

Smackdown – June 21, 2024: The Road To Cleveland

Smackdown

Date: June 21, 2024

Location: Allstate Arena, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Corey Graves, Wade Barrett

It's time for the return to one of the bigger cities and as you might expect, that means CM Punk is here for a special appearance. We're getting closer and closer to Punk being able to return to the ring and it would not surprise me to see the recently departed Drew McIntyre show up to go after him here. Let's get to it.

[Here is Clash At The Castle if you need a recap](#)

We open with a look at CM Punk costing Drew McIntyre the Raw World Title at Clash At The Castle. This led to McIntyre quitting WWE the following Monday on Raw.

The fans chant for CM Punk and here he is to get things going. Punk talks about the pressure of live TV and doing it in your hometown is even more pressure. It is even harder to make a promise to your hometown and then have to deliver. He gets nervous every time he hears that static and "LIKE MUSSOLINI" (there's your Cornette reference) and it always works. Punk brings up promising to win the WWE Title at Money In The Bank 2011 and he lived up to the pressure.

Drew McIntyre couldn't do that and now McIntyre has quit...and here is Paul Heyman to interrupt, with Punk giving a pretty great surprised reaction. Heyman says this isn't about disrespect before talking about how hot it is out there and in here. Punk sat next to his children at the Hall Of Fame induction when he was still the wise man to Roman Reigns. The fans chant for Reigns, with Punk saying Heyman is the only

person who can get away with hijacking his promo like this.

Heyman gets in and we get a rather emotional hug in a nice moment. The reason Heyman is here is that he heard a radio shot host say that Chicago is Punk's town and Solo Sikoa doesn't like that. If Punk doesn't get out here right now, the Bloodline is coming for him and the extra security is here for the Wyatts rather than a bunch of ticked off Samoans. Heyman is here out of respect to try and keep Punk safe but Punk isn't worried.

Cue the Bloodline, with Sikoa saying either pay respect to him or never be medically cleared. Punk asks Heyman what he wants to do if Punk does him this favor. Heyman: "Take me with you?" The fans rather approve of that idea so Punk acknowledges....that he is looking at a bunch of fake a** Usos (Heyman buries his face in his hands). Punk: "And a phone cosplay Tribal Chief."

The fight is teased but Cody Rhodes runs in with a pair of baseball bats and the Bloodline runs. Cody says Sikoa fashions himself as the Head Of The Table (Sikoa: "You d*** right.") but Cody has already beaten one Head Of The Table. The challenge is on for tonight. This was a long opening segment but dang Punk and Heyman being together again, even for a few moments, felt special. Heyman continues to nail it as the person who is scared of all the changes and just wants Roman Reigns back to make everything better but has to deal with the terror that is the Bloodline.

Jade Cargill talks to Bianca Belair and says that while tonight is about Money In The Bank, they need their Tag Team Titles back. Works for Belair.

Randy Orton and Kevin Owens offer to have Cody Rhodes' back tonight but Rhodes says he has a plan

Women's Money In The Bank Qualifying Match: Bianca Belair vs. Michin vs. Chelsea Green

Green gets caught between the other two and battered about the head and shoulders to start. She's fine enough to cut off a flipping Belair and everyone heads outside, where Belair decks Michin by mistake. Green hits a dive onto both of them and we take a break. Back with Green going up but getting double belly to back superplexed down again. Michin and Belair slug it out until Michin gets two off a sunset flip. Eat Defeat sends Belair outside and the Styles Clash hits Green for two. Belair is back in with the KOD to Michin but Green sends her outside and steals the pin at 7:24.

Rating: C+. I can go for more of Green on TV as she is becoming one of the more entertaining things about WWE as of late. She's had the character stuff down but the last few weeks have shown more and more of her in-ring talents. She's not likely to win the briefcase, but it's rather nice to see her getting a win here.

Blair Davenport comes in to see Bayley and promises to not only win Money In The Bank, but also cash in on her.

Solo Sikoa tells Paul Heyman to tell Kevin Owens and Randy Orton that the Tongans are going to...something, as the audio goes mute. Heyman goes to do it, but Sikoa says they need to have a talk when he gets back.

Grayson Waller is ready for his Money In The Bank qualifying match while Austin Theory is at home. DIY comes up to mock him...and a garage door opens. CM Punk is laying on the ground and Drew McIntyre, with his hands bloody, is standing over him. McIntyre carries the unconscious Punk into the arena and drops him onto the stage before stealing a bracelet or a watch. Nick Aldis comes out with referees but McIntyre shoves him as well. Punk is taken out on a stretcher. This is feeling more and more like a featured match at Summerslam and I'm more than down for that.

Men's Money In The Bank Qualifying Match: Tama Tonga vs.

Carmelo Hayes vs. Randy Orton

Apparently the message that Sikoa gave to Heyman was to make sure Kevin Owens and Randy Orton don't qualify for Money In The Bank. Makes sense. They fight heads outside fast but Hayes saves Tonga from being dropped onto the announcers' table. That doesn't last long as Orton drops both of them onto the table and we take a break. Back with Tonga elbowing Hayes down and hitting him in the face for two.

We hit the chinlock as the fans want Orton back but have to settle for Hayes fighting back to his feet. A facebuster gives Hayes two but a springboard...something is countered into a spinning backbreaker. Orton is back in for the powerslam on Tonga and there's the superplex for two on Hayes. A poke to the eyes staggers Tonga and Hayes hits Orton with the First 48. Orton is back up with the double hanging DDT but here is Tonga Loa for a distraction. Kevin Owens runs out to cut him off, only to have Hayes roll Orton up for the pin at 9:36.

Rating: C+. Much like Green, I'll take Hayes getting a win of any kind. What matters here is that Hayes didn't take a pin. He's felt like a target practice dummy since he debuted on the main roster and while stealing a pin on Orton isn't a big game changer, it's better than looking up at the lights again. Hayes could be something, but he needs to win to make that a reality.

We look at the Wyatt Sicks debut on Raw.

Here is LA Knight for a chat and he gets right to the point: he wants Logan Paul and the US Title out here right now. There is no Paul, which doesn't work for Knight, as he is tired of Paul no showing everywhere. Next week there's no running because they're going head to head (with Santos Escobar) in a Money In The Bank qualifying match.

Then Knight can beat him, win the briefcase, and then beat Paul again to win the US Title. Cue Escobar to interrupt,

saying he doesn't like this disrespect. Escobar comes after Knight, who lays him out with the BFT. Cue Paul to jump Knight from behind and knock him cold with the big right hand. Pretty to the point here, with Knight's match likely coming at Summerslam, which could be weird in Paul's hometown.

Men's Money In The Bank Qualifying Match: Grayson Waller vs. Andrade vs. Kevin Owens

Hold on though as the Tongans jump Owens during his entrance, with Randy Orton running in for the save. Owens of course says he can fight so the bell rings, with Andrade clearing the ring to start. The limping Owens fights back and they fight to the apron, where Owens clotheslines Andrade into the ring. Andrade is right back with a running sunset bomb to send Waller to the floor and we take a break.

Back with Andrade cleaning house, including the running knees to both of them in the corner. Owens fights up but walks into a double Downward Spiral from Waller. An A-Town Down attempt is broken up so Waller kicks Owens in the bad leg. Andrade and Waller go into the corner but Owens powerbombs both of them down. The Swanton gets two on Andrade so Owens drops him with a Stunner. Waller breaks it up and goes after the knee, only to walk into the Message to give Andrade the pin at 9:54.

Rating: C+. They're going in some interesting directions with Money In The Bank and that is nice to see. Andrade is someone else who has been looking for something to do since his return and while this isn't likely his big break, it's a nice enough spot for him for the time being. Owens has more important things going on and Waller is already a tag champion so let Andrade have the spot instead.

We look at Cody Rhodes retaining the WWE Title against AJ Styles at Clash At The Castle.

Tiffany Stratton mocks Michin for her loss, with Nia Jax running in to jump Michin from behind.

CM Punk is staying overnight in a hospital and Drew McIntyre will be at Raw.

Cody Rhodes vs. Solo Sikoa

Non-title. Before the match, we cut to Paul Heyman telling Solo Sikoa that he has done his bidding. However, this goes against some of Roman Reigns' bidding, as Reigns had said that CM Punk was off limits. Punk is personal to Heyman and Cody Rhodes is only supposed to be in check. Sikoa cuts him off and says Roman isn't coming back. Heyman is devastated and asks what that could mean as Sikoa leaves, only to follow him to ringside. Rhodes takes the brawl to the floor to start and whips Sikoa into the steps. Not that it matters as the Tongas come in for the DQ at 1:41.

Post match Randy Orton and (the limping) Kevin Owens come in for the save and lay out the Tongans, leaving Sikoa backed into a corner. Sikoa begs off...but then starts to smile. JACOB FATU debuts and cleans house with superkicks, setting up a Samoan drop to put Owens onto the steps. Rhodes gets speared through the barricade and drops Cody onto the apron. A Superfly Splash from the top through the announcers' table crushes Cody and Fatu poses with the Bloodline to end the show.

Of note: commentary did a great job here of selling that Fatu is the crazy member of the family and put him over as the most dangerous of them all. That's how you use commentary to make someone feel important and catch the fans who might not know him up in a hurry. Well done there, as that's the kind of thing that can really boost up a first impression.

Overall Rating: B. This was a VERY story heavy show and it seems that they're turning their attention towards the bigger matches at Summerslam. I'm curious to see where all of that goes and the Bloodline stuff is the icing on the whole cake. They were moving things forward this week and that made for an

interesting show which has me wondering where the stories are going. Good show here, and the bigger stuff is on the way.

Results

Chelsea Green b. Bianca Belair and Michin – KOD to Michin

Carmelo Hayes b. Tama Tonga and Randy Orton – Rollup to Orton

Andrade b. Grayson Waller and Kevin Owens – The Message to Waller

Cody Rhodes b. Solo Sikoa via DQ when the Tongans interfered

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