

Dynamite – February 5, 2025: Addition By Subtraction

Dynamite

Date: February 5, 2025

Location: Gateway Arena Center At College Park, College Park, Georgia

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Excalibur, Taz

We are just over a week away from Grand Slam and that means it is time to finish hammering home the card. Most of it is either set or almost set, which leaves a few spots to be filled in. There is a chance that we get something new added this week, though it could go in a few different ways. Let's get to it.

[Here is Collision if you need a recap.](#)

Renee Paquette talks to Jay White, who says he has to rely on Rated FTR to take out the Death Riders. Cue the Death Riders and cue Rated FTR to even things up, with the brawl coming into the arena. Yuta gets taken out and Cope adds a spear to send the villains running. With the Riders out in the crowd, Cope again issues the challenge for a World Title shot at Revolution. That's a no from Moxley, so White issues a challenge for a tag match at Grand Slam.

We run down tonight's card.

Buddy Matthews challenges Kazuchika Okada for the Continental Title again, with Okada saying no again.

Will Ospreay vs. ???

It's the newest member of the Don Callis family...Mark Davis. Ospreay isn't happy and gets chopped down as Callis is on commentary, talking about how he signed Aussie Open so he owns

Davis. Back up and Davis knocks him into the corner before hitting a suplex. Ospreay is back up with a Phenomenal Forearm though and we take a break.

We come back with Ospreay hitting a DDT to send Davis outside, with the big dive taking him down again. Back in and Ospreay strikes away, only to get piledriven for two. Davis yells at the referee and thanks to the distraction, gets taken down by the Hidden Blade for the pin at 10:58.

Rating: B-. Having Davis as the newest member of the team is something that makes sense, but egads it doesn't do much for the interest. It wasn't a bad match, but I could go a very long time without seeing Ospreay dealing with anything related to Callis again. Just get to the tag match and let that be enough already.

Post match Ospreay grabs the mic and says that he and his new friend will take out the Don Callis Family in Australia. Cue Kenny Omega to say he's back and ready to fight. He hits his catchphrase and a lot of pyro goes off, with Omega saying it surprised him.

Video on Swerve Strickland vs. Ricochet, complete with clips from their issues before they got to AEW.

Here is the Hurt Syndicate to celebrate their title win. Private Party was a good team, but the Syndicate is going to take out anyone who comes after them. They are open or business, so here are the Gunns to interrupt. The Gunns want their titles back and say that hurting someone is the point of being in wrestling. MVP agrees to the title match, even if they are a couple of "A** Boys." Austin says something in response but it's censored, even with the fans cheering rather loudly. Simple and to the point here.

Harley Cameron, with her Mercedes Mone puppet, are ready for Cameron's concert on Collision. Mone comes in to mock Cameron for only getting her first win. Now stay away from her locker

room.

Hangman Page isn't going to accept the idea of feeling sorry for Swerve Strickland. He took out Christopher Daniels but here is Max Caster to say it's his time for an interview. A match seems made for later.

Don Callis Family vs. Hounds Of Hell

Fletcher works on Matthews' arm to start but it's quickly off to Takeshita, who gets to slug away at King. Everything breaks down and they all fight to the floor, where King puts both villains in the same chair for a running crossbody. We take a break and come back with King fighting out of the corner, including a hard clothesline to Takeshita.

A German suplex doesn't do much to King so they clothesline each other down. Matthews' running flip dive to the floor takes both of them out again...and here is Kazuchika Okada for the interruption. Takeshita hits a dropkick/top rope backsplash combination, setting up a hanging DDT for two on King. An assisted brainbuster finishes King at 14:14.

Rating: B. Good match here, but I'm not sure about the logic behind having the Hounds lose so soon into their new run. It seems rather early for them to lose and that isn't the most logical way to go. Hopefully they get a nice win sooner than later, because otherwise I'm not sure I get the thinking.

Hook and Samoa Joe go to find Christian Cage but have to settle for beating up his minions. With Hook and Joe gone, Cage and Mother Wayne come in to survey the damage.

Here is MJF for a chat. MJF blames Jeff Jarrett for his issues and reminds Jarrett that the E in AEW isn't for "elderly". No one is on his level so here is Max Caster to interrupt. Cue Hangman Page to go after Caster but he gets in MJF's face instead. With Page gone, Dustin Rhodes (erg) cuts off the catchphrase and believe it or not, he's in a bad mood. Rhodes

gets on MJF for insulting Owen Hart's memory because that was Rhodes' friend.

Stop talking about people who have substance abuse issues because Rhodes is sixteen years sober. Rhodes talks about how he's been here for a long time and is still just as good as ever. MJF mocks Rhodes for thinking he's better before saying it took 37 years for Rhodes to get out of his father's shadow. Now he's in his little brother's shadow and the brawl is on, with security breaking it up. Nice promo from Rhodes, but not enough to overcome the fact that it's Dustin Rhodes.

Toni Storm vs. Queen Aminata

Mariah May is on commentary...and Storm is dressed as May. Storm has the mannerisms and look down, with the real May looking furious. They fight over a headlock to start with Storm taking her down as May vents about how she did this months ago. And where did she get that outfit? Aminata sends her into the ropes but gets hip attacked out to the floor. Back up and Aminata hits a suicide dive, taking off some of Storm's hair extensions with her.

We take a break and come back with May complaining that Storm doesn't have the chest to make the impression work. Storm Zero is countered into a rollup to give Aminata two and they trade the big forearms. Aminata knocks her into the corner for the running shot to the face but Storm hits a DDT. The running knee sets up May Day for the pin on Aminata at 9:05.

Rating: C. This was two things at once, as Storm absolutely nailed everything about May and was doing a pretty awesome impression. The problem, which tends to be a recurring issue in AEW, was having Aminata hang in there with the #1 contender for almost ten minutes. This should have been Storm massacring someone while having fun but instead we get this, which felt like it was more about building Aminata than anything else. They missed badly with this one, which is a shame as Storm was

great.

Post match Renee Paquette gets in and Storm insists that she is Mariah May. The real May gets on the apron but walks off instead.

Dustin Rhodes wants to fight MJF.

Video on Big Bill vs. Powerhouse Hobbs, with Bandido returning last weekend.

The Learning Tree gives us a live New York Minute and doesn't like Bandido being back. Jericho issues a \$200,000 bounty for Bandido so Bryan Keith can collect it. Cue Powerhouse Hobbs to go after Bill, with the Outrunners coming in to even things up. Bill and Hobbs brawl around ringside and we take a break.

Post break the brawl is still having to be broken up.

Swerve Strickland vs. Ricochet

Ricochet chairs Strickland from behind before the bell, setting up Vertigo for two at the bell. A backbreaker keeps Strickland in trouble and a running dropkick sends him to the floor. They go to the barricade where Strickland powerbombs his way out of a hurricanrana (that looked great). Ricochet gets sent into the corner and we take a break.

Back with Ricochet hitting a Codebreaker out of the corner, followed by a backbreaker. Both of them escape powerbombs until Strickland grabs a World's Strongest Slam for two. The House Call into he Swerve Stomp gets two on Ricochet, who is right back up with a springboard 450. The shooting star press gives Ricochet two more but the Spirit Gun is countered with a House Call. Strickland tries the Stomp but Ricochet gets his fists up for a low blow. The Spirit Gun finishes Strickland at 13:24.

Rating: B. The build to this match was a bit odd with the gold scissors coming out of nowhere, but what mattered here was

having a fight for the match itself. That's what we got here and it worked well, making this feel like a main event which had been set up. Good, hard hitting fight, but dang enough with Strickland losing.

Post match Ricochet steals Prince Nana's robe to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. Oddly enough, the show with the least Death Riders involvement is one of the better shows AEW has had in a bit. They had some good matches here and while there was a bit to much Don Callis Family for my liking, this was a show that kept me interested throughout. What mattered here was setting up more for Grand Slam, which should be going well. Nice stuff here, and again, how nice it was to not deal with the Death Riders.

Results

Will Ospreay b. Mark Davis – Hidden Blade

Don Callis Family b. Hounds Of Hell – Assisted brainbuster to King

Toni Storm b. Queen Aminata – May Day

Ricochet b. Swerve Strickland – Spirit Gun

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NXT – February 4, 2025: I'm Not Feeling It

NXT

Date: February 6, 2025

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Booker T., Corey Graves

We are just over a week away from Vengeance Day, which is going to be the night of the triple threats. Last week it was announced that both NXT Champion Oba Femi and Women's Champion Giulia will defend their titles in triple threat matches, which makes things more interesting. Other than that, we have to fill out the rest of the card so let's get to it.

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

Jacy Jayne vs. Stephanie Vaquer

The rest of Fatal Influence is here with Jayne. Vaquer wrestles her down without much effort before sending Jayne face first into the buckle. Some facewashes in the corner have Jayne in more trouble and they go outside. Fallon Henley gets in a cheap shot and we take an early break. Back with Vaquer putting her on top for a superplex and hitting some running knees in the corner. Jayne's knee to the face gets two and, after Jazmyn Nyx's interference fails, the SVB finishes Jayne at 11:21.

Rating: C. Take a challenger, have her beat the champion's friend on the way to the title match. That's as simple as you can get and it worked out well here. Vaquer is on the way to a big time title match and very well could wind up becoming the new champion. This was a good way to build her up and it

worked out well.

Various women argue over recent losses.

Oba Femi is ready for A-Town Down Under tonight and he doesn't owe Trick Williams a thing.

Here is Lexis King for a chat. He can't be humble when he is on the path to becoming the biggest star in wrestling history. King plays by his own drums and why wouldn't he? The King's blood doesn't run with that of a normal person and he wanted to be anything but his father. He has felt at his best when he is being his father's son and the reality is the Heritage Cup has been mistreated. Therefore, he is now going to get rid of the old rules and turn title matches into regular one on one matches, one fall to a finish.

Cue Fandango (TNA's JDC) of all people, who talks about how weird he got around here. They insult each other and he introduces himself as JDC (despite the Fandango music/graphics) before saying the title match is set for next week. Fandango coming back is a nice moment, but he's still not the biggest TNA name to come over as part of the crossover.

Tony D'Angelo is in the CW series Wild Cards and the Family is excited. Except Stacks, who says this is what D'Angelo is doing but he doesn't have time for them. D'Angelo tells him to worry about Ridge Holland tonight.

Ridge Holland vs. Stacks

The rest of the D'Angelo Family is here with Stacks, who jumps Holland before the bell. Holland snaps off an overhead belly to belly suplex and sends Stacks outside for a ram into the steps. Stacks' Codebreaker doesn't get him very far as Holland grabs a belly to belly suplex. Izzi Dame's distraction lets Stacks grab two but the Redeemer finishes Stacks at 3:44.

Rating: C. Much like the opener, they kept this to the point and didn't try to do anything weird here. What matters the most is having Holland look strong, likely on the way to a title match with Tony D'Angelo. Stacks is still having issues with his boss and that could make for an interesting situation down the line.

Fraxiom is interrupted by Josh Briggs and Yoshiki Inamura, who say they could win the Tag Team Titles in their one show. Fraxiom isn't overly impressed.

Zaria/Sol Ruca vs. Gigi Dolin/Tatum Paxley

Ruca and Paxley start things off with an exchange of quickly broken headlocks. A faceplant puts Paxley down and it's quickly off to Zaria vs. Dolin. Everything breaks down and Ruca gets dropkicked, allowing Paxley to drop a backsplash for two. Paxley gets underneath Ruca and lifts her up for a choke (that's a new one) before handing it off to Dolin for a twisting Swanton. Ruca manages to headscissor her way to freedom though and it's off to Zaria to clean house. Everything breaks down and Ruca gets shoved into Zaria but Zaria pulls Paxley out of the air. The F5 drops Paxley onto Dolin and the Sol Snatcher finishes at 4:22.

Rating: C+. I'm not sure what happened with Zaria but it feels like she came in on fire and then just fell through the cracks. This doesn't feel like a major feud as she's just kind of thrown into a tag team with Ruca. The match was energetic but it doesn't feel like something that matters all that much.

We look at some NXT women in the Royal Rumble.

Trick Williams hasn't seen Oba Femi tonight but the game plan is to show that he deserves the Vengeance Day title shot.

Here are Bayley, Roxanne Perez and Giulia for a chat. Well hold on as Perez wants to talk about her success in the Royal Rumble, where she broke Perez's longevity record. Bayley cuts

her off, talking about how she built the first ring in this arena with her bare hands. In this arena, Dusty Rhodes taught her how to hold a microphone. Bayley is fine, but what happens if Perez doesn't win at Vengeance Day? Perez threatens to win all of the titles but here is Giulia to say she'll keep the title.

Cue Charlotte to interrupt, saying Mama is home. This will always be her home and the last time she won the Women's Royal Rumble, she cashed in and won the NXT Women's Title. Perez had a nice performance at the Royal Rumble but she'll finish second place again if she faces Charlotte. Giulia, the hype is real but Charlotte is still better. Oh and she'll beat Bayley too. Cue Cora Jade to clear the ring, with Charlotte glaring at them. While I can't imagine Charlotte coming after the NXT Women's Title, it's nice to see them teasing it.

Ava has Je'Von Evans and Ethan Page held apart. Evans is suspended, but Page would rather they face each other at Vengeance Day. Ava makes the match, if Evans can get cleared.

Josh Briggs gets a tag match with Hank and Tank next week.

Ridge Holland comes up to the D'Angelo Family and wants a North American Title match. The solution? A cage match.

Kelani Jordan vs. Karmen Petrovic

They shove each other around to start and Petrovic's arm doesn't work very well as Jordan powers her into the corner. The armbar goes on again but Jordan is sent outside and takes out Ashante Thee Adonis. Back in and a springboard DDT gives Petrovic two as we take an early break.

We come back with Jordan knocking her down and nipping up as Jaida Parker is watching from ringside. Petrovic strikes away and gets two off some clotheslines. Back up and Jordan knocks her down, setting up a pair of One Of A Kinds. A glare at Parker and a choke finish Petrovic at 10:20.

Rating: C. This Adonis/Petrovic stuff just isn't interesting and it's getting worse every week. I'm not sure what the appeal is supposed to be and while Jordan is getting somewhere, the other two are kind of there. Parker and Jordan could be an interesting feud for both though, as Parker continues to rise up the ranks.

Post match Jordan keeps up the choke and the result is reversed.

Stephanie Vaquer is coming for the Women's North American Title and isn't worried about Fatal Influence.

Bayley gets Cora Jade next week.

Fraxiom is ready for either Hank And Tank or Yoshiki Inamura/Josh Briggs.

Here's what's coming next week.

A-Town Down Under are ready to team tonight but then argue over who will be the next NXT Champion.

Vengeance Day rundown.

Oba Femi/Trick Williams vs. A-Town Down Under

Williams tags himself in to start so Theory fires off some shoulders in the corner. Femi isn't pleased and Theory's rolling dropkick to Williams makes it even worse. Williams chops his way out of trouble and hits a hard slam before it's off to Femi for a harder slam. Femi and Williams keep arguing though, with Femi pulling him to the floor. A dive takes the good guys out and we take a break.

Back with a jumping knee to the face and rolling neckbreaker putting Williams down for two. Femi gets knocked off the apron so Williams has no one to tag after he jawbreaks his way out of a chinlock. A pop up right hand gives Williams a needed breather, allowing the tag off to Femi for a double Samoan

drop. Williams tags himself back in and hits a spinning kick to Waller's head for two. Cue Eddy Thorpe with a strap to Williams, allowing Waller to hit a rolling jumping Downward Spiral for the pin at 12:08.

Rating: C+. This was exactly what it was supposed to be with Femi and Williams not getting along, though I'm still not sure what appeal Thorpe is supposed to have. The guy isn't overly interesting and yet he's still in the main event scene no matter what. Other than that, you have Femi being ready to crush the annoying villains, which is how things should go.

Post match the whipping continues.

We get the test pattern again but this time it transitions into four people in the shadows to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The main event picked it up a bit but I'm not feeling Vengeance Day so far. Maybe it's the two triple threats on top but there isn't much about the show that is making me overly interested. This week's show didn't help very much and I'm still not exactly thrilled with what we're going to be seeing. Femi continues to look like a monster and his match with Williams is likely going to be headlining Stand & Deliver, but we've got something else to get through first. Not a terrible show here, but not something that hooked me.

Results

Stephanie Vaquer b.. Jacy Jayne – SVB

Ridge Holland b. Stacks – Redeemer

Zaria/Sol Ruca b. Gigi Dolin/Tatum Paxley – Sol Snatcher to Dolin

Karmen Petrovic b. Kelani Jordan via DQ

A-Town Down Under b. Oba Femi/Trick Williams – Rolling jumping Downward Spiral to Williams

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Monday Night Raw – February 3, 2025: What A Day

Monday Night Raw

Date: February 3, 2025

Location: Rocket Mortgage Fieldhouse, Cleveland, Ohio

Commentators: Michael Cole, Pat McAfee

It's the show after the Royal Rumble and in one heck of a shock, Jey Uso of all people won the men's namesake match. That isn't something a lot of people saw coming and a lot of things are screwy on the Road To Wrestlemania. We should be in for a big one this week as things will pick up in a hurry. Let's get to it.

[Here is the Royal Rumble if you need a recap.](#)

Some people come to work.

Long Royal Rumble recap.

Here is Jey Uso coming through the crowd for his big celebration. After the song stops playing...the fans insist that he does the YEET dance one more time. The fans tell Jey that he deserves it and then chant USO as we're still waiting for the first words. Uso is a bit nervous/taken aback by the reception before he finally says thank you. Uso: "I don't really know what to say." Fans: "YEET!" Uso: "Besides that!"

Uso talks about how he and his brother tried to become stars to carry on their legacy. Then he got involved with the Bloodline, which was fire. Those are cool chapters in his career but he wasn't confident enough to be a singles star. But coming out here tonight, he has it now. Uso thanks the fans and now he is the Royal Rumble winner and on his way to Wrestlemania.

Cue Gunther to interrupt, saying he is disappointed because this possible matchup doesn't appeal to him. Gunther has made everyone believe that he is barely hanging onto the title but he is always in control. He refuses to do this with Jey again, because he is in the process of building a legacy for himself. Beating Uso again means nothing and Gunther wishes it was Roman Reigns, John Cena or CM Punk because that adds to his legacy.

If Uso chooses Gunther, it will be a horrible display of violence at Wrestlemania. The reality is that Uso has options and he should consider them. Gunther goes to leave but Jey cuts him off, asking if Gunther is tired yet. Jey is tired of being told what he can or can't be. He'll be talking to Cody Rhodes on Smackdown but no matter what, he's coming out of Wrestlemania as champion. Yeet. Gunther vs. Uso is a possibility, but my goodness this is still bizarre to see.

We look at Seth Rollins attacking Roman Reigns at the Royal Rumble.

John Cena is officially in the Royal Rumble and says he's in

because he has earned it after 23 years. It is time for him to go to Wrestlemania and win his 17th World Title so that one day he can shake the hand of the person who wins #18. That's a good line.

Elimination Chamber Qualifying Match: Ludwig Kaiser vs. Penta

Kaiser kicks Penta down to start and yells about Penta humiliating him (by eliminating him from the Rumble in 6 seconds). This earns him another toss over the top but Kaiser hits a Death Valley Driver on the apron as we take a break. Back with Kaiser faceplanting him and hitting a clothesline for two, setting up the sneer. Penta gets fired up and chops away, followed by a backbreaker for two more.

The slingshot dropkick in the corner gets another near fall and Penta sends him to the floor for the big running flip dive. Back in and they chop it out until Penta scores with some superkicks. Kaiser manages a Regal Roll for two of his own but Penta pulls him into the Sacrifice. The Penta Driver finishes Kaiser at 9:58.

Rating: B-. This worked well enough as the Penta roll continues. What matters the most is continuing to see what they have with Penta, who is doing rather well just a few weeks into his WWE run. It's a good match too, with Kaiser being a perfect option for an opponent here, even if it was all about Penta getting the win.

Post match Penta is interviewed but Pete Dunne cuts him off. Kaiser lays Penta out with the spinning DDT.

We look back at JD McDonagh's injury last week. He'll be out for about four months.

Finn Balor can't believe things fell apart when he was gone for two weeks and yells at the rest of the Judgment Day. Dominik Mysterio stole his partner and got him hurt, so maybe Mysterio needs a babysitter. Liv Morgan defends Mysterio,

saying they had to fight next week or another team would have gotten the title shot. And tonight, Mysterio has gotten Balor an Elimination Chamber qualifying match. That seems to work for Balor.

Here is Charlotte for a chat. The fans boo her but the reality is she missed her. She missed the people who loved and hated her and last year sucked. Last year broke her physically and mentally and she didn't know if she was going to make any major show. Now she is back and won the Royal Rumble so BOO HER NOW! This ring is her home and she is going to Wrestlemania.

Cue Rhea Ripley to interrupt, with Charlotte saying she was trying to have a moment. Ripley says that was a moment, but this is her show. Ripley does respect Charlotte so please pick her. Charlotte brings up beating Ripley, who says that was when she was just a kid. It's not locked down yet though, as Charlotte is going to NXT and Smackdown to see what they have. As for Ripley, she's still a kid, but Charlotte will see her next week. Ripley begs Charlotte to pick her. I really don't need to see that match again.

Sami Zayn still wants to go to Wrestlemania and he has to go through CM Punk tonight to get to the Elimination Chamber. Zayn is asked about Kevin Owens but gets distracted by...Jey Uso. Jey insists he wasn't aiming for Zayn in the Rumble but Zayn is perfectly fine. This is Uso's moment and he wishes Zayn good luck tonight. With Uso gone, Karrion Kross comes in to ask what it's like to have everyone take Zayn's spot. Zayn isn't happy with these interruptions and violence is teased.

Iyo Sky says she will see Rhea Ripley at Wrestlemania. Ripley doesn't seem to mind the idea but Liv Morgan jumps Sky. Ripley chases her off but gets jumped by Raquel Rodriguez.

New Day vs. LWO

New Day has new music, which is almost hard to imagine. Lee

headlocks Woods to start but Kingston trips Lee down. Back up and Lee snaps off a running hurricanrana so it's off to Mysterio. Woods takes him into the corner and poses a bit, with the fans not being thrilled. Mysterio gets in a shot though and grabs a middle rope spinning hurricanrana for two. Lee sends Kingston into the corner for a running dropkick in the Tree Of Woe...and here is Logan Paul (facing Mysterio next week). The distraction lets Kingston pull Lee off the top and we take a break.

Back with Paul sitting at ringside and Kingston planting Lee for two. Lee manages to spin around and hit a sitout powerbomb for a needed breather. The tag brings in Mysterio to pick up the pace, including the running seated senton off the apron. Paul gets in Mysterio's face and is shoved into the chair for his efforts. Woods kicks the post by mistake so Lee snaps off a running hurricanrana over the top to the floor but Paul pulls Mysterio out. Back in and Trouble In Paradise gives Kingston the pin at 11:19.

Rating: B-. The point here was to give New Day a win as Paul is somehow despicable enough to actually not mind New Day. Granted it's more about his match with Mysterio next week but this is better than nothing for the team. It's also nice to have Lee back after such a lengthy absence.

We look at Seth Rollins attacking Roman Reigns and CM Punk after all three were eliminated from the Royal Rumble.

Reigns is banged up but he won't let us have a specific update. For now though, it is believed that Reigns will be out for the foreseeable future. Oh dear.

CM Punk apologizes to the Sami Zayn fans because he's going to the Elimination Chamber tonight.

We look at IShowSpeed being put into the Royal Rumble and being eliminated in fairly short order.

Video on Lyra Valkyria vs. Bayley next week in an Elimination Chamber qualifying match.

Elimination Chamber Qualifying Match: Iyo Sky vs. Liv Morgan

Sky is banged up after the earlier attack and Raquel Rodriguez is here with Morgan. Sky takes her down by the arm to start but Morgan is back up with a running corner clothesline. A basement dropkick gives Morgan two and she sends Sky outside. They switch places and Sky hits a nasty dive as we take a break.

Back with Morgan hitting Three Amigos (Cole: "She's no Eddie.") but getting kneed in the face. A missile dropkick connects and Morgan goes flying, only to come back with a Backstabber. Sky takes her down again and goes up, with Rodriguez offering a distraction. Thy fight to the floor, with Sky hitting a German suplex to leave Morgan laying.

An Asai moonsault drops Morgan again but she pulls Sky out of the air with a Codebreaker for two (that looked good). Back up and Sky snaps off a super hurricanrana but Rodriguez breaks up Over The Moonsault. Morgan can't hit Oblivion so it's a German suplex to put her down. Cue Rhea Ripley to go after Rodriguez and Morgan, who gets punched for the DQ at 12:12.

Rating: B. Maybe it was the bumps or maybe it was me not having much in the way of expectations coming in, but this was a heck of a match with both of them doing well. I had a great time with this and some of the bumps were great. The ending made sense and gives Morgan a win over a successful name and that's an impressive way to go.

Post match Ripley tries to explain but Sky isn't having it.

The War Raiders respect JD McDonagh but here is American Made to say this isn't championship material. The Creed Brothers are championship material but Erik asks what happens if this turns into a fight. Prepare for war. With the Raiders gone,

Chad Gable, not looking at the rest of the team, tells them to win titles while he goes to solve lucha libre.

Adam Pearce announces that AJ Styles is officially on Raw. Bron Breakker comes in and says keep Styles away from him. Breakker and a reluctant Pearce are off to talk business.

Here is Seth Rollins for a chat (after his entrance, a break and the Pearce/Breakker segment). First up, congratulations to Jey Uso because he loves seeing people get what they deserve. That brings him to CM Punk, who got what he deserved at the Royal Rumble. That brings him to Roman Reigns, who lost at the Royal Rumble as well. The reality is that Reigns is hurt and Rollins is the one who hurt him.

That is what Reigns has been doing to people for years and it doesn't bother Rollins to do the same things. He is ready for Wrestlemania and will face Finn Balor in an Elimination Chamber qualifying match. For now though, he wants Sami Zayn out here for a chat, which brings out Zayn. Rollins calls Zayn his friend and talks about what they have done to deal with Reigns. Tonight is time for the fight of Zayn's life and he is better than CM Punk. Cue Punk, who almost gets in a fight with Rollins in the aisle but it's broken up.

Elimination Chamber Qualifying Match: CM Punk vs. Sami Zayn

They trade headlocks to start before Zayn takes him into the corner for some rather loud chops. Punk starts in on the arm but Zayn springboards over him to set up a clothesline. Punk forearms him into a swinging neckbreaker, setting up the...well nothing actually as Zayn breaks it up. The superplex brings Punk crashing down and we take a break.

Back with Zayn fighting back but not being able to hit the Blue Thunder Bomb. Punk's knee in the corner sets up the running bulldog but Zayn reverses into the Blue Thunder Bomb for two. Punk grabs a DDT on the arm and goes old school with the Anaconda Vice. That's escaped as well so Punk tries the

GTS, which is reversed into a small package for two more. Zayn suplexes him into the corner, only to charge into the GTS to give Punk the win at 14:54.

Rating: B. This is another good example of a match where you knew it was going to work because of who was involved. They're both capable of having a strong match and they were given the time to make it work. Solid main event here, though it would be nice to see Zayn win one of these matches every so often.

Post match respect is shown but here is Kevin Owens to jump both of them. A package piledriver to Zayn ends the show.

Overall Rating: B-. There was a lot of talking on the show and a good deal of it was more about things to be announced later. That makes sense as we have a lot of time to get ready for the major shows, but it was still good enough to keep me interested. They have a lot more to do and Elimination Chamber is starting to come together, but for now, this was a nice enough follow up to the Rumble.

Results

Penta b. Ludwig Kaiser – Penta Driver

New Day b. LWO – Trouble In Paradise to Mysterio

Liv Morgan b. Iyo Sky via DQ when Rhea Ripley interfered

CM Punk b. Sami Zayn – GTS

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Collision – February 1, 2025: They Have Competition

Collision

Date: February 1, 2025

Location: Propst Arena At Von Braun Center, Huntsville, Alabama

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Nigel McGuinness

We have two weeks to go before we get to Grand Slam and the top of the card has come together. The show has some more spots to fill in though and we'll start taking care of that this week. As for this week, we have a Mid-South street fight, despite not being in the Mid-South (well, at least the wrestling version). Let's get to it.

[Here is Dynamite if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Hook/Samoa Joe vs. The Patriarchy

Wayne shoulders Hook down to start but gets suplexed for his efforts. Joe comes in but misses a charge into the corner, allowing Sabian to kick away. That doesn't work for Joe, who runs Sabian over and hits the backplash. Hook comes back in but gets taken into the wrong corner so the villains can take over.

Sabian grabs a chinlock as Schiavone rattles off the rest of the card, sounding more robotic than ever. A double suplex gives Wayne two but Hook is over to the corner without much trouble. Joe comes back in, hits the release Rock Bottom out of the corner, and MuscleBusters Sabian for the pin at 8:59.

Rating: C. This was what it needed to be, with Joe getting in there and smashing through everyone as soon as he got the chance. That's the point of someone like Joe, as he is an absolute monster when he gets the chance. Joe vs. Cage could be interesting, though Joe should have something to do with Chris Jericho first.

Post match Christian Cage comes in with the metal contract and lays the winners out.

Cope thinks Jon Moxley is always whining about something and was stupid to hide the World Title in a briefcase. He wants Moxley at Revolution. Logical, but dang that's a long time to sit through this feud.

The Beast Mortos vs. Adam Priest

The discus lariat and the spinning piledriver finish Priest at 44 seconds. Yep.

Post match here is Max Caster to say he doesn't want to fight, but he does want to issue his first open challenge.

Max Caster vs. Rush

Rush isn't having any of this waiting around to start and pounds Caster into the corner to start. The Bull's Horns finishes at 1:03. Yep again.

Post match Rush and Mortos, with Dralistico get in the ring so Rush can do his catchphrase.

The Outrunners think the Learning Tree need to dig two graves.

Outrunners vs. Learning Tree

Big Bill is here with the Learning Tree. Jericho pokes Magnum in the eyes to start and takes those eyes into the corner for some raking. Floyd comes in for some alternating atomic drops and the villains are cleared out to the floor. Bill gets in a big boot for a cheap shot though and we take a break.

Back with Floyd getting to clean house but the Mega Powers elbow takes too long. Jericho gets the Walls on Floyd but Magnum comes back in with a suplex. NOW the Mega Powers elbow can connect, only for Bill to break up Total Recall. Keith small packages Floyd for the pin at 8:21.

Rating: C+. Maybe I was stupid for thinking they could do something with the Outrunners, but here they are losing to bigger teams. I know they weren't going to be AEW Tag Team Champions, but they could have beaten some biggish team in a funny feud. Instead, they are the latest stars to be sacrifice on the altar of Jericho.

Post match, Big Bill beats up the Outrunners again. A double chokeslam through the table is loaded up but Bandido comes in for the save. Keith goes through the table instead.

Kyle Fletcher wants to even the score with Mark Briscoe. They're set for next week.

Buddy Matthews again challenges Kazuchika Okada, who isn't interested. B***** ensues.

Taya Valkyrie vs. Harley Cameron

Taya jumps her to start and stomps away in the corner, only to get kicked in the head. Back up and the sliding German suplex drops Cameron and we take a break. We come back with the fans chanting FEEL THE WRATH and Cameron hitting a Canadian Destroyer. Cameron misses a Swanton but gets speared, only for Cameron to roll her up for the pin and her first AEW victory

at 7:34.

Rating: C. Now THIS is what AEW needs to do more often. It wasn't some stunning upset or total nonsense, but one of the most popular stars in the promotion got a clean win. They still have time to do this on the way to Grand Slam where Cameron likely gets to lose to Mercedes Mone. Not a particularly good match, but it was what the fans wanted to see and it went well.

We get a sitdown interview with Ricochet, who is happy to be here among the best around. Then the fans turned on him and threw toilet paper at him. Swerve Strickland thought it was a good idea to join the fans booing him. Cue Strickland to say he could end Ricochet but that would disappoint fans in Atlanta. Strickland talks about how the two of them have a long history and now it is going to be a fight, which Ricochet can't win. Ricochet talks about how he doesn't care about the fans and they'll see each other in Atlanta. Nice stuff here, as they're making this feel like a showdown.

Here is Toni Storm to say that she has been playing the role of Toni Storm for the last six weeks. Naturally no one got this because she's such a great actress. She has to run away after Mariah May broke her heart and now she has seen everything she has. May is a "shambolic b****." and her time is over. At least they're winking at the fact that it wasn't a big surprise.

Video on Christopher Daniels.

Harley Cameron is outside of Mercedes Mone's dressing room...and whips out a Mone puppet for some outstanding ventriloquism. Mone comes in to mock Cameron for being a loser who doesn't get to ride the money train. Sweet goodness this woman is talented.

Video on Daniel Garcia.

TNT Title: Daniel Garcia vs. Kyle O'Reilly vs. Lee Moriarty

Garcia is defending and Moriarty's ROH Pure Title isn't on the line. Feeling out process to start with neither going much of anywhere. We get the parade of holds with neither being able to get very far, meaning it's another standoff. Moriarty gets sent outside so the other two can get kicked in the face. A big dive drops O'Reilly and Garcia and we take a break.

Back with Moriarty hitting an Eat Defeat/Downward Spiral combination for two each. Some double teaming takes Moriarty down until an exchange of kicks leaves everyone down. Garcia hammers away at both of them in the corner. With O'Reilly down, Garcia gets the Dragon Slayer but O'Reilly breaks it up. Moriarty's associate Shane Taylor punches Garcia into the Border City Stretch but Garcia reverses into the jackknife cover for the retaining pin at 11:31.

Rating: B-. This was mostly just a nice wrestling match, but CAN WE STOP PINNING RING OF HONOR CHAMPIONS??? If you don't want O'Reilly to lose here then fine, but don't put another champion in there to take the fall. Heck you had Shane Taylor RIGHT THERE on the floor to take the fall instead. This is one of those things that Tony Khan does far too often and it drives me insane.

Post match Shane Taylor Promotions surround O'Reilly and Garcia but the Undisputed Kingdom makes the save.

Video on Penelope Ford vs. Thunder Rosa.

Hologram is walking the streets and seems to have electrical powers.

Megan Bayne vs. Hyena Hera

Bayne powers her into the corner for some shoulders to the ribs to start and hits a pump kick for a knockdown. An F5 finishes Hera at 1:25. That's how she should have debuted

rather than being just another name in the Casino Gauntlet.

Lio Rush might take up Darius Martin's challenge. Maybe.

Mariah May is ready to watch Toni Storm vs. Queen Aminata.

Kris Statlander apologizes to Willow Nightingale over their issues. Nightingale says it's time to focus on herself, but Statlander pulls out their friendship bracelet, showing it was never broken.

Death Riders vs. FTR

Street fight and FTR jumps them in the crowd to start fast. The weapons are brought in rather quickly and the Riders fight back, with Cash being sent into the steps to put him down. Harwood is sent into them as well and Moxley puts him in a chair for a kick to the face and two, as "Mid-South Street Fight" apparently means falls count anywhere. Yuta chairs Harwood in the ring and here is Moxley with some pliers. Cash fights up and helps clean some house but Moxley pliers Harwood's nose...and we take a break. Because of course.

We come back with Moxley pouring out the thumbtacks, only to get powerbombed onto them. Cash and Yuta fight over a suplex before Cash settles for a suicide dive. Moxley Death Riders Cash on the floor and puts a table up in the corner. The double suplex is broken up and Harwood hits a brainbuster for a needed breather.

Harwood grabs Moxley low, only for Marina Shafir to come in and grab Harwood low. Shafir grabs a choke but gets sent through the table in the corner for his efforts. A piledriver sets up a Sharpshooter on Moxley so here is Claudio Castagnoli for the save. Cue Jay White and Cope to even things up, with Yuta getting piledriven through the announcers' table for the pin at 16:51.

Rating: B-. Quite the fight here and it's nice to see the

Riders lose, but at the same time, it was quite a bit of the same stuff that we have seen in this kind of a match before. The match did come a bit out of nowhere, though apparently this was the last minute replacement for Powerhouse Hobbs due to his injury, so fair enough. Good stuff here, but the Death Riders in general are just not that interesting.

Post match the Riders keep up the beating but get taken out, with a Shatter Machine and spear dropping Moxley. The Conchairto is broken up to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. Nice enough show here, even if the audience is going to be crushed by the Royal Rumble. The last two non-squash matches were pretty good and I liked them throwing in some shorter matches to keep things moving. It's not a show you need to see, but it was perfectly enjoyable.

Results

Hook/Samoa Joe b. The Patriarchy – MuscleBuster to Sabian

The Beast Mortos b. Adam Priest – Spinning piledriver

Rush b. Max Caster – Bull's Horns

Learning Tree b. Outrunners – Small package to Keith

Harley Cameron b. Taya Valkyrie – Rollup

Daniel Garcia b. Lee Moriarty and Kyle O'Reilly – Jackknife rollup to Moriarty

Megan Bayne b. Hyena Hera – F5

FTR b. Death Riders – Spike piledriver through the announcers' table to Yuta

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Royal Rumble 2025: Say It With Him

Royal Rumble 2025

Date: February 1, 2025

Location: Lucas Oil Stadium, Indianapolis, Indiana

Commentators: Michael Cole, Wade Barrett, Pat McAfee

It's time to start the Road To Wrestlemania and that means we have one of the most important shows of the year. As usual, we have the two Royal Rumble matches, which could go in a few directions. Other than that, Cody Rhodes is defending the WWE Championship against Kevin Owens in a ladder match. Let's get to it.

I was in the stadium for this show, sitting in the upper deck with the entrance on my right.

Commentary welcomes us to the show as people come to work.

Here is Stephanie McMahon in a surprise to welcome us to the show and hype up how big it is.

The opening video is naturally hosted by Pat McAfee, who talks about what a great city this is and how excited he is to have everyone here.

Commentary welcomes us to the show again.

Women's Royal Rumble

So in a new innovation this year, we have some incredible (yet still simple) graphics, giving stats (how many Rumbles they have been in, their total eliminations etc), as well as how many people are in, how many have been eliminated, the next entrant, who is still in the match, who has been eliminated etc. These are GREAT and make this feel like so much more of a real sporting event while also making it easy for fans to jump in. Outstanding addition here and another sign of how great the changes have been.

Anyway we have two minute intervals and Iyo Sky is in at #1 and Liv Morgan is in at #2. They run the ropes to start until Sky dropkicks her into the corner. Sky misses a springboard but manages to send Morgan to the apron as Roxanne Perez (from NXT) is in at #3. Perez Thesz presses Sky and hammers away before hitting a DDT and Russian legsweep at the same time. Morgan is back up with a Codebreaker to leave everyone down as Lyra Valkyria is in at #4.

Valkyria cleans house to start and hits a tornado DDT on Sky...and we pause as Valkyria's top starts falling off. Morgan is smart enough to knock her into the corner so things can be repaired. No one is eliminated and it's Chelsea Green (to a heck of a pop) in at #5. Green comes in with the big over the top slaps, which leaves everyone to surround her for a group beatdown. B-Fab is in at #6 and gets in some shots as little is happening.

Ivy Nile is in at #7 and gets to German suplex people, including two at once. Zoey Stark is in at #8 and fires off some superkicks before sending Sy to the apron. Morgan gets close to eliminating Green butt can't quite get there. Lash Legend (a big powerhouse from NXT) is in at #9 and gets to throw people around, including swinging Nile at various

people. Fab gets in a slugout with Legend but Green throws Fab out for the first elimination.

Bianca Belair is in at #10, giving us Sky, Morgan, Perez, Valkyria, Green, Nile, Stark, Legend and Belair as the ring is rather full. Belair starts fast with a high crossbody to Green but it's too early for any eliminations. Belair hammers away on Sky in the corner but moonsaults over a charging Sky to hammer away on both of them. Then she does it again with Stark and Legend and Morgan, though the latter gets away from the right hands. That was a great sequence and Belair follows it up with a suplex to Legend. Shayna Baszler is in a #11 and starts working on limbs until Stark slips on a springboard attempt.

Nile throws Valkyria out to set up their teased title match. Bayley is in at #12 and goes after Perez before having the big staredown with Sky. Stark and Baszler break that up but get sent to the apron as Sonya Deville is in at #13 to complete the Pure Fusion Collective. Deville gets to clean house and the Collective starts wrecking everyone. Green takes a time out on the floor as the beating continues.

Maxxine Dupri is in at #14 and forearms Nile down. The fisherman's suplex drops Nile but the Collective breaks up the reverse Caterpillar. With the Collective down, Dupri can hit the reverse Caterpillar and kicks Nile out. Then the Collective tosses Dupri out as well. Naomi is in at #15 and teams up with Belair to start cleaning house. The Collective is out back to back to back to clear the ring and it's Jaida Parker (athletic standout with some attitude from NXT) is in at #16.

Parker uses her hip based offense before staring it down with Legend. Belair and Naomi join in but Green gets in the middle of the four of them and is promptly destroyed. Green gets rid of Legend but runs into Naomi and Belair, who scare her off. Piper Niven is in at #17 and Green is rather happy, though it

takes Niven forever to get to the ring, leaving Green frustrated. Niven comes in and cleans house...and accidentally eliminates Green. Panic ensues (even Cole knows that's not good) and it's Natalya in at #18 to a rather limited reaction.

Natalya starts fast and almost powerbombs Sky out, only for Perez to make the save. Jordynne Grace (officially part of the company and now with straight hair) is in at #19 and the fans are VERY happy. Grace gets to throw people around and tosses Parker, setting up a Parker style dance. A Death Valley Driver plants Niven and McAfee/Cole jump up in shock. Grace hugs old friend Naomi but Belair pulls them apart.

Michin is in at #20 to clean a bit of the house before getting planted by Niven. That gives us Sky, Morgan, Perez, Belair, Bayley, Naomi, Niven, Natalya, Grace and Michin. Alexa Bliss, with the Lily Doll, is back at #21 and so much for the contract issues. Even commentary gets in on the joke about the internet saying she wasn't coming back. Bliss goes after Bayley for the old staredown and it's Zelina Vega in at #22. The pace picks up, including a Code Red to Grace.

Candice LeRae is in at #23 and goes after Perez to limited avail. Belair has to hug the post to avoid being eliminated and it's NXT's Stephanie Vaquer in at #24. She gets to pick up the pace but charges into Bayley's raised boot in the corner. Bayley gets her leg taken out and it's Trish Stratus for the big surprise legend spot at #25. Stratus goes after Natalya, who Cole says is her "longtime rival." They have never had a singles match or even been on opposite sides of a tag match.

Niven drops Stratus and things slow down as Raquel Rodriguez is in at #26. Rodriguez powerbombs Morgan onto Natalya and then dumps Natalya out. Bliss goes after Morgan and gets Codebreakered out for her efforts. Charlotte is back at #27 and, after taking her sweet time getting to the ring, chops quite a few people. Charlotte gets caught in a delayed double suplex but reverses it into a double DDT. Niven is out so

Morgan and Rodriguez go after Charlotte as NXT Women's Champion Giulia is in at #28.

Sky is waiting on her and they knock each other down as Charlotte fights off Morgan and Rodriguez. Giulia knees Grace out (that's a bit of a surprise) but gets to face off with Vaquer. We get something of a current NXT vs. old school NXT brawl (cool) until Nia Jax is in at #29 (McAfee: "Oh no is what everybody is saying."). Jax eliminates Vega and goes after Stratus, who doesn't seem impressed. LeRae tries to break that up and gets tossed by Stratus, who tries the Stratusphere on Jax.

A hurricanrana just annoys Jax and Stratus is out and Jax runs over various people. Nikki Bella is back at #30, giving us a final grouping of Sky, Morgan, Perez, Belair, Naomi, Vaquer, Rodriguez, Charlotte, Giulia, Jax and Bella. Everyone circles Jax, who shoves them all away because she's a monster and all. A bunch of strikes have Jax in trouble and Bella stops to do pushups, with Perez doing the same. In a totally not planned sequence, Vaquer, Sky, Belair, Naomi, Rodriguez and Morgan are sent to the apron and eliminated by Jax in the span of about fifteen seconds.

Giulia and Perez get Charlotte to the apron, only for Perez to eliminate Giulia instead. Bella knocks Bayley out but gets eliminated by Jax, leaving us with Charlotte, Jax and Perez. Charlotte chops away at Jax but gets her leg twisted by Perez for a knockdown. Back up and Charlotte knocks out Jax, followed by a boot to eliminate Perez for the win at 1:10:16.

Rating: B-. I did like it, but there were WAY too many instances of people laying around and just killing time. On top of that, there is the "yes, it's Charlotte, again" factor, as she's gone for a year but comes back and wins the whole thing. That's a bit of a lot to take, but it was the most likely option because, you know, Charlotte.

Other than that though, there were several great performances in here, with Grace, Perez, and especially Green coming off as absolute stars. That is quite the lineup but the bigger problem the long stretch of time without eliminations, leaving so many people laying around. Jax eliminating about six people almost at once was a bit much to take and large portions felt rushed, which says a lot when it was already long.

Big E. shills Slim Jim's.

The Godfather, Mickie James and Kurt Angle are here, with Angle's daughter wearing his gold medal.

Smackdown Tag Team Titles: Motor City Machine Guns vs. DIY

The Guns are challenging in a 2/3 falls match. The recap video (which shows the Guns debuting and winning the titles, only for Johnny Gargano to turn on his longtime friend Alex Shelley to steal them away) isn't showed on the broadcast. Sabin and Ciampa chop it out to start until Shelley comes in for a double kick to the chest. The champs are sent outside for stereo dives from the Guns, setting up a suicide double clothesline from Sabin.

Gargano gets in a cheap shot on the floor though and DIY takes over back inside. That means some alternating double teaming can ensue, only for Shelley to fight back. Sabin finally gets in an enziguiri and brings in Shelley but Ciampa...doesn't tag. Gargano comes in for a distraction though, allowing Ciampa to come in with a jumping knee for the first fall at 3:16 (that was brilliant).

The second fall begins with Ciampa stomping away to set up the chinlock on Shelley. With that broken up, it's a powerbomb/belly to back suplex combination for two as Shelley is in trouble. Back up and Shelley hits a Downward Spiral/DDT combination, only for Ciampa to offer a distraction. The referee doesn't see the tag (that always works) and Sabin is caught in the wrong corner again.

A Shatter Machine gets two on Shelley but the slingshot spear is cut off. That's enough for the tag back to Sabin and house is quickly cleaned. Ciampa is bleeding from the mouth as Sabin hits a huge dive to the floor for the double knockdown. Back in and a tornado DDT sets up Skull & Bones to tie the score at 9:04.

The third fall starts with Gargano getting in a shot to Sabin, allowing Ciampa to come in for a Fairy Tale Ending/superkick combination for two. Project Ciampa gets the same on Sabin and everyone is down. Ciampa takes Sabin up top but gets dropped face onto the post to knock him silly. With Ciampa in the Tree of Woe, Gargano gets suplexed into him to send Gargano outside.

A Sliced Bread/sitout powerbomb combination gets two on Ciampa, with Gargano making a last second save. Back up and Gargano accidentally kicks Ciampa, setting up the Dream Sequence. The referee is distracted though, allowing the Street Profits to come in with a crutch to knock Shelley silly. Meet In The Middle gives Ciampa the pin to retain at 13:59.

Rating: B. It was a good match, but it could not have been more filler to a card and it showed badly. The problem here is that it just didn't feel that important and there was little way around that fact. That being said, it was good, back and forth action with DIY getting an assist to retain the titles, which works out just fine. Heck of a match here, with the Profits being added right back into the title mix.

Post match the Profits beat the champs down and pose with the titles.

And now, we look at Pat McAfee's best NFL plays. But we don't have time to recap the Tag Team Title match?

Some fans met Bianca Belair and Chelsea Green and got to come to the show.

Ron Simmons, Rick Steiner and Rob Van Dam (the latter of whom looks better than he did during parts of his career) are here.

We recap Kevin Owens vs. Cody Rhodes. Owens was livid about Rhodes teaming with Roman Reigns after Owens fought the team for years. Then Owens snapped and stole the Winged Eagle belt, setting up this ladder match for the title and a lot of revenge. Note that Cole says that we're going to see a recap set to a Papa Roach song but it's cut from Peacock.

Smackdown World Title: Cody Rhodes vs. Kevin Owens

Rhodes is defending in a ladder match and for some reason they both have their belts despite making such a big deal about them being hung up over a week ago. They stare at each other to start before going to the floor. The ladder is turned on its side so Owens slams him through the rungs in the middle. Said rungs are raked over Rhodes' face and they fight into the crowd as this is quite the brawl so far.

Owens sends him face first into a camera for a great visual and they get back to the barricade, where Rhodes is dropped ribs first onto the barricade. Owens loads up a ladder inside but Rhodes is right there to cut him off. Another ladder is set up as a bridge between the apron and the announcers' table but Owens takes too long. That lets Rhodes send him into the steps...but Owens is back with a four foot step ladder and throws it at Rhodes to take over again.

A frog splash of the mini ladder doesn't launch so Owens hits him with said ladder. Rhodes is dropped onto the mini ladder but he's fine enough to send Owens into the really tall ladder. That lets Rhodes climb up but he winds up hanging from the belts. Owens pulls him down for a huge powerbomb, followed by a less huge ram into the standing ladder. Rhodes is fine enough to push the ladder over again and let's tear off a rung to swing at Owens.

That lasts all of a few seconds as Owens kicks him in the

face, setting up a Flip Flop And Fly for a nice chuckle. Instead of a Bionic Elbow though, it's a rung to the head. Yet another ladder is brought in (even Cole thinks it's excessive) but the package piledriver is broken up, with Rhodes backdropping him onto the side of a ladder for a NASTY landing. Rhodes goes up again, earning himself a powerbomb onto a ladder bridged over the bottom rope in the corner. Another ladder is bridged into the big standing ladder in the middle and Owens goes up.

For some reason Rhodes tries a superplex, which is as stupid as it seems as Owens superplexes him onto the bridged ladder. We pause for the medics and Nick Aldis to check on both of them...and Sami Zayn is here. With the two of them back up, Rhodes reverses a Stunner into the Cross Rhodes but it's too early to climb. Rhodes takes it to the floor for a posting and Owens is busted open. That means a bunch of right hands to the cuts, but a low blow cuts Rhodes off. Another package piledriver is loaded up but Rhodes reverses into an Alabama Slam through the ladder. Owens is DONE and Rhodes retains at 25:05.

Rating: B. It's a rather violent brawl and the ending spot looked great as Owens was destroyed. There were several cringe worthy moments and it felt like two people wanted to destroy each other. The problem here is the length, as it felt like they were killing tie more than once. Cut this down by five to eight minutes and it's WAY better, but as it is, it's basically just a violent ladder match with some good spots.

Evolve is coming in March. On Tubi.

Joe Tessitore and Big E. talk about the ladder match. For some reason only the audio was played in the stadium with no video.

Rumble By The Numbers video...which is also cut from Peacock.

Men's Royal Rumble

2 minute intervals with Rey Mysterio in at #1 and Penta in at #2 for a nice start. We get a rather lengthy show of respect, which surprising as Penta has probably been a fan for decades. They start a bit slowly before going to the apron, where Penta's feet certainly seem to hit the ground. The referee says it's only one (the fans are REALLY not sure on that) butt Penta gets back in.

They knock each other down again and it's Chad Gable in at #3. Gable fires off some suplexes but gets double teamed, with Mysterio climbing onto Penta's shoulders to crash down onto Gable in a nice spot. Carmelo Hayes is in at #4 and hits the springboard reverse DDT on Mysterio before forming an alliance with Gable. That lasts all of ten seconds before they split up and pair off in the corners as Santos Escobar is in at #5.

Penta and Escobar have their showdown, with Escobar hitting a Canadian Destroyer butt getting caught with a 619 from Mysterio. We get a parade of people going to the apron and it's Otis in at #6 as Gable (who can't handle luchadors) keeps getting in trouble. Otis hits the Caterpillar before slugging it out with Gable, who plants him with a German suplex. Bron Breaker is in at #7 and a spear gets rid of Hayes (Breaker's old NXT rival), followed by a backdrop to Otis.

Another spear drops Escobar (who was holding Penta) and Escobar is out. Akira Tozawa of all people is in at #8 but Hayes jumps him in the entrance. Since one forearm is enough to knock Tozawa silly, Adam Pearce comes out and carries him to the back, where HHH sends IShowSpeed (a streamer) in for his spot instead. Speed runs in and helps Breaker get rid of Otis before getting absolutely crushed by a Breaker spear (that looked GREAT). Breaker throws Speed over the top and onto Otis, who throws him over the announcers' table for the elimination. Cole: "Are you ok so?" McAfee: "NO HE'S NOT OK!"

Sheamus is in at #9 (the booking for this has been great so far, as it's one logical step after another, with Sheamus

having issues with Breakker) and hits the forearms to Gable's chest. Breakker gets the forearms as well and Sheamus hits Penta with a slingshot spear. The Brogue Kick cuts off Breakker's spear and they chop it out until Jimmy Uso is in at #10. That gives us Mysterio, Penta, Gable, Breakker, Sheamus and Uso, the latter of whom hits a Whisper In The Wind to Penta.

Andrade is in at #11 and runs over Sheamus, followed by some running knee in the corner. Penta superplexes Escobar and most everyone is down...as Jacob Fatu is in at #12. Fatu Samoan drops Mysterio and Penta at the same time before throwing out Mysterio and Gable. There goes Andrade as well but Breakker is waiting on Fatu. Ludwig Kaiser is in at #13 and he's not thrilled with getting in there immediately. The rest of the match slows down and Kaiser gets in, only to be tossed out by Penta two seconds later. Breakker saves himself from an elimination attempt and it's the Miz in at #14.

Miz almost throws Breakker out and hits a Skull Crushing finale on Uso. A middle rope hurricanrana takes Penta down but Miz makes the mistake of going after Fatu, which goes as well as you would expect. The Samoan drop plants Miz and Fatu stands around...as TNA World Champion Joe Hendry is in at #15. The stadium sings his song and he gets to clean some house including the Standing Ovation (chokeslam) to Miz. Sheamus and Fatu have a standoff and Roman Reigns is in at #16 to a ROAR.

The spear hits Miz and he's out, with Sheamus following him rather quickly. There's a spear to Hendry who is out as well (to be fair, he was only there for the song) but Breakker spears Reigns for a change. Reigns is right back up to toss Breakker but Reigns needs a breather. Fatu dumps Uso and we have the big showdown with Reigns, which has to be a preview for something. The slugout is on and Reigns hits a spear but Drew McIntyre is in at #17. Fatu and McIntyre double team Reigns down and Finn Balor is in at #18.

The Sling Blade hits Penta but it's not enough to get rid of him. Penta is back up with some slingshot dropkicks in the corner as Shinsuke Nakamura is in at #19. Penta's Canadian Destroyer hits Fatu so he tries another on Balor, who tosses Penta out. Jey Uso is in at #20, giving us Uso, Balor, Fatu, McIntyre, Nakamura and Reigns. Uso hits a spear on McIntyre and a poisonrana on Fatu before trading kicks with Nakamura. Uso tosses Nakamura (and waves goodbye) and AJ Styles is back at #21.

House is cleaned before Styles gets in a staredown with Fatu. Braun Strowman is in at #22 (only a week after being smashed by Fatu, which is quite the turnaround) and goes straight after Fatu with a crossbody of all things. That's enough for Strowman to power Fatu out, leaving Fatu to clear the announcers' table and throw a chair. A bunch of people go after Strowman but none of that matters as John Cena is here at #23 (getting a not so subtle glare from Fatu). Cena gets rid of Strowman and Balor before getting in a staredown with Reigns. Since this isn't big enough, CM Punk is in at #24 and we get a three way staredown, with Cena looking rather excited.

This goes on so long that Seth Rollins is in at #25 to make things all the more interesting. Rollins wastes no time in going after Punk as Cena brawls with Reigns. McIntyre is back up so Rollins goes after him as Styles chops Cena in the corner. Dominik Mysterio is in at #26 and comes in with a frog splash. For some reason Mysterio tries a suplex on Reigns, which goes as badly as you would expect. Sami Zayn is in at lucky #27 and starts firing off the Helluva Kicks. Nothing goes on for a bit until Damian Priest is in at #28.

Priest comes in with the Old School crossbody to McIntyre and a chokeslam is enough to get rid of Mysterio. Things slow down again and it's LA Knight in at #29 to quite the reaction. The top rope spelling elbow hits Cena and there's the jumping neckbreaker to Styles. Zayn gets sent to the apron and Uso's

superkick knocks him out by mistake. Logan Paul is in at #30, giving us a final group of Uso, Cena, Paul, Styles, McIntyre, Knight, Priest, Punk, Rollins and Reigns.

Paul comes in with a double Buckshot Lariat before Priest dumps McIntyre, who is aghast (again). Knight knocks Paul to the apron but Paul jumps to the announcers' table (you sir are no Kofi Kingston). Knight clotheslines Priest out instead but gets tossed by Styles, leaving Paul to jump from the apron to the steps so he can get back in. As a bonus, he pulls Styles of the top for an elimination and we're down to six. They all get up for a hexagon staredown and the pairing off begins.

The parade of knockdowns is on until Reigns glare at Rollins, We get the big showdown before both of them miss their big strikes. Reigns hits a clothesline against the ropes but can't get rid of Rollins, so Punk is right there to dump both of them. Paul dumps Punk and Rollins is so mad that he takes out Reigns. Rollins brawls with Punk but once that's broken up, he stomps Reigns into the steps. Rollins FINALLY leaves as the other three are still down inside with the match basically having stopped. Uso and Paul get up to slug it out until Cena fireman's carries them both at the same time.

With that broken up, Cena clotheslines Paul out and we're own to two. They stare each other down and lug it out until Uso hits some superkicks. The spear cuts Cena down and we get a double breather. Back up and Cena throws him over the top but Uso holds on, with Cena joining him on the apron. Both are smart enough to try to get back inside before they slug it out but Uso slips out and knocks him to the floor for the win at 1:20:08.

Rating: A. I'm sorry what now? Uso winning is about as out of nowhere as you can get, but you cannot deny how over he is right now. Uso is as hot as anyone in WWE at the moment and while there is a LONG time left for the Wrestlemania title picture to be shaken up, this is the kind of win that can

change someone's career. I kept thinking they were making it too obvious in the final two and above all else, this was not boring. We'll have to see where it goes, but dang points for a surprise.

As for the rest of the match, it was one of the best put together Rumbles I've ever seen, with the stories connecting throughout the match to make things that much better. Breakker and Fatu had another star making performance each and there were some stories set up for later. Heck of a match here and I had a great time with it. I'll need some time to get my head around the ending, but the match was great.

Post match Cena is aggressive but shows respect before leaving. Uso gets to celebrate for a long time as the announcers' YEET on the table to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. As usual, the Royal Rumble is going to be built around the two namesake matches because what else was it going to be about? They took up over two and a half hours of ring time and that is more than half of the entire show. The women's edition was ok enough and the men's edition was excellent, which is more than enough for a strong showing. The Tag Team Title match was good enough and the ladder match was a fight, making this one heck of an overall show.

Results

Charlotte won the Women's Royal Rumble last eliminating Roxanne Perez

DIY b. Motor City Machine Guns 2-1

Cody Rhodes b. Kevin Owens – Rhodes pulled down the titles

Jey Uso won the Men's Royal Rumble last eliminating John Cena

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Things Might Be A Bit Weird For A Bit

So the wife and I were in Indianapolis for the Rumble this weekend, with my mom watching our son. On the way home, we got a call from my mom, saying she fell and broke her leg. She's set for surgery today and the wife and I are going to be taking care of her. As a result, I have no idea what my schedule is going to be looking like as I'll probably be at the hospital with her for a good while. I can take my laptop with me, but it's not exactly great for reviewing. I'll be getting the shows done as fast as I can, but there is pretty much no chance that everything will be up as usual. I'm so sorry but this is something that is going to be put ahead of anything I do with wrestling.

Thank you for your patience

KB

Going To The Royal Rumble

The wife and I are going on a road trip to Indianapolis and will be at the stadium for the show. We'll be staying in the city overnight and then coming home tomorrow so I'll be trying to get to both the Rumble and Collision on Sunday night. Enjoy the show and I'll be back as soon as I can with the reviews.

KB

Royal Rumble 2025 Preview

It's time for the first major show of the year and in this case I'm a bit more excited than usual. Granted that might be due to me having a ticket for the show but maybe I'm looking too deeply into that. Other than that, it's the usual two match card, with the Men's and Women's Royal Rumble matches dominating the show. That should be enough to carry things so let's get to it.

Smackdown Tag Team Titles: DIY(c) vs. Motor City Machine Guns

Here we have one of the longer matches to help flesh out the card as this is 2/3 falls. In other words, there is no reason for this to be anything more than good, as you have two talented teams in a match that is basically built for them. They have a bit of a story too as DIY cheated the Guns out of the titles in an overdue heel turn. I can always go for more

of the Guns, and we should be getting that here.

As much as I would love to see the Guns get the titles back in a great moment on a big stage, this seems like it is going to be DIY getting to the last all and then losing in the end, likely due to some cheating. That would make the most sense and give DIY a way out, though I'm not sure what is next for the Guns. Either way, this should be a heck of a match and that's all it is supposed to be.

WWE Title: Cody Rhodes(c) vs. Kevin Owens

It's a ladder match for two titles and my goodness it's going to be insane to see the Winged Eagle Title on the line. This is a feud that is several months in the making and while there is always the chance for Owens to steal the title in something like this, Rhodes is still the biggest star in WWE and that should be more than enough to help carry him. I think you get where this is going.

Of course I'm going with Rhodes here, as we should be on the way to her having some kind of a major showdown at Wrestlemania. Owens has become a pretty standard Royal Rumble opponent and that is a nice thing to have around. There are going to be some big spots here and I could go for seeing what they pull off before Rhodes retains the title, as he should at the moment.

Women's Royal Rumble

This match always has the same issue: the women's division only has so much depth and it can become something of a problem. The names at the top are all more than solid enough, but the match doesn't usually have enough big names to fill out thirty spots. They are getting better and better at it, but hopefully we get some more NXT names or legends to spice things up a bit this time.

As for a winner though, as annoying as it might be, this feels

like Charlotte's to win. Unless Becky Lynch is going to make one heck of a surprise return, Charlotte is just too big of a deal to overcome. If WWE is so obsessed with her getting sixteen titles (and they are), then we are going to be in for another of her big runs as she becomes the first ever two time winner of the women's edition.

Men's Royal Rumble

Now we get to the fun part as I'm really not sure where to go. This week's Raw made it feel like winning the title shot was the biggest deal in the world and that is what we should be getting here. When you have people talking about how important the win is, it makes the match feel that much better and WWE has done a good job of making it work here, which is where things should be going.

I really have no idea who to pick here, as you could easily go with John Cena, but with Roman Reigns, Seth Rollins, Drew McIntyre, CM Punk and maybe even Sami Zayn, you have a heck of a field of options. That doesn't even consider the idea of someone in the middle of the card jumping up as a surprise. That being said, as it's his last chance, I'll take what should be the safe pick and say Cena steals the win here. It sets him up as the all time record holder for Rumble wins (well tied at least) and sets him up for the big record setting title match. It's a wide open field though and that is great to see.

Overall Thoughts

When I was watching Raw this week, the thing I kept thinking was "I have no idea who is winning the Men's Royal Rumble" and I love that feeling. It's just cool to have so many options and it makes the match that much more interesting. I'm curious to see where things go and if they are getting fans to feel that way, they are doing things exactly right for one of the most important shows of the year.

Smackdown – January 31, 2025: That Last Push

Smackdown

Date: January 31, 2025

Location: Gainsbridge Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, Indiana

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

It's the night before the Royal Rumble and that means it is time to start putting the final touches on one of the biggest shows of the year. We have a four match card for the pay per view so there is a good chance that we are going to get some more focus put on those matches. Other than that, we are probably getting some new Royal Rumble entrants. Let's get to it.

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

Various people came to work.

Michael Cole is apparently the host and brings in Pat McAfee to quite the hero's welcome. McAfee talks about the greatness of Indianapolis and how ready they are for the whole big weekend.

Joe Tessitore is in the ring and talks about how Kevin Owens has not gotten the chance to show his side of everything. Cue Owens for a chat and he's looking rather serious. Owens promises to win the title but he doesn't like Tessitore treating him unfairly last week. He also doesn't like everyone saying they're going to face Cody Rhodes at Wrestlemania so cue CM Punk to interrupt. Owens: "Can I help you?" Punk: "No you can't help me."

Punk knows he must be annoying but he heard his name invoked so it was an invitation. Just so Owens knows, when Punk wins the Royal Rumble, we could be seeing Owens vs. Punk at Wrestlemania. Owens says there are some guys in the Royal Rumble that he likes more than Punk. Like 29 more or so.

Owens loves the idea of Punk not getting to main event Wrestlemania but Punk brings up Owens losing at the Royal Rumble over and over. Punk has also never lost to Logan Paul (OUCH) but he has also never manipulated his best friend to help him win the WWE Title. Even if Punk never main events Wrestlemania, he can beat Owens up right now. Owens walks away instead.

Miz about Andrade to Nick Aldis and of course Andrade is behind him. Andrade thinks that's a challenge so the match is on for tonight.

Jimmy Uso is ready to fight.

Jimmy Uso vs. Carmelo Hayes

Before the match, Hayes mocks NBA star Tyrese Haliburton, who happens to be here. Hayes elbows Uso down but a headbutt slows things down. A running clothesline cuts Uso off and there's a running Umaga Attack to rock him in the corner. With Uso on the floor, Hayes hits a big running flip dive for the knockdown.

Hold on though as Hayes stops to yell at Haliburton, allowing Uso to get in a shot of his own. The running Umaga Attack misses inside, leaving Uso to hit a pop up Samoan drop for two. The First 48 gives Hayes two but Uso's superkick gets the same. Hayes drops him again and hits his own Superfly Splash for two more. They trade rollups until Uso puts him away at 8:32.

Rating: C+. Nice back and forth match here, with Hayes taking yet another loss. I get that he's the guy who is there to make

other people look good, but it would be nice to see him do something other than get a countout win over Braun Strowman a month or two ago. Using getting a bit of momentum makes sense, but he needs something to do sooner than later.

Rumble By The Numbers!

30 entrants each

1,370 entrants

36 winners

2.6% of the entrants win

22 won the World Title at Wrestlemania

1:03:01 that Bayley lasted last year, setting the record for a woman

3:05:32 that Bianca Belair has spent in the Royal Rumble, setting the record for a woman

3 back to back winners...until Cody Rhodes did it last year

61% of winners who have won the World Title at Wrestlemania

5 seconds, the shortest amount of time for a woman (Chelsea Green)

1 second, the shortest amount of time for a man

2,561 days since John Cena has been in the Royal Rumble

5 years since Roman Reigns has been in the Royal Rumble

10 Wrestlemania main events for Reigns...if he wins this year

60,000 fans in attendance, at least

11 winners who won their first World Title at Wrestlemania

Chelsea Green, with Piper Niven, swears revenge on Michin before she wins the Royal Rumble.

Women's United States Title: Chelsea Green vs. Michin

Green is defending and Piper Niven and B-Fab are here too. Michin knocks her around to start before snapping off a German suplex. With Green on the floor, a suicide dive takes her down again but it's too early for Eat Defeat back inside. Back up and green takes over, meaning it's off to the chinlock. Michin fights up and hits a Cannonball before getting out of the

Unprettier. Eat Defeat sends Green outside and a kendo stick shot to Michin is enough for the DQ at 6:15.

Rating: C. This is a feud that has been going on for a good while now and in theory that ending looks to set up another match between the two of them. I'm not sure how necessary that is, but in theory it should be the big blowoff to wrap it up. Michin did look sharp here and Green looked fine in defeat, but this was more to set up something else later on anyway.

Post match Michin takes the stick away and clears Green off. So what about Green and Niven teasing extra help last week?

Bianca Belair and Naomi are friends no matter what happens in the Royal Rumble.

Charlotte is rather rich and returning at the Royal Rumble.

Here is Damian Priest for a chat. Priest wants his name to live forever and that starts by winning the Royal Rumble tomorrow. Cue Jacob Fatu and Tama Tonga, with the fans seeming rather interested. Fatu talks about how similar he is to Priest but only Fatu was locked in a box. Priest: "That's it?" The fight is on and Tonga is dropped but gets back up and the numbers advantage has Priest in trouble. Cue LA Knight for the save with a chair to clear the villains out. A challenge is made for later tonight. Barrett: "MAKE MY LOINS TINGLE NICK ALDIS!"

The Motor City Machine Guns hope they're on the same page with Los Garza for tonight's eight man tag. That seems to be ok, but Los Garza says they're coming for the Guns if the Guns win the titles.

Pretty Deadly/DIY vs. Motor City Machine Guns/Los Garza

After some early tags, Berto and Prince start things off with the former hitting a springboard elbow to the face. We go split screen for a quick movie ad and come back with Berto

hitting a rolling moonsault for two on Ciampa. The Dream Sequence hits Ciampa and a triple dive takes the villains out as we take a break.

Back with Angel getting the hot tag to clean house, allowing him to TAKE OFF HIS PANTS! The high crossbody gives Angel two and everything breaks down. The fans declare this awesome until Sabin tags himself in, setting off an argument with Berto. Los Garza walks out and it's 4-2, only for Sabin to grab a tornado DDT for a breather. Ciampa accidentally kicks Prince in the face and Sabin gets a rollup pin at 12:10.

Rating: B-. The ending was a nice way to set up the Guns as more of a threat to DIY tomorrow and that's a good way to go. They've got a nice story going for the titles at the moment with some other teams around as well. That's more than you usually see and it's working nicely so far.

Here's how an actor trained for stunts in a movie.

Tama Tonga looks at the Tag Team Titles. With Tonga gone, DIY yells at Pretty Deadly but still seems to want their help. Pretty Deadly says DIY is on their own tomorrow.

McAfee and Cole bring out Tyrese Haliburton for a chat. McAfee shows Cody Rhodes and Cole crowd surfing on the Kickoff Show. And that's that.

Video on Cody Rhodes vs. Kevin Owens.

Naomi vs. Liv Morgan

Bianca Belair and Raquel Rodriguez are here too. Morgan runs the ropes to start but gets taken down by a quick armdrag. Back up and Naomi does her hips to the face before kicking Morgan down. Rodriguez offers a distraction though and Morgan knocks her down for a break. Back with Naomi getting choked down until a Stunner breaks it up. Naomi hits a high crossbody but Morgan's middle rope Codebreaker gets two. The Rear View

connects but Rodriguez breaks up the split legged moonsault. Instead, Naomi rolls her up for the pin at 10:25.

Rating: C+. This was just a quick match to give Naomi a win over a bigger name. Naomi has done enough things around here but she hasn't had much singles success in a long time. She's someone who can be in the Rumble and fill in a log of time, but a win like this might give her the slightest bit of a better chance in the match.

Post match the villains jump Naomi and Belair, with Morgan being powerbombed onto the two of them.

Video on Jacob Fatu smashing Braun Strowman on Saturday Night's Main Event.

The Miz vs. Andrade

Miz snaps off an armdrag to start and hammers away in the corner, setting up a hurricanrana of all things. They switch places and Andrade gets in a quick Lionsault as we take a break. Back with Andrade getting in a dragon screw legwhip into a running forearm. The running knees in the corner give Andrade two but Miz is back with a DDT for two. They head up top and Andrade hits a super Spanish Fly, followed by an exchange of rollups for two each. That's enough for Andrade, who smashes him with the spinning back elbow for the pin at 10:00.

Rating: C+. Andrade continues his start and stop pushes and it's nice to see him get another win here. Beating the Miz has a bit of value to it and I could go for seeing Miz as a whipping boy for a bit. They didn't have a ton of time here, but at least Andrade got the win clean and it looked good.

Santos Escobar offers Damian Priest a spot in Legado del Fantasma but he's not interested. R-Truth pops in and tells Priest to pick a show, though he seems to think Adam Pearce is now Nick Aldis. LA Knight comes in to say he and Priest are

partners tonight but they can fight on Saturday if they have to.

Tiffany Stratton runs into Zelina Vega, who wants to be Women's Champion. Stratton isn't impressed.

Video on John Cena in the Royal Rumble.

Michael Cole and Pat McAfee are in the ring and bring out Tiffany Stratton for a chat. She brags about being championship material and now everyone finally knows it. Stratton doesn't care who is coming for the title but here is Candice LeRae to interrupt. She wants revenge for Nia Jax and is entering the Royal Rumble. The arguing is on but here is Nia Jax to take Stratton down. The Annihilator leaves her laying.

Tama Tonga/Jacob Fatu vs. Damian Priest/LA Knight

Fatu is knocked to the floor to start so Priest goes after Tonga. That works fine for the villains, who take over on Knight in the corner. Priest fights up and gets out of the corner, only to get taken down by Fatu. The chinlock doesn't last long and Fatu is sent outside, allowing the tag back to Knight. A DDT into the jumping top rope elbow hits Fatu but Tonga grabs Knight's foot to slow him down.

We take a break and come back with Fatu missing the running Umaga attack in the corner. Priest comes back in to clean house, including sending Fatu hard into the steps. Back in and the Old School crossbody hits Tonga for two but the Razor's Edge is countered into a sleeper. That's broken up as well so Tonga grabs his running jumping DDT. Fatu and Knight fight into the timekeeper's area, leaving Tonga to get caught with South Of Heaven for the pin at 14:55.

Rating: B. It was a main event style tag match, mainly because it was a main event tag match. I'm surprised at Tonga taking another all but it's nice to see Priest and Knight picking up

some wins. None of these losses are likely to matter until Solo Sikoa is back, whenever that actually happens.

Post match Fatu lays out Priest to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This was a nice final push towards the Royal Rumble and while it was nowhere near as effective as Monday Night Raw at making me ready, they did a good enough job with the final show. That's all this needed to be and it could have been a lot worse. If nothing else, the more Jacob Fatu I see the better, and that's what we got in the main event. Good enough this week.

Results

Jimmy Uso b. Carmelo Hayes – Rollup

Michin b. Chelsea Green via DQ when Green used a kendo stick

Motor City Machine Guns/Los Garza b. Pretty Deadly/DIY – Rollup to Ciampa

Naomi b. Liv Morgan – Rollup

Andrade b. The Miz – Spinning back elbow

Damian Priest/LA Knight b. Tama Tonga/Jacob Fatu – South Of Heaven to Fatu

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Royal Rumble Count-Up – 2024 (2025 Edition): You Can See It From Here

Royal Rumble 2024

Date: January 27, 2024

Location: Tropicana Field, St. Petersburg, Florida

Attendance: 48,044

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves

It's time for the look back at last year's show which set up one of the biggest WWE events of all time. This show is designed to set up the main events of WrestleMania LX and that means it is time for Roman Reigns to get a new challenger. Speaking of Reigns, he is defending the title in a four way match. Let's get to it.

Today, various people scheduled for the show did in fact come to the show.

Hulk Hogan narrates a video about how important this area is to wrestling. You have to be RUMBLE READY because it is time to start the Road To Wrestlemania.

Earlier today: even more people came to work.

Pat McAfee comes out for commentary, with Corey Graves going on a hilarious rant about how much he hates this happening two years in a row.

Women's Royal Rumble

90 second intervals, Natalya is in at #1 and Naomi (in a surprise return) is in at #2. We get a handshake to start

before Natalya takes her down, only to have the step over dropkick cut off. They hit stereo crossbodies and Bayley is in at #3. The Rear View puts Natalya down and Naomi drops Bayley, only to have them sit there so Natalya can hit a double basement dropkick (that looked awful). Candice LeRae is in at #4 and gets in a few shots to leave everyone down.

TNA Knockouts Champion Jordynne Grace is in at #5 and doesn't get much of a reaction but she looks like a star. Grace cleans house and you can tell McAfee is impressed. We get a hug between Naomi and Grace (who beat Naomi to win the title) and the brawl is on. That doesn't mean any eliminations yet though as Indi Hartwell is in at #6. LeRae and Hartwell team up as Cole says that we've never had two winners in a Royal Rumble, save for that time when we did.

Asuka is in at #7 and teams up with Bayley, who looks rather nervous. Hartwell and Asuka go to the apron with Bayley getting rid of Hartwell for the first elimination. Ivy Nile is in at #8 and impresses McAfee with her rather impressive strength. Katana Chance is in at #9 and anklescissors LeRae. Nile and Grace have a delayed suplex off before Nile hits a loud enziguri.

Bianca Belair is in at #10 and the place is rather impressed. We have Natalya, Naomi, Bayley, LeRae, Grace, Asuka, Nile, Chance and Belair, with the latter getting to clean some house, including a double Blockbuster to Bayley and Asuka. As usual, Belair gets to show off for a bit until Kairi Sane is in at #11 to give us three members of Damage CTRL. The three of them get to beat up various people but not actually toss anyone as the ring is getting way too full. LeRae sends Asuka and Sane to the apron, only to have Bayley make the save and toss LeRae in a big crash.

Tegan Nox is in at #12 and wrecks some people but Grace cuts her off. Natalya makes the save and gives Grace a discus lariat. Natalya goes to throw Nox out but gets tossed instead,

with Bayley getting rid of Nox as well, leaving them both stunned on the floor. Katana Chance is in at #13 and is so distraught at losing the Women's Tag Team Titles last night that she stops to dance.

Sane is sent over the top and one of her feet touches and she tries to hang on to the apron, only to fall down for the elimination (I'm not sure if that was the plan). Asuka is kicked out a few seconds later and Bayley yells at the rest of the team for being eliminated. Chelsea Green is in at #14 and is immediately sent to the apron twice in a row before hitting a Zig Zag on Belair. We get the Grace vs. Belair slugout and they go to the apron, where Belair hits a KOD for the elimination.

Piper Niven is in at #15 and catches Green as we get a set of nifty time counters for various entrants. A bunch of people get together to beat on Niven and it's Xia Li in at #16. Li racks Green, who kicks at Niven by mistake for a not so great result. Zelina Vega is in at #17 and has what must be some weird cosplay deal. Vega gives Niven a tornado DDT as there are far too many people in there and the pace has slowed down a lot. Maxxine Dupri is in at #18 and does her SH00SH before dropping to the mat to hide from Niven.

Vega and Belair team up for a Code Red to put Niven down. A bunch of people can't get rid of Niven, who eliminates Carter. Nia Jax is in at #19 so Li goes after her, only to get knocked out in a hurry. Nile is out as well and Niven accidentally splashes Green. Jax does it in purpose and then gets rammed into Green in the corner for a funny bit. A bunch of people go after Jax, who then charges at Niven, with Green getting crushed between them. Naomi hits a springboard enziguri to Jax who, say it with me, falls onto Green as well.

Shotzi is in at #20, giving us Naomi, Bayley, Belair, Chance, Green, Niven, Vega, Dupri, Jax and Shotzi as the ring is WAY too full again. A bunch of people get together to go after

Jax, who shrugs them off. Bayley gets rid of Dupri and Jax tosses Green and Niven. Chance is tossed out onto the pile as well and it's Becky Lynch in at #21.

Lynch goes right after Jax and DDT's Vega and Shotzi at the same time. She throws Jax into Bayley as Green is back in, apparently not being thrown out. Lynch knocks her out without much trouble so that was nothing, especially after her hilarious bit earlier. Alba Fyre is in at #22 and hits a double Gory Bomb on Shotzi and Vega. Ignore that Vega didn't actually hit anything on the way down. With no one else out, Shayna Baszler is in at #23 to start going after arms.

Valhalla is in at #24...and here is R-Truth to take her place and enter the match by mistake. Jax throws him out anyway as Adam Pearce is here to say Valhalla is in and R-Truth is out. Then Jax throws Valhalla out without much trouble. Michin is in at #25 and goes after Fyre before Rock Bottoming Bayley onto Baszler. Naomi is up with a hanging Pedigree to get rid of Fyre as things slow down again.

Zoey Stark is in at #26 with a missile dropkick on Michin. The brawling continues, with Baszler blocking a hurricanrana from Vega, who is kicked out in a heap. NXT's Roxanne Perez is in at #27 and snaps off a headscissors on Stark. Bayley jumps Perez but can't get rid of her as Jax throws out Baszler and Michin. Shotzi is tossed out and Jax is the only one left standing...but Jade Cargill is in at #28. She gets one heck of a reaction and slugs it out with Jax, whom she picks up for a one armed Widowmaker. Cargill throws Jax out and even Lynch realizes that was awesome.

Cargill's charge hits the post though and everyone is down as Tiffany Stratton is in at #29. She immediately flip dives onto a bunch of people and hits an Alabama Slam on Perez. The returning Liv Morgan is in at #30, giving us a final grouping of Naomi, Bayley, Belair, Vega, Lynch, Stark, Perez, Cargill, Stratton and Morgan. The pace is picked up until Stark kicks

Morgan in the face, only to get knocked out without much trouble.

Stratton kicks Perez out so everyone surrounds her, only to split off and start the brawls. Cargill and Belair have stereo gorilla presses and then drop Morgan and Lynch for the mega showdown (the fans approve). Naomi gets spinebusted by Cargill, who tosses Lynch and Naomi in quite the moment.

Morgan and Belair are sent to the apron, with Stratton being pulled out with them. A Codebreaker staggers Stratton but she grabs Belair's hair for the save. Bayley kicks both of them out, leaving us with Bayley, Cargill and Morgan. They all wind up on the apron and Morgan eliminates Cargill, only to get kicked out by Bayley for the win at 1:04:57.

Rating: C+. This was only so interesting as there isn't quite enough depth to get all the way to thirty entrants in this kind of thing. The top spots were good with Bayley getting a long awaited win, but other than that there were some long stretches which were needing something better. Get rid of some of the dead spots in the middle and it's better, but this only got so far.

Come to St. Petersburg!

We recap the four way for the Smackdown World Title. Roman Reigns pinned LA Knight about two years ago so now Knight, Randy Orton and AJ Styles want the title.

Smackdown World Title: Randy Orton vs. AJ Styles vs. LA Knight vs. Roman Reigns

Reigns, with Paul Heyman, is defending. We get a long staredown to start before all of the challengers go after Reigns in a smart move. Styles and Knight get in a fight of their own though, leaving Orton and Reigns to brawl out to the floor. Knight and Styles join them, with Knight sending Styles face first into the announcers' table. Orton drops Reigns onto

the same table and then goes after Knight as it's time to switch off.

Knight gets the better of things, only to miss a charge and get dropped onto the table for a big crash. Orton takes Reigns back inside for the circle stomp before stopping to powerslam Styles. Knight is back in to stomp Orton down though as the back and forth start continues. Orton and Styles go outside, leaving Reigns to clothesline Knight in the corner. Reigns drops Styles as well and the fans certainly seem to approve.

It's Knight getting back up with a DDT to Reigns and a slam to Orton, setting up a middle rope bulldog. The jumping superplex brings Styles back down and there's the BFT to Reigns to get the crowd up again, only for Styles to make the save. Styles fights up and strikes away with the Styles Clash hitting Reigns for two and Knight making the save this time. Back up and Reigns tries the Superman Punch but Orton RKOs him out of the air in a sweet counter for another near fall, with Solo Sikoa pulling the referee out.

Sikoa isn't done as he Samoan Spikes Orton and Knight before stacking Knight onto Orton (which doesn't seem overly bright). The running Umaga Attack against the barricade misses Styles though and Sikoa is down. Styles comes back in with a Phenomenal Forearm to knock Reigns onto the other two before getting a triple cover for two, even though that normally means the first person getting a cover (Knight in this case) wins.

Styles grabs a chair and beats on Reigns, then does the same to Knight. Orton breaks that up with a low blow but gets speared out to the floor. Knight goes after Reigns but the BFT is broken up, which breaks up the Styles Clash as well. With Knight down, the spear to Styles retains the title at 19:24.

Rating: B. Rather nice stuff here with everyone going in there and trying hard, with the time flying by. Reigns winning

wasn't exactly in doubt with a milestone Wrestlemania on the horizon, but at least he had to put in the work to get there. If nothing else, it's nice to see the other three getting a chance, as it has been awhile for most of them.

We recap Logan Paul defending the US Title against Kevin Owens. Paul is the rather braggadocious US Champion while Owens is here to shut him up. They've taken turns attacking each other and Paul has injured Owens' hands.

United States Title: Kevin Owens vs. Logan Paul

Paul is defending and offers a handshake but Owens chops him down instead. They're quickly on the floor and Owens sends him hard into the barricade. Back in and a rather big chop sets up a release German suplex, meaning it's time to go back outside. Owens drops a backplash but Paul gets smart by going after the bad hand. Back in again and a high crossbody takes Owens down.

An armbar goes on but Owens elbows his way out of an Octopus. With nothing else working, Paul goes simple by punching Owens' bad hand. Paul misses a 619 though, allowing Owens to hit a hard clothesline. Another backplash hits raised knees though, as I continue to love watching someone learn during a match. Back up and Owens stomps away in the corner, setting up a pair of Cannonballs. The frog splash connects but a Swanton hits Paul's raised knees.

Paul misses a Swanton of his own though, only to hit a Buckshot Lariat. A frog splash gives Paul two but he tries a superplex, which you just do not do to Owens. The swinging superplex gives Owens two but the Stunner is blocked. Paul's big right hand drops Owens for a near fall and now it's Paul's turn to be shocked.

One of Paul's goons tries to bring in some brass knuckles but the referee cuts it off and has said goon ejected. Cue A-Town Down Under for a distraction though and Paul gets the brass

knuckles...which Owens takes away and uses to knock Paul out. The referee sees said knuckles though (McAfee: Oh NOW the referee has 20/20!") and that's a DQ at 14:01.

Rating: B. It was a good fight and there is something to be said about a bit of a twist ending rather than Paul just getting the pin. If nothing else, Owens is at his best when he's upset about something and the ending should fit in well. Paul gets to keep bragging about being champion too and that is good for just about everyone. Well mainly Paul but you get the idea.

Post match Owens puts Paul through the announcers' table. Then he takes a cough drop.

Hulk Hogan really wants you to come to St. Petersburg.

Elimination Chamber is in Australia.

Wrestlemania is in 70 days.

The attendance is 48,044, a new stadium record. Uh, yay.

Rumble By The Numbers!

30 entrants

1,310 entrants

34 winners

2.6% have won

20 have gone on to win the title at Wrestlemania

1 woman to enter at #1 and win

20 eliminations for Ripley all time, a record

1:01:08, Ripley's record time in the Rumble

1:11:40, Gunther's record time in the Rumble

60% of the winners have come from the last ten entrants

#30 has produced the most winners (5)

3 who have won consecutive Royal Rumbles

3 wins for Steve Austin, a record

3rd time Tampa will host the Royal Rumble (1995/2021)

8 eliminations for Shayna Baszler, the most in a single women's match

9 two time winners

13 eliminations in one men's Rumble by Brock Lesnar

Natalya is one of four women to compete in all women's Rumbles

45 eliminations by Kane over 18 Rumbles, both records

3,653 days since CM Punk has been in a Royal Rumble

34,000,000 social media engagements for the Logan Paul vs. Ricochet clip from last year

9 people have won their first World Title off a Royal Rumble win

60% of winners from the last five years have won the World Title at Wrestlemania

Men's Royal Rumble

90 second intervals and Jey Uso is in at #1 and Jimmy Uso is in at #2. They stare each other down to start until Jimmy is punched out to the apron. That's not enough for an elimination as Jimmy is back in to strike away, but the jumping enziguri misses. Jey superkicks Jimmy down but the Superfly Splash hits raised knees to leave them both needing a breather. Grayson Waller is in at #3 and naturally he runs his mouth about how awesome he is. Jey knocks him of the apron before he can get in, only to come in and team up with Jimmy for some double teaming.

Andrade returns at #4 and cleans house (or as much as you can with two heels in the ring) but can't get rid of anyone. Carmelo Hayes is in at #5 and we get a three way staredown with Hayes, Andrade and Jey. That's broken up and Hayes gets rid of Waller without much effort. Shinsuke Nakamura is in at #6 and the fans sing his song. Jimmy seems to approve and gets kicked in the head as a result. The freshly heel Santos Escobar is in at #7 and we get straight to a showdown with Andrade. They hug and pose but Andrade isn't interested in a Legado del Fantasma pose.

Karrion Kross is in at #8 and everyone goes to the general brawling. With that not going anywhere, Dominik Mysterio is in at #9 and the fans are not happy. It takes a good while for him to get in and he is quickly taken into a corner for some not so near eliminations. Carlito is in at #10, giving us Jey, Jimmy, Andrade, Hayes, Nakamura, Escobar, Kross, Mysterio and Carlito at the one third mark. Carlito goes after Escobar who bails to the floor, leaving Carlito to load up the apple. Escobar gets it in the face and is then tossed out to clear some of the ring.

Bobby Lashley is in at #11 and starts throwing some not great looking spears. One of them is enough to get rid of Kross so here are the AOP for a distraction, allowing Kross to pull Lashley out for the elimination. The big brawl is on with the Street Profits running out to even things up. They all go up the aisle and brawl to the back as Ludwig Kaiser is in at #12. He goes after Dominik for a bit of a weird one and everyone pairs off until Austin Theory is in at #13. The flipping Downward Spiral plants Jey and more brawling ensues as we need someone to clear the ring a bit.

Finn Balor is in at #14 and Hayes is tossed in a hurry. Cody Rhodes is in at #15 and this should pick things up a bit. The Cody Cutter gets rid of Theory but Balor takes Rhodes down and they slug it out. Bronson Reed is in at #16 and gets rid of Andrade. Nakamura and Rhodes slug it out with Nakamura hitting a spinning kick to the face as Kofi Kingston is in at #17. A Disaster Kick and Cross Rhodes get rid of Nakamura and Kaiser is out shortly thereafter.

Gunther is in at #18 and chopping ensues, setting up the staredown with Gunther. That's broken up and Kingston gets Gunther out to the apron, earning Kingston an elimination (no special save this time). Ivar is in a #19 and hits a powerslam, setting up the slugout with Reed. NXT's Bron Breaker is in at #20, giving us Jey, Jimmy, Mysterio, Balor, Rhodes, Reed, Gunther, Ivar and Breaker.

A spear immediately hits Jimmy and a running clothesline gets rid of him. Another spear gets rid of Balor and it's time for Gunther vs. Breaker, which has the fans' interest. Gunther slips out of the gorilla press but Breaker gives him the spear to quite the reaction. Omos is in at #21 and takes his sweet time getting to the ring. House is quickly cleaned and Reed is knocked out with a big boot. Breaker spears a springboarding Ivar out of the air and gets rid of him before staring up at Omos.

Pat McAfee is in at #22 and looks more than a bit surprised at the news. He sees Omos and Breaker waiting on him and eliminates himself in a funny moment. McAfee has claimed that he didn't know this was coming and I'd believe it. McAfee: "HOW BIG IS THAT THING IN THERE???" Breaker dumps Omos and Mysterio knocks Breaker out (after a star making performance), with Cole and Graves making up trash talk that Breaker said about Omos.

JD McDonagh is in at #23 and gets speared by Breaker on the floor before he can get in. Cody and Gunther fight some more as R-Truth is in at #24 (the same number he entered the women's match in for a nice touch). He throws McDonagh in so McDonagh can be properly eliminated, only to stand on the apron or a tag to Mysterio. Naturally Mysterio tags him in (because) and he goes after Omos to little avail.

Miz is in at #25 for an Awesome Truth reunion but Truth saves Mysterio. Gunther breaks that up and Mysterio gives Miz a 619 as Damian Priest is in at #26. Truth is out in a hurry and Priest cleans house, including South Of Heaven to Gunther. CM Punk is in at #27 and gets to do a bunch of running knees in the corner. Mysterio is tossed but Priest decks Punk with a discus forearm.

Ricochet is in at #28 and gets to fly around a bit as Gunther tosses Miz. Drew McIntyre is in at #29 to make things a bit bigger. A bit of house is cleaned, including a heck of an

overhead belly to belly to Ricochet. Jey superkicks Gunther almost to the apron but gets pulled out himself to end a rather long run. Sami Zayn is in at #30, giving us a final grouping of Rhodes, Gunther, Priest, Punk, Ricochet, McIntyre and Zayn. The pace picks up as Zayn goes after McIntyre, who recently beat him up pretty badly.

Priest avoids being tossed out but Ricochet can't do the same as we're down to six. A variety of suplexes and kicks ensue until Sami gets rid of Priest, only to be dumped by McIntyre. We're down to Rhodes, Punk, Gunther and McIntyre and everyone needs a breather as Seth Rollins and Roman Reigns watch from a sky box. Gunther and Rhodes pair off as McIntyre chops away at Punk in the corner.

The Cody Cutter seems to wake Gunther up as he hits a hard clothesline to Rhodes. We get the McIntyre vs. Gunther staredown but they go back to what they were doing instead of fighting. A neckbreaker puts Punk down but the Claymore misses. The GTS is blocked and it's the Glasgow Kiss to drop Punk again. Gunther sleepers Rhodes but gets Claymored by McIntyre. Another Claymore hits Rhodes and McIntyre is the only one standing.

There's a Claymore to Punk to complete the set but McIntyre would rather yell at Punk than get him out. That's enough for Punk to toss McIntyre, who looks absolutely crushed. Gunther dropkicks Punk and gives him a powerbomb before sending Rhodes to the apron. Rhodes pulls Gunther to the apron as well though and Gunther is out, leaving us with two. They slug it out and then slug it out some more with Punk getting the better of things.

Rhodes gets in a powerslam but the Cody Cutter is countered into some rolling German suplexes. That's broken up but so is Cross Rhodes, allowing Punk to put him on the apron. Back in and Cross Rhodes connects, only for Punk to get in a desperation GTS. Punk gets him out to the apron but Rhodes is

right back in, meaning it's a Pedigree to take him down again. Another GTS is blocked though and Rhodes throws him out for the win at 1:08:16.

Rating: A-. This was a heck of a Rumble with some entertaining spots throughout and a bunch of good stuff. The last bit felt epic and, despite Punk's big injury (as he tore his tricep while fighting McIntyre), the final two had a heck of a showdown. Cody winning is the right call as he is on the way to his destiny in Philadelphia and he had to get there from here. I liked this one a lot as they kept things moving and I wasn't bored at all.

Rhodes celebrates for a good while and points at Roman Reigns in the sky box (yeah don't bother teasing that Rollins stuff as there is zero point in this case). Reigns holds up the title and looks a bit nervous.

The big highlight package wraps us up.

Overall Rating: B+. The Women's Royal Rumble was the only thing close to a weak spot and even then it was good enough. The rest of the show was one hit after another as we are starting to get exactly what we need out of WWE. I liked this a good bit and you can feel the energy around here, which is rather nice to see. Heck of a show here, with Wrestlemania on the horizon as the really big prize.

Ratings Comparison

Women's Royal Rumble

Original: C+

Redo: C+

Roman Reigns vs. AJ Styles vs. LA Knight vs. Randy Orton

Original: B-

Redo: B

Kevin Owens vs. Logan Paul

Original: B

Redo: B

Men's Royal Rumble

Original: B-

Redo: A-

Overall Rating

Original: B-

Redo: B+

I totally shortchanged the Men's Royal Rumble the first time around as it's way better than that.

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