

Payback 2020 Preview



IMG Credit: WWE

It feels like we just got done with this. It's already time for another WWE pay per view in the form of Payback, which is another one of those generically named pay per views where there are no expectations but they might be able to make it work better as a result. The end of Smackdown gave me a lot of hope for what they could do, but you never can tell around here. Let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: IIconics vs. Riott Squad

This is another match added at the last minute. It doesn't feel like it is going to be the biggest match in the world but it is something that can get the energy going a little bit to start. WWE needs some fresh teams to come after the Tag Team Titles so one of these teams makes as much sense as anything else. I mean, assuming you let one of them get some wins going.

I'll go with the Squad to win here, as the IIconics have had their moments already. They're also the kind of team who can get over again in a hurry after a loss so let the Squad get a little something going for a change. It isn't like you can have the top singles stars in the division holding the Tag Team Titles forever, so mix it up a bit and see what else you

have out there.

Sheamus vs. Big E.

This was added on Saturday as another rematch on the card. These guys fought last week with Retribution getting involved so this is likely going to be the clean version. Given how many rematches we already have on this show, it fits in well with the overall theme, even if there wasn't much of an issues that warranted another match. They already took part in a six man this week anyway so I guess this passes for a feud these days.

I'll take Big E. to win as they seem to want to try and do something with him on his own, even if that has so far mainly consisted of beating up Miz and John Morrison. This is as good as we are going to get at the moment and this might have been better served as a Kickoff Show match. Big E. can get a win against a former World Champion though and that's a good sign for his future, even if it hasn't really gone that far yet.

Matt Riddle vs. King Corbin

I think I've made my thoughts on Corbin known well enough but this is the kind of spot that suits him well. He's in the midcard and can use the legitimate heel heat that he has to make someone new look better. Riddle can shut him up and overcome the obstacle in front of him, which gives him a nice achievement on his way up the ladder. This is something that should be almost impossible to screw up, putting it in WWE's problem area.

I'll give them the benefit of the doubt (because that has never gone badly for me before) and say that they'll get it right and have Riddle go over here. There is a chance that they will stretch it out for another month but I think it's best that you just wrap it up and don't bother messing with anything else. Don't do something stupid here and let them go with whatever makes sense.

Dominik Mysterio/Rey Mysterio vs. Seth Rollins/Murphy

Let's get this one over with because they already have the NEXT match set up as Rey will face Rollins the following night on Raw. This is a feud that doesn't seem to have the most heat but we are still watching it every single week no matter what. They already did this match on Raw and now we get to see it all over again just six days later. Maybe Retribution can interfere the same way they always do to spice things up a bit.

Give me the Mysterios to win here because this needs to keep going for some reason. I'm assuming that the win makes Rollins mad enough that he wants to destroy Rey (again) the following night, maybe with Retribution getting involved again. Above all else though, I'm just trying really hard to make myself care about the feud and it hasn't happened in months. Get to the end of this already so they can all move on to ANYTHING else (and yes I know how dangerous it is to say that).

US Title: Apollo Crews(c) vs. Bobby Lashley

This is what the entire Crews vs. MVP feud seemed to be building towards and that is a good sign. Lashley is the final boss of the Hurt Business because...well how could he not be? Crews has come a long way in a short time as champion and I could see this one going either way. It's the kind of run that could get him a little higher up on the ladder, but not that much higher based on how hit and miss he is at promos.

Anyway, I'll go with...Crews here, but I don't think he makes it through Clash Of Champions with the title. This could be a good match for both of them but at the same time, Lashley winning would make a lot of sense. The Hurt Business could use a big trophy like the US Title, but I think he slips on the banana peel here and Crews escapes. Lashley will wind up as champion, but it isn't taking place here.

Women's Tag Team Titles: Bayley/Sasha Banks(c) vs. Nia

Jax/Shayna Baszler

Here we have one of the worst kind of teams available: anything involving Nia Jax. Or in this case it is more about the tag partners who don't like each other but are willing to team together, while still reminding us that they don't like each other. This seemed to be set up for Asuka/Baszler but why go for good when you could go for Jax?

I'll take Baszler and Jax to win here as they have been setting up the idea of Banks and Bayley finally coming back down but you've seen me talk enough about how many times I've been burned by the story. I'll just say that it happens again here and the idea of Bayley FINALLY losing her title at the Clash could work out well enough. Anyway, the champs drop the titles here and continue to fall apart.

Keith Lee vs. Randy Orton

That's such a cool thing to get to put down and I have no idea what they're doing here. This is another rematch from Raw when WWE managed to screw up Lee's solo debut because...well because they're not that bright sometimes. Apparently new music is on the way but if they don't get rid of the horrible looking gear, it doesn't matter. That might be one of Lee's many issues on Sunday.

For the life of me I don't get what they're going to do here but I'll take Orton to win. Orton is gearing up for the rematch with Drew McIntyre, probably also at Clash, which begs the question of WHY you would make this Lee's real singles debut. If you want Lee to be a big star (and of course you should), don't put him in this spot. Give him a nice win to start so he can get over and then go somewhere from there. Don't have him stumble right out of the gate, but given that he is basically wrestling in a skirt, we are long past that point of worrying. Orton wins, as people try to figure out how they expected to get out of this.

Universal Title: The Fiend(c) vs. Roman Reigns vs. Braun Strowman

I had this one mainly planned out and then the world got turned upside down on Smackdown as Reigns was revealed as the new Paul Heyman Guy. I'm not sure what to think of that as it only happened a few hours ago and....dang man what in the world happened? Reigns is suddenly the top heel, Strowman is fresh heel and....I guess Wyatt is going to become the top face?

With all that being said, I'll flip a coin and say Reigns win here, likely pinning Strowman, so that you make Reigns out to be the big monster all over again and have Wyatt chase him for a bit, possibly setting up the Cell. It might not be pretty, but having Fiend lose the title back this soon wouldn't surprise me. Whatever gets Strowman out of the main event scene will help a bit, but dang it has done some damage to everyone involved. Reigns wins here though, as he almost has to after that reveal (which could have come at the pay per view, and possibly should have).

Overall Thoughts

I really don't know what to think of with this one but I'm curious to see where the Reigns/Heyman thing goes. That could be one heck of a heel run, though I'm not sure how well they are going to make it work. This isn't exactly a major show, but we have four weeks before Clash Of Champions and that means this is feeling more like your traditional B pay per view. Just don't do anything bad and work well with what you have. That is basic for a wrestling promotion, which makes it sound like deciphering hieroglyphics blindfolded for WWE. Please don't screw up Reigns and Heyman though. Please.

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