John Cena turns heel

By Jay'Mi Vazquez
Managing Editor

The WWE Elimination Chamber held at Toronto's Rogers Centre will be remembered as one of the most shocking Premium Live Events in professional wrestling history.

The most talked-about moment of the evening was undoubtedly John Cena's transformation into a heel character.

After Cena emerged victorious in the Men's Elimination Chamber match, securing his spot to challenge Cody Rhodes for the Undisputed WWE Championship in the main event of WrestleMania 41, Cena stunned the WWE Universe by aligning himself with his longtime rival, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson.

With the brutal attack on Rhodes, this marks Cena's first heel turn in his illustrious 23-year career in the WWE.

Cena's decision to embrace his darker side adds a fresh layer to his character and sets the stage for a compelling narrative leading up to WrestleMania.

This move not only revitalizes Cena's persona but also injects unpredictability into the WWE landscape and will be talked about among fans for the rest of history.

Rapper Travis Scott also made his presence felt, being alongside The Rock and Cena in the assault on Rhodes. This felt very random, as Travis Scott does not really have much to do in terms of storyline.

However, if this crossover is executed well, Scott could potentially be a special guest referee for a future match or wrestle a match himself which would make headlines as well.

Another highlight of this PLE was the unsanctioned match between Kevin Owens and Sami Zayn, which was a masterclass in storytelling and physicality.

Both competitors showcased their resilience and animosity, delivering a match that will be remembered as one of the year's best. Owens' victory solidifies his status as a relentless competitor, while Zayn's performance underscores his tenacity.

After this match, Randy Orton made a shocking return to confront Kevin Owens, who had previously sidelined him with an injury.

Orton's reemergence adds another layer of intrigue to WWE programming, as fans anticipate the rekindling of this intense rivalry which can lead up to a great WrestleMania match up.

In the Women's Elimination Chamber match, Bianca Belair won this bout, contending for the Women's World Title at WrestleMania 41.

The following night on Monday Night Raw, Iyo Sky defeated Reah Ripley for the title, setting up the WrestleMania match to be Sky versus Belair.

However, Belair winning this match- up was not even the most interesting aspect of this match.

During the first few minutes, Jade Cargill shockingly returned and attacked her former partner, Naomi. This could be setting up the possible WrestleMania bout between Cargill and Naomi.

However, a triple threat between Belair, Naomi and Cargill is what fans really are anticipating since they used to be in a group together called "Big Three."

With WrestleMania 41 on the horizon, fans are now anticipating the result of all these storylines and possibilities playing out on the grandest stage of them all.

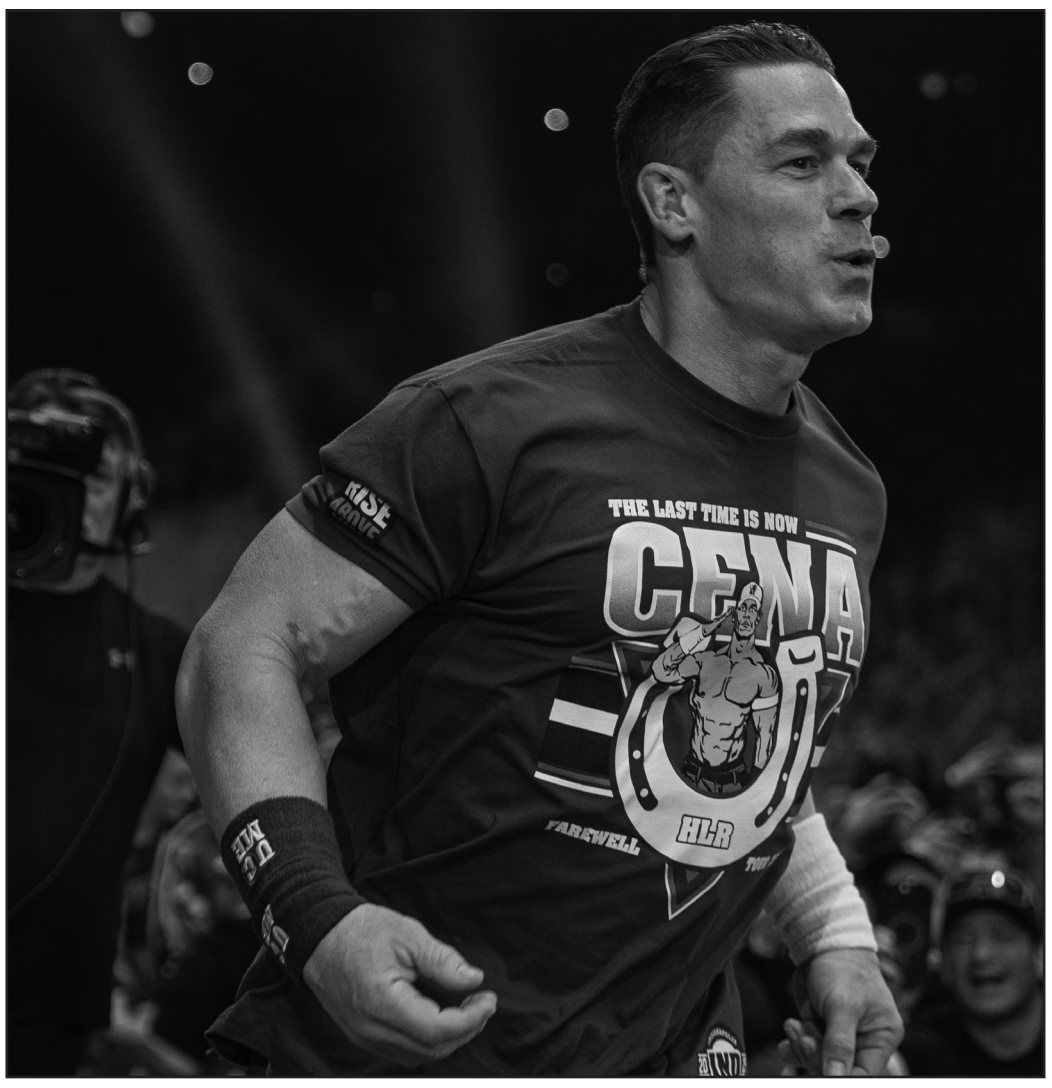


PHOTO | DIEGO SERRANO

John Cena during his recent Royal Rumble appearance before he turned heel.

The Oscars were quite frankly underwhelming

By Solé Scott
Editor-in-Chief



PHOTO | GAGE SKIDMORE

The host of the 97th Oscars ceremony, Conan O'Brien.

I don't know about other viewers, but this year's Oscars were boring and did not give me serontin in any way like previous years.

I will start with the positives of having Conan O'Brien host the 97th Oscars ceremony. He was sharp and called out anyone he deemed derserved the treatment.

Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo sounded beautiful and I enjoyed Queen Latifah's performance.

Now let's move onto the many negatives of the night.

The James Bond performance was worthless because there was no reason to celebrate due to no new film being out.

Raye sounded the best, while Doja Cat came in second place. However, Lisa was a waste as she lip-synced the entire time.

The Oscars last year were the Oscars awards to watch. Da'Vine Joy Randolph won for Best Actress in a Supporting Role, Robert Downey Jr. Won Best Actor in a Supporting Role, Emma Stone won Best Actress in a Leading Role and Cillian Murphy won for Best Actor in a Leading Role.

For example, O'Brien called out controversial trans actress Karla Sofia Gascón who has been getting crucified on social media and professionally over unearthed racist tweets.

"Little fact for you, Anora uses the f-word 479 times. That's three more than the record set by Karla Sofía Gascón's publicist. 'You tweeted what?!,'" O'Brien said.

I hate how Hollywood starts getting on trends when it is convenient or funny, such as calling out pedophilia after decades of ignoring and awarding abusers.

"It's time for Kendrick Lamar to come out and call Drake a pedophile. Don't worry, I'm lawyered up," O'Brien said.

This was not the place to make a joke of this issue when the whole town has questionable situations.

I mean hell, the academy never speaks up when a star is guilty of allegations, and it takes them an eternity to remove them from the Academy (Harvey Weinstein).

I just found this segment to be corny and just for cheap giggles.

I think what I was yearning for was some sort of scandal taking place backstage or even better, on stage. You know, so we have something to talk about for years to come.

Maybe another slap like Chris Rock received from Will Smith in 2022 or a big blunder on what movie won Best Picture like in 2018.

Sure, there was a slight controversy after the awards ceremony when Zoe Saldaña who just won Best Actress in a Lead Role answered a Mexican journalist about how the movie caused hurt to Mexicans with all the ignorant stereotypes.

"That was never our intention. We spoke from a place of love and I will stand by that. I don't share your opinion. For me, the heart of this movie was not Mexico," Saldaña said.

She completely dismissed the journalist with her smug response, yet I am not surprised because this is the same woman who thought it would be smart to play Black Jazz singer Nina Simone.

Overall, these Oscars were a snooze fest and I am hoping something more happens next year. However, we can keep O'Brien as the host or get Ricky Gervais to really make all the celebrities uncomfortable just like he did at the 2020 Golden Globes.

Plaqueboymax shakes up hip-hop streaming

By Jay'Mi Vazquez
Managing Editor

Plaqueboymax is one of the best Twitch streamers in recent years.

Plaqueboymax has carved out a unique space in the streaming world by focusing on hip-hop, using his platform to showcase new and underground talent while providing fans with an inside look at the music industry.

By offering viewers a chance to witness the creative process of artists in real-time, hosting series like "In the Booth" and "Song Wars," and engaging with his dedicated "5$tar" community, Plaqueboymax has built a reputation as a dynamic and influential figure in both the streaming and hip-hop worlds.

His emphasis on new talent keeps the content fresh and relevant, which is a key part of Plaqueboymax's recent success.

For example, the "In the Booth" series where he invites artists to record songs live on stream, provides an immersive experience for viewers, allowing them to watch the creative process unfold in real-time.

Some of the most popular guests he has had on for this series include Central Cee, DDG, BabyTron, Wiz Khalifa and many others.

Another popular feature of Plaqueboymax's streams is the "Song Wars" series.

Although this styled content is not a new thing, Plaqueboymax made this more engaging by having a wide range of artists pitted against each other to showcase a few songs each.

This series allows viewers to weigh in on which artist they believe is winning and the format often sparks debates in the chat, creating an interactive environment.

"Song Wars" adds an element of drama and excitement that keeps viewers coming back for more as there have been "beefs" started and questionable choices made by the guest judges Plaqueboymax has on stream.

High-profile guests have become a regular feature of his streams, with established musicians stopping by to participate in the "In the Booth" and "Song Wars" series. These guest appearances provide viewers with exclusive content they cannot find anywhere else, creating an added layer of excitement.

As Plaqueboymax's reputation in the hip-hop scene grows, he has attracted well-known artists to his channel, further elevating the content he offers.

A major strength of Plaqueboymax's stream is his ability to build and nurture a loyal community.

Known as the "5$tar" community, his followers feel personally connected to him and to each other. Plaqueboymax regularly engages with his fans through chat, responds to comments and creates content that reflects the interests and requests of his audience.

Another aspect which makes him so interesting to watch is the fact that he is an artist himself, with his biggest song being "Pink Dreads" with DDG.

The song "Pink Dreads" by DDG and Plaqueboymax has amassed over 19 million streams on Spotify. This transition from streamer to rapper has not been seen before, so the possibilities of his music career are also interesting to fans.

Plaqueboymax is a prime example of how a focused and unique streaming niche can lead to inevitable success.

Going into the new year, the future of Plaqueboymax's streams looks incredibly promising as he continues to carve out a unique space in the world of live streaming.

As his reputation grows within both the streaming and hip-hop communities, he is likely to attract even more guests, creating opportunities for collaborations that will elevate his content to new heights.

These are the opinions of the Southern News Editoral Staff

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