

YOUR GUIDE TO THE MATCHES OF WRESTLEMANIA

★ STING'S DEBUT ★



STING TRIPLE H

At Survivor Series 2014 the last soldier of the late 90's WCW/WWE Monday Night Wars surrendered. For years, Sting was the face of World Championship Wrestling and when WWE bought its competition in 2001, Sting was the biggest name **NOT** to come work for the other guys. So it's a big deal that he's finally going to wrestle in a WWE ring. Triple H is an actual, no-faking, real-life executive vice president of WWE, so you could look at their feud as WCW's major holdout finally working out his frustrations on a representative of his hated rival. In storyline, though, it's because Sting interfered in the main-event match of Survivor Series, got Triple H temporarily "fired," and added injury to insult by hitting him with his finishing move, The Scorpion Death Drop, right in front of everyone! The nerve of that face-painted man!

Between three hours of Raw on Mondays, two hours of Smackdown on Fridays, and NXT and Main Event on the World Wrestling Entertainment's online streaming service, it's definitely something of a time commitment to keep up with the storyline friendships, feuds and fallout that culminate each year in what is essentially the "Superbowl" of wrestling: Wrestlemania. If you're the type of casual wrestling fan who really just has time for the pay-per-views, then read on for a quick guide to the night's card along with some of the story background that got us here. Don't worry, we've got you covered (pun intended).

★ THE MAIN EVENT ★



ROMAN REIGNS BROCK LESNAR

Long story short: Whoever wins the Royal Rumble match in January gets a title shot against the WWE champion at Wrestlemania. This year, Roman Reigns won in a fairly unspectacular fashion, prompting boos and general vituperation from the audience that not even an appearance by Reigns' real-life cousin, incredibly popular wrestler and actor Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, could salve. So basically, there are a lot of people out there who don't like Reigns because his in-ring and microphone skills are frankly subpar and think he doesn't deserve the push corporate is giving him – he was essentially handed his title shot on a silver platter. Reacting to fan outrage, WWE has tried to put some obstacles along Reigns' path to Wrestlemania, which has helped fan perception somewhat. Lesnar is a beast of a wrestler who spent a few years competing in Ultimate Fighting Championship.

THE WINNER SHOULD WATCH OUT FOR THIS GUY ...



★ U.S. CHAMP ★



CENA RUSEV

United States Champion Rusev is undefeated by pinfall or submission and is one of the better heels (bad guys) in recent memory. He and his manager Lana, The Ravishing Russian, have been stoking jingoistic passions across the country for the last year. John Cena is a 15-time world heavyweight champion and has been the face of the company for about 10 years. He's sliding down to the midcard to make room at the top and build up fresher talent. His winning the U.S. title from the Bulgarian Brute will give this secondary strap some desperately needed gravitas.

★ LAST RIDE? ★



WYATT UNDERTAKER

The battle of the macabre. 'Taker, of course, is a legendary figure in wrestling circles for his longevity, totally owning his gimmick and his two-decade streak of never being defeated at Wrestlemania, which ended last year at the hands of Brock Lesnar. At 50, the Deadman is slower and really only competes at Wrestlemania these days, so this could be his final match. Bray Wyatt's gimmick is a cult leader who calls himself "The Eater of Worlds" and very much radiates an Undertaker vibe, so it would be fitting if 'Taker lost his last match to someone so similar and pass the torch. This will be Undertaker's first appearance in the ring since Lesnar defeated his Wrestlemania winning streak at the event last year, so Taker may be due for some redemption and win.

★ HEEL, BOY ★



ROLLINS ORTON

Orton is kind of "blah" right now and has little momentum, so Rollins is almost 100 percent of the reason to look forward to this match. Seth Rollins is the perfect, old-school heel and probably the best overall heel in WWE right now. If you saw his performance in the Royal Rumble triple threat match with Lesnar and Cena, then you know what kind of high-flying, risk taking show you might see at Mania. Rollins also has the distinction of being Mr. Money in the Bank, which means he has a one-time option to call a title match whenever he wants. Conceivably, he can compete in this match and then challenge the winner of the main event for the WWE title. Will Rollins walk out of Wrestlemania as the new WWE champ?

★ INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPIONSHIP CLUSTERF... I MEAN LADDER MATCH ★

Technically, Wade Barrett is the defending Intercontinental Champion but he's probably the least important person in this match. He's been a joke of a champ the past few weeks, jobbing to just about everyone else on the roster. And the IC title itself? Well, let's just say the legacy of "Pretty Boy" Pat Patterson, "Macho Man" Randy Savage,

Ricky "The Dragon" Steamboat and the "Rated R Superstar" Edge (among many others) isn't what it used to be. Hopefully WWE Creative can use this match as a kind of reset button on the title and allow the winner — maybe Daniel Bryan, who's been buried so much lately it's surprising he's not fighting the Undertaker — to hang onto it for

a while, rack up some clean defending victories and once again make this belt something of a stepping stone to the Big Gold rather than something to keep the midcard occupied while Roman Reigns is being forced down everyone's throat. Standard ladder match rules apply: First to climb the ladder and claim the title wins.



STARDUST



DANIEL BRYAN



DOLPH ZIGGLER



R-TRUTH



DEAN AMBROSE



WADE BARRETT



LUKE HARPER

★ DIVAS TAG TEAM ★



NIKKI BELLA BRIE BELLA

These four put on an excellent match during the final Raw before Wrestlemania. If WWE truly decides to #givedivasachance and the match goes longer than four minutes, this will be one to watch.



PAIGE

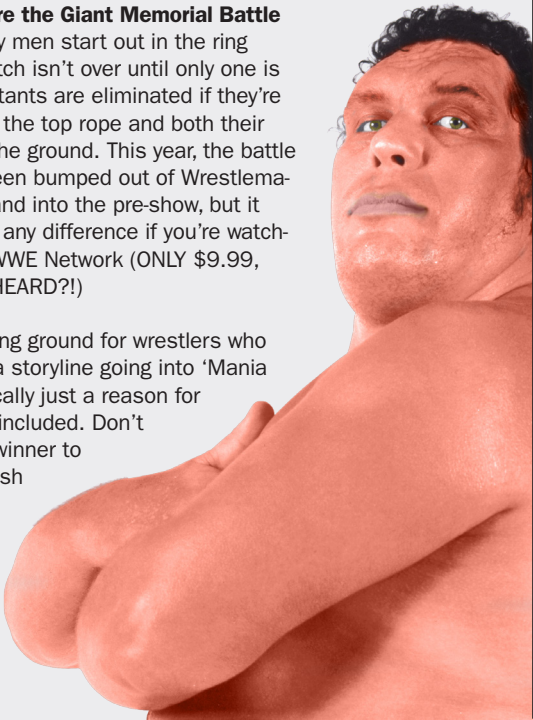


A.J. LEE

★ THE ISLAND OF MISFIT SUPERSTARS ★

Wrestlemania 31 will feature the second annual **Andre the Giant Memorial Battle Royal**. Thirty men start out in the ring and the match isn't over until only one is left. Contestants are eliminated if they're thrown over the top rope and both their feet touch the ground. This year, the battle royal has been bumped out of Wrestlemania proper and into the pre-show, but it won't make any difference if you're watching on the WWE Network (ONLY \$9.99, HAVE YOU HEARD?!)

It's a dumping ground for wrestlers who don't have a storyline going into 'Mania and is basically just a reason for them to be included. Don't expect the winner to get a big push afterward. Cesaro won last year, after all.



★ TAG TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP FATAL 4 WAY ★

Also pushed back to the pre-show. Watch it for Cesaro and Kidd — they've finally found a niche.



CESARO AND TYSON KIDD



KOFI KINGSTON AND BIG E



LOS MATADORES



THE USOS