

Monday Night Raw – July 4, 2011 – I Skipped Fireworks For This Mess?

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 4, 2011

Location: Thomas & Mack Center, Las Vegas, Nevada

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

We're still in Vegas as this show was taped last week. It's the 4th of July so expect a lot of Vince's patriotism to shine through. We have the Punk promo that everyone has been talking about to get through tonight which should definitely be interesting. Vince himself might be here too so let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week which is the same as the Raw ReBound from Smackdown.

There's a triple threat match for the #1 contender spot: R-Truth vs. Alberto Del Rio vs. Rey Mysterio.

Riley vs. Miz tonight...again.

Here's Cena to open the show and he's very serious it seems. He talks about how Punk has said some stuff that has ticked off WWE management. Due to those comments he's been suspended indefinitely and loses his title shot. There's a triple threat match tonight and we're just supposed to forget Punk existed. Cena thinks that sucks. The two of them have never seen eye to eye but Punk has been suspended for speaking his mind.

Cena says it's unfair that someone has had his freedom of speech taken away. He references the Bryan tie choking

incident and the removal of various signs. If the WWE Universe is silenced and Punk is silenced, what's next? The fans chant 1st Amendment and Cena agrees. If they can sweep Punk under the rug, what's next? He wants answers and he wants them from Vince himself. Vince is on the way and Cena will get his answers tonight. Solid opening.

Bella Twins vs. Eve Torres/Kelly Kelly

All of the girls looking good of course. Eve starts with we'll call that Brie. Eve dominates to start and makes fun of the Bellas. She gets tossed over the top though and might have hurt her shoulder. Off to Nikki who works over the arm. Eve finally escapes for the hot tag to Kelly who cleans house. She hits the headscissors and the Stink Face. Bulldog gets two. K2 ends this clean at 3:14.

Rating: C. The arm work here was actually pretty good and showed some rare psychology in a Divas' match. Not bad actually as the whole thing worked pretty well. Having the girls look good in their tiny outfits is always a nice perk. I know the Divas aren't going to amount to much anytime soon but it's nice to see a decent little match like this every now and then.

Video on Andy Levine of Tough Enough. It's a bunch of trainers and him talking about Silent Rage and how they need to get him to let it out more often.

Truth is on the phone with what sounds like an insurance company. Scott Sanford comes up to ask him about the triple threat. Truth says he's happy because he just saved 15% on his car insurance by switching to Geico. Oh and he'll win as Alberto comes up. "First Little Jimmy, now Senor Jimmy?" Alberto says it's about destiny and Truth isn't that impressed.

Santino Marella/Vladimir Kozlov vs. Michael McGillicutty/David Otunga

Apparently Mason Ryan is hurt. Santino and Otunga start us off with Otunga in control briefly. Santino tries the Cobra but David bails. Off to McGillicutty who doesn't do that well either. Kozlov comes in and manhandles McGillicutty a little bit. Double teaming by the champions takes Kozlov down and work their basic offense on the Russian. He blocks a double suplex and brings in Santino. Marella takes down everyone and loads up the Cobra, but McGillicutty manages to get a boot to the ribs and the McGillicutter ends this at 4:20.

Rating: D+. Pretty weak tag match here. No idea why the titles weren't on the line as they never deliver them anyway. There really aren't any teams on Raw to defend against anyway so I'd like to see them head to Smackdown once in awhile. Nothing of note here and really pretty boring.

Post match, Zack Ryder comes out and says Woo Woo Woo You Know It and that's it. Literally, he came out, said the catchphrase and smiled at the ring.

Miz is in the back and says there's a golden opportunity to get a shot at Cena but because of Alex Riley, Miz doesn't get a chance to get the shot. Tonight he's taking Riley out for good.

Evan Bourne is in the back with Sergeant Slaughter. He's going to lead the crowd in the Pledge of Allegiance. Swagger comes up and says that he should get to do it. We even get a reference to the Gulf War angle back in 91. Slaughter says everyone makes mistakes, like Swagger's parents when they didn't use birth control. A match is made for later.

Vince's plane arrived earlier.

Sgt. Slaughter vs. Jack Swagger

Slaughter is very bald. If you've seen any Sarge match where he's a legend you'll see this one. Sarge gets the jump on him a few seconds into the match and gets the Cobra Clutch but Swagger escapes and a Vader Bomb ends this at 1:18.

Post match Sarge gets put in the ankle lock and Evan Bourne makes the save. Sarge gets to do the Pledge of Allegiance.

We get a clip of the pretty cool destruction of the cage last week by Henry.

Alberto Del Rio vs. Rey Mysterio vs. R-Truth

No entrance for Del Rio. Whoever wins this is replaced by someone else in MITB. Alberto takes over to start and a kick to the back of the head gets two on Rey. Del Rio misses a charge and heads to the floor as Truth comes back in. The spinning forearm gets two. Everyone is on the floor now with Truth in control. He sends both guys into the railing and gets two on Rey back in the ring.

After beating Rey down a bit more he hits a dive to keep Del Rio down. Spinning side slam gets two on Rey as Del Rio is back in. Truth hammers on Rey some more but Del Rio gets Truth onto his shoulders as we get a modified Doomsday Device with Truth taking the majority of the blow. We take a break with everyone down.

Back with Del Rio choking Rey on the ropes and Truth nowhere to be seen. Rey tries to fight back but gets caught in a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker for two. Del Rio sets for an O'Connor Roll but Truth pops up to hit Alberto in the face. In a cool spot, Truth hits a sunset flip on Del Rio who still has his hands on Rey, meaning Rey takes a German suplex.

Backstabber to Truth for two. Axe kick gets two but Del Rio breaks it up. Alberto is sent to the floor as Rey hits the top rope splash to Truth. Alberto runs back in and throws on the cross armbreaker for the tap from Rey at 13:07.

Rating: C. Just another triple threat match for a title shot. I'm really getting tired of matches like these determining title shots rather than angles setting up matches, meaning they're set up on emotion and hatred. Still though that's the modern method of doing things so it's what we get. Anyway, this was nothing special but the sunset flip/German suplex spot was cool.

Back with a recap video of the first MITB match and cash-in.

There's a party setup in the ring and the cake says Happy Birthday Dolph. Oh ok it's because he's US Champion and this is the birthday of the US. Vickie sings Happy Birthday to Dolph. Ziggler says there will never be another him and he's awesome. Forget Punk and Cena and the WWE Title because as long as he's US Champion, it's the only title that matters.

Here's Kofi because we haven't seen them fight enough. Kofi says he should have been invited to the party. He also says that Dolph can't beat him without Vickie. His eyes are very bloodshot. Dolph says beat it so Kofi shoves him into Vickie who goes into the cake. They brawl a bit and Vickie is knocked into it again.

Video on Miz's MITB stuff last year.

The Miz vs. Alex Riley

We get a quick video about Riley during his entrance. Riley gets all aggressive and takes over but messes up an attempt to throw Miz over the top. He takes him out there anyway and keeps hammering. Miz catches him coming back in though and

takes over. Off to a cravate and then a short DDT for two. Vince is on his way to the arena. Riley gets in some punches but walks into a flapjack for two.

Miz keeps hammering away and gets a reverse DDT for two as we take a break. Back with Riley ramming Miz's head into the mat to take over. He gets all fired up and hits a spinebuster for two. Inverted DDT is countered by a northern lights suplex though and hits the corner clothesline. Miz tries the Reality Check but gets caught in a backslide for the pin at 9:10.

Rating: C+. Not bad here and it's good to see Riley keep getting pushed, but eventually they have to let Miz get a win over someone. I can't think of the last time he won something. Anyway, not bad here and probably about equal to their match at the PPV, which is a good sign for Riley.

Post match Miz snaps and beats Riley down, including Riley having his head rammed into the steps while Miz yells at him. A running boot puts Riley over the announce table.

We see the same video from the beginning of the show.

Here's Vince to talk about Punk. Vince says that Punk was suspended because he deserved it. He has a story about Punk. Punk's contract is expiring very soon and Punk wanted to have limos, first class flights, to be on DVDs etc. Punk was suspended because he deserved it. Punk is just that: a punk. Vince goes to leave and here's Cena to say not so fast my friend.

Cena says that's not enough for Punk and says Punk was using his freedom of speech. Vince is very pro-freedom of speech right? "That's why your microphone is still working pal." Cena remembers that when Vince used to walk down the aisle every week (required Vince walk impression included) and took on whatever was in front of him. Vince took down Turner but he just suspended Punk for talking about him.

Cena wonders if the grapefruits are gone. He still wants to fight Punk and if Vince doesn't want to fight, maybe he should hang it up "old man". Vince says he really suspended Punk out of fear. He's afraid that Cena can't beat him and Punk takes the title away with him wherever he goes. Cena says he wants the match and so do the people. God forbid we risk embarrassing Vince.

To Cena this is the biggest PPV of the year because of everything up against him. We get a reference to Punk riding on Cena's car at Mania 22 in Chicago. However, Vince won't let it happen because Vince didn't like what Punk said. Would Vince ever do that to Cena? Vince says we don't do this in public. "Don't be Hogan." Vince says it's his company, not Cena's, so does it really matter?

Cena says that's not what he signed up for. He gets that everyone is replaceable and that he shouldn't be afraid of losing. Cena hands the title to Vince and walks away. Vince freaks out and more or less begs Cena to come back. Vince says wait a minute and takes the belt with him up the ramp to Cena. Vince hates this but the match is back on and Punk is reinstated. However, if Punk walks out of Chicago with the title, Cena is fired. Cena's stunned look at Vince ends the show.

Overall Rating: D. The problem here is a very obvious one: this show revolved around two promos and other than them, not a single thing on this show mattered. The triple threat is proven to be completely inconsequential given the announcement at the end of the show. The lack of it being live and the crowd being burned out after four hours of Raw didn't help anything. This was a very bad episode of Raw and one of their weakest in a long time. The featured promos keep it from being a failure though.

Results

Eve Torres/Kelly Kelly b. Bella Twins – K2 to Brie Bella

David Otunga/Michael McGillicutty b. Santino Marella/Vladimir Kozlov – McGillicutter to Marella

Jack Swagger b. Sgt. Slaughter – Corner pump splash

Alberto Del Rip b. Rey Mysterio and R-Truth – Cross Armbreaker to Mysterio

Alex Riley b. Miz – Backslide