

## Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway

[Maddie Scarlett](#) reviews the 'Ant-less' version of Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway

Monday 2 April 2018



Image: ITV/Saturday Night Takeaway

If you hadn't heard the news, multi-award winning, legendary TV entertainment presenter, Ant McPartlin was arrested last month after drink driving and crashing into another car. Suffering from alcoholism and pain killer addiction since an operation a few years ago, Ant had been to rehab in 2017 and was released just before *I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here*. During the jungle game show, Ant's presenting partner Declan Donnelly held nothing back in making light of Ant's stint in hospital. Unfortunately, after the nation had shown their support towards Ant's recovery, their trust was broken in an accident that was simply inexcusable.

So, after a cancelled episode of *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway*, Dec made the decision to present by himself, the first time he had done as such in 28 years, and finish the series in style – making sure that all prize winners still had the opportunity to go to Florida for the last episode of the series. On Saturday 31st March 2018, at 7pm, I sat down and watched the live show on the edge of my seat. I wanted to review it.

It was a nervous start but the live studio audience welcomed Dec with open arms as he entered without the usual brotherly banter with Ant and instead was accompanied with a live performance from Paloma Faith. His first link was rushed and, usually steady on the stage, Dec rocked back and forth as he read the autocue. He was centre of screen (weird!) and the space around him screamed emptiness.

But, I was pleased to find, Dec settled very quickly and soon he was back to his professional self. It was clear that the team around Dec were working their socks off, even the guest celebrities somehow felt warmer towards the host, protective even.



Ant, Scarlett Moffatt, Dec and Stephen Mulhern. Image: Scarlett Moffatt

Scarlett Moffatt and Stephen Mulhern helped with some of Ant's previous duties, without directly drawing attention to the reason why, and the banter between Dec and the guest announcer Stephen Merchant flowed more often than usual – filling the gap. To be honest, it ran so smoothly in this respect that a first-time viewer perhaps wouldn't have noticed the missing half of the duo if it wasn't for the few references dotted throughout.

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The elephant in the room wasn't directly spoken about, the script tip-toed around the details and instead focused the attention on how well Dec had done/was doing. Dec slipped in a line about having to do twice as much work and as part of the 'Win the Ads' segment, he pointed towards the fact he had been unable to ignore the latest news. After watching the *Saturday Night Takeaway* clip, Stephen Merchant referenced Ant's feature and joked about Dec considering working with him in the future. Laughs aside, ultimately the seriousness couldn't be avoided.

Apart from the pre-recorded *Saturday Night Takeaway* section and opening credits, Ant had been edited out from all other clips. Where previously we were shown Ant and Dec already in Florida advertising the final episode, the producers instead chose to stick to establishing shots of the Disney park.

After airing, Twitter went mad with compliments for Dec including many from other television stars; Dermot O'Leary, Rylan Clark and Susanna Reid. From my point of view, Dec did a wonderful job. He was professional throughout and clearly embodied the opinion that 'the show must go on'. I was practically shouting at Dec through the screen, telling him he was going to smash it. And, what a show it became. It's since been described as an emotional, communal and successful hour and a half of tele.

This is what entertainment television is about, the audience. ITV provided the service that the audience craved: to come together as a nation and celebrate the simple fun of one of the best 'variety shows' of the century. If anything, my love for Declan Donnelly has grown immensely and I truly hope that his solo career, for the meantime, is full and prosperous.



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## 2 comments

Michelle Mcgoran

2 Apr '18 at 4:53 pm

unsure if the hole is in one golf bag and with the debt raising the golf range to who shot all the ones right at the direction of the bar i should send name and tell the owner to just add my bar bill up from sheffield estate lowedge for that lad and his mate and is everyone still in that area or known by the one who had a

place and did not ask for the life long cordinal or recording on courts and sheffield all the real old school please

[Report](#)

Confused of essex

2 Apr '18 at 5:42 pm

Couldn't have put it better myself.....I think.

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