

Smackdown – March 18, 2022: The Kind Of Show I Like

Smackdown

Date: March 18, 2022

Location: Spectrum Center, Charlotte, North Carolina

Commentators: Pat McAfee, Michael Cole

Wrestlemania is two weeks from tomorrow and we have most of the card set. There are still some matches to be made, but most of this show is probably going to be about building on what has already been started. That can make for some successful shows, but the stories need to be good in the first place. Let's get to it.

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

In memory of Scott Hall.

We open with a recap of Roman Reigns attacking Brock Lesnar at Madison Square Garden, leading to Lesnar trying to eat Paul Heyman last week.

Here is the Bloodline to get things going. Reigns tells the crowd to acknowledge him before moving on to Lesnar. Hold on though as Heyman interrupts, saying that due to a bad weather patter, Lesnar is stuck in Canada and will not be here tonight. The fans want Lesnar and Reigns says he wants the same thing.

Reigns talks about how he would have smashed Lesnar had he been here but keeps cutting off Heyman from saying something else. He finally lets Heyman give his update: Lesnar has landed and he's on his way here! Heyman: "WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?" Reigns: "I know what I'm gonna do: I'm gonna let you wrap it up and we're gonna get out of here." Everyone bails in a hurry after a runny moments from Reigns.

After a look at what's coming tonight, the Bloodline is running away and gets in their car. Cue Lesnar, on a forklift (which was apparently just laying around), to stab the lift through the car and, during a break, turn it its side. The Bloodline escapes and gets in a truck, which Lesnar chases down and rips a door off as they peel out again. Lesnar even dropped his hat.

Here is Lesnar in the arena, with the truck door, saying he is a little fired up. Roman Reigns has unleashed the bipolar beast. In two weeks, at Wrestlemania, Lesnar is going to do more than blow the door off because he's coming for blood so Reigns better be prepared.

We look back at Rick Boogs earning a Tag team Title shot at Wrestlemania for himself and Shinsuke Nakamura.

Rick Boogs/Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Los Lotharios

Humberto and Nakamura start things off, with Nakamura not being thrilled at the kiss blown his way. COME ON sets up the beatdown to start, including Good Vibrations in the corner. The running knee to the ribs gets two so it's Angel coming in to take over with some double teaming. Angel TAKES OFF HIS PANTS and it's a double basement dropkick to the back for two on Nakamura.

That doesn't last long but the comeback is cut off so Nakamura can get beaten down some more. A cheap shot takes Boogs off the apron and a running shot to the face gets two on Nakamura. That's broken up this time though and the hot tag brings in Boogs to start cleaning house. The Boogs Cruise finishes Angel at 4:46.

Rating: C. Now this is the kind of match that can do some good for Nakamura and Boogs. While they're somewhat established as a team, they can use a few more wins on the way to their title shot. Granted it might have made more sense to do that the other way around, but at least they are starting to put

something together and that is how you build a team up.

We look back at Drew McIntyre fighting off a three on one beatdown last week.

Happy Corbin is ready to win, though Madcap Moss' joke (What do you call an episode of Happy Time that puts everyone to sleep? Nappy time!) has everyone looking at him.

Viking Raiders/Drew McIntyre vs. Happy Corbin/Shanky/Jinder Mahal

Madcap Moss is here with the villains. Shanky takes Erik into the corner to start so it's off to Mahal, who gets dropped by the Vikings. Ivar cleans house but Corbin plants him with a spinebuster and we take a break. Back with Mahal putting Ivar in a chinlock, which is broken up without much trouble. The hot tag brings in McIntyre to take out Mahal and Shanky as Corbin and Moss watch from the floor. A Michinoku Driver sets up the Claymore to finish Shanky at 7:14.

Rating: C-. It is becoming more and more clear that there is little way to make Corbin vs. McIntyre interesting. McIntyre is on another level than Corbin and it feels like they are trying to fill in as much time as they can before the match and its inevitable ending. This wasn't even that interesting of a match, but some of that might have to do with how little I care to see the end result.

Sami Zayn is sick of Johnny Knoxville and his childish pranks. Zayn wants their Wrestlemania match to be anything goes.

Sasha Banks/Naomi vs. Rhea Ripley/Liv Morgan

Carmella and Queen Zelina are at ringside. Morgan and Banks start things off with Banks wristdragging her down. They trade rollups for two each and stereo dropkicks give us a standoff. Naomi comes in and takes Liv down for the splits splash but it's off to Ripley instead. As Carmella shows off her

engagement ring, Ripley hits a basement dropkick for two on Naomi and then powers out of a headlock.

Banks gets her chance but can't manage a suplex on the bigger Ripley. Instead Ripley hits a delayed vertical suplex for two, allowing the tag back to Morgan. Banks and Naomi are sent outside so Ripley can cannonball them down from the apron as we take a break (with the champs being very happy).

We come back with McAfee pointing out that these three teams were all thrown together as Ripley fights out of a chinlock. Banks comes back in for the double knees in the corner to Morgan, setting up the middle rope Meteora for two. Morgan enziguris her way out of trouble so Ripley can come in with a heck of a missile dropkick for two on Banks. Riptide is broken up though and it's a Backstabber from Banks to set up the split legged moonsault for two, with Morgan diving in for the save. A double superplex to Ripley is turned into a Tower of Doom...but Natalya and Shayna Baszler come in for the double DQ at 11:50.

Rating: B-. This was cooking near the end but then they had to do something to add yet another thrown together team into the Wrestlemania title match. Fair enough as they already have two thrown together teams so why not make it a third? I do like that neither of the teams took a fall, but dang I wanted to see more of this and the interference was a letdown.

Post match the big beatdown is on with the champs joining in. Natalya and Baszler say they're coming for the titles so Carmella and Vega get nervous. Some Natalya sign pointing makes things even more clear.

Johnny Knoxville is in on the anything goes deal.

Pat McAfee has been summoned to Vince McMahon's office.

Sonya Deville approves of Natalya and Shayna Baszler, so they're in the Women's Tag Team Title match too.

Here is McAfee back in the arena and getting into the ring. McAfee talks about seeing professional wrestling (his words) for the first time as a kid and it shaped him forever. He always wanted to do something and after he retired from the NFL, he got a call from Michael Cole, who offered him a job doing commentary on Smackdown.

McAfee talks about going from city to city but here is Austin Theory to interrupt. As per Vince McMahon's orders, McAfee has to apologize for last week, so McAfee apologizes for giving him that beat. He also apologizes for Theory's parents hating him and for Theory being a punk b****. Theory takes a selfie, laughs about the apology, and shoves McAfee being running off.

We look back at Brock Lesnar chasing the Bloodline into the parking lot and ripping the door off the hinges.

Rick Boogs and Shinsuke Nakamura go mountain biking.

Kofi Kingston vs. Ridge Holland

Butch and Sheamus are here too. Before the match, we look at Big E.'s injury and his various messages, including saying how touched he is by the outpouring of success and promising to get better. It's a brawl to start with Holland being knocked outside and Kofi trust falls him into the announcers' table. We take a break and come back with Kofi fighting out of a chinlock and chopping away. Kofi starts the real comeback and hits the Boom Drop but a Sheamus distraction lets Butch shove Kofi off the top. Butch gets ejected but tries to come back in. That's enough of a distraction for Holland to hit Northern Grit for the pin at 6:52.

Rating: C. I think you can see where this is going and that would be Xavier Woods returning to help Kingston even the odds up a little bit. I double they get a third person for the match but at least 3-2 is a bit better. Holland winning is certainly a way to go here, but they did at least offer him a bit of remorse by having commentary talk about him apologizing

to Big E. It isn't meant to be some evil deed but rather an accident and I think I like that better than exploiting such a terrible situation.

Long recap of Ronda Rousey vs. Charlotte's recent issues, with Rousey making Charlotte tap to the ankle lock. Charlotte couldn't make Rousey tap last week though and frustration seems to have set in.

Here is Charlotte for the closing chat. Charlotte talks about her dominance and says no one has caused Ronda Rousey more pain than her. She is going to beat Rousey at Wrestlemania because she is the mountain that Rousey has to climb. Rousey does not have what it takes to win so she will go back home and make another baby after it's over. Actually Charlotte can't wait, so come out here right now and take a beating in Charlotte's hometown.

Cue Rousey, ignoring Kayla Braxton's warnings that it might be a trap, but Charlotte pulls out a kendo stick. Rousey ducks the big swing though and goes for the armbar, sending Charlotte outside. That's fine with Rousey, who follows her out for the ankle lock. Charlotte breaks that up with a kendo stick shot but the choking won't make Rousey tap. Instead, Charlotte powerbombs her through the announcers' table to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. I can always go for a show that feels like it has goals in mind and then sets out to accomplish those goals. That is what we got here, as this show focused on a variety of either Wrestlemania matches or stories that are going to become Wrestlemania matches and built them up. Wrestlemania has needed some shows like this and it was nice to see one that didn't go flying off the rails. My one issue: Ricochet was nowhere to be seen and seems to be waiting on a last second addition to make Wrestlemania. He's the Intercontinental Champion and that shouldn't be his best option.

Results

Rick Boogs/Shinsuke Nakamura b. Los Lotharios – Boogs Cruise to Angel

Viking Raiders/Drew McIntyre b. Happy Corbin/Jinder Mahal/Shanky – Claymore to Shanky

Sasha Banks/Naomi vs. Liv Morgan/Rhea Ripley went to a double DQ when Shayna Baszler and Natalya interfered

Ridge Holland b. Kofi Kingston – Northern Grit

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