

Smackdown – February 21, 2025: The Rock Is Speaking. A Lot.

Smackdown

Date: February 21, 2025

Location: Smoothie King Center, New Orleans, Louisiana

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

We're closing in on Wrestlemania but the big story this week would be the return of the Rock. That could be for a variety of reasons and now we get to see what he is going to be announcing. Other than that, Elimination Chamber is just over a week away and the show's namesake matches are officially set. Let's get to it.

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

Cody Rhodes is here for the main event...but Nick Aldis reveals that the Rock has pulled him from said match.

Drew McIntyre vs. Jimmy Uso

During his entrance, Jimmy mocks McIntyre's chances of going to Wrestlemania. McIntyre mocks the Yeet pose and gets punched in the face for his early efforts. An overhead belly to belly sends Uso flying again and they go outside for a ram into the barricade. Back in and McIntyre says Jimmy will not be going to Wrestlemania so he knocks McIntyre outside for the suicide dive. A hard whip into the steps drops Jimmy again though and we take a break.

We come back with Jimmy knocking him off the top, meaning it's a Whisper In The Wind to drop McIntyre again. The Samoan drop gives Jimmy two but McIntyre catches him with a headbutt. A superkick and spear give Jimmy two so McIntyre comes back with

a neckbreaker. More trash talking ensues but Jimmy rolls him up for the pin at 11:18.

Rating: C+. It's good for Jimmy to get a nice win like this, even if it was off of a fluke rollup. It was a clean pin over an established main eventer who is likely going to be in a big match at Wrestlemania no matter what. Jimmy needed this a lot more than McIntyre did and points for going with the surprise, which didn't really hurt McIntyre all that much.

Post match McIntyre wrecks Jimmy and loads up a Claymore against the post but referees break it up. Then McIntyre breaks free and hits a Claymore (no post).

We look at Solo Sikoa returning last week but Damian Priest won his Elimination Chamber qualifying match anyway.

Sikoa arrives and says what happened was an accident. Jacob Fatu says if it wasn't an accident, Sikoa wouldn't be here. Tonight, the two of them are running the plays instead.

Video on the men's Elimination Chamber match.

Earlier tonight, R-Truth told Carmelo Hayes that they had a tag match tonight and Hayes was surprised that he would be teaming with Miz.

Zelina Vega is tired of being treated as too small to be a star and we hear about some of her success. She'll keep fighting.

Carmelo Hayes/The Miz vs. R-Truth/LA Knight

R-Truth says that Knight is a local legend, because his name is Louisiana Knight. Ok that's so stupid it's hilarious. R-Truth takes Hayes down and gets two off a rollup, followed by the hiptoss. He counts his own near fall, despite not actually being on top of Hayes. The armdrag goes on and...R-Truth tags the Miz in as we take a break.

Back with R-Truth hitting a Stundog Millionaire and making the tag to Knight to pick up the pace. Knight seems to drop Miz on what looked like a tilt-a-whirl powerslam but does block Hayes' First 48. R-Truth comes back in for the John Cena sequence but Miz breaks up the STF. Cue Shinsuke Nakamura to jump Knight though and the First 48 gives Hayes the pin on Knight at 10:04.

Rating: C. I laughed at the LA part but the stuff after the break was pretty much just generic. R-Truth was doing his usual fun stuff but there was nothing all that interesting otherwise. Nakamura vs. Knight has been going on for a long time now and the other people involved just weren't all that interesting. This felt like a one joke idea to set up the ending sequence.

Mike Tyson will be at WWE World.

Video on Charlotte, who says she doesn't have to call herself the greatest of all time. She's officially facing Tiffany Stratton for the title at Wrestlemania.

Here is Stratton for a chat before her match. Stratton knows that people are obsessed with her since she won the title and now she is ready to make sure that the unstoppable force comes to a bitter end. For now though, she wants to talk about Charlotte, who took her sweet time officially challenging her for the title. The rumors are true: no one loves to kick a woman down like Charlotte. Stratton is coming for the top spot in WWE but here are Nia Jax and Candice LeRae to interrupt. Jax promises to come for the title after Elimination Chamber. Stratton laughs it off and is ready to beat LeRae tonight.

Tiffany Stratton vs. Candice LeRae

Non-title and we're joined in progress with Stratton working on the arm but here is Charlotte to interrupt. The distraction lets LeRae hit a Hennig necksnap but Charlotte is right back up with a running hip attack. Charlotte joins commentary to

brag about how great she is, just stopping enough to see Stratton leave a moonsault to the floor short.

We take a break and come back with Stratton hitting a spinebuster for two as Charlotte says Stratton's career comes from copying one more. Stratton misses a Swanton but LeRae misses a moonsault, only to be pulled out to the floor. Back in and Stratton hits the Prettiest Moonsault Ever for the pin at 9:49.

Rating: C+. It's good for Stratton to win as she is going to be an underdog against Charlotte no matter what and it would not surprise me whatsoever to see Charlotte walk out with the title at Wrestlemania. The other stuff with Jax and LeRae feels like it's on another planet for Stratton right now and that's a weird way to go with Wrestlemania so close. Just keep her strong and don't let Charlotte, or Jax, run her over and it should be fine.

Post match the beatdown is on but Trish Stratus runs in for the save. Jax puts Stratus and Stratton down for a double Annihilator to leave them laying. With the villains gone, Charlotte comes in for the sign pointing. This whole thing was fine on paper, but I'm going to need a lot more of a reason to cheer for Stratton. She's still a villain and hasn't had a big moment to turn her to the good side. Right now, it's Charlotte being more evil than Stratton and that's not good enough. They really need to work on that, and I'm not sure how well it's going to go at Wrestlemania if things don't improve in a big way.

Damian Priest runs into Cody Rhodes and respectfully says he's coming for Rhodes' title. That's fine with Rhodes, who leaves. Braun Strowman comes in and they're good for tonight's tag match.

Video on the women's Elimination Chamber.

Naomi and Bianca Belair are ready to defend the Women's Tag

Team Titles against Liv Morgan and Raquel Rodriguez. They're convinced the two of them attacked Jade Cargill too.

Evolve is coming.

Video on Alexa Bliss, who has changed while she was gone but this place is still the same. She has won the Elimination Chamber before and she'll do it again.

Naomi vs. Liv Morgan

Bianca Belair and Raquel Rodriguez are both here too and it's a four way brawl before the bell. Naomi and Belair are laid out. No match.

Post break Nick Aldis throws Morgan and Rodriguez out. Chelsea Green and Piper Niven come in and say they're ready to take Belair and Naomi's spots in the Elimination Chamber. Aldis doesn't think that's necessary, though Green refers to herself as "the greatest Canadian export since maple syrup." Aldis puts her in a match on Smackdown next week instead.

Here is the Rock for a chat, thankfully without that personalized belt. Rock says you know it's important if he's here and we get the catchphrase...and the announcement that Wrestlemania is coming back to New Orleans next year. It's on April 11/12 2026 and Rock belts out a little When The Saints Go Marching In, though this is NOT singalong with the Final Boss. Rock insults the fans and says he's also here to call out Cody Rhodes.

Rock talks about how Cody deserves these cheers and then talks about their good night in Los Angeles last month. They have become friends since then and their moms are even friends now. Yes the Rock is on the Board Of Directors but he wants Cody to be more than a great champion. He wants Cody to be HIS champion. Cody isn't sure what this is about but says he's their (meaning the fans) champion.

The Rock brags about his social media following and wants Cody to go even higher. If Cody is his champion, the dreams of Cody, his wife and daughter can come true. What the Rock wants is a brother, and that's what he wants Cody to be. Last year, he wanted Cody to step aside but Cody did something censored. Then Cody slapped him, which no one does and gets away with it. He wants Cody to think about it and give him an answer at Elimination Chamber. The Rock wants his soul, which has Cody confused.

I have a really bad feeling about where this is going and the Rock is starting to wear thin. He's a major star, but it feels like he is coming in out of nowhere and is suddenly involved in the World Title picture. He very well might not be wrestling, but it would be fine to see a WWE Title match at Wrestlemania which doesn't have Rock and everything else involved. I'm curious to see where it goes at Elimination Chamber, but dang Rock takes his sweet time getting to the point.

Tag Team Titles: DIY vs. Pretty Deadly

DIY is defending and want a moment of silence for Pretty Deadly before the bell but get cut off rather quickly. Pretty Deadly clears the ring while the music is still playing but Prince gets kneed to the floor and we take an early break. Back with Prince and Ciampa hitting stereo crossbodies for a collision, allowing the tag off to Wilson. A Codebreaker out of the corner gets two on Gargano...and the Street Profits come in for the double DQ at 6:15. Not enough shown to rate but it was just picking up when the Profits interrupted.

Post match the Profits beat them down so here are the Motor City Machine Guns, who are beaten up as well.

We look at John Cena's time in the Elimination Chamber.

We look at Sami Zayn vs. Kevin Owens in an unsanctioned match being set for the Elimination Chamber.

Owens says Zayn got what he wanted and couldn't just take the beating he deserved. Has Zayn thought about his family? Owens moves the camera to show that he's outside Zayn's house and watching them through the window. He'll see Zayn in Toronto, but remember that Zayn asked for this. That shot made it feel a lot more serious and that's a good thing.

Damian Priest/Braun Strowman vs. Jacob Fatu/Solo Sikoa

Tama Tonga is here with the villains. During the entrance, Fatu promises revenge as Sikoa stays silent. Priest backs Sikoa into the corner to start but Sikoa headbutts his way out of trouble. Sikoa spends too much time talking to Fatu though and Priest knocks him down, allowing the tag to Strowman.

Everything breaks down and Strowman charges around ringside, only to have Fatu knock him into the timekeeper's area. We take a break and come back with Strowman fighting up but getting run over by Fatu again. Sikoa hits a running Umaga attack in the corner and Fatu hits his own, only to try once too often and get cut off.

Strowman hits a spinebuster for a needed breather and the double tag brings in Priest to face Sikoa. A superkick staggers Priest, who is right back with his lifting Downward Spiral for two. The Old School crossbody connects but Priest has to take out an interfering Tonga. Fatu gets in a cheap shot and Spinning Solo gets two. Back in and Fatu accidentally superkicks Sikoa and Strowman takes Fatu out. South of Heaven finishes Sikoa at 12:33.

Rating: B-. This was a nice hoss match and I'll take that in the main event. Priest is being treated as a big deal around here and putting him in the main event slots, even in a show like this, is a good sign for his career. Sikoa's fall continuing is a logical way to go as well, as there is no reason to keep Fatu as the monster much longer. Let him take Sikoa's spot, and that seems to be what we are going to see

sooner than later.

Overall Rating: C+. This was a weird show, in that the big focal point was in the middle and we're going to have to wait and see what that means next weekend. Other than that, the Stratton/Charlotte feud is going to need some work and some of the other stuff was only so interesting. The problem with having Elimination Chamber set is it only leaves so much to be done on TV. That was the case here and while it wasn't a terrible show, it wasn't something you need to see.

Results

Jimmy Uso b. Drew McIntyre – Rollup

Carmelo Hayes/The Miz b. R-Truth/LA Knight – First 48 to R-Truth

Tiffany Stratton b. Candice LeRae – Prettiest Moonsault Ever
DIY vs. Street Profits went to a double DQ when the Street Profits interfered

Damian Priest/Braun Strowman b. Jacob Fatu/Solo Sikoa – South of Heaven to Sikoa

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