

Monday Night Raw – April 4, 2022: They Need A New Coat

Monday Night Raw

Date: April 4, 2022

Location: American Airlines Center, Dallas, Texas

Commentators: Jimmy Smith, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

It is the night after Wrestlemania and I'm not even sure if that means anything these days. This show has a long history of being something special but since that isn't WWE's deal a lot of the time, we might be in for a show that is closer to normal. That isn't exactly inspiring but let's get to it.

Here are Wrestlemania [Night One](#) and [Night Two](#) if you need a recap.

Note that I was in the arena for this show, sitting in the upper deck and looking down at the edge of the stage, with the ring to my left and the Titantron to my right.

We open with a long recap of Wrestlemania, as you might have seen coming.

Here is Cody Rhodes, rising through the stage again and walking down a short ramp, to get things going. Cody takes his time getting to the ring and the fans seem happy to see him, though it doesn't come across as well as it did in the arena. Cody: "So...what do you guys want to talk about?" Forty seven days ago, he became a free agent and has kept silent since then. Rhodes made the decision to return to WWE and it was never a hard choice. It's a great story of the returning star and he is glad to be back.

He is an avid reader and he stumbled upon this quote: "Sometimes a man finds his destiny upon the path to avoid it." Rhodes puts up a photo of his dad holding the WWF Title in

Madison Square Garden from September 26, 1977. That is the same title that Hulk Hogan (boo), Undertaker (yay), Shawn Michaels (yay) and HHH (also yay) among others have held over the years. Rhodes talks about how this photo was on the mantle in his parents' bedroom until his father's last day.

One day when he was a kid, he asked his dad about being a champion like Hulk Hogan. His dad got serious and explained the championship advantage, meaning that since he won by countout, he didn't take the belt (yes belt) home with him. That made eight year old Cody decide he was going to win the title for his father.

That hasn't happened yet and that Dream died right in front of him. Now though, he wants to claim his dream again and his intentions are clear. Rhodes is going to do it for his friends, his fans, and for the American Dream. Cue Seth Rollins to interrupt and they shake hands, with Rollins being very happy and mouthing what commentary says is "welcome home".

This was a big moment for Cody, but the important point here is that it made sense. Cody didn't go onto any weird tangent and got his point across (with some impressive sounding words). I can go with the idea, though a Rollins rematch might be on tap first. Good stuff here, and the fans were into Cody. I'm not sure if that lasts beyond Wrestlemania weekend, but it's a good start.

Rhea Ripley/Liv Morgan vs. Naomi/Sasha Banks

Champions Contenders match. Naomi and Ripley start things off with Rhea hitting a rather delayed vertical suplex. That doesn't get her very far though as Naomi sends her into the corner, setting up a pair of middle rope splashes for two. Banks sends Morgan outside and hits the running knees off the apron, only to have Ripley take Banks down with a flip dive. Naomi dives onto Ripley though and a slingshot legdrop gets

two as we take a break.

Of note: during the break, D-Generation X's music started playing by mistake, confusing all of the wrestlers (the D-Generation X cam was played during a later break, so it wasn't completely random). Back with Naomi and Ripley making double tags, allowing Banks to hit a top rope Meteora on Morgan. Banks misses a clothesline as Morgan does a Matrix into a rollup for two before kicking Banks in the head. Ripley tosses Banks into Liv's powerbomb for two but Naomi is back in for the elevated Codebreaker to finish Morgan at 8:57.

Rating: C+. They started picking up the pace near the end and had me believing that the champs were going to lose in their first match after winning the belts. That being said, they don't exactly have much in the way of challengers going forward and that is a continuing problem for the titles. I can't imagine it getting much better, but at least Naomi finally had something to do.

Post match Ripley walks out on Liv, with Kevin Owens coming to the ring as she leaves.

Post break, Owens doesn't seem happy. Maybe he made a mistake on Saturday by challenging Steve Austin to an actual match. He goes over THE PLAN to trick Austin into a match but might have underestimated Austin. Owens admits that Austin is still great, because it takes someone great to beat him. However, it should be noted that he came in with a really serious back injury. Owens: "WATCH THE FOOTAGE! YOU CAN TELL!" He was limping because he was lifting a lot of weird but the WWE Universe needed him out there. Austin's win should be stricken from the record...and here is someone named Ezekiel.

It isn't Ezekiel Jackson, but rather someone who looks a lot like Elias, minus his beard. Owens asks Elias what he thinks he's doing. Ezekiel: "I am not Elias." Fans: "YES YOU ARE!" Ezekiel says he is Elias' younger brother and Owens looks like

he's about to lose it. Owens thinks he has beer in his ears because he can't believe he's hearing this. Owens hates liars, so Ezekiel thinks Owens hates himself. Ezekiel reminds him of getting stunned, sending Owens into a rant against Enrique or whatever his name is. He has ten seconds to get out of Owens' ring, but Owens counts down and then leaves instead.

We look back at Miz turning on Logan Paul after the two defeated the Mysterios at Wrestlemania.

Dominik Mysterio vs. Miz

Rey Mysterio is here with Dominik, who gets hit with the Skull Crushing Finale for the pin at 26 seconds. Ok then.

Post match here is Veer Mahaan to lay out the Mysterios, including a cross between the Gargano Escape and a camel clutch to Dominik as Rey crawled over to try and save him.

Here is Bianca Belair for her first chat after winning the Raw Women's Title. Belair thanks everyone for standing behind her because she never thought she would win the title. She takes off her sunglasses to reveal a black eye before talking about how losing to Becky Lynch at Summerslam made her realize how great she can be. Now she knows just how fast you can lose it all.

After a quick pause, Belair talks about how she never cheated but worked to get this title. Lynch went for her throat, her hair and even her eye. After all that though, she is still standing here because these people deserve better. That's why she became better and will become the best she can be. She'll fight everyone back there because no one is ready to take this title from her. Lynch needs to take some time and find out who she is, because Belair is the EST of WWE and is ready for anyone. This was the victory lap speech and Belair deserved it.

Video on Bron Breaker.

NXT Title: Bron Breaker vs. Dolph Ziggler

Ziggler, with Robert Roode in his corner, is defending. Breaker drives him into the corner to start and snaps off an overhead belly to belly. Ziggler manages to Breaker outside though and rakes away at the eyes back inside. That doesn't work for Breaker, who plants him with a powerslam, only to get crotched on top. We take a break and come back with Breaker fighting out of a chinlock but Ziggler nails a chinlock for two. Breaker's sitout powerbomb gets two more and the comeback is on, including the overhead belly to belly.

Roode's distraction breaks up the spear so Breaker takes him out with the big flip dive. Ziggler hits a running knee (might have been a mistimed Fameasser), followed by the Fameasser for two. Breaker blocks a ram into an exposed buckle pad but walks into the superkick (how Ziggler retained at Stand & Deliver) for two. Another superkick is loaded p but Breaker spears him down and hits the gorilla press powerslam for the pin and the title at 10:05.

Rating: C+. This is what you were probably expecting at Stand & Deliver so they did get the ending right. Breaker gets two in the title back in front of a big crowd and a much larger audience while showing that he learned something after his previous loss. I'm not sure if he should have lost on Saturday, but at least they got things right in the end.

Here is MVP for a chat. MVP praises Bobby Lashley for beating Omos on his own and brings out Lashley for his celebration. Lashley brags about beating the biggest and strongest opponent he has ever faced. He knew he had to wait for Omos to make a mistake and that is exactly what happened. Cue Omos to shout that he wants a rematch...and MVP turns on Lashley to help Omos beat him down. There's a twist and it makes sense, as Lashley is a face anyway and doesn't need someone to talk for him.

Rhea Ripley and Liv Morgan make up in the back, as Ripley has

gotten them a Tag Team Title shot next week. Thank you for rendering a stipulation completely worthless in about an hour and a half.

Carmella/Queen Zelina vs. Natalya/Shayna Baszler

Byron Saxton has a blast reminding Corey Graves that Carmella and Zelina lost their Tag Team Titles at Wrestlemania. Actually hold on, as Zelina says Carmella is obsessed with a man who is a fool for wanting to marry her. Zelina: "However, he is a VERY handsome man!" That's too far for Carmella, who mocks her for only winning the Queen's Crown tournament. Zelina was going to be in the wedding as the maid of honor, but now she can be a flower girl. The fight is on, with Carmella running over to Graves as Zelina leaves. Carmella kisses him in relief. No match, as Natalya and Baszler never appeared.

We recap Pat McAfee beating Austin Theory at Wrestlemania, only to love to Vince McMahon. Then Steve Austin came out to do Steve Austin things.

Austin Theory isn't happy with the loss and tells the Usos he's ready to take his anger out on RKBro and Finn Balor.

RKBro/Finn Balor vs. Austin Theory/Usos

Balor shoulders Jimmy down to start and stomps away. Riddle comes in to kick at the arm and grab a front facelock. That's broken up so Theory comes in, only to be backdropped to the floor. Riddle kicks him in the face but the springboard Floating Bro is blocked as we take a break.

Back with Riddle fighting his way out of a chinlock but getting caught with a pop up neckbreaker for two. Riddle manages a jumping knee to the face and the hot tag brings in Orton to clean house. The hanging DDT is loaded up on Jey but Theory makes a blind tag and hits a rolling dropkick. Balor tags himself in as well but misses the Coup de Grace. We hit

the parade of finishers, with Riddle being superkicked out of the air. Balor hits Jimmy with the Sling Blade, only to walk into the ATL for the pin at 8:14.

Rating: B-. Pretty easily the best match on the show so far as the star power involved helped a lot. That being said, I believe this is the third time that Theory has pinned Balor in as many weeks and I can't say I'm surprised in the slightest. The US Title has long since stopped meaning anything and this is another good reason as to why. Just let Theory win the title already because WWE actually seems interested in doing something with him.

Here is Edge for a big chat. Edge says he is an honest man. He knew he would beat AJ Styles but he didn't know Damian Priest would come out to help him. Edge knew that these people would be sheep just like he said they would. Fans: "WE ARE SHEEP!" Edge: "Very telling idiots." The fans need to rise for the man who respects Edge's message and the punishment for the guilty: Damian Priest.

After a handshake, Edge asks what got through to Priest over the last few weeks. The fans say they don't care, but Priest says that doesn't bother him anymore. Priest says he spent a long time trying to please everyone else, but that made it so easy to pledge his loyalty to Edge. They came to their new reality at the same time, which leads Edge to AJ Styles. He wanted the pitbull AJ Styles and that's what he got. The thing with pitbulls is that they pick fight over flight, but AJ needs to think of his family.

Cue Styles for the brawl, including taking out Priest and sending Edge into the post. Styles grabs some chairs but Priest gets up, allowing Edge to take Styles down. The Conchairto is loaded up but referees and agents make the save. I can go with the feud continuing, especially if Priest and Edge bring in some friends to uneven the odds even further.

Street Profits vs. Alpha Academy

The Academy jump them from behind to start and the fight is on. Cue Adam Pearce to say let's make this a Texas Tornado match, which works for the Profits (and lets Corey Graves say "You want to get nuts? Let's get nuts." from Batman for some reason). Ford hits the big flip dive onto the Academy on the floor but it's Otis coming back in to power away.

Dawkins fires off rights and lefts in the corner, leaving Gable to fisherman's suplex Ford for two. They pair off and we take a break with the fights continuing. Back with Otis loading up the table but he and Dawkins fall to the floor. Ford goes up top but gets crotched by Gable. A superplex is loaded up but Ford shoves him off and hits the frog splash through the table for the pin at 8:24.

Rating: C. The Texas Tornado stuff felt tagged on but maybe they realized that the crowd needed to be woken up a bit. This was late in the show and the fans weren't exactly feeling it at this point but at least they got something energized here. If nothing else, watching Ford do his big jumps and dives is fun and that's what the show needed.

Here is the Bloodline for the big show closing as they take their time getting to the ring. Roman Reigns says he knows why the people are here but wants Paul Heyman to explain the Bloodline's success. Heyman lists off the team's accomplishments, with a focus on Reigns' box office successes of course. Reigns calls himself the last needle mover because he is always operating at the highest level. He isn't hanging his hat on this weekend because he is constantly moving forward. This Friday on Smackdown, you'll find out the next step. Until then, acknowledge him. End of show.

That's an interesting way to go, as they didn't really say anything. Maybe they have something planned for Smackdown, but this was ten minutes to say "Reigns won, he's great, see you

Friday.” I’m not sure if that means anything, but it’s quite the wait for nothing substantial.

Overall Rating: C. I’m not sure what to think on this one. On one hand, it was an improvement over previous years as SOMETHING happened on the Raw after Wrestlemania. On the other hand, it wasn’t exactly interesting stuff. Elias’ younger brother? Veer Mahaan? Breakker wins a title that isn’t on this show? MVP is now with Omos?

It’s ok, but it isn’t something that is going to have my attention for very long. Maybe something gets better next week, but this wasn’t exactly making me want to see where things are going. Cody felt strong and that’s about it. Not a terrible show, but they need something hot and this wasn’t it in the slightest.

After the show was over, Cody Rhodes beat Kevin Owens with the Cross Rhodes in a dark match. Rhodes thanked the fans and talked about how surreal it was to be back to end the night.

Results

Naomi/Sasha Banks b. Liv Morgan/Rhea Ripley – Elevated Codebreaker to Morgan

Miz b. Dominik Mysterio – Skull Crushing Finale

Bron Breakker b. Dolph Ziggler – Gorilla press powerslam

Usos/Austin Theory b. RKBro/Finn Balor – ATL to Balor

Street Profits b. Alpha Academy – Frog splash to Gable through a table

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