

Smackdown – September 4, 2009: Smackdown Used To Be AWESOME

Smackdown

Date: September 4, 2009

Location: Quicken Loans Arena, Cleveland, Ohio

Commentators: Jim Ross, Todd Grisham

This is on the request list for one reason: Mysterio vs. Morrison. Mysterio had been wellnessed while still being the Intercontinental Champion, so a match was thrown together and was a match of the year candidate. Other than that I have no idea what's coming here. We're approaching Breaking Point which means Punk is about to defend the title against Undertaker. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Punk winning a loser leaves the WWE match against Jeff Hardy recently. This transitions into a pretty awesome career highlight reel for Hardy.

In a great opening, CM Punk comes out in a nearly perfect Jeff Hardy outfit to Jeff's music and nailing Jeff's mannerisms. The kids in the audience exploded when they heard Hardy's music but once they figured it out they looked furious. Punk talks about how this is the last time you'll ever see a trace of the Charismatic Enabler (great nickname) which is a good thing because the people that cheer for him are too weak to have Hardy around. Now they have a champion they can look up to and he'll never fail a test or miss a show because of an incident.

This brings him around to the Undertaker because Punk is now an icon on Smackdown as well. He's won back to back Money in the Bank ladder matches as well as sent Jeff Hardy packing. Punk says if Undertaker wants to come out here right now that's cool with the champ. There's no Taker so Punk runs down the Dead Man a bit before bashing the fans for being so easily lead to believe anything. At Breaking Point, it's one on one and Punk has no breaking point, which is why he can't lose.

Punk says he's stronger than any alcohol and straighter than any line you can shoot up your nose. He does however have one vice, which we don't get to hear because here's Matt Hardy. Matt charges at Punk and the brawl is on quickly. Neither guy really gets an advantage so they break it up.

Taker is back tonight.

Punk yells at Teddy so Teddy makes Matt vs. Punk non-title tonight.

Finlay/Great Khali vs. Mike Knox/Kane

Kane is all psycho and evil here (no really) and has a Singapore Cane match coming up with Khali at the PPV. Finlay and Knox get us started with Finlay being dropped face first on the buckle. Kane misses the clothesline and it's off to Khali, sending Kane running away. Khali puts the Vice Grip on Knox who bails to the floor. We take a break and come back with Khali clotheslining Kane down and chopping him in the corner.

Back to Finlay vs. Knox with Finlay hitting the running earthquake drop for two. Apparently Finlay is afraid of Knox for some reason. Finlay is sent shoulder first into the post and it's off to Kane to work over the arm. Knox works on an armbar followed by a crossbody of all things for two. Back to Kane who gets low bridged by Finlay. Khali has to save his brother/manager Runjin Singh and in the distraction, Finlay hits Knox with the shillelagh for the pin.

Rating: D+. This didn't really work and was longer than it needed to be. Knox vs. Finlay was a feud but it was barely explained here. At least with Kane he's naturally evil and therefore it's easy to plug him into a story. Other than that there wasn't much here and the match wasn't that interesting as a result.

Vince comes in to see Teddy and it's a plug for the Rise and Fall of WCW DVD. Vince talks about the title match between Punk and Taker and his jacket a bit. Not sure what the point of this was but that's the case with most Vince segments.

Eve and Maria are in the back. Eve wants to beat up Natalya and Maria is overly perky. Michelle McCool comes in on crutches and makes fun of them,

saying that Ziggler is going to dump Maria. Melina comes in and it's a big argument that goes nowhere.

Intercontinental Title: John Morrison vs. Rey Mysterio

Mysterio is defending. They shake hands and we're ready to go. Both guys try fast rollups but it's a standoff. They go to a test of strength grip and Mysterio fires some kicks to the legs, only to have Morrison get on top of him for some two counts. A headlock gives Morrison control on the mat as we're still in the feeling out process so far.

Commentary goes away for a bit and comes back with Morrison rolling up Rey for two. Rey gets his first big move in and hits a rana to send both guys to the floor. They're going in slow motion so far due to a lack of a reason for them to fight which is the constant problem you can have in a match like this. Back in and Mysterio charges into the corner and his shoulder CRACKS off the post. That sounded great. Or awful. I'm not sure which.

They finally speed things up with Rey snapping off a big headscissors to fire up the crowd and for two. Morrison starts making Mysterio miss him before getting kicked in the face and splashed for two. Rey hooks a chinlock to give both guys a chance to breathe. The fans seem to be far more behind Morrison which is kind of strange. Morrison fights up and hits a front flip into a dropkick for two in a sweet counter.

Standing shooting star gets two for Morrison before things speed up again and Rey is sent flying out to the floor. That gets two back inside as does a spinning legdrop from Morrison. We hit the chinlock again for a bit before Rey hits a pair of rollups for two. Morrison gets out of the 619 and they both try crossbodies at once.

We take a break and come back with both guys still down and Morrison getting two. Morrison puts on a bodyscissors which doesn't get him anywhere. Rey sends him to the apron and out to the floor followed by another hurricanrana to the outside. A springboard legdrop gets two but the sitout bulldog is countered into a mat slam by Morrison for two. A running knee to the face of Rey gets two as does a spinning cross body from Mysterio.

Mysterio goes up but jumps into a dropkick which gets another near fall. Starship Pain misses and Rey hits the 619 out of nowhere. The springboard splash misses and the Flying Chuck (think Cody's Disaster Kick) gets a very close two. John goes up and after countering a rana attempt, hits a middle rope Starship Pain for the pin and the title.

Rating: B. I haven't seen this match before actually and the only thing I can think of to say is that's it? It was good and the ending had some solid near falls, but if this was a match of the year candidate the this was one of the weakest years ever for wrestling. It was a good match and entertained me, but man this just didn't fire me up other than once or twice near the end. I don't get the hype here and I think it's one of those situations where people confuse length of a match with the quality of the match.

Here comes R-Truth but Drew McIntyre jumps him. McIntyre says that he's going to keep ruining our parties until he gets the respect he deserves.

Maria/Eve Torres vs. Layla/Natalya

Apparently this is the fallout from a six person tag last night where Eve had Natalya beaten but Tyson Kidd cost her the fall. Nattie and Maria start things off. I don't know if it's my thing for redheads or what but Maria has always been gorgeous. Layla distracts Maria and Nattie takes her head off with a clothesline to take over.

Off to Layla who hooks her reverse Tarantula and hits a shot to the back of Maria for two. The evil ones (Layla/Natalya) take turns beating up Maria until it's finally off to Eve. She comes in and fires off some kicks before getting kicked in the face by Layla for two. Everything breaks down and eve hits a cartwheel into a moonsault to Layla for the pin.

Rating: C-. I say this a lot but it's amazing how much more interesting the girls used to be like a year ago. I can't quite put my finger on it but they come off as much stronger and more serious characters here instead of the girls today where they come off as cute and perky. The older ones come off as serious and tougher and more like wrestlers than Divas, which is a good thing.

Matt Hardy says he's out for revenge tonight, rather than the world title or his soul.

CM Punk vs. Matt Hardy

Non-title here. Matt goes right after him and Punk bails to the floor almost immediately. Back in and Punk gets rammed into the buckle a few times and clotheslined down for no cover. This is Matt's return match from an injury apparently. Punk gets the not too bright Matt to chase him around the ring and the champ gets in some shots, only to get caught in a swinging neckbreaker for no cover again. That makes sense as Matt is here for revenge, not a quick win.

The Side Effect is countered and Punk goes up, only to get superplexed back down. This has been almost all Matt so far. Punk drapes Matt over the top rope and knocks him to the floor as we take a break. Back with Matt caught in an abdominal stretch and Punk firing off kicks to the bad ribs. Off to a body vice followed by a whip into the corner for two. Punk fires off his strikes and the champ is in full control.

Matt tries to fight back but gets rammed into the buckle to slow him right back down again. Back to the abdominal stretch which is Punk trying to prove that he's a master of submissions. Matt counters with a kind of Samoan Drop for two and avoids a charge, sending Punk's shoulder into the post. A bulldog gets two for Matt as does a middle rope legdrop to the back of the head.

Twist of Fate is countered but Matt gets two off a small package instead. The high kick gets two for the champ and Punk is frustrated. Punk tries a springboard clothesline but gets caught in a Side Effect for two. They head to the floor and Matt jumps into a kick to the ribs to put Punk right back in control. Punk grabs a chair to blast Hardy in the ribs and back, which somehow doesn't draw a DQ. Punk wraps the chair around Matt's throat....and the lights go out. The match ends here for all intents and purposes.

Rating: B-. I was getting into this at the end, even though you knew Taker would be involved somehow. To be fair though, the match could have ended before he showed up so it wasn't a lock that it would end out in a

no contest. Matt was game here and the story wrote itself given the issues with Jeff lately. Matt was always on the brink of jumping forward and then always started being crazy again.

Taker chokeslams Punk through the table to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. I was digging this show. We had two good matches, good looking women having a competent match where they looked like they knew what they were doing, a solid promo from the champions, and an entertaining show overall. It's amazing how much better things are here when they take the show seriously and not as a Raw supplement. Good show and I enjoyed it.

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