



THE CUBED CIRCLE NEWSLETTER

We have a huge issue for you this week, including an in-depth review of the WWE Elimination Chamber pay-per view, as well as a great Raw from this week. As always your feedback is always welcomed, either via the comments section, e-mail or the many social networks available, more on that in the “contact” section of the newsletter.

WWE ELIMINATION CHAMBER 2012 REVIEW

OVERALL SHOW THOUGHTS:

Overall the show was good, but it was still on the low end when it comes to Elimination Chamber shows. The chamber matches were good, but they didn't live up to the standard of past chamber matches. I also wasn't a big fan of the structure and pacing of the show, with the WWE Championship match going on first and the Kane vs. Cena match going on last.

I wouldn't say that the show was easy to sit through, with parts of the Raw and Smackdown chamber and the Kane/Cena match dragging. The show wasn't bad and was better than the Rumble, but like the Rumble show, it didn't live up to the standards set by previous shows.

1. RAW Elimination Chamber Match for the WWE Championship CM Punk vs. Chris Jericho vs. Kofi Kingston vs. The Miz vs. R-Truth vs. Dolf Ziggler

This was the match for the WWE championship, theoretically the most important thing in the company and it went on first, I can not think of any reasonable explanation for this. There is a need for gaps between chambers, I understand, but to put the WWE championship match on first just comes across as stupid to me. Punk and Kingston started the match off, Kingston leapfrogged over the top rope and nearly killed himself, they began to exchange pinfalls and chain wrestle. Punk took a terrible looking big back body drop on the steel, the first of many. Punk catapulted Kingston into a pod and hit a big suplex on the outside. Dolf Ziggler was the next entrant, he did pull ups on the chain link and then delivered a leg drop on Punk on the steel. Kingston and Punk both went for

springboard clotheslines and collided in midair. R-Truth was the next entrant, he came out hiptossing Ziggy over the top rope onto the floor and then landed a dive over the top, another brutal spot. Truth hit the scissors kick on Ziggy, who kicked out at two, Punk hit the knee on Truth who was perched on the top turnbuckle and hit a superplex for two. Kingston went for Trouble in Paradise, but he was thrown over the top rope, Punk went to the top rope for the Savage elbow and taunted Jericho who was still in his pod, Punk hit the elbow on Truth for three. Kingston hit the Trouble in Paradise on Punk, but he was thrown over the top rope by Ziggy, Ziggy then covered Punk for two. Kingston leaped onto the chain link and hit a tornado DDT on Ziggy it looked absolutely brutal, the crowd chanted holy s***. Miz entered at around the thirteen minute mark which meant at this point they weren't even hiding the fact that they weren't keeping to the five minute allocated time. Punk was rammed head first into a pod by Miz. Ziggy then crashed against the steel floor once again, as he was thrown over the top rope by Miz. Miz pushed Kingston off the top rope to the floor and rolled him back into the ring for two. Miz went for the clothesline in the corner on Punk, but mistimed his steps or misjudged his force, so he had to hit him twice with two flimsy clotheslines. Miz went for the skull crushing finale, Punk countered, but Miz hit a DDT for two. Punk hit a scoopslam and transitioned into the anaconda vice, but Jericho's pod opened at around the 17 minute mark, which meant that there was even more match time manipulation to be had. Jericho broke up the submission, Punk and Jericho then faced off and began to trade strikes. Jericho attempted to lock in The Walls of Jericho, but Punk countered it into the GTS, Jericho was able to reverse it and hit a running bulldog and a lionsault for two. Ziggy went for a rollup on Jericho, but Jericho hit a big code breaker and eliminated Ziggy. Punk was catapulted over the top onto the steel grating by Jericho. Punk rammed Jericho into a pod over and over again, until Jericho locked himself in an empty pod. Punk forced open the pod and began to unload on Jericho, but Jericho rammed Punk between the door and wrenched on the arm of Punk. Miz hit a big tornado DDT on Kingston on the steel. Miz went for a clothesline on Kingston, but Kingston hit caught him with a boot and went to the top rope. But, Miz climbed up and set Kingston up for the superplex, Punk then came and grabbed Punk for what I thought was the usual multiman suplex/powerbomb, but he hit a powerbomb on Miz for two. Kingston went to the top pod and hit a crossbody onto Miz and Punk, in what was one of the safest spots in the match. Jericho locked in the Walls of Jericho and eliminated him just moments after his big spot. Jericho threw Kingston over the top rope and continued to beat on him after he was eliminated. He then threw Kingston out of the chamber, but Punk kicked Jericho in the head knocking him out of the chamber. He held onto the chamber door as he was kicked out, but he "knocked a camera man down" so you couldn't really see the fall that well. Doctors came out to look at Jericho, it went on for minutes. Miz attempted to take out Punk with a neckbreaker, but Punk hit a big kick on Miz, Miz kicked out at two. Punk hit his knee in the corner and bulldog for two, he went for the springboard clothesline, but Miz countered it into the skull crushing finale for two in a great near fall. Miz unloaded on Punk in the corner, Miz went head first into the post as Punk moved out of the way of the clothesline. Punk then hit the GTS on Miz to retain the title in 32:38. I think that the crowd really expected Jericho to come back, but he didn't and I guess it was the best thing for their Mania match so I was fine with it. They could have used a slightly more convincing bump, especially given the bumps that we had in the match. The match itself I

would say was a below par chamber match, with too much time shaving, parts that dragged and a anticlimactic finish.

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The showed footage of the battle royal from Smackdown, Orton getting concussed as well as Santino winning the battle royal. They cut backstage to Santino who was preparing to drink raw eggs, in a Rocky spoof. He drank the eggs and then began to gag.

We had another John Cena Mania hype video, showing Cena training with developmental talent. Tyler Black as well as Consequences Creed were there, a developmental talent was shown lifting a huge amount of weight as everyone in the gym (including Cena) marked out. Everyone in the gym put over Cena and how much of a nice guy he was and how hard he trains. Cena said that the Rock and him would see what happens when the second bell rings and he takes on Cena. Good promo.

2. WWE Diva's Championship Match

Beth Phoenix vs. Tamina Snuka

Phoenix taunted and slapped the chest of Snuka. Snuka took a bad looking bump on the outside before Phoenix began to work on the neck of Snuka. Snuka got out and hit a Samoan drop and went up to the top rope for the Superfly splash, but she was halted by Phoenix who delivered a superplex. They exchanged strikes, Tamina hit a Mongolian chop and landed chops to the chest of Phoenix. Tamina hit a splash in the corner and landed a big super kick, she went to the top and hit the Superfly splash, but Phoenix kicked out. This was supposed to get over the strength and toughness of Phoenix, but I would have liked to have seen the move built up better during the weeks leading up to the Elimination Chamber PPV. Regardless it made Phoenix look strong, after Tamina's head met the turnbuckle Phoenix hit the Glamslam for the win in 7:16. Hopefully this will set up a match with Kharma at WrestleMania, it would make sense given the lack of depth on the women's roster, plus it is probably the only women's match in the WWE that people would care to see right now. This match was good by Diva's standards and I was impressed with Tamina.

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They showed a B.A. Star commercial with David Arquette and his crew, while emo music played in the background, it has been done and said to death no comment. They showed another Santino skit, he was punching some deli meat (presumably ham) he gave it the cobra. Josh Matthews was sitting in front of the doctors who were attending to Jericho. This was a double swerve, but that isn't my issue, don't the WWE realize, know or care about the situation with Jesse Sorensen? Because this really did come across as insensitive towards the issue.

Out came Laurinaitis and Otunga, Laurinaitis said that Teddy Long should be subjected to the same scrutiny as him, out came Alberto Del Rio. The fact that they wasted this surprise on a segment like this baffled me. Del Rio said that Long was nothing but a corrupt, good for nothing, piece of trash and Laurinaitis should become GM of Raw and

Smackdown. Out came Henry, another hollow surprise, he said that Long was a bully in a funny line that didn't get a reaction. He said that Long physically assaulted him and just like the good guy that he is he was fooled by Long and wrongly suspended. Henry said that Laurinaitis and him and never seen eye to eye, but he has never seen him abuse his power and he is not a bully. Out came Christian in an absolutely stupid move, when you have such a lack of talent and depth in the Smackdown chamber why would you waste Christian here, surely his return could have made for a much bigger return at some point. Laurinaitis gave Christian a hug, Christian said that he would have been champion if it wasn't for Long, he said that Orton faked an injury and Big Show tried to break his [Christian's] neck. He said that he will still be forced to compete in this unsafe working environment, so he will join Laurinaitis, haven't we seen this before? Otunga took a group picture. I was actually baffled that the return of Christian and Del Rio were wasted on this segment, why would you waste a return for the chamber or a big moment on TV here. Well we could get a match at Mania, but even if we do, this seemed like a waste.

We had a trailer for Mania. Santino was shown running up the stairs in another Rocky spoof. Josh Matthews interviewed Big Show, he asked about his WrestleMania track record and if it was important for him to walk into WrestleMania as champion, really? Big Show said that he has had over 4000 matches, but he has a bad WrestleMania record, he said that he has to walk out as World Heavyweight Champion.

3. Smackdown Elimination Chamber Match

Daniel Bryan vs. Cody Rhodes vs. Wade Barrett vs. The Great Khali vs. Big Show vs. Santino Marella

The fact that you had two possible surprises in Christian and Del Rio to use in this match, who would have gotten big reaction and would have made the match far better, but instead they decided to put the Great Khali in, boggled my mind. The fact that Khali was in the match and Christian and Del Rio were in the other boggles my mind even further. Big Show and Barrett started off, Barrett took the Big Show down with kicks, Barrett began to work on the leg of the Big Show, but Big Show began to fire back and landed a big suplex into the ring. Big Show threw Barrett over the top rope to the outside and stood on him, Cody Rhodes entered, but Big Show remained dominant ramming Barrett into the side of the chamber and chopping Rhodes. Big Show threw Rhodes into the side of the chamber, but Rhodes clipped the injured leg of the Big Show and brought him down. Big Show began to make his comeback, but he was struck with a high low from Rhodes and Barrett, they started to work on the Big Show again, but Barrett clotheslined Rhodes over the top rope to the outside. Rhodes was rammed into the chamber by Barrett, was next to enter, however this time the clock was late. Santino unloaded on Barrett hitting head butts and shaking the ropes. He was then face to face with the Big Show, who hit chops in the corner and threw Santino across the ring, before being clipped by Rhodes again. Big Show chopped Rhodes and threw him over the top rope onto the steel along with Barrett. Show pointed at Bryan's pod as the crowd chanted for Santino, Big Show was double suplexed on the outside by Barrett and Rhodes. There were light boring chants throughout the crowd. Rhodes then hit a great moonsault on a standing Barrett, Rhodes continued to ram Santino against the chamber arm first. Khali

entered, he chopped Barrett and took out Rhodes, he hit the Punjabi Plunge on Rhodes and Barrett. He chopped Santino, but Big Show nailed Khali with a spear for the elimination, thank god they got him out early. Show stared at Bryan once again in the pod, Show managed to get his hand through the top of the pod as Bryan began to cower in absolute terror. Big Show, as Big as he is climbed through the top of the pod and began to unload on Bryan, who was trapped in the pod. Big Show continued to choke Bryan with the knee until the pod opened, Bryan ran, but he was thrown through a pod by Big Show. Bryan kept getting up, but Big Show rammed him into the corner and hit a shoulder block, he then signaled for the chokeslam. He hit the chokeslam on Bryan, but Barrett hit a big boot and kneed Show to the outside. Santino went for a pin on Barrett, but he kicked out at two, in retaliation Barrett threw Marella over the top rope down to the steel. Rhodes hit a beautiful disaster kick on Big Show from the side of the chamber, back in the ring Rhodes hit a DDT on Big Show and Barrett nailed an elbow. Rhodes covered the Big Show for the elimination in the 22nd minute. Straight after Rhodes got the elimination, Santino rolled him up and eliminated him in the 23rd minute, but Rhodes laid Santino out with Cross Rhodes after he was eliminated. Barrett covered Santino, but he kicked out, in hindsight this was a great near fall in the context of the match. In retaliation Barrett threw Santino over the top, after ramming Santino into the side of the chamber, Barrett tied Santino up in the chain link and began to kick him. Bryan went to the top, but messed up, instead he hit a crucifix on Barrett for two. Bryan attempted to lock in the LaBell lock, but Barrett countered and attempted to lock in a submission, but Bryan was able to escape and landed kicks on Barrett. Bryan was hung up on the top rope and clotheslined by Barrett, Barrett slammed Bryan against the chamber and squeezed the head and neck of Bryan in the door. Barrett went for Wasteland on Santino, Santino was able to hold on, but he was big booted to the outside. Bryan landed a big knee from the top rope on Barrett and proceeded to ram Barrett's head against the chamber, just like Barrett had done to Bryan moments earlier. Bryan went to the top rope once more, but Barrett pushed him off, Bryan went through a pod, while still perched on the top rope. Barrett went for the Wasteland from the top rope, but it was broken up by Santino. Santino went for a superplex, he was shoved off, Barrett went for an elbow, but he missed. Bryan proceeded to land a diving headbutt on Barrett, who was pinned by Santino Marella, in a pretty surprising elimination. Bryan laughed and smiled at the thought of being the last remaining man along with Santino. Bryan Irish-whipped Santino into the corner and stared at him with psychotic eyes, Bryan kicked Santino and hit a buzz saw kick, but in a great near fall that really got the crowd into the match Santino kicked out. Santino got a roll up, Bryan kicked out, Bryan went for the headbutt from the top, but Santino got out of the way and hit the cobra, everyone was on their feet jumping up and down honestly believing that Santino Marella would become the Heavyweight Champion of the World. But, Bryan kicked out at two, Bryan locked in the LaBell lock it looked like Santino was going to break it, the crowd went insane, but Bryan locked it in deeper and Santino tapped at 34:03. The last five minutes of the match were great, especially the surprisingly great segment at the end with Bryan and Santino, probably due to the ability of Bryan and the charisma of Santino. However the rest of the match really dragged, Bryan came out last, which fitted well with his gimmick, but it hampered the match. The match was good and it was the best match on the show, but for chamber standards it was weak.

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Sheamus came out after the match and confronted Bryan, Bryan attempted to fight back, but Sheamus hit the Celtic Cross (Referring to Fit Finlay's over the shoulder back to belly piledriver) which seems to be his new finisher.

Hornswoggle was shown eating cheese, Natalya walked by, he said cut the cheese, she let out flatulence, this angle sucks! Hornswoggle then said cottage cheese referring to the weight of Vicky Guerrero, sure B.A. Star. Long said that Swagger was going to have a match, Swagger responded by saying that Laurinaitis should run both shows.

They showed a great trailer for the new Rock DVD.

4. United States Championship Match

Jack Swagger vs. Justin Gabriel

I have no idea why this was on the show, it served absolutely no purpose. Granted they needed to fill time, but they filled it with this? Swagger hit a big powerbomb, he then hit a splash in the corner, Gabriel botched a kick in the corner and hit a splash for two. Gabriel hit a dive to the outside, Swagger locked in the ankle lock and tapped Gabriel out in 3:05. I do not get the point.

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We then had a new Rock Cena promo, which in principle revealed this year's WrestleMania slogan as "once in a life time" good stuff.

5. Ambulance Match

John Cena vs. Kane

I really don't think that this should have gone on last, just for tradition sake, a blow off match for a terrible feud like this, shouldn't be put over the match for the Heavyweight Championship of the World. They brawled on the outside as the crowd duel chanted, Kane was near the entrance of the ambulance, but he kicked Cena off. Cena used the backboard as a weapon, he proceeded to Irish whip Kane into the steel steps. Kane worked on Cena in the ring, they exchanged strikes up until the point where Kane hit a sidewalk slam. Kane came off the top for the chokeslam, Cena caught him, he hit the five knuckle shuffle and got Kane up for the Attitude Adjustment, but Kane was able to get off of the shoulders of Cena with an eye poke. Kane locked in the claw, Cena proceeded to "pass out". Kane dragged Cena to the outside and grabbed a conveniently placed wheel chair from under the ring, Cena began to come to, but Kane applied the claw once again. Cena began to fight back once more and fired back on Kane, while gasping for air in the most unrealistic way possible. Kane was rammed into the ambulance, Cena grabbed the wheelchair and rammed it into the stomach of Kane. Kane was put into the wheelchair and wheeled into a table, Kane was back out of the wheelchair and used as a weapon. Cena used a steel chair across the stomach and back of Kane, they proceeded to fight in the crowd, Kane was thrown over the barricade. Cena asked if he could get a spot in the

Fave Five and hit Kane over the head with a monitor. Cena rammed the steel steps against the head of Kane, Cena smiled and yelled “do you want to have some fun?” as he hit Kane with the steps once again. Cena got Kane up for the Attitude Adjustment and walked up the steps in a great feat of strength, but Kane got off of Cena’s shoulders and hit a chokeslam through the table. Kane grabbed a stretcher and Kane dragged Cena for what felt like hours, until he placed him in the back of the ambulance. Kane attempted to shut the door, but Cena kicked it open and the slammed the door shut. Cena climbed on top of the ambulance, Kane followed suit, Kane went for the chokeslam off of the top, but Cena countered and hit the Attitude Adjustment off of the top. Cena climbed down and fireman’s carried Kane into the ambulance and shut the door to win the match in 21:20. I wouldn’t say that the match exceeded my expectations, but it wasn’t as bad as you could have expected it to be. The finish was satisfactory and the rest of the match was fine for the most part, besides the wheelchair spots are didn’t have any major problems with anything. The best part of the match for me is the fact that this angle has come to an end and now we can presumably focus on Rock vs. Cena.

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BITS & PIECES

A GREAT EDITION OF RAW

This week’s Raw, apart from the mainevent which was a complete and utter train wreck, was the best Raw in months. It contained everything that you would want in terms of build for Mania, we had a very good segment between Taker and Hunter, an actual serious and a likeable Cena promo, plus Jericho vs. Punk was all but confirmed for Mania which can’t be a bad thing.

The show kicked off with a not so good segment between Cena and Eve, Cena was actually pretty good in the segment, but the same could not be said for the material or Eve’s performance. The one thing that astonished me through the whole segment wasn’t the content, or even what was playing out, rather it was the fact that the crowd was still chanting for Ryder, which proves that he could really have something.

Sheamus beat Henry clean, which is great for Sheamus, but not so good for Henry and his drawing power. R-Truth and Kofi Kingston pinned the tag team champions of Hunico and Epico, which logically should set up a championship match, but I am not sure if it will take place.

The Undertaker vs. Triple H segment was good, although Undertaker did rush some of his delivery and the crowd actually “whated” Taker which astonished me more and made me sad. It is going to be a cell match, would should make for great match quality and spectacle, but in terms of logical progression I can’t see why they didn’t go for a last man standing. The entire segment became quite magical, after the mentioning of Michaels and the convincing portion from Taker, where Taker said that Hunter wasn’t as good as Michaels. This promo will definitely be one of the promo highlights of the quarter, if not the year.

Bryan regained his victory over Marella in what was basically a squash and that can only be a good thing. Yes the Santino segment in the chamber was great, but Bryan is the champion going into Mania, so I had absolutely no qualms with this.

Then in what will probably be one of the highlights of the Rock vs. Cena feud, Cena cut a serious promo, devoid of comedy and jokes about not winning the match. Cena said that he will win the match against Rock, because Rock left and he has stayed the whole time, which admittedly has become a stale, washed out and redundant argument. But, in the context of the feud it was great, John Cena said that he would do it for the few that can call themselves professional wrestlers.

The segment will definitely leave the Cena character more likable and although they will almost certainly get a 85-95% reaction for Rock in Miami, this will probably add great significance to the program.

I don't really want to go into the mainevent, because it has been done to death, but it was a train wreck. Jericho won a battle royal featuring some midcards and some geeks, almost 50% of the workers in the match got hurt, everyone was taking irresponsible bumps left and right it was just a disaster. But, we are getting a match between Jericho and Punk, which should have a good build and it should be a great match, that coupled with Rock vs. Cena, Triple H vs. Undertaker and Daniel Bryan vs. Sheamus should make for five weeks of good to great programming.

NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

Next week we will be covering the All Together 2 show, WWE Kayfabe t-shirts, Raw and more! For more on next week's issue head over to CubedCircleWrestling.blogspot.com.

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