

# I Want To Talk A Little Bit About Money In The Bank

Money in the Bank has ruined a lot about wrestling. It causes multiple problems and is a major reason why the world titles don't mean anything anymore. Granted there are other reasons like automatic rematch clauses but we'll get into those later. Anyway, there are a lot of things that MITB does which hurts wrestling and I felt like talking about them a bit so let's get to it.

First and foremost, the title changes mean NOTHING. A few years ago at a PWG show in California, Kevin Steen gave someone three package piledrivers then put his six month old son on top of the guy that took the piledrivers and counted three, making the son undefeated as a wrestler. It was cute and everyone laughed and all that jazz. It was ok because it didn't mean anything and was used to make a joke. WWE does the same thing, including once at Summerslam last year in front of 17,000 people at the biggest show of the year.

Let's take either Alberto's or Bryan's win as an example here. Those wins don't prove anything. There was a battle royal once where Jimmy Hart hid under the ring for the whole match but then ran in after everyone else was eliminated to win the match. It was a joke and the whole place erupted in booing. I could give you a dozen examples of matches just like that. You know what the one connecting factor would be? None of them would be for the world title. MITB breaks that rule.

It's a joke instead of a real match. The guy that cashes in hasn't proven he's better than the former champion. Look back to Flair in 1991 in WCW. Lex Luger never beat him, so why should people have accepted Luger as the rightful champion? There was no reason to, so no one did. It's the same here. Why should I have accepted Bryan as the world champion? He didn't

beat Big Show. He pinned a guy that was already beaten. Yes I get that that's the point of his heel turn, but just like everything else in wrestling, it's been done into the ground.

This brings me to my second issue: MITB allows the writers to be lazy. MITB has become a nuclear option in case something needs to be changed in a hurry. Don't have someone built up (Oh we'll get to that soon enough)? Let them cash in. Someone not working as champion? Give someone a briefcase. Want to give us a surprise with no thinking to it that gives you a way out of your bad stories? Here's MITB to the rescue!

The writers are already lazy enough. They've come up with so many tricks to buy themselves months off (automatic rematch clauses for example) that they don't need to actually think anymore. The writers need all the exercise they can get to show them what works and what doesn't, so having then being allowed to just throw something out there with no thinking to it is making things even worse.

Don't believe me that they need to be made to think? Flash back to the Attitude Era. The company was in big trouble and had to be pushed harder and harder to come up with new storylines. What was the result? Compelling storylines that had people glued to their sets every week to see what happened next. Now you get the same story every year. And their solution to the problem? **DOUBLE THE AMOUNT OF CASES!!!**

That ties into the next problem with the cases: they're repetitive. At the end of the day, the winner has a perfect record with it. The shock value of it is fine for a few moments, but there's nothing new to them. It's like watching a great movie for the first time then watching the story being rehashed in a bunch of sequels. It's cool the second time but after that, it really starts to get dull because you've seen it time after time.

Somehow the process needs to be switched up. First of all,

drop it down to less competitors in the ladder match. Eight people is just WAY too many as you can't keep track of what's going on and it drains the rest of the card because everyone is in the ladder match. Cut it down to five or six and things would be much more interesting. The other thing, which has been beaten into the ground over the years but needs to be said again, is that someone needs to lose their cash-in attempt.

Money in the Bank was built on the idea of it could happen at anytime. When Edge originally cashed in, it was shocking because you didn't see it coming. It's a legit surprise and a great moment because it fits in with the idea that Edge was the ultimate opportunist. The second one at least had a twist on it as the cash-in was announced in advance to build to a match. Since then though, it's been one surprise after another.

These are indeed cool at the moment but they need something changed about them. After the cash-in, the shock is gone and you'd left realizing how weak of a champion that person has become. In order to rebuild the shock value, they need to slow things down. This could be done by either cutting the amount of cash-ins down to one, or having the surprise element taken out. Have someone cash in at a designated time like RVD did. Use it on a major Raw or at a PPV.

Daniel Bryan talked about doing it that way and cashing in at Wrestlemania, but at the end of the day we get the same thing all over again: someone cashing in as a surprise when the champion was down and the title change means nothing. Instead, spend the next few cash-ins on matches that are announced in advance. If nothing else it lets you build up to something instead of hoping that the people watch in hopes of seeing a cash-in.

However in the modern world of WWE, that's as likely as a Diva having a match last longer than five minutes or most people

caring about it. The idea is that bigger and more is better, which isn't the case but in Vince's mind it is. Money in the Bank is possibly not going to be its own PPV this year which would be a step in the right direction, but I doubt they'll keep things going that way because that's not how WWE works.

In summation, Money in the Bank is fine in the short term if you need something fixed, but the problems with it outweigh the good. It furthers the idea of being lazy in creative is ok and that there's no need to give the fans a reason to care about guys as long as you do something that shocks them. It's rationale like that which hurt WCW and look how well they did.

The idea can be fixed but it might be too far gone. If it were up to me, I'd drop the concept. Yeah imagine that: a guy having to earn a title shot and then win the title without someone else doing all the work. Unfortunately that's probably not going to happen because at the end of the day, this is the WWE and they're going to use the easiest method possible anymore, which is why things are weaker lately.

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## **NXT – March 14, 2012: Tag-0-Rama**

### **NXT**

Date: March 14, 2012

Location: Nationwide Arena, Columbus, Ohio

Commentators: Josh Matthews, William Regal

With this show, half of NXT has been in this season. I can't believe that. I mean, it feels like we've been at that point for years and years. Anyway, Regal is in his second week in power now and hopefully something changes because last week

was the same thing as we've always had. Tonight's big match is a mixed tag with Bateman/Kaitlyn vs. Maxine/Curtis. Let's get to it.

Striker and Regal are in the ring to open the show. Regal is the Official Match Coordinator. Tonight is all tag matches.

### Titus O'Neil/Darren Young vs. Usos

The heels make fun of the Siva Tao on their way to the ring. Titus gets beaten down in the corner almost immediately. The Usos double team and use some nice coordination for a corner splash for two on O'Neil. Darren comes in and walks into an uppercut from Jey. Young gets launched over the top in the corner and Jimmy hits a cross body off the apron. Jey takes out Titus and we're almost in squash territory here.

We take a break and come back with Jimmy and Darren slugging it out, won by Darren. Back to Titus who rams Jimmy into the corner and it's right back to Darren. The heels double team well enough to send Jimmy into the apron and out to the floor. The beating continues for awhile until Jimmy gets something like a superkick up in the corner to take Young down. There's the double tag to bring in Titus and Jey. The place erupted for the tag and then just kind of stopped caring. They've been hot so far though. Samoan Drop takes down Titus and the Superfly Splash gets the pin at 8:05.

**Rating:** C. Not bad and I'm sure it won't lead anywhere for the Usos. They've been dominant on this show forever but can't get a title run because we need to see Kofi and whatever partner he has this week beat the champions but not be able to get the titles. The match was fine though.

Percy Watson and Alex Riley talk about basketball in the back. They have a tag match later tonight. Reks and Hawkins come in and Regal pops up (this was earlier in the day apparently) to make the tag match. If Reks/Hawkins lose, they're doing Regal's laundry.

## Curt Hawkins/Tyler Reks vs. Alex Riley/Percy Watson

Watson starts with Reks but gets caught in the wrong corner. The double teaming allows Reks to take over and Watson is in trouble early. A knee drop gets two. Off to Hawkins and the chinlock. This is a really dull match. Unlike the previous one which built up a hot tag, this has been Reks and Hawkins in control from the star with nothing interesting at all. Watson comes back with a belly to belly throw and there's the tag to Riley with no pop from the crowd this time. Riley is now the Rare Breed. Oh boy. Riley takes Hawkins down but a distraction from Reks allows Hawkins to slam him off and hit a top rope elbow for the pin at 5:05.

**Rating:** D. Like I said during the match, this wasn't interesting at all. Reks and Hawkins are the villains of the show I guess but they're not doing anything interesting. Granted that's probably because they lose half of the time and haven't done anything but be annoying so far. Hopefully Riley and Watson don't team together that often as they're not that interesting.

Maxine is leaving a note for Striker when Kaitlyn runs in and rams into her. She's playing tag with Bateman apparently. Someone canceled Kaitlyn's flight again but Maxine says she doesn't know anything about that. Bateman comes in as does Curtis who apparently wants a fourway. In the ring that is. Apparently there really was a game of tag going on.

Here's Michael McGillicutty in street clothes. On the way to the ring we see a recap of his feud with Kidd. McGillicutty gets on the fans for being pathetic and demands respect. Kidd talking about hanging out with Bret Hart is lame too. No rematch either. Here's Tyson to talk about how he's been with the Harts since he was 16. McGillicutty says that no matter what he does, Kidd will never be a Hart. Kidd hits him with the mic and they go to the floor. Tyson tries for a Sharpshooter but Michael runs away. McGillicutty agrees to the

rematch.

Raw ReBoutd makes sure the main event isn't that long.

### Kaitlyn/Derrick Bateman vs. Maxine/Johnny Curtis

Regal says Bateman was raised by nuns. No joke there, just a statement of fact. The girls start and Maxine gets taken down a lot. Apparently that was Regal's office they were in rather than Striker's. Maxine is frustrated and we take a break. Back with the guys in there and Curtis taking him to the mat by the leg. Curtis keeps looking at Kaitlyn and dancing for her which results in a Bateman rollup for two. Regal works in an Exotic Adrian Street reference for you old time fans. Kaitlyn slaps Curtis and the falling bulldog gets the pin at 3:32. Since a good bit of that was on a commercial no rating, but this was nothing.

Kaitlyn hugs Bateman's mom as she leaves.

Bateman says that Maxine can go with whomever she wants, be it Curtis or Regal. Regal: "Wait what?" Bateman says tag, you're it to Kaitlyn and kisses her to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D. So that's NXT for the week. It ran about 45 minutes, there were three tag matches which weren't very good, there's a new couple which we pretty much knew would happen and I won't think about this show again until next week. That's all NXT is anymore: 45 minutes of subpar wrestling that I don't think about after I watch it. Why is this just now a revelation?

### Results

Usos b. Titus O'Neil/Darren Young – Superfly Splash to O'Neil  
Curt Hawkins/Tyler Reks b. Alex Riley/Percy Watson – Top Rope Elbow to Watson

Derrick Bateman/Kaitlyn b. Maxine/Johnny Curtis – Sweetness to Curtis

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# Monday Night Raw – March 12, 2012: Word Life Says Cena Wins Again

## Monday Night Raw

Date: March 12, 2012

Location: Quicken Loans Arena, Cleveland, Ohio

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

Guest Star: James Roday

We're a step closer to Wrestlemania now so it's hard to say what to expect. Well actually it isn't but that sounds better. Tonight we'll probably get more of Rock vs. Cena, although I'm not sure if Rock is going to be here tonight. Undertaker and HBK both will be though and their confrontation is one of the highlights of the show. Let's get to it.

Oh and I forgot: tonight Cena raps and we get another Rock concert.

The full theme song and opening sequence starts things out. We haven't seen that in awhile.

Lawler announces the Rock and Rap concert in the shadow of the Rock N Roll (Express?) Hall of Fame. We're going to start with Thuganomics so here's Cena in the Word Life gear, complete with chain and throwback jersey. He starts with a LeBron James joke to get the crowd to love him. If Rock gets all choked up,

it's all in the wrist. I can't do these lines justice by just writing them out. He mentions the Tooth Fairy chant from last week. This one is short though and ends with him throwing nuts at the camera, like he'll do at Rock's face.

Here's Vickie who I can't understand. She introduces Dolph. Ok then.

### Sheamus vs. Dolph Ziggler

Sheamus' march through the midcard continues. Ziggler can't quite pull off the pink but at least he matches Vickie. Sheamus takes him to the mat and then runs him over to start. Back to the mat with an armtrap headlock. Forearms in the ropes take us to the first break. Back with Sheamus clotheslining Dolph down. Sheamus hip tosses him to the outside but Dolph slips under the ring and hits a dropkick to take over.

Still on the floor Sheamus is rammed into the back and both guys are down. OH MAN there's a bit mark on his back. He manages to get back in at about eight and Dolph stomps away. Off to a chinlock as AJ and Bryan are in a skybox watching. Josh is up there so let's cut to Bryan talking instead of watching the match. AJ is scared of Bryan after Bryan told her to shut up last week.

Sheamus comes back with a tilt-a-whirl slam for two. Celtic Cross is countered and a one man flapjack gets two. They botch what could have been a cool ending as Ziggler hooks a crucifix but Sheamus tries to pull him into White Noise but can't get him up. Fameasser gets two. Brogue Kick finishes clean at 11:53.

**Rating:** B-. Sheamus dominating the upper midcard is fine but they desperately need something substantial to make us care about the Bryan match. When Bryan hasn't beaten anyone big on his own in months, there's no reason to care about the match. Then again no one in charge cares about this match at all so

it doesn't really matter.

The Battle of the General Managers match was announced earlier on WWE.com The GM's will get to pick their own teams and the winner gets to run both shows.

### Santino Marella/Aksana vs. David Otunga/

Santino is captain for Team Teddy at Mania. Oh dear. Ace is on commentary here. Otunga is Ace's captain. Ace says hold it a minute. There's not going to be a mixed tag. Instead it's a handicap match.

### Santino Marella vs. David Otunga/Mark Henry

Teddy comes out to an actual pop. Aksana is on the apron even though we were told this was a handicap. It's a 12 man tag at Mania. Teddy escorts Aksana out as Otunga jumps Santino. Teddy shoves Ace down and we're missing the match for the second time tonight. Santino avoids Otunga and comes back with his usual stuff but Henry makes a blind tag. He grabs the Cobra and headbutts Santino down. World's Strongest Slam makes Santino the latest squashed champion at 1:32.

Kofi comes out for the save but is beaten down as well. Truth comes out but is beaten down as well. Ace officially announces Henry as the second man on his team.

Preview for Psych, guest starring Miz.

Piece from Extra with the Bellas and Alicia talking about Mania and Rock vs. Cena.

Eve and her AWESOME rack is in the back when Ryder comes up. He wonders why Eve hasn't answered his calls this week. Ryder asks if she's playing him so she says be friends with benefits instead. Beth comes up and says she should have been on Extra. She's going to see Maria Menunos on Extra. I smell a celebrity match. Ryder leaves and Beth says she could get Ryder wrapped around her finger too if she wanted. Eve says she'd mind and

leaves.

Ace is on the phone when Miz (hometown pop) comes in. He wants to know when he'll be added to Team Ace. Ace was on the phone with a member of the Board of Directors so Ace is mad. James Roday of Psych comes in and Miz says he's a guest star, which is the star power Team Ace needs. Miz has a match tonight and if he wins, he's on the team. Roday is guest ring announcer. He says he'll Fink it up tonight. Oh and Miz is facing CM Punk.

**BRODUS IS BACK NEXT!!!!!!**

### Jinder Mahal vs. Brodus Clay

Jinder now has a case for his turban. The girls still look good, this time in white. Jinder jumps Brodus to start and gets a headbutt for his efforts. There's the suplex and a splash ends this in 26 seconds.

Brodus dances for a bit post match.

Some rapper is here.

It's Shawn time. He talks about how it's going to be the end of an era inside the Cell. Shawn is guest referee and HHH wasn't aware of that when he told HHH that last week. We get a clip of last week where HHH says he's going to end the Streak for Shawn. How that makes people stop talking about how Shawn couldn't do it still eludes me. Shawn has been in the back and he hasn't heard anyone calling him a loser.

However, there's one person that hasn't been around lately. He calls out Undertaker and 27 hours later, Taker is in the ring. Shawn accuses Taker of being the one talking about him and that that's not cool after what they did at Mania. Taker wants to know if it's eating at Shawn that he couldn't get it done. He thinks Shawn is just repeating what HHH has been saying. Taker starts talking about Shawn's insecurities and Shawn cuts

him off.

It was Undertaker that was begging for the match so he's the insecure one. Last year HHH got so close to beating him that Taker needs another match. Taker says he's prepared to accept the outcome whether it's a win or a loss, but he's not prepared to have Shawn cost him everything.

He says Mania is on April 21st and that Shawn will pay if the outcome isn't pure. Shawn says this is irony, not destiny. The guy whose career Taker ended might end the Streak. He could still be the guy to end the Streak. Taker says he'll win and that the Streak will continue and he'll end an era. If Shawn screws him, he'll end Shawn. Shawn pulls back like he's going to superkick Taker but doesn't move. He leaves with a smile. Shawn gets to the stage and HHH meets him. They share a quick look and Shawn leaves. HHH shoots Taker a crotch chop.

### CM Punk vs. The Miz

Rodday is the ring announcer. If Miz wins he's on Team Ace. Miz takes over with a quick knee to the ribs and we take a break 40 seconds in. Back with Miz holding Punk in an abdominal stretch. Punk comes back with some kicks but the GTS is countered. Low DDT gets two. The Finale is countered into the Vice and we're done at 6:10. Since we saw about 2:20 of that, I'm not going to bother rating it but it was mostly a squash.

Jericho pops up on screen and says that Punk is a fraud. He says he's found out something about Punk. Punk is straightedge because his father is an alcoholic which is why Punk doesn't drink. It scares Punk which is why he puts on this big front. Punk is going to drink eventually and Jericho is going to drive him to it. Punk almost freaks out like he's having a relapse but gets serious again.

We get a commercial for David Otunga's law offices. See, THAT is the kind of character development that the people in today's company is starving for.

## Randy Orton vs. Jack Swagger

Orton takes over to start and sends Jack into the steps as we take a break. Back with Swagger controlling with a top wristlock as Cole says the attendance for at least the third time tonight. Swagger goes after the ankle but misses the Vader Bomb. Jack grabs the ankle but Orton kicks him off and they go up to the corner. A superplex puts Swagger down and Orton comes back with his signature package. RKO ends this clean at 8:30.

**Rating:** C-. This was fine. Swagger is nothing more than a jobber to the stars and putting the US Title on him was the way they're trying to keep a victory over him meaning anything. Orton looks strong before the inevitable Kane post match stuff (and hey there it is) which is the right idea.

Post match the Kane pyro goes off and the red light comes on but there's no Kane.

We recap the Cena rap (with the fourth use of attitudinal by Cole).

HHH, Shawn and Undertaker will be at Raw next week. Cena vs. Henry next week also.

Here's Rock with a guitar for the Rock Concert. Rock talks about how the people have broken a record. This is the largest sellout crowd the WWE has ever had in Cleveland. He says to chant Cleveland instead of Rock. He wants to know if the people have seen Marky Mark tonight. What's up with the chain anyway? Also Cena looks like Vanilla Ice crossed with a Teletubbie. And he has pictures. This isn't funny.

Rock sits down with the guitar and the fans cheer for him. This isn't about a two minute rap because Cleveland Rocks. Rock gets a spotlight and starts singing what sounds like a parody of Jailhouse Rock. He says Cleveland Rocks a lot and the people cheer. Rock says Cena went to a doctor last week

and he's got a song about it. It ends with Cena wanting a rectal exam. Now he has a story about Cena and Eve. They were making out but Cena has a wife. Ok then.

Now he's got a story about Cena's birthday. The doctor wanted to get rid of Cena at birth and Cena had lady parts. THIS ISN'T FUNNY! I know that's blasphemy but this isn't funny at all. He keeps singing about how Cleveland Rocks so the fans cheer for him but the stuff he's saying isn't funny. He asks if there are any adult male Cena fans and says that they're virgins in a funny bit. He asks about the ladies. Rock says he loves women and there's a special woman that he has a song for. He's going to bring her wine and yeah it's Cena's mom.

He has his finale now and it's for the people. This is for Team Bring It. It's for the millions you see. It's We Will Rock You. Rock actually sings the song but throws in some Cena Sucks lines. There are lyrics on the screen for the modified lyrics. Rock totally screws the words up (I mean, we can see them on the screen) and that's it. No Cena at all. Seriously? This was the lowest Rock has his since he's been back.

**Overall Rating:** B. I liked tonight's show again. The Cena stuff was good, Rock was just dreadful and they plugged a good amount of matches. Plus you get some Brodus time which is never a bad thing. The 12 man tag was finally announced to help flesh out the card a bit. I'm starting to wonder how many more people they're going to induct into the Hall of Fame (Mil Mascaras was announced on WWE.com earlier today but there was no mention of him tonight) but other than that, everything is getting time. Good Wrestlemania push show.

## Results

Sheamus b. Dolph Ziggler – Brogue Kick

David Otunga/Mark Henry b. Santino Marella – World's Strongest Slam

Brodus Clay b. Jinder Mahal – Splash

CM Punk b. The Miz – Anaconda Vice

Randy Orton b. Jack Swagger – RK0

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# **Smackdown – March 9, 2012: We're Three Weeks From Wrestlemania. Do They Know That?**

## **Smackdown**

Date: March 9, 2012

Location: Mohegan Sun Casion, Uncasville, Connecticut

Commentators: Josh Matthews, Booker T, Michael Cole

Johnny Ace is in charge tonight and if it's the same as when Teddy ran Raw on Monday, then we're in for a very uneventful night indeed. Other than that I don't think we have much else announced for tonight. Hopefully we get anything on the story for Sheamus vs. Bryan as we need any reason to care about them. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about Ace hosting tonight and implying he's out to steal the job permanently.

We open with a cage being lowered. Otunga and Ace are in the ring. Tonight we're starting with a championship match in a cage because Teddy has never done that.

US Title: Santino Marella vs. Jack Swagger

Swagger throws him into the corner and pounds Santino down followed by a modified powerslam for two. Clothesline gets two. This has been all Swagger in the first two minutes. Santino tries to escape but Swagger launches him face first into the steel. Santino comes back with some punches and his signature stuff. Headbutt gets two and here comes the Cobra. Ziggler tries to climb in so his hands get hit by the Cobra to knock him to the floor.

Swagger grabs Marella in a belly to back suplex but Santino hits the Cobra to escape and both guys are down. Ziggler is ejected and we take a break. Back with Santino taking a knee to the ribs to put him down. Swagger takes the Cobra glove off and throws it to the floor. Rollup gets one for Santino and a sunset flip gets two. Swagger throws him down and hits a Vader Bomb for two.

He tries to climb but gets crotched and covered for two. Santino gets most of the way over but Swagger saves and they're both back inside now. Santino comes back with a tornado DDT and crawls for the door. Santino kicks Swagger off and dives again but Swagger grabs the ankle lock. Vickie tries to slam the door on Santino's head but hits Swagger instead, allowing Santino to crawl out to retain at 7:33 shown of 11:03.

**Rating:** C. This was fine all things considered. Why this was in a cage is beyond me, but I guess it's to further the Ace vs. Long feud somehow. The match was just ok as neither is particularly great in the ring but the crowd was way into Santino. It's better than Swagger having the title as he actually gets on TV too. I guess this is Ryder's push too.

Teddy comes out to celebrate with Santino.

Teddy comes to see Ace/Otunga and doesn't want Aksana to have to face Kane. Ace enjoys seeing Teddy squirm and Teddy begs a bit. Ace proposes a match between himself and Teddy. If Ace

loses, Aksana will face Kane. Ok then.

Shawn will confront Undertaker on Monday.

Here's Drew McIntyre in his gear. Is anyone surprised by this? Drew says that Ace will rehire him if he wins a match against a mystery opponent.

#### Drew McIntyre vs. Great Khali

And never mind as Otunga says Khali isn't in the match, so here's the real opponent.

#### Drew McIntyre vs. Hornswoggle

So why did Khali come out there at all? Horny is terrified despite regularly beating full sized guys before. Drew dominates him and keeps pulling him up after slams. The referee stops it at 1:39.

Khali chops Drew post match.

Aksana is scared for Teddy but he says it's ok.

Ace is warming up in a track suit.

#### Ezekiel Jackson vs. Mark Henry

So the word on the street is that Henry is in hot water for not being tough enough for working through his injuries, despite being out there almost every week working through his injuries. There's your lesson guys: don't work hard, don't enhance your character, don't work through injuries, or you might be in danger of being released. Slugout to start but Zeke gets beaten down quickly. Zeke comes back with the clotheslines in the corner but Henry runs him over again. World's Strongest Slam for the pin at 1:41. Well Jackson is moving up. Now he's getting squashed by bigger names.

#### John Laurinitis vs. Teddy Long

Remember if Teddy wins, it's Aksana vs. Kane. This gets big match intros. Ace grabs a mic after the bell rings and tries to talk Teddy out of this. Ace yells at Teddy to do the right thing and lay down, but Teddy won't do it. Aksana freaks so Ace waves down Kane. Orton runs through the crowd and RKOs Kane, allowing Teddy to roll Ace up at about 2:30. Is this company aware the Wrestlemania is in three weeks? So to clarify, as soon as Kane gets up, he has to face Aksana right? Right?

According to the announcers, Teddy did that because Kane has been taken out so there won't be a match. I'm as shocked as you are. Teddy and Aksana leave to have a nice dinner.

#### Kofi Kingston/R-Truth vs. Primo/Epico

Uh oh. Kofi was starting to get over as a legit guy again so we better put him in the black tag team of the month. Now the Kane vs. Aksana match isn't happening because Teddy and Aksana left. So why didn't Teddy just send Aksana away earlier in the night? Epico and Kofi start with Epico being monkey flipped to the corner. Off to Truth who dances around and hits a spinning legdrop for two.

Back to Kofi and Primo hooks the rope to send Kofi to the floor. Booker praises the cheating for being the right move. See, that's what most commentators are horrible at: being subtle. Things settle down a bit and it's Kofi in trouble against Primo. Kofi comes back with a knee to the head and there's the hot tag to Truth. Everything breaks down and the Little Jimmy gets the pin on Primo at 5:11.

**Rating:** D+. This wasn't much but the tag champions get to job AGAIN to these two that have teamed together what, three times now? Why did Bourne have to get all drugged up when the division was actually getting some stability to it? This wasn't a particularly good match, mainly because you knew the champions weren't going to win.

Three minutes on Cena vs. Rock from Monday.

Here's Cole in the ring to talk to Sheamus and Bryan. Yes, they're actually talking about this match. Cole's first question is to Bryan, asking how much of a role luck has played in his title reign. Bryan says you don't need to be lucky when you're good like he is. Nothing has been luck in any of his accomplishments, which he lists off. It's been living a vegan lifestyle and scientific skill that has given him the title. That and charisma and sex appeal.

Sheamus says everyone needs a bit of luck. He's lucky to be from Ireland and to be in WWE and in America and in front of all these people here. You make your own luck however and Sheamus has fought his way here. He also hasn't hid behind a 99lb girl who looks like she should be in a Catholic schoolgirl uniform. AJ: "Well from my point of view..." Bryan: "AJ shut up." Sheamus says Bryan should be wearing the skirt. At Wrestlemania, Bryan's luck runs out.

### Sheamus/Randy Orton/Big Show vs. Cody Rhodes/Daniel Bryan/The Miz

The staredown got cut short for Cody's entrance, meaning once again this match gets like 3 minutes a week if it's lucky. Sheamus vs. Cody gets things going. Quickly off to Randy as we hear again about Legacy and their history together. Orton stomps him down but Cody gets in a dropkick and the tag to Bryan. Cole says he's starting to respect Bryan. Off to Big Show who throws the champion around a little bit more.

Bryan finally gets away and tags in his former NXT Pro. You know, in ancient history when NXT actually had a structure to it. Show throws Miz around too so Miz tags out to Cody. Cody comes in and tags out to Miz immediately. Show doesn't care and brings Miz back in as we take a break. Back with Sheamus pounding on Miz. Miz comes back with some lefts in the corner but Sheamus comes back with a rolling fireman's carry slam.

Off to Cody who gets the ten clubbing forearms in ropes. Miz finally gets in a shot to send him to the floor and Bryan adds the knee off the apron. Bryan vs. Sheamus now and Sheamus towers over him. Bryan keeps taking him down and strikes away with the knees and feet. Off to Miz who hits a running boot to the chest for two. Cody comes in as the heels are moving in and out well.

Back to Daniel who shouts YES with every kick in a funny bit. Miz hooks the chinlock and the knee to the back gets two. Here's Cody again (see how fast they're tagging?) as Cole makes fun of GI Bro. Celtic Cross out of nowhere is countered into a Russian legsweep for two. Irish Curse takes Cody down and there's the hot tag to Randy. Everything breaks down and Show stalks Cody up the ramp. Elevated DDT takes Miz down but Bryan avoids it. Sheamus LAUNCHES Bryan into the barricade and they fight into the crowd. The Finale is countered into an RKO for the pin at 10:39 shown of 14:09.

**Rating:** C+. This was a good main event tag, but I'm really not sure why Miz was involved. Was Kane that injured off a single RKO? At least we got some in ring time for the two matches, although I'm worried that they're going to give the title to Big Show which is one of the last people that they need to put a title on. Good match overall though.

Kane comes out post match and pulls Orton out to the floor. Kane knocks him into the crowd (called the Universe by Cole to make me roll my eyes) and they fight up the steps to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D+. I REALLY didn't like this show. It's like the main matches are being pushed back for the sake of the Teddy Long and Johnny Ace and Aksana. As I said earlier, do they realize that there are three weeks before Wrestlemania? I know Ace vs. Teddy is going to be lead to a match at Mania but the rest of the show felt thrown together. We have an unneeded gimmick match, Drew being rehired again, meaning that weeks of

losses add up to nothing, a Henry squash, and the tag champions losing again. This show had no focus at all and it was a pain to sit through as a result. Bad show.

### Results

Santino Marella b. Jack Swagger – Marella escaped the cage

Drew McIntyre b. Hornswoggle due to referee stoppage

Mark Henry b. Ezekiel Jackson – World's Strongest Slam

Teddy Long b. John Laurinitis – Rollup

Kofi Kingston/R-Truth b. Primo/Epico – Little Jimmy to Primo

Randy Orton/Sheamus/Big Show b. The Miz/Cody Rhodes/Daniel Bryan – RKO to Miz

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# **NXT – March 7, 2012: Why Am I Not Surprised?**

## NXT

Date: March 7, 2012

Location: Mohegan Sun Casion, Uncasville, Connecticut

Commentators: Josh Matthews, William Regal

This is the real anniversary show as the season debuted on March 8, but as you know something like counting eludes WWE. Anyway, Regal is now in charge as the boss and Striker will continue on as host. The only confirmed match is Titus vs. Watson, which is a match we've seen and means that another character's story is going around in circles. Let's get to it.

We open with Striker in the ring to remind us that Regal has chosen the matches tonight. Regal gets in the ring to talk about tonight's show. He confirms the main event we already knew and here's Maxine. She keeps flirting with him and says she's looking forward to working underneath him. However Teddy makes Aksana vs....oh sorry wrong show. Anyway it's Maxine vs. Tamina next.

### Maxine vs. Tamina Snuka

Maxine grabs what appears to be an octopus hold but Tamina drops back into a rollup. Tamina chases Maxine to the floor as Josh quotes Spider-Man. Regal goes into another long rant/song/poem that I don't recognize. He got stuck halfway through it which is understandable. Anyway, Maxine misses a charge and the Samoan Drop sets up the Superfly Splash for the pin at 3:00. Usual Divas match but a bit longer and not as annoying.

Here are Hawkins and Reks with something to say. Hawkins says he should have been made in charge of NXT but it's Regal instead. Reks says that Regal hasn't done anything and since he can't get it done in the ring anymore (just like Striker), they run their mouths and make matches. Regal says if they want to get back in the ring next week, he's got a job for them. He pulls out some brooms and says that after how they've treated the roster, they'll be whatever Regal wants them to be. Either do it, or they won't be getting matches. The fans chant at him to do the job. Hasn't he been doing that for years?

### Yoshi Tatsu vs. Johnny Curtis

Yoshi sends him to the floor to start and we take a break with Curtis down on the outside. Back with Yoshi controlling in the ring. They go to the mat and Curtis takes over on the arm. Back up and Curtis suplexes him for two. Josh thinks Maxine likes Regal, because most people in this company don't get

women that are evil anymore. They slug it out to give Curtis a small advantage, but Yoshi avoids a charge and chops away. A hard kick to the chest gets two. A big kick misses and Curtis rams Yoshi's arm into the buckle. They go to the corner where nothing happens, so Curtis hits a Falcon's Arrow for the pin at 6:17.

**Rating:** C-. Not a bad match but Curtis continues to reach new levels of uninteresting. Regal graded Curtis' performance as an A. I'm not sure I'd agree with that, as Curtis isn't anything of note in the ring or on the mic. Naturally that makes him perfect to keep on TV right?

Speaking of things that aren't perfect, McGillicutty is looking at the tape of his win over Kidd last week with Striker. He's watched it multiple times and Kidd comes up. Kidd has been tweeting his rematch requests and tells McGillicutty to man up. Michael goes after him but takes a knee to the ribs to stop him.

Curtis rubs lotion on himself when Maxine comes up. She says she hates him but play along. Maxine kisses his ear when Bateman comes in. He wants to know where Kaitlyn is but they won't tell him. There's a mixed tag next week. Bateman is left alone when Curtis/Reks come up. Bateman leaves so Percy comes up to make unfunny janitor jokes.

Raw ReBound.

### Jey Uso vs. Darren Young

All hail the new regime? Jimmy sits in on commentary. Jey controls early on but Young takes over with a powerslam. Backbreaker sets up the slingshot into the bottom rope for two. There's a body scissors and then Young really gets the crowd going with a reverse chinlock. Jimmy talks about how Samoans love to eat because it's how their culture celebrates. Regal wants to know if it winds up being a big Samoan fight and of course it does. See, FINALLY someone gets their racial

stereotypes right. Jey makes his comeback but the running hip attack misses and Young rolls him up for the pin at 4:41.

**Rating:** D+. I would love an explanation from a higher up in the WWE as to what they see in Darren Young. There's nothing about him that makes me want to watch him. His matches aren't anything of note, his talking basically consists of the same thing 80% of heels say today, and his look is nothing we haven't seen on a bunch of others. I don't get it at all.

### Percy Watson vs. Titus O'Neil

Percy speeds things up to start but he tries to jump over Titus in the corner but lands on a boot. Titus yells about how he knows the rules and controls with power. Off to an abdominal stretch and then a chinlock. Watson makes his comeback with his usual stuff. The dropkick and backdrop set up the Heisman for two. Clash of the Titus is countered into the Persecution for the pin at 5:13.

**Rating:** D+. As you could say with all of the matches tonight, it's not bad but who cares? Josh certainly didn't. This is the first loss for Titus since his change in attitude and Josh sounded like he was watching an old rerun of Cheers. This is another feud that has lost whatever story it had, so why should I care?

Hawkins and Reks clear the ring and tell Regal that they're just getting started. Regal is mad to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D. How foolish I was to think that something was actually going to change on this show. Regal has done nothing but take the place of Striker. We still have the same boring stories and nothing ever changes. Would a big named guest star once in awhile kill them? They have a huge roster and it wouldn't hurt to have someone pop in, say they're fans of NXT and have a match would it? Apparently so, because this show is the ugly step child of WWE. Another bad show, which I really should have expected.

## Results

Tamina Snuka b. Maxine – Superfly Splash

Johnny Curtis b. Yoshi Tatsu – Falcon's Arrow

Darren Young b. Jey Uso – Rollup

Percy Watson b. Titus O'Neil – Persecution

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## **Rock Or Cena**

Which side are you on? I'm still with Cena. Rock was far funnier tonight when he was on location, which makes me think that he's lost the ability in front of a live crowd. He's gotten used to a script and being on film which is a very different style. I'm curious to see Cena's reaction if he loses though.

Thoughts?

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**Monday Night Raw – March 5,  
2012 – The Word Of The Night**

# Is Smart

## Monday Night Raw

Date: March 5, 2012

Location: TD Garden, Boston, Massachusetts

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

We have four Raws to go before Wrestlemania and tonight's is star studded to say the least. We have Rock, HHH, Undertaker and Shawn scheduled to be on the show tonight so there's definitely an old school feel to it. Other than that I'd expect more build to the PPV as almost everything is set in stone by this point. That's probably a good thing though. Let's get to it.

Teddy Long is in charge tonight.

Here's Shawn to open the show. He says he loves hearing the HBK chant now because it allows him to catch his breath because he can't move around that well anymore. Shawn talks about how things got heated with him and HHH but that's all over because now the match is on. He asks HHH to come out here. Here's the Game and they hug. Shawn reminds HHH of all the things that he said last week and even said he called HHH a coward, somehow getting away with it.

Something must have changed HHH's mind and Shawn has to know what it was. HHH doesn't look happy. The fans chant for Undertaker. HHH starts to talk but Shawn cuts him off as he wants to see the moment HHH agreed to the match with his buddy. We see the clip and of HHH agreeing after Taker said Shawn is better. HHH starts to talk again but Shawn cuts him off. It was saying Shawn was better that set HHH off.

HHH says he left Shawn a voicemail about this but if we need to do this in front of the world so be it. HHH says this isn't about which of them is better. He's tired of hearing people talk about how Shawn couldn't get the job done. He's tired of

people calling Shawn a failure who was never as good as he thought he was. HHH is his best friend and the guy that believes that Shawn is the best ever. HHH is going to end the Streak to shut those people up about Shawn. How would that shut them up exactly? Shawn is a little offended by this and says HHH will lose again. Oh, AND HE'S GUEST REFEREE.

### US Title: Jack Swagger vs. Santino Marella

Ace and Otunga come out almost immediately. Santino loads up the Cobra but Ace distracts, allowing Zigler to interfere and Swagger hits the gutwrench powerbomb...for two? Cue Teddy with Kofi and we go to a break. The portion we saw lasted about a minute and I'm assuming it was thrown out. Amazingly enough it's not a tag match yet! Teddy and Ace get in a fight almost immediately as Zigler interferes AGAIN. Kofi smacks him so Zigler gets a Cobra. Vickie avoids one so Aksana gets in a fight with her. Santino counters the Cobra into the ankle lock as Teddy knocks Ace down. Santino counters the ankle lock into a rollup AND WINS THE TITLE AT 6:30!!!!!! I'm legit shocked.

**Rating:** D+. The match was an overbooked mess but it was awesome. I'm not a Santino fan at all but it's not like the title means anything on Swagger. The title died the minute Ryder lost it so putting it on Santino is just fine. I'm glad they didn't turn this into a tag match as it gave me a legit surprise.

Ace freaks out but Teddy says this is his show and throws Ace out. Santino, Kofi, Aksana and Teddy all do the Trombone.

Rock is in Boston and he's got a history lesson for Cena. This is filmed on location earlier in the day. He talks about how the British were in people of Boston's faces every day. Then in 1773, the Boston people threw the tea in the ocean and called it the Boston Tea Party. So tonight, Rock is going to throw some of Cena's stuff in the ocean. He has a bunch of merchandise. "John Cena midget shorts. Who would buy these

things? They're an insult to midgets. The John Cena garden gnome. There's a man somewhere with one of these in his garden. And he's a virgin." Rock is coming to start the Rock Revolution tonight.

### Eve Torres vs. Alicia Fox

Kelly is on commentary and talking about being nominated for a Kids' Choice Award. Rollup, 34 seconds.

Post match cue RYDER to a big pop. He can at least walk now. Broskis before Hoeskis.

Post break Eve tries to apologize to Ryder and kisses him. She walks off smiling and Ryder seems to fall for it.

We cut to earlier today with Cena alone in the arena. I've always liked shots like that. He talks about Wrestlemania and how it'll be full of moments. With everything that'll be happening, all eyes will be on two men and one match. He talks about how Boston is now being the city of champions after being the city of broken hearts for so long. Cena talks about them losing the Super Bowl to the Giants but no one remembers second place. If he loses, he's just another name in Rock's book. But if he wins, it's the biggest match ever and no one remembers second place.

### CM Punk/Sheamus vs. Chris Jericho/Daniel Bryan

Smackdown has made me loathe these main event style tags. You know, Bryan has looked like a complete afterthought in his feud. The two of them haven't interacted at all that I remember. They've probably been in the ring together a few times but it's been nothing significant. Jericho and Punk start and Chris is knocked to the corner very quickly. Off to Bryan and Sheamus with Sheamus beating on him like he stole something. Clothesline gets two.

Back to the starters with Jericho getting in a shot to the

ribs which are still hurt from last week. We take a break and come back with Punk coming up out of a hold, only to get side slammed. They're really pushing the social media tonight, reading tweets from "fans". Off to Sheamus who hits the Irish Curse for two on Jericho. Jericho gets his springboard dropkick to take over and Sheamus is down.

Jericho hooks a chinlock but misses a running knee in the corner. Double tag to Punk and Bryan and Punk springboards in, hurting his back in the process. He comes back with one arm though and manages to slam Bryan and hit the elbow. Everything breaks down and Sheamus loads up the Celtic Cross on Bryan but Jericho saves. I can't keep up with all this. Jericho goes for the Walls on Punk but Punk counters to a small package but Jericho counters into one of his own for the pin at 10:57.

**Rating:** C. See, this one helps as it actually gives us a new wrinkle in this story. Jericho has a pin over Punk now so the title is in some more jeopardy. That's a big perk as until then, it was Jericho trying to make Punk tap which just wasn't going to happen. Not a bad match either with Punk's top notch selling helping a lot.

Off to Paul Revere's statue. Rock wants to know what would happen if Cena was riding instead of Revere. We'd all be having tea and blessing the Queen. Rock would have to invent a time machine and go back to 1776 to beat up Cena. With the Flux Capacitor smoking, the Rock, 25% black, 25% Samoan and 50% Clydesdale, Ben Franklin would say forget you kite, THIS MAN invented electricity. We get Rock's version of Yankee Doodle involving a feather going into John Cena and calling it a jabroni. Hilarious stuff.

### Big Show vs. The Miz

Miz immediately hits the floor and Cody is on the ramp. He says there's nothing worse than embarrassment. There's no clip this week, because at Mania 18, Show was at the WWE restaurant

in New York instead of having a match. Miz jumps Show but is speared down and the WMD gets the pin at 2:00, about 1:40 of which was Cody talking/the clip.

Time for the third Rock history lesson. He's in front of the Massachusetts State House and talks about how the revolution lead to the birth of a new nation. The people have been waiting for ten years for Rock to overthrow John Cena and tonight, Rock is in the Garden.

Undertaker will confront Shawn next week.

### Kane vs. R-Truth

Truth talks about Little Jimmy a bit before the match. Truth attacks him in the corner to start and gets beaten down quickly. He gets in a few punches but the axe kick misses. Chokeslam gets the pin at 1:23.

As soon as Kane does the corner fire, here's Orton. Truth grabs Kane's foot so Orton can hit the RKO. He wants a mic and says it's good to be back.

Here's Cena for the big closing number. He says the place is pumped and he knows why. The Rock is back. He means the real Rock, the one he needs to face at Wrestlemania. Rock has been giving history lessons all day and it's exciting. But if you get through all of the theatrics, what is Rock really saying? He's obsessed with breakfast cereal, he's obsessed with how Cena looks, and talks about how many women he's slept with. Am I fighting Rock or Situation from Jersey Shore?

Last week Rock was shaken by what Cena said and that's never happened before. Cena says look at me. He looks ridiculous. He's wearing kneepads to talk to you people tonight, but this is what shook the Rock. But tonight Rock has his swagger back. He wants to see The Rock in this ring right now. Not Dwayne, but The Rock. Cue Rock and Cena is even more fired up.

Rock says he's never been shaken and unconfident. When you strip everything away, at the Rock's core, Rock is 6'4, 260lbs of man that is going to rip Cena's throat out. At Cena's core, he'll always be a little boy. And that's it? Rock leaves with that and Cena says that doesn't intimidate him one bit.

In a brilliant bit, Cena reads Rock's height and weight off his arm. Rock can rip his throat out and he's going to have to do just that to beat him. Cena says he'll make history at Wrestlemania when he wins and that's it. Cena dives into the fans to end the show. I'm assuming that's his family or something. He hugs his dad and apparently the rest of his family. Cena's wife is shown on camera and is really pretty.

**Overall Rating:** A. I love and hate Wrestlemania time. It gives us great episodes like this one but it also reminds you of how bad the rest of the year can be. The key word for tonight would be smart. Everything had a point and made sense, which is arguably the most important thing a wrestling show can do. I'm fired up for Wrestlemania and that's hitting at the right time. Great show tonight and I want to see more.

#### Results

Santino Marella b. Jack Swagger – Rollup

Eve Torres b. Alicia Fox – Rollup

Chris Jericho/Daniel Bryan b. CM Punk/Sheamus – Small package to Punk

Big Show b. The Miz – WMD

Kane b. R-Truth – Chokeslam

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# Santino Marella Wins The US Title

Ricky Steamboat, Ric Flair, Magnum TA.....Santino Marella?

Swagger wasn't doing jack with it so putting it on someone the people love and who is at least on TV every week is fine.

Thoughts?

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# Shawn Michaels To Referee HHH vs. Undertaker at Wrestlemania

It fits the story and if they have to go with another gimmick to it, that's the perfect one. It says a lot when this match has technically been three years and three featured Wrestlemania matches including one main event in the making. That has to be a record.

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# **(Not My) Thought of the Day – How Times Change**

This is something I saw a similar version of in a comment on a blog but it made a lot of sense. Picture a group of wrestlers who look different enough to tell them apart but get no substantial mic time, have a generic name and wear generic outfits.

Back in the 70s and 80s we'd call them jobbers. Today we call most of them superstars.