Monday Night Raw – May 29, 2023: They're Creeping Forward

Monday Night Raw
Date: May 29, 2023
Location: MVP Arena, Albany, New York
Commentators: Corey Graves, Kevin Patrick

We're done with Night Of Champions and that means it is time to deal with the fallout. The show featured a triple main event, including Seth Rollins being crowned as the new World Heavyweight Champion. In addition, Brock Lesnar beat Cody Rhodes and Jimmy Uso seems to have walked out on the Bloodline. Let's get to it.

Here is Night Of Champions if you need a recap.

We open with a long recap of Night Of Champions.

Here is new World Heavyweight Champion Seth Rollins, coming through the crowd, to open things up. After taking his sweet time to get to the ring, with streamers and a lot of singing, Rollins says it was a long road here. Finally now, Raw has a champion that wants to be here and a champion that is ready for a fight. After some more conducting, here is AJ Styles to interrupt.

Styles talks about how he gave Rollins everything he had and now the fans are saying Rollins deserves it. That's not how Styles sees it though, because the reality is Rollins earned it. Rollins shakes his hand and here is the Judgment Day to interrupt. The team talks about how they run WWE and know that it's going to be one of them that takes the title from Rollins. Ripley: "It could even be my Dom Dom!" After Rollins and Styles crack up laughing, a tag match is made for tonight.

Adam Pearce is on the phone and says that yes he gets why the tag match feels like it goes against the Raw and Smackdown being separate but it's what the fans want to see. Pearce goes over to Rollins and Styles, who are down for the match. Of note: Pearce was talking to someone above him who had to approve the match, which isn't something he usually has to do.

Money In The Bank Qualifying Match: The Miz vs. Ricochet

Ricochet starts fast and sends Miz outside, only to have Miz come back with a running hurricanrana (!) and a big boot. With Ricochet on the floor, Miz drops him onto the announcers' table, followed by a top rope ax handle back inside. We take a break and come back with Miz hitting a springboard (Miz: "I SPRINGBOARDED!") crossbody to knock Ricochet down for two more. A Codebreaker out of the corner and a DDT get two on Ricochet, who comes back with a kick to the face. The standing Sliced Bread sets up a shooting star press to finish Miz at 8:40.

Rating: C+. Miz was trying some different stuff here, to the point where it almost felt like he was trying to show off a bit. There's nothing wrong with mixing it up a bit and Miz bragging about what he was doing fit in perfectly. At the same time, Ricochet going forward is the right call, as you need someone to do a bunch of flips from the ladders.

We look at Zoey Stark helping Trish Stratus beat Becky Lynch at Night Of Champions.

Here is Trish to soak in some THANK YOU TRISH chants, but they mean nothing to her coming from you people. Trish talks about how she told us she would win and says this is what you do when you are the best ever. Now Becky can go away for a bit and let the real stars shine through. Trish is proud of someone who wanted to help her and reminds her of herself from years ago.

Cue Zoey Stark to says he is here to be behind someone as

legendary as Trish. They bring up the bruise on Trish's chin, with Trish threatening Becky Lynch if she shows up. Cue Becky, who says let's do it again, with Trish sending Zoey after her. That doesn't work and Becky gets in to hammer on Trish, at least until Zoey cuts it off. The Z360 knocks Becky silly and they put a THANK YOU TRISH shirt up against her in the corner. Solid heel heat here and the feud will have some legs going forward.

Indus Sher vs. Javier Bernal/???

Jinder Mahal is here with Indus Sher (including Veer, who slips off the apron as they get in), who jump them before the bell. Bernal gets sent into the corner and the bell rings, with Veer kicking him in the head. It's off to the unnamed one, who is tossed into Bernal, setting up a legdrop/side slam combination for the pin at 1:14.

We look back at Jimmy Uso turning on Roman Reigns at Night Of Champions, seemingly leaving the Bloodline. Jey Uso's future remains to be determined.

Here are Kevin Owens (in an Usos shirt) and Sami Zayn for a chat. Sami is so happy about winning, by which he means ruining Roman Reigns' life. He has nothing to say about Roman but here is Imperium to interrupt. Ludvig Kaiser brags about Gunther but Owens snaps, shouting about what Kaiser's problem is. Sami says there is an unwritten rule that Imperium's name wasn't mentioned so they shouldn't be out here.

They have a match later with "American Alpha" but Sami brings up the two of them and Riddle beating Imperium. Kaiser calls Riddle an embarrassment but Owens is tired of hearing from Slender Man (Kaiser) and "the one with the ears" but they never hear from baldy (meaning Giovanni Vinci. That's not cool with Kaiser, who is cut off by the Alpha Academy and one heck of a SHHHHHHHUUUUUUUUSH. Owens wants to hear the other thing, giving us a big THANK YOU. And now we're ready to go.

Video on Katana Chance/Kayden Carter, who like to party.

Alpha Academy vs. Imperium

Maxxine Dupri and Gunther are here too, while Sami Zayn and Kevin Owens are on commentary. Gable is taken into the corner but comes out with a flying headscissors and a headlock takeover/flying headscissors combination. Cue Valhalla to chase Dupri off (and scare Owens to death), with the distraction letting Imperium take over with the double dropkick to Gable in the corner.

Gable armdrags his way to freedom and kicks Vinci away, setting up the diving tag to Otis. The Caterpillar hits Kaiser, with Vinci making the save and low bridging Otis to the floor. It's back to Gable, who gets caught with a spinebuster. The Imperial Bomb is enough to finish Gable at 5:15.

Rating: C. This was the usual completely watchable Academy match while Imperium continues to establish themselves around here. That can take some time to do but what matters is WWE actually has an accomplished team who can be elevated that quickly. Other than that, the Valhalla interference was kind of amusing due to Owens' reaction, so it was kind of hard to get bothered here.

Shotzi and Raquel Rodriguez are ready for their match when Damage Ctrl comes in to mock them. Rodriguez points out that Bayley is the only member of the team who hasn't won gold since they got together, so it's time for her to look in the mirror. After they lose of course.

Video on Candice LeRae, who wears fairy wings because of the fairy tale her life has become.

Women's Tag Team Titles: Damage Ctrl vs. Ronda Rousey/Shayna Baszler vs. Raquel Rodriguez/Shotzi vs. Chelsea Green/Sonya Deville

For the vacant titles. Rodriguez powers Bayley around to start until an elbow to the face cuts her off. Bayley tags in Green, who really doesn't want to be involved. Green gets thrown into Baszler and out to the floor as we take a break. Back with Rodriguez coming in to clean house until Rousey gets the tag.

Rousey takes Rodriguez down into the armbreaker but Bayley makes the save with a top rope elbow. Green tags herself in and sends Rodriguez into the post, setting up I'm Prettier to Rodriguez. A running knee gives Deville two but it's Sky coming in for the running knees in the corner.

Shotzi makes the save and hits a heck of a suicide dive on Bayley. Rodriguez tags Shotzi in and it's a Tower Of Doom, with Rousey taking the worst of it. The top rope backsplash is pulled into the armbreaker though and Shotzi immediately taps to make Rousey/Baszler champions at 11:35.

Rating: C+. I'm not sure how much of a surprise that it was to have Rousey and Baszler win the titles but that is what should have happened. They have long since felt like the most dominant team around and they probably would have won the titles earlier if not for Rousey's injury. Sometimes you need to go with the logical move and that is what they did here.

Dolph Ziggler vs. JD McDonagh

Ziggler takes him into the corner to start but McDonagh sends him throat first into the rope. They head outside with McDonagh sending him into the steps. It's enough of a beating that McDonagh is disqualified at 1:13.

Post match the beatdown stays on Ziggler until referees break it up.

Here is Cody Rhodes, with his arm in a sling, to talk about the Brock Lesnar match. Cody's contemporaries talk about how he shouldn't have fought Lesnar but he did it anyway. No he didn't tap out, because that isn't the kind of man he wants to

be. Rhodes talks about John Cena saying Never Give Up, which hurts a lot when you're stuck in a Kimura for three straight minutes.

He wants to talk to Lesnar, but since Lesnar isn't here, he'll have to talk to the camera. Rhodes issues an open challenge to fight Lesnar anywhere anytime, and even lists off the cities where he'll be soon. He also wants this to be the last time that he lists off all of Lesnar's accomplishments but says that while Lesnar is Beast enough to break his arm, he isn't man enough to make Rhodes tap out. Lesnar is afraid of him, and that's your mic drop.

Matt Riddle wants to win Money in the Bank but Gunther interrupts. Gunther wishes him good luck because he wants Riddle to be able to cash in on him. It would be fun to beat and humiliate Riddle.

Ronda Rousey and Shayna Baszler are happy with their win, because they are here to hurt people. Loyalty is everything and now they are the champions.

Money In The Bank Qualifying Match: Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Bronson Reed

Nakamura manages to knock him outside to start but Reed is back in with a big shoulder. The rolling splash crushes Nakamura but he's right back with the kicks. The sliding German suplex is blocked though and Reed kicks him in the face. A legsweep on the apron takes Reed down though and there's the running knee to the face.

We take a break and come back with Reed running him over again for two and there's a backsplash to crush Nakamura again. Back up and Reed misses a charge, allowing Nakamura to hit the running knee. Reed is back with a powerslam but the Tsunami misses. Nakamura knocks him to the apron and knees him down, followed by Kinshasa for the pin back inside at 9:48.

Rating: B-. This was a hard hitting match with Nakamura striking away for all he was worth to slay the monster. I'm rather surprised that Reed, who has been presented as a beast in recent weeks, lost to Nakamura, who has been around to put people over more than anything else. Good match here, with quite the surprise result.

Judgment Day is proud of Rhea Ripley for winning at Night Of Champions, but they won't say which two of them will be in tonight's tag match (they're all in gear, including Rhea).

Memorial Day video.

AJ Styles/Seth Rollins vs. Judgment Day

It's Dominik Mysterio/Damian Priest for the team….or not as Finn Balor jumps Styles, with Dominik going to the floor. Rollins slips away and runs to the floor, where he puts his arm around Rhea for some rather nice annoyance. Back in and Priest elbows Rollins down and we hit the armbar. Rollins kicks him off and brings Styles in to clean house, including a running forearm in the corner.

Dominik breaks up the Phenomenal Forearm though and Priest knocks Styles over the announcers' table as we take a break. Back with Styles trying to fight out of trouble but getting sent outside instead. Rollins gets into it with Ripley on the floor, leaving Styles to Pele his way out of trouble. The tag brings in Rollins, who small packages Balor for two but is quickly knocked down for the same.

Priest comes back in and is superplexed, only to come back with the Falcon Arrow. Balor misses the Coup de Grace though and gets superkicked, heaving Balor and Rollins down. Everything breaks down and Rollins and Balor go over the announcers' table. The Phenomenal Forearm doesn't work as Priest backs up (that's so simply brilliant) and the Razor's Edge plants Styles. Rollins cuts Priest off though and the diving tag brings in Rollins for the Stomp to finish Priest at

13:09.

Rating: B. Nice main event tag match here, even if nothing of note really happened. They had some time to work though and the stuff with Ripley getting involved and feeling almost on equal footing with the men was a nice touch. It wasn't a classic, but it was a rather good match and better than a lot of what you see on Raw on a regular basis.

Overall Rating: B-. They kept things moving here and got some stuff ready for Money in the Bank, but a lot of this felt like a bit of a holding pattern after Night Of Champions. McDonagh looked like a monster though and we have some new champions, so they did advance enough stuff. It's not a great show, but it's also good enough that you wouldn't have been miserable. I'll take that more often than not.

Results
Ricochet b. The Miz – Shooting star press
Indus Sher b. Javier Bernal/??? – Side slam/middle rope legdrop combination to ???
Imperium b. Alpha Academy – Imperial Bomb to Gable
Ronda Rousey/Shayna Baszler b. Raquel Rodriguez/Shotzi, Chelsea Green/Sonya Deville and Damage Ctrl – Cross armbreaker to Shotzi
Dolph Ziggler b. JD McDonagh via DQ when McDonagh sent him into the steps
Shinsuke Nakamura b. Bronson Reed – Kinshasa
AJ Styles/Seth Rollins b. Judgment Day – Stomp to Priest

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