

Monday Night Raw – January 8, 2024: Punk Has Issues

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 8, 2024

Location: Moda Center, Portland, Oregon

Commentators: Wade Barrett, Michael Cole

We are less than three weeks away from the Royal Rumble and while there is still a lot to cover, some of the show is starting to come together. This includes some names being announced for the Royal Rumble matches, including CM Punk. As luck would have it, Punk is here tonight, and he might have something to say. Let's get to it.

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

Cody Rhodes arrived earlier today but he's cut off by Drew McIntyre in the ring. McIntyre says he had the title won last week but he overdid it with the cover. Maybe Seth Rollins is right and McIntyre is the problem. If that is the case, maybe he needs to step away from WWE for a bit. But wait, that can't be it because Damian Priest cashed in during the match and the distraction cost McIntyre. You have all these people around here, including CM Punk, so maybe McIntyre should just leave for nine years so he can come back to a hero's welcome.

Cue Punk, who says we are in Piper Country, but McIntyre didn't wear a kilt. Piper was known for talking, just like Punk, but that's not the case with McIntyre. Since Punk has been back though, all he's done is see McIntyre talking. McIntyre says Punk has been back for more than a month without self destructing. We hear about Punk declaring himself as the "locker room leader" back in the day but no one helped McIntyre. Randy Orton couldn't help either because he had his own demons, but Punk is straight edge so he doesn't have

demons.

Now McIntyre is back and he's Punk's leader. With McIntyre laying over the top, Punk says he has always led by example. Has McIntyre ever watched him? Does he know who walked out of WWE about ten years ago? He has all kinds of demons and when he's pushed, he's the devil himself.

Punk saw McIntyre come back bigger than ever so Punk is following his lead. McIntyre brings up how unlike Punk, he has main evented Wrestlemania, but those title wins he had were because someone needed to step up. Punk says it's getting heated here so he's going to lead by example and leave now, but he'll throw McIntyre out of the Royal Rumble. Interesting showdown here, with Punk's past being brought up again.

Finn Balor vs. Tommaso Ciampa

Damian Priest is here with Balor. We see Ciampa walking to the ring (with Johnny Gargano) where he talks about how his new year's resolution is for DIY to win the Tag Team Titles. Ciampa starts fast with an elbow to the face but Balor rolls through a sunset flip and hits a basement dropkick. Back up and a Thesz press with right hands has Balor in more trouble but a Priest distraction lets Balor knock Ciampa into the announcers' table.

We take a break and come back with Ciampa hitting a running clothesline into the reverse DDT for two. A knee to the face and Project Ciampa get two as Ciampa has gotten in quite the run of offense here. Balor knocks him down again but the Coup de Grace misses, allowing Ciampa to grab a crucifix for two. The seconds get in a fight on the floor so Ciampa knees Priest off the apron. Back in and Balor kicks the middle rope into Ciampa and loads up a suplex, only to have Gargano sweep the leg so Ciampa can fall on top for the pin at 8:16.

Rating: C+. Ciampa can still go with just about anyone and that was on display here, as part of DIY gets a win to move

the team forward to a likely Royal Rumble Tag Team Title shot. The ending was more evening the odds as it's nice to see Judgment Day get what's coming to them for a change. Nice stuff here and I can go for more of DIY getting a chance.

Becky Lynch talks about how Nia Jax hit her hard last week but she's back up. Now she's entering the Royal Rumble and maybe it's not over with Jax.

Kofi Kingston vs. Ludwig Kaiser

Kaiser starts fast and hits an early clothesline and takes him into the corner for some right hands. Kingston fights back but gets sent into the buckle to shut that right own. A ram into the corner has Kingston in more trouble but he fights right back to send them both outside. Kingston gets whipped into the barricade and we take a break. Back with Kaiser stomping away in the corner but Kingston sends him outside again. There's the top rope trust fall and they brawl is on outside for the double countout at 8:56.

Rating: C. This was more about Kaiser wanting revenge for his injured friend, which is a logical story even if it is coming from an evil team. We can get to the big rematch with the teams when Vinci is back to full health but for now, his keeps things going in a bit of a surprising way, which is nice to see.

Post match the brawl stays on, with Kaiser throwing one of the announcers' chairs at Kofi. A running dropkick slams Kingston's head into the steps to leave him laying. Sounds like something Gunther will approve of rather strongly.

Post match Kaiser says that Kingston brought it on himself for taking out Giovanni Vinci last week.

Here is Nia Jax for a chat. Last week was no shock and she threatens to do something shocking by breaking Michael Cole's face. No one can stop her...but here is Rhea Ripley to

interrupt. Ripley talks about eliminating Jax from the Rumble last year, but now Jax is laughing about beating Becky Lynch. Well Lynch isn't Rhea Bloody Ripley. Jax promises to win the Rumble and come after Ripley, who isn't the unstoppable one anymore. That's probably Elimination Chamber.

We look at the Rock's return last week.

Cody Rhodes says it should be over with Shinsuke Nakamura, who jumps him from behind to start a brawl.

Women's Tag Team Titles: Kayden Carter/Katana Chance vs. Chelsea Green/Piper Niven

Green and Niven are challenging. Green kicks Carter to the floor to start but they get back in, where Carter kicks her in the face. It's off to Chance, who gets sent into the corner for a Cannonball from Niven and we take a break. Back with Chance kicking her way to freedom and handing it back to Carter to pick up the pace. Everything breaks down and Niven hits a backsplash for two. A release Rock Bottom out of the corner plants Carter but a quick replacement means the Vader Bomb hits Green. Niven gets dropped with a top rope Codebreaker and it's the Keg Stand to retain the titles at 9:53.

Rating: C+. They kept this one relatively short and that makes sense, as the new champs get a win under their belts to help establish them a bit more. At the same time, the win clears out a good chunk of the division, as it isn't like there is depth to the thing. Nice enough match with Niven being the monster the champs have to overcome using teamwork and athleticism.

R-Truth gives us a special look at his childhood dream of joining the Judgment Day. Then he did it, especially now that JD McDonagh is out. Quite a bit of altered photography ensues here.

JD McDonagh vs. Miz

Dominik Mysterio and R-Truth are both here too. Miz sends him outside to start and poses a bit, with the fans being rather happy. Back in and McDonagh kicks away a bit, with a Dominik distraction making it even worse. We take a break and come back with Miz jawbreaking his way out of a chinlock. McDonagh knocks him back down and hits a slingshot corkscrew splash for two.

A suplex gets the same as Truth is playing cheerleader. Miz fights up and hits a clothesline for two, followed by the YES Kicks. Some shots to the knee set up the Figure Four but McDonagh is straight into the ropes. A Truth distraction lets Miz send McDonagh into Mysterio though and the Skull Crushing Finale gives Miz the pin at 12:01.

Rating: C. The build towards what seems to be Awesome Truth vs. Judgment Day continues and I'm not opposed to the idea. It gives us a simple title program for the Royal Rumble until someone else can come along and get the real challenge going later. Either that or just change the belts so Priest can use his briefcase. For now though, not exactly a great match but it did what it needed to do.

The rest of Judgment Day is in the back and says this has to end.

Here is Seth Rollins for a chat. Rollins lets the fans sing the song before saying it's time to get ready for the Royal Rumble. He has done a lot of things at Wrestlemania but he has never walked into the show as a World Champion. Rollins asks who he is going to have to beat at the Royal Rumble to get to Wrestlemania...and here is Jinder Mahal to interrupt (Rollins is stunned too).

Mahal says he was a bigger revolutionary last week than Rollins has been in years. He talks about how Rollins does some horrible things, including throwing tantrums after the

show goes off the air. Yet he disrespects Mahal, but now Mahal has his attention. Rollins agrees that Mahal has been overlooked, but it has been by design. He appreciates Mahal coming back out here but tells Mahal to take a swing. A cheap shot from behind lets Mahal beat him down but Rollins clears the ring without much trouble.

Otis vs. Ivar

Maxxine Dupri, Akira Tozawa and Valhalla are here too. Otis hits a running elbow to start but Ivar knocks him into the corner. A quick World's Strongest Slam gives Otis two and the Caterpillar gets the same. Ivar kicks him in the face though and finishes with the moonsault at 3:48.

Rating: C+. You've seen this kind of match more than once recently and it still works very well. It's two big, strong guys hitting each other with cool looking power moves and WWE knows just how to present it. I could have gone for this one going a bit longer, but someone powering Ivar around like that was impressive.

Jey Uso is ready to win his first singles title but Bronson Reed comes in to say not so fast.

Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Cody Rhodes

Street fight and Nakamura tries to make him wait, only to have Cody hammer away. They fight towards the entrance with Cody sending him into the barricade. Back in and Nakamura rolls away, allowing him to grab a kendo stick for some hard shots. We take a break and come back with Nakamura missing a knee drop.

That's enough for Cody to get a breather, including some stick shots of his own. Nakamura knocks him down again though and some kicks to the chest have Cody in more trouble. Rhodes is back with a powerslam and grabs a table but Nakamura takes him outside. The mist is loaded up but hits the timekeeper,

allowing Nakamura to deck a concerned Cody as we take a break.

Back with Nakamura chairing him down and hitting a middle rope knee to the face to rock Cody again. The Kinshasa is loaded up but Cody cuts it off with a superkick. The Pedigree gets two so Cody sends him through the table in the corner. That and the Cross Rhodes are enough to finish Nakamura at 24:08.

Rating: B. This felt like a big time house show main event and that has probably been the case more than once. It gives Cody the big conquering hero win over a dangerous threat going into the Rumble and that should be enough momentum. Nakamura is still really good in this kind of role, but it would be nice to see him actually win a big match once in awhile.

Overall Rating: C+. The main event was good but the rest of the in-ring action was only ok for the most part. The Punk vs. McIntyre situation was interesting, but it did feel like they kind of punted again due to the big college football title game. That might have been a smart move, though they can only do that so many times. Not a bad show here, but they need another big one at some point before the Rumble.

Results

Tommaso Ciampa b. Finn Balor – Ciampa landed on Balor

Kofi Kingston vs. Ludwig Kaiser went to a double countout

Kayden Carter/Katana Chance b. Piper Niven/Chelsea Green – Keg Stand to Green

Miz b. JD McDonagh – Skull Crushing Finale

Ivar b. Otis – Moonsault

Cody Rhodes b. Shinsuke Nakamura – Cross Rhodes

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