survivor Series, but after the second match, Sheamus hit Show 31 times

with a chair. The chairs match stipulation tonight was obvious.

Smackdown World Title: Sheamus vs. Big Show

Note that with the Raw Champion off the show, this was never once mentioned as a possible replacement main event. This is a chairs match, which means chair shots are legal. Sheamus pounds him down to start and goes for the knee. The first chair is brought in but Sheamus is knocked to the floor. Show superkicks the chair into Sheamus' face and there's the LOUD chop. Sheamus comes back with the shoulder off the apron and we head inside again.

Show pounds him down again but Sheamus slams him down for two. Why is it a surprise that he kicked out of that? It's just a slam. A top rope chair shot puts Show down but a second attempt is countered with a spear out of the air to take him down. Back in and Sheamus pounds away but charges into a chokeslam for two. Show goes under the ring and pulls out a bunch of chairs.

A Vader Bomb onto a chair onto Sheamus gets two so Show loads up two chairs in the middle of the ring. Sheamus fights back and hits White Noise onto both chairs but it only gets two. Sheamus gets all fired up but the Brogue Kick hits the rope instead. The WMD lays Sheamus out but it only gets two. In a pretty dumb ending, Show pulls out a GIANT chair and clocks Sheamus in the head with it to retain at 14:40.

Rating: B-. Good match here but it was several steps below what they've done before. I really didn't know who was winning here and with Show winning, I doubt we're going to have a cash in tonight, which is probably the right call. Decent but not great match here, which surprisingly enough is a downgrade for this feud. Hopefully this is the end for these two here.

AJ comes up to Cena in a cutoff Cena shirt. Good look on her. Basically he says she can thank him after he wins.

3MB vs. Alberto Del Rio/The Miz/Brooklyn Brawler

You know what? Why not? He's in a Brooklyn Nets jersey as apparently he's

abandoned the Yankees (Bronx, not Brooklyn) shirt. Ignore those RYDER chants of course. Del Rio and Slater start things off with Alberto in control. Off to Brawler who beats up Mahal a bit before getting punched down by Heath. Brawler avoids a middle rope knee drop as we hear about 3MB having their tattoos messed up. Not hot tag brings in Miz who gets two on Jinder off a DDT. Del Rio drives Drew into the remnants of the announce table. The Finale takes down Mahal and the Brawler gets the win off a Boston Crab at 3:37.

Rating: D. It should have been Ryder. Seriously, what else do you want me to say here?

We recap Ziggler vs. Cena, which is more about AJ and Vickie than anything else. Eventually Dolph and Cena got dragged into it and Ziggy's MITB case was put up for grabs in a ladder match.

Dolph Ziggler vs. John Cena

Ladder match for the case here. Cena runs him over with a shoulder to start and they stare at each other for a bit. The fans are almost universally behind Dolph here. Cena takes him down with a headlock, probably for the first time in the history of ladder matches. He works on Dolph's arm and hits a fisherman's suplex. There's a monkey flip out of the corner and Ziggler is sent to the floor.

Ziggler gets a chair to take Cena down and wedges it between the top and middle rope. We get the first ladder brought in but Cena rams it into Dolph's face. Cena might be cut over the eye. The dueling Cena chants begin as he crushes Ziggler's head with the steps. It's table time but Dolph knocks Cena down and goes for a climb. They slug it out and it's boo/yay time. Dolph hooks the sleeper and Cena turns red, but he climbs the ladder anyway with Ziggler on his back.

This of course goes badly and they crash backwards through a table in the ring. In a very cool spot, Ziggler goes up the ladder, so Cena PICKS UP THE LADDER FOR THE AA. Ziggler escapes what would have likely resulted in death and hits the Fameasser to put both guys down. Cena puts on a quick STF but Ziggler escapes the AA and hits the Zig Zag. Ziggler seems to be a big ginger on his leg as he gets another table.

The table is placed in the corner but Cena hits four of the five moves of doom. Dolph counters the AA and hits the jumping DDT to put Cena down again. Ziggler goes for the big ladder but Cena stops him at the top. They slug it out up there with Cena shoving Ziggler off. There's no one to stop Cena...except himself as Cena does the stupid VERY slow climb, allowing Ziggler to take him down. Ziggler rams the bad eye into the ladder but Cena BUSTS OUT A FREAKING HURRICANRANA to send Ziggy through the table in the corner.

John pounds Ziggler into the corner and puts him on the top rope. Ziggler shoves him away and tries a top rope cross body, but Cena rolls through into the AA. That gets countered too and a chair shot puts Cena down. Ziggler misses a kick and there's an AA. There's nothing in the ring at the moment though so here's Vickie with a chair. Cue AJ to take Guerrero down with the Five Moves of Doom. Well close enough I guess. Cena climbs the ladder and AJ shoves it down, turning heel. Ziggler has no idea what's going on but AJ goes all happy psycho again. Ziggler retains the case at 23:38.

Rating: B+. I'd like this a lot more if it wasn't about AJ. At the end of the day, I get that she's nuts but she's gotten WAY too much focus and it means this story must continue. I get what they're going for here, but man alive they've run this story into the ground for so long that I don't care anymore. The match was very good though as the ladders were props in the match, which is what makes the best ladder matches.

Ziggler celebrates a ton to end the show.

Overall Rating: A-. Once we got by the obvious matches to open the show, this turned into the usual excellent show that TLC is. It's not so much about the quality of it, but it's FUN, which is a good idea to end the year with. Things get serious now as the Road to Wrestlemania begins. Very fun show here with a serious match of the year candidate included. Check this one out.

Results

Rhodes Scholars b. Rey Mysterio/Sin Cara – Rhodes shoved Cara through a table

Antonio Cesaro b. R-Truth – Neutralizer

Kofi Kingston b. Wade Barrett – Trouble in Paradise

The Shield b. Ryback/HELL NO – Superbomb to Bryan

Eve Torres b. Naomi – Spinning Neckbreaker

Big Show b. Sheamus – Chair to the back

Albeto Del Rio/The Miz/Brooklyn Brawler b. 3MB – Boston Crab to Mahal

Dolph Ziggler b. John Cena – Ziggler pulled down the case

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Checked Out Christmas Bounty

Miz's movie in case you forgot.

It's not terrible but I'm probably going to forget I watched it in about 3 days. Miz is the co-star of the movie and is about what you would expect. It's not like That's What I Am where they hyped up Orton and he literally wasn't on screen for five minutes.

The movie is supposed to be a comedy but it's more of an

action movie than funny. The story is an ex-bounty hunter is coming back to New Jersey because the one bounty she ever let get away is back in town. She hooks up with her old team, including ex-boyfriend Miz. She doesn't want her fiance to know she used to be a bounty hunter and spends half the movie hiding it. The fact that it's set at Christmas means nothing to the plot at all and this could have been set at any time of the year with no effect on the story.

It's better than some WWE movies but there's a reason this is a straight to DVD movie that aired once on cable. The action sequences aren't bad and the lead girl is good looking. Miz isn't bad in it all things considered and he looks fine beating up goons. It ran an hour and 45 minutes with commercials so it's not even that long. The movie isn't terrible by any means but it's nothing that is going to blow you away or be something you'll want to watch multiple times.

If you like Miz and not serious action movies you might like this but definitely don't buy the DVD if you're just curious. Rent it or see if it's ever on TV again at best.

Monday Night Raw – August 30, 2004: Total Divas Wish They Were Like This

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 30, 2004

Location: Cow Palace, San Francisco, California

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This was a request from a long time ago and I have no idea why anyone wanted to see it. We're just past Summerslam 2004, meaning Orton is the

world champion, having beaten Benoit at Summerslam, only to be thrown out of Evolution the next night. We're coming up on Unforgiven where HHH would make it VERY clear who ruled Raw and Heaven help anyone that thought otherwise. Let's get to it.

We open with an In Memory Of graphic for Marcin Makulski, a graphics designer for WWE who died either that day or over the weekend.

The opening video shows HHH throwing Orton out of Evolution and Orton spitting in his face.

Here's Evolution for their weekly ten minute chat. HHH says this unit exists because he invented it. It's his blood, sweat and heart that makes the team what it is today. Just ask Ric Flair, who was down in the dumps before HHH saved him. Batista had no direction or guidance until HHH showed him the way. Dude just say you think you're Jesus already. That brings HHH to Orton who was supposed to be the pet project. No one cared if Orton lived or died until HHH got hold of him. HHH wasn't done with him yet, but Orton spat in his face. That's how he repays HHH?

This brings out Orton who stands next to what appear to be three covered up pictures. Orton tells HHH to call him champ instead of Randy in a nice line. HHH is right: he gave Orton a chance to make a name for himself and HHH should be thanked for that. HHH got something out of it as well though, which leads to the first picture being revealed: a group shot of Evolution with HHH front and center. The team was never about the past, present and future, but only about protecting HHH.

The Game goes into a tirade on how Evolution is all about him because he made it. Orton is one to talk about protection because the three of them protected him for over a year. Randy reveals picture #2: him pinning Chris Benoit all by himself, something HHH could never do.

The third picture is Orton spitting in HHH's face, making Trips even angrier than before. Orton is ready to fight if HHH wants a piece, but we're not waiting for Unforgiven. Randy takes off his shirt, but realizes it would be 3-1. He goes over to the third picture and pulls out a sledgehammer. HHH ducks a swing that would have killed him and bails into the crowd, leaving Orton to pose in the ring. Good ending to the segment

but it didn't need to take fifteen minutes.

After a break Bischoff is yelling at Orton for swinging the hammer. As a punishment, Orton is thrown out of the building. Did I mention HHH is facing Eugene later tonight? Orton drops the hammer on Bischoff's foot.

We recap Rock making a shocking appearance last week to beat up La Resistance with a slight assist from Rhyno and Tajiri.

Rhyno/Tajiri vs. La Resistance/Coach

Rob Conway (who, as of this writing on December 17, 2013, is the NWA World Champion of all people) pounds on Rhyno to start before it's off to Sylvan Grenier for some neck cranking. The French Canadian tag champions hold Rhyno for a slip from Coach for two as this is already boring. Back to Grenier for a chinlock until Rhyno fights up and makes his comeback with clotheslines. Tajiri keeps getting kicked off the apron to keep him out as Rhyno Gores Coach down. Rhyno walks into Au Revoir (spinning suplex/side slam combo) for the pin.

Rating: D-. Oh my goodness how bad was the tag division at this point? I'm assuming Tajiri was injured or something here as he never came in at all. The match was really dull stuff with La Resistance being one of the least interesting multiple time champions ever and having no opponents of note at all. Terribly uninteresting match.

Papa Roach is here.

We recap Kane and Lita's wedding which saw a failed run-in from Matt Hardy to try to save the reluctant Lita. Kane's white tuxedo does rather rule.

Kane tells someone off screen to not come out until he tells them to. It's not Lita.

Eugene tells Regal about how much he loves baseball and gets on Regal's nerves. Regal doesn't want Eugene to come out there for Regal's match with Batista.

William Regal vs. Batista

Regal beat Flair last week with the help of the brass knuckles to set this up. Batista takes Regal into the corner to start and shrugs off a shoulder block attempt. Some knees and elbows have Regal in more trouble but he avoids a charge into the corner and gets a nice suplex on Big Dave. The knee trembler gets two but Regal walks into the spinebuster. Batista goes outside to get a chair but it's just a distraction so Flair can get in a brass knuckle shot to Regal's ribs. Batista's running clothesline (the Batista Bomb was still coming) is good for the pin. Just a squash to wrap up some ends from last week.

Smackdown Your Vote: Republican version. This was a voting drive kind of deal the company did for both parties to get 18-30 year olds involved in politics. Shawn, Ivory and Linda McMahon are representing here.

Here's Stacy to emcee the Diva Search segment. The Diva Search was exactly what it sounds like and basically filled in the Diva division for about five years. We get the five finalists (Christy Hemme, Carmella Descarse, Joy Giovanni, Maria Kinellis and Amy Weber, all of whom were hired) in swimsuits. Maria gets eliminated despite being arguably the most famous of the final five. She flips Carmella off on the way out and gets the only pop of the segment.

All four of the remaining finalists get thirty seconds to insult the other girls. Joy feels Amy up, spansks Christy and says Carmella has a big mouth. Amy tells Joy to learn how to lick a pie, Christy to settle down and that Carmella knows "S*** about wrestling and that having a c*** in your a** has nothing to do with wrestling." MAN this was a different era.

Carmella makes fun of Amy for being rejected for Playboy, calls Joy fat and hopes Christy wins if she doesn't. Christy says don't mess with fire because she'll get burned. Amy has fat lips and Carmella enjoys swallowing male bodily fluids in a gutter. Christy does the splits and that's it. Christy would wind up winning this, even though the most successful of all the girls in the Search had been eliminated weeks ago: Michelle McCool. To say this was extreme compared to the Bellas and Total Divas is an understatement.

Trish Stratus and Tyson Tomko make fun of Lita in the back. Kane gets in

Tomko's face to stand up for his wife but winds up laughing with them. Another sign of the times: Kane has six pack abs.

Here are Kane and Lita for Lita's wedding present. After mentioning an open contract for Unforgiven, Kane thanks her for giving his unborn child a womb to grow in and has a surprise for her as a reward. Matt isn't here tonight but Kane has flown in his family. The fans go nuts at the thought of Jeff Hardy returning but instead it's a bunch of random guys, including Pat Hardy, Nat Hardy, Rat Hardy and a 400lb Samoan named Fat Hardy. Kane destroys all of them and chokeslams Rat for a pin since that apparently that was a match.

Kane raises his arms for the fire but Lita says hang on a second because she has a surprise for him too. See, they're married now and can sign legal documents for each other, such as that open contract. Kane laughs it off because Matt Hardy won't be able to fight by Unforgiven. Lita is aware of this, which is why she signed Kane to face Shawn Michaels. Kane injured Shawn a few weeks ago, even though he was fine for the voting thing about fifteen minutes ago.

Ric Flair vs. Chris Benoit

This should be good. Flair is checked for brass knuckles and the referee actually finds some in his knee pad. Ric takes him into the corner to start but Benoit fights out with chops and a bad looking backdrop. A quick Crossface attempt doesn't work as Flair makes the rope and we go outside for more chopping. Back in and Flair Flops face first on the mat but comes back with a quick chop block.

Ric fires away with chops and kicks at the knee in the corner before doing what was supposed to be a strut. There's a half crab of all things on Benoit as Flair needs a breather. They chop it out again until Benoit enziguris him down. Benoit misses the Swan Dive but rolls the Germans anyway. A Sharpshooter almost makes Flair tap but Batista comes in for the DQ.

Rating: C. This is one of those matches that would have been better five years ago with an extra fifteen minutes but at this point it was a shell of what it should have been. Benoit didn't look like his usual self here

but the German suplexes looked great. Flair was starting to slip out there and it was on the verge of getting sad.

Batista powerbombs Benoit.

Here's Jericho for the Highlight Reel with special guest Edge. We get a clip from Jericho challenging Edge for the IC Title and getting dropped throat first on the top rope to retain Edge's title. It may or may not have been intentional, but Jericho wants a rematch at Unforgiven. Edge comes out on crutches but Jericho doesn't seem convinced. The champion says he tore his groin over the weekend and claims that he doesn't need to get disqualified to keep his title.

Jericho talks about Edge getting booed out of Toronto at Summerslam and starts a Y2J chant here in San Francisco. Edge calls the fans puppets and says Jericho can win the popularity contests because he'll keep winning the matches. Jericho questions the need for Edge's crutches and thinks as soon as he turns his back, Edge will bash him over the head. Edge says he has the MRI to prove that he's injured and promises Jericho the first title shot when he's healed. The champion goes to leave when Christian returns to jump Jericho. Edge looks confused as Christian whips Jericho with a belt.

Trish Stratus/Gail Kim vs. Nidia/Victoria

This is Trish's first match since June even though she never lost the title. Trish and Nidia get things going but Trish gets in a cheap shot to Victoria on the apron. Nidia is easily taken down and kicked in the ribs by the evil Stratus before it's off to Gail. Kim puts on a freaky looking armbar with her leg wrapped around Nidia's neck but lets it go a few seconds later. We get the unseen tag as Nidia fights to Victoria but Trish had the referee. Lucky guy.

The tag goes through a few seconds later anyway and Victoria cleans house, getting two on Gail off the spinning side slam. Victoria can't hit a big boot and has the Widow's Peak countered, allowing Gail to put on a modified Sharpshooter. Before Victoria can tap a mystery woman falls down the ramp, distracting Gail enough for Victoria to get a rollup for the pin.

Rating: C+. Gail looked great in her white shorts and evil Trish is one of the hottest things you'll ever see in wrestling. You add some awesome looking holds from Kim and I can almost forgive the mystery woman (Steven Richards in drag for no apparent reason) being such a stupid ending.

Smackdown ReBounce shows Eddie destroying Angle's car, which wound up being Teddy Long's. Angle was behind it and gets a 2/3 falls match against Eddie. That was such an awesome feud. Eddie vs. Angle, not Teddy. We also see Orlando Jordan defending the world title against Undertaker in place of an injured JBL. Layfield saved the title while wearing his AWESOME neck halo with his cowboy hat on top.

A sore footed Bischoff makes Orton vs. Kane for next week.

We run down the Unforgiven card.

HHH vs. Eugene

No DQ. Eugene comes out in a poorly buttoned San Francisco Giants jersey to suck up to the crowd. You would think he would get how serious this was after HHH beat him up at Summerslam. HHH jumps him again here but Eugene comes back with headlocks and something resembling an AA. Back up and Eugene gets two off a backslide before heading right back to the headlock. HHH comes back with a stiff right hand and a low blow to take over.

Eugene is thrown over the top rope, injuring his arm in the process. HHH of course pounds away on the injured slow guy because he can be a good heel when he tries. No sarcasm in that if you're looking for any. Back in and Eugene walks into a spinebuster followed by the knee drop so HHH can strut around a bit more. Eugene gets rammed into the buckles but it's Hulk Up time. He slugs HHH down and hits a top rope ax handle for two followed by an old school thumb to the eye.

A Rock Bottom looks to set up a Stunner but HHH grabs a sleeper. HHH: "ROCK A BYE BABY EUGENE!" Eugene is almost out but HHH lets go before the third arm drop. It didn't work for Adrian Adonis back in 87 but at least HHH follows up with a Pedigree. HHH lets him up again and pulls out the hammer, only to have Orton (in wrestling gear after wearing a suit

earlier for no apparent reason) to take the hammer away. A shot to the ribs and an RKO put HHH down and Orton puts Eugene on top for what is supposed to be some huge moment.

Rating: D+. Well that happened. Anyone who has watched wrestling for more than five minutes in their lives knew that Orton was going to cost HHH the match, but it's not like this really means anything. It doesn't help when Eugene didn't move for the last five minutes of the show after a sleeper and a Pedigree.

Overall Rating: D. It's easy to see why Batista and Cena needed to rise up very soon. This was just boring for the most part, but Orton looked like a star in the making. That's the perfect explanation for why he lost the title to HHH at the PPV and wouldn't win another world title for over three years. HHH crippled that push so hard it's almost unfathomable, but at least HHH got to get the title back after letting other people have it for a full five months. Boring show, as expected from this time period.

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