

Monday Night Raw – January 24, 2022: Beginning To Rumble

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 24, 2022

Location: Huntington Center, Toledo, Ohio

Commentators: Jimmy Smith, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

It's the go home show for the Royal Rumble and that could mean a few things. While the show is mostly set on the Raw side, there is always room to get in the final push towards Saturday and odds are that is what we are getting tonight. If nothing else, we have Miz celebrating Maryse's birthday, which sounds shenanigansy. Let's get to it.

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

We're starting big this week with the official weigh-in between Bobby Lashley (with MVP) and Brock Lesnar (with Paul Heyman). Lesnar is looking rather casual in jeans and a cowboy hat, which Corey Graves doesn't like. That earns him a threat, but Lashley goes first and weighs 273lbs. MVP says the match has been in the making for a long time but don't worry, because Lashley will be gaining weight after the Rumble: the exact same weight as that title.

Lesnar goes next, and does at least take off his hat, allowing him to weigh in at 286lbs. Lashley says Lesnar isn't taking this serious but Lesnar talks about how Sunday morning, the headlines will read about Lashley winning with the Hurt Lock. Heyman: "What?" Lesnar: "The new WWE Champion: Bobby Who!"

We look at Bianca Belair winning last year's women's Royal Rumble.

Here's what's coming tonight.

Bianca Belair vs. Queen Zelina

And yes, after making her entrance before the break and the preview for tonight's show, we are supposed to believe that Belair has been dancing in the ring for about six minutes straight. Belair wrestles her down to start and hits a dropkick but Zelina kicks her into the corner. A gorilla press and some suplexes put Zelina down again but she's back up to try a Code Red. That's blocked with straight power though and the KOD finishes for Belair at 3:50.

Rating: C-. This was little more than a squash, with Belair running Zelina over the whole time. That's how it should have been too, as Belair is going to be a favorite for the Rumble. Zelina has her crown and lame King Booker impression and that is about all she needs to be doing right now.

Kevin Owens does not like being accused of lying against Damian Priest last week so tonight, he'll do as the shirt says and Keep On Fighting.

United States Title: Damian Priest vs. Kevin Owens

Priest is defending. Priest starts slugging away in the corner and punches his way out of trouble. The chokeslam is broken up so Owens bails to the floor, only to step away from the threat of a dive. Owens is sent into the barricade instead but still manages to knock Priest off the apron. The Swanton hits raised knees though and we take a break.

Back with Owens hitting a tornado DDT into a frog splash for two. The low superkick doesn't get Owens much further though as Priest hits his own kick to the face for two of his own. Hold on though as Owens claims another injury but this time, Priest stomps away. The goldbricking lets Owens grab a rollup with tights for two but Priest blasts him with a clothesline. Priest unloads in the corner and the referee finally calls for the DQ at 9:36.

Rating: C+. Remember when Priest unloaded on Dolph Ziggler and got disqualified? Or when he unloaded on Shinsuke Nakamura and got disqualified? Or when WWE had one idea for how to present someone like Priest? I'm glad Priest is getting this much TV time, but can WWE please come up with something new other than this Ken Shamrock IN THE ZONE idea?

We look back at Nikki Ash beating up Rhea Ripley last week.

Rhea Ripley is ready to win the Royal Rumble.

Dana Brooke is ready to win the Royal Rumble.

Liv Morgan is ready to win the Royal Rumble.

Rhea Ripley/Dana Brooke/Liv Morgan vs. Nikki Ash/Carmella/Tamina

During the entrances, Sonya Deville yells at Damian Priest in the back. Doesn't do anything about it, but she does threaten him. Also, Tamina, Nikki and Carmella are ready to win the Rumble. Tamina knocks Dana into the corner to start so it's Rhea coming in with a bunch of clotheslines. The basement dropkick rocks Tamina again and everything breaks down. Carmella gets the tag and the Prism Trap finishes for Ripley at 2:21.

Post match Nikki gets in a cheap shot on Rhea and runs off.

We recap RKBro vs. Alpha Academy being set up for an Academic Challenge, because that's what we watch Raw to see.

And now, a spelling bee between Alpha Academy and RKBro. Before we get started though, Chad Gable makes it clear that this is the first of three events over the next three weeks. He also insults Ohio's intelligence and brags about his GPA (which he doesn't spell). RKBro comes out, and we start with Otis spelling some kind of Swiss cheese.

Riddle thinks calibration is pronounced calibrotion and then

doesn't understand he has to spell it himself. Then he gets it right , meaning it's time to celebrate. Gable brags about how easy his word will be and then misspells dissolution. Orton gets dumbbell to win and now it's time for Orton vs. Gable. Randy even spells how he'll win: R-K-O. This could have been worse, but having it go on for three weeks isn't exactly appealing.

Randy Orton vs. Chad Gable

Feeling out process to start until Gable starts in on the arm. Orton can't get very far away though as it's an armdrag into an armbar to put him in trouble. The threat of an RKO sends Gable bailing to the floor but he's back in to send Orton bailing as well. Orton is fine with going outside though as he drops Gable back first onto the announcers' table. Otis offers a distraction though and Gables takes out Orton's knee. The moonsault gets two on Orton and we take a break.

Back with Gable working on his leg some more but Orton fights up for the backbreaker. There's the hanging DDT but Otis suplexes Riddle on the floor. Gable grabs a backslide for two, only to charge into the powerslam. The RKO is countered into the ankle lock, only to have Riddle jump Otis with the scooter. Orton sends gable into the corner and now the RKO can finish at 13:35.

Rating: B-. Scooter hijinks aside, this was a good match as Gable continues to feel like one of the bigger threats to break through to the next level. I have no reason to believe he ever will, but it feels like the chance is there. Orton pinning him isn't a bad thing, but I'm not sure about having this Academic Challenge stuff go on for two more weeks.

Post match, Riddle picks next week's competition: a scooter race!

Bad Bunny has a tour coming.

We recap last week's therapy session, with Alexa Bliss still being obsessed with Lillie. Someone throws a headset down in the background.

We go to Alexa Bliss back in therapy. This time she is asked about how she met Lillie, sending her into a story about how she was six years old and some girls made fun of her. Then she met Lillie, who took care of them...somehow. They had fun all day and that's the segment, as we go back to commentary with Bliss still babbling away.

Austin Theory tries to get Vince McMahon to give him a good Royal Rumble number but Vince wants him to focus on AJ Styles. Theory lists off Styles' resume and goes to leave, but forgets his phone. Vince tells him to bring back a really good selfie.

Veer Mahaan is still coming to Raw.

AJ Styles vs. Austin Theory

Styles starts fast by shrugging Theory off and dropkicking him out to the floor. There's the slingshot forearm to the floor and Theory is rocked early. Back in and Theory sends him face first into the corner, setting up the quickly broken chinlock. Some chops and kicks to the chest have Theory down and there's the jumping knee drop.

Theory drops him throat first across the top rope and sends Styles chest first into the buckle. A big crash out to the floor has Styles in more trouble and we take a break. Back with Styles getting kicked in the head and being knocked down again. Styles is able to pop back up with the middle rope moonsault into the reverse DDT though and the comeback is on.

The Phenomenal Blitz sets up the sliding forearm for two on Theory. A belly to back suplex gets Theory out of trouble though and a running Blockbuster gives him two of his own. The Pele drops Theory again but Theory goes to the ropes to escape the Calf Crusher. Back up and Theory breaks up the Phenomenal

Forearm but gets caught with his feet on the ropes. Styles is fine enough to get back to the ropes and now the Phenomenal Forearm finishes Theory at 16:56.

Rating: B. These two worked very well together and putting Theory in the ring with someone like Styles is a good idea. I'm still not sure what is going on with the Vince/Theory stuff, but it seems that WWE sees something in Theory in the first place. Styles can be put into any spot on the show and thrive, which is a very useful asset to have.

Ad for WWE2K22.

We get a sitdown interview between Becky Lynch and Doudrop, with Becky talking about how confident she is and Doudrop not buying Becky being this good. Becky didn't hear a thank you for putting Doudrop in the biggest match of her career. She brings up Doudrop attacking her last week to cost them a tag match, but Doudrop can't hear anything because the whining makes her zone out. Doudrop gets up and marches into Becky's studio to drive her into a wall. Referees break it up in a hurry.

We look back at Rey Mysterio tossing his son Dominik over the top last week in a Royal Rumble preview.

Rey is very pleased with being on the cover of WWE2K22. Dominik is ready to win the Royal Rumble, but Rey says that means throwing him out. Rey: "He's just kidding."

Street Profits vs. Mysterios

Dominik sends Dawkins outside to start and hits a dive, leaving Ford to backdrop Rey onto Dominik (for a nearly scary crash) on the floor. Ford hits a big running dive of his own and we take a break. Back with Dawkins dropping Dominik with a right hand for two but the hot tag brings in Rey to pick up the pace. Ford launches Rey into the air for the big crash, setting up the rolling splash for two. Dominik breaks it up

but the double 619 is cut off by Dawkins. Rey victory rolls Ford for the pin at 7:51.

Rating: C+. The flips and dives were good here with both teams getting the chance to show what they can do in the air. Rey is likely to get a big push going forward towards the video game launch, but it isn't like losing to a former World Champion is going to kill the Profits' momentum. You know, assuming they had any.

Post match Dominik tries to dump Rey but gets tossed out for his efforts. The Profits throw them out but get dumped by Dolph Ziggler and Robert Roode. The Profits and the Mysterios get back in to clear the ring but don't trust each other.

Smackdown Rebound.

Seth Rollins knows he has Roman Reigns' number and he'll prove it at the Royal Rumble. For this week though, he'll be at Smackdown too.

Royal Rumble rundown.

Here is Miz for Maryse's big birthday celebration. There are all kinds of gifts and paintings around, so here is Maryse to open everything. Miz opens the first present, which is a portrait of the two of them as a prince and princess, which has to be looked at from the side as the straight on shot leaves it with a glare that makes it impossible to see. The second gift: what looks like a bedazzled jewelry box.

Now she wants the big gift, which Miz doesn't recognize. Miz thinks there is something going on here and tells security to open the gift. It's....a brick on a stand. Miz laughs a lot and we see Maryse hitting Beth Phoenix in the back of the head with the loaded purse last week. With that out of the way, it's time for Miz to sing Happy Birthday but Edge and Beth Phoenix interrupt.

Edge threatens violence and they run through security without much trouble. The presents are wrecked and more security is beaten up, including with a Hart Attack and a 3D for some fun. Miz and Maryse panic as another guard is powerbombed through the cake to end the show. This was pretty by the book but Miz and Maryse are great at this kind of thing.

Overall Rating: C+. There were some rocky points on this show but the mostly good wrestling carried everything else. The World Title match didn't get a lot of attention here, but ultimately that match is going to sell itself. This show was more about the Royal Rumble matches and those are the ones that have not gotten a ton of attention. Oh and there was a spelling bee.

Results

Bianca Belair b. Queen Zelina – KOD

Kevin Owens b. Damian Priest via DQ when Priest attacked in the corner

Rhea Ripley/Dana Brooke/Liv Morgan b. Tamina/Carmella/Nikki Ash – Prism Trap to Carmella

Randy Orton b. Chad Gable – RKO

AJ Styles b. Austin Theory – Phenomenal Forearm

Mysterios b. Street Profits – Victory roll to Ford

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