

Monday Night Raw – May 15, 2023: That Sounds Heymanish

Monday Night Raw

Date: May 15, 2023

Location: Greensboro Coliseum, Greensboro, North Carolina

Commentators Kevin Patrick, Corey Graves

We are less than two weeks away from Night Of Champions and the main event (in theory) is set with Seth Rollins vs. AJ Styles for the inaugural World Heavyweight Championship. Other than that, we have a different form of the Bloodline coming after Kevin Owens and Sami Zayn, who might have something to say about it this week. 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 for the opening chat (after a clip of the announcement that they will defend against Roman Reigns and Solo Sikoa). Zayn is fired up about the match because it is their chance to check Reigns for good. Reigns is pushing the Bloodline way too hard and everything is falling apart. Now Reigns being champion for 1,000 days isn't enough because he wants the Tag Team Titles too. Well HE CAN'T HAVE THEM, but Zayn and Owens can have an interruption at the hands of the Judgment Day.

Owens doesn't care what they have to say because he wants to fight, but Zayn says we should hear them out. Zayn: "Gentlemen and Dom." The team gets in the ring to talk and Finn Balor says they'll be waiting on the titles after Night Of Champions. Rhea Ripley laughs at the idea but Dominik Mysterio is booed out of the building. The fight starts fast with Zayn clearing the ring with the save. Dominik's heat continues to be amazing and it is just awesome to see the fans loathe him

like this.

Shinsuke Nakamura vs. The Miz

Nakamura sends him into the corner to start but runs into the general vicinity of Miz's boot. Another boot doesn't connect either (though Nakamura goes down anyway), only to have Nakamura kick him down for the apron knee. Miz neckbreakers him across the rope though and we take a break.

Back with Nakamura's kicks being blocked so he kicks Miz in the head instead. The running knee in the corner sets up a cross armbreaker but Miz stacks him up for two. Miz's short DDT gets two so Nakamura kicks him in the head again for the same. The sliding German suplex looks to set up Kinshasa but Miz bails to the apron. The distraction lets Miz hit the Skull Crushing Finale for two, only to walk into Kinshasa for the pin at 9:57.

Rating: B-. This was one of the better Miz matches in a bit as he was hanging in there with Nakamura, and mostly clean at that. Nakamura needed the win after coming up short last week, so at least he is getting somewhere. WWE needs to reestablish things a bit with the new roster and this should be held set the lineup a bit.

Chelsea Green and Sonya Deville aren't happy that Liv Morgan is hurt, meaning their Women's Tag Team Title match is off for tonight. Raquel Rodriguez is willing to beat up Green tonight, with Green sounding a bit nervous, even as she yells.

We get a video on Seth Rollins, going all the way back to his NXT days.

Corey Graves sits down with Rollins, who talks about winning the first NXT Title in a tournament. He became a force for change, which included turning on Roman Reigns to break up the Shield. More on this later.

Here is Imperium, with Gunther standing on the announcers' table. Gunther has been the most dominant Intercontinental Champion of the modern era and now he will continue his reign on Raw. For now though, no one has been named as his next challenger for this prestigious championship (WHY DOES NO ONE ELSE PRAISE THEIR TITLES LIKE HIM???). That will be solved soon, and he will defeat them at Night Of Champions.

Battle Royal

Ricochet, Bronson Reed, Erik, Ivar, Johnny Gargano, Akira Tozawa, Elias, Humberto, Angel, Apollo Crews, Von Wagner, Dolph Ziggler, Xyon Quinn, Cedric Alexander, JD Drake, Dexter Lumis, Mansoor, Mace, Riddick Moss, Baron Corbin, Otis, Riddle, Chad Gable, Shelton Benjamin, Mustafa Ali

For the Intercontinental Title shot at Night Of Champions and I believe that's everyone. Corbin, in shorts, dumps Tozawa to start and is immediately clotheslined out by Lumis. The Models get rid of Lumis and are tossed out by the Alpha Academy, followed by McDonagh headbutting Humberto out. Ziggler kicks McDonagh out but gets eliminated by Wagner (that an upset). McDonagh goes after Ziggler on the floor and we take a break.

Back with the Vikings tossing out Benjamin and Quinn, plus Benjamin. The Academy and the Vikings have a standoff with Erik being sent to the apron. Gable is suplexed to the apron with him but hangs on and can't quite German suplex Erik out. The knee knocks Gable silly (but not out), allowing Otis to dump Erik. Ivar knocks Gable out but Reed tosses Ivar and Otis at the same time.

We're down to eight (Reed, Riddle, Ricochet, Moss, Gargano, Elias, Crews and Ali) with everyone else going after Reed. With that not working, Gargano snaps off a hurricanrana to Ali, who is right back with the rolling neckbreaker. The slingshot spear hits Ali but Ricochet crushes Gargano with a running shooting star press. Moss fall away slams Gargano but

walks into Reed's Samoan drop. Crews Blockbusters (or kind of flip dives into) Reed, only to get kneed in the face by Elias.

Crews gets rid of Elias but gets eliminated by Reed, leaving us with six. Reed Rock Bottoms Gargano onto Ricochet but Riddle is there with the strikes. The Floating Bro finally drops Reed but Moss hits a heck of a shoulder to knock Riddle down. Not that it matters as Riddle dumps Moss, followed by a hurricanrana to get rid of Gargano.

Gunther sends the rest of Imperium after Riddle and that's enough for Reed to knock him out. Ricochet knees Reed in the face and dropkicks him....not quite out, as Ali has to help but they only get Reed to the apron. A triangle dropkick staggers Reed again but another one is countered into a fireman's carry. That leaves Ali to dropkick both Reed and Ricochet out for the win at 12:28.

Rating: B-. This got WAY better after the break and Ali vs. Gunther could be quite the nice title match at Night Of Champions. Reed continued to look like a monster here and Riddle felt like one of the biggest stars around. Ali winning is a nice choice and he should be fine as a fresh challenger for Gunther. Good stuff here overall, and multiple people got a nice showcase.

Here is Becky Lynch for a chat. Becky talks about how she has been going through a lot lately but in this business you put on your best face and keep going. She got some help from two legends in Trish Stratus and Lita, the latter of whom was great. Becky and Lita won the Women's Tag Team Titles and she even let Trish get close to them. She didn't see what was really going on, because Trish was just here to help herself like the backstabbing egomaniac that she really is.

Becky is out there to say Thank You Trish....for turning on a light that had been off for many, many months. Trish called Becky's daughter stupid and that gave all of the badness in

her head a face and a name and a target. Trish wants to be #1 again but Becky has had it, been it, done it and has it. She's going to kick Trish's head in at Night Of Champions. That's sooner than I was expecting the match but this felt more like old school Becky, which is always a good thing.

Rhea Ripley is seen watching in the back and doesn't seem impressed with Becky. When asked about Natalya, Ripley says Natalya needs to stay out of her way. Natalya comes in to say this is about Ripley attacking an already beaten Dana Brooke. Ripley deserves respect but she isn't allowing it for anyone else. That doesn't work for Ripley, who knows Natalya wasn't there for Brooke last week. If Natalya ever interrupts her again, it will be the end of her legendary career.

Mustafa Ali is very proud of his win when he runs into the Alpha Academy. They should try being more positive, but Ali keeps going and runs into Imperium. Gunther says Ali is the rightful challenger to what is rightfully Gunther's, but we get a good luck handshake anyway. Ali feels sorry for Gunther having to go halfway around the world, just to lose his title. Gunther smiles at him and seems to like Ali's moxie.

Dominik Mysterio vs. Xavier Woods

Rhea Ripley is here with Mysterio, who is again booed out of the building for trying to talk about Woods being all alone. Woods says he's alone right now, but unlike Mysterio, he's a grown man who can fight on his own without needing permission to speak from Mami. Woods hammers away to start and hits the running dropkick to the back for two. Back up and Dominik actually wins a test of strength, at least until Woods sweeps the leg to escape. They head outside, with Rhea getting between the two of them to quite the reaction.

We take a break and come back with Woods hammering away but getting knocked down for a fast two. Woods fights back up with the Honor Roll for two but Dominik grabs some Amigos. The frog

splash only hits raised knees though and Woods hits a gorilla press gutbuster for two more (as Ripley is looking nervous). Ripley breaks up the Limit Breaker so Woods dives onto Dominik on the floor instead. A Ripley cheap shot takes Woods down though and Dominik rolls him up for the pin at 11:01.

Rating: C+. The Dominik push continues to work well, as he is just good enough in the ring to get by but Ripley is perfect as his heater. There are a few places Dominik could go and that should make things interesting for him in the future. Woods isn't likely to win anything important on his own but he'll be fine when Kofi Kingston gets back.

Video on JD McDonagh.

McDonagh is leaving and says he attacked Dolph Ziggler to teach him a lesson: never bet against an ace.

Indus Sher vs. ???/Trey Thompson

Jinder Mahal is here with Sher. The non-Thompson is knocked silly with a shot to the face to start and it's quickly off to Thompson. A big jumping elbow and a hard whip into the corner sets up the old Smoking Gunns' Sidewinder of all things for the pin on Thompson at 1:51. Impressive squash, though "we're big foreign heels" doesn't have the longest shelf life.

Post match Mahal seems to promise more violence. After a replay, Mahal grabs a headset to say Sher runs this show. Then he grabs the mic to say the same thing in another language.

Kevin Owens and Sami Zayn are in the back when Imperium comes in. Gunther isn't happy with their disrespect and a six man is set for next week.

Here is Cody Rhodes for a chat. Cody gets right to the point and tells the story of the scorpion and the frog (scorpion doesn't trust the frog, the frog eventually agrees to take him across the river, scorpion stings him in the middle, ensuring

they're both going to do, just because stinging is his nature). It is Brock Lesnar's nature to hunt, but how is Lesnar's face feeling?

Cody is ready to face him at Night of Champions, even though the reality is Lesnar is better than 99.9% of the Superstars he faces. What seems to have Lesnar upset is that he was defeated, meaning he might not be the biggest game on Raw anymore. Maybe Lesnar isn't the big thing around here these days and it's time to say next. He's ready for Night Of Champions. Cody leaves, and signs some autographs on the way out in a great touch that isn't used often enough.

Zoey Stark is kind of mean to Nikki Cross and gets a match with Candice LeRae as a result. Cross looks....annoyed?

Raquel Rodriguez vs. Chelsea Green

Sonya Deville is here with Green. Rodriguez hits a big boot at the bell but a Deville distraction lets Green send her face first into the buckle. A basement dropkick cuts Rodriguez off again but she powers Green up into a reverse Alabama Slam onto the top rope. The clothesline comeback is on and the Texana Bomb finishes Green at 3:43.

Rating: C. That's a bit of a weird way to go for Green, who has been angling for a Tag Team Title shot. I'm fine with not having Rodriguez lose, but there was an easy way to have her get pinned due to the numbers game, which can be evened out when Liv Morgan is back. For now though, it could have been worse and they got out rather quickly so it could have been a lot worse.

Post match Ronda Rousey and Shayna Baszler appear and jump Rodriguez, promising to win the Women's Tag Team Titles.

Imperium shakes hands with Paul Heyman, who calls Roman Reigns.

We get the second half of the Seth Rollins interview, with Rollins talking about being a visionary and reinventing himself. This is the best part of his career and he's not sure why. Maybe it is the hard work, but for the first time, the fans got behind him and connected with him. That changed him and now it is time to give us a World Champion who is here for everyone. As for Roman Reigns....more next week.

Video on Apollo Crews. He runs a lot.

Judgment Day vs. Sami Zayn/Kevin Owens

Non-title. Balor and Zayn start things off rather slowly until Zayn snaps off some armdrags. Priest comes in to slug away but Owens comes in to punch him in the face. An enziguri staggers Priest, who misses a charge to the floor. Balor is sent outside as well, so here are Rhea Ripley and Dominik Mysterio to uneven things up as we take a break.

Back with Zayn in trouble but managing to send Balor into the corner. That's enough for the hot tag to Owens, who gets to clean house on everyone but Ripley. The cannonball hits Priest for two so Ripley and Dominik interfere. They're a bit slow though and get ejected, allowing Owens to superkick Priest down. Cue Xavier Woods to go after Dominik and they fight to the back, leaving Priest to roll Owens up...as Paul Heyman comes out.

We take another break and come back with Owens in trouble, including a middle rope legdrop/backbreaker combination. Owens knocks Priest off the ropes though and nails a Swanton for a double knockdown. The hot tag brings in Zayn and takes Balor down to hammer away. The Michinoku Driver gives Zayn two and the Blue Thunder Bomb gets the same.

Cue Imperium for a distraction, allowing Balor to hit 1916 for two. Owens comes back in (without a tag) to Stun Priest, leaving Zayn to suplex Balor into the corner. The Helluva Kick connects but Imperium offers a distraction. Owens takes them

out so Priest chokeslams Owens onto the apron. Zayn hits the big flip dive onto Priest but Gunther breaks up another Helluva Kick. Balor's shotgun dropkick sets up the Coup de Grace for the pin at 20:58.

Rating: B. This one had some vibes of a Paul Heyman produced match and it worked out well, with so many moving parts and pieces that all seemed to fit together. Heyman working with Imperium makes for some interesting future returns, but for now it was a good enough way to keep Owens and Zayn looking strong on the way to Night Of Champions. Solid main event here, and a good enough way to protect the champs, as Heyman is trying to get inside their heads again (shouldn't be hard with Zayn) before the title match.

Heyman is rather pleased and appears to call Roman Reigns to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. There was quite a bit going on with this show and it's kind of hard to keep track of everything. I liked having wrestlers appearing throughout the show, as having them disappear once their main match/segment of the night never made a ton of sense. Other than that, we had the Rousey/Baszler return and some stuff set up for Night Of Champions. What matters here is that the show still felt like it was structured despite coming off as a bit chaotic, which is more of a sign of the new WWE regime than the "classic" McMahon stuff.

Results

Shinsuke Nakamura b. The Miz – Kinshasa

Mustafa Ali won a battle royal last eliminating Bronson Reed and Ricochet

Dominik Mysterio b. Xavier Woods – Rollup

Indus Sher b. ???/Trey Thompson – Side slam/middle rope legdrop combination to Thompson

Raquel Rodriguez b. Chelsea Green – Texana Bomb

Judgment Day b. Kevin Owens/Sami Zayn – Coup de Grace to Zayn

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