

Smackdown – February 2, 2024: It's On/Not On

Smackdown

Date: February 2, 2024

Location: Legacy Arena, Birmingham, Alabama

Commentators: Corey Graves, Wade Barrett

We're done with the Royal Rumble and that means we are officially on the Road To Wrestlemania. That means we are going to need some decisions from the Royal Rumble winners, one of which will be announced tonight as Bayley makes her announcement. Roman Reigns and Cody Rhodes are here as well so let's get to it.

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

The Bloodline arrives.

Long Royal Rumble recap.

Commentary welcomes us to the show. It's a smart move to remind people that Barrett is a 5x Intercontinental Champion. A lot of people might not know that and it gives him some instant credibility.

Here is Logan Paul for a chat. He hates Alabama but has to praise Kevin Owens, who hurt him more than Floyd Mayweather Jr. Owens even made him bleed....but then Owens still lost. Paul talks about how tough he is and mocks Seth Rollins and CM Punk's recent injuries. He lists off some nicknames before getting interrupted by Owens himself. Owens talks about how much he liked hitting Paul, because hurting him was better than winning the title.

Paul says that was Owens' one and only shot because he took the bait of the brass knuckles. Owens talks about how he'll do

anything to win a match, but he just got caught. Paul insults Owens' smell, but Owens says he bathed in Prime (Paul's energy drink) before he came out here. Either way, there's no rematch, so Paul is off to find a better challenger.

Kevin Owens vs. Austin Theory

Logan Paul is on commentary and Grayson Waller is at ringside. They trade headlocks to start with Theory knocking him down and choking a bit, much to Paul's approval. Owens is back up with a backsplash into a Cannonball but Theory backdrops him onto the apron. We take a break and come back with Owens fighting out of a chinlock. A knockdown sets up a missed Swanton so Theory hits a rolling Blockbuster for two. Back up and Paul slips in the brass knuckles but Owens takes them away. After dropping Waller, a right hand to Theory finishes for Owens at 10:48.

Rating: C+. It seems like Owens is staying in the title picture and this was a good way to get him back in the hunt after the bad loss. Sometimes it's fine just to put someone out there and give them a win over a somewhat credible star and they did it just fine. Owens has bigger things coming, but this was about setting the table and that needed to be done.

Post match Owens chases Paul off.

We look back at Naomi returning in the women's Royal Rumble.

Naomi has officially signed with Smackdown...and so has Tiffany Stratton, who slaps Michin and runs off.

Bianca Belair is trying to find out what she has to do to get a Wrestlemania title shot. Logan Paul interrupts and wants a match tonight, but gets into an argument with Belair.

Legado del Fantasma talks about their unbreakable bond. A toast is made.

Pretty Deadly vs. Tyler Bate/Pete Dunne vs. LWO vs. Legado del

Fantasma

The winners face the winners of another four way on Raw, with the winners getting a Tag Team Title shot at Elimination Chamber. Bate works on Prince's arm before handing it off to Dunne to do more of the same. Everything breaks down and Wilde is launched off the middle rope for the huge assisted dive onto a bunch of people.

We take a break and come back with Dunne getting the tag to clean house as everything breaks down. Zelina Vega holds the ropes so the LWO can hit stereo dives, followed by Vega diving onto Elektra Lopez. Pretty Deadly's twin magic doesn't work as Dunne snaps his fingers and the double Tyler Driver 97 finishes for Bate at 8:47.

Rating: C+. As usual, there is only so much you can do with this many people and so little time. Bate and Dunne are a good tag team and it's nice to see WWE rebuilding their tag division. No one in here felt off and if there are four other teams on Raw (which there should be), you have quite a division between the two rosters. Having one set of titles helps that much, and there are some interesting possibilities for the Elimination Chamber title match.

We look at Bayley and Rhea Ripley arguing on Raw until Nia Jax interrupted and scared Bayley.

Damage CTRL, minus Bayley, doesn't think much of Bayley, who happens to be listening from the other room. So she's Batista with less tattoos?

Here is Bayley, with Damage CTRL, to talk about her Wrestlemania decision. She has done everything she can at Wrestlemania and her career has been a lot more downs than ups. The whole time though, she had her Damage CTRL friends with her because they're family. The team laughs a bit but then gets serious when she turns around. She wants to be the best and that means beating the best, which brings her to Rhea

Ripley.

Sometimes you have to do what your heart tells you to do, like proving people wrong when they said they were your friends. Bayley calls Damage CTRL out for laughing and drops some Japanese, which scares them a bit. She picked it up from all the talking they've done behind their back (they know the jig is up) and doesn't get why they did this.

All she wanted was Damage CTRL to be the best...and they beat her down. Bayley whips out a pipe and cleans house before staring Iyo Sky down. With Sky bailing, Bayley makes the Wrestlemania challenge and the match seems on. That was good stuff as the villains knew the jig was up and didn't bother wasting time getting to the point.

Final Testament vs. Bobby Lashley/Street Profits

It's a brawl before the bell and Lashley is left alone to spinebuster Kross. The Hurt Lock is loaded up but Scarlett runs in, only to have B Fab make the save. Lashley spears Kross down and the villains leave. No match.

Bron Breakker is about to sign with Smackdown when Adam Pearce comes in to say he has an offer for him on Monday. Breakker is willing to listen and says he'll see Pearce on Raw. Jade Cargill comes in to talk with Aldis, who throws Pearce out. Pearce says be careful of Double 0 Salesman.

Tiffany Stratton vs. Michin

Michin starts fast and grabs a suplex but Stratton pops up and takes her down without much trouble. Stratton asks what time it is as we take a break. Back with Michin hitting a heck of a slap and hammering away. An Alabama Slam gives Stratton two and it's a Regal Roll into the Prettiest Moonsault Ever for the pin at 7:42.

Rating: C. This was a "hi, nice to meet you" match from

Stratton as she beats someone the fans know well enough. Stratton is quite the athlete and got to showcase that here, though she's going to need to do some of her promos to really make it work. For now it's a nice start, but there is only so much you can get out of this kind of a presentation.

It's time for Cody Rhodes' decision, so here is the Bloodline, with Roman Reigns wanting some acknowledgment. Reigns talks about how Seth Rollins talked called his title the important title, but Reigns has beaten everyone who is going after that title. Rollins tried to carry the title and now he's limping around. Sure Reigns wrestles ten times less than Rollins, but he makes ten times more. Do you want Rollins money or Tribal Chief money?

Cody Rhodes is an idiot and has values and all that, so Reigns isn't begging him like the other guy. You can be the best #2 in the industry or take a crack at #1 again. After Reigns killed that promo, here is Cody to interrupt. Back from a break and Cody asks if we can do this more privately. Solo Sikoa and Jimmy Uso leave, allowing Cody to say he disagrees with Seth Rollins saying the WWE Title is the Hollywood Title.

Cody says that is the title Bruno Sammartino held and the title that was taken from his father's hands. So what is finishing the story? Reigns has said everything around here belongs to him, so if finishing the story taking the title, or taking everything? Cody wants the title and is coming for Reigns....but not at Wrestlemania.

Cody took counsel this week and one person knows him very well...and here's the Rock (Reigns' eyebrows popped up when the music hit). Cody and Rock shake hands, with Rock whispering something to Cody that makes him nod. Cody leaves and Rock stares Reigns down...as the show ends with nothing being said, but we do get a graphic for a Wrestlemania Press Event on Thursday.

Oh yeah this is going to get some people mad and I don't quite get it. Cody has had his Wrestlemania main event. Against Reigns. For the title. In an NFL stadium. Rock is 53 years old and has a very complicated schedule. If this is the time to get that one big match out of him, you do it when you have the chance. Cody can have his (second) match with Reigns later and even then there's no guarantee he's getting the title. Rock vs. Reigns is he biggest match possible right now and if they can do it in front of 60,000+ in Philadelphia, it's going to be an amazing moment.

Overall Rating: B. This show wasn't about the wrestling but rather setting up the Wrestlemania title matches. Bayley vs. Sky won't headline anything but it's a solid middle of the pack match. Rock vs. Reigns is one of those dream matches that you get every so often and yeah, WWE is going to have to twist things around a lot for it to happen but maybe, just maybe, they have something else in mind for Cody, either at Wrestlemania or down the line. This wasn't about what happened this week but rather setting things up for Philadelphia and that went really well.

Results

Kevin Owens b. Austin Theory – Right hand with brass knuckles
Tyler Bate/Pete Dunne b. Pretty Deadly, LWO and Legado del Fantasma – Double Tyler Driver 97 to Prince
Tiffany Stratton b. Michin – Prettiest Moonsault Ever

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