

Monday Night Raw – April 25, 2022: Maybe They're Learning

Monday Night Raw

Date: April 25, 2022

Location: Thompson Boling Arena, Knoxville, Tennessee

Commentators: Jimmy Smith, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

We are less than two weeks away from Wrestlemania Backlash but we have a special milestone to cover first. This week is twenty years to the day of Randy Orton's WWE debut and a special tribute is planned. I'm sure nothing will happen to cause that to be derailed in any way. Let's get to it.

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

The ring is surrounded by wrestlers and Riddle introduces us to a rather cool tribute to Randy Orton's career. There are clips from every major moment of his career (save for that first World Title win of course) and my goodness there have been a lot of them. With that out of the way, Riddle introduces Orton, who talks about how he was actually born right here in Knoxville.

Orton thanks a lot of the people who helped get him here, including a special mention of Mick Foley for turning him into the Legend Killer. There have been a lot of moments over the years, but he has never had more fun than he is having right now, which is good for a hug to Riddle. He thanks the fans for always coming back to him and says there would be no Legend Killer, Apex Predator or Viper without them.

Riddle has a surprise, as a second generation star who looks up to Orton as a mentor wanted to say something. Cue Cody Rhodes for a hug of his own but Seth Rollins says don't trust Cody. He's just out here to steal the spotlight like he did to Rollins at Wrestlemania. Rollins says Orton's best days are

behind him so he isn't the future, meaning a new leader is needed around here.

That would be Rollins, but Ezekiel gets in the ring to interrupt. Ezekiel talks about watching dominate as the Legend Killer (with Rollins checking Ezekiel's hair for some reason). Kevin Owens pops up to scream that Ezekiel is a liar and he is going to prove it. Now the Usos come out to say they have been watching Orton since they were fifteen. Now they are ready to unify the Tag Team Titles, but here is Adam Pearce to make a big tag match for tonight. The brawl is on, with Orton RKOing Owens to give the fans a nice moment. You could feel the emotion from Orton and it clearly meant a lot to him.

Kane is here and talking with Bianca Belair backstage.

Raw Women's Title: Bianca Belair vs. Sonya Deville

Belair is defending and they go to the floor, where Belair throws her over the announcers' table. Deville can't get back in and that's a countout at 46 seconds.

Hold on though as Sonya says not so fast because they are going to start the match again with no countouts. They fight on the floor with Belair being sent over the timekeeper's area. She comes out with a chair shot for the DQ but Deville says restart it AGAIN, no countout and no DQ. Cue Carmella and Zelina Vega (now fine again I guess) and we take a break.

Back with Belair fighting off all three of them and sending Carmella and Vega into the corner. A victory roll sends Belair chest first into the middle buckle (which had a large chunk of hair hanging over the corner) and a DDT onto the chair gets two. Vega loads the chair into the corner but gets knocked out to the floor. Deville goes into the chair and it's the KOD to retain the title at 8:41.

Rating: D+. What in the world was this? So Deville is the evil boss and apparently can make Carmella and Vega get out of

their argument from a week or two ago? Then she just loses in about eight minutes total? This felt like a smoke and mirrors match and outside of an injury or something REALLY bigger coming, this was one of the weaker things on Raw in a pretty good while. Belair winning in her hometown was nice, but could they do it in a better way?

Post break, Zelina Vega and Carmella are arguing about whose fault that was. Deville comes in and slaps them both, saying she is still their boss.

We recap Edge and Damian Priest attacking AJ Styles last week.

Edge and Damian Priest talk about what they have been doing as of late and are ready to take out Finn Balor tonight. After some cheap shots at Knoxville, Edge talks about how AJ Styles isn't here tonight because of that bad arm. That's the same arm that AJ hurt in the 2020 Royal Rumble when Edge started his big comeback. Edge isn't worried about the Phenomenal Forearm because AJ can't hit it with one arm. As for tonight, Balor's judgment has already been determined.

Veer Mahaan vs. Sam Smothers

Big boot, Million Dollar Arm, Cervical Clutch for the tap at 40 seconds.

Post match Mahaan sends him outside and puts the hold on again, including another one on the announcers' table.

It's time for arm wrestling between Omos and Bobby Lashley, with MVP talking some trash before Lashley comes out. MVP talks about how this started when Lashley went to Wrestlemania without him, which is why MVP has moved on to someone better than Lashley in every possible way.

Cue Lashley to cut him off and we're ready to go. They don't waste time here and go straight to it, with Omos taking over early. MVP talks a lot of trash to fire Lashley up though and

Lashley eventually wins. Then MVP teases a cane shot so Omos can jump Lashley and beat him down. The arm wrestling table crushes Lashley over and over, much to MVP's approval.

We look back at last week's double commitment ceremony, which led to a bunch of 24/7 Title changes.

Earlier today, R-Truth announced that he is a marriage counselor and has set up a mixed tag between them tonight. Oh and he'll be guest referee (complete with another certificate), which might have been more interesting if this hadn't aired after he came to the ring in a referee shirt with an announcement of the match.

Akira Tozawa/Tamina vs. Dana Brooke/Reggie

R-Truth is guest referee. The women start with Tamina grabbing her by the hair...and seems to tease a kiss until Tozawa tags himself in. Reggie comes in as well and hits a corkscrew crossbody but Tozawa knocks him down. The top rope backsplash (with an I LOVE YOU to Tamina) finishes Reggie at 1:26.

Post match Tozawa throws Dana down and covers her but Truth breaks it up...and rolls Dana up for two (counting himself). Dana leaves while shouting that she trusted Truth.

Long video on Cody Rhodes vs. Seth Rollins, including last week when Kevin Owens walked out on Rollins during a match with Rhodes.

Here is a very sad looking Becky Lynch for her first appearance since Wrestlemania. It has been three years since she came out here without a title and now she doesn't recognize herself anymore. She is at rock bottom...but that means it can be the start of an other Becky Lynch comeback. It means she can beat Bianca Belair and win the title back to be the champion again and no one can ever take it from her. Cue ASUKA for a surprise return and Lynch looks like she has seen a ghost. Asuka rants in Japanese before saying she'll stop

Becky. She flicks Becky in the nose so Lynch swings and misses, meaning it's time to run.

We look back at the Street Profits using the Usos' theme song to distract and beat RKBro last week.

The Street Profits recap various things taking place around here and want the next shot at whoever leaves Wrestlemania Backlash with the titles.

Finn Balor vs. Damian Priest

Edge is on his throne on the stage and Priest is "representing Judgment Day". Priest shoulders him down to start but Balor gets in a clothesline to the floor. That's fine with Priest, who hits a Razor's Edge onto the apron as we take a break. Back with Balor fighting out of a cravate and hitting the shotgun dropkick into the corner. The Coup de Grace is loaded up but Balor stops to look at Edge for too long and gets knocked back down. A lifting Downward Spiral gives Priest the pin at 7:18.

Rating: C. I like that the new monsters are getting some wins, but it's yet another instance of Balor going up and then coming right back down a short while later. Priest had to win here to keep the team strong and now they can move on to AJ Styles again. It was nice to see the logical path, but seeing Balor not lose over and over would be nice as well.

It's time for MizTV, with Miz getting straight to the point by bringing out new United States Champion, Theory, as his guest. After an awkward discussion of first names, Miz says it is nice to see the United States Title having some credibility after twelve years of nothingness. Theory remembers that Miz was US Champion twelve years ago and talks about growing up watching Miz. He promises to become the US Champion but Miz has some advice for him: don't trust anyone.

People want to win the title and take it from Theory...and

Mustafa Ali of all people interrupts. Miz: "You still work here?" Theory: "Aren't you the guy who took his ball and went home?" Miz: "You're Mufasa, Mustafa's younger brother!" Ali says if he wanted to laugh, all he has to do is watch Miz wrestle. He was talking to Adam Pearce and is hoping that Theory is holding an open challenge for that title so he can answer it tonight.

Theory shoots that down so Ali asks if Theory is all biceps and no balls. Ali says Theory is out here running like the Miz, which has Theory praising Miz. A match sounds good to Miz, but he doesn't have a magic wand. Theory says he does though, because he just texted Vince McMahon and the match is set.

Mustafa Ali vs. Miz

Miz works on the arm to start but Ali flips up, only to get big booted in the face. Another kick to the head gives Miz two and it's time for the chinlock. With that broken up, Miz chops away in the corner, only to have Ali duck underneath and chop away even more. A hard whip into the corner drops Ali again but he kicks Miz down.

Ali's rolling neckbreaker gives him a breather but Miz kicks the leg out and hits the DDT for two of his own. Ali sends him to the apron and catches Miz on top with right hands. Miz knocks him down and tries the Figure Four, which is reversed into a rollup to give Ali the pin at 6:35.

Rating: C-. I wasn't feeling this one, but some of that might be due to my mind being blown at the fact that Ali actually showed up on WWE TV again. I'm glad to see him back, but he was in a pretty lame match here as it felt rather slow and Ali didn't get to do much. What mattered was that he won though and maybe he could get somewhere this time around.

Post match Tommaso Ciampa jumps Ali and I'm interested.

We look back at Rhea Ripley turning on Liv Morgan.

Ripley talks about how she came here and dominated on her own but then got turned into a tag wrestler. Now she is back on her own and doing everything for herself, but here is Morgan to jump her and start the brawl.

The Alpha Academy is trying to get Kevin Owens to pay up for last week but he wants the full lie detector results first. Seth Rollins comes in and thinks there are more important things to discuss so the Academy leaves. Owens doesn't think much of Rollins but here are the Usos to say they need to be on the same page or Roman Reigns won't be happy. Rollins laughs that off and they are all left alone.

We look back at the arm wrestling match.

MVP isn't worried about Bobby Lashley, because Omos has challenged him to a match at Wrestlemania Backlash. Omos seems ready for some violence.

Cody Rhodes/Ezekiel/RKBro vs. Usos/Seth Rollins/Kevin Owens

Ezekiel jumps Owens to start and the good guys clear the ring before the bell. We're joined in progress with Ezekiel hitting a delayed vertical suplex on Jimmy. Riddle comes in for a snapmare and hands it off to Orton for the assisted Floating Bro. It's off to Rhodes, but Rollins offers a distraction so Jey can come in with the Samoan drop. Cody gets caught in the wrong corner, with the Usos getting in some shots each.

Rollins comes in but misses a charge in the corner, allowing the tag back to Ezekiel. A spinebuster plants Rollins for two but he sends Ezekiel into the corner for the tag to Riddle. Rollins catches him up top in a hurry though and a reverse superplex sends us to a break. Back with Riddle hitting Rollins with a Floating Bro but Jey breaks up the hot tag attempt. Riddle fights up and hits a jumping knee but the villains take his partners off the apron.

Owens' Swanton gets two on Riddle and Jey adds an enziguri...which sends Riddle right into Orton for the tag. House is cleaned but everything breaks down, with Orton dropping the bad guys onto the announcers' table. There's the hanging DDT to Jey but Rollins jumps Orton from behind. The Disaster Kick sends Rollins into the RK0 and Ezekiel knocks Owens into another RK0. Riddle knees Jimmy into a pop up RK0 and Orton RK0's Jey off the top for the pin at 15:11.

Rating: B. What mattered here was they didn't do anything screwy. This match wasn't so much about advancing much of anything in a major way but rather making Orton look like a star on a special night. They made that work here as Orton got to run through everyone at the end with one RK0 than another. The match had some good action and was fun, with the ending being a highlight.

Orton and company celebrate for a good while to end the show and nothing bad happens to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. Women's Title match aside, they got in a nice show this week with two big returns and Orton looking like a star. I liked most of what we got here, but what gave me hope more than everything else is that Belair and Orton didn't get the hometown punishment. Maybe WWE is starting to get the idea of letting the fans have fun and for the most part, they did that this week.

Results

Bianca Belair b. Sonya Deville – KOD

Veer Mahaan b. Sam Smothers – Cervical Clutch

Akira Tozawa/Tamina b. Dana Brooke/Reggie – Top rope backsplash to Reggie

Damian Priest b. Finn Balor – Top rope Downward Spiral

Mustafa Ali b. Miz – Rollup

RKBro/Ezekiel/Cody Rhodes b. Usos/Kevin Owens/Seth Rollins – RK0 to Jimmy

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