

Smackdown – February 17, 2023: Ole, Ole, OLE!

Smackdown

Date: February 17, 2023

Location: Bell Center, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Commentators: Michael Cole, Wade Barrett

We are a day away from Elimination Chamber and that means this is likely to be the Sami Zayn show. Tomorrow night the hometown boy Zayn gets his shot at Roman Reigns and I think the people might be a bit interested. Other than that we have Gunther defending the Intercontinental Title against Madcap Moss. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of last week's Usos/Bloodline drama, with Jimmy Uso getting caught lying about Jey Uso and Sami Zayn. Hence Roman Reigns telling the Usos to stay home this week.

Natalya/Shotzi vs. Ronda Rousey/Shayna Baszler

Fallout from Rousey and Baszler hurting both of them. Baszler cranks on Natalya's arm to start and it's quickly off to Rousey for another battle over arm control. Shotzi comes in to actually take Rousey down, setting up Cattle Mutilation of all things. Rousey powers out but gets sent outside, allowing Shotzi to hit a pretty hard dive. With Natalya adding a clothesline, Shotzi dives onto both villains as we take a break.

Back with Shotzi still in trouble but managing to send Baszler outside. A scary looking DDT on the apron plants Rousey and it's off to Natalya to clean house. Natalya German suplexes Baszler and gets the Sharpshooter on Rousey. Baszler makes the save but gets sent outside, leaving Rousey to armbar Shotzi

for the tap at 12:05.

Rating: C+. They were working hard here and it showed well. Rousey and Baszler are looking like the next big thing in the tag division (assuming there is one) and racking up wins, even like this one, is a good way to go. They weren't going to beat Natalya the day before Elimination Chamber so they even got the result right.

Long video on the history of Sami Zayn and the Bloodline. This really has been a pretty epic story.

Here is Hit Row to complain about how Montreal didn't like them the last time they were in this city. They issue what seems to be an open challenge so here are Bray Wyatt and Uncle Howdy to wipe the team out. Bray: "You're welcome Montreal." With that out of the way, Bray talks about...Brock Lesnar vs. Bobby Lashley? Whoever wins should run. Well that comes out of nowhere and in a good way.

We look at Madcap Moss becoming #1 contender to the Intercontinental Title.

Emma is proud of Moss for winning and it's time for people to learn that he is a superstar.

Combat sports journalist and hometown boy Ariel Helwani is in the crowd, saying they are happy to see Sami Zayn return home tonight.

Sheamus/Drew McIntyre vs. Viking Raiders

Valhalla is here with the Vikings. They go straight to the brawl to start with the Raiders being cleared out to send us to a break. Back with Sheamus fighting out of a chinlock but getting choked on the apron instead. A clothesline gets Sheamus out of trouble though and the hot tag brings in McIntyre for the neckbreakers. Everything breaks down and the Glasgow Kiss hits Erik. Sheamus comes in and hits a super

Regal Roll to Ivar for the huge crash.

We take another break and come back again with McIntyre planting Ivar and Sheamus adding a top rope knee for two. The Brogue Kick misses though and Sheamus gets powerbombed. Erik goes up but dives onto raised knees, allowing the hot tag to McIntyre to clean house. McIntyre gets caught on top for a super World's Strongest Slam though and the Superfly Splash gives Ivar two. Ragnarok is broken up by a Brogue Kick though and the Claymore finishes Erik at 17:06.

Rating: B. Sometimes you need four big, strong guys to beat the fire out of each other for a little while and that is exactly what you got here. Sheamus and McIntyre are the kind of team who could be Tag Team Champions one day so keeping them strong somewhat early in their run together is the right move.

We look at more on Sami Zayn vs. the Bloodline, including Sami finally turning on them at the Royal Rumble.

We look at Rey Mysterio and Santos Escobar showing respect last week after the show ended.

Mysterio talks about how great that was when Karrion Kross, with Scarlett, comes in. Kross said he once wanted to be a father, but then saw how Dominik Mysterio turned out. If Rey wants to fight again, Kross is ready.

Asuka vs. Liv Morgan

Carmella is on commentary. Asuka takes Morgan down and works on the arm as Raquel Rodriguez comes out to yell at Carmella. Nikki Cross jumps out of the crowd and sits on Wade Barrett's lap (Barrett: "I am going to be in so much trouble when I get home.") as Morgan hits a quick Oblivion for two. We take a break and come back with a glare off until Asuka fires off strikes to the head. A springboard Codebreaker looks to set up Oblivion but Asuka goes for the arm instead. The armbar makes

Morgan tap at 8:35.

Rating: C. Asuka is looking like one of the favorites to win the Chamber so giving her the win here makes sense. Morgan's fall from championship status continues as the experiment seems to have come to a rather crashing halt. She still belongs in a #1 contenders match, but Asuka or Rodriguez seem to be the top prospects to go on to Wrestlemania.

Post match all of the women in the Chamber, including Natalya, come in for the parade of knockdowns, with Asuka standing tall.

Gunther promises to keep the Intercontinental Title from Madcap Moss.

Intercontinental Title: Madcap Moss vs. Gunther

Gunther, with Imperium, is defending and Emma is here with Moss. Gunther's headlock takeover doesn't get him very far so he comes back with the hard chop instead. There's the big boot for two but Moss knocks him into the corner for some running shoulders to the ribs. A spinebuster and running shoulder put Gunther on the floor as we take a break.

Back with Moss slipping out of a powerbomb but not being able to hit the Punchline. The sleeper is broken up with a belly to back suplex and Moss hits a hard running clothesline for two more. Moss blocks another sleeper attempt and catches Gunther on top with a super fall away slam for two. Now the sleeper goes on and Moss is staggered, allowing Gunther to hit the powerbomb to retain at 10:20.

Rating: C+. There is only so much you can do in a match where the champion never feels like he is in danger and that was the case here. Moss is becoming a more serious star and that is a great thing for him (just change the first name already) but it is going to take something special to beat Gunther. As far as Moss has come, he was in way over his head here but did

fairly well in spite of it.

Here is Sami Zayn to the huge hometown reception and yes he has the old theme back. The ovation goes on for a long time and Sami starts to cry, with the YOU DESERVE IT chants making it worse. The fans give him the OLE chant as Sami has been in the ring for almost five minutes and not been able to say the first word.

Sami finally says that this time of year, everybody points to one thing, because Wrestlemania is the most important show of the year. But for this city, tomorrow night is once in a lifetime. Sami addresses Roman Reigns in French, saying tomorrow night it's Reigns vs. Sami and the City of Montreal. Reigns is going down. This was incredible and one of the more emotional things you'll see from WWE. I know Zayn has about a sliver of a chance to win the title, but WWE better have the jet in the parking lot to get the Bloodline out of Montreal after Sami loses before they get ripped to pieces.

Overall Rating: B. Maybe it's just being fired up by that ending, but I'm wanting to see Elimination Chamber a lot more than I was coming in. The card is stacked and while the Raw side is better overall, the Smackdown half should be rather adequate. This show did a solid job of making me more interested and that is exactly what it was supposed to do.

Results

Ronda Rousey/Shayna Baszler b. Natalya/Shotzi – Armbar
Sheamus/Drew McIntyre b. Viking Raiders – Brogue Kick to Erik
Asuka b. Liv Morgan – Armbar
Gunther b. Madcap Moss – Powerbomb

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