

Smackdown – March 25, 2022: As Frustrated As I Have Been In A Long Time

Smackdown

Date: March 25, 2022

Location: Barclays Center, New York City, New York

Commentators: Michael Cole, Pat McAfee

We're eight days away from Wrestlemania and believe it or not, the preview for the show has a picture of Roman Reigns/Brock Lesnar/Paul Heyman, because that is the only thing on this show that matters. It would be nice for the new Intercontinental Champion to get a Wrestlemania match set up, but I wouldn't bet on it anytime soon. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of Brock Lesnar's path of rage last week, including the fork lift attack on the Bloodline's SUV.

Opening sequence.

Brock Lesnar is outside of Reigns' dressing room and says that he has paid some fines and bought some vehicles, including a blood red SUV for Reigns himself. Now upper management has told him to not have any contact with Reigns, so he'll be sitting in Reigns' locker room and wait for a good provoking. Lesnar goes into the empty room, likes what he has found ("Not as good as mine but not bad") and puts his feet on the table, breaking it in the process. As Lesnar tends to do.

Jimmy Uso vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

Jey Uso and Rick Boogs are here too, with Boogs throwing Jey at Jimmy to send us to a break before the bell. The battle over wrist control doesn't last long so Nakamura gives us a

COME ON before taking Jimmy down. Good Vibrations makes it worse for Jimmy and he heads outside for a breather.

Back in and Jimmy gets two off a belly to back suplex, setting up the chinlock. Nakamura fights up but gets sent to the apron and then out to the floor. Jimmy's suicide dive is cut off by a kick to the head though and we take a break. Back with Nakamura knocking Jimmy down again but Jey jumps Boogs before Kinshasa can launch. The distraction lets Jimmy hit a superkick for two so Jey goes after the guitar. That distraction lets Nakamura hit a spinning kick to the head, setting up Kinshasa for the pin at 8:36.

Rating: C-. It's not a good sign when you need to go double interference and the fact that it's a singles match to set up a tag match at the pay per view. This is one of WWE's most overdone tropes and I'm not sure why it is supposed to be impressive. Nakamura is a former multiple time singles champion and a former Royal Rumble winner. Jimmy Uso is a career tag guy with pretty much no notable singles wins. Why is this an accomplishment for Nakamura?

Raw Rebound, focusing on Kevin Owens as Steve Austin.

Brock Lesnar is eating Roman Reigns' grapes and breaking his bottle of champagne.

Shad Gaspard is receiving the Warrior Award at the Hall of Fame.

Drew McIntyre could take out Happy Corbin tonight but he'd rather do it on the biggest stage of them all.

Video on Happy Corbin's fall and rise back up to the top of the world. Then he joined up with Madcap Moss and took out Drew McIntyre, leading to their Wrestlemania match.

Kofi Kingston vs. Ridge Holland

Hold on though, as Kofi has a surprise: Holland is facing the

returning Xavier Woods! The fact that Woods was introduced as accompanying Kofi to the ring might take away some of the surprise.

King Woods vs. Ridge Holland

Sheamus and Butch are here too. Holland throws him around to start and gets small packaged for the pin at 46 seconds. Ok then.

Paul Heyman joins us from Roman Reigns' car after a trip to Del Frisco's Steakhouse. They're on their way here and know what Brock Lesnar has done. Threats are made if Lesnar isn't out of there.

Here's Ronda Rousey for a chat but first we recap her recent issues with Charlotte. Rousey says she isn't taking Charlotte's title, because after Charlotte taps, she can give the title over. Then she'll be the "Women's Smackdown Champion." Rousey: "Why do we have to say women anyway? Call me the Smackdown Champion".

She calls Charlotte out, but here is Charlotte via satellite to say she isn't here tonight. Rousey says she broke her first arm at 14 and now she has lost count of how many she has broken. Charlotte laughs it off so Rousey threatens to take her arm off at Wrestlemania. As usual, Rousey is not the most natural speaker.

Kayla Braxton comes in to see Brock Lesnar and asks if he should leave Roman Reigns' locker room. Lesnar says go find Reigns because he is running out of things to break.

Ricochet vs. Humberto

Championship Contenders match. Angel is here with Humberto for the Los Lotharios Kiss Cam and it takes some time for them to find a woman to kiss. We take a break before the match and come back with...this.

Ricochet vs. Angel

Yes they changed the match during the commercial, because WWE likes to do weird things. Angel starts fast but gets set into the corner, allowing Ricochet to nip up. A jumping knee sets up a high crossbody but Humberto offers a distraction, allowing Angel to small package him for the pin at 2:03.

Post match Ricochet says not so fast so let's do this too.

Ricochet vs. Humberto

Championship Contenders match. Ricochet isn't playing this time and knocks Humberto outside, setting up the big running flip dive to send us to a break. Back with Ricochet hitting a springboard hurricanrana, setting up a middle rope moonsault. Angel's distraction lets Humberto roll him up for two but Ricochet rolls some suplexes for two. Angel pulls Humberto out of the way of the 630 so Ricochet hits a big dive to wipe Angel out. That sends Angel underneath the ring so Ricochet hits a tornado DDT on the floor. Then Angel grabs the foot and Ricochet is counted out at 7:03.

Rating: D+. Well that's to be expected. Since there is absolutely no other way to set up a title match than by having the champ lose twice in ten minutes, here we are. Ricochet couldn't just say he wanted a challenge, have both of them come out, and then say sure I'll do it. No, that would be too interesting and make him look too good. This is the best idea that they had and that says a lot.

Austin Theory runs up behind Pat McAfee and slaps his headset off. McAfee gives chase but Theory runs into Mr. McMahon's office, leaving McAfee slapping the door. Shouldn't McAfee have tripped on the way there and then paid a janitor for messing something up? Seems how most good guys are on this show.

We hear about HHH's in-ring career being over, which is rather

sobering given how close to death he was.

Sasha Banks vs. Rhea Ripley vs. Carmella vs. Queen Zelina

All of their partners are here too. Banks and Ripley clear the ring to start and Rhea hits the Rey Mysterio sitout bulldog. Everyone, including partners, get inside for a big brawl and we take a break. Back with the partners all gone and Baszler saving banks from the Prism Trap. Zelina comes in and covers all three for two each but gets pulled into the Bank Statement.

Baszler tries another save so it's a double Bank Statement with Ripley having to make a save. Banks has to save Ripley from the Kirifuda Clutch, leaving Baszler to save Banks from Zelina's Code Red. With Baszler on the floor, Ripley hits a flip dive but Vega takes Ripley out as well. Back in and the Bank Statement makes Vega tap at 8:48.

Rating: C. The champ loses again because that's how you set up title matches around here. This was another match where everyone was doing stuff until one of them got the pin, which is somehow supposed to make me want to see these four teams in a match at Wrestlemania. It didn't do so in particular, and I doubt it will either on Raw when the other four do the same thing.

Roman Reigns and Paul Heyman arrive. Heyman says he's worried but Reigns says he'll be fine. Reigns: "But Brock Lesnar won't."

We run down the Wrestlemania card.

Here are Roman Reigns and Paul Heyman for the big final chat. Reigns says Brock Lesnar better be out of his locker room so we cut to said locker room, where Lesnar is nowhere to be found. We cut to the parking lot, where Lesnar has a PICKAXE to smash up Reigns' car. Reigns says there won't be any weapons at Wrestlemania, so Lesnar comes to the ring.

Cue Lesnar through the crowd to stare at Reigns from the announcers' table. Security comes out so Lesnar grabs a chair and dives onto the guards. Reigns and Heyman (plus the Usos, who just appeared) bail so Lesnar beats up security some more. Reigns pops up on screen and promises to make Lesnar acknowledge him at Wrestlemania.

This was one of the most frustrating endings to a show I have seen in a long time. The segment was good, as have been most of the Lesnar vs. Reigns showdowns. What makes it frustrating is that WWE knows how to make a match feel important but they would rather just focus on this one match than anything else on the show. They have intentionally made Wrestlemania a one match show and it has been such a huge part of what is wrong with this year's show.

Overall Rating: D. I don't remember the last time I was this annoyed at a WWE show and everything turned on those Ricochet matches. This show felt like it was either actively trying to make everyone (save Lesnar) I'm supposed to cheer for at Wrestlemania look like a loser or trying to make every match as uninteresting as possible. Lesnar vs. Reigns might as well be the whole show and WWE continues to use the same tropes they have used for years to weaker and weaker impact. This show got on my nerves in a big way and that is not a good sign eight days before the biggest weekend of the year.

Results

Shinsuke Nakamura b. Jimmy Uso – Kinshasa

King Woods b. Ridge Holland – Small package

Angel b. Ricochet – Rollup

Humberto b. Ricochet via countout

Sasha Banks b. Queen Zelina, Shayna Baszler and Rhea Ripley – Bank Statement to Vega

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