

On This Day: July 8, 2011 – Smackdown: Back When It Was Good

Smackdown

Date: July 8, 2011

Location: Tucson Arena, Tucson, Arizona

Commentators: Josh Matthews, Booker T, Michael Cole

This was taped last week but for Smackdown that's not going to change anything from the norm. Tonight we get some fallout from last week with Sheamus interjecting himself into the main event scene to end the show. Other than that we'll probably be building up to Money in the Bank with some more stuff between the ladder match guys. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the ending of last week's show where Orton signed the contract but before Christian did, Sheamus returned and beat both guys up and ripped up the contract.

Do you know your enemy? Mine is a really bad sunburn.

Most of the MITB guys are in the ring but I only see seven right now. Sheamus is missing I believe. Everyone gets to say something. Bryan says he's excited and nervous because he's wanted to be world champion since he was a little kid. Cody cuts him off and says it's because Bryan is a

common man incapable of the things exceptional people do. Cody is one of those exceptional people. Once he wins the title everyone will have to swallow their pride and look him in the eye.

Barrett says he's tired of hearing about what everyone else has done. He starts listing off his accomplishments but here's Sheamus with a chair. He cracks almost everyone with it and clears the ring. Sheamus says he'll win and cash in on Orton when he beats Christian. He's going to get Orton tonight though, because of getting punted last month. Here's Christian who asks if Sheamus thinks he can't beat Orton. Sheamus calls him a scrawny, malnourished, googly eyed homely weasel.

Christian points out that he beat Sheamus a few weeks ago before Orton punted Sheamus. He'll also be world champion after MITB. There's a clause in the contract, saying that if Orton gets disqualified or if there's bad officiating, Christian is automatically world champion. Christian calls him Ronald McDonald and asks if he can even read a contract. Sheamus throws the chair at him and here's Teddy. Orton vs. Sheamus is the main event. Really solid opening segment here as Sheamus looked fired up and intimidating. I'm liking this three way feud a lot and they're running it perfectly.

Clip of the first MITB match with Edge winning and cashing in about 9 months later.

Cody Rhodes/Ted DiBiase vs. Daniel Bryan/Ezekiel Jackson

Booker gets a bag again. DiBiase and Bryan start us off with DiBiase not being able to do much. Off to Jackson who is part of the Fave Five of Booker. We actually get the full list: McIntyre, Jackson, Sheamus, Barrett, Cara and a dark horse in Ryder. The good guys clear the ring and send Cody to the floor as we take a break. Back with Bryan firing off kicks to Cody in the corner.

Cody avoids a charge in the corner and backdrops Bryan onto the corner and catches him in an Alabama Slam for two. It's off to DiBiase who keeps the advantage and hits a chinlock. Back off to Cody who uses his old school style to dominate even more. DiBiase chokes some more. Cole picks Wade Barrett to win MITB. Bryan gets a boot up in the corner and Josh picks Sin Cara, the same as Booker. Hot tag to Big Zeke who gets a nice reaction. He starts slamming people and Racks DiBiase but it's broken up by a Beautiful Disaster and Dream Street gets the pin at 6:45 shown of 10:15.

Rating: C+. Pretty basic tag match here but for the love of all things good and holy Vince, why do you think midcard champions always have to lose? He won the title and then beat Barrett a second time and now he's lost to Rhodes (not that bad) and then to DiBiase. Why in the world would that be something they'd think is smart? I don't get why midcard champions are booked into the ground so often anymore but it's getting annoying.

Video on Mark Henry and his domination as of late.

Striker tells Henry he's facing potential fines, suspensions and criminal charges after what he did last week. Henry breathes a lot.

Jinder Mahal vs. Trent Barreta

During Mahal's entrance we hear about some empire he's built up and we don't hear anything about his wife/Khali's sister. Are they already changing the story? Anyway Khali sits in on commentary (you read that right) and actually speaks some English now. Total squash in the ring and the full nelson slam ends it at 1:04. The camera was on Khali more than the match. Post match Cole mentions the story we got last week.

Sheamus says his recent rampage is an Irish thing.

AJ vs. Tamina

Cole: "Hopefully this doesn't put me to sleep like a Harlem Heat match."
Josh: "Tell me you didn't just say that." AJ has different hair now as it's a bit lighter and a bit wavier. Natalya and Alicia are at ringside. Cole bashes Natalya for most of the match as Tamina dominates with an Umaga hip smash to the face. Off to a chinlock which doesn't last long. AJ fights back and hits a Shining Wizard for two. Tamina misses a splash in the corner and AJ gets a rollup for the pin at 2:28.

Alicia yells at Tamina post match.

Mark Henry vs. Kane

Kane looks terrified but hammers away to start. Henry runs him over but Kane gets three dropkicks, two to the knees and a seated one to the chest, for two. Top rope clothesline is caught in a belly to belly for two. Henry stands on the chest for a bit and Kane is in trouble. The big fried freak fires off a right hand and the crowd is surprisingly into this. Big boot puts Henry down for two.

Kane goes up again and this time the clothesline hits. He loads up the chokeslam but Henry breaks out of it and headbutts Kane. A second attempt at the chokeslam hits but Henry gets his foot on the ropes. Out to the floor and Kane tries a chokeslam through the table but Henry breaks it up, ramming Kane into the post. Back inside a splash gets two. Mark is all ticked off now and the World's Strongest Slam gets the pin at 5:52.

Rating: C. For a battle of the big men this was fine. They kept it relatively short which is the right idea for sure. If they want Henry to be taken as a big threat, this is the kind of win he needs. Kane is still someone with credibility and Henry beating him clean by just overpowering him is a good thing for him. I still don't get the appeal or point of pushing Henry but it's his every other year push so it's to be expected.

Henry yells at the announcers post match.

Orton says he doesn't care what the contract says because he's going to win with the RKO. As for Sheamus, he'll have to defend the title against him eventually but as for tonight, good luck to him.

Video of Miz winning MITB last year.

Tyson Kidd vs. Sin Cara

There go the lights again. Kidd grabs an armbar to take him down almost immediately. Cara speeds things up and hits an armdrag to send Kidd to the floor. Cara tries a dive or something similar to one, only to get his head slammed into the apron. Back inside Cara hits a slingshot corkscrew splash for two. Off to a chinlock by Kidd as the fans chant for Cara. Kidd keeps countering Cara's moves and it's working pretty well. He tries a springboard elbow but Cara gets the knees up to block it.

Cole says his name would be Billy the Kid if he was a superstar. Booker and Josh are quiet for a bit and then laugh at him. Cara starts his comeback and gets a victory roll into a sunset flip for two. Kidd kicks him down and goes up, only to get dropped onto the buckle. They go up

again and the C4 off the top ends this at 4:16.

Rating: B-. Pretty good stuff here as I didn't notice any botches which is a change for Cara. Granted they may have been edited out but that's the perk of a taped show. Anyway not bad here and Cara is starting to get better slowly but surely as he's having more coherent matches rather than just doing random spots. Good stuff.

Teddy is asked if he's intimidated by Henry and won't answer.

Video on Ezekiel Jackson.

Usos vs. Justin Gabriel/Heath Slater

The matches are good but we've seen this how many times now? The Usos do their dance thing on the way to the ring. Jey has a tattoo on his chest apparently so he starts us off with Gabriel. Slater comes in rather quickly and takes Jey down as the crowd is more or less silent. Booker talks about the Fave Five again and it's already annoying. Gabriel comes in and gets two before hitting a headlock. After some silence on commentary, Booker randomly says that no one likes Cole.

Double big boot puts both guys down as Jimmy tries to get the crowd back

to life. It's not really working but points for trying at least. Off to Jimmy vs. Slater with Jimmy being labeled as the powerhouse. Bubba Bomb puts Slater down as Booker says they both need gain another hundred pounds or so. Samoan Drop gets two on Slater. Slater manages to take him down with something like a Zig Zag and it's off to Gabriel. He wants the 450 but Slater gets kicked into the ropes to crotch Justin. We get Power and Glory's old finisher (superplex/top rope splash combo) to end Gabriel at 3:32.

Rating: C+. Another fine match but again, we've seen this how many times now? The teased tension between the former Nexus/Corre is what you would expect as they've been a successful team long enough so it's time to split them in a feud that not many people want to see. Anyway this was fine and it's cool to see the Usos have an actual finisher.

Johnny Curtis is at a table with a bunch of birthday stuff on it. He takes the cake. Debut him already and get it over with.

We get an abbreviated version of Cena and Vince from Raw.

We run down the MITB card. Henry vs. Show is official.

Randy Orton vs. Sheamus

Christian vs. Orton has been signed apparently and the Canadian is on commentary here. Orton fires away in the corner and Sheamus is in trouble. Pretty basic back and forth stuff here as Orton counters some Sheamus offense with a dropkick. He loads up the punt but Sheamus hits the floor. Back in Orton hits his way too enthusiastic Thesz Press and they slug it out to the floor.

Orton gets reversed into the railing and part of the wall falls down. Elevated DDT is blocked and Orton goes shoulder first into the post and back out to the floor. Christian goes after Orton but Sheamus stops him. Orton goes into the post again as we take a break. Back with Sheamus hitting a DDT to the arm for two. Orton makes a brief comeback but takes a knee to the ribs to put him right back down.

Randy makes his comeback and uses his regular stuff including the scoop powerslam. He adds something new to the arsenal with a belly to belly suplex for two. Sheamus gets a kick to the knee and pulls himself up to the top for a shoulder block for two. Irish Curse gets two. Brogue Kick and RK0 are countered and Orton hits the backbreaker. Not that it matters as Christian comes in for the DQ at 8:24 shown of 11:54, giving Orton the win.

Rating: B-. Not a great match or anything but compared to the stuff these two were putting on in 2010, their recent stuff has been a miracle. I was thinking Sheamus would win MITB and then cash in at the end of the night but now I'm not so sure. Either way, not a bad match here and fine for a TV main event.

Post match Sheamus lays out Christian but walks into an RKO to leave Orton standing tall to close the show.

Overall Rating: B. While a step down from last week this was still good stuff. The key thing to Smackdown is they don't waste time. Everything they do is either advancing a story, in ring action or promoting one of their wrestlers. This show was no exception as everything on here had a point, which is rare in today's wrestling product. Anyway good show but not as good as last week.

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