

Smackdown – December 12, 2025: The Preview Farewell

Smackdown

Date: December 12, 2025

Location: Mohegan Sun At Casey Plaza, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves

It's the night before Saturday Night's Main Event and that means we have one more night before John Cena's final match. That means we very well may be hearing from Gunther before he faces Cena tomorrow, but there is also the matter of Cody Rhodes facing NXT Champion Oba Femi on Saturday. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a quick recap of Cody Rhodes wanting to face Drew McIntyre again.

Earlier today, Nick Aldis said he can't get in touch with Drew McIntyre but he's getting a chance to come here and speak about it face to face.

Aldis tells Cody Rhodes that McIntyre isn't here and he's legally claiming an unsafe work environment. Rhodes doesn't have time for this and heads to the ring.

Here is Rhodes for a chat. He's not happy with McIntyre's claims and says they're happening because McIntyre is only half in. If it was up to Rhodes, McIntyre would be fired, but here is NXT Champion Oba Femi to interrupt. Femi praises Rhodes and talks about how you can often see the future a long way off. This time though, the future is right in front of him and his time is now. Rhodes says they both respect John Cena, but he's the man who beat Cena for this title. They hold up

their titles and stare each other down to wrap up a short but intense segment.

Fraxiom tell Ilja Dragunov they'll have his back tonight against Tommaso Ciampa. Dragunov appreciates the offer but declines because this is his responsibility. John Cena introduced the US Open Challenge and Dragunov is carrying on its history. Everything seems to be cool.

United States Title: Ilja Dragunov vs. Tommaso Ciampa

Dragunov is defending and they trade forearms to start until Ciampa (with a taped up arm) goes after Dragunov's previously banged up knee. Dragunov is sent outside and a suplex sends the knee into the steps. We take a break and come back with Ciampa staying on the knee, only for Dragunov to slug his way out of trouble. Some rolling German suplexes have Ciampa down but the knee gives out before Dragunov can suplex him.

Something like a John Cena ProtoBomb gets two but Ciampa catches him on top. That means an Air Raid Crash on the apron for two, only for Dragunov to come back with a missile dropkick to the back of the neck. We take another break and come back with Dragunov looking even more intense than usual but getting taken down with a super Air Raid Crash.

Dragunov strikes away but gets caught with a dragon screw legwhip. Ciampa is back up but the bloody Dragunov hits Torpedo Moscow. Cue the rest of DIY for a distraction, allowing Ciampa to get in a running knee for two. The Fairy Tale Ending is loaded up but Dragunov reverses into a cradle for the pin to retain at 16:57.

Rating: B+. They laid into each other here with Ciampa working on the knee, as a good villain should be doing. At the same time, Dragunov was at his best as he kept fighting through the adversity to retain. I'm not sure who is going to take the title from him but they're making the idea of beating him into

quite the moment.

Post match Ciampa jumps Dragunov but Carmelo Hayes makes the save.

Je'Von Evans is asked about his match tomorrow night but Miz interrupts, saying he doesn't know why we're talking to Evans. That doesn't work for Evans, who wants a match tonight, with Miz saying he'll get it going.

Here are the Wyatt Sicks for a chat. Uncle Howdy doesn't like Solo Sikoa casting judgment on his family and it's interesting that Sikoa's real family has turned on him. If Sikoa wants the Tag Team Titles, come get them. Sikoa and company come up on the screen, saying they're coming for the titles next week. The Wyatts are given the option to give them up early, because otherwise, all they can do is RUN.

Charlotte gives Alexa Bliss a pep talk before her match but Rhea Ripley comes in to suggest she and Iyo Sky are coming for the titles instead. Bliss and Charlotte aren't impressed.

Various celebrities congratulate John Cena on his retirement.

Alexa Bliss vs. Lash Legend

Charlotte and Nia Jax are here too. Bliss sends her outside to start but Legend is back with something like a Dominator onto the barricade. Back in and Legend works on the arm before nailing a rather hard forearm. Jax teases getting involved but Charlotte kicks her down. Bliss tries a DDT but gets cut off for the Lash Extension and the pin at 3:35.

Rating: C. The match was short and to the point, with Legend basically squashing her to show off the power and strength. It would have been a stretch for Bliss to be able to hang with a powerhouse like Legend so the match was put together well. Keeping Legend's match short made sense and they kept her safe here so well done all around.

Aleister Black and Zelina are ready for Rhea Ripley and Damian Priest.

Smackdown is back to three hours on January 2. Oh joy.

Video on Leon Slater/Je'Von Evans.

Miz vs. Je'Von Evans

They start slowly until Evans snaps off a quick hurricanrana to stagger Miz. With Miz on the floor, Evans takes him down with a springboard moonsault, only to be sent arm first into the post. We take a break and come back with Miz still on the arm but Evans kicks his way out of the corner. A very big moonsault misses though and Miz initiates John Cena's finishing sequence. Evans fights back though and sends him outside for the dive. Back in and Evans' springboard cutter is blocked, only for the second attempt to connect for the win at 8:08.

Rating: C+. Evans continues to feel like one of the best prospects around and that means we're likely going to be seeing him a lot more often. It's also why he was in there against Miz, who is capable of making anyone look good. Miz pulled it off again here, which really shouldn't be a surprise given how talented he really is.

Nia Jax and Lash Legend mock Rhea Ripley, who isn't intimidated. Damian Priest comes in to say he likes that intensity from Ripley, who turns around to stare down Jade Cargill. These teases are great, as there are quite a few matches in there.

Michin doesn't like bullies so she wants to fight Jade Cargill...who jumps Michin from behind to leave her laying. Cargill comes to the ring to say that's what happens when you step up to her so here is Michin with a kendo stick. Naturally she loads up a table (because THAT is a logical weapon here) but gets kicked in the face for her efforts. Cargill hits a

chokeslam and leaves Michin laying. Could Michin and B-Fab look any more useless against Cargill?

Video on the Last Time Is Now tournament.

Saturday Night's Main Event rundown.

Video on Oba Femi.

Rhea Ripley/Damian Priest vs. Aleister Black/Zelina

The villains jump the heroes from behind to start, with Priest throwing Black into the corner to hammer away. Zelina tries to choke Priest, which goes as well as you would expect. Ripley throws her and hits a clothesline as we take a break. We come back with Zelina hitting a middle rope Meteora but getting muscled up for a hard toss. Priest comes back in for a lifting Downward Spiral to Black, followed by the Broken Arrow for two. Black is back up with a German suplex for two of his own as everything breaks down.

Zelina is picked up and launched at Ripley for a hurricanrana. Ripley tries Riptide but it gets reversed into...I have absolutely no idea (it looked like a Code Red but they landed so badly that commentary had no idea who got hurt). Code Red gives Zelina two but Ripley muscles her up into an electric chair. Black comes in for a standoff with Ripley until Priest is back in with a Razor's Edge. Riptide finishes Zelina at 9:48.

Rating: C-. This was a rather hasty main event and I'm not sure why. The botch on the Code Red (I think) was pretty terrible, but other than that it was a lot of Ripley throwing Zelina around. This didn't feel like the big ending of Priest vs. Black and that is something we need to see sooner rather than later. After all the hype, this was quite the letdown.

Overall Rating: C+. I liked the stuff with Rhodes/Femi and the

opener, but the main event was pretty disappointing. Other than that, you had Legend and Evans getting some nice wins to get them off to a nice start. The problem is this show is coming the night before Saturday Night's Main Event and that's the show that really feels important. Not the best show here, but it had some decent pieces, including a heck of an opener to bail it out.

Results

Ilja Dragunov b. Tommaso Ciampa – Cradle

Lash Legend b. Alexa Bliss – Lash Extension

Je'Von Evans b. The Miz – OG Cutter

Rhea Ripley/Damian Priest b. Zelina/Aleister Black – Riptide to Zelina

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