

Monday Night Raw – March 15, 2021: Aim A Little Closer

Monday Night Raw

Date: March 15, 2021

Location: Tropicana Field, St. Petersburg, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, Samoa Joe, Byron Saxton

It's the go home show for Fastlane, which is such an important show that it doesn't actually have any raw matches announced yet. Odds are that is fixed tonight, but it doesn't hide the fact that even WWE doesn't care about the thing. This should be an eventful one so let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

They don't waste time by announcing Drew McIntyre vs. Bobby Lashley for the WWE Title at Wrestlemania.

Here are Bobby Lashley and MVP for a chat to get things going. MVP says we are now in the Almighty Era and Lashley promises to destroy McIntyre at Wrestlemania. Lashley: "Right now are in the...Almighty Era." And that's why MVP handles most of the talking. Cue Miz and John Morrison with Miz praising Lashley's speech and saying they are all in on the Almighty Era. They think Miz should be in the title match at Wrestlemania because Miz defended the title twice in one night and had cramps both times!

Cue Drew McIntyre to say he knows what it is like to be on a sixteen year journey. McIntyre was knocked down off the ladder and claw back up and then they have both reached the finish line. MVP tries to interrupt but gets shut down and is asked why he is here. Miz interrupts and gets glared down, with McIntyre saying he owes Miz one.

They are facing each other tonight and Miz needs to run

because McIntyre is going to Fastlane to beat up Sheamus and then take the title back from Lashley at Raymond James Stadium. The fight is nearly on but a Miz distraction lets Lashley jump him from behind. MVP and Lashley leave so Miz hammers away. Cue Sheamus to jump Lashley until referees break it up. MVP holds Lashley back.

Post break Sheamus says he is going to beat McIntyre on Sunday but then he wanted to show Lashley what is waiting on him after Wrestlemania.

Miz vs. Drew McIntyre

Miz hammers away in the corner but McIntyre is right back with the chops to take over. The toss suplex sends Miz flying and the Glasgow Kiss makes it even worse. John Morrison throws his sunglasses at McIntyre, which just gets on his nerves. There's the reverse Alabama Slam out of the corner so Morrison tries another distraction earning himself an ejection.

We take a break and come back with McIntyre sending Miz flying with an overhead belly to belly suplex. McIntyre takes him to the floor for a ram into the apron and several into the steps. Back in and the Futureshock drops Miz on his head, followed by the Claymore for no cover. Instead McIntyre picks him up, points to the Wrestlemania sign, and finishes with the Hurt Lock at 11:20.

Rating: C-. There is nothing wrong with a statement win like this, as the point was to show how ready McIntyre is for Wrestlemania. Miz is someone who is going to be fine with loss after loss so it's not like this is going to take away any of his momentum. The match was mostly a squash anyway and that's all it needed to be.

Bad Bunny won a Grammy.

We look at Shane McMahon calling Braun Strowman stupid.

Here is Strowman in the ring but Shane cuts him off in a hurry. Strowman knows that Shane isn't going to apologize because that's not what McMahons do. Instead, Strowman issues the challenge for tonight but Shane says no because Strowman can't handle him. Shane talks about how this proves Strowman is stupid, like the t-rex, which went extinct as well. Then he accepts the match.

R-Truth, dressed like Steve Austin, interrupts Dana Brooke, Mandy Rose, Lana and Naomi, who tell him that 3:16 Day is tomorrow. They can't drink though because they have a match next.

Mandy Rose/Dana Brooke vs. Lana/Naomi

Nia Jax and Shayna Baszler are on commentary. Naomi knocks Dana down to start and it's quickly off to Mandy to hammer away in the corner. Dana comes in with a handspring elbow in the corner and Mandy adds a running knee to the face. That's broken up and it's off to Lana to clean house. Everything breaks down and here's the returning Asuka (facing Baszler later) for the big distraction. Shayna goes after her and gets kicked in the head, leaving Lana to hit an X Factor on Mandy. Brooke comes back in with a swinging neckbreaker to pin Lana at 4:28.

Rating: D+. This just does not work for these teams no matter how many times they try it. Lana continues to not feel like she has the best instincts in the ring, though she has been getting a bit better. These four are all trying, but Naomi should be near the top of the card, not toiling in the lower levels of the tag division.

New Day is ready to get the Tag Team Titles back when Riddle comes in. He wants them to win like he is going to do against Mustafa Ali tonight and then they can get matching scooters. Or have matching pancakes!

Tag Team Titles: Hurt Business vs. New Day

New Day is challenging. Woods takes Alexander down by the arm to start and it's quickly off to Kofi, who pulls Alexander to him with an invisible rope (ala Ryo Mizunami in AEW). A jumping knee puts Woods on the floor though and Shelton sends him hard into the steps. Back in and Kofi hits the middle rope standing double stomp, which is enough to bring Woods back in to clean house.

Everything breaks down and they head outside with Woods being whipped HARD into the steps as we take a break. Back with Woods hitting a clothesline but getting kneed in the ribs. The Michinoku Driver gives Alexander two but Woods gets in a shot, allowing the hot tag to Kofi. The SOS gives Kofi two as everything breaks down. Woods hits a DDT on Alexander on the floor and Trouble in Paradise hits Shelton. Woods hits the top rope elbow into Daybreak for the pin and the titles at 13:04.

Rating: C+. Well that came out of nowhere. New Day has held the titles so many times now that it doesn't mean anything anymore but that has never stopped WWE. The worst part here is that commentary acted like it was a bigger deal that the team has momentum heading into Wrestlemania rather than being champions. That's not how things should be working and it explains a lot of WWE's problems these days.

Post match here are AJ Styles and Omos to interrupt. AJ mocks New Day for having another win but says he is running out of things to accomplish. He has never been a Tag Team Champion though, so he and Omos should be the next champions. The challenge is on for Wrestlemania, but Kofi wants to know if they are even registered as a team. Woods accepts the challenge and everything is set.

Damien Priest and Bad Bunny mock Miz and John Morrison for losing everything but Miz asks what Priest has won. Priest gets in his face, sending Miz and Morrison running off. R-Truth comes in trying to hit Bad Bunny in the head with a Steve Austin lunchbox. Priest calls him out and Truth gives

Bunny a bunch of Austin merchandise instead. Bunny is so touched that he gives Truth the 24/7 Title back, meaning Truth can remember Bunny's name. The menagerie of numskulls gives chase and we're back at it.

Jaxson Ryker vs. Damien Priest

Broken Arrow and Lights Out finish Ryker in 37 seconds.

Post match Elias tries to bring in the guitar but Bunny takes it away. Elias picks him up for a slam but Bunny slips out and hits Elias in the face, setting up Hit The Lights from Priest. Cue John Morrison for a distraction though and Miz runs in with a guitar shot to Bad Bunny. There's the Wrestlemania angle.

Shane McMahon vs. Braun Strowman

Hold on as Shane needs to warm up. After some pushups, Shane goes over to the hopscotch game he has set up, because Strowman talked about how this was like being back in school. Strowman isn't having that and grabs Shane, who he sends into the barricade. The Strowman Express is loaded up but Shane is waiting on him with a camera to the face instead. Another camera shots sets up the elbow through the announcers' table. Shane isn't done as he pulls out...a bucket of green slime to cover Strowman. With that done, Shane pulls out...another bucket of green slime to cover Strowman again! No match.

Rhea Ripley is still coming.

We look at Alexa Bliss tormenting Randy Orton.

Bliss, on her swing set, says that if Orton wants to get rid of her, he can do it at Fastlane. But is he going to do it?

We look at Molly Holly being inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Asuka vs. Shayna Baszler

Non-title. During the entrances, Baszler says she is glad she hurt Asuka a few weeks ago. Asuka attacks them both before the bell and sends Jax outside with a Codebreaker. The bell rings and Asuka kicks away but gets kneed in the face. They brawl on the mat until Asuka gets up to dropkick Jax. Shayna grabs the Kirifuda Clutch but Asuka flips back for the pin at 1:31.

Post match Shayna doesn't let go but Asuka escapes anyway. The beatdown continues with Asuka firing off Kawada Kicks and pulling off a turnbuckle pad. Baszler's face is crushed against the buckle and Asuka loads up a curb stomp. The referee breaks it up to prevent a high dentist bill.

Mustafa Ali is yelling at Retribution when Riddle speeds through on his scooter. The sound effects he was making push this to funny.

Fastlane rundown with Braun Strowman vs. Shane McMahon added.

US Title: Mustafa Ali vs. Riddle

Ali is challenging and has Retribution with him. Riddle knocks him outside to start but gets sent into the announcers' table. A swinging neckbreaker off the apron drops Riddle and we take a break. Back with Ali hitting another neckbreaker for two but Riddle strikes away. A suplex sets up the Broton for two and he kicks Ali in the head. There's a rollup so T-Bar gets up, only to have Ali reverse into one of his own. T-Bar drops down but the delay lets Riddle kick out and hit the Bro Derek to retain at 8:31.

Rating: C. This was much more about Ali having problems with Retribution, if nothing else because he keeps promising that he can win the big one and failing just like them. It is a shame that Retribution has never taken off because the talent is there, but never let it be said that WWE doesn't know how to screw things up. The team is likely on borrowed time and at this point, that's probably the best idea.

Randy Orton is ready to kick Alexa Bliss out of his life.

Here's Drew McIntyre to say he has been watching the show and doesn't like MVP's guarantees. That's why he is out here tonight, because he wants to see this match up close and get ready for Wrestlemania.

Sheamus vs. Bobby Lashley

Non-title and Sheamus sends him into the corner to start in a hurry. Some forearms to the back have Lashley in trouble but he powers Sheamus to the mat. A clothesline drops Sheamus again and the delayed vertical suplex does it one more time. Sheamus is back up and sends Lashley to the apron for the forearms to the chest.

Lashley is fine enough to catch him with the overhead belly to belly though and we take a break. Back with Lashley working on the armbar and sending Sheamus into the corner again. The running charge hits the post though and Sheamus gets up top for the clothesline. Some elbows to the shoulder and an armbar keep Lashley in trouble and Sheamus sends him outside.

Back in and the Irish Curse gets two and Sheamus grabs a kind of complicated leglock. Lashley fights up again and hits a Downward Spiral, followed by a superplex for the big crash. The spear is blocked by a jumping knee to the face and Sheamus grabs White Noise for two. Lashley doesn't seem to mind and pops up with the spear for the pin at 17:41.

Rating: B. I know he isn't the most popular guy but Sheamus can do a good power match. That was on full display here and Lashley is more than capable of hanging right in there with him. This was a heck of a fight that took a little time to get going. Once they started trading bombs though, it was good good stuff and that's what you would have expected from these two.

Post match Lashley grabs the Hurt Lock on Sheamus but McIntyre

breaks it up with the Claymore. Sheamus and McIntyre stare each other down to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. This was a really weird show as it did a very good job of setting up Wrestlemania but did very little to set up Fastlane, which is in less than six days. The good thing is that they added more matches to both pay per views, but Fastlane is going to be lucky to run longer than two and a half hours. The wrestling was more good than bad and there was nothing terrible (your taste may vary on Shane vs. Strowman) so this was one of the better Raw's in a while (and it still wasn't great).

Results

Drew McIntyre b. The Miz – Hurt Lock

Mandy Rose/Dana Brooke b. Lana/Naomi – Swinging neckbreaker to Lana

New Day b. Hurt Business – Daybreak to Benjamin

Damien Priest b. Jaxson Ryker – Hit The Lights

Asuka b. Shayna Baszler – Rollup

Riddle b. Mustafa Ali – Bro Derek

Bobby Lashley b. Sheamus – Spear

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