

Reviewing the Review – Monday Night Raw: June 16, 2014

As we're coming up on Money in the Bank, WWE is kind of on a roll. Raw was a great example of that but there were certainly some issues in there as well. Let's get to it.

We open with a roster meeting on the stage to set up the major matches tonight. The Authority gives us Cena vs. Kane in a Money in the Bank qualifying stretcher match because Bryan can't do it (makes enough sense) and a battle royal for the other Money in the Bank spot. Ambrose and Reigns won't be in the battle royal because they have other matches that we'll get to later. There wasn't much to the meeting and it really didn't need to take place. This easily could have been announced by Cole to save more time for other stuff.

First match up was Seth Rollins vs. Dolph Ziggler. They've fought a few times on Smackdown and the matches have worked, much like this one here. The interesting thing was the ending though, which ties into the next match as well. Dean Ambrose would hit the ring and attack Rollins for the DQ as Seth was about to win. That's the logical move as Rollins' back was turned and Ambrose had his best chance to get in an attack. Rollins escaped but HHH gave Ambrose a match.

Ambrose lost to Bad News Barrett via countout when Ambrose went out to fight with Rollins. The match was good, but the main story here was how awesome Ambrose vs. Rollins feels. This feud is on fire and feels like something that could launch them to a much higher level. It's a feud based on hatred between two men over a betrayal instead of something contrived and that's exactly what you should do in a feud like this. The fact that both guys can more than go in the ring makes things even better. I said that it was giving me flashbacks to Rock vs. HHH in 1998 and that's about as high of

a compliment as I can give.

Now we get to the stupid part of the show because this is WWE and it wouldn't feel right if we didn't have one. Roman Reigns intercepted and spiked some coffee (in plastic cups for some reason) that Vickie Guerrero was bringing to the Authority. Jumping ahead, HHH would spill his coffee but Stephanie would suck it down and soon get sick, vomiting on Vickie (possibly in a tribute to Ultimate Warrior who did the same in 1992 and would have had a birthday on Monday).

Much like last week with Layla, WWE doesn't have A TOWEL available and Vickie wouldn't clean up all night. With Vickie left in charge while HHH got Stephanie to a doctor, Reigns would tell her that she's getting fired anyway so why not put him in the battle royal. She agreed, completing Reign's plans. This doesn't work for a variety of reasons.

First and foremost, Roman Reigns just isn't a mastermind like this. Not that he's stupid or anything, but he's a muscle and power guy who gets by being physical. Ambrose was the smart and dastardly guy in the Shield and could get away with something like this, but it really doesn't suit Reigns. They tried this with Kurt Angle back in 2001 when he tortured Austin into giving him a title shot and it just doesn't fit.

Second, it took A LOT of convenience to make this work. Reigns didn't know that they would get sick that fast, that they would leave, that they would leave Vickie in charge, that Vickie would go for this, and that Vickie would turn on them for giving her more authority. It's REALLY convenient that all this worked and it didn't work for me. Also, did we really need the projectile vomiting? That's supposed to be entertaining? Insert your own "it's WWE" joke here.

Bray Wyatt cut a really good promo about how the title would be his happy ending because it means power. This promo made me think that he could win, and that's exactly what it's supposed

to do. It makes sense for the story and would be the boost that Bray needs. He also made me believe that winning the title made sense which I didn't buy last week.

Sheamus would beat Bray Wyatt via DQ in a nice brawl when the Wyatt Family interfered. The Usos would make the save as they're defending against the Wyatts at Money in the Bank. This was fine and made perfect sense, along with preventing either guy from taking a clean loss. See how easy it can be?

Heyman said that Cesaro will win and that's a spoiler. Simple line but I liked it.

Rusev squashed Heath Slater, who appeared alone and referred to himself as the American Rock Star. It came off as kind of a face turn but it's not going to make a difference when you lose in 34 seconds.

Kevin Hart was the guest star last night and did fine in his short segment with Adam Rose. He did commentary on a mixed tag with Rose/Summer Rae vs. Layla/Fandango. Nothing to see here and Hart was fine.

The battle royal was next and actually surprised me. The final group included Reigns, Rusev and Bo Dallas among others. Reigns was the fairly obvious winner, but WWE gave us just enough reason to believe that the other two could pull it off that there was doubt. All you have to do is have the smallest doubt and you can get around the obvious result. They pulled this off in the battle royal and the fans LOVED it. There's a big match between Rusev and Reigns somewhere down the line and it will rock if they build it up properly.

Cena cut a Cena promo on the Authority. Nothing to see here.

Cameron dragged Paige down to a horrible match, which I believe is leading to the Funkadactyls splitting and Naomi getting a title shot. At the end of the day though, Cameron will be around because she's on Total Divas and is loud,

obnoxious and stupid, making her a reality TV star. She's horrid in the ring though and hopefully the split lets Naomi get some solo time.

Goldust's partner was Cody Rhodes as Star Dust. This actually worked as they won a quick match over Ryback/Axel (basically wasting all the wins they've gotten in recent weeks but that's WWE for you) with Cody getting the pin. Yeah it's destined to lead to Cody vs. Goldust, but Cody as Cody Rhodes has never worked so this is as good as anything else. One nice touch: Cody got the pin with a move that used to be called Diamond Dust. Those good things being said, I really don't get why they split up the Brothers in the first place. They were on fire and having good matches, but now we're back where we started with Cody in a new gimmick. It's working though so it's not necessarily a bad thing.

Cena beat Kane after surviving Rollins and Orton interfering thanks to Ambrose making the save. This was one of their better matches but it wasn't anything all that good. Much like last week, Cena winning was obvious but there's nothing wrong with that at all. You can't have a huge multi man title match without Cena and WWE would be crazy to try.

Issues aside, Raw was awesome on Monday and Money in the Bank is looking like one heck of a ladder match. Reigns, Wyatt, Orton and Cena are all realistic options to take the title and that makes things far more interesting than just one or two choices. Reigns as a criminal mastermind aside, this was a good show that made the stars of the future look like huge stars and that's a great sign going forward.

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