

Smackdown – April 18, 2025: The Starrcade Reference

Smackdown

Date: April 18, 2025

Location: T-Mobile Arena, Las Vegas, Nevada

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

We're less than a day away from Wrestlemania and that means it is time for the final push towards the biggest show of the year. In this case we have the Andre The Giant Memorial Battle Royal and a Tag Team Title match, with the Motor City Machine Guns challenging the Street Profits. Let's get to it.

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

Solo Sikoa and Tama Tonga arrived earlier but LA Knight slammed Tonga's car door on his arm, Larry Zbyszko style.

Here is Seth Rollins to get things going. He's not used to being on Smackdown but he'll try the catchphrase anyway. Naturally the fans chant for CM Punk so Rollins sits down, ala Punk. Now it's an OTC chant but Rollins would rather talk about Punk first (the fans are ok with this). Those chants for ten years brought Punk back to the ring, but it wasn't a WWE ring.

It wasn't for the fans, but rather because someone wrote him a big fat check. After he burned that bridge, he came back to WWE because they wrote him another big fat check. Rollins: "Tell me when I'm telling lies." The reality is that Punk doesn't care about anyone, and the reality is that Roman Reigns only cares about himself. Reigns is Mr. Private Jet and Mr. Handpicked Opponent because Reigns is always about making himself look bigger.

Every year, Reigns kept getting treated as the biggest thing

in the world, but there were always some CM PUNK chants. While this was happening, Rollins was working every day, sacrificing his body. Last year at Wrestlemania, he was there despite his knee hanging on by a thread and his stepfather dying of cancer. Now the fans sing Rollins' song as he talks about how the story ends at Wrestlemania, where he will lay it all on the line to move this business forward. And yes, that is a spoiler. This was a pretty straightforward promo as Rollins tries to remind us that he is part of this story.

Wrestlemania rundown.

Video on Andre The Giant.

Andre The Giant Memorial Battle Royal

Rey Fenix, Shinsuke Nakamura, Andrade, Otis, Berto, Angel, Kit Wilson, Elton Prince, Akira Tozawa, Santos Escobar, Carmelo Hayes, Carlito, Julius Creed, R-Truth, Brutus Creed, Joaquin Wilde, Cruz del Toro, Miz, Karrion Kross, Tyler Bate, Pete Dunne, Ludwig Kaiser, Grayson Waller, Austin Theory, Chad Gable, Dragon Lee

R-Truth poses with Carlito to start and then throws him out, only to get booted out by Miz for some fast eliminations. Karrion Kross goes after Miz and we actually get a Bloodsport reference for a weird thing to hear on WWE TV. Legado del Fantasma goes after Fenix, who gets rid of Berto and Angel in quick fashion. Pretty Deadly beats up Bate but get tossed by A-Town Down Under. Bate is sent over the top but skins the cat, only to get dropkicked out by Kaiser.

Things slow down a bit as Escobar tries to get an alliance going with Fenix, who tosses him instead. Otis uses Tozawa as a projectile, allowing Julius Creed to throw Tozawa out. A double clothesline gets rid of the Creeds but Otis goes with them as the ring is clearing out in a hurry. Andrade tosses Waller and Theory and Fenix gets rid of Gable. Wilde and del Toro are out and Lee gets rid of Kross before grabbing a

hurricanrana to Nakamura.

That just earns Lee a shot to the face and Nakamura tosses him out. Dunne and Kaiser fight to the apron but get back in, only for Dunne to eliminate Kaiser. Miz saves Hayes but gets dropkicked out for his efforts. Hayes tosses Dunne and we're down to Hayes, Andrade, Nakamura and Fenix. Nakamura misses a charge into the corner and gets dropkicked out by Andrade to get us down to three. Fenix throws both of them over but they hang on for the save.

For some reason Fenix tries a rope walk so here is El Grande Americano to pull him out. We're down to Andrade vs. Hayes as commentary talks about their history together. A double knockdown gives us a double breather before Hayes grabs a suplex cutter. For some reason Andrade tries a springboard and gets tossed to give Hayes the win at 15:28.

Rating: B-. Why not? This is a match where you can give someone a somewhat important victory without having to pin someone at the same time. Its winners don't have the best track records but I can go for Hayes getting a win and possibly feuding with the Miz over being more successful than he has been lately. It's not the most important match but it could mean something for Hayes.

Miz comes out to celebrate.

HHH Hall Of Fame video, looking at the Cell match with Undertaker. Didn't we already see that one?

We get a sitdown interview with Charlotte who doesn't like where her feud with Tiffany Stratton has gone but she's ready to be on the big stage. This is how you make things happen.

Here is Rhea Ripley for a chat. This is going to be her sixth Wrestlemania and she's always in a title match, but this feels like the most important. She lost her title right before Wrestlemania and this Sunday, she wins back what she lost. Cue

Iyo Sky to interrupt but before she can say anything, Bianca Belair cuts her off.

She wants the title but here is Naomi to interrupt as well. Naomi has been trying to talk to Belair because she wanted to handle this in private. Instead though, we have to do this in public because Jade wasn't there...and here she is too. Ripley gets in Jade's face but Naomi knocks Jade into her. The big brawl is on and Sky hits the moonsault to wipe everyone out.

American Made mocks Rey Fenix but Dragon Lee and Rey Mysterio come in and a fight is teased. Fenix says we should have a six man tag and it seems to be on.

Tag Team Titles: Motor City Machine Guns vs. Street Profits

The Profits are defending and get jumped during their entrances to start fast. The Guns take over on Ford to start but he comes back with a clothesline to Sabin. Dawkins comes in for a clothesline of his own and the champs take over as we take a break. Back with Shelley diving over for a tag off to Sabin. House is cleaned, including a missile dropkick for two on Ford. Back up and Dawkins tosses Sabin into Ford for a belly to back suplex but Shelley is right back in. The Dream Sequence hits Ford but he breaks up the Skull & Bones to hit a big flip dive over the top. And cue DIY for the double DQ at 8:25.

Rating: C+. The match was getting going when the interference brought it to a halt but they only had so much time in the first place. Normally this would set up some kind of ladder match at Wrestlemania but I can't imagine they would put that on with so little time left before the show. If nothing else, it should give them something to build off in the next few weeks as this story still has some steam.

DIY steal the titles and leave.

Chelsea Green and the Secret Hervice serve Nick Aldis with an

official complaint. Aldis says there is a complaint, so tonight's six woman tag is now a singles match with Green against Zelina Vega, with the Hervice barred from ringside. Screaming ensues.

Cardi B is hosting Summerslam. I was hoping we were getting away from that dumb idea.

Nick Aldis cuts off DIY from leaving with the titles. The Guns and the Profits come in and Aldis takes the titles. Next week, it's TLC for the titles. Well that's big.

Here is Randy Orton for a chat. As of right now, he does not have a Wrestlemania opponent. His father was at the first Wrestlemania and 20 years later, he made his Wrestlemania debut at the Garden (try again). He's going to show up on Sunday in his gear and with just the right amount of baby oil, so anyone in the back can come test themselves. Just be ready for an RK0. Simple and to the point here since he doesn't have an opponent.

Damian Priest and Drew McIntyre got in a fight at the Wrestlemania Kickoff event.

Priest is tired of McIntyre being a victim, but tomorrow Priest is going to beat him so badly that he wishes he was future endeavored again.

The smoke person is here next week.

Zelina Vega vs. Chelsea Green

Non-title. They start fast with Green having to get her skirt out from underneath her feet. Green pounds away to start but gets sent outside and over the barricade. Back in and Vega wins a slugout but the 619 is cut off with a kick to the head. They go up and a super Code Red gives Vega the upset win at 3:34.

Rating: C. This didn't have time to go anywhere and it's

rarely a good idea to have a champion lose a clean fall. Last week's countout was nothing of note but this felt more like it was out of the older WWE days. Hopefully we get something better for Green, because she shouldn't be losing like this.

We look at Shawn Michaels vs. Undertaker at Wrestlemania. The first time.

Here is LA Knight for a chat. He talks about trying to take out Jacob Fatu's relatives so it's one on one at Wrestlemania. This US Title means the most in WWE because he's around the most so Solo Sikoa can get out here right now and take his beating.

LA Knight vs. Solo Sikoa

Non-title and the brawl starts on the floor as we take a break. Back with the brawl continuing on the floor before they both get inside, with Sikoa getting two. Knight's neckbreaker gets his out of trouble but Sikoa drops him again. Sikoa cannonballs down onto the ribs a few times, only to land in a low blow so Knight can fight back. A DDT connects...and Jacob Fatu runs in to beat Knight down for the DQ at 3:38.

Rating: C. They didn't have time to get anywhere here but that wasn't the point of the match. Odds are someone is going to run in and help Knight after the match and a tag match will break out. Knight and Fatu's match is already set up so this was just one more push to get us to the showdown.

Post match Braun Strowman runs in for the save and it's time to do that tag match thing.

Braun Strowman/LA Knight vs. Solo Sikoa/Jacob Fatu

We're joined in progress with Fatu being low bridged to the floor and Strowman coming in to clean house. The Strowman Express drops Sikoa on the floor but Fatu is back with a jumping clothesline back inside. Sikoa and Fatu take turns

working on a neck crank until Strowman fights up and brings Knight back in. Everything breaks down and Strowman is sent over the announcers' table. With Fatu outside, Knight hits a BFT to pin Sikoa at 4:34 shown.

Rating: C+. This was another short match but they got a decent amount of stuff in there, which is always good to see. Knight gets another win on the way to Wrestlemania, but there is a very good chance that he is losing the title to the monster Fatu. For now though, they've done a nice job of setting it up and that's a positive sign.

We get a preview of Tiffany Stratton talking to Wade Barrett, with the full interview airing on the Wrestlemania Kickoff Show. She's tired of being taken advantage of so she's retaining the title at Wrestlemania.

LWO/Rey Fenix vs. American Made

Fenix punches away at Brutus to start and takes him down with a flying headbutt. Lee comes in with a slingshot dropkick in the corner but Brutus takes him over for a tag of his own. Back up and Lee sends Julius to the floor for a big flip dive and it's off to Mysterio vs. Gable. Mysterio chases him outside but gets pulled down...and he's in trouble. Gable suplexes Lee inside and American Made hit a triple top rope headbutt as Mysterio can be seen limping off.

We take a break and come back with the Brutus Ball hitting Lee for two. Mysterio is gone as Lee ties American Made in the Tree Of Woe (at the same time) for a top rope triple stomp. It's back to Fenix to clean house but Julius catches him with an overhead belly to belly. Fenix's springboard armdrag sets up a running hurricanrana as Lee is back in to drop Julius. A top rope Meteora gives Fenix the pin at 9:10.

Rating: B-. The fact that Mysterio is gone is not a good sign and there is a strong chance that he is not going to be at Wrestlemania. Fenix taking his place would make sense if that

is where they want to go, but hopefully the injury isn't as bad as it seems. For now though, it was a fast paced match, even if it wound up being a handicap match.

Video on Roman Reigns vs. CM Punk vs. Seth Rollins, with the music video treatment.

Here is Cody Rhodes for his final face to face confrontation with John Cena. Before Rhodes can say anything, here is Cena to get to the point in a hurry. Cena tells him to "shut your mouth kid", because this is going to be his last Wrestlemania. No one has had the courage to finish their career like he has, to the point where no one believes he's really leaving. Everyone else comes back because they all need these people, but Cena has happiness on his own.

Last year, Rhodes won the title but Cena told him that it is going to get heavier every day. Cena defeated Rhodes when Rhodes said no to the Rock because it was over then. On Sunday, the title reign comes to an end when Cena proves that the fans don't matter. Rhodes has been wanting to be somebody and on Sunday he will find out that he is just a kid playing in a man's world. Rhodes brings up Cena saying that he doesn't bury talent, but there is a graveyard of people who would disagree.

Cena doesn't know the wrestlers' names, but the reality is Cena is out of time, paler than Sting at Starrcade 1997 (WHOA!) and it's 2025 and he still can't wrestle. Cena says the fans don't know what they want and he doesn't have to wrestle to beat Rhodes. Cena goes for a shot to the face and the AA but gets reversed into Cross Rhodes. They were bringing the intensity here but they didn't really say anything new here.

One more Wrestlemania rundown wraps us up.

Overall Rating: C+. This was exactly what you would expect here as it's the last Smackdown before the biggest nights of

the year. They had the battle royal, a few other matches, and then the big closing segment. Hopefully Mysterio is healthy enough to wrestle tomorrow, but that doesn't seem likely based on what we saw. It's not a particularly good show and definitely not worth seeing, but this could have been far worse.

Results

Carmelo Hayes won the Andre The Giant Memorial Battle Royal last eliminating Andrade

Street Profits vs. Motor City Machine Guns went to a double DQ when DIY interfered

Zelina Vega b. Chelsea Green – Super Code Red

LA Knight b. Solo Sikoa via DQ when Jacob Fatu interfered

LA Knight/Braun Strowman b. Solo Sikoa/Jacob Fatu – BFT to Sikoa

LW0/Rey Fenix b. American Made – Top rope Meteora to Julius Creed

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