

# Thought Of The Day: Missed Masterpieces Of The 80s

Barry Windham vs. Randy Savage

Ted DiBiase vs. Tito Santana

To the best of my knowledge, neither match ever happened. Tito vs. Ted might have on some house show but I'm 99% positive that Windham vs. Savage never did, at least not when it would have been great (read as before 1989ish when Windham just stopped trying). Imagine either of these matches getting 20 minutes and see if you don't smile a little.

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## Smackdown – October 5, 2012: Even Basic Stuff Is A Breath Of Fresh Air

### Smackdown

Date: October 5, 2012

Location: BOK Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Commentators: Michael Cole, Josh Matthews

We're closing in on the Cell and we have our main event now. Sheamus will defend against Big Show and they had a debate on Raw to set the match up. The debate wound up being almost as a big of a waste of time as the

entire Del Rio feud, but at least the match should be more interesting. Other than that there isn't much going on so we're almost going into this blind. Let's get to it.

Do You Know Your Enemy? Mine is Bud Selig. Why does he feel the need to keep changing everything that was was working fine?

Here's Big Show to open the show. Show talks about Sheamus having a plan for their match, but a punch in the mouth can change any plans. We get a highlight reel of Show knocking people out. Here's Sheamus who says he knows the fight at the PPV is going to be the fight of his life. He offers a handshake and says may the best man win, but Show walks away.

As Show is leaving, Sheamus talks about the plans that Show mentioned. He says Bryan had a plan at TLC and we see a clip of Big Show losing the title in 45 seconds. We also see Bryan's plan from Wrestlemania and the 18 second title change. Show gets back in the ring and extends his hand again but this time Sheamus walks away. This was already more entertaining and interesting than the last two months of Sheamus vs. Del Rio and it was just ok.

#### Tag Team Tournament: Kofi Kingston/R-Truth vs. Prime Time Players

The winners get Mysterio and Sin Cara. Kofi and Young get things going and Kofi hits a dropkick for two. Off to Truth as the former champions take over. Truth hits his spinning legdrop for two but Young powers him into the corner and it's off to O'Neal. Titus has a great look and the power but he's not quite there yet in the ring. Off to Young for their suplex drop onto Truth for two.

Young hooks a bearhug of all things which gets him nowhere. Wouldn't that be a better move for someone like O'Neal? Anyway Truth gets in a shot to take Young down and there's the hot tag to Kofi. Things immediately speed up and after running around a lot, Kofi hits the Boom Drop for no cover on Young. Titus distracts Kofi before Trouble in Paradise can hit. Two

kicks miss but O'Neal trips Kingston up and Young's gutbuster gets the pin on Kofi at 4:23.

**Rating:** D+. This didn't have time to get anywhere but at least the Players finally beat these guys after losing for months on end. Kofi and Truth have probably outlived their shelf life as a team but the Players facing the masked guys is a good idea for a feud. This wasn't awful but the time killed it.

Here are the final four matchups:

Rhodes Scholars

Zack Ryder/Santino Marella

Prime Time Players

Sin Cara/Rey Mysterio

Primo vs. Ryback

Cole says Ryback said he's looking for his next meal with Punk. Primo gets launched into the corner and a big boot puts him down. Ryback slams Primo into the mat a few times but Primo gets in some jobber offense. Primo is then launched across the ring, clotheslined down and sent to the floor. Ryback beats up both cousins on the floor, clotheslines Primo down in the ring and Shell Shocks (Josh actually called it that for the first time I can ever remember) him for the pin at 2:52.

Punk and Heyman are in the back and looking for Dolph Ziggler.

Layla vs. Alicia Fox

Layla's music just does not fit at all. They do basic stuff to start and

Alicia shakes her hips a lot. She works on Layla's leg and puts some holds on it but Layla kicks Alicia from the corner, hits her bouncy cross body, and finishes Alicia with a high kick to the head at 3:26.

**Rating:** D. Not only was the match uninteresting, there was no selling at all from Layla. Alicia worked on Layla's leg for almost two minutes before Layla hit three moves that all involved her leg. Then again, I don't think anyone has ever accused Layla of being what you would call a ring general.

Layla says that it's going to be all the sweeter to take the title from Eve because of how Eve got the title in the first place.

Ziggler and Vickie are in the back and run into Heyman and Punk. Punk yells at Dolph for walking out on the tag match on Monday, which Ziggler points out that Punk did a few weeks ago. All four of them get in an argument until Booker shows up and makes Punk vs. Ziggler in the main event.

#### Wade Barrett vs. ???

It's a jobber whose name isn't worth mentioning. In an inset interview, Barrett says that he likes toying with the people he fights. A pumphandle slam puts the jobber down and Barrett shoves him off the top to the floor. The Souvenir gets the pin at 1:47.

#### Sheamus vs. The Miz

Cole hypes up this as being a rare champion vs. champion match. That's true actually. There hasn't been one in two whole days. Miz pounds Sheamus down into the corner to start but the champ (the world champ I mean) throws Miz into the corner and pounds away. The ten forearms in the ropes are blocked and Sheamus is sent to the floor. It's nice to see people start countering that as it means Sheamus is going to have to

start mixing it up a bit more.

Miz sends him into the post which gets two back inside. Sheamus fights up but walks into the Reality Check (backbreaker into a neckbreaker) for two. Miz hooks a chinlock and the announcers talk about fantasy football. Sheamus starts his comeback with some high powered shots but walks into the short DDT for two. Miz's corner clothesline is caught in an Irish Curse and there are the ten forearms. White Noise hits and the place gets very fired up when Sheamus loads up the Brogue Kick...and here's Big Show. Sheamus is ready to go but Show KO's Miz to give Sheamus a DQ loss at 6:25.

**Rating:** C-. We've reached the point where watching two champions go at it means nothing anymore. We saw this two nights ago so why should it mean anything today? At least Sheamus vs. Show is something new which you can't say has happened in months now. The match should be a physical one as well which is a perk. The match here wasn't bad.

Here's Otunga in wrestling gear. He wants to address something that happened after Smackdown went off the air last week and we get a clip of Del Rio attacking Orton after the end of last week's show. Otunga thanks Del Rio for having the guts to stand up to Orton, and that brings out the Viper. Scratch that as it brings out Del Rio and Ricardo.

Alberto talks like Orton which is kind of funny actually. That lasts all of two seconds and he says Orton isn't here because he's afraid of dying like a snake. This brings out Booker who puts Otunga and Del Rio in a tag match against these guys.

#### Alberto Del Rio/David Otunga vs. HELL NO

Non-title again. After a break Bryan and Otunga start things off. Bryan gets thrown down and Otunga poses a bit. Daniel comes back and sends Otunga into the corner and poses as well. The NO Lock is avoided and Otunga drapes Bryan over the ropes to take over. A neckbreaker gets two

for Otunga and it's off to Del Rio for a suplex for two. Ricardo chants SI and Bryan drop toeholds Del Rio into the middle buckle.

Off to Kane who gets in an argument with Bryan almost immediately. Del Rio gets in a shot on Kane to take over and it's off to Del Rio who spinebusts the big man for two. That gets him nowhere though as Kane hits the chokeslam. Daniel tags himself in and hits a top rope headbutt for the pin on Otunga at 4:04.

**Rating:** D+. Was there a point here other than getting the champions on TV? I don't know if it's the crowd but the act seems to have died down a little bit. Granted they're being treated like a much more normal tag team now which takes away the stuff that got them so popular in the first place so that's probably it. I'm hoping they go back to what worked for them as it'll still get laughs. The match was nothing special.

Eve and Teddy are arguing in the back with Teddy saying he never told Eve to suspend Beth. Eve accuses Teddy of losing his memory in his old age. Teddy says he can see straight through Eve and thinks she had something to do with Kaitlyn's attack. Teddy says that he sees through Eve unlike Booker. Booker pops up and yells at him while sending Eve away. Booker tells Teddy to stop bickering or he might be fired.

### Big Show vs. Tensai

Show doesn't get an entrance but Tensai does. Tensai pounds away to start and beats Show into the corner with punches and headbutts. Show comes back with a chop but charges into a boot in the corner. Big Show shrugs that off and throws him to the floor where he runs Tensai over. Back in and Show misses an elbow and gets hit by the backplash for two. Show spears Tensai down and loads up the punch but here's Sheamus to Brogue Kick Tensai to give Show a DQ loss at 2:20.

Raw ReBound.

## CM Punk vs. Dolph Ziggler

It's the rare heel vs. heel main event and Punk comes out first. No Vickie entrance for Dolph either. The crowd is DEAD for Ziggler. They argue a lot over respect before the match starts and Punk grabs a headlock to start. Ziggler fights out and it's a stalemate as we head to a break. Back with Punk in control on the mat. Ziggler comes back with a headlock as they're still in first gear here.

Punk goes up but Ziggler is on the apron to meet him. They fight on the top before they both crash to the floor. These guys are mirroring each other so far. Back in and they slug it out a bit before both get two off rollups. Ziggler hits a jumping DDT for two and after ducking a high kick, Dolph hits a Fameasser for the same. This time the high kick hits for a near fall for the champion. Punk slams him down and loads up the Macho Elbow, only to get stopped by Ziggler. Dolph slams him down but misses a Stinger Splash in the corner. GTS hits out of nowhere for the clean pin at 7:10 shown of 10:40.

**Rating:** B-. They were going for a big match feel here but it didn't quite get there. The match was entertaining and Ziggler looked like he was hanging with Punk most of the way, but before the break and for part of it after the break they didn't really hit a higher level. It's good to see Punk get another clean win, but I could have done without seeing the MITB guy lose AGAIN.

Punk gets on the announce table and says he's heard it from everyone that he has to enter the Cell to face Cena. It's still not going to happen though.

**Overall Rating:** B-. I liked tonight's show but there were some problems with it. A lot of the matches felt like they were there to fill in time and had no real purpose other than that. I'm digging the basic stuff they're doing with Sheamus and Big Show as they're showing that Sheamus can do whatever Show can do and that Sheamus is trying to get inside

Show's head. That basic story is more than we got in the Alberto feud. I know I mentioned it like three times now, but that feud was so boring and even something simple like this is a breath of fresh air. This was a nice upgrade for Smackdown but it's no masterpiece.

## Results

Prime Time Players b. Kofi Kingston/R-Truth – Gutbuster to Kingston

Ryback b. Primo – Shell Shock

Layla b. Alicia Fox – High Kick

Wade Barrett b. ??? – Souvenir

The Miz b. Sheamus via DQ when Big Show interfered

HELL NO b. Alberto Del Rio/David Otunga

Tensai b. Big Show via DQ when Sheamus interfered

CM Punk b. Dolph Ziggler – GTS

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# **WWE Main Event – October 3, 2012: Perfectly Acceptable Wrestling That I Feel No Need To Watch**

## Main Event

Date: October 3, 2012



Location: BOK Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Commentators: Michael Cole, The Miz

This is the debut of a new show because seven and a half hours of free TV a week wasn't enough apparently. The main event tonight is Punk vs. Sheamus in a champion vs. champion match which could main event a PPV, but instead we're getting it on Ion Television at 8pm on a Wednesday night because that's how WWE works. Let's get to it.

The opening video is just about the exact same thing any opening video is. The theme song sounds like something from Shinedown.

Miz and Cole are in the ring to open things up. Cole talks about the champion vs. champion match which is just thrown together and there's no reason for them to fight other than they're champions. They talk about Punk a bit and here's a video on Punk, likely from his DVD. There are some clips from what looks like IWA-Mid South. This is definitely from the DVD as it talks about his beginnings. We get some OVW and ECW clips as well. We move on to Punk rising up the WWE ladder and I don't get why we're seeing this. If this was some big major show it would be one thing, but this is on ION Television, not NBC.

Punk is in the back warming up when Striker has a question for him. He's going to win tonight and maybe that'll be enough for him to get some respect.

Sheamus makes fun of Punk for wanting respect and is going to give that to Punk by kicking him in the face.

Here's a video on Sheamus so he doesn't get jealous.

Sheamus vs. CM Punk

Non-title of course. We get big-match intros at least. Punk grabs a

headlock and shouts spots in Sheamus' ear as is his custom. Sheamus puts on one of his own as it looks like we're in for a long match. Punk takes him to the corner but Sheamus kicks Punk away. The Smackdown Champion (Sheamus) pulls himself to the top but gets shoved to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Sheamus guillotining Punk on the top rope and stomping away in the corner, only to get pulled face first into the middle buckle. Punk drops a knee for no cover. That spot between Sheamus' eyes seems to be bleeding. Punk goes after the shoulder and hits a neckbreaker for two. Sheamus gets back up and starts speeding things up with a high knee followed by a powerslam for two.

Sheamus sets for the ten forearms in the ropes but Punk blocks the first one and hits a high kick for two as we take another break. Back with Sheamus holding his arm on the floor. The arm seems to be fine though as he snaps off a forearm and hits a slingshot shoulder for two. Sheamus loads up the Brogue Kick but Punk hides in the corner. The buckle pad is pulled off as Punk is pulled out and there are the ten forearms to the chest.

White Noise gets two and the fans are getting into this. Heyman seems to be praying or muttering to himself at ringside. Sheamus loads up the Cloverleaf but Punk punches his way out of it. There's a running knee in the corner followed by the Savage Elbow for two. The GTS is countered and Sheamus gets the Cloverleaf on in the middle of the ring.

Punk manages to get to a rope and Heyman is panicking even more. They both come out of the corner and Punk charges into the Irish Curse. Sheamus charges again but Punk drop toeholds him into the exposed buckle and rolls Sheamus up with the tights for the pin at 12:18 shown of approximately 18:18.

**Rating:** B. Good match here and the fact that there was as close to a clean pin as there was is amazing. Sheamus hadn't lost a singles match

since like July but at least it was to another main event guy. For a first match on a new show this was excellent and it was a very good match all around anyway.

Post match Sheamus says he gets why Punk doesn't get respect. He promises a Brogue Kick for Punk in the future.

Miz and Cole talk for a good while.

After a break, Punk and Heyman are incensed at being accused of winning through means not entirely on the level. Heyman wants to know what Punk has to do to earn Josh's respect and Josh of course says it's to go inside the Cell with Cena.

The main event for next week is Show vs. Orton so Show says that it'll be Orton's last appearance on this show next week.

#### Tag Team Tournament First Round: Santino Marella/Zack Ryder vs. Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel

Santino and Gabriel get things going with Gabriel grabbing a quick headlock. The winners of this get the Rhodes Scholars. Gabriel tries a leg sweep but Santino jumps over it and tries one of his own in slow motion. Off to Ryder and Kidd which goes nowhere so it's back to Gabriel who double teams with his Canadian buddy. A kick to the face gets two on Ryder and it's back to Kidd. Kidd and Gabriel work very well together. Kidd launches Ryder over his head and into a kick from Gabriel for two.

Everything breaks down and Santino has issues getting thrown to the floor. Kidd gets a spinning rollup for two but charges into the knees in the corner. Tyson crawls into the corner and looks painfully obvious doing it for the Broski Boot. Ryder hits a good looking flip dive to take Gabriel out and the Cobra advances Santino and Ryder at 4:03.

**Rating:** C. Gabriel and Kidd looked like a polished team here while Santino and Ryder looked like a pair of comedy guys who got thrown together into a tag team because the fans love both of them. It wasn't a bad match or anything but it's really just kind of there, which is the problem with most tournament matches you'll ever see.

**Overall Rating:** B-. this is an interesting show for a number of reasons. First of all, this felt like it was booked in reverse. Isn't the idea of the main event match on the Main Event show to be THE main event? As in the match that goes on last? Once you watched that match, are most people really going to stick around for a face vs. face tag match? I'd be surprised if they did.

Second, this show really doesn't need to exist. This easily could have been Superstars put on Wednesday instead of a brand new show. Then again people are probably going to think it's just something they threw together instead of making a new idea, which is understandable all around.

Finally, I likely won't be watching this on a regular basis. It's a perfectly acceptable hour of TV and had a good match, but does anyone really believe this is going to be what the show looks like at the end of the year? WWE will get bored with it and they'll turn it into Superstars II, which is fine, but don't expect people to care about it. In short, this show makes eight and a half hours of WWE programming a week, and I was perfectly fine having seven and a half.

### Results

CM Punk b. Sheamus – Rollup after a drop toehold into an exposed turnbuckle

Santino Marella/Zack Ryder b. Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel – Cobra to Kidd

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# NXT – October 3, 2012: A Solid Wrestling Show, Which You Rarely See Anymore

## NXT

Date: October 3, 2012

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, William Regal

Back for another show as this show has been in a bit of a rut lately. Last week's main event of Steamboat vs. Ohno is probably the main story on the show right now but other than that there isn't much going on. We should be setting up another opponent for Rollins soon enough which is something we need in the near future. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week's main event and the post match attack.

Earlier today Ohno was getting into the building when Richie Steamboat jumped him.

Welcome Home. Where do these people go that they have to be welcomed home every week? In case this makes no sense to you, the theme song is Welcome Home by Coheed and Cambria.

## Drew McIntyre vs. Richie Steamboat

Feeling out process to start with Drew shoulder blocking Richie down. Steamboat comes back with forearms and right hands as he seems to be abandoning his usual style here. Drew catches Steamboat with a kick to

the ribs as Steamboat tries to jump over him in the corner. That gets two and McIntyre takes over before hooking something like a seated abdominal stretch.

Drew knocks him to the apron where Steamboat gets two off a sunset flip. Back inside McIntyre hits a release Wasteland with Steamboat landing on his face. Drew loads it up again but Richie tries to counter it into a hurricanrana, only to botch it by falling off McIntyre's head. Steamboat starts firing off elbows but here's Ohno for a distraction. Richie turns around and walks into a shot to the head and the Futureshock DDT for the pin at 4:25.

**Rating:** C. This was more about the angle but building up McIntyre with a win is a good idea. The guy has potential but he's fallen so far in the last few years that he's having to start all over again. As for Steamboat, this is a good story for him as he's getting to show some emotion and I'm not complaining about what I see. Being boring was the biggest knock on him so seeing some good emotion out of him is a good sign.

### Big E. Langston vs. Aiden English

The place starts chanting 5 as Langston comes in. English pounds away and gets beaten down for trying to fight. A running clothesline takes Aiden down and there go Langston's straps. The falling slam kills English and gets the five count at 1:14.

Langston hits the finisher again post match for another five count to a big reaction. The fans seem to love this guy. Langston's face looks a bit like Monty Brown's when you can't see his hair. He hits another falling slam on Aiden for fun.

Steamboat is looking for Ohno in the back but only finds Michael McGillicutty who hasn't seen Ohno.

CM Punk is here next week.

Here's McGillicutty with something to say. Apparently he gets a title match next week. McGillicutty says it's going to be Rollins' first and last title defense. He calls Rollins out to the ring and gets what he asks for. Well partially as Rollins stops on the stage. Rollins talks about how much McGillicutty talks, including calling Rollins a paper champion. Rollins thinks that shows a lack of respect and holds up the title, which means the respect is real. He's earned everything he has and didn't have a path laid out for him since birth. Rollins wants to fight now but McGillicutty says on his own terms.

Gabriel and Kidd are ready for Ascension later tonight. This was earlier today and as they're talking, Ascension's entrance starts and they pop up on the screen but don't say anything.

#### Percy Watson vs. Kassius Ohno

Steamboat jumps Ohno on the stage during Ohno's entrance. Ohno says he's good to go and goes off on Percy quickly. Watson speeds things up and leg lariats Ohno down. Ohno comes back with something like a neckbreaker (Ohno was standing behind Watson and facing him so it was hard to tell what he was doing) but Watson dropkicks him down. The spinning Heisman splash gets two but Ohno blocks the Persecution. A knee in the corner stops Watson and the spinning elbow gets the pin for Ohno at 3:20.

**Rating:** D+. Nothing to see here as usual with Watson matches. The guy isn't bad at all but man alive there's nothing to care about with him. Ohno's matches are still nothing interesting but this was better than his usual stuff. I think it's the elbow finisher that holds him back more than anything, especially given what we know he's capable of.

#### Ascension vs. Justin Gabriel/Tyson Kidd

Kidd and Cameron start us off but Gabriel tags himself in and the smaller guys double team Cameron with a double hip toss and a pair of kicks. A release German throw (not really a suplex) takes Gabriel down and we take a break. Back with O'Brien hammering on Gabriel until Justin rolls around O'Brien and tags out.

Tyson kicks him in the head and hits a springboard missile dropkick for two. O'Brien is sent to the floor where he blocks a baseball slide and slams Kidd onto the floor to take over. Back inside and Ascension takes turns stomping away. That style of rapid fire stomping and pounding is reminiscent of Demolition and there's nothing bad about that. Cameron puts on a body scissors with a chinlock and O'Brien follows up with a body scissors of his own.

Kidd starts fighting back but Conor tags out immediately to make sure Tyson can't escape. You can almost hear JR beaming as he talks about the tag team continuity of Ascension. Kidd avoids a charge from O'Brien and side steps Cameron, which lets Kidd make the hot tag to Gabriel. Justin takes Cameron down and immediately tries the 450 but crashes and burns. With Tyson down on the floor, Ascension hits the running Total Elimination (called the Fall of Man) for the pin on Gabriel at 8:20 shown of 11:50.

**Rating:** B-. This was a solid tag match although the ending felt abrupt. I really like Ascension's stuff as they have the look and aggressive style that makes them feel like they could dominate anyone. When you combine that with an awesome finisher and a great entrance, what more could you want? Kidd and Gabriel were their usual good selves.

**Overall Rating:** B. I liked this show better than most recent episodes. We got a lot of stuff from this one with a good main event, a continuation of the main angle for the show and some stuff set up for next week. This is what NXT is good at doing: offering an old fashioned hour long wrestling show and they did that again here. Good show and I enjoyed it.



## Results

Drew McIntyre b. Richie Steamboat – Futureshock DDT

Big E. Langston b. Aiden English – Falling Slam

Kassius Ohno b. Percy Watson – Spinning Elbow

Ascension b. Tyson Kidd/Justin Gabriel – Fall of Man to Gabriel

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# **WWE Main Event Debuted Tonight**

I didn't watch it but I'll be reviewing it tonight or tomorrow.

For those of you who watched it, any thoughts?

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# **Monday Night Raw – October 1, 2012: Without Cena, This Show Is Flatter Than AJ's Stomach**

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 1, 2012

Location: Cheseapeake Energy Arena, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma|

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jim Ross

We're in Oklahoma tonight which means a few things. First of all, it's JR Appreciation Night but that might only be for the post show stuff. Also I believe we're in the arena where Punk first cashed in the MITB case and won his first world title, which will likely be mentioned. We're also likely to see what Ryback staring Punk down last week will mean, and on the Blue side, we're getting....wait for it....a debate between Big Show and Sheamus. Yet they wonder why no one watches Smackdown. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of all of Punk's antics last week, including the great promo with Foley and turning around to see Ryback at the end of the show.

Here are Punk and Heyman to open the show. During the entrance the Appreciation Night is mentioned. Punk complains about the attack last week and says in Chicago that's called weakness. Punk was looking for a doctor at the end of the show when he low blowed Foley. He didn't like the lack of respect that Foley was showing him and thinks Foley never would have talked like that to Cena or Rock or Austin. Punk doesn't like the lack of respect this crowd is showing him either. Tonight, Punk is here to announce that it's still not going to be Punk vs. Cena inside the Cell.

Punk whispers something to Heyman and Paul takes the mic. Heyman would like to move on to something else and that would be the proposal to AJ. This seems to bring out AJ but they cut her music after about half a second. Must be a production miscue. Heyman points out that while AJ didn't say no, she did violate an ordinance from the board of directors, that if AJ strikes someone, she's in trouble. Heyman calls for her removal from power and wants her job.

This brings out Vickie and Dolph with Vickie demanding that AJ be fired also and we get a clip of AJ beating her up a few months back. Heyman wants to know when this became about Vickie. Vickie cuts him off and says she represents the future World Heavyweight Champion. Heyman makes the obvious point that he's with the CURRENT WWE Champion. Ziggler suggests

Heyman and Vickie being co-GMs.

This brings out AJ to a surprisingly big reaction. AJ says she's officially on probation which means we can drag this story out for a few more weeks. Apparently even Heyman doesn't count as an exception so she has an executive coach to help with her development as a GM. And it's Daniel Bryan. Bryan snaps on the crowd and yells NO a lot, saying he's just here to apologize.

Bryan thinks AJ has gone insane because of being dumped by the man with the amazing beard. Now he's the tag team champions, and you know who this brings out. Kane points out that AJ is a phenomenal kisser. Everything else that Bryan said was true, but he (Kane) is the tag team champions. Ziggler and Punk get in an argument of their own over who is better until AJ freaks out and reaches octaves even Vickie is jealous of. She makes the tag match you would expect her to make with the four guys in the ring. Total time for the opening segment: 21 minutes.

#### Tag Team Tournament First Round: Epico/Primo vs. Sin Cara/Rey Mysterio

Cara and Epico start with Cara hitting a Tajiri Elbow for two. Off to Primo who doesn't do any better. Cara and Rey have inverted matching attire now. Rey comes in and the cousins are sent to the floor, but the masked guys stop before diving Epico and Primo move. Here are the Prime Time Players to sit on the stage as we take a break.

Back with Rey tagging out to Cara who comes in with a big springboard cross body. Cara kind of botches a springboard armdrag but it's not too bad. Epico dropkicks him out of the air for two as the cousins take over. A quick sunset flip gets two on Primo for Cara and it's back to Epico. Cara spins Epico around and slams him into the mat to get some separation and there's the tag to Rey.

A big kick to the head takes Primo down and a seated senton does the same. A spinning reverse DDT gets two and here's Cara with a springboard missile dropkick. There's a kick to Primo's head and it's a double 619. Both masked guys go up top and Cara dives on Epico as the top rope splash from Rey pins Primo at 9:27.

**Rating:** C+. When all else fails, throw four high fliers out there and have them jump a lot. It worked for years in WCW and it worked here too. The Players didn't do much here, but what did do something here was the commercial. It's annoying when you have one like a minute into a match and the post break stuff has to act like a full match for all intents and purposes.

### Brodus Clay vs. Antonio Cesaro

Non-title here and no entrance for Brodus. There was no entrance for either tag team earlier so maybe they're trying to hurry things up. It's an easy way to add a lot of time to the show actually. Brodus takes him into the corner to start and suplexes him down. A headbutt to the chest does the same but the t-bone suplex is blocked. Clay misses a splash and a springboard uppercut (you read that right) gets two and the Neutralizer pins Clay in 1:06. I guess it's time for Brodus to be a jobber.

AJ comes up to Kaitlyn and introduces her to the coach, Christopher J. Stevenson, a guy in a suit. Kaitlyn will be ready to go again next week, even though she's in her ring gear tonight. AJ wants to talk about their relationship and is all serious before going into an insane laugh. She isn't really sorry at all and skips away. The coach says nothing at all.

### Zack Ryder vs. The Miz

Miz takes him down with a shoulder block and a pair of boots to the head for two. Ryder makes a comeback and hits the Broski boot for two as we hear about Larry King as the social media ambassador. The Rough Ryder is countered into a buckle bomb and the Skull Crushing Finale gets the pin at 2:39.

Here are Booker, Show and Sheamus for the debate. Show gets to make an opening statement but Show says this is stupid. He's going to knock Sheamus out and Sheamus can't even kick that high, so the Brogue Kick means nothing. Sheamus asks Show not to rip his leg off because he needs it to kick Show's teeth in. All of the questions come from fans and the first question is what do you find the most challenging about your opponent. Sheamus is looking forward to the fight and the biggest issue is the match lasting more than 45 seconds. Sheamus has something between

his eyes that looks like a bruise.

Show defends his hygiene in response to something Sheamus said and the second question is who has the most devastating finisher (Booker, reading the questions off the screen, gets Show's finisher's name wrong). Sheamus mentions the 45 second loss again and Show gets mad again. FINALLY he breaks his podium and we go to the last question.

Sheamus wants it to be from his cousin's Tout. It's from Rey Mysterio Sullivan, which is clearly Sheamus holding a mask to his face. Show complains about this not being serious again so Sheamus asks how it feels to lose the title in 45 seconds. Show takes off his jacket and Sheamus takes off his shirt. Show is dripping sweat and he walks away. This was REALLY worthless and it doesn't make me want to see them fight at all. It does however make me want to know what is on Sheamus' nose.

#### Ryback vs. Tensai

For those of you that were fascinated by the two minute match these two had on Smackdown I guess. Tensai runs him over to start but Ryback pops up and smiles. They slug it out and Ryback powerslams him down with ease. A belly to belly is broken up by Tensai so Ryback clotheslines him down with ease. Ryback can't Shell Shock him on the first two attempts so he clotheslines him again for the pin at 1:49.

The Rhodes Scholars love their name and make fun of the debate. Sandow wasn't pleased with the lack of formal wear from Sheamus. They think Sheamus is a neanderthal. And that's it.

More cancer stuff.

#### Eve Torres vs. Beth Phoenix

Before the match Eve talks about how awesome the Divas are. Beth tentatively shakes her hand and blocks the surprise attack from Eve. This is non-title by the way. Beth misses a charge and hits the post so Eve goes to the floor to pound on the bad arm. Beth gets rammed onto the floor and into the barricade which draws a nine count. Back inside Eve is upset so Beth runs her over. Eve hides in the ropes and comes out with

her neckbreaker for the pin at 2:35.

AJ runs into Barrett in the back and my goodness Barrett is tall. Barrett says AJ needs the coach because Barrett doesn't even have a match tonight. He says AJ has done a horrible job with her emotional outbursts and letting her personal relationships get in the way of her job. Barrett leaves and AJ thinks the coach is intimidated.

We hear about JBL climbing mountains to raise money for poor kids. Nothing wrong with charity work.

### Santino Marella vs. Heath Slater

Apparently the One Man Band now has two people with him in the forms of Mahal and McIntyre. After a quick dance off they trade shoulder blocks and Slater elbows him in the face to take over. Slater's group is called Encore apparently. He slams Santino down and jumps into the boot and Santino uses his usual stuff. The Cobra hits and Mahal/McIntyre run in for the DQ at 2:51.

Encore destroys Santino post match. All three of them say their nicknames and that's about it. Slater's theme song starting with "I'm just one man" is really stupid now.

### Damien Sandow vs. Sheamus

Sandow hides to start so Sheamus grabs him by the beard and pounds away. Damien hides on the floor as we take a break. Back with Sandow hitting the floor again, drawing huge boos. Sheamus chases him into the crowd and catches Cody trying to interfere. The distraction lets Sandow clothesline Sheamus down and he takes over back in the ring. After some basic shots to the upper body, Sandow puts on a chinlock. Sandow fires off knees to the chest and hits a Russian legsweep and the windup elbow for two.

Damien pounds away some more and gets two off an elbow to the face. Back to the chinlock as Sandow's offense is pretty much exhausted at this point. With Sheamus in 619 position, Sandow hits a charging hip shot to the back for two. Off to a headscissors which doesn't last long. Sheamus gets a boot up in the corner but Sandow knocks him off the top with a

good right hand. A boot to the head gets one for the non-champion and it's off to a front facelock again.

Sheamus gets knocked to the floor as Sandow is still dominating which is pretty surprising. Back in and Damien gets another two and then another two and then chinlock #3 assuming you don't count the variations of the move he's already used. Sheamus comes back with a suplex to escape the hold and hits a knee lift and Regal Roll.

Sandow escapes a powerslam and hits a flipping neckbreaker for two. Sheamus gets the feet up in the corner and a top rope battering ram gets two. Sandow escapes White Noise but gets caught in the ten forearms. Sheamus catches Cody coming and sends him into the ring as well. A single Brogue Kick takes out both guys and pins Sandow at 15:45.

**Rating:** C+. Sandow looked better than usual here but man alive does he need to expand his offense a bit. Five chinlock variations in a fifteen minute match is hard to get past. It's very good to see Sandow get a rub like this though, as he looked credible against a guy who is way out of his league. Not a great match or anything but a good stepping stone for Damien.

It's time for Jim Ross Appreciation Night and Cole sucks up to JR now because the scripts calls for it. Before JR can say anything, here are Punk and Heyman. Punk tells Cole to go sit down and asks the fans to make some noise. He says the fans don't know the first thing about respect and says JR is going to make the fans believe it, by saying Punk is the best in the world.

JR calls Punk a jackass instead and Punk is mad. He wants to know what JR is going to do if Punk gets physical. Will Ross scream for Austin to help, because Austin isn't here. Today is the 316<sup>th</sup> day Punk has been champion which means that number now belongs to Punk. JR belongs to Punk right now too and JR is going to say it, no matter what. Ross says no because he's called some of the best matches of all time with the best in the world in them and those people have earned the right. Punk needs to walk into the Cell and beat Cena, and then JR will say he's the best in the world.

Punk takes his jacket off and steals JR's hat which he stomps on. They are fighting words in Oklahoma. JR looks like he's about to cry and Punk talks about all the time he's beaten Cena and makes fun of the Thunder for losing in the NBA Finals. Punk gives JR a chance to run or he's going to get knocked out. JR goes to leave but Punk stops him, saying there's no more commentary for JR for the rest of the night. Punk makes him take the walk of shame and berates him as he leaves.

Cue Ryback and JR immediately turns back towards the ring. Ryback stares Punk down with JR behind him. Punk doesn't back down at first and the fans are chanting FEED ME MORE. Now Punk backs down, which is something he said he never does in his promo a few moments before.

### Alberto Del Rio vs. Kofi Kingston

Post Smackdown Del Rio attacked the already down Orton to put Orton off TV to film the movie I'd assume. Ricardo is going to do commentary here. This should be good. Del Rio immediately takes Kofi down to start but Kofi speeds things up as you would expect. Kofi knocks Del Rio to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Alberto holding an abdominal stretch with Ricardo complaining that it's 3-1 with Little Jimmy and R-Truth out there. Kofi escapes and hits an elbow and clothesline. A nice dropkick puts Del Rio down followed by the Boom Drop. Trouble in Paradise misses but the springboard cross body does as well. Armbreaker and we're done at 6:10. Most of that was during the break so no rating, but this was nothing of note.

The coach talks to AJ in the back about putting aside her personal issues. AJ wants something special to happen tonight, like making the coach the guest referee for the main event. This is only made interesting by hearing JR talking about doing a reveal in something we weren't supposed to hear. That's production gaffe #3 tonight. For those of you counting, I only mentioned one of them. An incorrect graphic was put up earlier as well as AJ's music playing too early.

### Hell No vs. CM Punk/Dolph Ziggler

This is non-title and AJ's coach is referee for some reason. Scratch that



as after the break before the match, AJ comes out as referee. Well I'm assuming she looks better in the outfit if nothing else. Kane and Ziggler start things off with Kane shoving him around a lot. Ziggler tries to get on Kane's back but gets clotheslined to the floor. Bryan tags himself in as we take ANOTHER break.

Back with Ziggler holding Kane in the sleeper which means nothing anymore. A dropkick puts Kane down for two but the monster comes back with the low dropkick for two. A jumping DDT takes Kane down again and there's the tag to Punk for the corner clothesline. Say it with me: the bulldog is countered. A side slam gets two on Punk as we still haven't seen Bryan yet.

Kane hits the clothesline but as usual, Bryan tags in while Kane sets for the chokeslam. Punk kicks Bryan out of the air but Bryan moonsaults out of the corner. A clothesline from Daniel sets up the kicks and he takes Ziggler down as well, only to walk into the high kick for two. Dolph comes in and dropkicks Bryan to the floor. Bryan gets thrown into the barricade which gets two back inside and we hit the chinlock.

Back to Punk who goes up and gets crotched by Bryan. A butterfly superplex sets up the NO Lock on Punk but Punk (with Heyman's help) makes the rope. AJ ejects both Heyman and Vickie, which makes Ziggler leave as well. Punk walks into the chokeslam and Kane gets the pin at 12:35.

**Rating:** C. Not a terrible match here but it felt more like an angle than the match itself. Bryan and Kane have more or less been turned face now which is the best thing for both of them. They also weren't featured as much tonight which is another good thing for them, as the company was bordering on overkill with them. Not a great match but it did its job...whatever that was.

**Overall Rating:** D+. This one felt flat to me. The biggest problem of all was that in the first two hours or so, everything felt really short, making it hard to get into anything. I'm wondering what the point was in squashing Clay, but more importantly we have Ryback getting face to face with Punk in the ring and the place going NUTS. That's a really good sign for Ryback and hopefully it means something for the future. Not a good

show tonight as it felt really flat, but it wasn't the worst I've ever seen.

### Results

Sin Cara/Rey Mysterio b. Epico/Primo – Top Rope Splash to Primo

Antonio Cesaro b. Brodus Clay – Neutralizer

The Miz b. Zack Ryder – Skull Crushing Finale

Ryback b. Tensai – Clothesline

Eve Torres b. Beth Phoenix – Spinning Neckbreaker

Santino Marella b. Heath Slater via DQ when Drew McIntyre and Jinder Mahal interfered

Sheamus b. Damien Sandow – Brogue Kick

Alberto Del Rio b. Kofi Kingston – Cross Armbreaker

Hell No b. Dolph Ziggler/CM Punk – Chokeslam to Punk

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# **Monday Night Raw – October 21, 2002: Do Hulkamania And Necrophilia Rhyme? It's Katie Vick.**

### Monday Night Raw

Date: October 21, 2002

Location: Bridgestone Arena, Nashville, Tennessee

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

Oh look: a Raw from 2002. This is I think the twelfth episode I've done from this show, and you would think it would be something fun. Instead, it's the KATIE VICK EPISODE! Yep, this is the show where HHH climbs in a casket and rapes a mannequin, because this is a wrestling show baby! I think that about covers it. It's the night after No Mercy and HHH is the champion of all that is Raw as the IC Title has been knocked out for the next eight months or so. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the Katie Vick story. HHH claims Kane is a murderer, but Kane says it was an accident. This is the night after HHH beat Kane to unify the IC and World Titles but the feud must continue for some reason.

Here's HHH along with Flair to open the show. HHH talks about how he's proven the writers wrong when they said he didn't deserve to be handed the title. He ended the IC Title last night and there's no one that can do anything about it. HHH calls himself unstoppable and says that he might be the greatest world champion ever. Flair has a video that explains the Katie Vick ordeal. Oh boy. Kane isn't here yet, but apparently tonight it's Kane/RVD vs. HHH/Flair. This brings out Hurricane, Kane's other partner, to beat up HHH and take the tape, but HHH beats Hurricane down and takes it back.

#### Jeff Hardy vs. Christopher Nowitski

Chris takes him down to start and Jeff is getting frustrated, which would be a recurring theme for him for the next few weeks. Jeff sends him to the floor and hits a big flipping dive to take over. Nowitski gets in a shot back inside and gets a few two counts. Hardy comes back with a Thesz Press and actually uses it as a pinning combination. Nowitski chokes away in the corner and gets two off a rolling side cradle.

A gutbuster gets another two on Hardy and this match isn't going anywhere. Jeff fires away but walks into a hot shot for two. A spinning double underhook slam gets two for Chris and here comes Jeff's real comeback. He fires away with right hands and a jawbreaker but Chris moves before the Swanton launches. Chris brings in a chair but Al Snow comes in

to break it up. The chair winds up hitting Chris in the head but Snow pulls Nowitski away from the Swanton. It hits the chair and Chris steals the pin.

**Rating:** D. This just kept going. Nowitski was a great base for a character but he never got off the ground. The guy just wasn't that good. He wasn't especially bad but he just wasn't that good. This match didn't work well for the most part and Hardy would start turning heel soon after this, which didn't work at all.

Eric Bischoff, the GM, is watching Big Show intimidate him recently. Stacy comes in to ask to referee a match tonight. Eric says yeah whatever but not the main event. Stacy leaves and here's Show. Eric gives Show Jamal, Rico and Rosey tonight.

Snow talks to Dreamer about costing Dreamer a match recently. They have a Singapore cane match tonight. Dreamer leaves and Nowitski comes up. Nowitski doesn't want/need Al's help. Ok then.

#### Lance Storm/William Regal vs. Bubba Ray Dudley/Spike Dudley

The winners get a title shot against whoever the champions are now. Apparently it's Christian/Jericho. Storm runs down American before the match. Spike vs. Storm to start things off with the smaller dude taking over quickly. The fans want tables but other than that things are mostly silent. We've lost commentary for some reason and by the time that sentence is finished JR is back.

Off to Bubba who takes Lance down with a neckbreaker but Regal hits Bubba in the back of his recently concussed head to give Storm the advantage. Regal comes in as Kane arrives in the back. Everything breaks down and Spike rans Storm off the top. Bubba catches the superkick from Storm and hits the Bubba Bomb. Spoke hits the Dudley Dog on Regal for the win and the title shot.

**Rating:** C-. This was one of those matches that was too short to go anywhere of note. Regal and Storm as the Unamericans were a solid team but the gimmick was only going to go so far, especially with Test weighing them down as their third man. Nothing to see here and thankfully

D-Von would reunite with Bubba the next month.

Storm kicks Bubba in the head post match and Spike gets hit in the ribs over and over by Regal's brass knuckles.

Trish is having her picture taken and has to talk to the photographer about her match with Victoria from last night. Jericho and Christian pop up and call Trish a w\*\*\*\*. Apparently Jericho thinks Trish wants him. Geez is this some extreme foreshadowing? I really doubt it.

Here's Eric with something to say. He praises last night's HIAC match with Brock vs. Taker (it really was good) but he's going to top it. How is he going to do that? Something called the Elimination Chamber. No word on what that is yet.

#### Test vs. D'Lo Brown

Stacy is referee so she can wear a revealing outfit. Test looks like an idiot with long hair and short tights. Stacy slaps Brown and rings the bell. Test launches him over with a big backdrop and pounds away in the corner. Brown gets his feet up to block a charge followed by a flying forearm. Brown drops a leg but Stacy interferes again. The Sky High hits but Stacy is tying her shoe instead of counting. The big boot from Test and a fast count give the Canadian the win. Stacy jumps in Test's arms post match.

Victoria says that she isn't lying about Trish sleeping her way to the top. Victoria is still insane here. Goldust pops up behind her to make fun of her in a Dustyesque voice. Booker shows up as well to do the same, minus the American Dream part.

#### Trish Stratus/Booker T/Goldust vs. Victoria/Chris Jericho/Christian

Trish has her full entrance and look down now. Jericho and Christian are tag champions which I think I mentioned earlier. The girls brawl to start and Trish fires off her kicks in the corner. Victoria drop toeholds her onto the bottom rope and it's off to Christian vs. Trish as the genders don't have to match here. Booker comes in to make this a bit more fair for Christian. A forearm puts Christian down and a side kick gets two.

Victoria and her awesome rack distracts Booker and the Canadians take over.

Off to Jericho who pounds away but gets caught in the spinning sunset flip out of the corner. The fans are way into Booker which is a good sign. It means HHH has someone to beat at Wrestlemania for no other reason than HHH wants to win at Wrestlemania. Back to Christian who takes Booker down so Jericho can hit a top rope knee drop.

A spinebuster takes Jericho down and it's off to Goldust. He cleans the lower level of the house, hitting a middle rope bulldog for two on Jericho. Trish comes in with a cross body to Jericho and Goldust kisses Victoria. Booker and Christian take each other out and Jericho takes Trish down and finishes her with the Walls of Jericho.

**Rating:** D+. This started off as ok but boring and evolved into a messy comedy (I think?) match. There was nothing of note going on here which is the problem with Raw at this point: it isn't terrible but there's no interest in it at all. The tag titles meant nothing at all at this point and wouldn't for a very long time. Thankfully we had the Smackdown tag titles established last night and they tore the house down for a long time.

Booker saves Jericho post match.

Terri is at Kane's door and we cut to HHH who says roll the footage. I'm sure you've at least heard of this before. It's of a funeral home with a date of 1992. Kane (clearly HHH in a Kane mask and t-shirt that wouldn't be released for another 9 years) comes up to the casket and talks to the dead "body" of Katie Vick. It's a mannequin if that's not coming through. Kane (it's HHH the entire segment so don't get confused. I know this segment can make you stupid but hang with me here) says that if Katie had let him touch her in the car, this wouldn't have happened.

The idea is that Kane was driving and crashed, killing Katie. Katie "talks" to Kane, saying that apparently now that she's dead she wants Kane. Kane talks about getting excited watching Katie cheerlead and he fondles her chest which is mosaiced. This is supposed to be something like a hidden video of a sex tape. Kane takes his shirt off and starts

undressing the mannequin. He takes off her underwear and says he loves the smell of formaldehyde in the morning. Kane takes his jeans off and gets in the casket. Sounds are heard and we cut to shots of candles and flowers.

Usually I would give a long winded explanation of how awful this is for wrestling and how terrible it is, but I think the segment speaks for itself: it's simulated necrophilia. I think that sums it up. When you look at the unemployment figures in this country, remember that someone came up with this idea and was paid to do so.

### Al Snow vs. Tommy Dreamer

Singapore Cane match. We start with a cane duel and Snow gets in the first connecting shots to the legs. Out to the floor and Dreamer fires away more cane shots but Snow headbutts him down. Back in and Dreamer kicks Al low, followed by a missed cane shot from an interfering Nowitski to give Dreamer the pin. Nothing to see here.

### Big Show vs. Rosey/Jamal/Rico

The big guys jump Show to start but he shoves all of them away with ease. The heavies are clotheslined to the floor and Show goes after Rico's sideburns of doom. JR makes gay references about Rico and Show destroys more people. There's a chokeslam to Jamal (Umaga) for the pin. Total squash for Show.

Post break Eric announces that Big Show has been traded to Smackdown. He would get the world title the next month over there. After Show leaves, Hurricane arrives (did he leave?) and stands in front of his own car. Ok then.

We get some clips of Shawn getting destroyed after his match with HHH at Summerslam. Shawn is in a wheelchair at The World (WWF New York) and says his rehab is going slowly. The final match he had with HHH can stand on its own merit as not only a great match but a tribute to God. HHH did indeed put him in a wheelchair like he said he would but Shawn vows vengeance and stands up. He's coming for HHH again.

## HHH/Ric Flair vs. Rob Van Dam/Kane

The good guys pound away on their respective feud partners (Van Dam beat Flair last night) in the corner and both heels get kicked in the face. Van Dam and Flair start and it's the cartwheel moonsault to Naitch. A middle rope kick to the face puts him down again as HHH knocks Kane off the apron and it's the barricade. Van Dan kicks the Game down but Flair breaks up the Five Star.

Van Dam gets sent into the post and seems to have hurt his ankle. That gets two back inside as we're finally into a normal tag team match. JR and King debate necrophilia, which isn't something I expected I'd have to write. Off to Flair as JR is sounding ticked off. Flair and Van Dam slug it out but it's off to HHH with the knee to the face. King tries to convince JR that necrophilia is funny but Captain Oklahoma isn't convinced. HHH puts on the sleeper and Van Dam is in trouble.

The hold is broken and it's off to Flair. Van Dam superkicks him down and Flair goes up and with JR verbally rolling his eyes, Flair gets slammed down. HHH comes in and beats on Van Dam, but Rob escapes and tags Kane. Never mind as the tag isn't seen so it's time to go back to the not interesting match.

Back in and Van Dam takes Flair down and makes the real tag. Kane cleans house as the announcers debate if necrophiliac and Hulkamaniac rhyme. This is what Raw has sunk to people. Van Dam goes up and gets crotched as Kane and HHH fight on the floor. They head up the ramp with HHH being rammed into the set. Van Dam kicks Flair in the face, hits Rolling Thunder and adds the Five Star for the pin.

**Rating:** C-. Not only was the match not that good, but it was based on necrophilia. I can't emphasize that enough: this feud is continuing because HHH dressed up like Kane and pretended to have sex with a mannequin representing a corpse. JR sounded legitimately angry in this match and can you blame him at all?

In the back Kane destroys HHH in the back and throws him into various metal objects. Hurricane is standing next to his car with the trunk open. HHH tries a Pedigree but gets catapulted onto the hood of the car.



There's a chokeslam onto the hood and Kane throws HHH into the trunk and slams it shut. Kane sends Hurricane away and says to the trunk, and I quote, "Now I'm going to screw you. The only question is will you still be alive, or will I just wait until you're dead." Kane drives away with HHH in the trunk to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D. Ignoring the white elephant on this show, it wasn't a good episode. There weren't any good matches and a lot of the stuff felt like it was there to fill in two hours. The Elimination Chamber was mentioned but after the announcement it was barely mentioned again. This show was based around one of the stupidest stories of all time and it's even worse than it seemed at the time. It's in poor taste, it's not funny, and it makes you embarrassed to be a wrestling fan. Terrible show.

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## **Lawler Plans To Return At 10/16 Smackdown**

<http://wreg.com/2012/09/28/jerry-lawler/>

If he manages to do that, that's pretty awesome just five weeks after a heart attack.

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# Smackdown – September 28, 2012: He Isn't Alberto Del Rio

## Smackdown

Date: September 28, 2012

Location: First Niagara Center, Buffalo, New York

Commentators: Michael Cole, Josh Matthews

After last week's tag team show, it's time to put some focus on the world title match at the upcoming PPV. By that I mean actually setting up a match there. The main event for tonight is Orton vs. Big Show which would be fine to make a #1 contenders match. Show returned from a brief absence on Monday and beat up various big men so I guess he's a heel again. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week's events.

Do You Know Your Enemy? Mine is Garrett Bischoff. Why is he back on my TV screen now?

Here's Big Show to open the show. Show says he wants the world title because he lost the title in 45 seconds last time. Then the guy that beat him lost the title in 18 seconds. Show didn't get to be in the main event of Wrestlemania and he didn't get to be champion and that's not cool with him. He says he's the only person that can beat Sheamus, but here's Orton with a rebuttal.

Orton says that to deserve a shot at Sheamus, you have to go through him. That's perfect as tonight's match is for the #1 contendership. Show says tonight it's either going to be an RKO or a KO. Here's Alberto and please don't make this a triple threat. Please. Del Rio says the two of them need to go to the back of the line, and there's an RKO for him to end

this segment. THANK GOODNESS.

### US Title: Antonio Cesaro vs. Santino Marella

Cesaro pounds him down to start as Matthews talks about how Santino and the Cobra have made up. Some suplexes from the champ (Cesaro) and puts on a cravate before Santino makes his comeback. The gutwrench suplex is countered into a sunset flip but the European Uppercut puts Marella down. The second attempt at the suplex hits but Cesaro talks enough trash to let Santino hit a superkick of all things for two. Cesaro goes up but Santino makes the stop and backdrops Antonio off the top. Santino misses a top rope headbutt and the Neutralizer retains the title at 4:10.

**Rating:** C. This was by far the most competitive match these two have ever had but they're almost a month after the point where people buy Santino has having a chance at beating Cesaro. This is what I don't get about WWE's obsession with endless rematches: there's no one else they're willing to try out with a title shot? No one at all? I have trouble believing that.

We get the My Name Is Gerald bit from Raw. Kane is so awesome at these things.

### Natalya vs. Beth Phoenix

Before the match, Eve Touts how serious she takes the attack on Kaitlyn. Feeling out process to start with both girls trying to get control. I believe this is their first ever match. Beth controls on the mat with a headlock but Natalya escapes a slam to tick Phoenix off. Natalya slaps her in the face and the fight is on.

Beth, the hometown girl, hits a Russian legsweep to take over and is put in the Sharpshooter two seconds later. She does the fastest crawl I've ever seen to make the rope and Natalya freaks out. Nattie charges at Beth

and tries a rolling cradle, only to get caught in the Glam Slam...for two. Natalya grabs a fast rollup but Beth rolls forward into one of her own for the pin at 4:15.

**Rating:** C+. Best Divas match I can remember in a long time here. The hometown thing worked here with the fans being really into Beth. It's remarkable what you get when you have girls that can wrestle a match and look like they know what they're doing rather than looking like they're struggling to remember how to run ropes.

Post match here's Eve to say that Beth is suspended until the investigation into who attacked Kaitlyn is concluded. Natalya yells at Beth and says not to blame her.

Booker and Teddy talk about a tag team tournament to find #1 contenders for the titles at HIAC. Beth comes in to complain and apparently Booker isn't even watching the show. Eve pops in and says she has the authority to do that. Booker says Eve doesn't have that authority and reverses the decision. Eve sucks up as usual and Beth leaves. Booker isn't happy so Eve blames Teddy. Booker isn't sure who to trust.

Breast cancer stuff.

Raw ReBound.

### Zack Ryder vs. Wade Barrett

No entrance for Ryder and I think you know where this is going. Barrett immediately shouldered him down then kicks Ryder in the ribs. Pumphandle slam gets two as does a slingshot belly to back backbreaker. Off to a surfboard hold but Ryder fights up and hits a facejam and middle rope missile dropkick. Barrett avoids the Broski Boot and hits a clothesline to send Ryder to the floor. Back inside and the Souvenir ends Ryder at 3:15.

**Rating:** D+. This was your standard Barrett squash since he came back. The problem with that is these matches aren't really doing anything for him. He talked about being open for business a few weeks ago and then never mentioned it again. Barrett as a mercenary would work fine given how he always talked about how he was here for the money and not titles. Just squashing jobbers with an elbow to the head isn't getting him anywhere.

Diner skit #2.

Here's Miz for MizTV. The guest tonight is Sheamus who interrupts Miz's intro. Sheamus looks about 300% tougher in jeans when you can't see those white legs of his. He takes the mic from Miz and thinks Miz is suffering from memory loss after the beatdown from Ryback. Sheamus keeps asking Miz questions but won't let him answer. He runs down Miz and in a way the IC Title by saying the best Miz can do is host a C list talk show. Miz talks about how he's in a movie and a book now and you'll have to pay to see it. You can pay to hear him on Sirius Radio and you can pay to see him compete in the ring.

Miz talks about how Sheamus is going to get taken out by an RKO or a WMD at HIAC. I feel like I'm on Sesame Street. Sheamus says no one takes this championship more seriously than he does and while he likes to have fun and joke around, the title means more to him than anything. Since Sheamus is cutting a good promo, here's Vickie to interrupt him.

She introduces Ziggler and says that he's the real guy Sheamus needs to worry about at the PPV. Ziggler says the main event tonight as well as Sheamus' title reign is irrelevant because Ziggler is the next champion. Sheamus says Ziggler may get lucky with a cash-in...and that's all he says. Then he jumps Ziggler and Miz and launches them both to the floor.

This segment was going well until Ziggler came out and said the exact same thing he's been saying for four months. It's really hard to buy Ziggler as a real threat when Sheamus has beaten him so many times. Once he wins the title, it's going to take awhile to take him serious as a

champion, but that's clearly his fault and not the company's for having him lose over and over again right?

We get the brackets for the tag team tournament:

Usos

Rhodes Scholars

Marella/Ryder

Gabriel/Kidd

Kingston/R-Truth

Prime Time Players

Epico/Primo

Mysterio/Sin Cara

We get the full Lawler interview from Raw. That's still awesome. One question though: is it still a Raw exclusive if it's shown in full on Smackdown as well?

### Tag Team Tournament First Round: Usos vs. Rhodes Scholars

Sandow and Jimmy start us off. Sandow would be the Scholar and if I have to explain who Rhodes is, you're beyond my help. Damien controls to start but walks into a Samoan Drop and both guys tag out. Jey hits the running Umaga attack in the corner for two on Cody as things break down a bit. A superkick puts Cody down but Jimmy's splash hits knees. Cross Rhodes hits and we're done at 1:54.

Diner sequence #3.

Video on some global summit that WWE was involved in.

### Ryback vs. Tensai

Another good reaction for Ryback. They fight over a lockup to start and Ryback sends him into the corner. Tensai gets in some headbutts and a splash in the corner but Ryback suplexes Tensai down. The clothesline is countered into a Baldo Bomb for a pair of two counts. Now the clothesline hits and Shell Shock keeps Ryback undefeated at 2:06. The finisher was impressive but I'm not sure this proves that Ryback is for real like Cole says. I mean, it's just Tensai.

Del Rio attacks Orton in the back on the way to the ring. He slams a case into Orton's knee as well.

### Big Show vs. Randy Orton

There's no Orton due to the attack in the back so here's Del Rio instead. Del Rio talks for a bit before Orton jumps him and limps to the ring to have the match anyway. After a break we're ready to go and Orton is very tentative to mix it up for multiple reasons now. Show gets him into the corner but Orton comes out with right hands. Show gets a knee in though and Orton is down quickly.

A second attempt at the chops in the corner is blocked and Show takes him down with a single shot to the ribs. He stands on Randy's ribs and puts on a stomach claw, which is one of those usually lazy moves that works a bit better for Show. The Final Cut (Eye of the Hurricane) gets two but Orton barely has anything left. They head outside and Orton gets dropped onto the barricade as we take a break.

Back with Orton trying to make a comeback and countering the chokeslam into a DDT for a very delayed two. Orton can't follow up at all here because of the ribs. His knee seems to be fine after having a BIG

FREAKING CASE slammed into it but you can win them all I guess. Show pounds on the ribs some more and beats on Randy in the corner. We head to the floor and Show gets rammed into the post to give Orton a breather.

As Show is getting back in, Orton tries for the Elevated DDT but he can't find a way around the powers of fat. Instead he hits an RKO out of nowhere but it only gets two. Orton loads up the Punt as a last resort but charges into a chokeslam...for two. A second chokeslam kills Orton dead for the pin at 9:32 shown of 13:02.

**Rating:** C+. I liked this match for a few reasons. First and foremost, Big Show is not Alberto Del Rio and he's getting the next title shot. Second, this match was more realistic than most you'll see anymore. Orton hit one big move the entire match and other than that it was pretty much a squash. Having Orton be competitive in this match after being attacked would have been absurd, so having Show dominate here made perfect sense. Also, since it deserves a second mention, Del Rio isn't getting another shot!

Show lays Orton out with the WMD post match and says he'll see Sheamus at the PPV.

**Overall Rating:** C+. This was another pretty good episode. Not having Kane and Bryan on the show was likely a good idea after last week. You don't want to run the risk of running the pairing into the ground and giving them a week off is probably the right idea. Ryback got another win over someone who at least looking intimidating and we have a bunch of tag matches coming up. This show built for the future and it did it in a good way. Good stuff tonight.

## Results

Antonio Cesaro b. Santino Marella – Neutralizer

Beth Phoenix b. Natalya – Rollup



Wade Barrett b. Zack Ryder – Souvenir

Cody Rhodes/Damien Sandow b. Usos – Cross Rhodes to Jimmy Uso

Rybac b. Tensai – Shell Shock

Big Show b. Randy Orton – Chokeslam

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## **Kelly Kelly Released**

<http://www.wwe.com/inside/kelly-kelly-released-26055812>

I can't say I'm surprised at all. She's been on Raw what, once in six or seven months? This doesn't mean much and I'm sure there will be another good looking blonde replacing her soon.