

Smackdown – June 20, 2025: Project Veritas, Or Cena With The Truth

Smackdown

Date: June 20, 2025

Location: Van Andel Arena, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

We're still in the middle of the build towards Night Of Champions and tonight the two tournaments get a big boost. This week will see one of the two semifinals taking place in each of the tournaments and that should make for a big night. Other than that, we need some other things on the card and we might get some of that this week. Let's get to it.

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

Here is LA Knight to get things going. Knight has been sabotaging people in the King Of The Ring tournament because he wants to get his hands on Seth Rollins. Therefore he wants Rollins out here right now, but he gets Paul Heyman instead. As Heyman does all of his usual stuff, Knight asks him to get to the point already.

Heyman talks about representing Seth Rollins and company but he's a huge Knight fan as well. He even gives us a YEAH before saying Rollins has allowed him to say to Knight, that as a favor, it is time for Knight to get out of town. Either that or something bad is going to happen to him before the end of the night. Knight calls Heyman a grifter and a leech who bleeds everyone dry. Right now it's Rollins and Knight doesn't care who is next.

Since there is no Rollins, Knight is willing to face Heyman right now, and even turns his back so Heyman can get in a free

shot. Heyman bails to the floor and reiterates his warning about something bad happening to Knight tonight. And that's a spoiler, so here are Bronson Reed and Bron Breakker. The monsters get in and take Knight down, with Reed throwing him into the timekeeper's area. Knight finally gets smart by grabbing a chair to fight back. The villains are cleared out. This was more of Knight getting a strong performance and I could go for more of that.

Post break, Heyman and company are told that it's Reed vs. Knight later tonight. Heyman implies this was the plan all along.

Queen Of The Ring Semifinals: Alexa Bliss vs. Asuka

Bliss' running shoulder just earns her a growl from Asuka so Bliss grabs the leg instead. A basement dropkick takes Asuka down for a change but she's right back up with a running shot of her own. Bliss gets knocked off the apron and we take an early break. We come back with Bliss breaking out of the Asuka Lock and hitting a running flipping backsplash for two.

Asuka's running knee gets two but she has to counter the Sister Abigail DDT into a rollup for two. The big kick to the head gets two on Bliss, who grabs a DDT for two more. Bliss goes up for Twisted Bliss but instead drops down, allowing Asuka to grab something like the Rings of Saturn, but Bliss slips out as well. The Empress Impact is blocked and Bliss hits a running corner dropkick. Twisted Bliss hits raised knees though and now the Empress Impact can finish Bliss at 9:26.

Rating: B-. Bliss was putting in the work here but there was almost no way that she was going to be able to beat Asuka in a straight match. Asuka went toe to toe with Stephanie Vaquer on Raw so having her lose to Bliss would have been a stretch. It helps that Asuka is someone who is talented and decorated enough to be put back into this place rather quickly, which is

exactly what WWE has done.

Jade Cargill is impressed by Asuka but she's ready. Cargill is also ready for Roxanne Perez in the semifinals on Monday because Perez is still proving herself. Asuka is a different story but the tournament was made for a woman who can take the crown. She's walking in to reign. This was as rehearsed of a promo as I've heard in a long time.

Chelsea Green mocks Alexa Bliss for her loss when Charlotte comes in, threatening to take Green out tonight. Bliss says she doesn't want Charlotte's help, but Charlotte wasn't offering it.

Kit Wilson vs. Aleister Black

Hold on though as here is R-Truth to attack Wilson during Black's entrance. The STF makes Wilson tap and R-Truth wants a microphone. He wants John Cena (who he's facing later tonight) out here right now and puts Wilson in the STF again. Agents come out to break it up as Black stands and watches. R-Truth leaves and Black...is still standing there. No match.

We recap Goldberg's return and setting up his match with Gunther at Saturday Night's Main Event.

In the back, R-Truth is told to calm down but he wants to kill John Cena. Aleister Black comes in to ask why R-Truth is getting involved in his matches but R-Truth says it had nothing to do with Black. They go nose to nose but Damian Priest comes in to separate them, saying he'll talk to R-Truth. Priest says that there was no need for that because it's what Priest used to do. Then R-Truth would be the one to make him smile. Use that aggression on Cena tonight and then they'll hit the town. That seems to get through to R-Truth, but he's still angry. If nothing else, points for addressing Black just standing there.

Here is Cody Rhodes for a chat but before he can say anything,

it's Jey Uso (facing Rhodes in the King Of The Ring on Raw) to interrupt. After a few encores of his entrance, Uso says that this Monday, there's only room for one of them. Uso knows Rhodes is going to bring it and he knows this isn't personal. But with that being said, on Monday, after they go to war, please believe that it's going to be four letters and one word.

They shake hands but here is Sami Zayn to interrupt. Zayn says this is nice, as he gets to share the ring with two great friends, who are two of the best the business has to offer. He's the only one to have never been World Champion though and that bothers him. Zayn talks about being the first one to congratulate both of them when they won their World Titles but now it is time for him to finish his story.

Cue Randy Orton to interrupt, saying he's going to be going after the World Title by winning the King Of The Ring. He respects everyone here and makes it clear that it isn't personal. Orton says Zayn will be World Champion one day soon, but it's not at Summerslam because tonight, Orton is taking him out. Unless I missed it, Rhodes did not say a single word on the microphone here. I wonder if he's under the weather or something.

King Of The Ring Semifinals: Randy Orton vs. Sami Zayn

Orton works on the arm to start but gets sent to the floor, where he has to avoid the dive. Instead Zayn bounces back into the middle of the ring and is smart enough to wait for Orton to join him. Back in and Orton gets chopped so he pokes Zayn in the eye, with Zayn doing it right back to him. Zayn sends him outside, where Orton grabs the leg to send Zayn face first into the apron. Orton drops him onto the announcers' table and then does it again as we take a break.

Back with Orton hammering on Zayn's chest but charging into an elbow in the corner. Zayn's middle rope ax handle connects but

the Blue Thunder Bomb is blocked. Orton grabs the hanging DDT and they go back outside, where Zayn escapes another drop onto the table. This time Orton goes onto said table before missing a charge into the post back inside. The Helluva Kick is countered with a powerslam for two on Zayn, who is back with the Blue Thunder Bomb for two more. The RKO is blocked but then the second attempt isn't and Zayn is done at 11:19.

Rating: B. This was two professionals getting to have a match and there was almost no way it was going to go badly. Orton winning is a bit of a surprise, but they have definitely planted the seeds to get us to a major Zayn title win. That is going to be a heck of a moment and it would be awesome to see it take place at Wrestlemania next year, if not before.

Here is Nia Jax for a chat. Tiffany Stratton came to her to ask Jax to be a mentor. Cue Stratton, who says Jax is like the annoying ex who won't leave her alone. It's ok though because next week they're facing each other, with Stratton getting to add some more scars to that five head of Jax because it's Last Woman Standing.

The brawl is on and Jax easily leaves her laying. That would be the second Last Woman Standing match taking place on WWE programming next week. With Stratton down, Naomi runs out and tries to cash in but Jax won't let her, giving her a new way to get on my nerves. Stratton gets up and dropkicks Naomi into Jax before leaving. No cash-in. Jax is just not interesting, which was on full display here.

Video on CM Punk vs. John Cena, comparing them to yin and yang as they have been intertwined for years. This is quite the package, with the two of them being treated as the major stars they have become.

Charlotte vs. Chelsea Green

The Secret Hervice is here with Green and Alba Fyre offers a distraction, allowing Green to get in a cheap shot to start.

Charlotte kicks her away and hits a high crossbody for two, followed by a kick to the head in the corner. Fyre distracts Charlotte again though and Green takes over again as we take a break.

Back with Charlotte chopping away and hitting the fall away slam into the nip up. Charlotte mocks the salute and hits a front flip clothesline for two. Fyre offers a third distraction but gets booted down, allowing Green to hit a Rough Ryder for two of her own. Green takes her mask off and tries the Unprettier, which is countered into a spear to give Charlotte two. Green gets two off a small package but the Figure Eight finishes for Charlotte at 9:36.

Rating: C+. I am running out of ways to explain how little I care about anything Charlotte does. She's been around for so long and has been in the title picture so many times that it is just too hard to get interested again. This was Charlotte wrestling as a hero and my goodness that does not sound like something I want to see.

Post match the Hervice comes in for the beatdown but Alexa Bliss makes the save. Charlotte walks away from the offer of a handshake.

JC Mateo is getting ready to beat up Jacob Fatu but Solo Sikoa wants to try and talk it out. Mateo should be ready though.

Here is Sikoa, who requests and receives Fatu so they can clear the air. Sikoa says he's not here for a fight because he loves Fatu, as he always has. Families fight but then they move forward, which is what Sikoa wants to do again. Fatu is all Sikoa has and that's all he needs. Sikoa says he loves him but the fans are certainly not convinced. Fatu thinks Sikoa has been using him to gain power and fight his battles. Is that all this was for Sikoa?

Fatu wants Sikoa to look at him while he's speaking. Ever since Fatu won the title, Sikoa has been acting differently,

so maybe the title is the problem. Fatu lays it on the mat and says come fight him for it. Sikoa loads up the Spike but Fatu shoves him down, only to have JC Mateo run in. The double teaming takes Fatu down but Jimmy Uso runs in for the save. Uso gets taken down until Fatu is up for the real save. They have to do the Sikoa vs. Fatu match sooner or later and Night Of Champions would be a good place for it to happen.

Bronson Reed vs. LA Knight

Paul Heyman and Bron Breaker are here with Reed. Cue Knight through the crowd to post Breaker and send Reed outside. Reed has to calm Breaker down before getting inside, where Knight stomps him down in the corner. The seated sitdown splash misses for Reed but he grabs the ropes to block the jumping neckbreaker.

Reed misses the backplash though and Knight is back with a middle rope bulldog. Knight sends him to the floor and hits a springboard spinning crossbody as we take a break. We come back with Knight blocking a superplex attempt and dropping the jumping elbow for two. Reed's Death Valley Driver gets the same but Knight fights back up, only for Breaker to come in with the Super Spear for the DQ at 7:33.

Rating: B-. They were having a good match until the ending, which is what makes sense all things considered. Knight is someone who can fight back and probably will, likely with some kind of a weapon or some help. What matters right now though is that Knight is getting higher level competition, which is what he has been needing for a good while.

Post match Breaker hits another Super Spear, setting up three straight Tsunamis.

Here's what's coming next week from Saudi Arabia.

Jacob Fatu is ready for Solo Sikoa at Night Of Champions for the US Title. Get in where you fit in, because if not, it's

about to be all gas, no brakes.

R-Truth vs. John Cena

Non-title. R-Truth starts fast and slugs away, even sending Cena outside to keep up the beating. Back in and Cena gets sent into the corner as we take an early break. Back with Cena hitting the Shuffle but R-Truth slips out of the AA and hits a Thesz press. Cena bails out and grabs the title to leave but R-Truth cuts him off. That's fine with Cena, who hits him with the belt for the DQ at 5:45, most of which was during the break.

Post match CM Punk runs in for the brawl but gets kicked low. Another belt shot gives us a loud THUD and Cena pulls out a table. Cena gets in another belt shot and AA's Punk through the table. Cena grabs the mic and sits on the turnbuckle, where he starts a slightly tweaked version of the Pipebomb. Cena has a lot to get off his chest, starting with the fact that he doesn't hate Punk. He hates the idea of Punk being the best in the world because Cena is the best in the world.

Punk is better at one thing, as he is the best bulls***** in the world. Uh oh. He said a bad word so the show must be off the rails. Look at him! He's breaking the fourth wall! Cena is jealous of Punk for conning people saying he's the best in the world, especially when he changes his values more often than Cena changes his shirts. Cena: "Hey Claudio Castagnoli! Hey Nic Nemeth! Hey Matt Cardona!"

Punk has done nothing but repeat the same things over and over again because he's a promo potato salad. He's not the Voice Of The Voiceless anymore because he's a millionaire these days. In Saudi Arabia, he'll face a different tune when he finds out that Cena is the best of all time. Punk was the best in the world for seven minutes, ten years ago. If he still thinks that after Night Of Champions, it must be a small world after all. Punk needs to bring his a-game because the mood is

starting to change.

A referee FINALLY comes in to check on Punk, which seems to be a signal that they need to stretch things out a bit longer. Cena says he won't do anything else to Punk and holds up the title, saying get a good shot of the champ. And USA can keep the extra 2.5 minutes, because he doesn't need the time to set off a bomb. He flips the mic to Punk, saying that he just made the stupid promo more famous. Cena poses to end the show.

Yeah this was rather good, and makes their match feel all the more important as it ties back into one of the most famous promos ever. Cena was getting some of his swagger back here too, which has been missing for a rather long time. Good stuff here, and it did exactly what it was supposed to do.

Overall Rating: B. This show did a good job of making Cena vs. Punk and the King Of The Ring feel way more important. That's what both of them have been needing, as Night Of Champions got a heck of a boost out of this show. Now just get everything else going on the show, which is where Monday Night Raw should work. Next week's show is pretty stacked and that's some nice momentum to have, even if it's in Saudi Arabia.

Results

Asuka b. Alexa Bliss – Empress Impact

Randy Orton b. Sami Zayn – RK0

Charlotte b. Chelsea Green – Figure Eight

LA Knight b. Bronson Reed via DQ when Bron Breaker interfered

R-Truth b. John Cena via DQ when Cena used the title belt

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