

Backlash 2025 Preview

We're already back on pay per view after Wrestlemania and that isn't feeling like quite enough time. That's something that can be a big problem, but in this case the show being in St. Louis is going to help. It instantly boosts up the main event and the reaction alone should be enough to carry quite a bit. There is another short form card this time around and those have a hit and miss record. Let's get to it.

Intercontinental Title: Dominik Mysterio(c) vs. Penta

What does it say that the least interesting match on the card might be for the Intercontinental Title? The good thing about having someone like Mysterio as champion is that the title feels like it is in jeopardy at any time. While I'm not sure if Penta is going to be the one to dethrone him, it feels like there is at least a chance, which is going to make things all the more interesting.

The more I see from Mysterio, the more I think he might be in for a long run as champion, meaning I'm expecting him to retain here. There is a good chance that we are going to be seeing him do something with Finn Balor in the near future, so having him go over Penta here, likely with Judgment Day's interference, makes sense. Penta needs to win a bit more, though it isn't happening here.

Women's Intercontinental Title: Lyra Valkyria(c) vs. Becky Lynch

I feel sorry for Valkyria, who is trying as hard as she can and she isn't failing, but she's in over her head with Lynch. There are no women bigger than Lynch in wrestling history and it is hard to find anyone who can step up to her level. Valkyria is trying and the story of Lynch being her idol is a good way to go, but there is only so much that she can do given the circumstances.

I can't imagine a world where Lynch loses here, as it makes sense for her to win the title. It's still a new championship and that means it needs something to make it feel more special. There isn't much that can be done better than by having Lynch win it here and eventually put someone over for it. Valkyria is going to try, but I can't imagine her leaving as champion, as she shouldn't.

United States Title: Jacob Fatu(c) vs. Damian Priest vs. LA Knight vs. Drew McIntyre

I had forgotten McIntyre was part of this match and that makes things a lot more interesting. Having just Knight and Priest as challengers doesn't feel as important, but McIntyre is one of the bigger stars in WWE these days and feels like a threat to win anything. I'm not sure I can imagine him winning here, but having him around makes the title feel like it is in a lot more jeopardy.

That being said, I'll still take Fatu to retain the title here, which is what makes sense. Fatu feels like he should be on the way to a long, dominant reign as champion. At the same time, I want to see McIntyre get a singles match against Fatu, as that feels like it could be quite the showdown. For now though, Fatu gets to smash a lot of people, probably pinning Priest to retain.

Gunther vs. Pat McAfee

Somehow this is the second biggest match on the show and that is because of McAfee's rather strong promos setting it up. Yeah they have gone on for a long time and he has sucked up to a few towns on the way there, but this is a story that anyone can get behind: he's standing up to a bully for a friend. That's an easy to understand concept and even if he's going down, he's going down swinging.

That being said, barring one heck of a surprise run in (and by that I mean Goldberg), Gunther is going over here and he

should. McAfee is one of the better celebrity wrestlers but he isn't going to beat someone who was defending a World Title at Wrestlemania less than a month ago. Odds are Michael Cole gets involved in some way, but it isn't going to matter as Gunther will win here, despite a few nice hope spots from McAfee.

Smackdown World Title: John Cena(c) vs. Randy Orton

This is the match that makes the show feel like an In Your House and that is not a bad way to go. I know this feud has been done to death and I've gotten horribly sick of it over the years, but if Cena is done after this year, it would be insane not to have him face off with his greatest rival one more time. Orton is one of the few people who feels close to Cena's level and having the show be in Orton's hometown makes it that much better.

And no, I can't imagine Cena losing here so we'll say he retains, likely through cheating. The interesting thing about Cena's title reign is that it has a firm end date, meaning he has to lose before then. I'm not sure when that is going to happen, because he could lose it on his last night in the company, or he could lose it and then have some fallout over the ensuing months. Cena isn't losing here, but the pressure is going to start building soon and that's when things get really interesting.

Overall Thoughts

The more I think about the show, the more interested I am about seeing how it goes. The matches are good enough with limited weak spots, which is kind of the point in having the five match card. What matters the most is getting things going as we head towards the summer, which could go in a few different ways. I want to see how this goes and that means they're doing something right.

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