

Smackdown – July 16, 2021: We're Back (A Smackdown Story)

Smackdown

Date: July 16, 2021

Location: Toyota Center, Houston, Texas

Commentators: Michael Cole, Pat McAfee

They're back. In something that I've been waiting to say for well over a year now, we are FINALLY back on the road with a show outside of Florida for the first time since last March. It's also the go home show for Money in the Bank, meaning we might be in for some last minute surprises. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a special video showing great crowd reactions throughout WWE history, ranging from Hogan slamming Andre to Austin to the modern era. Since this is a WWE history package, it is quite awesome and worth seeing just for the feel of it all.

There are PEOPLE here!

The new set seems to be little more than just a big screen.

We start big with Vince McMahon himself coming out for a chat. Vince: "WHERE THE H*** HAVE YOU BEEN???" End of appearance.

Edge/Rey Mysterio/Dominik Mysterio vs. Usos/Roman Reigns

Reigns gets a rather high pitched pop while Edge gets a MONSTER pop. Jey jumps Edge from behind to start but gets caught with a flapjack. Jimmy comes in and gets armdragged by Rey, setting up a double springboard moonsault from Dominik. That's about it for Dominik as Jimmy sends him into the corner

and hands it off to Reigns, who pulls Dominik outside.

Back in and Reigns gets two with a hand on Dominik's face. They head outside again and this time it's a powerbomb onto the announcers' table to send us to a break. Back with Dominik hitting a DDT on Jey and bringing Edge back in to clean house. Everything breaks down and Edge spears Reigns on the floor. The 619 connects but a rollup only gives Rey two. Instead, Jey gets in a cheap shot and Jimmy grabs his own rollup for the pin at 8:45.

Rating: B-. I'm kind of torn on this one as it boosts up the Tag Team Title match, but having the heels go over in the first match back with fans is quite the strange choice. It wasn't Edge losing to Reigns so it isn't the worst idea or anything, but they might have wanted to go in a different direction.

Post match the Usos jump the Mysterios but Edge is back in with a chair. Reigns Superman Punches him and grabs the chair but takes too long breaking the bar off. Edge is back up with a spear and the Crossface with the bar makes Reigns tap (as Cole reads his copy about how Reigns might tap on Sunday).

Post break, Edge talks about how he made Reigns tap and how he is going to need to do everything he can to take the title. Seth Rollins pops up behind him to laugh, saying he is going to be Edge's biggest fan on Sunday. Rollins is going to finish what he started years ago when he had his boot on Edge's neck and crush him once and for all.

Here is Sami Zayn to say the lights and new set are all just a distraction from the conspiracy against him. For over a year, WWE has tried to hold him down with a conspiracy but now he will have the people in his corner. Sami can't get a JUSTICE FOR SAMI chant going for him but he isn't surprised by a bunch of Texas fans. If there was justice, he would be handed the Money In The Bank briefcase right now. This show is not going

anywhere until he gets his justice...but here is the returning Finn Balor to cut him off. Sami welcomes him back to the show and is promptly beaten down. The Coup de Grace lets Balor pose after a nice surprise.

Video on Apollo Crews.

Nox/Shotzi vs. Tamina/Natalya

Non-title with Zelina Vega/Liv Morgan on commentary. Nox gets knocked off the apron to start, leaving Shotzi to get beaten down in the corner. The beating continues as Vega and Morgan won't stop bickering. Shotzi gets over for the tag off to Nox to clean house as Vega and Morgan get in a fight. The Shiniest Wizard gets two on Natalya as Vega is thrown inside. Natalya can't get the Sharpshooter as Nox small packages her for the pin at 3:23.

Rating: C-. We continue to wait on what should be an obvious title change, which makes me wonder what the point was in having NXT Women's Tag Team Titles in the first place. Other than that, Vega and Morgan dragged this WAY down by not shutting up for the entire match. That was the focus here instead of the new team and it was really distracting.

Post match Nox and Shotzi leave as everyone else brawls at ringside, with Morgan standing tall.

Women's Title: Bianca Belair vs. Carmella

Belair is defending and gets a rather strong reaction. A running shoulder puts Carmella down to start but she sends Belair hard into the corner for two. That earns Carmella a running shoulder into the ribs but she manages to post Bianca and we take a break. Back with Belair grabbing a suplex for two and going up, only to have to block what looked like a Stratusphere attempt.

A super hurricanrana brings Belair down for two instead and we

hit the pinfall reversal sequence. Carmella grabs a guillotine choke but Belair powers her up for another suplex for two more. With nothing else working, Carmella grabs the hair and takes Belair outside for a whipping. Back in again and Carmella misses the superkick, setting up the hair whip. The KOD retains the title at 11:04.

Rating: C. This was a good way to get Belair in front of a crowd and the reaction was worth the wait. Carmella wasn't going to be a huge challenger and it was fine to have her out there in a completely acceptable match. Now Smackdown can build up someone else for Belair, though I'm really not sure who that can be outside of bringing someone back in.

Chad Gable talks about how the Alpha Academy is getting used to having everyone be scared of Otis. Tonight he is going to beat Cesaro and they can smell the fear. Cue Cesaro, to say that all he smells is bull from Otis, who beat him down as a result.

Toni Storm is here next week.

Otis vs. Cesaro

Chad Gable is here with Otis and both guys get quick highlight packages during their entrances. Otis hammers away to start and slugs at the ribs that were banged up before the break. Cesaro slugs back but Gable comes in for the DQ at 1:07.

Post match Cesaro hits the pop up uppercut but Otis breaks up the Swing. The Vader Bomb crushes Cesaro again.

We look at Edge taking out Roman Reigns earlier.

Paul Heyman talks about how Roman Reigns is going to destroy Edge but Big E. comes in

Here is King Corbin for a video on how everything has fallen apart for him. Things have gotten so bad that he might have to give up his house and move in with his wife's parents. His

daughter has to eat spaghetti in a can instead of Ragu beef! He has opened a crowd funding website and all he needs is \$100,000. Cue Kevin Owens, with Corbin saying he knows Owens has money and can help him. It's not like Owens spends money on his wardrobe or anything. That means a Stunner and it's time for the main event. Corbin FINALLY having the tables turned on him is a nice change of pace and long overdue.

Kevin Owens vs. Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Big E. vs. Seth Rollins

The ring is surrounded by ladders. They start fast with the parade of dives and it's off to an early break. Back with Big E. hitting the Big Ending on Nakamura with Rollins making the save. The ladder is brought in but Rollins heads to the floor. Owens puts Nakamura onto the announcers' table for a HUGE elbow, leaving them both down (and taking out a cameraman as well). Back in and Big E. runs Rollins over but a rake to the eyes breaks up the Big Ending. The Stomp onto the ladder finishes Big E. at 8:01.

Rating: C+. What the heck was that? I'm going to assume they ran out of time here as this was an eight minute match with a commercial in the middle. The match itself was very energized and I'd rather they didn't have some big fifteen minute match which has no bearing on Sunday at all. Let Rollins win and build momentum so we can get to the ladder match and move on.

Rollins pulls down the briefcase to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This show gave me a bit of an NXT vibe, as they didn't try to do anything huge and just covered what they needed to cover. That is a good formula for something like this as I would much, much rather have them put on a nice, solid show than shoot for the moon and blow up on launch. Nothing on here was terribly bad, there were enough things to keep me interested, and Balor was a cool moment. Throw in the fans losing their minds and this was a good Friday night.

Results

Roman Reigns/Usos b. Rey Mysterio/Dominik Mysterio/Edge – Rollup to Rey
Nox/Shotzi b. Natalya/Tamina – Small package to Natalya
Bianca Belair b. Carmella – KOD
Cesaro b. Otis via DQ when Chad Gable interfered
Seth Rollins b. Kevin Owens, Shinsuke Nakamura and Big E. – Stomp onto a ladder to Big E.

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