

Crown Jewel 2023 Preview

We're going back overseas for this one as WWE returns to Saudi Arabia for another big show. One of the best things that could have happened to these shows is that WWE has begun treating them like the big show of the month (or one of two in this case) rather than some unique ordeal. For now that means Roman Reigns actually defending his title against LA Knight, plus a bunch more. Let's get to it.

Kickoff Show: Sami Zayn vs. JD McDonagh

This is the next step in the rather long running battle between the good guys of Monday Night Raw and the Judgment Day, or in this case the guy who wants to be on the team. Zayn seems to want to wreck the whole team and beating their would be associate would be a good place to start. At the same time, McDonagh could use a win and it would not be out of the question to have him win here.

That being said, this almost has to be Zayn winning so we'll go with that instead. Zayn is likely getting ready for a big match, likely inside WarGames, at Survivor Series and he can get some momentum here. Granted I'm not sure how much momentum there is to get out of beating McDonagh, but at least we might get something to start the show here, as Zayn can fire up any crowd.

US Title: Rey Mysterio(c) vs. Logan Paul

We'll start the main card with what should be one of the easier calls. Paul has been one of the more consistent stars in WWE, even though he hasn't been around very often. Someone who can draw in that much heat is worthy of giving a push and he might be in the right place here. It's hard to imagine another part time champion, but in this case it is the right call.

So yeah absolutely Paul wins the title here, as there is no reason to keep the title on Mysterio. From the second he won the title, Mysterio felt like a transitional champion, which has been the case for more than one of his title reigns. Let Paul have the title in his big moment and build up someone else to come after it in the future. This should be a layup and I think WWE knows that this time.

Smackdown Women's Title: Iyo Sky(c) vs. Bianca Belair

This is a rematch from Sky's Money In The Bank cash-in at Summerslam. Belair had a good win over Bayley on SmackDown to get things ready but I'm not sure I can imagine her getting the title here. Belair held the title for such a long time that she doesn't really need to pick up another win here, but it's hard to imagine Belair losing a singles match to just about anyone.

With all that being considered, I'll go with Sky retaining here, as Belair really doesn't need the win. There is also enough depth in the division that Sky can defend against a few interesting choices going forward (Shotzi getting a big shot, say at the Royal Rumble, wouldn't surprise me). For now, this is Sky's match to win and hopefully it comes after a heck of a match.

Cody Rhodes vs. Damian Priest

This is another match that seems destined to move into the WarGames match later this month at Survivor Series and that should be a good thing. These two have mainly been working in tag matches lately but Priest has been teasing that Money In The Bank cash-in even more. At the same time, Priest could use a few big wins of his own, but beating Rhodes is another level.

I'll go with Rhodes here, possibly with the rest of Judgment Day and Jey Uso getting involved. At the end of the day, I'm a bit tired of seeing these people fight each other over and

over, but that is what we will probably be seeing for weeks to come. At the very least the match should be good, as they both know how to wrestle a rather good match. Rhodes wins here though, as he should be doing.

John Cena vs. Solo Sikoa

Now this one really has me interested as it could go either way. Yes it would make sense for Cena to win his first singles match in five and a half years or whatever the specifics are this time, but there is a very interesting story to be told if Cena loses again here and loses confidence in himself. Granted that might all depend on how long Cena is going to be around, but there is certainly a story to be explored there.

I'll play it safe and go with Cena win, even though that isn't what I want to see happen. Cena beating Sikoa isn't going to hurt Sikoa's value as there is no shame in losing to Cena, but my goodness it could be interesting to see Cena lose. I just can't imagine it happening though and we'll go with Cena winning, as it probably makes the most sense all things considered.

Raw World Title: Seth Rollins(c) vs. Drew McIntyre

We have another intriguing one here as McIntyre has had quite the chance to explain why he is upset again and he kind of has a point about not getting his moment in front of people. At the same time, Rollins telling him to get out of it is a rather accurate response and it makes for what should be a heck of a showdown between two main event level stars in one of the show's top matches.

While I could see McIntyre winning here, I'll go with Rollins to win and retain the title. Rollins is going to drop the title to a big name along the line but I don't think it's McIntyre here. At the same time, I'm not sure what is next for McIntyre as a loss here could send him into a full fledged heel turn. A Survivor Series rematch wouldn't be out of the

question, but for now, Rollins retains.

Raw Women's Title: Rhea Ripley(c) vs. Shayna Baszler vs. Nia Jax vs. Raquel Rodriguez vs. Zoey Stark

This is something you don't see every day as we have an actual hoss fight in the women's division. All five of them are rather hard hitting and we could be in for a big time fight. That is something that could go in a variety of ways and that makes it all the more interesting. The five way aspect makes a title change that much more likely, though there is one thing standing in its way.

I'll go with Ripley retaining here, as she is by far and away the biggest star in the division and is not likely to lose the title anytime in the future. Unless Ripley loses here and wins the title back rather soon in a one on one showdown, it's hard to imagine the reign ending anytime soon. Ripley is a star on another level and she can easily get a fall over one of these four while the other three move on to do something else. Ripley retains here though, as she should.

Smackdown World Title: Roman Reigns(c) vs. LA Knight

This almost has to headline the show and the story here is the rise of Knight. Despite not actually winning anything of value, Knight has become one of the biggest stars in all of WWE. He's the kind of guy who gets a reaction no matter what he does and has that look in his eyes that lets you know you're seeing something special. I'm just not sure that's enough to take the title from Reigns.

I really just can't imagine Reigns losing the title here so we'll say he keeps the belt, but they better not have Knight lose clean. Knight is someone who could be something very special in WWE and a clean loss would hurt that more than anything else. Reigns should keep the title as he seems all but destined to face Rhodes (again) at Wrestlemania next year, but Knight shouldn't be flat out beaten here.

Overall Thoughts

This feels like one heck of a pay per view card on paper and I could imagine it being rather good if the matches get the chance to work out. I'm not sure I can imagine some big title change outside of the US Title but that might be good enough all things considered. This show has me interested and that is more than I can say about most of the shows in this series so far.

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