

Smackdown – February 23, 2007: We're Getting There

Smackdown

Date: February 23, 2007

Location: iPayOne Center, San Diego, California

Attendance: 7,500

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

No Way Out has come and gone, with the big story being Batista attacking Undertaker to end the show. It wasn't quite a heel turn but rather Batista being more aggressive and ready to fight. That should make things all the more interesting on the way to Wrestlemania and we could probably use some more stuff to build it up. Let's get to it.

[Here is No Way Out if you need a recap.](#)

We open with a long video recapping Undertaker vs. Batista being set up, plus the No Way Out attack.

Michael Cole brings out Batista for a chat and if that was a heel turn (it wasn't), it didn't work. Batista isn't going to need Cole as he talks about being familiar with Undertaker before he came to WWE. Undertaker is the Phenom and Batista has nothing but respect for him. That being said, he cannot apologize for what he did at No Way Out.

Undertaker chokeslammed him a few weeks ago, which is why Batista promised that payback is a b****. As far as Batista is concerned, they are even as they go into Wrestlemania. If it gets ugly, it gets ugly, but no one is disrespecting him. No matter what happens, Batista is leaving Wrestlemania as World Champion. Batista stayed to the point here and it worked.

We get a look at Rey Mysterio's career, starting with his history with Eddie Guerrero.

Maryse, laid next to a fire, welcomes us back to the show.

Matt Hardy/Paul London/Brian Kendrick vs. Joey Mercury/Deuce and Domino

Ashley and Cherry are here too. Mercury drives Hardy into the corner and hammers away as JBL berates Cole for losing his voice at the pay per view. Hardy fights back and backdrops Mercury over the top onto Deuce and Domino, meaning London and Kendrick can start the double teaming. Domino finally offers a trip off the top though and it's Deuce taking over with some knees to the ribs.

The chinlock goes on and it's back to Domino to kick away. A double release gordbuster gets two with London making the save as we take a break. Back with Joey working on a waistlock but having to pull Kendrick down by the hair to cut off the comeback. Not that it matters as Kendrick gets over for the tag off to Hardy. House is cleaned for a bit as everything breaks down, including Hardy grabbing the Twist of Fate to finish Mercury.

Rating: C. I learned one thing from this match: I never need to see Hardy vs. Mercury in any form again. They aren't interesting and they have been done to death at this point, so find something new for both of them to do already. London and Kendrick vs. Deuce and Domino isn't there yet, but they should probably switch the titles already if they're going to.

Vickie Guerrero has everything taken care of, though details are scarce.

We look at Edge qualifying for Money in the Bank.

Rey Mysterio won the 2006 Royal Rumble.

Chavo Guerrero vs. Scotty 2 Hotty

Non-title. Chavo knocks him into the ropes to start but gets caught with a hiptoss. A dropkick puts Chavo down again and

Scotty hammers away in the corner. That earns him a dump over the top for a crash to the floor, meaning Scotty has to beat the count back in. Chavo cranks on both arms at the same time until Scotty fights up for a small package.

That earns him a big boot and we hit the abdominal stretch to keep Chavo in control. Scott fights out again and makes the clothesline comeback, though he does throw in a backdrop for a bonus. Chavo gets in Two Amigos but Scotty escapes the third, setting up the Worm. That's enough to send Chavo outside so Scotty hits a running flip dive off the apron. Back in and Chavo grabs a rollup with feet on the ropes for the cheating pin.

Rating: C. These two had a nice little match here as you wouldn't have expected these two to get much time. Chavo is someone who has long since been established as a big name in the division so he isn't going to lose much by being in trouble against Scotty for a bit. Good enough here as Chavo gets to brag about a win and Scotty gets to do his biggest stuff.

Raw Rebound.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Kane vs. King Booker

Falls Count Anywhere and Queen Sharmell is here with Booker. Kane gets pounded down into the corner to start but comes right back with his assortment of uppercuts. They head outside with Kane dropping him onto the barricade for two and they're back inside in a hurry. Booker hammers away in the corner again so Kane hits him in the face. Kane adds a knee to the ribs and falls down by mistake, allowing Booker to get in a shot of his own.

It's time to go back outside with Kane being sent face first into various things. Back in and Kane ducks a bell shot to the face, meaning it's another trip to the floor so Booker can get sent into hard objects. Booker DDTs him on the stage for two

but Kane is fine enough to beat him back to ringside. Sharmell's distraction allows Booker to get in a bell shot to send us to a break, because a bell shot isn't the end of the match.

Back with Booker working on the arm and getting two off the hook kick to the face. Kane gets tossed outside, where he grabs a chair to smash Booker in the head for two. Back in again and Kane hits some running clotheslines in the corner, setting up the side slam for two more. Booker sends him outside but dives into the chokeslam...and here is Great Khali to beat Kane down. Khali sends him through the barricade and leaves, allowing Booker to steal the pin.

Rating: C-. I'm not sure who thought this needed nearly eighteen minutes but it set up Kane vs. Khali and gives Booker something to do at Wrestlemania. It felt like they didn't know how to fill that much time as you can only go to the floor to brawl so many times and they went way over the quota here. It wasn't bad, but it was long and overstayed its welcome.

Post break, Khali comes up to Booker for a handshake. Khali leaves so celebrating can ensue.

We look at Ashley's Playboy cover reveal.

Rey Mysterio forced JBL to retain.

Finlay/Leprechaun vs. Boogeyman/Little Boogeyman

No Way Out rematch and there is no Leprechaun to start. He does pop up from under the ring skirt in fear and we take a break. We come back joined in progress with Finlay working on the arm...and then stomping on the worms. Cole freaks out over said worms as Little Boogeyman hits Finlay low.

Now the Leprechaun comes in for the brawl until Boogeyman and Finlay come in to take out the counterparts. Finlay hits Boogeyman with the Shillelagh and the Leprechaun hits a

jumping DDT for the pin. This was nuts in a good way, with JBL freaking out over Cole cheering for Rey to beat him in the clip before the match making it even better.

Maryse, with champagne and in very limited clothing, welcomes us back to the show.

We look back at Batista's opening speech.

Next week: Undertaker responds.

Here is Rey Mysterio, on a cane due to knee surgery, to the big hometown reception. It takes him the better part of a minute and a half to get in the ring and the wincing is strong. Rey talks about how great it is to be back in the ring, but it is even better to be back in his hometown. His rehab is ahead of schedule...and here is Vince McMahon to interrupt, with security following to surround the ring. Vince talks about how big of a star he is and brags about Wrestlemania, even though Rey can't be there.

We hear about the Battle of the Billionaires with Vince promising to humiliate Donald Trump and shave him bald. Vince can't wait to make Trump squeal (that's good for a shiver) and pull his hair out by the roots. We should get Rey's opinion on this, so Vince drops to a knee to ask Rey, who thinks Vince is a loser.

That's fine with Vince, who brings out Umaga to meet Rey. Cole and JBL don't seem to get what is happening here as Vince asks if Rey wants to change his pick. Then Vince hits Rey low and the beating is on, including a splash to the bad leg. Rey gets stretchered out to end the show. The hometown curse strikes again and it shouldn't be much of a surprise. At least we got to hear about Trump on Smackdown this time for a change of pace.

Overall Rating: C-. This was one of those shows where they kind of slowed the pace down and got us ready for next week

when Undertaker will be back to get us to the next big thing. Outside of Batista vs. Undertaker, we don't have much going on in the way of Smackdown exclusives. Maybe that can be fixed up, but I'm not sure what exactly could be added. Smackdown isn't exactly heavy in feuds, but they still have a long time to go before Wrestlemania to figure something out.