

Smackdown – April 14, 2023: The Simple Version

Smackdown

Date: April 14, 2023

Location: Pinnacle Bank Arena, Lincoln, Nebraska

Commentators: Michael Cole, Wade Barrett

The Draft is coming up and that is going to change quite a few things around...well everywhere really. The good thing is we still have enough time before it gets into the lame duck period. Backlash is coming up in less than a month and it is time to start getting things ready for the show. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Here are Kevin Owens and Sami Zayn to get things going. Sami talks about how they closed out Wrestlemania by winning the Tag Team Titles but they haven't had the chance to process it all. There is the Bloodline and the Draft, which makes things uncertain. Owens doesn't care where they wind up, because they are the undisputed Tag Team Champions and they will defend them with everything they have.

One day the Usos are coming for a rematch...and here they are (with Solo Sikoa) to interrupt. The Usos don't want to hear about a two week reign but Sami says they'll keep going back to their daddy Roman without their titles. Jey promises that they'll get the titles back because Owens and Zayn are going to turn on each other, again. Sami says Jey is great at lying to himself and the fight is teased but here is Matt Riddle to even things up. The Bloodline gets knocked down before bailing.

Post break, Adam Pearce makes Solo Sikoa vs. Matt Riddle for tonight's main event.

LA Knight vs. Xavier Woods

This is fallout from a broken controller. They fight over a headlock to start until Woods snaps off a dropkick to take over. Woods' headlock doesn't last long as it could due as Knight shoulders him down. Knight is sent outside and taken out with the big running flip dive. He's fine enough to post Woods though and we take a break.

Back with Knight getting two off a neckbreaker and choking on the ropes, only to have Woods pop back up for a leg lariat. Knight plants him with a DDT but Woods blocks a suplex attempt. Woods manages to drop him ribs first across the top, setting up a top rope double stomp. A middle rope legdrop gets the same but Knight catches him in a powerslam. Knight's jumping elbow connects so he tries a rollup, only to get caught pulling the trunks. Then Woods grabs his own rollup (also with trunks) for the pin at 11:20.

Rating: C+. Nice back and forth match here with Woods getting to show Knight how the cheating thing worked in the end. Woods is the last remaining member of the New Day at the moment and it's no surprise that WWE wants to keep him strong. As for Knight...just let him do something other than lose for a few weeks. Please.

Gunther gives Imperium a pep talk/instructions when Xavier Woods, with his trombone, comes in. Gunther isn't happy and calls Woods a goof, but Woods challenges him for the title. There's no answer but Gunther isn't one to turn down a challenge.

We look at Solo Sikoa taking out Matt Riddle in December.

Sami Zayn and Kevin Owens give Riddle differing forms of advice, but Riddle is rather serious when he talks about

taking out his aggression on Sikoa.

Judgment Day, minus Finn Balor, has had it with the LWO. Damien Priest is going to do his talking about Bad Bunny in the ring.

Here is Judgment Day for a chat. Damien Priest says Backlash is in San Juan, Puerto Rico and Bad Bunny is guest host. We look at the team taking out Bunny on Raw two weeks ago and we even see it in slow motion. Cue the LWO and it's time to fight, with the LWO quickly clearing the ring.

Damien Priest vs. Santos Escobar

The rest of their groups are here too. Joined in progress and they head outside, with Priest knocking him out of the air. Back in and the Broken Arrow gives Priest two and he fires off the kicks to the chest. Escobar fights up and hits a few kicks of his own, setting up the running knees in the corner. Some right hands have Priest in trouble but he knocks Escobar outside in a heap as we take a break.

Back with Priest getting two off a Downward Spiral and cranking on both arms. Priest goes up top but gets hurricanranaed right back down for a delayed two. They slug it out until Escobar hits a jumping knee and running hurricanrana to send Priest into the corner. There's the jumping kick to Priest's head and a top rope moonsault press gets two.

Rhea Ripley offers a distraction though and it's Priest decking Escobar. Everyone gets into it on the floor with Priest joining the fight, only to get taken down by a suicide dive. Back in and Ripley grabs Escobar's foot, leaving Zelina Vega to hurricanrana her into the barricade. That leaves Priest to kick Escobar in the face and hit South Of Heaven for the pin at 11:33.

Rating: B. These guys were rocking by the end and I wasn't sure who was going to win. That's a nice feeling to have, much

like seeing Priest get a win. Escobar losing again is tough to take, but you can tell there is going to be more of this feud sooner than later. Heck of a match here, with everyone putting in the energy.

Post match Priest goes after Escobar again but Rey Mysterio runs in for the save. Rey gets to beat on Dominik, who has to be saved from the 619.

The Usos and Paul Heyman give Solo Sikoa a pep talk about how Matthew Riddle insulted the family, with Heyman listing off a bunch of members of the family who were insulted. Solo puts his hand on Heyman's shoulder and says tell the Tribal Chief that he has this. Has Sikoa spoken since he debuted on the main roster? If he has, it hasn't been very often.

Here are Liv Morgan and Raquel Rodriguez for a championship celebration. Raquel appreciates Morgan allowing her to be used as a projectile and Morgan can't wait to see how good they can get. Cue Chelsea Green and Sonya Deville to interrupt, with Deville telling the fans to sit down and shut up.

They want to know why Morgan and Rodriguez are champions when there is nothing special about them. It must be an upper management thing! Like from Adam Pearce! Where is everything for Green and Deville? The fight is on and the champs stand tall. This was every other not great women's tag team segment and Morgan's talking continues to be weak.

Madcap Moss vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

Emma gives Moss a pep talk in the back and is in his corner here. Moss starts fast and hits a running shoulder in the corner for two. Nakamura strikes back, hits the sliding German suplex and finishes with Kinshasa at 1:30.

Post match Moss goes after him again, leaving Emma to have to pull him to the floor for the save.

Scarlett has a Nakamura tarot card and Killer Kross says tick tock.

The Viking Raiders jump Ricochet and Braun Strowman, with Ricochet being powerbombed through a table.

Matt Riddle vs. Solo Sikoa

The Usos, Paul Heyman, Sami Zayn and Kevin Owens are here too. Before the match though, Heyman says that Roman Reigns has decided the Usos will get their title rematch in two weeks. Riddle kicks away to start but his armbar is countered with a hard slam. It's right back up with a chinlock but Sikoa punches him down again. The Usos offer a distraction and a trip so Zayn and Owens come over. The referee ejects them all, leaving Sikoa to take over as we go to a break.

Back again with Sikoa elbowing him in the face for two, meaning it's time to get frustrated. The nerve hold doesn't work on Riddle as Sikoa knocks him away again, only to get forearmed into the corner. The Floating Bro connects but here are the Usos again, with Zayn and Owens not far behind. Riddle dives onto the Usos but dives into a superkick back inside. The Samoan Spike finishes for Sikoa at 10:45.

Rating: B-. Riddle losing his first match back is certainly a weird way to go, but Keeping Sikoa strong is a good idea as well. Yes he lost to Cody Rhodes, but it was a few days before Rhodes headlined WrestleMania. There is going to be at least one six man tag in here to build Riddle back up so he'll be fine for the time being, kind of like this match really.

Post match Sikoa plants Riddle on the announcers' table and then turns it over to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. There was good action throughout and some stuff was set up for the future. This was a nice, productive episode of Smackdown, even though nothing was added to the pay per view card. The main thing about this show is that it flew

by, with nothing dragging (save for maybe the Women's Tag Team Title segment). Good show this week, as Smackdown seems to continue its successful run.

Results

Xavier Woods b. LA Knight – Rollup with trunks

Damien Priest b. Santos Escobar – South Of Heaven

Shinsuke Nakamura b. Madcap Moss – Kinshasa

Solo Sikoa b. Matt Riddle – Samoan Spike

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