

Survivor Series Count-Up – 2013 (2014 Redo): They Just Don't Care

Survivor Series 2013

Date: November 24, 2013

Location: TD Garden, Boston, Massachusetts

Attendance: 13,500

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's the final show before the 2014 edition and for the most part I have no idea what happens here. If I remember right it's something about Orton and then Reigns destroying a bunch of people. It kind of amazes me how easy the last year is to forget while I could snap off the main event of almost every PPV 2005 or so. Let's get to it.

Pre-Show: Miz vs. Kofi Kingston

Kofi won't shake hands to start but eventually gives in after a few seconds. Kingston tries to speed things up with his leapfrogs before a crucifix gets two. A backslide gets two more but Kofi charges into an atomic drop. Both guys miss finishers but Kofi kicks him in the face and clotheslines him out to the floor. There's a suicide dive for good measure and we take a break. Back with Kofi holding a chinlock for a change but Miz fights up with a big boot to take over.

Another boot to the face gets two and Miz puts on a chinlock. Back up and Kofi hits a quick standing double stomp before speeding things up with his dropkicks. There's the Boom Drop but Trouble in Paradise misses. SOS connects for two and a high cross body gets the same as Miz is reeling. Kofi kicks him in the chest a few times before countering a Skull Crushing Finale attempt into a rollup, only to have Miz counter into a rollup of his own for the pin.

Rating: C. Nice match here as Kofi kept things moving until Miz finally caught him going for one too many big moves. Kingston is a guy that can

move around as fast as anyone else and put on an entertaining match with almost anyone. Miz was looking sharp here too, even though I'd like him to drop that Figure Four nonsense. It didn't work for him then and it still doesn't today.

The show itself opens with HHH and Stephanie rather than an opening video. They guarantee no physical interference in any match tonight. Not a single one. Assuming Boston is ready, here's the opening match.

After an opening video about the flame of survival in us all that is. As usual this transitions into a video about the main events.

Rey Mysterio/Goldust/Cody Rhodes/Usos vs. Shield/Real Americans

Elimination match of course. This is Mysterio's return from yet another injury. Ambrose is US Champion and Cody and Goldust are Tag Team Champions, having taken the belts from Reigns and Rollins recently. Before the match, Colter rips on Americans for Twerking and even gives us a demonstration. David Ortiz gets insulted a bit as well until Cody Rhodes cuts him off and Twerks a bit as well.

Rhodes and Ambrose get things going with Rhodes nailing him with a right hand. Dean comes back with a clothesline but argues with the referee, allowing Cody to roll him up for a quick elimination. Everything breaks down for a bit with the Usos nailing all four remaining opponents. Each Uso dives on a team and the good guys are in full control.

We settle down to Cody suplexing Seth for two. Off to Goldust to a huge reaction but Swagger comes in off a blind tag and runs Goldust over. Cesaro snaps Goldust's arm over the top rope before coming in to work on the ribs. Swagger gets two off a powerslam as Cole screws up Survivor Series history, saying that Andre won the first Survivor Series match (it was the first main event). Cesaro jumps over Swagger's shoulders for a double stomp and slaps on a chinlock.

Back up and Goldust grabs a DDT to put both guys down. Goldust has to elbow all of his opponents before hitting a sunset bomb on Cesaro, only to have Swagger come in first. The Vader Bomb hits raised boots though and the hot tag brings in Mysterio. A quick 619 sets up a superkick from

Jimmy and the Superfly Splash from Jey to make it 5-3.

Cesaro comes in immediately with Swiss Death for two on Jey. Both Usos get Swung and Cesaro is the most over person in the match. His reward: a sunset from Cody for another elimination. It's Reigns in now to run over Jey and stomp away in the corner. Rollins comes in with an elbow for two before it's back to Reigns to work on the arm. Cole mistakenly says the Shield has developed rivalries over the years but JBL points out that they've only been around a year. Cole: "Well you know what I mean." JBL: "No not really."

Jey finally gets over for the hot tag to Jimmy who takes Reigns down with a Samoan drop. The running Umaga attack gets two but Roman blocks the splash with his knees and nails the spear to make it 4-2. Cody comes in with a missile dropkick to Rollins as things speed up. The moonsault press gets two but the Disaster Kick is caught in midair. Rollins gets countered into Cross Rhodes but makes a blind tag, allowing Reigns to spear Cody for the elimination.

Jey sends Reigns into the barricade but misses a high cross body back inside. Rollins makes another quick tag to come in for a Curb Stomp and it's down to Mysterio/Goldust vs. Reigns/Rollins. Rey is quickly taken down by Rollins but he comes back with a kick to the head for two. The advantage is short lived though as Rey gets tied in the Tree of Woe for a running dropkick to the ribs. Reigns throws him out to the floor with ease but the spear hits the post by mistake.

It's quickly back to Rollins who dropkicks Goldust off the apron, only to get caught in a rollup for a fast pin. It's Reigns vs. Goldust/Mysterio but Seth gets in some cheap shots on Mysterio before he leaves. Rey sends a charging Reigns into the buckle and tags in Goldust to clean house. A spinebuster plants Reigns and Goldust hammers away in the corner. Goldust nails a powerslam and spinning cross body for two each but a bulldog is countered into a spear for another pin. So it's Mysterio vs. Reigns and the 619 is broken up with a huge spear to give Reigns the pin.

Rating: C. The match was boring to start but picked up a lot when Reigns was unleashed. This was the star making performance that started Reigns'

push to the moon which would be driven even higher when he broke the elimination record in the Royal Rumble. The match itself wasn't much to see but those spears looked great.

HHH, Kane and Stephanie are in the back when Orton comes in. He wants to make sure everyone is on the same page after he demanded respect from the Authority on Monday. HHH wants to know if that's just making sure everything is ok or if Orton is asking them to save him tonight. We get the usual Face of the WWE speech but Stephanie tells him to go prove it.

Intercontinental Title: Big E. Langston vs. Curtis Axel

Langston took the title from Axel on Monday and this is the rematch. Axel puts on a headlock but gets taken down with pure power. With that not working, Curtis starts going after the arm for almost the same result. Big E. busts out a leapfrog before just running Axel over. A running splash in the corner crushes Axel again and a clothesline gets two.

They head outside for a few seconds with Axel knocking Langston off the apron to get his first advantage. Back in and Curtis puts on a chinlock before Langston fights up with a big belly to belly. The Warrior Splash connects but Axel grabs a quick PerfectPlex for two. Back up and the Big Ending retain the title with ease.

Rating: D+. This was far less of a match and more of a formality.

Langston was getting a solid push around this time until they suddenly pulled the plug on him. Axel has the same result, though at least he got to be in a tag team. Hopefully Langston can get somewhere with the New Day stuff but I won't get my hopes up.

Post match Big E. talks about being in Boston but doesn't want to look like he's pandering to the people here in Boston. However, this feels like when the Boston Red Sox won the World Series.

AJ gives the True Divas a big pep talk but they don't buy into it. Rosa Mendes: "Do you think you're better than all of us." AJ: "Yes?" Kaitlyn goes on a rant about all the horrible things AJ has done but AJ says this is about Total Divas not wanting any of them. The champ's (AJ) advice for the night: start your own show by stealing this one.

Total Divas vs. True Divas

Total Divas: Bella Twins, Natalya, Funkadactyls, Jojo, Eva Marie

True Divas: AJ Lee, Tamina Snuka, Summer Rae, Rosa Mendes, Alicia Fox, Aksana, Kaitlyn

Elimination tag and let's get this over with. Fox works over Naomi in the corner to start and slams her down for one. She puts Naomi on top but gets elbowed down, setting up a split legged moonsault to get rid of Fox. Rosa comes in and avoids the Rear View before it's off to Cameron. This can't go well. A double split legdrop from the Funkadactyls gets two on Mendes as we hear about the Total Divas having personalities.

Rosa sends a charging Cameron into the middle buckle for a pin. Mendes dances but turns into a Bella Buster from Nikki for another elimination. Summer comes in wearing orange and blue for a dance off with Nikki. Summer does the splits and gets dropkicked to make it 6-4 for the Total Divas. Eva Marie comes in and is booed out of the building. Kaitlyn doesn't like her either and ends her with a quick gutbuster to make it 5-4. Naomi comes in but takes a gutbuster of her own for the pin. Tied at four now with Brie throwing Kaitlyn down for two.

Kaitlyn misses a spear and gets caught by a bad looking missile dropkick for another pin. I'm not leaving out anything on play by play here. These falls are just going that fast. AJ kicks Brie from behind, allowing Aksana to hit a bad spinebuster to eliminate Brie. A Rack Attack ends Aksana about 10 seconds later and we're down to AJ/Tamina vs. Nikki/Natalya/Jojo. Tamina comes in to lay Nikki out with headbutts and Nikki is nice enough to smile through half of the beating.

Nikki gets thrown into Natalya and it's off to Jojo, who has almost no in ring experience. Jojo nails a quick cross body and a rollup gets two before Tamina just kicks her head off. A Samoan drop plants Jojo and AJ comes in for the pin. The announcers say it's 2-1 because Nikki Bella is that forgettable. Tamina charges into Natalya in the corner but misses the Superfly Splash, allowing Natalya to hook the Sharpshooter for the elimination. AJ comes in and gets nailed by Nikki because she wasn't eliminated, setting up another Sharpshooter so the Total Divas can win.

Rating: F. This won Worst Match of the Year and it's really easy to see why. It was clear that they had no idea how to do more than a few spots and had to fly through this match as fast as they could. I can't stand these messes but the fans hating Eva Marie made up for it a bit. In case this wasn't enough for you, there was a REMATCH the next night!

Orton asks referee Charles Robinson to help him out tonight but Robinson says he'll do what the Authority told him to do.

Expert panel time but Ryback's music cuts them off. Ryback says his favorite Survivor Series memory is shutting up all those old timers. He can intimidate anyone here but that doesn't make him a bully. It's open challenge time so let's have a Wrestlemania rematch.

Ryback vs. Mark Henry

This is another return for Henry. They fight over a lockup to start and Ryback talks even more trash. Henry casually shoves him across the ring so Ryback goes after the knee for two. Ryback slams him down but misses a charge into the post. Maybe the GOLDBERG chants messed with his head. Mark gets down on all fours for some JYD headbutts before a powerslam gets two. The World's Strongest Slam is countered into a spinebuster and Ryback takes down the straps. Ryback's Meat Hook is countered with a cross body and now the World's Strongest Slam is enough for the pin.

Rating: D. I can't remember the last time I saw such a worthless set of back to back matches. Henry looked fatter than ever and Ryback's collapse continues. At the end of the day the guy has come back so many times that it's really hard to care. The fact that he's anything but the Hall of Pain era Henry makes things even worse.

We recap Cena vs. Del Rio. Cena had to leave due to a bad arm but came back to take the World Heavyweight Championship from Del Rio like the main event jobber that he was. This is the rematch and Del Rio is going after the arm. Of course.

World Heavyweight Championship: John Cena vs. Alberto Del Rio

Cena is the defending hometown boy so the split chants begin. They fight

over a headlock to start until Del Rio tosses him down for a headlock and some of the most obvious spot calls I've ever seen. Back up and Del Rio steps on Cena's head before a snap suplex gets two. Cena powers out of an armbar but Del Rio sends him outside and into the steps. They head back inside and the arm work continues along with the slow pace.

Cena fights up again but misses a charge into the buckle to keep Del Rio in control. Alberto avoids a shoulder block and Cena falls outside again so Del Rio can stay on the arm. A clothesline gets two on the champ and we hit another armbar. Del Rio talks about doing two things to Cena because he's really bad at spot calling. Cena powers up again and hits a clothesline, only to walk into a Backstabber for two.

Alberto goes up but dives into a dropkick to put both guys down again. Back up and the ProtoBomb looks to set up the Shuffle but Cena takes too long, allowing Del Rio to score with a DDT. Alberto misses a charge of his own though and both guys are down again. The champ's finishing sequence is countered yet again into a German suplex so he opts for a tornado DDT for two. The enziguri knocks Cena off the top and the dueling chants begin again.

Del Rio puts him in the Tree of Woe but his charge hits the post by mistake. There's the top rope Fameasser for two and a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker gets the same for Del Rio. Alberto calls for the cross armbreaker and gets a huge SI chant. Cena rolls through into the STF though, sending Del Rio rolling over to the ropes. The low superkick gets two on John and his belly to back neckbreaker gets the same for the champ. Cena's cross body is countered into the armbreaker but he counters up into a powerbomb. Back up and the AA retains Cena's title.

Rating: B. Del Rio is basically the new Chris Jericho: he'll win the title every now and then, but he's little more than cannon fodder for Cena. I have no reason to believe that Cena is going to tap out to the armbreaker and every time Del Rio went for the hold it felt like a waste of time. Alberto's style makes perfect sense for him, but it's a waste of time against Cena. The match was good, but the ending was never once in doubt.

Santino and Truth play with toys, only to be joined by Los Matadores, El Torito, Fandango and Johnny Ace.

We recap the Wyatts vs. Bryan/Punk. Bray saw both of them as heroes that needed to be destroyed so he crushed Bryan's head and went after Punk in general. Bryan came out for the save and we've got a tag match. The tag line makes it a bit better: the Wyatts vs. the Beard/the Best.

CM Punk/Daniel Bryan vs. Wyatt Family

Bray holds up the lantern and says Abigail told him Punk and Bryan would be tough as nails. She was right. Bryan kicks at Rowan's leg to start and is quickly shoved down. More kicks to the leg send Rowan into the good corner for a tag from Punk. The fans are very pleased with the tattooed hero but Erick drives him into the other corner to take over. Off to Harper as the Family starts taking turns working over Punk's ribs.

Rowan slaps on a bearhug but Punk slips out of a suplex and tags in Bryan. Their combined forces can't suplex Rowan though so he sends both guys flying at the same time. Things settle down until Punk and Bryan start kicking away in the corner and now they can suplex Rowan down. Naturally the announcers are debating if Rowan is like Michael Myers or not.

Back to Harper but Punk easily drives him back into the corner as well. A double dropkick sets up Bryan's YES Kicks and we go old school with a Hart Attack for two. Punk gets distracted by Erick though, allowing Harper to kick Punk's head off and tag in the other freak. A backbreaker gets two for Rowan and it's back to Luke for the Gator Roll. Rowan starts talking to the mask on the post as Luke gets two off the Michinoku Driver.

Rowan comes back in and charges into a boot in the corner, followed by a tornado DDT (way too common a move anymore). There's the hot tag to Bryan who comes in with all of his usual stuff. Luke gets kicked to the floor for the FLYING GOAT. Back in and the missile dropkick gets two but the big YES Kick is caught in a powerbomb. Bryan counters into a hurricanrana but Luke counters it's top rope cousin into a super sitout powerbomb for a very close two.

Everything breaks down and Rowan throws Punk out to the floor. A splash gets two on Bryan as things settle back down. Harper runs Bryan over and chokes with the boot before catapulting him throat first into the rope. Daniel fights back until Erick catches him in a half nelson suplex. The monster gets too confident though and goes after Punk, only to get kicked in the head. The hot tag brings in Punk to clean house again but he dives on Rowan and Wyatt instead of Harper. Back in and the top rope elbow gets two on Luke but Rowan breaks up the GTS. That earns him a running knee and the GTS ends Harper.

Rating: B-. The fans thought it was awesome but it never got past solid for me. Bryan and Punk are the kind of super team that you put in there to fight monsters like these, but at the end of the day it doesn't matter until they fight the master himself. At least Harper and Rowan are still good enough to have a good match and look like real threats.

Bray teases getting in but backs down as you would expect.

Cena is getting his arm looked at with the Authority next to him. Orton comes in and isn't pleased so Cena leaves them to their chat.

We recap Big Show vs. Randy Orton. Big Show was basically blackmailed into being the Authority's monster until lawsuits were threatened and Big Show was given anything he wanted. Rather than money, job security, or a piece of the WWE, he wanted a single WWE Title shot. This went on for months and felt like it would never end, setting up a match that no one wanted to see.

WWE Title: Big Show vs. Randy Orton

Champion Orton immediately bails to the floor before going back in and getting shoved out again. Randy heads back in again and takes one of the loudest chops I've ever heard. Show tries to claw Orton up from the floor but gets his throat snapped across the top rope. A big shoulder gives Show two but Orton finally scores with a dropkick.

We hit the front facelock as the crowd goes silent again. Instead Orton shifts to a horrible sleeper until Show suplexes him down. Orton rolls outside to avoid a chokeslam so Show sends him into the steps. Back in

and Show tries to go up for some reason, allowing the champ to crotch him down and nail the Elevated DDT. He takes too long setting up the RKO though and eats a chokeslam for two.

Show loads up the KO but Orton bails outside, bumping into the referee's knee in the process. They head into the crowd to keep up the beating, including a KO Punch to knock Orton silly on the floor. We're about to have a new champion and of course here's the Authority. The distraction lets Orton nail an RKO, setting up a Punt to retain the title.

Rating: D. This is basically poor man's version of Del Rio vs. Cena. The ending was never in doubt as there was no way they were putting the belt on Show, but the match was really dull and boring throughout. This was the culmination of a terribly dull story and thankfully they moved on to anything better, like Cena vs. Orton. That's a fresh idea right?

Orton celebrates but Cena comes out and holds up his own belt to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This show was a rollercoaster. The first part was just kind of there, then it went straight down, then up for Cena/Bryan/Punk, then down through a hole for the finish. October/November is just a horrible time for the company every year and this is probably the low point for the Survivor Series. There are far worse shows, but man alive this show felt worthless. It's just not an interesting show and felt like it could have been any given B show rather than the second longest PPV ever. That's a bad sign for a show this important.

Ratings Comparison

The Miz vs. Kofi Kingston

Original: B-

Redo: C

Real Americans/Shield vs. Cody Rhodes/Goldust/Rey Mysterio/Usos

Original: B-

Redo: C

Curtis Axel vs. Big E. Langston

Original:D+

Redo: D+

Total Divas vs. True Divas

Original:D-

Redo: F

Mark Henry vs. Ryback

Original:D

Redo: D

Alberto Del Rio vs. John Cena

Original:D+

Redo: B

Wyatt Family vs. CM Punk/Daniel Bryan

Original:B

Redo: B-

Big Show vs. Randy Orton

Original:D-

Redo: D

Overall Rating

Original:D+

Redo: C-

Dang I hated Del Rio back then.

Here's the original review if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2013/11/24/survivor-series-2013-they-had-me-for-a-bit/>

That's it for Survivor Series and you can tell WWE has thought the same for years. The show hasn't felt important in a long time with almost no major matches, save for maybe the Rock's in ring return, even though that was just a warmup for the real match. I still love the idea and tradition of the show, but it's been too long since we've had an elimination tag that matters.

Now that's going to be remedied in 2014 so maybe there's some hope, but the last few years haven't been kind to the show. That doesn't change the fact that the older shows rock and are definitely worth checking out if you want to see a lot of the roster on the same show and about five matches rolled into one. It's a good series, but anymore it's really just one of the Big Four because it came so early.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book on the History of the Royal Rumble at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00PZ1GR7E>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

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Smackdown – September 19,

2014: Wake Me Up When September Ends

Smackdown

Date: September 19, 2014

Location: Mississippi Coast Coliseum, Biloxi, Mississippi

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tom Phillips, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's the go home show for Night of Champions and since this is Friday, we're not likely to see Cena or Lesnar, meaning nothing important is going to happen tonight. WWE has done a very bad job building up everything other than the main event for Sunday and it really shows when Cena and Lesnar aren't on the show. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Reigns vs. Rusev. Just get to the DQ now.

Jimmy Uso vs. Stardust

The brothers that look different say they're coming for the titles. Jimmy and Stardust fight up against the ropes to start until a neckbreaker puts Jimmy down. Uso tries three superkicks and connects with the final one for the pin at 2:00.

Goldust gets kicked as well.

Sheamus/Dolph Ziggler vs. Miz/Cesaro

Haven't we seen this one a few times now? Cesaro tries to ride Ziggler on the mat but the champion gets away. A slam takes Ziggler down again and Cesaro cranks on a headlock. Back up and Cesaro counters a sunset flip and lifts Dolph all the way into a gorilla press. It's an awesome power display but Ziggler slips down the back and nails a dropkick. Off to Miz for a kick to the face for two and some posing. He avoids the Fameasser and hooks the Reality Check for two.

We come back from a break with Miz getting two off a top rope ax handle

and putting on a chinlock. Dolph counters with a jawbreaker but Cesaro blocks a tag attempt. That earns him the swinging DDT and the hot tag brings in Sheamus. Miz gets caught in the fifteen forearms to the chest and the rolling fireman's carry gets two. The Irish Curse gets the same and Zigler backdrops Cesaro to the floor, possibly injuring the big man's knee. The stunt doubles get into it and Zigler superkicks Miz into the Brogue Kick for the pin at 11:43.

Rating: C. This wasn't bad but did anyone buy Miz having a chance to pin Sheamus? He has the character down but he needs something different in the ring. I still think a switch to tights would help him a lot, though that doesn't seem to be a possibility. Also let him get some wins with the Finale to build the move back up a bit.

Adam Rose vs. Heath Slater

Slater decks him with a right hand and Rose is in early trouble. He gets a boot up to stop a charging Heath in the corner and a high cross body gets two. Slater stomps him down in the corner again but misses a knee drop. Rose comes back with some forearms and a spinebuster but Titus trips him up. This brings in the Bunny who dives on Titus, setting up the Party Foul for the pin at 2:55.

We recap Henry and Rusev from Raw. This eats up over a minute.

Lana and Rusev are in the back and Lana speaks Russian about Henry and Reigns. Rusev does the same and that's about it.

Los Matadores/Big Show vs. Wyatt Family

I could have sworn this was originally going to be the Usos. Big Show does Torito's entrance in a funny bit. This is joined in progress with Fernando doing OLE to Rowan. Thankfully Erick picks him up for a fall away slam into the Wyatt corner. Off to Bray for the backplash before Harper comes in and gets caught in a sunset flip. His response is to hit Fernando really hard in the face, though Fernando is able to get over to the corner for a tag to Big Show.

Rowan comes in as well and takes out Show's leg, allowing Wyatt to hammer

on a downed giant. Harper Gator Rolls Big Show and drops him with a dropkick. The Family starts some fast tagging but Show rolls to the floor and headbutts Wyatt. Bray stops a tag attempt though and Harper hooks a chinlock. That's fine with Big Show who lifts Luke up and slams him down for a break.

Show misses a Vader Bomb elbow and it's back to Bray for a chinlock of his own. Wyatt is slammed down just like Luke was and the hot tag finally brings in Diego. Everything breaks down and the Wyatts destroy Los Matadores with ease. Diego dives out to nail Harper but Sister Abigail takes him out for the pin at 8:10 shown.

Rating: D+. The stuff with Big Show in there was good enough, but at some point you have to get the tag off to a Matadore and there's no way around that. I'm glad to see Bray get a win again but he needs to get back to his over the top stuff and a big win over a top guy. He can go in the ring but that Cena feud ripped his legs off.

We look at Reigns vs. Rollins from Monday.

Reigns is ready for tonight and Sunday because the Punch is ready.

Paige vs. Nikki Bella

Non-title and AJ comes out to do commentary. Nikki shoves her down to start and nails a middle rope spinning kick to the head for two. Paige gets knocked to the floor but she knocks Nikki off the apron just as quickly. Back in and Paige kicks her in the ribs but gets caught with some dropkicks. Not that they matter as the Paige Turner is enough to pin Bella at 2:57.

Post match Paige and AJ do their usual with AJ holding the title. Nikki lays them both out and holds up the belt, despite getting pinned about a minute earlier.

Bo Dallas vs. Jack Swagger

Rematch from Raw where Jack made Dallas tap. Jack takes him into the corner to start but Bo slaps him in the face. A chase goes badly for Bo with Swagger clotheslining him hard. Dallas is sent hard into the table

but grabs a neckbreaker to take over back inside. Swagger comes right back with a suplex and Vader Bomb but Bo runs to the floor again. Another chase results in Swagger's throat being snapped across the top rope, setting up the Bodog for the pin at 2:48. Another short match in a series of them tonight.

Bo says the usual post match and says Jack will wind up being like Zeb Colter if he keeps up. Colter stole three packs of sugar and is a TERRIBLE TIPPER! Jack wouldn't want to be someone like that would he? Swagger chases him off.

Long package on Cena vs. Lesnar with clips from the brawl on Monday spliced together with the sitdown interviews from Lesnar and Heyman.

This week's sitdown interview was with Lesnar, who called himself a prize fighter. In this fight, John Cena is going to get another beating.

Henry feels good about his rally on Monday but admits he lost to a Russian in 1992. Another Russian defeated him in 1996 even though he was injured. This Sunday, he will crush Rusev.

Roman Reigns vs. Rusev

They lock up to start and fall out to the floor before heading right back inside. Reigns nails a big running elbow to the face but gets caught with a kick to his own face. Rusev puts on a quickly broken bearhug before dropping Roman with a spinwheel kick. We take a break and come back with Reigns caught in a reverse bearhug. Reigns fights up and hits a running clothesline to put both guys down.

Rusev charges into a Samoan drop and Reigns hammers away. The Apron Kick looks to set up the spear but Rollins comes out for a distraction. Rusev kicks Roman in the jaw and starts working on the back. The Accolade is countered with something like Cena's ProtoBomb but with Reigns driving Rusev down (he basically throws him into the air and clotheslines Rusev's stomach) but Rollins comes in off the top with the briefcase, accidentally hitting Rusev for the DQ at 9:27.

Rating: C-. The problem here was the same one that so many of these

matches have: we were just waiting on the run-in for the DQ because neither of these guys were going to lose this match clean. Rusev getting the win is an interesting choice but it's not like it really matters one way or another.

Reigns and Rollins brawl into the crowd and here's Henry for the brawl. The American flag comes down and Henry slams Rusev to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. Another week, another basic Smackdown. The wrestling was fine but most of it was too short to rate. It really didn't do much as far as making me want to see Night of Champions, but the show has pretty much been dead in the water for the last two weeks. This show just came and went without anything to see, which makes for an uninteresting show to sit through. It did go by really fast though which always helps.

Results

Jimmy Uso b. Stardust – Superkick

Sheamus/Dolph Ziggler b. Miz/Cesaro – Brogue Kick to Miz

Adam Rose b. Heath Slater – Party Foul

Wyatt Family b. Los Matadores/Big Show – Sister Abigail to Diego

Paige b. Nikki Bella – Paige Turner

Bo Dallas b. Jack Swagger – Bodog

Rusev b. Roman Reigns via DQ when Seth Rollins interfered

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<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Main Event – April 8, 2014: How The Mighty Have Fallen

Main Event

Date: April 8, 2014

Location: CajunDome, Lafayette, Louisiana

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Byron Saxton

This is a show I've wanted to do since I heard the main event announced at the Raw after Wrestlemania. The company was on fire at this point and they were smart enough to put a huge match on the Network to get people to watch. The main event of...well of Main Event is Shield vs. Wyatt Family III. Not bad for the C show. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap from Raw where Shield turned face to save Bryan from the Authority. Everyone in the building knew that was coming and they went nuts for it anyway.

Opening sequence.

Shield vs. Wyatt Family

Now this is how you open a show. The fireflies aren't a thing for Wyatt yet and it really does take something away from the entrance. Ambrose and Rowan get things going and Dean slaps the mask off his face. Rowan shoves him down but gets caught by a jumping back elbow to the jaw. Rollins comes in to help with a double suplex for two before hammering away on the big man. He even grabs Erick's beard to take him into the corner. Why has no one ever thought of that before?

Rollins tries a crucifix but swings around and drags Erick down into a Koji Clutch. The other Wyatts come in for a save and we have a staredown. Back from a break with Bray hitting a gutbuster on Seth for two. Rowan comes in again and steps on Seth's head before getting two off a belly to

back suplex. Off to Harper who pulls Seth out of the corner, only to have him backflip to his feet and send Luke face first into the middle buckle.

The hot tag brings in Reigns to start cleaning house. It's quickly off to Ambrose for a reverse 3D but Harper is up at two. A big boot takes Dean's head off for two more and the Wyatts take over again. Dean tries biting Rowan's finger but gets caught in a side slam for his efforts. Harper comes in and drives Ambrose back into the corner so the Family can keep hammering away.

Dean is sent to the ropes and tries to skin the cat but Rowan kicks him to the floor and we take another break. One of the commercials is for the Warrior DVD which still makes me shake my head given the news that would break about three hours later. Back with Harper Gator Rollins Ambrose but getting caught in a jawbreaker. Harper pops back up though and slams Dean down to stop a hot tag attempt.

Wyatt comes in to stay on the bad back before it's off to Rowan for a bearhug. Dean fights out and grabs a sleeper, only to have Harper make a save. Some stiff uppercuts put Ambrose on the ropes but he finally comes back with the Rebound Clothesline. Bray stops another hot tag attempt but charges into a pair of boots in the corner. Dean goes up top, only to have Wyatt load up a superplex. That's countered as well though and Dean tries a top rope ax handle but gets caught in a release Rock Bottom.

Rollins and Reigns come in for the save and everything breaks down again. Harper throws Reigns over the announcers' table as Dean counters Sister Abigail into a rollup for a very close two. Ambrose scores with a DDT and makes the hot tag to Rollins. He dropkicks both minions to the floor and hits huge flip dives to knock them both down.

Back in and Seth is backdropped to the apron where he kicks Bray in the face and hits a standing Sliced Bread #2 for a near fall on Rowan. Ambrose breaks up a Harper powerbomb attempt but Bray knocks him outside. The Superman Punch drops Bray and Rollins kicks both monsters in the head. The Apron Kick drills Harper and Rollins hits the springboard knee to Rowan's head, setting up the Dirty Deeds for the pin on Erick at 19:33.

Rating: A-. Great six man tag here as they went for the hot wrestling match instead of the war to give it a nice change of pace from the Elimination Chamber classic. These teams could have fought for years and it would have stayed awesome with the matches being this good. It's awesome to see the Shield get a win, especially when they were coming off the huge turn the night before.

Ambrose faints after the match in a Flair Flip. Renee Young comes in for an interview and Rollins says no one can stop the team when they're united. Ambrose starts coughing and says the others have to do the promo. Young asks about them saving Bryan and Ambrose says the Authority found out what happens when you test the Shield.

The Authority called them anonymous but Rollins insists they're anything but that. Reigns hits on Renee a bit and asks the crowd if he has a name. He was the guy that speared HHH on Raw and he's standing right here. Rollins talks about being prepared for war and calls the Authority the greatest injustice in WWE. They'll fire the final shot and win this war. Believe that. DANG these guys were awesome.

Adam Rose is coming. He was always destined for comedy relief and there's nothing wrong with that.

We see some of the mainstream coverage of the Streak ending.

Video on the history of Wrestlemania set to Celebrate by Kid Rock. This turns into a montage of WWE clips with maybe half of them being from Wrestlemania.

Thank You video for the fans. That's still awesome.

Jack Swagger vs. Dolph Ziggler

Zeb rants about Cesaro turning on them last night, thus confirming his thoughts about immigrants. Ziggler nails a great dropkick to start but Jack takes him down and hits a quick Vader Bomb for two. Dolph comes back with a running cross body and some right hands in the corner, only to have Swagger chop block him down. Another Vader Bomb attempt hits boots but Jack grabs the Patriot Lock. That goes nowhere and Ziggler gets two

off the Fameasser. The running DDT gets the same but Zigler tries to get a bit too fast and is thrown into the Patriot Lock for the submission at 4:07.

Rating: C-. This was fast paced while it lasted but it didn't have the time to go anywhere. I was expecting this to go on until the end of the show but I kind of like them having a third match instead. Swagger works a lot better as a face, even though he's doing a lot of the same stuff.

Clip of Rusev debuting (again) last night.

Sin Cara vs. Alexander Rusev

Kick, slam, Accolade, 47 seconds. He would lose the Alexander in a few months.

Overall Rating: B+. Man it's amazing how far WWE has fallen in the five months since Wrestlemania season. This was a hot show with a great opening match and some awesome videos that made me miss being at Wrestlemania. The six man is awesome and worth seeing, though it's not quite as good as the Elimination Chamber match. Shield really could have gone on for a long time, but I can see why they were split. Imagine what happens when one of them needs help in a few years and you hear that music hit. Really good show.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of on the History of ECW Pay Per Views at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00LWSOTGK>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Smackdown – September 12, 2014: Time For A Tag Match Playa

Smackdown

Date: September 12, 2014

Location: Mohegan Sun Arena, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Tom Phillips

We're coming off a good Raw for the first time in far too long and the main story is Reigns getting taken out to end the show. It looks like we're heading for Reigns vs. Rollins and Jericho vs. Orton, though they would likely be better off with just having a tag match instead. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the end of Raw and Reigns taking a Curb Stomp onto a chair.

Usos/Big Show/Mark Henry vs. Wyatt Family/Goldust/Stardust

This is just Harper and Rowan and not a handicap match if that isn't clear. Jimmy chops on Goldust in the corner to start before doing the same to Stardust. Jey comes in to choke on the ropes a bit and start in on the arm. Back to Jimmy to face Harper with Luke missing a clothesline and getting dropkicked down. Mark gets the tag for a splash in the corner but Luke clotheslines him down for two. Bray comes down to ringside but Big Show stands in his way as we take a break.

Back with Jimmy superkicking Harper and nailing him with an enziguri. Bray is nowhere in sight. Luke backdrops him to the apron and Jimmy slips off, injuring his own knee. Stardust likes what he sees and sends Jimmy into the announcers' table before handing it off to Goldust. A clothesline to the back of the head gets two and it's back to Harper with a dropkick for two. Rowan comes in for a knee drop to give us a complete set of heels not going after the injured limb.

Not that it matters though as Jimmy is able to Samoan drop Rowan on the bad knee. Goldust comes in and gets superkicked, allowing for the hot tag to Big Show for some house cleaning. Stardust takes the worst of it but the Dusts are actually able to suplex Big Show down. The Wyatts take Henry to the floor, allowing Jimmy to dive onto everyone. The Disaster Kick staggers Show but he comes back with the KO Punch and a Superfly Splash from Jey pins Stardust at 11:04.

Rating: C-. What was the point in having Jimmy hurt his knee if they were just going to forget about it thirty seconds later? At least have someone kick the leg a few times after it. That being said, I'd definitely prefer not to have two members of a team both having leg injuries as the injured limb is being overused as it is. The match wasn't bad but just kind of there.

We recap Heyman and Cena from Raw.

Kane praises Reigns and Rollins for their actions on Raw. Rollins says he knew he could get inside Reigns' head and promises to take him out tonight. It's Reigns/Jericho vs. Orton/Rollins later.

Bo Dallas vs. Justin Gabriel

Colter and Swagger are at ringside. After the bell, Dallas says most of the fans are destined to be failures for their entire lives, but they could be just like him if they just Believe! Dallas calls himself America's Sweetheart and asks everyone to put their hand over their heart, but Zeb interrupts. He says if Dallas is America's Sweetheart, then he's "Arianna freaking Grande. And I don't even know who that is!"

After a minute and a half of talking, Gabriel starts firing off kicks and rolls Dallas up for two. A hard whip sends Gabriel into the buckle and we hit the chinlock. Gabriel comes back with a springboard cross body and an STO but the moonsault misses, setting up the Bodog for the pin at 4:10.

Rating: D+. It's almost not fair to rate this as they only fought for about two minutes after all the talking. The match was every Bo Dallas match you've seen yet but that's fine in this case as he finally has something to do. I'm glad he didn't get the "Vince is bored with you"

treatment that so many others have suffered through as Dallas has potential to be a good pest.

Dallas runs from Swagger post match.

Paige vs. Summer Rae

Non-title. AJ is on commentary of course. Summer stomps away in the corner to start and puts on a full nelson leg lock. Paige fights out with a headbutt and some clotheslines followed by a series of knees to the ribs. A Black Widow makes Summer tap at 1:46.

AJ comes in and lays out Summer with the Paige Turner before skipping away. Paige freaks out again.

It's time for some good old fashioned arm wrestling between Rusev and Mark Henry. Before the match, Lana offers Henry a chance to get out of the match by forfeiting. She brings up Henry leaving the Olympics with an injury but Henry will have none of it. He never thought he would have the chance to represent his country again and there's the USA chant. Henry easily wins in a few seconds. Rusev wants a rematch left handed and Lana throws powder in Henry's face so Rusev can beat him down.

Jericho talks about losing the cage match on his own terms. He can live with that, but he can't live with Orton attacking him to make a statement. Jericho calls himself the Snake Shredder and the Copperhead Crusher and promises to take care of Orton. We get a hiss to cap things off.

Miz/Damien Mizdow vs. Dolph Ziggler/R-Truth

Ziggler says Truth (R-Ziggler) is his stunt double tonight and we get Truth in Dolph attire, complete with the hip swivel on the stage. JBL and Cole are nice enough to play up the joke. Mizdow vs. Ziggler to start but it's quickly off to Truth for Dolph's big elbow and two. Off to a front facelock from Ziggler before the good guys try to do a twin switch in a funny bit. A pair of hiptosses and clotheslines put Miz and Mizdow on the floor as we take a break.

Back with Ziggler crawling over to tag in Truth who is still wrestling

like Dolph. Mizdow takes a right hand for his boss, allowing Miz to kick Truth in the face. The Reality Check gets two for Miz but Truth escapes the same thing from Mizdow. Back to Miz who walks into a DDT, allowing for the hot tag to Dolph. Everything breaks down and the good guys use each others' signature moves, capped off by Truth hitting a Zig Zag on Mizdow to give Dolph the pin at 11:04.

Rating: C+. The wrestling wasn't great but this was at least a funny idea and the announcers played up the joke really well. Dolph did say that this was one night only, which is for the best as it would get old fast. For a one off joke though, it advances the story and keeps us from having Miz vs. Ziggler one on one again.

We look at the Bellas and Springer segment from Raw.

Nikki talks about how she's been the victim for years when AJ comes in and says Nikki got into the title match by being Stephanie's lap dog. Paige comes in and says she'll beat AJ one last time so they can be best friends. Nikki thinks this could be easy.

Chris Jericho/Roman Reigns vs. Seth Rollins/Randy Orton

The brawl quickly heads to the floor and Reigns wants to get his hands on Orton. Reigns gets sent face first into the announcers' table though and we take a break. Back with Orton hitting a running clothesline in the corner and putting on the chinlock. Roman fights up and slams Orton down to make the tag off to Jericho.

Chris cleans house and sends Rollins into the buckle before putting on the Walls. He has to let go to take care of Orton but comes right back with a bulldog. Orton breaks up the Lionsault though and the Authority takes over again. Randy hammers away and gets two off the powerslam. Rollins comes back in and gets backdropped to the floor, only to circle around and break up the tag to Reigns.

Jericho fights up and dropkicks Randy, allowing the hot tag to Roman. The big man cleans house and sends Rollins to the floor before tagging in Jericho for a high cross body on Orton. The former Shield members head into the crowd as Orton loads up the Elevated DDT, only to have Jericho

counter into a rollup for the pin at 12:09.

Rating: C-. This was short, energetic and set up the matches at Night of Champions. It's fine to have Jericho win here as losing to a former World Champion on a quick rollup is hardly going to crush Orton. Reigns and Rollins weren't really a factor in this but their story is already set up.

Overall Rating: C. Tonight was a by the book episode of Smackdown: advance everything but the main event, have some tag matches and recap stuff from Raw. It's just a supplement to Raw but I'll take that over a lot of boring episodes that we so often get. There's nothing to see here but it could have been far worse.

Results

Usos/Big Show/Mark Henry b. Wyatt Family/Goldust/Stardust – Superfly Splash to Stardust

Bo Dallas b. Justin Gabriel – Bodog

Paige b. Summer Rae – Black Widow

Dolph Ziggler/R-Truth b. Damien Mizdow/Miz – Ziggler pinned Mizdow after a Zig Zag from R-Truth

Chris Jericho/Randy Orton b. Seth Rollins/Randy Orton – Rollup to Orton

Smackdown – September 5, 2014: Holla Holla Holla!

Smackdown

Date: September 5, 2014

Location: Pinnacle Bank Arena, Lincoln, Nebraska

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

I really hope this show is better than Raw as I can't imagine things getting much worse. This week's episode of Raw was one of the least interesting and flat out horrible shows that I can remember in a very long time. To make things even worse, tonight we have Paige vs. Brie Bella as the story that swallowed the WWE is moving to Fridays. Let's get to it.

Here's Cena to get things going. He immediately gets a cheap pop by talking about wearing red at the University of Nebraska. In less than three weeks, we're done with lawsuits and what's best for business because he's going to fight Brock Lesnar for the WWE World Heavyweight Championship. He isn't going to come out here and just do the Queen's wave because it's what the company thinks he should do.

At Night of Champions, he's going to fight because that's what he does. The day he comes down here not wanting to be champion again is the day he walks out the door. The fans actually start a loud CENA chant (complete with shots of the crowd to show it's legitimate) for the first time in longer than I can remember. He knows this is going to be a fight but he's going to take Lesnar on and fight. Then he'll tell the Authority to line them up so he can knock them down and you can still get the WWE Network for \$9.99.

Cena is on a roll here but Kane and Rollins come down to interrupt. They accuse Cena of having a mid career crisis but John isn't going to take advise from a demon brother of a dead guy who is now the spokesman for Men's Warehouse. Kane threatens to put Cena in a match but this brings out Roman Reigns. Roman says he's going to finish his business with Randy Orton on Monday and would love to start tonight, but Orton isn't here. Therefore he can focus on Kane and Rollins, so let's get started right now.

Cena is ready to go but Kane and Rollins say not so fast. Rollins says the Authority is one step ahead of them and we've got Wyatts. This brings out Jericho, Big Show and Mark Henry. We're still not done yet though as HHH comes out, says "let me tell you something playa" (seriously) and

makes a ten man tag. "Now how about that playa?" And, complete with a leg in the air and a one armed raising the roof, "HOLLA!" AND TEDDY LONG'S MUSIC PLAYS!!! This was a very solid opening segment with Cena nailing the promo and HHH cracking me up.

Cesaro vs. Dolph Ziggler

Non-title and Sheamus is on commentary. Cesaro takes him down and grabs a quick chinlock, only to get caught by a neckbeaker. Ziggler's jumping elbow gets two but he walks into a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker to put Dolph down. A European uppercut drops Ziggler again but Cesaro goes outside to jaw with Sheamus before covering. He cranks on a cravate for a bit before a gorilla press gutbuster gets two more.

We take a break and come back with Ziggler nailing a jawbreaker to escape another cravate. Ziggler loads up the splash in the corner but dives into another uppercut for another two. Dolph spins around Cesaro's shoulders and grabs a sleeper. That goes nowhere so Ziggler counters Swiss Death with the jumping DDT for a near fall of his own. Cesaro gets back up and tries the Neutralizer but gets rolled up for the pin at 6:51 shown of 10:21.

Rating: C-. The match was the decent action you would expect from these two, but the booking continues to make my head hurt. You either job a champion or you job a guy that is getting a title shot in a few weeks. Why WWE felt the need to book this is beyond me, but the fact that they see nothing wrong with pushing the Bellas this much and jobbing Cesaro clean before he gets a title shot should tell you everything you need to know.

Cesaro pounds on Ziggler post match but Sheamus makes the save. They yell at each other until Sheamus throws the belt at Cesaro and lays him out with a Brogue Kick.

Stardust talks about needing what they have and about one of the Usos being hurt. He keeps turning around and changes his tone every time. Apparently they have a title shot at Night of Champions.

Jimmy Uso vs. Heath Slater

Jey is on a crutch. Jimmy misses a quick superkick attempt and gets caught in a neckbreaker for two. Slater stomps away and hooks a chinlock before sending Jimmy into the corner. Uso fights out and nails a Whisper in the Wind for two. He has to kick Titus down though and walks into a side kick for two. Cole: "The Gator is down!" JBL: "Call Skinner!" Back up and the superkick knocks Slater out of the air and the Superfly Splash is good for the pin at 2:59.

We look back at the Divas segment from Raw.

Stephanie announces Nikki vs. AJ vs. Paige for the title at Night of Champions.

Nikki thanks Stephanie for her announcement and says she's finally learning what it means to have a real sister. She talks about being treated horribly by her sister all her life.

Here are Lana and Rusev to respond to Mark Henry. Lana says we're in America's heartland but that's an oxymoron because America has no heart. If it had one though, it would be made in China. America used to be great but is soon to be nothing, just like Mark Henry. This brings out Mark who says he challenged Rusev, but that isn't the question. The question is whether Rusev is going to accept the challenge or hide behind the woman that looks like an escort. Lana accepts the challenge on Rusev's behalf and Henry promises to give him a red white and blue whipping.

Jerry Springer will be having an intervention with the Bellas on Raw. Oh dear.

Paige vs. Brie Bella

Non-title, AJ is on commentary and Nikki is at ringside. Brie has her own music now and it's the generic pop rock song you would expect it to be. Brie takes her to the mat to start and we're quickly in the catfight. Paige gets taken down out of a lockup but pulls Brie out to the floor. Back in and Paige crawls onto Brie as AJ makes some comments about missing her baby. Brie comes back with clotheslines and a running knee to the chest. The fans chant YES but AJ and Nikki are in a fight on the floor. Brie hits a missile dropkick as AJ beats up Nikki, sending Brie

outside for a save. She heads back in for the Rampaige and the pin at 4:27.

Rating: D+. The catfighting makes me think the Bella showdown is going to be an even bigger disaster than I thought. Brie can be passable in the ring but Nikki has never proven herself capable of having more than a bad match. This was nothing special and was more about the drama than the wrestling, which is better in a way but still bad.

Harper says Wyatt is a serpent and the rat can't run fast enough. Bray tells Jericho that he has to pay for his sins on Monday. Rowan adds in a RUN.

Bo Dallas vs. Zack Ryder

Ryder dropkicks him at the bell and nails a faceplant, only to have Bo pop up for the Bodog and the pin at 43 seconds.

Post match Bo says everyone must be living in Nebraska because of some horrible choices in their lives. If Jack Swagger can turn their lives around, so can everyone else. He's about to start his own WE THE PEOPLE when Swagger hits the ring and beats him up.

We see the Rollins/Ambrose/Reigns stuff again.

Roman Reigns/John Cena/Chris Jericho/Big Show/Mark Henry vs. Wyatt Family/Kane/Seth Rollins

We get a LOUD Y2J chant as Big Show starts with Rollins. The giant hits his loud chop in the corner and brings in Henry for a splash. Big Show loads up a gorilla press but Rollins escapes and tags in Wyatt. Bray is quickly thrown around so it's off to Rowan for the big man showdown. Show busts out a sunset flip for two followed by a hard shoulder block. He rips open Erick's coveralls for a chop before it's back to Henry for another splash.

Jericho comes in to a big pop and nails Erick with a dropkick to the side of Rowan's head. We take a break and come back with Kane dropkicking Big Show's knee out. Off to Wyatt for some stomping before Harper slaps on a chinlock. Big Show fights up but gets dropkicked down for two, with the

kickout sending Harper out to the floor. Seth comes in to work on the leg before quickly tagging in Wyatt. A DDT gets two and it's already back to Harper for a headlock.

Big Show suplexes him down and finally makes the tag off to Reigns to clean house. A Samoan drop to puts Harper down but they head to the floor where the numbers game results in Reigns being sent into the barricade. We take another break and come back with Rowan holding Reigns in the skull crusher. Reigns is sent to the floor and Rollins whips him into the barricade while talking trash. Back in for another chinlock but Reigns powers up, only to get kicked in the head.

Harper comes in again as Cena is pacing around on the floor playing cheerleader. Reigns suplexes Luke down but charges into a big boot for two. It's back to Kane who walks into a running clothesline and the hot tag brings in Jericho. A top rope shot to the head puts Kane down and the Lionsault connects, only to have Kane pop up and grab him for a chokeslam. Jericho counters with an enziguri but can't get the Walls.

Bray comes in for a save and it's quickly back to Harper as we take an almost unheard of third break. Back with Rollins working over Jericho with some right hands. Jericho backdrops Rollins to the floor but Seth dives back in to pull Jericho away from the tag. Bray headbutts him a few times and puts on another chinlock.

The running cross body gets two but Bray is down as well. Wyatt spiders up but Jericho elbows out of a Rock Bottom. A dropkick puts Bray down and we FINALLY get the tag to Cena. Everything breaks down and the parade of secondary finishers begins. With everyone else down, Cena puts Rollins in the STF but the Wyatts all come in for the DQ at 17:49 shown of 28:19.

Rating: C+. The match was decent but it felt long more than anything else. They're doing a good job of making Cena look explosive but I still think they're keeping the title on Lesnar at the PPV. It doesn't make sense to have Brock dominate that much at Summerslam and then have Cena win just because he's fighting harder. The match was good enough and was a decent enough use of half an hour.

The good guys all hit their finishers with Cena planting Rollins with an

AA to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. The show was nothing great but man alive does that one less hour make a difference. It doesn't drag things down and makes the show much easier to sit through. That and a lack of recaps really helps things along. The main event was decent enough but it took away a lot of matches that could have filled out the card. At least the ten man match was a fourth of the show so everything else wasn't left hanging. It says a lot when a totally average show is miles ahead of Raw. Granted HHH's Teddy Long stuff was hilarious.

Results

Dolph Ziggler b. Cesaro – Rollup

Jimmy Uso b. Heath Slater – Superfly Splash

Paige b. Brie Bella – Rampaige

Bo Dallas b. Zack Ryder – Bodog

John Cena/Big Show/Roman Reigns/Mark Henry/Chris Jericho b. Seth Rollins/Kane/Wyatt Family via DQ when the Wyatt Family attacked Cena at the same time

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Smackdown – August 29, 2014: Follow The Cannon Fodder

Smackdown

Date: August 29, 2014

Location: Citizens Bank Business Arena, Ontario, California

Commentators: John Bradshaw Layfield, Tom Phillips, Michael Cole

I can't believe I'm saying this but Smackdown might be the best thing I could sit through right now. To say Raw wasn't that great is an understatement and WWE really doesn't seem to be the most interesting right now. However, two hours of decent wrestling and far less nonsense might be the cure for some of their issues. Let's get to it.

We open with a clip of the eulogy from Raw, Reigns cleaning house and the match that followed.

Roman Reigns vs. Bray Wyatt

Reigns takes him into the corner to start and runs Bray over with a hard clothesline. Bray sends Reigns out to the floor and hits a big running charge to knock him off the apron. Back in and we hit the chinlock for a bit before Bray hammers on him even more. Roman comes back with right hands and the jumping clothesline but Bray elbows out of the Samoan drop. The backsplash gets two for Bray but he goes to the middle rope, allowing Roman to hit the Samoan drop for two. He loads up the apron boot but gets in a fight with the Wyatts for the DQ at 3:20.

Rating: C-. This wasn't bad for the most part and WAY less annoying than what I sat through on Raw. Bray looked like he was on equal footing for the most part and wasn't dominated during the match. It wasn't anything special but it kept both guys looking strong and set up stuff for later. That's the

best you can ask for out of a match that isn't even three and a half minutes.

Big Show and Mark Henry make the save, setting up a six man tag later on I'm sure.

Rob Van Dam vs. Seth Rollins

Rollins immediately stomps Van Dam down in the corner to start but runs into an elbow to the jaw. Rob's middle rope kick drops Seth and he flips over Rollins' back, only to walk into a dropkick. We take an early break and come back with Rollins splashing him in the corner and mocking Van Dam's pose.

Rollins puts on the chinlock for a bit before Rob fights up and kicks him in the head. A superkick sets up Rolling Thunder but Rollins gets out of the way. The Curb Stomps misses and Rob kicks him in the face again. The Five Star misses as well and Rollins nails an enziguri for two. Seth goes up top and breaks up a superplex attempt with a running buckle bomb. There's another buckle bomb and the Curb Stomp is enough to pin Van Dam at 4:40 shown of 8:10.

Rating: C. It's a nice back and forth match with both guys getting to look good. Word on the street is this was Van Dam's last match and thankfully he got to go out with a decent match. Rollins getting a decisive win is a nice touch and he looks even better before he gets to his big match with Reigns.

We look back at the Bella Twins segment from Raw and are lucky enough to see family photos to make it even more SERIOUS.

Paige vs. Emma

Non-title. Paige slaps her down to start but Emma gets in a kick to the head. She goes up top, only to get pulled down to the mat. The PT0 makes Emma tap at 58 seconds.

Post match AJ comes out with a box of chocolates for Paige. AJ says that it's because Paige is her friend and Paige said she

loved her. She demands that Paige eat one and gets her wish. Paige spits it back at AJ but AJ eats it anyway. Paige is freaked out again.

Lana and Rusev come out to do their usual.

Rusev vs. Jack Swagger

Submission match. Swagger immediately goes after the ankle but he can't suplex Rusev because of the bad ribs. With that not being an option, Swagger kicks him in the ankle and puts on the Patriot Lock, sending Rusev crawling to the ropes. They head outside with Rusev whipping Swagger into the barricade. We take a break and come back with Swagger being sent back outside but Rusev's ankle is hurting too badly to follow up. Swagger blocks a kick and puts the Patriot Lock on outside.

Rusev crawls back inside for the break so Jack kicks at the leg in the corner. The Vader Bomb connects but the ribs are hurt even worse. Now Rusev puts Swagger in a Patriot Lock until Swagger rolls through into one of his own. The ropes save Rusev again and he nails the jumping superkick. Rusev hooks the Accolade but Jack gets an arm free and grabs a rope. The hold goes back on in the middle of the ring but Jack powers to his feet. A towel comes flying in and Bo Dallas trips up Swagger to put him back in the full hold, making Swagger tap at 7:03 shown of 10:33.

Rating: C. This is an interesting one as they keep Swagger looking as strong as they can, but having him tap defeats the purpose. It continues to set up Swagger vs. Dallas, but that doesn't really do as much for me with Swagger submitting. Have him pass out again, or let it be a regular match ending in a pin but the tapping out hurts this. It does however keep Rusev strong and that's more important long term.

Dallas says he threw the towel in because Swagger hasn't learned to Believe. Swagger takes a Bodog for good measure.

Miz is on the phone with his agent and says he can be on set within the hour. Reigns already had a match so there won't be a trilogy. Someone keeps tapping him on the shoulder (Miz: "Autographs will be signed LATER!") but it's Kane, who makes Miz vs. Sheamus for tonight. Why does Kane have it in for Miz lately?

Jimmy Uso vs. Stardust

Jey is at ringside with a taped up knee, making him I believe the fourth current wrestler with a nagging injury (Swagger, Rusev, Ambrose, Jey). Again, GET SOME NEW WRITERS. Before the match, Goldust apologizes for freaking out on Monday but the Usos don't seem convinced. Jimmy hits a loud chop in the corner to start but Stardust hits the drop down uppercut to take over. He drives some shoulders into Jimmy's ribs but gets rolled up for the pin at 1:02.

The Dusts go nuts and attack after the match again.

Sheamus vs. The Miz

Pause for stunt double.

Sheamus vs. Damien Mizdow

Non-title. Miz offers a distraction to give Damien an early distraction. Some knees to the chest have Sheamus in trouble but he pops up with the running ax handles. He nails the ten forearms to the chest and pulls Mizdow back in for White Noise and the pin at 1:48. Another nothing match.

Miz gets in a cheap shot post match and runs, only to have Dolph Ziggler throw him back into the ring. Sheamus tries a Brogue Kick but hits Damien instead. Nice setup for a future tag match.

Clips of Lesnar and Heyman's pretaped interview from Raw and the Hall of Fame forum.

Wyatt Family vs. Big Show/Mark Henry/Roman Reigns

They all pair off because the bell rings with Reigns and Wyatt fighting out to the floor. We get started with Big Show and Rowan slugging it out in the ring. Big Show actually busts out a sunset flip for two before cranking on a hammerlock. Reigns comes in and drives Rowan down by the arm. It's quickly off to Henry to stay on the arm as the big guys make some fast tags.

Big Show hits the loud chop on Rowan before allowing Harper to come in for one of his own. Harper takes another in a different corner before asking Big Show to hit him again. Big Show gives him a running basement dropkick of all things, much to Cole's shock. Off to Henry who gets dropkicked down by Harper, allowing Bray to come in for a beatdown.

We take a break and come back with Henry countering a Rowan suplex to put Erick down. There's the hot tag to Big Show for some clotheslines but Rowan nails him with a clothesline to take over. Harper Gator Rolls Big Show to Wyatt's delight. Back to Bray for two off a DDT and Rowan gets the same off a splash. Erick cranks on the neck but lets Big Show up, allowing the giant to get a boot up in the corner. Harper keeps Big Show down and puts on a choke.

Big Show stands up and drops Luke down on his back, only to have Bray come in and hammer away. A huge clothesline drops Wyatt and there's the real hot tag to Reigns. Roman cleans Harper's house and hits the apron boot. There's the Superman Punch for two as Rowan makes the save. Big Show takes out Rowan with a chokeslam but Bray runs Big Show down. The World's Strongest Slam drops Bray but Harper kicks Mark in the face. Harper loads up the discus lariat but Roman nails a great looking spear for the pin at 12:17 shown of 15:17.

Rating: C. That spear really did look great and had the kind of impact that Reigns needs every time. Roman is continuing to get his strong push, but the way Bray has been treated since

Summerslam doesn't sit well with me. He's just another heel at this point, which is really annoying considering how thin WWE is at the top of the card.

They need to build someone up instead of having him be cannon fodder for the big stars or the latest SUPER STRONG TEAM THAT WE'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IN THE HISTORY OF OUR SPORT THAT IS GOING TO SPLIT UP FOR A BATTLE OF THE GIANTS IN LIKE THREE MONTHS AFTER WINNING AND LOSING THE TAG TITLES! I'll give them this though: all of these guys move amazingly well for their size.

Overall Rating: C-. This worked well enough but the short matches got on my nerves. But hey, at least we got to sit through a bunch of recaps of boring segments from Raw. The Bella segment just kills the show dead and doesn't make for entertaining television. Well at least not entertaining for the right reasons. The show was a decent enough use of two hours and I kind of like the tag match they set up with Sheamus and Miz's stuff. Not a bad show this week but nothing worth checking out.

Results

Roman Reigns b. Bray Wyatt via DQ when the Wyatt Family interfered

Seth Rollins b. Rob Van Dam – Curb Stomp

Paige b. Emma – PTO

Rusev b. Jack Swagger – Accolade

Jimmy Uso b. Stardust – Rollup

Sheamus b. Damien Mizdow – White Noise

Big Show/Mark Henry/Roman Reigns b. Wyatt Family – Spear to Harper

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Monday Night Raw – August 25, 2014: John Cena Redux

Monday Night Raw

Date: August 25, 2014

Location: Honda Center, Anaheim, California

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

We're getting away from Summerslam now and the main story is Cena vs. Lesnar III has been announced for Night of Champions. Cena is back tonight and gets to address the situation for the first time on TV after Summerslam. We also have a Hall of Fame forum with people like Hogan, Flair and HBK talking about the upcoming match. Let's get to it.

We're opening with the Hall of Fame forum so here are Flair, Hogan and Shawn to get things going. Cole recaps the Summerslam match with Lesnar vs. Cena and asks Shawn first about the rematch. Shawn thinks Cena doesn't have a chance and thinks it might be time for Cena to give it up. Hogan disagrees and thinks Cena can still go. Flair sides with Shawn and thinks Cena is the franchise, but doesn't want to see John vs. Lesnar again.

Hogan says Hustle, Loyalty and Respect is the real Cena and hopes Cena wins. Flair agrees and Shawn says that they all like Cena but no one thinks he has a chance. Hogan brings up the match at Extreme Rules and says you can never rule Cena out, but Shawn says no one can take a beating like that. Flair doesn't think Hogan believes that and here's Cena for a

rebuttal.

Cena says everyone in the WWE Universe thinks he has no chance and now a group of WWE Hall of Famers think the same thing. John talks about the respect he has for all three men in the ring with him, including saying there would be no Cena without Hulk Hogan. Cena was at Summerslam and felt every one of those suplexes. There is no way around this: Summerslam was a beating and a 100% beatdown. He addresses Shawn saying this can't happen again and Cena says he won't do it again. Instead he'll take the fight to Lesnar and is ready for Night of Champions.

The first 100 hours of Nitro is coming to the Network next week. That would be about 1995/1996 or so.

Rusev vs. Jack Swagger

Swagger takes it right to him to start and grabs an early Patriot Lock, sending Rusev out to the floor. Back in and Swagger takes Rusev down before heading outside again. Rusev goes face first into the announcer's table but he sends Swagger ribs first into the ropes back inside. We take a break and come back with Swagger fighting out of a bearhug but walking into a spinwheel kick. Swagger nails a belly to belly suplex to get a breather and follows up with a Vader Bomb. Rusev gets his foot up but gets caught in the Patriot Lock. He bites his hand to fight the pin but crawls over to the ropes.

Back to the floor with Rusev ramming him back first into the apron a few times. The Accolade is countered into the Patriot Lock again but Jack has to settle for a jackknife cover for two. The jumping kick to the ribs puts Swagger down and Rusev pounds away in the corner. Rusev shouts a lot but Swagger comes back with WE THE PEOPLE! The beating on the ropes continues and Swagger is in big trouble. The referee checks on swagger but Rusev keeps stomping. A hard standing kick to the chest drops Jack again and the referee stops it at 11:35.

Rating: C+. Well that happened. It's basically the same thing we saw at Summerslam. The match was entertaining but they can't have Rusev lose so Swagger continues to get beaten over and over. In theory we're setting up Cena vs. Rusev as the ultimate American vs. foreigner showdown but we don't need Swagger to lose over and over again to get there. It's the same issue he's had for months now: he loses over and over again despite getting close. Eventually you don't buy the close matches and they're just waiting for the ending.

After a break, Swagger is getting his ribs looked at when Bo Dallas comes in. He says Swagger let his country down again, but all he needs to do is Bo-lieve.

Cesaro vs. Rob Van Dam

The winner gets Sheamus (on commentary) for the US Title, presumably at Night of Champions. Good to see that Van Dam is fine after getting DDT on concrete on Smackdown. Rob spins around to start and superkicks Cesaro into Rolling Thunder for two. Cesaro comes back with a right hand in the corner and we hit the cravate on Rob for a bit. A kick to the face drops Cesaro and sets up the split legged moonsault for two. The springboard kick to the face looks to set up the Five Star but Cesaro rolls to the floor. Back in and Cesaro picks up Rob for the Neutralizer and the pin at 3:38. It's as abrupt as it sounds.

Rating: D+. The ending really hurt this as Cesaro just got back into the ring, kicked Rob in the ribs and Neutralized him for the title shot. Also, I have some issues with Rob beating Cesaro clean at Summerslam but then losing a match here to give Cesaro a title shot that easily. Why not have this match at Summerslam? The time and ending dragged this down a lot.

Post match Cesaro picks up the US Title and throws it back at Sheamus after a few seconds.

Network hype.

Natalya vs. Paige

Non-title again. Natalya gets a quick rollup for two but Paige nails her with a clothesline. They trade abdominal stretches before Natalya hooks a release German suplex. There's the Sharpshooter but Paige crawls over to the ropes. Paige can't hook the PT0 and Natalya tries another Sharpshooter, only to get kicked in the face. The Paige Turner is good for the pin at 2:56.

AJ comes skipping out for a distraction and Natalya nails a discus lariat. The fans don't react because that's a very heelish thing to do after she got beat. AJ gets in the ring and helps Paige up, saying she's sincere. She hugs Paige, freaking the champion out a bit. Now it's a handshake offer but AJ has to lean over to grab her hand. She even kisses Paige's hand and skips around a bit before leaving.

Kane introduces Seth Rollins to deliver Dean Ambrose's eulogy. Rollins says he was the leader of the Shield. On to Dean, fear was never a factor for him. We get a clip of the match from last week with the Curb Stomp onto the conveniently placed cinder blocks. Rollins is curious about what went through Dean's head as it was going down onto those blocks. How did Ambrose feel when he knew he was outmatched?

The blocks were there on purpose but Rollins wants to know what would have happened if Ambrose had known his place. As far as Rollins is concerned, he doesn't think we'll be seeing Ambrose again. He says he created the Shield...so here's Roman Reigns. Kane goes after him and is easily sent into the steps. Reigns goes after Rollins but Kane makes the save and bails.

We look at the Hall of Fame forum again.

Goldust and Stardust want the Tag Team Titles and get their shot tonight.

Tag Team Titles: Usos vs. Goldust/Stardust

The Usos are defending and we get some big match intros. Stardust rolls Jimmy up for two to start but Jimmy does the same to him. It's off to the arm work for a bit to give Stardust another two count. The champions are sent to the floor with the Dusts nailing big dives to take them down again. Back from a break with Jimmy fighting out of a chinlock from Stardust. Off to Goldust and both guys try cross bodies, setting up a double hot tag. Jey hammers on Stardust and knocks him out to the floor. A huge dive takes Stardust down but Jey hurts his knee and can't get back in, drawing a countout at 7:40.

Rating: C-. This was starting to get good at the end but the countout stopped that cold. That's two straight losses for the Usos against this team but they keep the titles against. That sounds like the start of a heel turn but it's not how it's coming off. Instead it's more like they're just kind of inept.

Post match Goldust says the Usos got counted out on purpose. They want to keep going and the Dusts turn evil by attacking the injured Uso. I've heard worse ideas.

Rollins is annoyed at Reigns so Kane uses the old standard handicap match.

We get a sitdown interview with Lesnar and Heyman. Brock says he came back to conquer the world and that's what he did. He gave Cena an F5 right off the bat, allowing Cena to have the chance to quit. Instead Cena kept going and took a horrible beating. Heyman calls Cena challenging Brock to a rematch a horrible decision. Brock imitates Cena's dad and talks about how he'll have the chance to be a man...and then Brock Lesnar appeared. The idea of what's coming to Cena at Night of Champions almost brings a tear to Brock's eye.

Dolph Ziggler vs. The Miz

Non-title. Miz comes out in street clothes and talks about not having to wait in line at Disneyland this morning. As for his

match tonight, he'll be stepping out for his stunt double.

Dolph Ziggler vs. Damien Mizdow

Sandow is of course dressed as Miz. An early dropkick gets two for Ziggler but Sandow, now in all black, comes back with a clothesline and dropkick to the knee. He puts on the Figure Four (on the proper leg) but Ziggler turns over pretty quickly. Back up and the Zig Zag is good for the pin at 2:25.

It's time for the third big in ring segment of the night as Lawler is hosting a Bella Twins reconciliation. We get a clip of Nikki saying Brie has cost them all their success and the big slap. Nikki comes out first in a tight black dress and moves her chair across the ring. Here's Brie as well, again in her Brie Mode shirt. Brie gets all serious and asks Nikki to forgive her because this is bigger than WWE or Total Divas. Nikki doesn't buy it and says she knows the real Brie.

She accuses Brie of holding her back and is sick of the family treating Brie better. Nikki insults Brie's hair and her save the Earth lifestyle. This brings Nikki to the troll faced husband and how sick she is of supporting a sister that never cared about her. Nikki says Brie stole all her boyfriends when they were younger and the fans are really not interested.

We FINALLY get to the point of this: Brie quit and left Nikki alone to get beaten up week after week because she cared about getting herself over more than her sister. Brie starts crying and Lawler tries to intervene so Nikki tells the old man to get out. She wishes Brie died in the womb and throws her out of the chair. The beating is on until Lawler breaks it up. Nikki slaps him off camera and the referees finally make the save.

Hall of Fame forum again.

Roman Reigns vs. Seth Rollins/Kane

Kane is knocked over the top almost immediately and Reigns goes after Seth. The monster gets back up and helps his partner to take over but Rollins is backdropped to the floor. Reigns hammers on Kane in the corner and nails the apron kick for good measure. The Superman Punch is countered but Reigns hits the spear, only to get nailed with the briefcase for the DQ at 2:40.

The beating continues post match and Kane has more cinder blocks ready at ringside. Reigns is able to fight out of it though and Superman Punches Rollins instead. Kane is sent "into" the post (clearly missing by a good six inches) and Roman picks up a cinder block. It hits the post instead of Rollins' head but the Superman Punch lays out Kane. Rollins bails and looks terrified.

Bray Wyatt thinks Cena's shell is cracked after his fight with Brock Lesnar. He'll put Cena out of his misery tonight. It's nicer on the other side.

Los Matadores vs. Heath Slater/Titus O'Neal

Before the match, Slater and Titus argue over which superhero they both are. Diego hits a quick spinning cross body for two on Slater, allowing Fernando to come in with a slingshot hilo for two more. Back up and a hurricanrana sends Slater down, setting up an armbar. Slater finally gets in a shot to the face and makes the tag off to Titus for some backbreakers. Heath reluctantly comes back in for a chinlock and a clothesline before tagging out. The makeshift team keeps hammering away until Diego grabs a crucifix for the pin on Slater out of nowhere at 4:00.

Rating: D. Another dull match here but it's kind of nice to have a match instead of a long talking segment in the ring. Slater and O'Neil are fine for a thrown together tag team, though I wouldn't mind them winning a match. Or a better name than Slater Gator. I'm also shocked that Los Matadores lasted

this long.

Hall of Fame forum x4.

Kofi Kingston vs. Bo Dallas

Kofi fires off kicks and a rollup to start. Bo comes back with a running knee to the ribs but Kofi does his mounted punches in the corner. Dallas avoids a charge in the corner and hits the Bodog for the pin at 1:40.

Bo says his usual post match but Swagger comes in and slams him.

John Cena vs. Bray Wyatt

Bray just appears in the ring instead of doing an entrance. We don't even get the lantern shot. Cena takes him right into the corner to start and nails him with a hard running clothesline. A German suplex puts Bray down again and Wyatt looks shocked. Another German suplex does the same and Bray is in trouble. John hammers on Bray in the corner and hits a hard running knee to the head as this is totally one sided. There's another German suplex but Bray elbows out of a fourth. There's a running splash in the corner but Cena takes him down and hammers away, drawing in Harper and Rowan for the DQ at 4:28.

Rating: D+. I get the idea here but I REALLY don't like them doing this to Wyatt when he's coming off a big win at Summerslam. I mean...do this to Rowan or Harper but leave Wyatt himself out of something like that. The match could have been worse and the story makes sense, but it should have been against someone who could absorb a loss like this. Del Rio would have been perfect had he not bailed.

Big Show and Mark Henry run out and I smell a six man after the break.

Big Show/Mark Henry/John Cena vs. Wyatt Family

Joined in progress after a break with Big Show dropping an elbow on Rowan. Henry comes in off the top for more big man offense but gets nailed by Harper. We hit the chinlock for a bit before it's back to Wyatt for some big right hands. Rowan slams Henry in an impressive power display but charges into a boot in the corner.

The hot tag brings in Big Show to clean house, only to have Harper dropkick him down. Rowan comes in and kicks Big Show as well before it's back to Wyatt for the backsplash and two. Another kick to the face gets two for Harper but Bray gets another tag and walks into a chokeslam. The tag brings in Cena for German suplexes all around and the STF to make Harper tap at 6:55.

Rating: D+. There were some nice moments here from Cena with the power displays, but this might as well have been Cena in a handicap match. I get the idea and I'm MUCH happier with Harper taking a fall that isn't going to hurt him as opposed to Bray, who has potential in the future. Not much to see here though as Cena getting the win was obvious.

All three Wyatts get AA's post match.

Overall Rating: C-. It's very clear that WWE cannot handle doing a three hour show every week with the talent roster they have right now. Between the CONSTANT replays and rematches, it's clear that they just don't have the depth to pull this off. The matches were mostly short too and stretching them out would have helped a lot. I'm not asking for Thesz vs. Funk here, but take those three minute matches and make them six minutes. It takes away the need for so many recaps to fill in time and gives you a better show. This wasn't the worst episode ever, but it felt like it was dragging itself to a conclusion.

Results

Rusev b. Jack Swagger via referee stoppage

Cesaro b. Rob Van Dam – Neutralizer

Paige b. Natalya – Paige Turner

Goldust/Stardust b. Usos via countout

Dolph Ziggler b. Damien Mizdow – Zig Zag

Roman Reigns b. Seth Rollins and Kane via DQ when Rollins hit Reigns with the briefcase

Los Matadores b. Heath Slater/Titus O'Neil – Crucifix to Slater

Bo Dallas b. Kofi Kingston – Bodog

John Cena b. Bray Wyatt via DQ when the Wyatt Family interfered

John Cena/Big Show/Mark Henry b. Wyatt Family – STF to Harper

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Smackdown – August 22, 2014: Fastest Show In The West

Smackdown

Date: August 22, 2014

Location: US Airways Center, Phoenix, Arizona

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Tom Phillips

We're already on the way to Night of Champions and the main story is going to be Cena vs. Lesnar III. Lesnar destroyed Cena on Sunday so now the question is how can Cena survive. Other than that we might be in for an update on Ambrose's

condition after his head was crushed against a conveniently placed pile of cinder blocks. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Summerslam. I believe this is the same one we saw on Monday.

Tom Phillips from NXT has joined the announcers' booth.

Here's Randy Orton to get things going. He says that just winning a battle doesn't mean you win the war. One match doesn't define either himself or Roman Reigns. He's been a legend killer, an apex predator and the Viper, but he's never been a loser. This just made him that much more focused, which leads to things like this happening.

We see Orton RK0ing Reigns through the announcers' table last month. Reigns will get what's coming to him at some point but first up, Orton has a match with Rob Van Dam. RVD is nothing but collateral damage. He'll be an example of what happens to anyone that crosses his path. Orton demands the fans' respect and poses to cap off a quick promo.

Jack Swagger vs. Seth Rollins

Rollins shakes Orton's hand on the way to the ring. Before the match we get a long package on Ambrose vs. Rollins from Monday night. This was actually set up on Main Event with Rollins saying Swagger has been dropping the ball. Swagger quickly takes Rollins down with a nice amateur move but Seth bails to the floor for a breather. Back in and Seth puts a bodyscissors on the bad ribs but Jack fights up with the powers of America. Rollins goes to the middle rope but dives into a belly to belly suplex.

Jack gets kicked in the ribs again and we take a break. Back with Swagger hitting a wheelbarrow suplex and getting all fired up. The Vader Bomb connects but he re-injures the bad ribs. Swagger backdrops Rollins to the apron but gets kicked in the head for his efforts. Rollins dives into a quickly

broken Patriot Lock. Both guys fall to the floor and the Patriot Lock goes on again. Seth rolls away though and Swagger accidentally posts himself. Swagger rolls back in but Rollins nails a Curb Stomp to send him back outside for the countout at 6:50 shown of 10:20.

Rating: C. The match was nothing special but the most important thing here is the addition of a new midcard guy for the main eventers to beat. Yeah Swagger has been in this spot for awhile but the new character makes him feel fresh instead of the same guy that has lost over and over again.

Post match Bo Dallas comes out to tell Swagger the usual. Dallas is willing to pick up the pieces and become the new American sweetheart.

Video on the Bellas splitting and the slap from Raw.

Miz is on the phone ordering a latte when Kane comes up. Miz: "Unless this is about my sequel for the Intercontinental Title, talk to my agent." Kane doesn't like the sequel line so he makes Miz vs. Reigns again for tonight. Miz rubs his face in a funny bit.

Rusev vs. Sin Cara

Rusev pounds him down in the corner but Cara actually gets in some shots to the bad ankle. A missile dropkick puts Rusev down but he comes back with the jumping superkick. Accolade and we're done at 1:53.

Lana talks trash post match but Mark Henry comes out to chase the evil foreigners off.

RVD is in the back with Renee Young and says Orton needs to chill out. Orton pops up from behind and nails Van Dam. He tells Renee to tell Van Dam that he'll be waiting at the ring.

Rob Van Dam vs. Randy Orton

Van Dam charges to the ring but calms down long enough for the opening bell. Orton takes over very quickly and stomps Rob down in the corner. The springboard kick to the jaw drops Orton and he gets clotheslined out to the floor. A big flip dive puts Orton down again but Van Dam misses the spinning apron kick. Randy throws him into various objects, including the steps over and over. The match is thrown out at 2:57.

Randy plants him with an Elevated DDT on the concrete and an RKO onto a chair, likely writing Van Dam off TV. That's DDT is the same move that originally put Van Dam out back in 2007.

Reigns says he knows what Orton and the Authority are capable of. He saw what Rollins did to Ambrose and promises revenge. Orton talked about methodically decimating him, right until Reigns speared him in half. If that's what Orton wants, it's fine with Reigns.

Natalya vs. Paige

Non-title. They trade smacks to the face to start with Natalya taking over via a butterfly suplex to send Paige outside. A baseball slide puts her down again but Paige nails her in the face. Natalya gets posted and Paige does the slow crawl back in the ring. We hit a bodyscissors on the Canadian but here's AJ for the traditional distraction. She takes the Divas Title and skips around the ring, allowing Natalya to grab a rollup for two. AJ leaves with the title but lays it down so Paige can take it back. She comes back in and walks into the Sharpshooter for the submission at 3:55, even though she was inches from the ropes.

Rating: D+. Well at least it wasn't the usual way of distracting the champion. I'm hoping Natalya at least gets a PPV title match of her own out of this instead of another lame triple threat. Paige vs. AJ is a feud that needs to have some more creative developments, but that's the same for every long feud anymore.

Goldust/Stardust vs. Wyatt Family

Stardust jumps over his brother to start with Harper. Luke drives him into the corner and hammers away before getting caught by the drop down uppercut. Harper rakes the eyes across the ropes and it's off to Rowan who lets Stardust make a blind tag to Goldie. Rowan slugs him down in the corner and we take a break.

Back with Harper throwing Goldust across the ring before Rowan comes in for a hard slam. A legdrop gets two and it's back to the evil corner for Goldust. There's the Gator Roll from Harper but Goldust gets to the middle rope for a hurricanrana. Harper slugs him right back down and nails a sitout powerbomb for two. Stardust comes in without a tag and the distraction lets Goldust roll up Harper at 6:04 shown of 9:34.

Rating: C-. What the heck has happened to the Wyatts? They went from the hottest team on the roster to this in less than two months. So I guess the Dusts are now the new "it" team, even though Henry/Big Show were last week. Odds are it's a fourway title match coming up because that's the go to move for most of the titles.

The Wyatts beat up the brothers post match, including Harper throwing an announcer's chair at Stardust.

We get a clip from Main Event where HHH announces Lesnar vs. Cena III at Night of Champions.

Here's the title presentation and Heyman promo from Raw to eat up a lot of time.

Roman Reigns vs. The Miz

Orton comes out to watch just after the bell. Reigns sends Miz into the corner to start and hits a Samoan drop. Miz gets in a running knee but Roman easily escapes the Skull Crushing Finale. A spear ends Miz at 2:06. Squash.

Reigns tells Orton to bring it on and the fight is on. They head outside with Orton being sent into the steps and the German announcers' table. Randy comes back with some chair shots and takes the chair inside. The RKO through the chair is countered though and Reigns nails him with the chair. A Superman Punch sends Orton to the floor to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. The wrestling wasn't the best here but the action and storytelling stuff was solid enough. This was a VERY quick two hours and that's more than you can say about the three hour Raw. They didn't let anything stay out there long enough to drag and it was a good fallout show from Summerslam. More than anything else though, we saw the Bellas ONCE. That's such a nice change of pace.

Results

Seth Rollins b. Jack Swagger via countout

Rusev b. Sin Cara – Accolade

Rob Van Dam vs. Randy Orton went to a no contest

Natalya b. Paige – Sharpshooter

Stardust/Goldust b. Wyatt Family – Rollup to Harper

Roman Reigns b. The Miz – Spear

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Smackdown – August 15, 2014:

One Heck Of A Right Hand

Smackdown

Date: August 15, 2014

Location: Key Arena, Seattle, Washington

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's the very final show before Summerslam and man alive does it feel like it's taken awhile to get here. The main story coming off of Monday is Cena standing toe to toe with Lesnar and being ready to fight on Sunday. Unfortunately tonight is likely going to be about an hour and forty five minutes of filler and a few minutes of good build. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

MizTV gets things going with the host in a red suit. He talks about how awesome it's going to be when the Hollywood icon gets to defend his title in Hollywood. Nice touch. His guest tonight is Roman Reigns to a solid ovation. Miz mentions his mom being a big Reigns fan and asks if Roman is nervous about his match on Sunday. If Reigns loses, he's going to be a guy remembered in a vest that was once on MizTV.

Miz keeps cutting him off and bragging about his movie career, so Reigns punches him out without standing up. The replays make it look even better as Reigns made perfect contact. Reigns stares Miz out of the ring and says he respects the titles Orton has won, but he's coming at Summerslam.

Dean Ambrose vs. Cesaro

Cesaro is going to be a lumberjack on Sunday. A quick knee to the ribs puts Cesaro down and Dean hammers away in the corner. Cesaro comes back with a right hand of his own and a big clothesline. Dean's cross body is caught but he slips over Cesaro's back and clotheslines him out to the floor. Dean follows him out with a plancha and hammers away again. They

head back inside for more punching as it's pretty clear we're not getting their A stuff tonight. Cesaro whips him shoulder first into the post and suplexes him on the floor as we take a break.

Back with Ambrose fighting out of a chinlock and sending him to the floor, setting up a suicide dive to take Cesaro down. A tornado DDT gets two for Dean but his arm gives out when he tries for a butterfly suplex. Another clothesline and Swiss Death get two each for Cesaro. Ambrose starts to get on his nerves so Cesaro busts out a Burning Hammer of all things for two. Naturally the announcers ignore it and keep chattering about the lumberjack match. Cole tries to get "Lunatic Fringe" over as the name for Dean's comebacks as he hits the rebound clothesline and Dirty Deeds out of nowhere for the pin at 7:45 shown of 10:15.

Rating: B-. This started slow but got WAY better after the break. I can't believe we got a Burning Hammer, but I can easily believe that Cole and JBL didn't bother to notice it. It's nice to see Ambrose get a pin over a name but I don't like that it's at Cesaro's expense. The problem though is who else could Dean beat? The midcard has been so beaten down that there's almost nowhere else to go.

Post match Rollins comes out and explains the idea of a lumberjack match before declaring himself better than Ambrose. They were never friends, they were never brothers, and Seth never cared about Ambrose one bit.

Miz is holding an ice pack to his face when he runs into Kane. Miz complains a lot so Kane makes Miz vs. Reigns tonight.

Titus O'Neil vs. Dolph Ziggler

Before the match we get a clip of Titus and Heath Slater ruining Hogan's cake after Raw went off the air this week. Dolph swivels his hips to start and sends Titus charging over the ropes. Slater yells at O'Neil to get back in, earning

Titus a dropkick to the face. Titus hammers away in the corner but charges into two boots to the face. A Stinger Splash has Titus in trouble, only to have him kick Dolph's head off for two. The advantage is short lived though as Zigler escapes a fallaway slam and hits a Zig Zag for the pin at 3:09.

Rating: D. Nice job here of making Zigler look good heading into the match on Sunday. I can't imagine they take the title off Miz this soon, even though Dolph has been ready for a push now longer than most people have careers. Titus and Slater are fine as a harmless tag team, even though I can't imagine them ever going anywhere.

Video on Jericho vs. Wyatt.

Mark Henry vs. Luke Harper

This actually has potential. Big Show is out with Henry. They circle each other to start until Luke tries his luck against Mark's power. It goes as badly as you would expect with Henry shoving him out to the floor and staring down at Harper. Back in and a big boot drops Mark for two before we hit the chinlock. Henry powers up again and loads up the World's Strongest Slam, drawing in Rowan for the DQ at 3:07.

Rating: D. This didn't have time to go anywhere but there's something interesting to another team. Granted I'm not wild on having yet another pairing of big power guys but that's life in the WWE. Big Show vs. Henry down the line doesn't do anything for me, but you can almost sense it coming.

Big Show clears the ring.

Mark Henry/Big Show vs. Wyatt Family

This is joined in progress after a break as Kane made the match on the fly. Points to WWE for doing that during a break and not wasting two minutes of TV time. Big Show chops Harper in the corner and Luke bails to the floor to avoid a

chokeslam. Show goes after him and Rowan gets in a cheap shot to take over. Erick comes in legally and drops an elbow for two before choking away on the ropes.

Harper's superkick gets two and a big reaction from the crowd. Big Show fights out of another chinlock and plants Harper with a side slam. The hot tag brings in Henry who cleans house and loads up Rowan in the World's Strongest Slam. Big Show nails Erick with the KO Punch before Henry plants him with the slam for the pin at 5:00.

Rating: C. I'm kind of in shock but this was actually pretty good. The Family can wrestle the power style very well and have the size to match up with Show and Henry but are lanky enough that they can sell the big power moves like smaller guys. I wouldn't mind seeing this again and I can't believe I'm saying that.

LONG recap of Stephanie vs. Brie. They say Stephanie hasn't had a match in ten years, even though she competed (very technically) against Vickie in the mud pit match a few months back.

AJ Lee vs. Eva Marie

Non-title again. AJ charges and sends Eva out to the floor but she's able to snap AJ's throat across the ropes. Back in and AJ snaps, even ripping Eva's extensions out. Paige comes out but takes a beating as well, but it causes AJ to get counted out at 2:07.

Paige kicks AJ in the head and nails a Paige Turner.

Jack Swagger vs. Bo Dallas

Dallas takes him into the corner to start and hammers away. That's the extent of his offense as Swagger shrugs off a spear and grabs the Patriot Lock for the submission at 53 seconds. So much for Dallas meaning anything.

Rusev and Lana come out post match (with Cole calling the Gold Star the Bronze Medal) and do their usual. Nothing to see here.

Post break we get a video of Bo saying he was crawling for the ropes and not tapping out.

Video on Lesnar vs. Cena.

Roman Reigns vs. The Miz

Non-title. Miz runs from Roman to start, earning a calm smile from the big man. Miz's hammerlock doesn't work and a left hand has about the same effect. Now it's time for a chase scene and Reigns is ready for the sneak attack as they get back in. He pulls Miz to the floor and sends him into the barricade as the beating begins. Back inside and Miz goes for the leg to take over. He wraps it around the post and hammers away on Reigns' back.

Cole and JBL debate if Miz is really an A-lister as Miz slaps on the Figure Four. It doesn't stay on long though as Miz opts to punch him in the head, only to get kicked into the corner. There's the Samoan drop followed by the apron boot, but Miz rolls away to avoid the Superman Punch. Ziggler comes out to block Miz's way, allowing Reigns to NAIL the Superman Punch on the floor. Back in and the spear gives Reigns the pin at 7:00.

Rating: C. This was fine and another former World Champion to add to Reigns' pile. I'm not wild on another active champion getting pinned but at least it's not a way to set up a title defense. Miz has a good character but he still isn't the best in ring worker. A few alterations to his offense and look could do wonders for him, including tights instead of trunks. The trunks just don't look right on him and never have.

Overall Rating: C+. I liked this one more than I thought I would as they did a nice job of setting up the pay per view on Sunday. Thankfully there was far less Brie vs. Stephanie which

has been one of the major drawbacks to Raw lately. It also helps that this show doesn't have the extra hour of filler matches to dull your brain. Good stuff here and Cesaro vs. Ambrose was a solid match.

Results

Dean Ambrose b. Cesaro – Dirty Deeds

Dolph Ziggler b. Titus O'Neil – Zig Zag

Mark Henry b. Luke Harper via DQ when Erick Rowan interfered

Mark Henry/Big Show b. Wyatt Family – World's Strongest Slam to Rowan

Eva Marie b. AJ Lee via countout

Jack Swagger b. Bo Dallas – Patriot Lock

Roman Reigns b. The Miz – Spear

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Reviewing the Review: Battleground 2014

We're a few days past Battleground now and there has been a few differing opinions on the show. Some people have said it was horrible while others say it was only kind of bad. The show was nothing more than a bridge to Summerslam but my level of interest was actually high. Let's get to it.

The pre-show matches saw Adam Rose, with Layla and Summer, beating Fandango and Cameron beating Naomi. There's nothing to

say about either of these except that Cameron was horrible in the ring. I mean like REALLY horrible.

The pay per view opened with an awesome Tag Team Title 2/3 falls match with the Usos defending against the Wyatt Family. The first two falls were there so the match could be 2/3 falls. They weren't bad but they could have been on any given Raw or Smackdown. The story of the match was that the Usos were barely able to hang in there against the monsters and could only beat them with a quick rollup.

Then the third fall happened and everything went nuts with some INSANE near falls. Stuff like this is what makes tag team wrestling so fun as the drama is incredible and leaves you wondering when it's going to end. The double splash from the Usos was a great big finisher and there was no way Harper was kicking out after it. The feud needs to be over now as they're probably not going to be able to top this, but who do the Usos fight now? Ryback/Axel? I'd love to see them against the Ascension but WWE doesn't seem to want to call them up.

I'll cover all of the Rollins and Ambrose segments at once. Rollins was in the back when Ambrose attacked him. HHH ejected Ambrose from the building and said the match wasn't happening. Later, Rollins came out and had himself declared the winner by forfeit, but Ambrose attacked Seth again because wrestling security sucks. HHH came out again and had Ambrose handcuffed, allowing Rollins to jump him again. Finally, Rollins was trying to leave but Ambrose popped out of the trunk of his car and attacked Rollins one more time but Seth got away in said car.

Obviously there was no match and the more I think about it the less I like it. It felt like a cheap way to get people to watch the show and probably pop some Network buys. That's a common wrestling practice but it doesn't mean it's something that I want to see happen all the time. The match will be fine when it happens, but you could have easily done a quick double

DQ or countout and still had the match without a conclusive ending. This felt like a cop out and that's not a good thing.

AJ Lee retained the Divas Title against Paige with a Shining Wizard. This was an odd match as they were trying to do something special but it came off sloppy. I can understand this not working better than I can most other matches as the girls don't have anyone at this level to practice on. Paige has spent weeks fighting Paige and Cameron so doing anything complicated is out the window. Here she tried to do something a few steps higher and clearly needed more practice. AJ was far from perfect though.

Orton talked to Kane and tried to form an alliance but got nowhere.

Rusev and Swagger had a watchable match that ended in a Rusev countout win. The story of course was Lana's promo before the match, saying you can't blame Vladimir Putin for "current world events", referencing the Malaysian plane crash. This caused a bunch of bad mainstream publicity for WWE, whose response was "we've been doing this story for weeks." That really doesn't make it any better, but it puts WWE in a strange place.

Rusev and Lana are going to get real heat because Putin is a real life crazy and possibly evil man who may be responsible or at least linked to the death of nearly three hundred innocent people. Whether the characters are directly referencing it or not, people in the media are going to complain. Why? Because media has a tendency to run off at the mouth and not understand the vast majority of what they're talking about and complain before they know what's going on. WWE had to know this was coming and really has no right to complain about the negative attention. Yeah a lot of the complaints are stupid, but they were coming no matter what Lana said.

Goldust and Stardust continue to talk about the Cosmic Key. This is starting to intrigue me.

Chris Jericho beat Bray Wyatt in a disjointed match. The chemistry really didn't work and neither guy seemed to be on the same page. I still haven't heard a logical reason for Jericho to win. The next night on Raw would see Jericho laid out by Bray, but Wyatt already lost a clean match. Yeah I'm sure Bray will win the blowoff match, but why didn't he win both matches? I see absolutely no reason for Jericho to win at all. He has nothing to lose and there's no need for Bray to lose to a guy in his third or so match back. The Summerslam win will help, but it's taking a few weeks to get there.

Miz won the Intercontinental Title in a battle royal. The match was nothing special, much like most battle royals. I was hoping for Bo Dallas, but Miz's Hollywood character is growing on me. The biggest surprise here was Slater dumping Cesaro which seems to have gone nowhere. It seems like Miz vs. Sheamus to unify the titles might be coming, even though that would be the stupidest thing they could do. One interesting note here: Del Rio went under the ropes before being knocked to the floor.

The main event was exactly what you would expect as the match started slow, got hot at the end saw Cena pin Kane to retain the title. Reigns looked like he was destroying everyone, though he's not ready to be the top guy. That's where WWE is in a good place, as they can build him up for several months. In theory he gets the title at Wrestlemania, but at least he's got eight months to get there.

Overall the show was a disappointment as the buildup was far better than I was expecting but the execution really failed. Only the opening and closing matches were any good with the rest of the show being worthless. This is a show that could have been eliminated and used on a longer build to Summerslam, much like Fully Loaded 1998. It wasn't the worst show ever,

but it was pretty easily the worst show of the year. That's saying a lot given that this really wasn't horrible.

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