

Monday Night Raw – July 16, 2012: It Needs To Be Next Week RIGHT NOW!

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 16, 2012

Location: Mandalay Bay Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

Money in the Bank is over and Cena is Mr. MITB for Raw. Tonight is the final show before the real big match of the month in the form of the 1000th Raw. Punk is still champion so it's pretty clear that Cena vs. Punk is either going to be next week or at Summerslam, unless they throw us an unlikely curve ball. Let's get to it.

Here's Punk to open the show. He talks about how he loves Vegas because it's the same place that he dropped his first pipe bomb right up there on that stage. Last night he went through a war and kept the world title, because he's the best in the world, which is what he said a year ago. With the 1000th Raw next week, he has to flash back to the first Raw when he wouldn't even get a chance to be on TV.

Cue Big Show, who Punk faces tonight. Show says he was inches away from winning the MITB case last night but the handle broke to give it to Cena. If Show had the case, he'd cash it in right now. Punk says Show almost won last night, but he didn't quite do it. Show is a guy that breaks a lot of stuff but no one respects him.

Show laughs at the idea that people respect Punk, but that's impossible because the people don't respect themselves. If Punk left the WWE tomorrow, it would be a week before the people moved on to the next big thing. Show calls Punk a joke so Punk says Show is a well paid shell of a man that happens to be a giant. Show says that after Punk gets knocked out tonight, he might lose the title to Cena.

Tag Titles: Kofi Kingston/R-Truth vs. Prime Time Players

1. Why didn't this match happen on the PPV last night?
2. Why did they have the #1 contenders lose clean last night if they're getting the title match tonight?
3. Why should I care?

Titus and Kofi start things off and it's quickly off to Young. Kofi fights them off and brings in Truth as things speed up. The Players get sent to the floor and Kofi hits a flip dive to take them out as we take a break. Back with Young holding onto Truth before it's off to Titus. Kofi finally dives over to Truth and house is a little less dirty now. Kofi hits Trouble in Paradise on Titus and Little Jimmy gets the pin on him at about 7:15 total.

Rating: D+. There wasn't much here. Thankfully they didn't change the titles after the Players got beat last night, but at the same time, they would have been the right choice for the titles now. It's clear they're putting no thought at all into this division but who cares anyway? They're just the tag belts.

Daniel apologizes to AJ in the back when Eve pops in. Tonight it's AJ/Bryan vs. Eve/???. Eve insults AJ and leaves. Bryan has something to say to AJ after they win tonight and he kisses her on the cheek.

TOUT IT OUT!

Alberto Del Rio vs. Zach Ryder

Alberto jumps him to start and takes out the arm with a DDT. They go to the floor and it's more arm work followed by the cross armbreaker for the pin at 1:33.

Alberto goes after the arm even more until REY MYSTERIO comes back for the save. By save I mean waiting on the stage and doing his full entrance, during which Del Rio could have ripped Ryder's arm off and beaten him senseless with it. Rey gets beaten down for a second but hits a spinning headscissors and the 619 sends Del Rio running.

Heath Slater vs. various legends happened on Raw. This is really one of

the moments they feature.

Heath Slater vs. Rikishi

Kish looks decent. Thankfully he's wearing a t-shirt here which is probably a telling sign for him. Slater sings a bit, takes a superkick, the Stink Face and a Samoan Spike of all things. Rump Shaker ends this at 1:11. See, THIS is how you do nostalgia. Not by having Dusty and Piper come out every three months.

In a very cool moment, the Usos (Rikishi's sons) appear in the ring to do the Too Cool dance with their dad.

Eve Torres/??? vs. Daniel Bryan/AJ

Eve's partner is Miz. The crowd LOUDLY chants YES with Bryan in a cool moment. The guys get us going here. Bryan fires off some HARD kicks in the corner and it's quickly off to the girls. Eve chokes away in the corner but AJ snaps and fires off a bunch of Bryan like kicks. Miz distracts the referee so AJ kicks him to the floor and looks all loony. Eve rolls up AJ but there's no referee. Bryan reverses it and AJ pins Eve at 2:55.

Post match Bryan says he loves AJ and says he asked for her hand in marriage last week to become WWE Champion. Tonight though, he wants nothing. He gets on one knee and pulls out a ring. AJ says yes and they kiss.

Another Raw moment is when Rock threw the Smoking Skull belt into the river.

The wedding is next week. Dang they're packing that thing.

Jack Swagger vs. Ryback

That's quite the upgrade over Hawkins and Reks. Swagger jumps Ryback before the bell and hits the gutwrench bomb. Vader Bomb keeps Ryback down and there's the ankle lock but Ryback shrugs it off. Swagger shoulders him down but can't put the ankle lock on again. Ryback takes Jack's head off with a clothesline and a BIG spinebuster followed by a a triple

powerbomb. Swagger bails and Ryback stands tall. The bell never rang and there was never a match. Good looking beatdown though and it's good to see Ryback getting beaten down a bit before making these comebacks.

TOUT IT OUT BABY!

Here are Ziggler and Vickie. Ziggler talks about how great he is and how he'll be better than Bret, Rock and Austin. Vickie makes sure to say every name after he says it....and here's Jericho. Ziggler cuts him off before Jericho can say anything because this isn't about Jericho. Ziggler says he won the match last night while Jericho didn't. When is the last time Jericho won anything? Actually Dolph doesn't remember either, but he does remember hearing Jericho talk about how great he is.

Ziggler talks about how all Jericho does is lose, despite being given more chances than anyone else. All Jericho does is lose because he's all hype. Ziggler thinks Jericho is losing his touch, so here's a Codebreaker for him. I think that's a face turn for Jericho. Jericho never said anything and leaves.

TOUT IT OUT AGAIN!

We run down the stuff for next week: Bryan/AJ's wedding, Rock live, Brock answers HHH's challenge and DX reunites again.

Brodus Clay vs. JTG

After Brodus' entrance we're told that Christian will defend the IC Title next week due to a poll on WWE.com. JTG actually gets an entrance. Great to see Brodus moving up the card like he has since the Show match. Usual stuff here with JTG going after Brodus' still bad knee. Brodus comes back and splashes JTG for the pin at 2:30.

Vince was bald on Raw once.

CM Punk vs. Big Show

Non title here. Punk tries to move away from Show and stabs with kicks to the leg of the giant. Show gets his hands on the champ and chops him in the corner before running Punk over with a shoulder. They head to the

floor and Punk is in big trouble. He escapes the shoulders of Big Show and rams the bald head of the Show into the post. Back inside and here come the kicks. Punk blasts Show a bit but gets shoved right back down.

Punk gets up a boot but jumps into a bearhug and then a slam. With Show firing away shots at the ribs, Punk jumps on his back and hooks a sleeper. That gets broken up by a side slam and Punk is still in trouble. The Vader Bomb misses and Punk tries some clotheslines. They only do so much though as a backdrop puts the champ down. Show loads up the WMD but Punk ducks and hits a high kick. Another high kick staggers Show and a third one knocks him into the corner.

The knee hits in the corner as does a second one. Punk hits a third one but the bulldog is countered. Show charges but a corner splash hits the post. Punk hits the top rope elbow but Show shrugs him off at two. The springboard dropkick lands in the chokeslam but Punk gets his foot on the ropes at two. Show is all ticked off now and he sends Punk into the corner to pound away on the ribs. And there goes the referee for the DQ at 9:20.

Rating: B-. I was digging this one for the most part until the ending. That being said, the ending wasn't too bad as it was all to set up the post match stuff which is coming in a minute. There's only so much you can do here though as the beating from Show can only be shrugged off so many times. I was digging the match though and it worked well.

Post match the beating continues and here's Cena with the case. Show leaves but Cena wants a mic. He says that he's cashing in.....but Show cuts him off before Cena can say when. Show says Cena is cashing in right now because Cena hasn't been champion in a long time. A referee runs out as Show says Cena would be a fool to not cash in now. He says there's never going to be an easier win for Cena than right now, but Cena says no. Cena says that Punk has one week to prepare because it's next week. As for tonight, his announcement is a case shot to the head of Big Show. Punk and Cena stare it down to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This wasn't a great show but it had a lot of good parts to it. There is some potential in some of the stuff they're talking

about, but it's clear that everything will go down next week. The Tout stuff gets annoying quick but at least it's short I guess. Cena and Punk are going to clash and it's going to be awesome, so we have that to look forward to also. Things are looking up a bit and that couldn't come fast enough for this company.

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