

Monday Night Raw – January 29, 2024: Well That's Depressing

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 29, 2024

Location: Amalie Arena, Tampa, Florida

Commentators: Pat McAfee, Michael Cole

We're done with the Royal Rumble and officially on the Road To Wrestlemania. That means it is time to start getting ready for the big time of the year. Almost everything is going to matter now, but that is going to be more complicated because CM Punk has reportedly torn his tricep. Odds are we'll hear something about that tonight so let's get to it.

[Here is the Royal Rumble if you need a recap.](#)

We open with wrestlers coming to work.

Pat McAfee is here, and apparently will be every Monday night going forward. No word on what that means for Wade Barrett.

We get a long recap of the Royal Rumble.

Here is CM Punk, with his arm in a sling, for a chat. He talks about how close he got to winning the Royal Rumble and had it in the palm of his hand. Punk doesn't feel mad at Cody Rhodes, who earned the win. On Saturday, he tore his tricep and is going to be out for a long time. That means that main eventing Wrestlemania just isn't happening this year, and the fans are not pleased.

Punk talks about a friend of his who is battling cancer and he never says a bad word and he's the kind of person that Punk wants to be. We hear about other people Punk know who work day to day jobs and they keep going, which is what he wants to do.

He's a Chicago Cubs fan and guarantees us that there is always a next year...but here is Drew McIntyre to interrupt (Punk: "Not what I was expecting.").

McIntyre seems to feel sorry for Punk and talks about how he's going to headline Wrestlemania. He got his hands on Punk and still doesn't like him, which has Punk promising to be back next year and then getting his hands on McIntyre. The fight is on with Punk using the bad arm, which is quickly taken down. Sami Zayn makes the save. Punk was emotional here but there is nothing he can do with that kind of an injury. Hopefully he's back later this year, which should be a heck of a moment, but how many times can he keep making these comebacks?

Judgment Day is happy with how things are going and ready to take out DIY.

DIY is ready for Judgment Day and have been waiting for years for this chance.

Tag Team Titles: DIY vs. Judgment Day

Judgment Day is defending. Priest takes Ciampa into the corner and hits him in the face to take over. Everything breaks down in a hurry with DIY hitting stereo dives to the floor, meaning stereo pats on the back. We settle back down to Priest dropping Ciampa face first onto the apron.

Back in and Balor's ax kick gets two so Ciampa goes over for the tag...which the referee doesn't see. Ciampa finally gets in a reverse DDT for the breather and the tag brings in Gargano to clean house. The slingshot spear gives Gargano two and everything breaks down. Ciampa assists Gargano for an assisted Sliced Bread to Priest for two but can't hit the Fairy Tale Ending.

A heck of a clothesline gives Priest two and he throws Gargano outside for making a save. South Of Heaven is broken up though and Ciampa hits a super White Noise for two. Meet In The

Middle connects but Priest makes the save. That makes Ciampa send Priest over the announcers' table as Balor knocks Gargano into the corner but misses the Coup de Grace.

The Gargano Escape and Sicilian Stretch go on at the same time until Priest drops Ciampa onto the other two for the save. We settle back down to Gargano escaping the Razor's Edge and handing it back to Gargano. A superkick drops Balor so Priest loads up the Razor's Edge to Ciampa, only to be cut off by Gargano. Back in and Ciampa rolls Priest up for two but it's a Razor's Edge into the Coup de Grace to retain the titles at 12:49.

Rating: B+. Man this was rolling by the middle and if they had gone at somewhere in there, the roof might have come off. Instead though, it was an awesome match in front of a hot crowd and I was buying that DIY had a chance of pulling this off. Really hot match here and hopefully DIY gets another shot at some point.

Post match Dominik Mystério and JD McDonagh come in to celebrate, with Damian Priest saying we have seen a different side to the team in recent weeks and it's time to thank someone for making it happen. That would be R-Truth, so here he is for a chat, albeit after Priest assures him that he'll be safe. Truth comes in and talks about doing Priest's taxes, with Priest saying Truth doesn't know what any of that means.

They're a family, with Balor as the weird uncle. Then you have Tom and Nick, but there is nothing else to say about them. McDonagh is like that step brother you don't want to admit is in the family. Priest says they're family, but Truth isn't part of the team. He likes Truth though, which is why Dominik and McDonagh are doing this. The beatdown is on but Miz runs in for the save, only to get beaten down as well. Truth and Miz getting the Tag Team Titles could be a nice moment.

Chelsea Green/Piper Niven vs. Shayna Baszler/Zoey Stark

Niven runs Stark over to start but it's quickly off to Baszler to work on the arm. Green comes in to takeover on Stark, who hits a Z360 for a VERY quick win at 2:01. Baszler looked a bit confused there, even though her team won so I'm wondering if that wasn't as planned.

Here is Cody Rhodes for a chat and yeah the fans really like him. The fans say he deserves it, so Cody asks Samantha Irvin to introduce him as the back to back Royal Rumble winner one more time. Cody talks about how this place is supposed to be an escape for people but the last few days have been challenging. He needed the fans since then but let's make Wrestlemania official.

Cue Seth Rollins to interrupt, saying he agrees with the fans: Cody deserves it. They might not see eye to eye, but Rollins is getting serious now: if Cody chooses to face Roan Reigns at Wrestlemania, he's making a mistake. Cody should face Rollins instead and wants the fans to hear him out. At the Royal Rumble press conference, Cody said he was the guy, but neither he nor Roman Reigns is the guy anymore. Rollins is the guy, because of the World Heavyweight Championship.

It made sense to go after Reigns when there was only one champion, but Rhodes and Rollins have been on this ride together. They have made town after town and Rollins was defending the title every night. Why did the World Heavyweight Championship come to be? It's because people were tired of Reigns barely being around to defend the title, but that's not what Rollins does.

We don't need to pretend that Reigns is something special anymore because we don't need him at all. Does Cody want the Hulk Hogan Title, or does he want the Dusty Rhodes workhorse title? It doesn't matter what Dusty would do because this is about Cody and his decision. Rollins can wait on an answer, but what kind of a man does Cody want to be? An emotional Cody says he respects Rollins and did not expect to be talking

about this tonight. He'll think about it. While I still think Cody picks Reigns, they did a really good job here of sewing some doubt, which is a good thing if you want the announcement to be a big moment.

New Day is ready to win another title when Kofi Kingston beats Gunther for the Intercontinental Title.

Jey Uso vs. Bronson Reed

Reed runs him over to start and hits a hard clothesline. Back up and Jey manages to knock him outside for the suicide dive. We take a break and come back with Uso punching away and getting two off a high crossbody. The enziguiri is knocked away though and Reed's backsplash gets two. Reed goes up but gets knocked down, only to avoid the Superfly Splash. Reed's Death Valley Driver gets two but he misses the Tsunami. Uso spears him down and hits the Superfly Splash for the pin at 9:17.

Rating: C+. This is the kind of win that can do some good for Uso. He wasn't in there against a top star but he had to come from behind and gets a nice clean win. Uso is likely going to be getting to do something soon (a run at the Intercontinental Title wouldn't shock me) and this should move him forward in more than one way.

Andrade officially signs with Raw but Nick Aldis interrupts. Adam Pearce introduces the two of them and runs down Andrade's resume, though Aldis said Smackdown had its own contract offer. Andrade says say hi to Zelina Vega for him and leaves. Aldis says Bayley has been loaded to Raw for tonight, but before they can talk about the Elimination Chamber, Aldis takes a phone call from Bron Breaker.

Gunther talks about being glad Kofi Kingston challenged him because Kingston will remember this night for the rest of his life. After tonight though, Gunther will forget about Kofi and remember Gunther's record setting title reign.

Becky Lynch is disappointed in losing but she's not done fighting until she takes the title back to the main event where it deserves.

Intercontinental Title: Gunther vs. Kofi Kingston

Kingston is challenging and charges right at him to start. Some early shots to the face stagger Gunther but a backbreaker puts Kingston down. Gunther grabs the Boston crab and we're off to an early break. Back with Gunther pounding away and telling Kingston to bring it. Gunther shrugs off a comeback attempt and grabs another Boston crab as we take another break.

Back again with Kingston hitting a jumping knee but getting caught in the sleeper. The powerbomb is broken up and they head outside, with Kingston countering another powerbomb attempt into a hurricanrana into the post. Back in and Kingston hits Trouble In Paradise but Gunther rolls outside before the cover.

Kingston drapes him over the steps for a jumping shot to the back, followed by the top rope Boom Drop for two back inside. Another Trouble In Paradise is countered in a failed Boston crab attempt so Gunther hits the big clothesline. Another clothesline is countered into the SOS for two and Gunther has had enough. The dropkick and powerbomb retain the title at 16:18.

Rating: B-. This took some time to get going but once they got rolling, this got a lot better in a hurry. Kingston is in that sweet spot where he's just good enough to feel like a threat while making Gunther look good. We're coming up on Wrestlemania season and the shot against Gunther is going to be a big spot for someone. Jey Uso still feels like a real option, but it's going to be someone big.

Post match Xavier Woods comes in to check on Kingston but Imperium comes in for the beatdown.

We look back at Drew McIntyre injuring Sami Zayn last month.

Sami talks about how he keeps getting things taken away by McIntyre, who is now targeting other people. Tonight, Sami is giving him a reality check.

Kabuki Warriors vs. Natalya/Tegan Nox

Non-title. Natalya runs Sane over to start so it's off Now for some running shots to Asuka in the corner. A Cannonball keeps Asuka in trouble and it's Natalya coming back in for the double running kicks to the face. We take a break and come back with Natalya fighting back on Asuka. A German suplex and discus clothesline look to set up the Sharpshooter so Asuka screams for Sane to save her. Natalya reaches for the tag to Nox but instead she goes to the floor to brawl with Sane. That goes badly, leaving Natalya to roll Asuka up for two. Asuka kicks Natalya down and the Insane Elbow finishes for Sane at 9:50.

Rating: C. Good grief. Natalya and Nox have teamed together SIX TIMES. Can we please stop acting like them having an issue and probably splitting up is in any way a big deal? Natalya isn't interesting in the first place and pretending that this is some kind of a big deal isn't making things better. This was a fine enough match but I rolled my eyes hard at the idea of some kind of a breakup angle between a team that was barely around in the first place.

Kayden Carter and Katana Chance are ready for their rematch for the Women's Tag Team Titles next week.

Here is Bayley, with the rest of Damage CTRL, for a chat. Bayley talks about how everyone was saying she wasn't as good once she came back from her injury but now she is back as the Royal Rumble winner. She beat the best women's division ever and even broke Rhea Ripley's Iron Woman record.

Cue Ripley to interrupt but Nia Jax jumps her from behind. The

fight is on and they get in the ring, with Jax running her over and dropping the big leg. Jax drops two more plus the Annihilator before staring Bayley down in the corner. Ripley isn't making it to Wrestlemania, but Bayley says she's making her announcement on Smackdown. This was more about setting up Ripley for her Hogan vs. Andre style match in Australia.

Drew McIntyre says Sami Zayn has never beaten him and that isn't changing tonight.

Sami Zayn vs. Drew McIntyre

McIntyre jumps him to start and they go to the floor for an early break. Back with Sami hitting a sunset bomb for a much needed breather. Zayn fights back again but gets run over with a hard shot. McIntyre goes up top, only to get superplexed back down in quite the big crash.

The Helluva Kick is cut off with an elbow to the face, followed by the overhead belly to belly. White Noise plants Sami for two but he knocks McIntyre into the corner again. Another Helluva Kick is blocked with what appears to be a low blow. The Claymore finishes for McIntyre at 12:56.

Rating: C+. This got better near the end but it was kind of a flat main event. I'm not sure what WWE has in mind for McIntyre at Wrestlemania (though a match with Seth Rollins isn't out of the cards) but this was just him beating Sami again. It was a good enough match, though nothing you need to really see.

Overall Rating: B-. The show started off on a down note but was picked up by some rather good action. They could only set up so much for Wrestlemania this week due to the Punk injury and probably a bunch of fallout from the lawsuit changing everything, but it could have been worse. They have more than enough time to get ready, but the build to Elimination Chamber can start next week.

Results

Judgment Day b. DIY – Coup de Grace to Ciampa

Shayna Baszler/Zoey Stark b. Chelsea Green/Piper Niven – Z360 to Green

Jey Uso b. Bronson Reed – Superfly Splash

Gunther b. Kofi Kingston – Powerbomb

Kabuki Warriors b. Tegan Nox/Natalya – Insane Elbow to Natalya

Drew McIntyre b. Sami Zayn – Claymore

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