

Monday Night Raw – April 22, 2024: Draft Prep?

Monday Night Raw

Date: April 22, 2024

Location: Schottenstein Arena, Columbus, Ohio

Commentators: Michael Cole, Pat McAfee

It's the last Raw before the Draft and that means things are going to be shaken up again. We are also about two weeks away from Backlash and we have a big main event on the Raw side as Jey Uso will challenge Damian Priest for the World Heavyweight Championship. On top of that, we need a new Women's World Champion so it's battle royal time. Let's get to it.

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

Michael Cole and Pat McAfee are in the ring to start things off and announce that the battle royal will be the main event.

We look at Rhea Ripley vacating the Women's Title last week to set up the battle royal.

Here is Jey Uso to get things going. He's ready for Backlash but here is Damian Priest to cut him off. Priest says this whole YEET thing suits Uso and he brings up their history together. Last year, Uso gave him such a beating that Priest came up to him in the locker room and said he earned his respect. They went out drinking that night and Jey said they were next.

The reality is that Priest was next, and he is now. Uso is just the first person to be fed to Priest to make him look good. Priest goes to leave but Uso asks if that is all Priest sees him as. Uso praises him for winning the title but Priest is being fed to him because Uso is becoming the next World Champion. Cue JD McDonagh so Uso throws the superkick, which

hits Priest. McDonagh begs forgiveness as Uso leaves.

Raw Tag Team Titles: DIY vs. Awesome Truth

Awesome Truth is defending. R-Truth armdrags Gargano into an armbar to start and it's quickly off to Miz. Gargano kicks him away and brings in Ciampa, who is quickly caught in a Figure Four. With that broken up, Ciampa bails to the floor so Gargano dives onto R-Truth as we take a break.

Back with R-Truth hitting a sitout gordbuster and handing it back to Miz. Ciampa wastes no time in kneeing him out of the air, only for Miz to get in a shot of his own. The tag brings in R-Truth to pick up the pace, at least until Gargano superkicks him into a Pedigree for two. Meet In The Middle hits R-Truth but Miz pulls Gargano out at two, setting up the Truth Crushing Finale to retain at 10:06.

Rating: C. Awesome Truth isn't exactly out there to have instant classics but they work well enough to get by. They needed to get their first win like this and it went well, as DIY are great choices for such opponents. At the same time, DIY needs to win something already, but I'm not sure I can imagine it happening anytime soon.

Post match Ciampa isn't happy and won't shake hands (Gargano did).

JD McDonagh begs Damian Priest for forgiveness when Dominik Mysterio comes in. He's banged up and can't team with McDonagh tonight, so he's gotten Santos Escobar to do it instead. The rest of the team isn't thrilled.

Here is Gunther, with Imperium, for a chat. Gunther talks about elevating the Intercontinental Title to never before seen heights and that left a big target on his back. That weight has been lifted off his back, so he thanks Sami Zayn for allowing him to become the hunter again.

We are in a new era and now he is entering the King Of The Ring tournament, which will allow him to decide which title to come after. Cue New Day to interrupt, with Xavier Woods saying that since he is the reigning King Of The Ring, Gunther is A USURPER! Woods is going to become a two time King Of The Ring but Gunther says he will elevate the crown by winning the tournament. New Day brings up Gunther losing the title and a tag match is made.

Imperium vs. New Day

Kaiser drives Kingston into the corner to start so it's off to Vinci, who gets chopped into trouble. Everything breaks down and Imperium manages to clear the ring as we take a break. We come back with Woods getting the tag and firing off some clotheslines. A running crotch attack against the ropes/dropkick through the ropes hits Imperium but Vinci blasts Kingston with a clothesline for two. The Imperium Bomb is broken up and the UpUpDownDown finishes Vinci at 9:14.

Rating: C+. Nice match as usual between these teams, though hearing that it was going to happen again didn't exactly get my interest. They've fought so many times that it is hard to get interested again. Odds are this is not going to sit well with Gunther, who has been tired of Imperium screwing up more than once. New Day getting a win helps them a bit, but they still need something new.

Post match Gunther is livid and leaves Imperium in the ring. Kaiser then jumps Vinci and leaves him laying. Security breaks it up but Kaiser hits a running dropkick to send him into the steps. Kaiser walks to the back, where Gunther is waiting for him in approval.

Andrade recaps his issues with the Judgment Day, saying he is no one's servant. Now he is their biggest problem.

We look at the United Kingdom tour.

Here is Drew McIntyre to sit down (McIntyre: "Don't shoot up my kilt you perv."). He doesn't get why people chant for CM Punk every time he's out there when Punk doesn't care for any of them. After saying if you say WHAT you French kiss your sister (Fans: "WHAT!" McIntyre: "You guys are sick."), McIntyre talks about how Punk cost him everything at Wrestlemania. Now it's on to the King of the Ring but here is Sheamus to interrupt.

Sheamus says McIntyre cost himself everything at Wrestlemania when his family was there supporting him. They have traveled the world together but a one armed Punk beat McIntyre up. Sheamus says McIntyre needs to get Punk's name out of his head but McIntyre calls out Sheamus for gaining weight while he was gone. Sheamus: "I can lose the weight but you can't lose stupid." They argue over what people say about Sheamus' weight but McIntyre promises to watch Sheamus' back (in a bit of an ominous way). We've done this before, though McIntyre and Sheamus doing anything together is good to see.

Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Sheamus

Or McIntyre vs. Sheamus according to Cole (which he does correct after a break). Nakamura strikes away to start and knocks him to the apron before choking in the corner. McIntyre leans over to McAfee and talks about how this company is succeeding due to the work of people like Sheamus.

A hard shot puts Nakamura down (McIntyre approves) and we hit the forearms to the chest. The rather banged up Nakamura is sent outside but he comes back with a kick to the head. Nakamura knees him in the back of the head and we take a break. Back with Sheamus hitting the Irish Curse and a top rope clothesline gets two.

Sheamus misses a charge into the corner and gets caught with the sliding German suplex, setting up Nakamura's sliding German suplex. The chinlock doesn't last long and Sheamus

manages a super White Noise for two more. The Brogue Kick misses so Sheamus knees him down for another near fall. Nakamura slips out of the High Cross but walks into the Brogue Kick to give Sheamus the pin at 11:18.

Rating: B. This is the kind of match that Sheamus needed to really show that he's back. The match was about taking two hard hitting stars and letting them beat the fire out of each other for awhile. Odds are we'll be seeing something between Sheamus and McIntyre, so it's nice to see Sheamus getting a nice boost on the way there.

McIntyre applauds Sheamus' efforts.

We recap Sami Zayn defeating Chad Gable last week, resulting in Gable snapping on him in a rather violent way.

Zayn says he is angry and hurt but he's biting his tongue. He'll be listening for Gable's explanation later tonight. Bronson Reed comes in to say he's a bigger problem than Gable. Zayn says anytime, anyplace. Then Reed jumps him.

Here are Chad Gable and the Alpha Academy for a chat, but first we see a clip from the Pat McAfee Show, with Charles Barkley talking about how he didn't like what Gable did to Sami Zayn. Gable says Zayn is having a rough week but what he did to Zayn was justified. Gable talks about last week's main event and how big of a deal it was. That was important enough, but then Zayn put the title in front of his face.

That would set some people off, but Gable gave him his moment. Then Zayn celebrated with his wife despite knowing Gable was standing right there. Gable should have been at Wrestlemania in front of his family but he has been training a bunch of losers. He gets on Akira Tozawa for losing too often, Maxxine Dupri for being dumb and Otis for being a huge disappointment. From now on, it's all about Gable, with everyone here helping him. Gable wants to hear them say it, with Otis reluctantly agreeing. That's a perfectly acceptable explanation, but it

seems like we are looking at a slow burn heel turn for Otis.

Dominik Mysterio, with his arm in a sling, comes up to Ricochet, who cuts him off and doesn't want to hear Mysterio's threats. Tonight he'll take out JD McDonagh in a tag match and then do it again in their match for Speed. Ricochet leaves and Liv Morgan comes in for a staring from Mysterio.

Nia Jax promises to win the title tonight.

Ricochet/Andrade vs. JD McDonagh/Santos Escobar

Dominik Mysterio is here with McDonagh/Escobar. Ricochet knocks Escobar into the corner to start and hits a quick elbow for two. Back up and Ricochet cranks on the neck before snapping off an ankle scissors. McDonagh comes in to elbow Ricochet in the face for two before dropping him with a hard belly to back suplex. The fans tell Dominik to shave his mustache and don't like it when he trips Ricochet up, allowing Escobar to get in a cheap shot.

We take a break and come back with Ricochet fighting out of the corner. It's back to Andrade for some dragon screw legwhips into the running knees in the corner to Escobar. Ricochet comes in with the springboard clothesline into the running shooting star press for two. Escobar and Ricochet collide for a double knockdown so it's Andrade coming in for the two Amigos. McDonagh makes the save and all four head up. Andrade knocks McDonagh down and Escobar snaps off a super hurricanrana to send Ricochet...right onto McDonagh. Andrade grabs the Shadow to finish McDonagh at 11:54.

Rating: C. This had its moments with the athleticism and flips, but they weren't exactly gelling in a lot of ways. Some of the stuff was looking a bit messy and at the same time, the match was kind of confusing as Ricochet and Andrade aren't a regular team and Escobar is a replacement. Andrade's push continues though, and he might be in line for something bigger if he stays on this path.

Post match Damian Priest runs in to take out Ricochet and Andrade. Priest says he doesn't need McDonagh and Escobar but they need him.

Video on Zoey Stark.

Candice LeRae and Indi Hartwell are asked about being all evil when they're interrupted by a fight between Liv Morgan and Nia Jax. Becky Lynch comes in and steals the microphone. She goes towards the ring and runs into Maxxine Dupri, who gets a quick pep talk. Lynch goes back to walking and says she'll be waiting for Rhea Ripley whenever she gets back.

Raw Women's Title: Battle Royal

Becky Lynch, Indi Hartwell, Candice LeRae, Shayna Baszler, Nia Jax, Liv Morgan, Zoey Stark, Natalya, Kayden Carter, Katana Chance, Piper Niven, Chelsea Green, Ivy Nile, Maxxine Dupri

For the vacant title. Niven and Jax slug it out to start but can't get very far. Lynch has to get back inside and Natalya is sent to the apron for an early elimination tease. We slow down a bit until Dupri dumps out LeRae for the first elimination. Dupri gets rid of Hartwell too and we take an early break.

Back with Carter and Chance getting to clean some house until Baszler and Stark get rid of both of them. Nia tosses Nile into the post for the elimination but Dupri fires off some kicks. Then Jax eliminates her as well, with the fans not being pleased. Niven gets low bridged to the apron and Lynch kicks her out. That's not cool with Niven, who pulls Lynch outside (not eliminated) and crushes her against the steps.

Niven loads up the announcers' table but stops to pull Jax outside (not eliminated). That's fine with Jax, who chokeslams and Samoan drops Niven onto Lynch. As this is going on, Natalya eliminates Green but the referee misses it, allowing Green to get back in. We take another break and come back

again with Lynch still mostly done on the floor. Green and Natalya brawl on the apron until Stark kicks Green out.

Natalya is knocked out as well, leaving us with Morgan, Jax, Stark, Baszler and the out of it Lynch. Jax punches Stark and Baszler out as Lynch is pulling herself back inside. Morgan kicks away at Jax and it's a Codebreaker/neckbreaker combination to Jax to put all three of them down. Jax is back up with some Samoan drops and sends them both to the apron. A double Stunner slows Jax down but she suplexes both of them at the same time.

Jax goes up and gets knocked to the apron, where a Codebreaker and middle rope Fameasser get rid of her. We're down to Lynch vs. Morgan, with Lynch knocking her to the apron. Morgan pulls her through the ropes to the same apron and they fight over a suplex. That doesn't work so it's a Manhandle Slam to give Lynch the win and the title at 21:47.

Rating: B-. This got a lot of time and they got us to the end with multiple viable options. Jax, Morgan and Lynch were the three most likely choices to win and they went with the best of those three. Lynch definitely feels like a safe pick and there is nothing wrong with that given the circumstances. Good main event here and it felt like a big moment, as it should have.

Lynch celebrates in the crowd (including hugging a lot of young girls in a nice moment) to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. There was enough good action here and the ending felt important. The interesting part to me here was that the show focused on King & Queen of the Ring and Backlash, but the Draft was barely ever mentioned. That makes a lot of sense as there is only so much you can do with previewing something as random as the Draft. The next two shows are going to be interesting, but this show was mainly about getting ready for the next few big events. There are

quite a few of them coming up, so getting this kind of night in helped them a bit.

Results

Awesome Truth b. DIY – Truth Crushing Finale to Gargano

New Day b. Imperium – UpUpDownDown to Vinci

Sheamus b. Shinsuke Nakamura – Brogue Kick

Ricochet/Andrade b. JD McDonagh/Santos Escobar – Shadow to McDonagh

Becky Lynch won a battle royal last eliminating Liv Morgan

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and head over to my Amazon author page with 30 different cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

AND

[Remember to check out Wrestlingrumors.net for all of your wrestling headline needs.](http://wrestlingrumors.net)