

Monday Night Raw – October 25, 2021: Same Very, Very Old

Monday Night Raw

Date: October 25, 2021

Location: Toyota Center, Houston, Texas

Commentators: Jimmy Smith, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

It's time for the season premiere and that means we have the new roster officially finalized. We are done with the weird post Draft season, meaning everyone is here for good, assuming you ignore Becky Lynch going to Smackdown last week. We also need to start getting ready for Survivor Series, where it's Raw vs. Smackdown again. Let's get to it.

[Here is Crown Jewel if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Here is Big E. to open things up and talk about how great it is to have the season premiere in a city like Houston, Texas. We get a LET'S GO ASTROS chant before Big E. congratulates Xavier Woods on winning the King of the Ring. He also needs to talk tip his cap to Drew McIntyre for pushing him even harder than expected at Crown Jewel. There is no rest for the weary though and now he needs a new challenger, so here is Seth Rollins to interrupt. Rollins thinks he should get a shot but Big E. points out the loss to Edge at Crown Jewel.

That doesn't work for Rollins, because he thought Big E. wants to be a fighting champion. The challenge is on for tonight but here is Rey Mysterio to interrupt (NO! NOT AGAIN WITH THESE TWO FIGHTING!). Mysterio lists off his resume and Big E. isn't sure where he should go here. Cue Finn Balor (hey he lost at Crown Jewel too) to list off his resume and say he should get a shot at the one title he hasn't won yet.

Now it's Kevin Owens to do the same thing as I'm still waiting on someone who actually won a match at Crown Jewel to come out and challenge. Rollins starts swinging but bails from the threat of the Stunner. Sonya Deville comes out to make a four way #1 contenders match. That's not big enough, so let's make it a ladder match. I mean, it has been about three months since the last ladder match around here and that's a long sabbatical for WWE. This would be the latest code for "please don't watch football".

Street Profits vs. Alpha Academy vs. Robert Roode/Dolph Ziggler

The winners get a Tag Team Title shot later tonight. Ford armbars Gable to start but gets taken down, allowing Gable to yell a lot. Back up and Ford flips out of a release German suplex, allowing the tag off to Dawkins. House is cleaned in a hurry, leaving Otis vs. the Profits. A double dropkick puts Otis on the floor and we take a break. Back with Roode suplexing Ford for two and stopping for some pushups. Ford manages to knock Roode down and a charging Ziggler is caught in a Batista Bomb.

Otis gets smart though by coming in to drag Ziggler to the Academy corner, allowing Otis to come in instead. A missed charge hits post though and it's Gable coming in to grab the leg, only to have Ford kick him away. The hot tag brings in Dawkins to clean house and there's the Silencer to Gable as everything breaks down.

The discus lariat/German suplex combination hits Dawkins hard but Ford hits one of the fastest frog splashes I've ever seen for the save. Ford hits the big flip dive onto Otis, leaving Dawkins to hit the Anointment on Roode. Cue Omos and AJ Styles with the former punching Dawkins in the face, setting up the Zig Zag/spinebuster combination to give Roode the pin at 10:23.

Rating: C. This was perfectly watchable and that is all it needed to be. You're only going to be able to get so much out of a ten minute match with six people and interference so they were working with some limitations. What matters most is it seems that we are getting something close to a tag division, with the three teams involved, RKBro and Styles/Omos. There isn't a ton there, but it's a heck of a lot better than two teams fighting over the titles and nothing else.

Here is Zelina Vega for her official coronation as Queen. Vega makes the ring announcer say her introduction again before asking what kind of queen she will be. With a British accent coming in and out, she says she'll be every kind of queen and she knows that she can beat Doudrop again. People will talk about her reign for years.

Doudrop vs. Zelina Vega

Doudrop grabs the scepter to start and pulls Vega in for a clothesline. There's a big toss to send Vega flying and let's do that again. Vega has to slip out of what looks like an over the shoulder piledriver but an elbow to the back just annoys Doudrop. A trip sends Doudrop into the corner though and Vega kicks her in the face. Vega scores with a middle rope Codebreaker for two so it's time to go for a turnbuckle pad. That means the distracted referee misses the scepter shot to Doudrop's face for the pin at 2:33.

We look at Roman Reigns cheating to beat Brock Lesnar at Crown Jewel, setting up Lesnar's path of destruction and suspension on Smackdown. Adam Pearce's massacre is included as well.

Here is the new Raw Women's Champion Becky Lynch for a chat, with commentary bringing up the testy exchange of titles on Smackdown. Becky says she never lost this title and she is going to pick up right where she left off. We hear about her winning the triple threat match at Crown Jewel and she knows that no one wants to see Bianca Belair getting anywhere near

the title. What about Rhea Ripley getting beaten up? Or maybe Liv Morgan!

Cue Bianca Belair, who takes off the earrings on the way to the ring. Belair says it is always something with Becky, who always gets what she wants because she never faces adversity. See, Belair keeps beating Sasha Banks and last week she beat the Raw Women's Champion, but now that is Becky. Belair says she is the new face of Raw, but Becky has her beaten again. We see some photos of their faces at Crown Jewel, with Becky looking happy and Belair looking mad.

Belair laughs it off and thinks that Becky has nothing behind the title. She FINALLY gets around to the title challenge and the fight is on, with Becky finding a kendo stick because WWE. Belair takes it away and beats Becky down but the KOD is escaped with a rake of the eyes. A Russian legsweep with the kendo stick drops Belair and Becky says she can have the title match...but not tonight. This was one of the most scripted segments I've seen in a LONG time, as Belair was just saying words over and over again to get to the point of "I want a title match".

They could have cut out two minutes of dialogue (because wrestling has dialogue) and made this that much better, but that might mean the show only needs 22 writers instead of 37. Also, WHY WAS THERE A KENDO STICK AT RINGSIDE??? Why? Someone tell me a logical reason for that to be at ringside other than it was needed for the brawl and was put in the script. If you absolutely must do Becky vs. Belair again, find a way to cut about $\frac{3}{4}$ out of this because it sounded so stupid.

We look back at the opening segment.

Kevin Owens tells Finn Balor he has to win.

Wrestlemania XXXVIII will be two nights.

T-Bar vs. Damian Priest

Non-title but it's a CHAMPIONS CONTENDER match, because that still needs to be a thing. T-Bar kicks him in the face to start and drops Priest face first onto the buckle for two. Priest gets planted again for two more, setting up a good looking moonsault for a one count. Back up and Priest hits a running elbow in the corner, setting up the Broken Arrow. T-Bar gets knocked outside, where he throws the announcer's chair at Priest for the DQ at 2:40. This was the first time T-Bar has come close to feeling like Dominick Dijakovic in over a year.

Post match Priest snaps and beats the heck out of T-Bar, including the Reckoning back inside.

Carmella doesn't like Liv Morgan trying to mess up her face.

Carmella vs. Liv Morgan

Yes, again. Carmella puts the mask on to start and jumps Morgan in the corner. Some shots to the face get two, allowing Carmella to remind us that she is hot and we aren't. Morgan tries the comeback but charges into two boots in the corner. We hit the chinlock but Morgan fights up with a jumping enziguri. Morgan takes it outside but can't kick Carmela into the announcers' table. She can however bulldog her onto it, allowing some trash talk to Corey Graves. Back in and Oblivion misses so Morgan has to settle for two off a small package instead. Carmella is back with a floatover into an X Factor for the pin at 2:58.

Bearcat Lee vs. Cedric Alexander

Lee's entrance now has a bearcat growl to hammer home the idea. Cedric is sent flying to start and needs a meeting with Shelton Benjamin on the floor. Back in and Lee shoves him around and shoves Alexander down by the head. A running splash in the corner sets up a missed charge, allowing Alexander to kick away at the leg. Lee runs him over again and shouts a lot before the Big Bang Catastrophe finishes Alexander at 2:38.

Finisher aside, this felt like they took everything that made Lee feel unique and replaced it with generic power stuff.

Post match, Lee glares at Shelton Benjamin.

Earlier tonight, Dominik Mysterio gave Rey Mysterio a pep talk but Austin Theory interrupted. Theory asks Dominik to take a selfie for them (back in my day, that was called a photo) but we're getting a match instead, with Rey saying he'll be out there if Dominik wants him do be. Dominik says Rey has enough to do already so he's got this. Everything seems cool.

Dominik Mysterio vs. Austin Theory

Theory dropkicks Dominik down to start and hits the Eddie Guerrero dance, which has Saxton losing his mind on commentary. Dominik is back with a high angle springboard armdrag and does the dance as well. There's a hurricanrana to Theory but he grabs a half nelson backbreaker for two. Theory misses a charge into the corner but is right back with the ATL for the pin at 2:58.

Post match, Theory gets a selfie with the referee. Theory piling up wins is a good thing for him as they are building him up more and more every week.

Riddle thinks he and Randy Orton could be Mario and Luigi or the creepy girls from the Shining. Orton says they can talk about Halloween later but for now, they need to worry about Robert Roode and Dolph Ziggler.

Video on Veer.

Tag Team Titles: RKBro vs. Dolph Ziggler/Robert Roode

RKBro is defending. Riddle and Ziggler start things off and go nowhere, so Orton comes in (to the fans' delight) to face Roode. Orton uppercuts him into the corner but it's too early for the RK0. Roode bails to the floor but gets beaten down back inside. An assisted Floating Bro gives Riddle two and

Roode is knocked outside again. The apron kick to the chest is cut off though and we take a break.

Back with Roode missing a charge in the corner, allowing the hot tag off to Orton. There's the snap powerslam to Roode but Zigler's distraction breaks up the hanging DDT. Orton gets sent knees first into the barricade, setting up a Crossface from Zigler back inside. With that broken up, Roode grabs a chinlock but Orton fights up again. The hot tag brings in Riddle to clean house as everything breaks down. The RKO hits Roode but Zigler superkicks Orton and rolls Riddle up for two. Riddle is right back with his own rollup for the pin at 11:48.

Rating: C+. This started off kind off slowly but then picked up steam to make it that much better. RKBro is starting to get better as a team in the ring and now that they actually have some fresh opponents, we might be able to get somewhere. Nice match here, and it was a good change of pace after so many short matches throughout the match.

Seth Rollins says of course he has a target on his back but he doesn't care because he'll win the ladder match tonight.

Video on Goldberg vs. Bobby Lashley at Crown Jewel.

Seth Rollins vs. Rey Mysterio vs. Kevin Owens vs. Finn Balor

Ladder match for a future title shot against Big E. It's a brawl to start and everyone heads outside, with the referee checking on Owens after a shot with a ladder. Owens is fine enough to pick up a ladder and start cleaning house. Back in and Owens powerbombs Balor onto a ladder bridged against the rope. The Swanton only hits ladder though and we take a break.

Back with Rollins cleaning house with the ladder and shouting about how he shouldn't be in this match. Balor breaks that up and heads up top to get a hand on the contract, with Mysterio making the save. Owens shoves both of them down though and

German suplexes Balor down. Mysterio gets planted as well and Owens goes up but Mysterio manages to make the save. With everyone else down, Owens sets up a table, only to get jumped by Balor. Rollins dives onto both of them but Rey is up with some ladder shots of his own. Balor hits another big flip dive to the floor though and we take a break.

Back with Rollins shoving a ladder over but getting taken down by Mysterio. Owens plants Mysterio but can't follow up, leaving Rollins to bridge a ladder between the announcers' table and the apron. Balor goes up and vets a hand on the contract but gets pulled down into a Stunner from Owens. Mysterio's hurricanrana is countered into a powerbomb through the table at ringside. Rollins cuts off Owens' climb and sends him through the bridged ladder (check the box) and Stomps Balor. That's enough for Rollins to get the contract at 22:17.

Rating: B. I'm sick of ladder matches. Absolutely sick of them. This one had all of the required stuff too: illogical table setup, someone going through a ladder bridged horizontally at ringside, people suddenly forgetting how to pull down a clipboard/other object, "LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT LADDER HE JUST PULLED OUT!" and "I can't believe he won!". WWE has run this match into the ground so hard for so long now that I never need to see another one, but I'd be shocked if we don't have at least two more by Thanksgiving at the latest. As for this match, it was the usually entertaining and completely not memorable WWE ladder match.

Post match Big E. comes out for the staredown with Rollins, who offers a handshake.

In the back, Rollins says this is his show and he is back and better than ever. Maniacal laughter ends the show.

Overall Rating: C. This show feels so exhausted that it's hard to even get annoyed at it. The stuff they're doing is still ok enough most of the time, but it feels like there hasn't been

anything original in so long. It comes off like they are doing nothing but playing the hits or ideas that worked before and that makes for a very, very tiring three hours.

That's the word for this show, and Raw in general: tired. The show feels like it is just completely out of energy and ideas and if they stumble into a good match, it's more out of luck than anything else. Between taking the Smackdown women's feuds and just moving them over to Raw to "hey I want a title shot/no I want a title shot/NO! I WANT A TITLE SHOT!" to T-Bar being called T-Bar, this show felt like it was cobbled together from pieces of other shows pulled out of a bag.

I don't know if this was over another script being ripped up at the last minute or WWE not preparing for tonight or just Raw in general, but this show has no spark whatsoever. I don't get that feeling with Smackdown or NXT and certainly not with any AEW show. Instead, this was the latest example of a show that might not be the worst quality wise (and there have been FAR worse episodes than this in the last few months), but it was so hard to bring myself to care about almost anything they were doing.

You know what was actually the bright spot this week? The tag team stuff, which featured multiple teams wanting to go after the titles and a new feud being set up with Omos/AJ Styles vs. the Street Profits while RKBro dealt with Robert Roode/Dolph Ziggler. That actually felt different and it was such a breath of air on a show without much else on it worth seeing (along with Austin Theory, who comes off like a star in the making).

All things considered, Raw is not the worst wrestling show, but it is the least interesting because WWE has made it hard to care about. It feels like they are going out of their way to take away anything that might get the fans' attention and are just getting by week to week. The show doesn't so much need an overhaul as much as it needs some fresh minds behind the scenes, and that isn't going to happen anytime in the

future.

Results

Robert Roode/Dolph Ziggler b. Alpha Academy and Street Profits
– Zig Zag/spinebuster combination to Dawkins
Zelina Vega b. Doudrop – Scepter to the face
Damian Priest b. T-Bar via DQ when T-Bar threw a chair
Carmella b. Liv Morgan – Floatover X Factor
Bearcat Lee b. Cedric Alexander – Big Bang Catastrophe
Austin Theory b. Dominik Mysterio – ATL
RKBro b. Dolph Ziggler/Robert Roode – Rollup to Ziggler
Seth Rollins b. Kevin Owens, Finn Balor and Rey Mysterio –
Rollins pulled down the contract

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