

= Extreme Rules ( 2012 ) =

Extreme Rules ( 2012 ) was a professional wrestling pay @-@ per @-@ view ( PPV ) event produced by WWE . It took place on April 29 , 2012 at the Allstate Arena in Chicago , Illinois . It was the fourth event under the Extreme Rules chronology . Eight professional wrestling matches were scheduled on the event 's card and one pre @-@ show match was streamed on YouTube . It featured Brock Lesnar 's first WWE match since WrestleMania XX in 2004 .

The concept of Extreme Rules was that the event would feature various hardcore @-@ based matches . In the main event , John Cena defeated Brock Lesnar in an Extreme Rules match . Elsewhere on the card , CM Punk defeated Chris Jericho in a Chicago Street Fight to retain the WWE Championship , and Sheamus defeated Daniel Bryan in a 2 @-@ out @-@ of @-@ 3 falls match to retain the World Heavyweight Championship .

The pay @-@ per @-@ view received universally positive reviews , with the main event and two world championship matches drawing high praise from critics and fans . The event received 263 @,@ 000 buys , up 25 @.@ 8 % from the 209 @,@ 000 buys for the previous year 's event , whereas the next Extreme Rules event in 2013 received 231 @,@ 000 buys , a drop of 12 @.@ 1 % .

= = Storylines = =

The professional wrestling matches at Extreme Rules featured professional wrestlers performing as characters in scripted events pre @-@ determined by the hosting promotion , WWE . Storylines between the characters played out on WWE 's primary television programs , Raw and SmackDown .

On the April 2 Raw , John Cena spoke about his loss to The Rock the previous night at WrestleMania XXVIII , which was dubbed a once @-@ in @-@ a @-@ lifetime match and the most important battle of Cena 's career . Cena asked for the Rock to come out so that Cena could offer his congratulations . Instead , Brock Lesnar came into the ring , making his first WWE appearance since 2004 . Lesnar offered to shake hands with Cena but instead executed the F @-@ 5 maneuver , dropping Cena onto the mat . The next week , General Manager John Laurinaitis revealed that he signed Lesnar to bring " legitimacy " and for Lesnar to become the " new face of the WWE " ; Laurinaitis also announced that Lesnar would face Cena at Extreme Rules . On April 16 , the match was made into an Extreme Rules match .

On the January 2 Raw , Chris Jericho returned to WWE . He made it clear that he wanted to reclaim his title as the " best wrestler in the world , " which CM Punk had claimed to be since Money in the Bank 2011 . Punk defeated Jericho at WrestleMania XXVIII . In the weeks following the event , Jericho attacked Punk several times , once pouring a bottle of Jack Daniel 's over him ? a pointed insult to the straight edge Punk , and vowed to lead Punk " down the path to alcoholism just like [ his ] father . " On the April 16 Raw , Jericho announced that he would face Punk in a Chicago Street Fight at Extreme Rules for the WWE Championship . Punk had held the WWE Championship since November 2011 at Survivor Series .

At WWE 's Royal Rumble pay @-@ per @-@ view event on January 29 , Sheamus won the Royal Rumble match to earn the opportunity to face either WWE Champion CM Punk or World Heavyweight Champion Daniel Bryan for their respective titles at WrestleMania XXVIII . Sheamus elected to wrestle Bryan and defeated him in 18 seconds to win the championship . On the April 10 SmackDown , Bryan used his rematch clause as ex @-@ champion to announce a 2 @-@ out @-@ of @-@ 3 Falls match for the championship at Extreme Rules between him and Sheamus . Bryan chose the multiple @-@ falls format to prevent Sheamus from scoring another quick victory .

Another rivalry heading into Extreme Rules was between Randy Orton and Kane . In July 2011 , Kane lost in a Street Fight to Orton , and the two shook hands after the match as a sign of respect . In 2012 , a newly re @-@ masked Kane viewed the handshake as a sign of weakness , hence Kane started a feud with Orton and defeated him at WrestleMania XXVIII . Yet , on the April 6 SmackDown , Orton defeated Kane in a No Disqualification match . On the April 10 SmackDown ,

Kane attacked Orton and his father " Cowboy " Bob Orton . On the April 20 SmackDown , it was announced that Kane and Orton would face off at Extreme Rules in a Falls Count Anywhere match .

On April 23 , the fifth match for the event was announced , a rematch between Big Show and Cody Rhodes for the WWE Intercontinental Championship ; Big Show won the title from Rhodes at WrestleMania XXVIII . Later that same day , it was announced that The Miz would challenge Santino Marella for the United States Championship in a pre @-@ show match that would be streamed live on YouTube , on WWE.com , and on WWE 's official Facebook page .

Also on April 23 , Nikki Bella defeated the Divas Champion , Beth Phoenix , to capture the Divas Championship . Phoenix was slated to receive a rematch for the title during Extreme Rules , but due to suffering a sprained left ankle in storyline during the aforementioned match on April 23 , Phoenix was not medically cleared to compete at the event . During the PPV , Phoenix was replaced by Layla , who made her first WWE appearance since the 13 May 2011 SmackDown . Layla had suffered a knee injury at the previous year 's Extreme Rules event and was subsequently attacked by Kharma .

= = Event = =

= = = Pre @-@ show = = =

The Miz challenged Santino Marella in a singles match for the United States Championship in the pre @-@ show . This was Marella 's third defense of the title . Before the match , Miz complained about being in the pre @-@ show after he was in the main event a year before at Extreme Rules ( 2011 ) . The title match ended with Marella pinning Miz after hitting the Cobra . After the match , the format for the Intercontinental Championship match between champion Big Show and Cody Rhodes was determined by a wheel spin to be a Tables match .

= = = Preliminary matches = = =

The English commentators for the event were Michael Cole , Jerry Lawler and Booker T , while there were also Spanish commentators . Justin Roberts and Lilian Garcia acted as ring announcers . In the first face @-@ off on the main card of Extreme Rules , Randy Orton defeated Kane in a Falls Count Anywhere match . The match started with Kane and Orton brawling into the crowd and then backstage , where Zack Ryder made an appearance to attack Kane and allow Orton to deliver an inverted headlock backbreaker for a two count . Orton and Kane eventually headed back into the ring , where Orton was unable to beat Kane despite multiple pin attempts after repeated chair shots , an elevated DDT onto the floor and a superplex . However , Orton managed to survive a chokeslam from Kane to counter the Tombstone piledriver into an RKO on a steel chair for the pinfall victory .

Brodus Clay defeated Dolph Ziggler in the main show 's second match . Interference from Jack Swagger at ringside led to Ziggler seizing an early advantage with a leg drop bulldog and a sleeper hold . Clay then mounted a comeback ; his headbutt floored an onrushing Ziggler , and he delivered a running splash for the pinfall victory .

In the main show 's third match , Big Show 's first defense of his Intercontinental Championship ended in failure when he lost to Cody Rhodes in a Tables match . Big Show had the upper hand early on , but Rhodes managed to escape being thrown into a table propped up in the ring corner by running up and pushing off it to hit the Beautiful Disaster kick . Big Show then re @-@ established the advantage with superior size and strength , but Rhodes later dropkicked his leg as he attempted to re @-@ enter the ring from the outside . To regain his balance , Big Show stepped on and broke a table at ringside , and Rhodes was announced as the winner and new Intercontinental Champion as Big Show " went through a table " with his foot . An angry Big Show assaulted Rhodes after the match .

The fourth match on the main card was a 2 out of 3 falls match for the World Heavyweight Championship in which Sheamus defended his title against Daniel Bryan in his first title defense . Sheamus held the early advantage , putting Bryan in a Texas Cloverleaf and countering Bryan 's flying knee off the apron by catching and ramming Bryan 's back into the guardrail . Bryan then began to target Sheamus ' left arm and shoulder with a hammerlock , and he repeatedly went for the " Yes ! " Lock ( omoplata crossface ) , although Sheamus was able to shake him off . Bryan then sent Sheamus flying shoulder first into the corner ring post , and continued to ram Sheamus into the ring post shoulder first while outside the ring . Back in the ring , Bryan repeatedly kicked Sheamus ' left arm while it was in the ropes and refused to stop at the referee 's five count . The referee disqualified Bryan and awarded the first fall to Sheamus . Bryan , who intentionally disqualified himself to hurt Sheamus , immediately rushed to put the " Yes ! " Lock on Sheamus , targeting the injured arm as soon the match was restarted . Sheamus soon passed out due to the " Yes ! " Lock and the referee awarded the second fall to Bryan . WWE officials then tended to a dazed Sheamus , who insisted that he could continue the match , as Bryan started shouting " Yes ! " , prompting his fans to chant with him and his detractors in the crowd to yell " No ! " . As Bryan rushed in again at the restart , Sheamus floored him with a desperation Brogue Kick . Sheamus was slow to cover Bryan , and Bryan kicked out at two . Bryan then peppered Sheamus with kicks , and a kick to Sheamus ' head got a two count . However , Bryan missed a diving headbutt and a corner dropkick , allowing Sheamus to make a comeback with double axe handles and an Irish Curse backbreaker . Sheamus finished Bryan off with a Brogue Kick to score a pinfall and win 2 falls to 1 . With this victory , Sheamus retained his World Heavyweight Championship .

The fifth match featured Ryback facing two local competitors Aaron Relic and Jay Hatton in a 2 on 1 Handicap match . Ryback hit a powerslam on Hatton , then a clothesline and a stunner on Relic . Ryback then delivered his finisher on Hatton and pinned both opponents at the same time for the dominant victory .

The next match was the sixth on the main card , a Chicago Street Fight for the WWE Championship , in which CM Punk defended his title in his hometown against Chris Jericho in his tenth title defense . After weathering an initial flurry of offense from Punk , Jericho gained the edge and taunted Punk and his family . This earned Jericho a slap from Punk 's sister at ringside . An aggravated Jericho went after Punk 's sister , causing Punk to go into a frenzy , slamming Jericho through the top piece of the announcers ' table , which had been removed and propped up against the under structure of the table . When Jericho managed to re establish an advantage , he taunted the straight edge Punk by pouring beer all over him . Then , Punk made a comeback and performed the Randy Savage diving elbow drop , but Jericho kicked out at two . Yet Jericho managed to block Punk 's attempts at executing his finisher , the Go to Sleep , and managed to hit his own finisher on Punk , the Codebreaker . Jericho then locked Punk in his finishing submission , the Walls of Jericho . Punk made it to the ropes while in the hold , but there were no rope breaks in the Street Fight format . Punk then reached under the ring , grabbed a fire extinguisher and sprayed it in Jericho 's face to blind him and break the hold . Punk then jumped off the top rope with a diving elbow drop onto Jericho , who was at ringside on the Spanish announcers ' table . The blow sent both men through the table . That did not give Punk a pinfall victory , however , and he locked Jericho in the Anaconda Vise , his finishing submission . Jericho broke it by hitting Punk with a kendo stick . Punk then grabbed a chair and prepared to attack Jericho , but Jericho nailed Punk with a Codebreaker into the chair . Jericho made the cover but Punk kicked out at the last second . Aiming to humiliate Punk , Jericho attempted Punk 's finishing move , the Go to Sleep , but Punk countered the move and then catapulted Jericho into an exposed turnbuckle that Jericho himself had exposed earlier in the match . Punk finished by delivering the Go to Sleep to Jericho for the pin and the win . Punk then celebrated retaining his WWE Championship with his hometown crowd .

Then , a backstage segment revealed that Beth Phoenix was declared not medically fit to wrestle . As a result , Divas Champion Nikki Bella would have to make her first defense of her title against a mystery opponent . The mystery opponent was revealed as Layla , who managed to counter Bella 's Twin Magic switcheroo to score the pinfall victory with a neckbreaker .

== Main event match ==

The main event for the night saw John Cena face Brock Lesnar in an Extreme Rules match ; this was Lesnar 's first match in WWE since 2004 . The match , refereed by Charles Robinson , started with Lesnar causing Cena to bleed with a vicious elbow to his head after a double leg takedown . Lesnar continued to dominate the match , delivering punches , clotheslines and knee strikes to Cena ; the match had to be paused twice while a medic attended to Cena to clean up the blood . After the match restarted for the second time , Lesnar continued to brutalize Cena , hanging him from the turnbuckles and throwing him into the steel steps and the guardrail . Cena desperately went for his finishing move , the Attitude Adjustment , but Lesnar countered into his own finishing move , the F @-@ 5 . While throwing Cena to the mat , however , Lesnar inadvertently caused Cena to hit and knock out the referee . By the time another referee got to the ring to make the count , Cena was able to kick out at two . Lesnar then brought the metal ring steps into the ring and put a kimura lock on Cena while on the steps . Cena lifted and slammed Lesnar onto the metal steps to break the hold . After Lesnar avoided a Cena diving leg drop bulldog , Lesnar charged and leapt off the ring steps and over the top rope onto Cena , sending both men to the floor . When Lesnar tried the same move again , Cena countered by hitting Lesnar in the head with a metal chain that he brought to the match , bloodying Lesnar . An intense and re @-@ energized Cena then delivered an Attitude Adjustment to Lesnar onto the metal steps and pinned him . Following his victory , a bloodied Cena , selling an arm injury , closed the event by announcing his intentions to go home for a vacation .

== Reception ==

The event sold out the Allstate Arena with 14 @, @ 817 people in attendance . The official buy total for the 2012 Extreme Rules event was 263 @, @ 000 , up from 209 @, @ 000 for the 2011 event and 182 @, @ 000 for the 2010 event , whereas the next Extreme Rules event in 2013 received 231 @, @ 000 buys , a drop of 12 @. @ 1 % .

Extreme Rules received widespread acclaim from critics and fans . The professional wrestling section of Canoe.ca described the event as " outstanding " and " a show where all the big matches delivered in spades " , rating the entire event a 9 out of 10 , while also rating each of the three main events 9 out of 10 .

The Sun rated the entire event 9 out of 10 , saying that Extreme Rules " was about as good a show and ( sic ) one could realistically expect " . The Sun also described the Cena @-@ Lesnar main @-@ event as " a peculiar ? but effective ? hybrid of MMA and pro wrestling ... The most important thing is that this match was different to what we usually see in a WWE ring . It was intriguing and most of all compelling . "

Dave Meltzer of the Wrestling Observer Newsletter awarded out of 5 stars , 4 @. @ 5 for the Cena @-@ Lesnar match , 4 for the Bryan @-@ Sheamus match and 3 @. @ 5 stars for the Punk @-@ Jericho match .

Benjamin Tucker of Pro Wrestling Torch rated the event 8 @. @ 5 out of 10 , stating that " with a solid under @-@ card and three four @-@ star @-@ plus [ out of five stars ] matches , the show was a lot of fun to watch and had a lot of emotional highs . " Tucker described the Punk @-@ Jericho match as a " hellacious brawl that built really well and had a great emotional aspect to it " . James Caldwell , also of Pro Wrestling Torch , praised the event 's strong matches and performances and the " nice pace with downs to follow the big ups " . Caldwell described the Cena @-@ Lesnar main @-@ event as " super @-@ intense " , saying that Lesnar offered " physicality not seen in years " . Caldwell described the World Heavyweight Championship match as an " excellent , excellent bout " with Bryan " phenomenal in defeat " and Sheamus " looking strong headed into the next chapter of his title run " . As 2012 drew to a close , Pro Wrestling Torch rated Extreme Rules as the best pay @-@ per @-@ view of all the WWE and TNA pay @-@ per @-@ views produced in that year with an average staff rating of 8 @. @ 3 compared to the second best WWE PPV , WrestleMania XXVIII 's 7 @. @ 6 and TNA 's best pay @-@ per @-@ view ,

Destination X 's 7 @. @ 0 . The average rating across all of WWE 's pay @-@ per @-@ views in 2012 was 6 @. @ 1 .

The Baltimore Sun summarized the " terrific " event being engineered by " a ' perfect storm ' of a stellar Chicago crowd , excellent matches with several clever finishes , refreshing commentary and WWE rarities including violence , blood and referee assault " . The Baltimore Sun also felt that " all four rematches on this card from WrestleMania exceeded their matches one month ago " , while reserving special praise for Daniel Bryan and Dolph Ziggler , saying that although " Bryan doesn 't hold the World Heavyweight title , he proved that he is a champion in terms of someone who can be counted on to always be one half of a fantastic match in big @-@ stage situations " , while Ziggler " made Brodus look like a million dollars in his offense " .

Patrick Lennon of the Daily Star described the main @-@ event as " compelling " while perceiving a " discrepancy " between WWE 's TV @-@ PG approach and " Lesnar elbowing Cena repeatedly in the face until he bleeds profusely " .

The International Business Times rated Extreme Rules as the best pay @-@ per @-@ view of the year and listed both the Cena @-@ Lesnar and Bryan @-@ Sheamus matches in the top five WWE matches in 2012 . Cena @-@ Lesnar was described as " as brutal as anyone could have hoped for " while Bryan @-@ Sheamus " stole the show " . Bryan was also spotlighted as the " greatest in @-@ ring performer that WWE has at the moment " .

Fans also praised to the event 's match quality , but raised concerns about Cena beating Lesnar in Lesnar 's first return match .

In 2013 , WWE released a list of their " 15 best pay @-@ per @-@ views ever " , with 2012 's Extreme Rules being ranked at # 11 .

Extreme Rules was released on DVD by WWE Home Video on 29 May 2012 , featuring the DVD extra of Matt Striker interviewing CM Punk . About.com 's Eric Cohen rated the DVD 5 stars out of 5 , stating that for " a three @-@ hour pay @-@ per @-@ view event , it doesn 't get much better than this " . DVD Talk gave a " Recommended " rating to the DVD , stating that the release was " right on target with other recent WWE DVDs ( for better or worse ) , from the decent technical presentation to the lack of bonus features " .

= = Aftermath = =

Extreme Rules saw the culmination of most of its feuds , some of which started before the previous pay @-@ per @-@ view , WrestleMania XXVIII . The Cena @-@ Lesnar , Punk @-@ Jericho , Sheamus @-@ Bryan and Orton @-@ Kane feuds ended at Extreme Rules ; the only feud to continue on after the event was the Rhodes @-@ Show feud , which ended before the next pay @-@ per @-@ view , Over the Limit .

Immediately after Extreme Rules on the April 30 Raw , WWE 's Chief Operating Officer Triple H refused to give in to Brock Lesnar 's unreasonable contract demands , starting a feud between the duo and resulting in Lesnar attacking Triple H and ( in storyline ) breaking Triple H 's arm . This led to Lesnar defeating Triple H via submission at SummerSlam . At WrestleMania 29 , with Triple H 's career on the line , Triple H defeated Lesnar in a No Holds Barred match . The feud ended in the main event of 2013 's Extreme Rules , where Lesnar ( with his manager Paul Heyman 's interference ) defeated Triple H in a steel cage match .

Also on the April 30 Raw , General Manager John Laurinaitis , unhappy that his hand @-@ picked star Lesnar lost to Cena at Extreme Rules , revealed himself to be Cena 's next opponent for Over the Limit . In the storyline , WWE 's board of directors declared that as a condition of the match , if Laurinaitis lost , he would be fired , and any wrestler who interfered would be fired . At Over the Limit , Laurinaitis defeated Cena after Big Show interfered on Laurinaitis ' behalf . Show was free to interfere in the match because he had already been fired the week before Over the Limit by Laurinaitis after he mocked Laurinaitis ' speech mannerisms .

To determine the # 1 contendership for CM Punk 's WWE Championship , a Beat @-@ the @-@ Clock challenge was held on the April 30 Raw . A series of five singles matches took place where the victor with the lowest match @-@ time was deemed the overall winner ; Daniel Bryan set the

fastest time by defeating Jerry Lawler in under three minutes . Notably , during the Beat @-@ the @-@ Clock challenge , The Miz avenged his loss to Santino Marella by defeating Marella in a non @-@ title match . Marella eventually lost the United States Championship in August to Antonio Cesaro at SummerSlam .

At Over the Limit , Punk retained his title in controversial fashion when Bryan rolled back onto his shoulders as he applied the " Yes ! " Lock on Punk , Punk tapped out immediately after the referee counted a pinfall win for Punk . Punk would continue to hold the WWE Championship until January 2013 when he was defeated by The Rock at the Royal Rumble , a title reign of 434 days .

Before Extreme Rules , Alberto Del Rio defeated World Heavyweight Champion Sheamus via disqualification on the April 6 SmackDown to earn a future title shot . After Extreme Rules on the May 7 Raw , Sheamus and Randy Orton faced Del Rio and Chris Jericho , with Sheamus accidentally delivering a Brogue Kick to Orton followed by Jericho hitting the Codebreaker on Sheamus and pinning him . Orton then gave Sheamus an RKO after the match . Due to this , the World Heavyweight Championship match at Over the Limit was made a fatal @-@ four way match . Sheamus pinned Jericho at Over the Limit to retain his title . Sheamus remained as World Heavyweight Champion until October 2012 , where he lost his title to Big Show at Hell in a Cell .

Cody Rhodes ' feud with Big Show continued after Extreme Rules , ending on the May 7 Raw when Show defeated Rhodes in a title match via count @-@ out , but this meant Rhodes retained the title . At Over the Limit , Christian made his surprise return after a month 's absence from injury and won a battle royal to earn an Intercontinental Championship opportunity later that night ; Rhodes lost the match and the title to Christian .

After Nikki Bella lost the Divas Championship to Layla at Extreme Rules , both Bella Twins received a title shot in a triple threat match on the April 30 Raw . Layla won the match quickly and the Bella Twins were " fired " from WWE ( in actuality , the twins ' contracts expired ) . Layla moved on to feud with Beth Phoenix , whom she beat at Over the Limit to retain her title . Layla remained Divas Champion until September 2012 , where she lost her title to Eve at Night of Champions .

After Extreme Rules , both Brodus Clay and Ryback 's winning streaks continued through Raw and SmackDown into Over the Limit as Clay defeated the Miz while Ryback defeated Camacho . Clay 's streak ended at 24 wins on the June 25 Raw with a loss to Big Show . Ryback 's streak ended at 38 wins in October 2012 at Hell in a Cell with a loss to CM Punk . Meanwhile , Dolph Ziggler and Jack Swagger moved on to feud with Tag Team Champions Kofi Kingston and R @-@ Truth but would fail to win their title .

= = Results = =