

Monday Night Raw – June 21, 2021: Quality Qualifying

Monday Night Raw

Date: June 21, 2021

Location: Yuengling Center, Tampa, Florida

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Corey Graves, Jimmy Smith

We're done with the Cell and that means it is time to start getting ready for Money in the Bank. That means a lot of qualifying matches before we have a series of matches with the people building momentum, whatever that means going into a ladder match. Other than that, Bobby Lashley needs a new challenger after beating Drew McIntyre again. Let's get to it.

[Here is Hell In A Cell if you need a recap.](#)

The briefcases and the Cell are above the ring and the MONEYMONEYMONEYMONEYMONEY song is back, because there are two songs ever for that show.

Here are Bobby Lashley and MVP, flanked by his latest group of women, for the VIP Lounge. MVP brags about Lashley retaining and hands him the floor. Lashley says he was pushed to his limit last night but proved that he is still the Almighty. They brag about their win and load up a toast but here is the New Day to interrupt, complete with a plate of toast. Said toast is thrown into the ring, prompting MVP to talk about how this is more proof of what goofs these two are.

MVP accuses Kofi Kingston of not taking things seriously and hanging out with his video game obsessed friend. Kofi says not so fast but Lashley talks about being on a higher level than the two of them. That makes Kofi laugh as he talks about becoming WWE Champion at Wrestlemania XXXV and then beating Lashley last week. We see a clip of said loss and Lashley isn't cool with that. The challenge is on Lashley accepts for

Money in the Bank, but he wants to make sure it's one on one. Therefore, he can beat up Xavier Woods tonight.

That's cool with Woods, who cuts off MVP from talking down to him. Woods runs down his own accolades, which mainly include being on YouTube and G4. Oh and let's make tonight's match inside the Cell. I'm surprised they didn't put a USA NETWORK APPROVED sticker on the screen, as that could not be more of WWE appeasing them over FOX getting a Cell match if they tried.

Earlier today, AJ Styles ran into the Viking Raiders and promised to become the new Mr. Money in the Bank. He's so sure that he'll beat them for the Tag Team Titles soon after, but the Raiders aren't convinced. AJ slaps the turkey leg out of Ivar's hand but violence is held back.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Ricochet vs. AJ Styles

Ricochet knows what it takes to get to the WWE Title match and he'll show why he's something special. AJ gets sent to the apron to start and a springboard kick to the face puts him on the floor. Ricochet misses a springboard moonsault though and gets posted hard as we take an early break.

Back with AJ dropping Ricochet again but a shot to the face rocks Styles for a change. There's a crossbody to send AJ into the corner and a running clothesline catches him for a bonus. Back to back suplexes give Ricochet two but AJ scores with a kind of torture rack powerbomb for his own near fall.

A strike off goes to Ricochet, who ducks the Pele Kick and grabs a bridging German suplex for two more. AJ grabs the fireman's carry backbreaker but here are the Viking Raiders to go after Omos. A missed charge sends Omos through the barricade though and the distraction lets Ricochet counter the Phenomenal Forearm into the Recoil for the pin at 9:50.

Rating: C+. I'm rather glad to see Ricochet getting his chance

and it isn't like AJ needs to be in Money in the Bank when he might be defending the Tag Team Titles on the same show. Ricochet is a perfect person to put in this kind of a match and giving him a win over AJ isn't such a big upset that it is too much to believe.

Riddle, now with RKBro merchandise (including a bag and a coffee cup) talks to Randy Orton about wanting to put a stash of Burger King Whoppers in the briefcase when one of them win it tonight. Orton: "RIDDLE! WHAT DO YOU WANT???" Riddle asks for some pointers and dances a bit while waiting. Orton tells him to stay out of his way, which Riddle thinks will be difficult if they're both in the ladder match. Riddle thinks it would be awesome if they are both in the match, but Orton disagrees and walks off.

We look at Eva Marie's return with her unnamed partner.

Eva Marie, while getting the interviewer's name wrong, says that she had a cold last week to prevent her from getting in the ring. That's why she had a substitute, in the form of...Doudrop. Well of course it is.

Money In The Bank Qualifying Match: Eva Marie/Doudrop vs. Asuka/Naomi

Eva starts with Asuka and tags out immediately, as you would expect. Asuka can't do much with Doudrop to start so it's off to Naomi, as Eva drops down to the floor. Doudrop plants Naomi and hits the Cannonball in the corner, but Eva tags herself in as Doudrop goes up. This time it's Doudrop heading to the floor as Eva reaches for the tag, meaning Naomi can grab a rollup for the pin at 2:50. That's a change of pace and they have me curious so well done.

Eva is stunned and Doudrop smiles at her.

We look back at Charlotte beating Rhea Ripley last night via DQ, because Charlotte needed to win as the feud is extended.

We look back at the opening segment to set up the Cell match tonight.

Here are Adam Pearce and Sonya Deville to deal with the Rhea Ripley/Charlotte fallout. Ripley comes out and wants to know why that was a DQ, but here is Charlotte to promise to destroy Ripley soon. Deville gets to the point and makes the rematch for Money in the Bank. They kept this really short here and there wasn't much of a reason not to.

We recap the Mandy Rose/Dana Brooke vs. Tamina/Natalya, including Natalya beating Rose last night.

Tamina and Natalya were having a photo shoot when an interview broke out. Hold on though, as they were distracted by Rose and Brooke training in the nearby ring. Natalya said they were trying to have an interview (not exactly) and another fight was teased. Mandy and Dana kicked them off the apron and got rather smug.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Randy Orton vs. John Morrison

Miz is on commentary. Morrison takes Orton down to start and a kick to the head gets an early two. An armbar has Orton in more trouble but he fights up and takes it to the floor. Morrison sends him into the announcers' table a few times but Orton does it far more times, setting up a belly to back drop onto the table.

We take a break and come back with Orton stomping away and grabbing his own chinlock. Morrison fights up and hits a springboard kick to the face to send things outside. Orton's hand is slammed into the steps, setting up an armbar so we can get an inset ad for Fast and Furious 9.

Back to full screen with Morrison staying on the arm but Orton fights up and hits the hanging DDT. The RKO is loaded up but Miz fires off the Drip Stick, allowing Morrison to grab a

rollup for two. An uppercut sends Morrison to the apron but here is Riddle for a slow speed chase after Miz. The distraction lets Morrison kick Orton down and hit Starship Pain for the pin at 12:20.

Rating: C-. This was similar to Ricochet beating Styles as it is an upset but it isn't an earth shattering upset. Morrison being in the ladder match is a bit more interesting than Orton as it gives the chance of something fresh getting into the main event scene, even if Morrison has absolutely no chance of winning. The Drip Stick is a bit stupid, but that's kind of the point of Miz and Morrison so it's hard to complain that much.

We recap Alexa Bliss using her mind control powers to control Nia Jax and beat Shayna Baszler.

Nia Jax says she won't attack Reginald again tonight. Shayna Baszler insists that she isn't scared of anyone in the locker room and no one is stopping them from qualifying for Money in the Bank. Jax says there is something different about Alexa Bliss.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Alexa Bliss/Nikki Cross vs. Shayna Baszler/Nia Jax

Bliss has new music, featuring her talking a lot. Before the match, Nikki Cross talks about how she is trying to stand out and needs something to find a way to succeed despite her shortcomings. Therefore, she now has a mask and superhero costume while saying she is embracing her spirit. So she's Scottish Mighty Molly?

Baszler drives Cross into the corner to start and sends her to the apron. A slingshot Oklahoma roll gets two on Baszler so it's off to Jax. Cross sends her outside where we pause so Bliss can mind control Reginald. Baszler and Jax talk him out of it but Cross dives onto all three as we take a break.

Back with Bliss hitting her moonsault knees on Baszler but Jax comes back in to take over. Baszler chokes on the ropes and grabs the chinlock for a bit. Bliss fights up and gets in a shot to the face, allowing the hot tag to Cross. House is cleaned for all of a few moments but Jax takes her into the corner. Baszler nearly hits Jax by mistake and the weekly argument is on. Bliss uses the distraction to control Reginald, who can't bring himself to slap Jax. The distraction lets Cross grab La Majistral to pin Baszler at 10:09, because Nia Jax is just there to stand around while Baszler gets pinned.

Rating: C. There is a lot here, as Bliss continues her mind control deal, which I'll still take over the Lily nonsense. At the same time, it's really, really annoying to have Baszler become the designated jobber, as these stupid arguments between her and Jax continue. That has been their thing since they came together and it hasn't been that interesting since it started. On the other hand, you have Cross FINALLY getting some TV time. Yeah the superhero deal is kind of dumb, but I'll take that over her sitting on the sidelines doing nothing.

Drew McIntyre promises to fight despite being banged up, even quoting Winston Churchill.

Jinder Mahal, with lackeys, Jeff Hardy, Cedric Alexander and Sheamus are arguing about who should be competing for Money in the Bank. Sonya Deville doesn't want to hear it and the decisions are final. Sheamus brings up being US Champion and thinks he should be in automatically. Adam Pearce takes that to mean Sheamus' nose is healed and he can defend his title. Sheamus panics and goes off to find his doctor. Mahal complains about not being in and suggests he should be the alternate. Everyone leaves.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Riddle vs. Drew McIntyre

Drew, with his wrecked back, goes for the grappling to start so Riddle goes to the ropes. With that not working, McIntyre blasts him with a clothesline and fires away in the corner. There's the big toss across the ring for two on Riddle and a toss suplex gives Drew the same. An elbow to the face gives Drew two more but Riddle pulls him off the middle rope for a crash. There's the Broton to set up the gutwrench suplex, banging up Drew's back again.

Another one is countered into a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker to send Riddle outside. That's fine with Riddle, who snaps off a belly to belly as we take a break. Back with Drew fighting out of a chinlock but Riddle gets in a shot to the back to put him down again. The Broton hits raised knees though and it's an overhead belly to belly into a neckbreaker.

Somehow Drew nips up and the reverse Alabama Slam gets a slightly delayed two. Riddle is taken up top but he manages to crotch Drew...who lifts himself up for the release German superplex anyway. Cue Randy Orton to watch and we take another break. Back again with Riddle reversing a super White Noise into a sunset bomb, followed by a knee to the face for two.

Drew grabs a Michinoku Driver for two and goes up, only to dive into a triangle choke. That's reversed into a Futureshock for two but Riddle collapses before the Claymore can launch. There's a ripcord knee to McIntyre but the Floating Bro misses. The Claymore is countered into the Bromission, which is countered as well. The Glasgow Kiss looks to set up an electric chair but Riddle reverses into a victory roll for the pin at 22:49.

Rating: B. This worked well, as McIntyre tried to fight through the pain but still lost in the end. The fact that McIntyre almost never loses a match clean makes this all the more interesting and Riddle gets to continue his rise back to being something. I'm curious to see where McIntyre goes from here, but he has been on top long enough that a step down

isn't going to hurt him.

Post match Riddle scooters up the ramp but Randy Orton isn't pleased. Riddle: "Randy what's wrong? You can always talk to me Bro." Orton looks at him but Riddle still can't get a fist bump.

We recap Elias vs. Jaxson Ryker, with Elias running away twice in a row.

Ryker is whipping himself with a strap when Mansoor comes up to ask for some advice. That doesn't seem to sit well so Mansoor leaves, but Ryker says never let your enemy escape. More often than not, those closest to you are wolves in sheep's clothing. Next week, it's Elias vs. Ryker in a strap match. Elias is all about the music, and next week, the big hit will be the strap against Elias' flesh.

Mansoor goes to leave when he runs into Mustafa Ali, who says Mansoor is asking the wrong people. Why are people in the Money in the Bank qualifying matches stealing spots from the two of them? If they don't get the chance to climb the ladder of success, you have to build your own ladder. Ryker whips himself some more.

The Cell is lowered.

Bobby Lashley vs. Xavier Woods

Non-title with MVP and Kofi Kingston here as well. Woods tries to start fast but gets powered out to the floor. That means it's time for a chair, which Lashley punches into Woods' face. The running charge hits the post though and Woods is able to dropkick Lashley into the Cell twice in a row. A running chair shot drops Lashley again and we take a break.

Back with Lashley hammering away until Woods misses a charge and falls out to the floor. Woods' charge lets Lashley tie him in the ring skirt though and the beating is on again. Lashley

stops to yell at Kofi though and Woods gets back inside. A forearm to the leg cuts Lashley down for a second and Woods gets in a hard kendo stick shot. Woods gets in more shots with the stick on the floor and a victory roll faceplant is good for two back inside.

A tornado DDT gives Woods two more so he sets up a table. Lashley's quick powerbomb attempt is broken up and a superkick puts him on said table. The rope walk elbow sends Lashley through the table for two (with Woods almost overshooting him) but Lashley sends him face first into a chair in the corner. The spear sets up the Hurt Lock to finish Woods at 13:37.

Rating: C+. This was another match that didn't need to be in the Cell as it was little more than a street fight for the most part. The fact that it was the fourth match in the Cell in four days didn't help either, but I would bet on this being a way to appease USA more than anything else. There was never any doubt here and that's ok, as Woods got to look good for a bit.

Post match the beating stays on with MVP getting inside the Cell and locking it back. Lashley puts Woods up against the Cell as Kofi can't do anything to end the show. That was an effective use of the Cell for a change, though I'm not sure why Kofi didn't get the referee to unlock the door again.

Overall Rating: C+. As usual, Raw is better when they have something going through the course of the show to keep them from going way off course. That was the case here with a slate of mostly good qualifying matches, though you can't do that every week. Money in the Bank is starting to take a nice shape, but there is a long time to go and that is where WWE can get in trouble. Good enough show this week though, and a FAR better version of Raw than usual.

Results

Ricochet b. AJ Styles – Recoil

Naomi/Asuka b. Eva Marie/Doudrop – Rollup to Marie
John Morrison b. Randy Orton – Starship Pain
Nikki Cross/Alexa Bliss b. Shayna Baszler/Nia Jax – La
Majistral to Baszler
Riddle b. Drew McIntyre – Victory roll
Bobby Lashley b. Xavier Woods – Hurt Lock

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