

Smackdown – August 12, 2022: What Makes The Show Work

Smackdown

Date: August 12, 2022

Location: PNC Arena, Raleigh, North Carolina

Commentators: Pat McAfee, Michael Cole

It's time for a title match as Gunther is defending the Intercontinental Title against Shinsuke Nakamura. What matters here is that they are treating the title like it matters and that is more than you could say about most WWE shows for a long time. Other than that, we are probably going to get more about the returning Karrion Kross so let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Women's Tag Team Titles First Round: Raquel Gonzalez/Aliyah vs. Xia Li/Shotzi

Gonzalez sends Shotzi to the apron to start but gets rolled up for a fast two. A front facelock is shrugged off without much trouble as Natalya and Sonya Deville pop up to scout from ringside. Aliyah comes in with a high crossbody and we take a break. Back with Aliyah getting dropped on her head for two and Shotzi adding a bulldog.

Aliyah finally breaks away and brings Rodriguez back in to clean house. Shoulders and fall away slams abound and the spinning Vader Bomb hits Li. Shotzi manages a hurricanrana into the corner and Sliced Bread gets two. A double Russian legsweep is broken up by Aliyah's spear and the Tejana Bomb finishes Li at 9:31.

Rating: C. This was a nice workout for Gonzalez and Aliyah,

which more or less meant Gonzalez cleaned house and Aliyah did one thing at the end. Odds are they lose in the second round but at least they had a chance to get in a win here. Li and Shotzi were little more than cannon fodder here but the match could have been a lot worse.

Video on Drew McIntyre vs. Roman Reigns, with Karrion Kross debuting last week to interrupt the proceedings.

Karrion Kross and Scarlett call that the rebirth of a darkened soul. Kross waited for the perfect time to strike the chosen ones. Now you are going to see the new timeline, because everybody pays the toll. We hear Drew McIntyre's music and it turns out this speech was taking place near him.

Here is Drew McIntyre for a chat. He is looking forward to Clash At The Castle but first of all, there is Karrion Kross. Last week, Kross returned after a year away and took out the #1 contender and stared down Roman Reigns. That's a problem because that #1 contender is Drew McIntyre. Kross' options are knockout, hospital or graveyard, so he needs to watch what's coming at Clash At The Castle.

As for tonight, shock and awe, Reigns isn't here tonight. McIntyre was watching at Summerslam and saw Reigns need his family, weapons and tables to beat Brock Lesnar. Well McIntyre beat Lesnar with his bare hands, so what is he going to do with Reigns? Cue Scarlett to interrupt (meaning black and white lights) and the Usos come in from behind to jump McIntyre. The 1D leaves McIntyre laying.

Video on the Intercontinental Title, similar to the video on the US Title that has been airing on Raw. This is a great idea, especially given how badly the title has been treated for most of the last few....decades?

Shinsuke Nakamura is ready for Gunther.

Ivar (of the Viking Raiders, who are no longer new or vicious)

comes to the ring for a singles match but Kofi Kingston jumps them from behind. That doesn't last long as the Vikings beat him down and leave him laying. Well what did you expect man?

Sami Zayn knocks on Roman Reigns' door (Why does he have a dressing room when he isn't here?) but gets the Usos. Before he can get too far into his apology, Drew McIntyre jumps them from behind and promises to do this every week they get in his business. McIntyre goes looking for Sami, who escaped.

Brandon Scott/Trevor Irvin vs. Hit Row

The team (Ashante Thee Adonis/Top Dolla with B Fab) is back with Cole saying there was "controversy" when they left. Top Dolla runs Scott over to start and sends him into the corner, where Adonis hits a slingshot dropkick. Irvin tries to come after Dolla so it's a World's Strongest Slam to Scott and a Wasteland to Irvin at the same time. A dropkick/belly to back suplex combination (the Heavy Hitter) finishes Scott at 1:35. Total dominance and the team still seems cool.

Post match Hit Row reintroduces themselves.

Video on Gene LeBell, who passed away recently. There's a legendary name you don't hear much about on WWE TV.

We look at Shayna Baszler becoming #1 contender to Liv Morgan's Smackdown Women's Title.

Gunther promises to make Shinsuke Nakamura suffer.

We're ready for the contract signing between Shayna Baszler and Liv Morgan...and here is Ronda Rousey coming over the barricade, with a bag. Rousey says she was suspended and fined, so she pours out the money from the bag. That's double the fine, because she's going to get fined again since being the baddest is expensive. Cue security, so Rousey beats them up and then leaves, where Baszler is waiting on her. Baszler says you can't do that and Rousey says Baszler used to be a

killer before leaving.

With that out of the way, Baszler gets in the ring and promises Liv is next on the list. Baszler signs and tells Morgan to get out here right now. Cue Liv, who says Baszler is a bootleg Rousey, which Liv would know because she beat the real thing twice. Liv signs and the fans remind her that she tapped out. The beating is on, but Morgan manages a springboard bulldog through a table and escapes. The YOU TAPPED OUT chants at Liv show you where she is at the moment.

The Usos come up to Sami Zayn and yell at him for leaving, but Sami says he was going to get security. That doesn't work for the Usos, who are going to call out Drew McIntyre.

Here are the Usos to call out Drew McIntyre and any partner he wants.

Drew McIntyre/??? vs. Usos

Non-title and non-partner for Drew to start but he beats up both Usos anyway. The numbers game starts getting the better of McIntyre but here is Madcap Moss for the save and McIntyre has a partner. This seems to work for Drew and house is cleaned as we take an early break.

Back with Moss exploding out of the corner to drop Jey and the double tag brings in McIntyre and Jimmy. Cue Sami Zayn for a distraction so a superkick into the Superfly Splash can get two on McIntyre. Moss pulls Jey outside and they fall into the timekeeper's area. The Glasgow Kiss into the Claymore finishes Jimmy at 9:05.

Rating: C+. The Usos almost have to be close to losing the titles if they are losing a nothing non-title match like this to a makeshift team. By "almost have to" I mean "probably won't but should", because this reign just keeps going. Maybe Hit Row can give them a challenge, but that might not be for a bit. Moss is moving up the ladder nicely, and I certainly

didn't have that coming a few months ago so well done on the improvement.

Post match Jey goes after Drew but gets Futureshocked but Sami takes the Claymore for him.

Maximum Male Models are in a photo shoot when Los Lotharios interrupt. They should be the models and hit on Maxxine, which has Max annoyed as Los Lotharios leave.

Video on Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Gunther.

Ricochet laughs about beating Happy Corbin last week and gets jumped by...Corbin, believe it or not.

We meet Nikkita Lyons and Zoey Stark, who like to fight. And dance, at least in Lyons' case.

Intercontinental Title: Gunther vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

Gunther, with Ludwig Kaiser, is defending. They go with the grappling to start and Nakamura goes with a headlock. Uppercuts and chops drop Nakamura though and the Boston crab has Nakamura in trouble. That's switched into an STF as Cole talks about Gunther wanting to face people like John Cena and other elite stars. A cross armbreaker doesn't work very well for Nakamura so he starts kicking away at the arm. The arm is good enough for a huge chop to put Nakamura down and we take a break.

Back with Gunther favoring his arm so he kicks Nakamura in the face. Gunther's top rope splash is countered into a triangle choke but he muscles Nakamura up. Nakamura switches into an armbar, which is reversed into a butterfly suplex for a breather. A hard knee to the face rocks Gunther and Good Vibrations makes it worse.

There's the sliding German suplex, with Nakamura landing in front of Kaiser for some yelling. Back up and Gunther hits the shotgun dropkick in the corner but Nakamura escapes the

powerbomb. Kinshasa is loaded up...and knocked away by a hard clothesline. Nakamura goes after the arm again so Gunther dropkicks him in the back. The powerbomb retains the title at 13:06.

Rating: B. They did have a hard hitting match here and that's what you would expect from something like this. Gunther seems primed to hold the title for a long time and now he has beaten someone with a bit stronger resume than most of his previous victims. Nakamura didn't seem likely to win the title here, but he can beat people up well and he made Gunther sweat here, which was entirely the point.

Overall Rating: B-. The important thing to say about this show was that it had energy. It didn't come off like a show that was all about one match and they had stuff going on throughout the card. The show felt like it was building towards something in the future and I'm wanting to see what happens next week. Much like on Raw, it didn't need a bunch of surprises popping up, but rather people feeling like they were trying. That is what we got here and it was a good show as a result.

Results

Raquel Gonzalez/Aliyah b. Xia Li/Shotzi – Tejana Bomb to Li
Hit Row b. Brandon Scott/Trevor Irvin – Heavy Hitter to Scott
Drew McIntyre/Madcap Moss b. Usos – Claymore to Jimmy
Gunther b. Shinsuke Nakamura – Powerbomb

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