

Smackdown – November 7, 2017: Celebrate

Smackdown

Date: November 7, 2017

Location: Manchester Arena, Manchester, England

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

We're still in England and it's a huge night with two title matches. Tonight the Usos will defend their Tag Team Titles against Chad Gable/Shelton Benjamin, but the real main event will see Smackdown World Champion Jinder Mahal put his title on the line against AJ Styles. These matches have major Survivor Series implications so let's get to it.

Styles says he'll win.

Mahal says he'll win.

Opening sequence.

Here's Shane McMahon to get things going. Shane talks about the war with Raw, specifically the attack on Daniel Bryan. While Daniel is banged up at the moment, he'll be back next week. As for tonight, Shane brings out New Day to some clips of their mini invasion last night. New Day didn't mean to make Seth Rollins and Dean Ambrose lose their Tag Team Titles last night but it's part of the deal when you prove Raw is the B show. If Raw wants some revenge, New Day will be waiting on them.

Shane joins them in some dancing but here are Kevin Owens and Sami Zayn to interrupt. Sami mocks Shane's dancing abilities, which Woods finds rather amusing. Owens brings up beating Shane inside the Cell and Sami says they could have beaten Raw by themselves last night. New Day trades some insults with Sami and a match is made for right now.

Kofi Kingston vs. Sami Zayn

Kofi gets armbarrered to start but lands on his feet out of a monkey flip. That means dancing to trombone music and a dropkick to put Sami on the

floor. Sami takes a breather and the delay lets him stomp away back inside to take over. The top rope dive is dropkicked out of the air though and we take a break. Back with Kofi missing Trouble in Paradise and getting caught in a somewhat nasty Blue Thunder Bomb for two. Not that it matters as Kofi pops back up to the top for a high crossbody and the pin at 9:49.

Rating: C+. These are two of my favorites in WWE and it's always cool to see them have a chance to showcase themselves. Kingston really doesn't get to show his solo skills all that often but he got to show what he could do here. I'd still love to see him become World Champion someday and it's not the most ridiculous idea in the world.

We look back at Jinder Mahal attacking AJ Styles last week.

Jinder says AJ is the appetizer to his entree of Brock Lesnar.

Video on the Bludgeon Brothers.

Rusev vs. Randy Orton

If Rusev, accompanied by Aiden English, wins, he joins the Survivor Series team. An RKO is broken up in the first few seconds and Rusev gets three straight near falls off the jumping superkick. We take a quick break and come back with Rusev holding a chinlock as Orton hasn't gotten in much offense here. Back up and Rusev stomps away some more, only to walk into the RKO for the fast pin at 6:58. Not enough shown to rate but Orton hit one move of note the whole match. There is still an open spot on the Smackdown Survivor Series team.

James Ellsworth knocks on the women's locker room door and gets Becky Lynch. They have a match tonight and James laughs off the idea of Becky defeating him. James says this is MANchester after all but Becky questions his manhood to a gasp.

We look at the Siege and subsequent retaliation. AGAIN.

James Ellsworth vs. Becky Lynch

The Smackdown Women's Team is at ringside. Ellsworth does some pushups

but stops to take off his shirt, revealing a horribly pale physique. Becky takes him off the ropes without much effort and rolls Ellsworth around the ring to make him dizzy. An airplane spin makes it even worse for Ellsworth but he knocks Becky outside in a heap. That earns him a missile dropkick, followed by an atomic drop for the comedic portion of the match. The Bexploder makes Ellsworth try a hug, only to get caught in the Disarm-Her for the tap at 5:57.

Rating: D. This was an angle instead of a match and feels like a treat for the live crowd more than anything else. Ellsworth being chauvinistic came out of nowhere and I'm not sure it really needed to happen, but it's not like it hurt anything. Becky getting a win before captaining the team at Survivor Series is a good idea and that's all it needed to be.

Carmella superkicks Ellsworth post match, possibly ending their relationship.

Post break Charlotte is in Shane's office but Natalya comes in to interrupt. She's here to accept Charlotte's place on Team Smackdown. Shane has another idea though: Natalya defends the title against Charlotte next week.

Tag Team Titles: Chad Gable/Shelton Benjamin vs. Usos

The Usos are defending. The champs jump Gable and Benjamin before the bell and we take a break. Back with the match joined in progress and Jey coming in off the hot tat. Shelton hits Pay Dirt on Jimmy but gets rolled up for two. Gable chop blocks Jey on the floor though and that's a countout at 1:22 shown.

Clip of Luke Harper guest starring on Damnation.

AJ isn't the biggest and isn't the strongest but he works harder than anyone else.

Smackdown World Title: AJ Styles vs. Jinder Mahal

Mahal is defending. AJ grabs a headlock to start but gets LAUNCHED out to the floor as we take an early break. Back with AJ caught in a headlock on the mat but they're quickly on the floor with Mahal slamming him onto the

announcers' table. We hit the armbars as Mahal slows things down a bit.

Mahal drops a knee but dives into a pair of raised boots, followed by the Phenomenal Blitz. The fireman's carry backbreaker gives AJ two as you can tell the fans are way into this one. Something like a backdrop into a faceplant gives Mahal two of his own but he gets kicked out of the corner.

The Calf Crusher is quickly broken up and Jinder turns him inside out with a clothesline. That's fine with AJ who sends him outside for a slingshot forearm. Back in and the springboard 450 connects, only to have the Singh Brothers pull Mahal to the floor. AJ takes out the brothers but jumps into the Khallas.

That's only good for two though as AJ gets his foot on the ropes and the place goes NUTS at the new hope. Jinder loads up a super Khallas but AJ slips out and snaps his throat across the top, setting up the Phenomenal Forearm for the pin and the title at 16:47 as the fans go coconuts at the pin.

Rating: B. Pretty easily Mahal's best match ever as champ but I think you can guess where that's from. I can't imagine Mahal isn't champion again by the end of the India tour. There's nothing wrong with that, as long as we don't have to sit through Mahal vs. Lesnar at Survivor Series. Styles winning was the right call here as he can have the dream match against Lesnar and then do whatever with the title as necessary.

Mahal beats up the Singh Brothers to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. The title change easily puts this one over the top and makes it a much more important show. There wasn't much going on until then and it felt like your standard throw away episode, but sweet goodness the place went nuts when AJ won the title. That's an instant spark for Survivor Series and the show certainly needed it coming into this week. Not a great show, but a great moment to close it out.

Results

Kofi Kingston b. Sami Zayn – High crossbody

Randy Orton b. Rusev – RK0

Becky Lynch b. James Ellsworth – Disarm-Her

Chad Gable/Shelton Benjamin b. Usos via countout

AJ Styles b. Jinder Mahal – Phenomenal Forearm

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