

Monday Night Raw – December 5, 2022: Out Of Steam (Again)

Monday Night Raw

Date: December 5, 2022

Location: Capital One Arena, Washington DC

Commentators: Kevin Patrick, Corey Graves

We are on our way to...well the Royal Rumble, but the show is so far away that it is hard to be that interested so far. As for this week, the Usos will be defending the Tag Team Titles against Matt Riddle and Elias, who are such a longstanding team. Other than that, it's hard to say what we might be seeing this week so let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Tag Team Titles: Usos vs. Matt Riddle/Elias

The Usos, with Sami Zayn and Solo Sikoa, are defending and they're starting fast this week. Earlier today though, Riddle annoyed the Bloodline so Elias got beaten down as a result. Actually hang on as the Usos say that the match is off due to Elias being beaten down. Therefore, whoever wants a shot can come get one. Cue Riddle to say that beatdown wasn't cool, but Sami calls him "my dog." Riddle: "My dog?"

Sami says he knows what it takes to be ucey, because he is a certified uce-ologist. Sikoa taking out Elias was ucey. The Usos remaining the longest reigning Tag Team Champions in history is ucey. Riddle coming out here to suggest he ever had a chance, that his dog is NOT ucey. The thing is though, Riddle has found a partner and the title match is on for tonight. He isn't bros with this guy, but they both hate the Bloodline...and it's Kevin Owens.

Tag Team Titles: Usos vs. Kevin Owens/Matt Riddle

Owens and Riddle are challenging and it's Owens hammering on Jey to start. The backplash gives Owens an early two but Jimmy breaks up a Cannonball attempt. That's fine with Owens, who goes outside and sends Jey into the barricade as we take a break. Back with Riddle in trouble as the Usos start taking turns kicking at him. A big kick to the head drops Riddle and Jimmy even knocks Owens off the apron. Riddle forearm back but gets dropped again by some double teaming and we take another break.

Back again with Owens hitting a Swanton on Jimmy but the Stunner is blocked. Owens hits a superkick instead, only to have Jimmy come back with one of his own for the double knockdown. The tag brings in Riddle as Owens and Sikoa stare at each other on the floor. Riddle dives onto Sikoa and it's time for a bunch of shots to the face. Back in and a blind tag lets the Usos hit the 1D to finish Riddle at 13:58.

Rating: B-. Owens was definitely an upgrade over Elias as he at least ties into the story. Other than that though, there was no drama here as the Usos aren't losing the titles to a makeshift team on Raw. It is going to take something special to take the titles from the Usos and I'm not sure if anyone around at the moment is up to the task. For now though, having good matches most of the time will still work.

Post match the Usos go after Riddle again but Owens makes the save with a chair and chases the Usos and Sami to the back. Sikoa is still at ringside though and beats on Riddle some more, including a Samoan Spike for an Umaga flashback. The running Umaga attack in the corner rocks Riddle again but Sikoa isn't done. A chair is wrapped around Riddle's head and another running Umaga attack crushes him again. Riddle is taken out on a stretcher as Sikoa looks like a killer.

Rhea Ripley is ready for tonight's triple threat to become the

new #1 contender. Bayley and Asuka are great, but they're not Rhea Bloody Ripley. She's coming for Bianca Belair and after that, everyone will be calling her Mami. She whispers something to Dominik Mysterio and seems like she'll be handling her match on her own.

JBL is hosting a poker tournament in the back with various stars. Cue Dexter Lumis and Johnny Gargano, but JBL doesn't think much of the idea of Lumis playing. Lumis empties out his bag of money from the Miz last week and is much more welcome.

Bayley vs. Rhea Ripley vs. Asuka

The winner of this faces the winner of another triple threat next week for a shot against Bianca Belair (simple, effective reason for these matches to take place). Bayley comes out first but here is Becky Lynch to interrupt. Becky, coming through the crowd, talks about how the two of them haven't fought in a long time, even after Bayley carried the division during the Thunderdome era.

Bayley doesn't want to hear this and thinks Becky is jealous of her success. Becky is ready for a showdown, if Bayley can get the job done like her partners have already managed to do (ouch). Becky goes to leave, only to run into Rhea Ripley for a heck of a staredown on the way to the ring.

After a break and Asuka's entrance, we're ready to go with Bayley grabbing a rollup for an early two. Ripley sends Bayley outside and hammers on Asuka until Bayley comes back in. A hard whip into the corner drops Bayley and Asuka gets thrown down as well. Some double teaming finally slows Ripley down but Bayley has to avoid the running hip attack from Asuka.

We take a break and come back with more double teaming dropping Ripley again until Asuka ankle locks Bayley. That's broken up so it's a German suplex to Bayley and a kick to Ripley's head. A double Codebreaker gives Asuka two each so she missile dropkicks Bayley. The Asuka Lock goes on but it's

not quite in full, allowing Ripley to break it up with a basement dropkick.

Some headbutts rock Bayley and an electric chair faceplant puts Asuka down for two, leaving Ripley shocked. Ripley knocks Bayley outside but misses a running flip dive off the steps for a nasty crash on the floor. Back in and Asuka strikes away on Bayley but the middle rope dropkick misses. The Rose Plant finishes Asuka to give Bayley the pin at 15:21.

Rating: B. I was surprised by the ending as they seemed to be setting up Ripley as the winner. That being said, it's nice to see some surprises here and there, as going with the same stuff over and over can get old fast. Bayley getting the win is a good way to heat her up a bit more and now we could be in for something more interesting with what was set up here. It helped that the match got some time and had them laying into each other for most of the match.

Post match Ripley unloads on Asuka and leaves her laying, while holding a somewhat nasty looking shoulder.

Drew McIntyre is not medically cleared for Smackdown so Butch is taking his place in the Tag Team Title match.

Here is Seth Rollins for a chat. He is happy to be here and next week he'll be facing Bobby Lashley in a #1 contenders match for US Title shot. Rollins talks about the fans singing his song but here is Lashley to interrupt. That's fine with Rollins, who accuses Lashley of being scared of Brock Lesnar. Lashley doesn't want to hear that, so Rollins thinks it must be jealousy instead.

That earns Rollins a grab by the jacket so he says that winning the US Title isn't going to make Lashley feel better about Lesnar. The fight is on with referees and agents not being able to break it up. Lashley spears an agent down (missing Rollins in the process), leaving Adam Pearce rather upset.

Austin Theory thinks he has all the cards and the forever reign is just beginning. Theory runs into Mustafa Ali, who is smirking at the idea of Theory holding the title forever. That's too far for Theory, so Ali can have his shot tonight.

Back to the poker, where Lumis appears to be cleaning up and beats Baron Corbin in another hand. Corbin yells a lot so Lumis pulls out an ax. At the other table, Akira Tozawa is still cleaning up but accuses Dominik Mysterio of stealing chips. A match is set.

US Title: Austin Theory vs. Mustafa Ali

Theory is defending and chokes Ali in the corner to start. Ali is back up with a headscissors to the apron and there's a suicide dive to drop Theory again. A posting rocks Ali though and we take a break. Back with Ali hitting his rolling neckbreaker but a hurricanrana out of the corner doesn't go so well, with Theory landing mostly on his head. Thankfully he's fine enough to get caught with a tornado DDT to give Ali two but Theory fights back. Not that it matters as Dolph Ziggler runs in to superkick Theory for the DQ at 8:03

Rating: C. Well at least Ali didn't get pinned again. I know Ali might be getting a little tiresome, but having him win some matches, or at the very least not getting pinned so often, could do him a world of good. I'm not sure I can picture him getting a bigger push than he is now, but giving it a shot might not be a bad idea. At the same time, Ziggler vs. Theory isn't exactly appealing and hopefully it doesn't last very long.

Post match Ali rightfully yells at Ziggler for costing him the match but Theory runs them both over. Ali is sent outside and A Town Down drops Ziggler.

Miz interrupts JBL's phone call and asks why he didn't get an invitation to play poker. JBL won't let him in, even with an offer of a Rolex since he doesn't have the money to buy in,

sending Miz off.

Corbin can't quite pull off cheating at the poker game and shoves AJ Styles for accusing him of doing so. The result: OC vs. Corbin/Alpha Academy. JBL is annoyed at these "idiots" and hits the dealer with his hat. Lumis strokes his ax and tips the dealer a few grand. Nice guy.

Bianca Belair is ready for whoever gets the title shot.

We look back at Solo Sikoa beating down Matt Riddle earlier tonight.

OC vs. Alpha Academy/Baron Corbin

Corbin shoulders Styles over to start as JBL sits in on commentary. Gable comes in to take Anderson down and work on a headlock but it's quickly off to Gallows for a shoulder. Gallows and Gable yell at each other before Corbin comes back in. Everything breaks down and OC gets dropped on the floor as we take a break.

Back with Otis splashing Styles, who can't quite fight out of Gable's armbar. Gable knocks Anderson to the floor, allowing Corbin to hit a quick Deep Six to give Gable two. Styles gets up and brings in Anderson to clean house as everything breaks down. Otis runs Styles over but gets dropped by Anderson. Gable forearm Anderson, who comes back with an uppercut to put both of them down. The Magic Killer finishes Gable at 14:30.

Rating: C. I'm not sure what was missing here but it wasn't quite thrilling stuff. The Alpha Academy has been ground into little more than dust and here they lost again. Corbin has cooled WAY off in recent weeks and the OC felt very tacked in on this whole match. The match might not have been bad, but it didn't exactly feel important and that made for a long nearly fifteen minutes.

Candice LeRae is ready to fight harder now that she's a mom. Dexter Lumis and Johnny Gargano come in, with LeRae being stunned by how much Lumis won playing poker.

Dominik Mysterio vs. Akira Tozawa

The rest of Judgment Day is here with Dominik. Tozawa gets taken down to start and Dominik manages Three Amigos for two. Dominik gets sent into the corner, only to avoid the top rope backplash. The frog splash finishes Tozawa at 2:43.

Post match the beatdown ensues but the Street Profits make the save.

Adam Pearce yells at Bobby Lashley for spearing down the agent earlier tonight. As a result, he is...well nothing, but if it happens again, things will go badly.

Becky Lynch vs. Alexa Bliss vs. Nikki Cross

The winner faces Bayley in a #1 contenders match next week. Bliss and Lynch knock Cross outside to start, leaving Bliss to roll Becky up for two. The knees to the ribs rock Becky again but Cross is back in to clean house. Cross gets taken down again and Bliss knocks Lynch into the corner. The running knees miss though and Becky sends her into the buckle. It's Cross back up to wreck both of them, including the swinging neckbreaker to drop Bliss on the floor.

We take a break and come back with Cross chinlocking Bliss until Becky makes the save. The middle rope legdrop hits Cross for two and Lynch suplexes her down. Bliss is back in and flip dives off the apron to take both of them down. Back in and it's a Tower of Doom to give Becky two on Cross. That doesn't last long as Cross is back up to crossbody Becky against the apron for a unique crash.

The hanging DDT is loaded up but Becky hits a double legdrop to Bliss' back, giving Becky two of her own. Cross can't

piledrive Becky on the apron, meaning it's a bad Manhandle Slam to give Becky...no count as Cross rolls away. Cue Dakota Kai and Iyo Sky to jump Becky, including a powerbomb through the announcers' table. Bliss steals the pin on Cross at 16:28.

Rating: C+. Bliss winning is a bit surprising but I can go with boosting her up a bit after such a long stretch of very little of note. Cross continues to be enough of a wild card to be interesting and we are likely heading towards Bayley vs. Bliss. Good match here, even with a few rough spots near the ending.

Overall Rating: C+. This show started fast and then cooled off pretty badly about halfway through. What worked here was having people fighting over various personal issues and possible title shots. It gave us a reason to care about what we were seeing and that kept things a lot more engaging. After that though, things slowed down a good bit and the action wasn't quite as strong, but I'll take half of a rather good show over nothing.

Results

Usos b. Matt Riddle/Kevin Owens – 1D to Riddle

Bayley b. Asuka and Rhea Ripley – Rose Plant to Asuka

Austin Theory b. Mustafa Ali via DQ when Dolph Ziggler interfered

OC b. Alpha Academy/Baron Corbin – Magic Killer to Gable

Dominik Mysterio b. Akira Tozawa – Frog splash

Alexa Bliss b. Nikki Cross and Becky Lynch – Man Handle Slam on the apron

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