

# Smackdown – September 15, 2023: It's Coming WHAT IS HE DOING HERE Together

## Smackdown

Date: September 15, 2023

Location: Ball Arena, Denver, Colorado

Commentators: Corey Graves, Michael Cole, Kevin Patrick

This is the first Smackdown under the Endeavor banner and I'm not sure I can imagine there are going to be any major changes for the time being. We're also about three weeks away from Fastlane and nothing has been announced so they might want to get on that. Not that they will, but they should. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a surprise appearance by Pat McAfee, who was working in nearby Boulder, Colorado and swung by. McAfee welcomes us to the show but here is Austin Theory (in a black tank top, dressed almost identically to McAfee) to interrupt. Theory mocks McAfee and makes an Aaron Rodgers shirt before making fun of McAfee's physique. McAfee makes a marijuana references and says this is the people's show rather than Theory's show. Do you know what that means?

AND HERE IS THE ROCK! The fans certainly seem to remember him but Theory says this is his ring. Rock: "SHUT YOUR B\*\*\*\* A\*\* UP!" McAfee is loving this and Rock takes off his jacket to reveal his own black tank top (and throw said jacket into the crowd), followed by a little FINALLY. Theory says it's Rock and Austin in the ring one more time, but this time it's a REALLY tough Austin. Rock says...and Theory says it doesn't matter what Rock says.

McAfee can feel the death coming as Rock says it matters what he and the people say, because Steve Austin is Rock's boy. Rock talks about Theory being from A-Town but it's clear that he's an a-hole. He gets half of the arena to chant YOU ARE and the other to chant A\*\*HOLE, which takes up so long that McAfee makes fun of it. Rock lays Theory out with the spinebuster and hits a People's Elbow. McAfee adds one of his own and everyone celebrates. Oh yeah I'd say the Rock showing up as a total surprise still works.

### AJ Styles vs. Finn Balor

Damian Priest and Dominik Mysterio are here too. Feeling out process to start with Balor taking him down and grabbing an early chinlock. Back up and Styles hits the drop down into a dropkick, setting up a backbreaker to send Balor outside. We take a break and come back with both of them hitting crossbodies for a double knockdown. Styles hits the Phenomenal Blitz, followed by the basement forearm.

A Mysterio distraction lets Balor rake the eyes but Styles hits a belly to back faceplant for two. Balor kicks him away and goes up, only to have the Coup de Grace broken up. A fireman's carry backbreaker sends Balor outside and Styles nails the slingshot forearm to the floor. Styles decks Mysterio and the team is sent to the back. The Phenomenal Forearm misses and here is Jimmy Uso for a distraction, allowing Balor to crucifix Styles for the pin at 8:28.

**Rating:** B-. Oh like these two were going to have anything but a good match. The ending keeps probably the biggest story going around here rolling as Jimmy continues messing with things. They're having a few people get involved here and that makes for an interesting story. As for the match itself, it was Balor vs. Styles. What else were you expecting?

Pat McAfee and the Rock are talking when John Cena comes up. Cena and Rock have the staredown and then hug because

everything is cool.

Finn Balor comes up to Jimmy Uso and offers both of the Usos a spot in the Judgment Day. Jimmy politely declines but Balor says there is no leader in the Judgment Day. Balor: "No Roman." That might get Jimmy's attention, so here is Paul Heyman after Jimmy leaves.

Here is the LWO for a chat, with Rey Mysterio talking about how the team reminded him what family represents. He has a family that is united and stronger than ever. Santos Escobar talks about how the family won the title when Rey stepped up. His dream has always been to face Mysterio for a title so he issues the formal challenge. Rey seems a bit taken aback...but he's just kidding because of course he accepts. Cue Bobby Lashley and the Street Profits to interrupt, with a challenge quickly being made and accepted.

#### Street Profits vs. LWO

Joined in progress with Wilde getting two on Dawkins. Wilde misses something off the top and the Revelation finishes for Ford at 52 seconds shown. Something tells me this was trimmed for time.

Post match the beatdown stays on, with the entire LWO being taken out.

#### LA Knight vs. The Miz

Feeling out process to start with Miz hammering away until Knight hits a neckbreaker. The slingshot shoulder hits Miz again but he's right back with a knee to the ribs. Knight is back with another neckbreaker and a middle rope bulldog gets two. Miz goes to the eyes though and the running corner clothesline gives him two of his own.

We take a break and come back with Knight hitting a running kick to the chest. Knight manages to send him into the corner

for a running knee and another near fall. They trade rollups for two each until Miz hits a hanging DDT for two. Miz misses the big kick and Knight slugs away, setting up the BFT for the pin at 11:28.

**Rating:** C+. It was a little shorter than the Payback match and that helped it a good bit. What matters, again, is Knight getting the win and in theory, moving himself up the ladder. This really should end their feud so Knight can move on to something else, and thankfully it was a feud that went exactly as it should have, at least in the ring.

Post match Knight says he's here for gold and it doesn't matter if it's Rey Mysterio, Gunther, Seth Rollins or even Roman Reigns. He's top two and he's not second, so with everybody saying it, LA KNIGHT! That was a good line.

We cut to the back where Solo Sikoa is not pleased with Knight but Paul Heyman tries to talk about how Roman Reigns has to give that kind of an order. Sikoa has to worry about Jimmy Uso and John Cena. Sikoa says he already knows what he needs to do and promises to finish this. Tonight. He looks at the taped up thumb and leaves, with Heyman wondering who gave that order. A distressed call to Reigns ensues.

Pretty Deadly comes in to see Adam Pearce, who is glad they'll be back in the ring soon. Elton Prince says that he can still hear his bones breaking and Ridge Holland laughing. Pearce asks why Prince is in a wheelchair for a shoulder injury but instead we get a quick pep talk and a YES BOY.

Bayley and Dakota Kai fire each other up backstage but Kai isn't sure if Bayley is ready for Asuka. Bayley doesn't seem overly sure.

### Bayley vs. Asuka

Dakota Kai is here with Bayley. They trade rollups for two each to start and the threat of a kick sends Bayley into the

corner. Instead Asuka dropkicks her to the apron, where Bayley manages a ram into the post. We take a break and come back with Bayley kneeling her in the head for two but not being able to hit the sunset bomb into the corner.

She tries to slide back over but thankfully Asuka armbars her instead. With that broken up, Asuka grabs a German suplex and they're both down. Asuka misses a Codebreaker and Bayley takes her outside, where the announcers' table is loaded up. Cue Shotzi to scare Bayley away and Asuka gets a backslide for the pin at 8:56.

**Rating:** C+. This match helped fuel a few stories, as you had Asuka getting ready for a title match next week against Dakota Kai as well as Shotzi scaring the daylights out of Bayley. As usual, Bayley can't beat Asuka, but that's not the point here. Asuka is ready to go and Shotzi is looking like more of a star than she ever has before. That's not bad for a match that didn't even last nine minutes.

Here is Grayson Waller or the Grayson Waller Effect. His guest has headlined Wrestlemania but now his star is fading faster than his hairline. Cue John Cena to be his guest, though Waller mocks him for leaving his hat on. Waller thinks Cena needed help hosting Payback and since he only wanted to be a guest referee, his in-ring career is over. Cena isn't the best right now and that's enough to get him to take the shirt off.

Cue Jimmy Uso to interrupt and takes the mic away from Cena (who hasn't spoken yet). The fans chant for Cena to cut Jimmy off but Jimmy says if Cena isn't going to do anything, get out of his ring. Cue Paul Heyman and Solo Sikoa, with the latter getting in Cena's face. Sikoa grabs Jimmy but turns around to superkick Cena into the corner. Jimmy smiles at Sikoa, who ignores him but hammers on Cena. Cue AJ Styles for the save and Sikoa, Jimmy and Heyman bail to end the show. This is starting to get interesting with everything coming together and I want to see where this goes.

**Overall Rating:** B. There was little reason to care about the wrestling here when you had the Rock, but the action itself was more than fine enough. Knight got his win, Asuka looked strong going into her title match and Balor vs. Styles worked. At the same time you had some stuff being teased for later, including multiple stories coming together in the main event segment. I liked this show a lot, with Rock being one of the bigger surprises in recent memory.

### Results

Finn Balor b. AJ Styles – Crucifix

Street Profits b. LWO – Revelation to Wilde

LA Knight b. The Miz – BFT

Asuka b. Bayley – Backslide

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