

Smackdown – May 2, 2025: They Can't All Be Winners

Smackdown

Date: May 2, 2025

Location: Wells Fargo Arena, Des Moines, Iowa

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

We're just over a week away from Backlash and that means it is time to fill up a lot of the card. The big Smackdown match is already set though as John Cena will defend against Randy Orton. That's enough to carry the main event portion but we need something besides just that one match. Let's get to it.

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

Damian Priest almost got in a fight with Solo Sikoa and Jacob Fatu but LA Knight (facing Priest for a US Title shot against Fatu later tonight) walks past.

Here is Knight for a chat. Knight lost the US Title to Fatu and his chance at a rematch and a lot of that was due to Sikoa. Priest didn't help things and while Knight has no problem with him...and here is Priest to interrupt. Priest says Sikoa got involved but Knight is the one who lost his title at Wrestlemania. Knight did lose but he's not getting a title shot because of Priest. That doesn't work for Priest, but Knight says they don't have a problem so far, though that might change. Priest wants a referee down here right now so let's go.

Damian Priest vs. LA Knight

For a future US Title shot. We're joined in progress with Knight working on the arm but Priest faceplants him down to cut that off. It's too early for the BFT and Priest hits a superkick for two. Old School is broken up and Knight's

jumping neckbreaker gets two. The jumping elbow is countered into a choke, with Priest hitting a heck of a clothesline for two. A DDT plants Priest again and the jumping top rope elbow is good for another near fall.

We take a break and come back with Priest hitting a Razor's Edge for two. The Broken Arrow connects and Priest goes up top, where Knight runs the corner and superplexes him back down for two more. They go to the floor where Priest hits a lifting Downward Spiral onto the apron but here is Solo Sikoa to go after Priest for the DQ at 11:02 shown.

Rating: B-. They were getting going rather well at the end there and I was wanting to see where it went. At the same time, it's not overly surprising that it went to a DQ, as you don't want either of them taking a fall. There is a good chance that the two of them, likely with Drew McIntyre, will be getting a title match in the near future. Like say at Backlash.

Post match Knight and Priest get together to beat Sikoa down. Cue Jacob Fatu though and the good guys are taken out rather quickly.

We look back at Fraxiom's debut last week.

Fraxiom is ready to face Pretty Deadly tonight so here is Pretty Deadly to interrupt. The villains talk a bunch of fairly friendly trash and we're ready to go.

Pretty Deadly vs. Fraxiom

Axiom and Wilson start things off with the latter working on a wristlock. It's off to Frazer for a rather fast running kick to the face and he kicks Prince away without much trouble. Fraxiom is up with the string of dives and it's time to crank on the arms back inside. Axiom is dropped onto Wilson's feet though and the Clothesline From El (clever) drops him as we take a break. Back again with Axiom rolling over for the tag

off to Frazer and it's time to clean house. The running shooting star press gets two on Prince and the super Spanish fly puts Wilson down. Frazer's Phoenix splash finishes at 9:30.

Rating: C+. Take two teams who can do some good stuff in the ring and it worked well for Fraxiom again here. Fraxiom continues to look good in their start on Smackdown, which comes with a pair of wins so far. Good stuff here, and odds are Fraxiom will be put into an actual story sooner or later, perhaps with one of the teams from last week's TLC match.

Michin and B-Fab want the Women's Tag Team Titles. The Secret Hervice brings in Chelsea Green, whose title was hijacked by the deep state. Green wants a recount but instead Nick Aldis has Piper Niven facing Zelina Vega. Maybe Niven can get the title shot and become champion! Green nearly faints.

We look at Randy Orton vs. John Cena at TLC 2013.

Here is Nia Jax, who is so happy the fans are glad she's back. She's here to get the Women's Title back from Tiffany Stratton, so here is Stratton to interrupt. Stratton says this isn't the same version of her who has been around for so long but she's ready to fight anytime. Cue Naomi to interrupt and bring up the things that Stratton and Jax put her through. Naomi runs down Bianca Belair and Jade Cargill, the latter who comes out to go after Naomi in a frenzy. Nick Aldis comes out to make the tag match for later tonight.

Carmelo Hayes gives Miz a pep talk before he gets to face Aleister Black.

Aleister Black vs. The Miz

Black misses an early kick to the face to start but takes Miz down, only for Miz to knee his way out of trouble. The threat of another kick sends Miz outside and Black drops him again back inside. Miz is able to send Black into the ring board

though and we take a break. Back with Miz knocking him to the floor again, followed by the short DDT for two back inside. The YES Kicks wake Black up and he hits Miz in the jaw to take over. The Skull Crushing Finale is countered with a cartwheel (sweet) but Carmelo Hayes offers a distraction. Back up and Black Mass takes Miz's head off for the win at 9:30.

Rating: C+. What else were you expecting here? Other than maybe Black running through Miz, this was a perfectly fine way to go. Black got to show what he can do in the ring and hit his big finisher. That's the big point of everything he does and it's what made the most sense here. There is a good chance that Hayes is next for Black and there are far worse ideas.

Santos Escobar mocks Rey Fenix for losing to El Grande Americano, even as Rey Mysterio's handpicked replacement. Escobar thinks he should be Mysterio's replacement but Fenix would rather fight him tonight instead. Deal.

Zelina Vega vs. Piper Niven

Non-title and Alba Fyre and Chelsea Green are here with Niven. Vega kicks her own to start but Niven is right back to knock Vega outside. Something like a reverse powerbomb out of the corner drops Vega again and we take a break. Back with Niven swinging her around in a cobra clutch, only for Vega to come back with a Codebreaker.

Niven drops her for a backsplash but gets caught with a middle rope Meteora for two. Niven's cannonball misses and Vega grabs a spinning DDT. The moonsault gets two on Niven but Green gets on the apron for a distraction. That doesn't work either as Vega comes back with a jackknife rollup for the pin at 11:05.

Rating: C+. Having a match between two wrestlers with such different sizes is a hard way to go but they made it work well enough here. Vega getting the win is the right way to go and I'm glad to see her not losing so soon into her title reign. It wouldn't surprise me to see her have another match with

Chelsea Green, who will be fine as long as she can keep getting on camera.

Jacob Fatu is ready to fight so Nick Aldis gives him a triple threat match at Backlash against LA Knight and Damian Priest. Solo Sikoa brings up Drew McIntyre winning the match last week so Aldis makes it a four way. Sikoa says Aldis is screwing Fatu over, but Aldis says Sikoa is the one screwing Fatu. Good response there.

Here is Randy Orton for a chat. Orton talks about how he has seen John Cena for years and knows that Cena was a walking talking cartoon character during the PG Era. At the same time, Orton was doing everything he could to get to the top and talks about all of Cena's obsession with merchandising which made him that much more money. Last week Cena said that he raised a bunch of children but the only thing he raised was the price of his merchandise so the parents had to work harder.

What happened to the loyalty and respect? Cena has promised to end the Orton Legacy but that isn't going to happen. Orton sees Cena as the latest legend he has to kill and promises to punt his "Lego shaped head" through the St. Louis Arch. This was a fired up Orton and as sick as I've gotten of this feud over the years, my goodness this is feeling like a major showdown, with Orton bringing the emotion.

Nia Jax wants Naomi to stay out of her way in the main event. Naomi: "Sure."

Randy Orton runs into R-Truth, who says Orton has no chance. Jimmy Uso comes in to say he's got this and tells R-Truth to cool it with that. R-Truth

Rey Fenix vs. Santos Escobar

Fenix spins away from Escobar to start until Escobar wins a chop off and yells a lot. Back up and Fenix knocks him to the

floor but Escobar is right back up with the big suicide dive. We take a break and come back with Escobar kicking him out of the corner. A slingshot hilo gets two but Fenix is quickly out of an armbar.

Fenix hits a double springboard moonsault for two but Escobar knees him in the face for a double down. Back up and Fenix gets sent into the corner for some running knees to the chest. Fenix is right back with a kick to the chest though and it's a top rope Meteora for the pin on Escobar at 12:25.

Rating: B-. This was similar to the Fraxiom match, as the idea is to make Fenix look good as he's still starting up his time on Smackdown. Unfortunately Fenix is in a weird spot as he had to be put into the Wrestlemania match in Rey Mysterio's place and take his first loss. Wins like this one should give him a nice start to his comeback, which should go somewhere soon.

Tiffany Stratton and Jade Cargill bicker over the tag match. Next week though, Cargill is facing Nia Jax in a #1 contenders match.

We look back at last week's TLC match with the Street Profits retaining the Tag Team Titles in an instant classic.

Santos Escobar yells at Los Garza for not being there when Andrade comes in. Escobar doesn't like Andrade, who is still trying to get into Berto's head.

Jade Cargill/Tiffany Stratton vs. Nia Jax/Naomi

It's a big brawl as they start fast, with Jax sending Stratton into the barricade. We settle down to Naomi pulling on Cargill's arms in the corner but Cargill is back up with a big boot. Jax drops Cargill from behind though and we take a break. Back with Jax crashing onto Cargill for two, allowing Naomi to come in and hammer away. Cargill manages a faceplant and gets the tag off to Stratton to clean house.

Jax cuts her off with a Samoan drop but Stratton gets the knees up to block Naomi's split legged moonsault. Cargill comes back in for a fireman's carry flapjack to Naomi and a chokeslam gets two. Jax runs Cargill over but Stratton is in for the save with a Swanton. A missed charge hits Naomi in the corner and Cargill powerbombs Jax out of the corner for the pin at 11:30.

Rating: C+. Cargill got to look good in the end with the powerbomb and staying in the ring for awhile gives her some extra ring time. That should help her a bit, and working with someone experienced like Naomi should help. This is at least a slightly different cast going after the title, even if it's hard to buy Naomi in this spot after Cargill has beaten her so thoroughly.

Post match Cargill grabs the title but gets decked by Naomi, who holds up the title to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. I wasn't feeling this show as much as it felt like the show designed to get ready for the other stuff. That being said, we're coming off last week's TLC match so taking a bit of a breather isn't a bad thing. This wasn't a terrible show or even a bad one, but it was the kind of week where a recap might be better than watching the whole thing.

Results

Damian Priest b. LA Knight via DQ when Solo Sikoa interfered

Fraxiom b. Pretty Deadly – Phoenix splash to Wilson

Aleister Black b. The Miz – Black Mass

Zelina Vega b. Piper Niven – Jackknife rollup

Rey Fenix b. Santos Escobar – Top rope Meteora

Jade Cargill/Tiffany Stratton b. Naomi/Nia Jax – Powerbomb to Jax

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Smackdown – April 25, 2025: What A Match!

Smackdown

Date: April 25, 2025

Location: Dickies Arena, Fort Worth, Texas

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

We're done with Wrestlemania and that means it is time for things to get started again. That could go in a few different directions, but first of all we have a TLC match for the Smackdown Tag Team Titles as the Street Profits are defending against the Motor City Machine Guns and DIY. Other than that, there is a good chance we'll hear from some of the new (and old) champions. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a long Wrestlemania recap, I believe the same one from Raw.

Here is John Cena to get things going and yes, he again has issues with his ring introduction. Before he can say anything, Randy Orton interrupts and gets a rather lengthy entrance. Orton talks about how we are coming up on twenty five years to the day since they first shook hands. In all that time, Cena

has not changed because he really was about hustle, loyalty and respect.

Now though, it's clear that Cena has a void that needs to be filled. There have been all kinds of generations of children looking up to him and that has to mean something to him. Cena holds the record for the most wishes granted in the history of Make-A-Wish but Orton isn't accepting that they were just numbers. Orton has figured out what Cena needs to fill that void: children. Imagine a bunch of square jawed, big forearmed like Cenas running around! It would make Cena a better man and make him grow up.

Cena accuses Orton of parent shaming him and says he doesn't have kids because he has spent 25 years raising everyone else's children. Cena: "Oh great. A six year old just gave me the finger. CLASSY!" That's why he doesn't have kids but Orton says they aren't done yet. Cena has gone Hollywood but the reality is he has nothing without those fans. Orton has done a lot of things in WWE and is a piece of furniture. He is here to stay, but Cena is just a guest.

Cena says he used to think that same way but now he tries to do something else and the fans go for someone else. That is a dysfunctional relationship and pure manipulation from the fans. Orton calls himself stupid (Orton: "Stupid! Stupid! Stupid!") for thinking he could come out here and make an impact on Cena in this bizarro world where Orton is good and Cena is bad. Wrestling has meant everything to Orton and his family for generations and it will provide for his family until Orton is put in the ground.

Cena is tired of hearing about this and says that the count between them is 17-14. When Cena leaves though, the counter freezes because Orton can win a title, but that puts his count at 1. He wants to erase the three generations of Cena's family, which is enough for Orton to issue the challenge for a title match right now. Cena says no, but he's willing to face

him at Backlash in St. Louis.

That's Orton's hometown so Orton can spend the day with his family and come in at his best. That means when Orton fails, he has no excuses. Cena says this is as close to the title as Orton is going to get, and then he throws it at him to start the beating. The belt shot is loaded up but Orton ducks and hits the RKO. This was an exchange between two guys who have been tied together for twenty years so they didn't have much new to say. That being said, they absolutely had to run this match one last time and having the dynamic reversed could be interesting.

Video on Fraxiom (Nathan Frazer/Axiom), former NXT Tag Team Champions who are officially on Smackdown. They've dominated the NXT tag team division for a long time now so it makes sense to move them up. There is nothing left for them to do in NXT.

Orton vs. Cena is set for Backlash.

Fraxiom vs. Los Garza

Fraxiom starts fast and clears the ring, setting up some dives to the floor to take Los Garza out. A low bridge sends Axiom outside though and we take an early break. Back with Frazer getting the hot tag to come in and pick up the pace. Frazer gets quite the running start for a forearm to Berto into a Sling Blade. Angel comes in off a blind tag to kick Frazer down and the villains take over. Axiom has to make a save before coming in to strike it out with Angel. They go up top where Axiom hits his super Spanish Fly, setting up Frazer's 450 for the pin at 8:24.

Rating: B-. Pretty much a perfect start for Fraxiom on the main roster as they got to do what they do best and it worked here. Fraxiom works best when they are flying all over the place and going at a breakneck pace. Putting them in there with Los Garza is a good way to go and they were fun opponents

for Fraxiom to start things off.

Here is Tiffany Stratton to brag about retaining her title. There were moments when she wasn't sure what was going to happen, but she kept hearing that she would be the next Charlotte. The reality is there will only be one Tiffany Stratton. Cue Jade Cargill (oh dear) to interrupt, saying that while Stratton's win was impressive, it just put a bigger target on her back. It's time for Cargill to show why she's here because it's time to be a champion. Stratton is ready to go right now so get a referee. Cue said referee and we're ready to go.

Tiffany Stratton vs. Jade Cargill

Non-title. Cargill grabs an early rollup for two so Stratton offers a handshake. That's enough to pull Cargill into a headlock before an armdrag seems to annoy her. A backbreaker puts Stratton down but she's right back up with a running hip attack in the ropes. Cargill rolls her up for two but gets caught with a handspring elbow in the corner for the same.

We take a break and come back with Stratton hitting a Regal Roll but slipping on the Prettiest Moonsault Ever. The distraction lets Cargill roll away and hit a sitout powerbomb for two. A basement dropkick gives Stratton two but Cargill is back up with a superplex. Cue Naomi to jump Cargill for the DQ at 10:14.

Rating: B-. Well you knew that wasn't going to have a clean finish, as it shouldn't as you don't want either of them to take a loss here as it's so soon after Wrestlemania. At the same time, Naomi coming after Cargill again so soon doesn't quite fit, as Cargill won pretty definitively at Wrestlemania. Let Cargill move on, because she can only destroy Naomi so much.

Post match Naomi beats Cargill down until Stratton chases her off. Then Nia Jax returns, because THIS needs to happen again.

Here is Jacob Fatu, with Solo Sikoa, for a chat. Sikoa introduces Fatu and says he is the only one who wants him. The thing is, Fatu wouldn't be here without Sikoa, because he brought Fatu here. He wouldn't be the champion without...and Fatu takes the mic. Fatu says he was going to bring the title to the family with or without Sikoa and that's what he has done. The title makes him America's most wanted and a menace to society, but you better get in where you fit in.

Cue LA Knight to say that he dropped Fatu on his head and Fatu had to grab the rope. It can happen to anyone on any night but he wants the title back. Cue Drew McIntyre to say it is hard to be him: tall, dark, handsome and with big guns. He just went through a violent match at Wrestlemania and he just wants to say it was a pleasure to embarrass Damian Priest. The next plan was to challenge John Cena but Randy Orton cut the line again.

It's always Nepo Wrestling Entertainment and speaking of which, hi Bloodline. McIntyre wants to fight the baddest champion around here but Knight says let him know when this mush mouth is done. McIntyre calls Knight's latest title reign a joke. Knight says he would say something about McIntyre's latest title reign but he can't remember it. The challenge is on but cue Nick Aldis to say not so fast. Tonight, it's McIntyre vs. Knight in a #1 contenders match. Having big names wanting title shots is just going to increase Fatu's status and that is great to see.

Zelina Vega is ready to go big or go home tonight.

Women's United States Title: Zelina Vega vs. Chelsea Green

Green, with the Secret Hervice, is defending. They start fast with Green being sent outside, where the Hervice takes Vega down. We take a break and come back with both of them down for a breather. Vega fights up with a spinning back elbow into the corner, setting up a middle rope Meteora for two. The 619 is

broken up and the referee sees the Hervice interfering, which is enough for the double ejection. Vega grabs a Code Red for the pin and the title at 7:14.

Rating: C. I'm not sure on this one, but after Vega lost so many times already, it was time to either give her some gold or move on. I really don't like Green, who has been outstanding in this role, to lose, but if it gives her something new to complain about, she should be fine. The match was nothing to see, but I'm going to need to see some fallout to see if this feels like a good idea.

We look at Carmelo Hayes winning the Andre The Giant Memorial Battle Royal last week.

Miz is proud of Hayes winning and that's why he sacrificed himself last week. Now, he has a gift for Hayes: a rather large Andre head necklace. Miz is so inspired that he wants to show everyone something in the ring.

Here is the Miz, in a snazzy white suit, for a chat. He has been a featured part of Wrestlemania since 2007 but this year, he was nowhere to be seen. Miz main evented Wrestlemania and successfully defended the title against John Cena, which even Cody Rhodes couldn't do.

When Rey Mysterio was injured, Miz doesn't get the spot but rather someone who has been here two weeks. When Kevin Owens got hurt, an internet meme got his spot instead. He is sick and tired of people showing up and getting his spot...and the lights go out. A bunch of candles are on the stage and Aleister Black is back, complete with riser and theme song. The fans say WELCOME BACK so Miz goes after him, only to get kicked in the head. Black coming back was hardly a surprise, but it's going to depend on how he's used. He has talent, but it isn't going to matter if he's totally unfocused again.

Bianca Belair has a few broken fingers from Wrestlemania but she is so proud of the match she had with Rhea Ripley and Iyo

Sky. Belair is fine with what Sky did at Wrestlemania but Ripley slid into a match where she didn't belong. For now though, Belair is focused on healing so she can get back home on Smackdown.

Nia Jax doesn't care about Naomi's quest for revenge, but Naomi tells her to proceed with caution. Jax is confused.

LA Knight vs. Drew McIntyre

For a future US Title shot. They take turns taking each other down and showing off the double biceps to start. A belly to back suplex drops McIntyre for two but Knight is knocked off the apron and into the barricade for a crash. Back in and a shot to the ribs gives McIntyre two and he fires off some knees to keep Knight down.

Knight manages a snap suplex into a jumping neckbreaker out of the corner for two. They go outside with Knight sending him into the announcers' table over and over. Back in and...cue Solo Sikoa to Samoan Spike Knight. McIntyre sees it and isn't pleased but loads up the Claymore anymore. Cue Damian Priest to pull McIntyre out for the DQ at 9:24.

Rating: B-. Knight was hanging in there and thankfully he didn't get pinned. In theory this should make McIntyre the #1 contender, but at the same time it wouldn't surprise me to see Nick Aldis say "that's not what I meant", which wouldn't be a terrible way to go. Otherwise, I again approve of Knight being in the ring with some bigger names, as he has earned that kind of a spot.

Post match the brawl is on, with Priest chokeslamming McIntyre through the announcers' table. Priest and Knight get in an argument but Jacob Fatu shows up with a huge suicide dive to take both of them out. Fatu's triple jump moonsaults leave everyone laying as he again looks like the biggest monster in the world.

We look at Bron Breakker becoming a Paul Heyman Guy.

R-Truth comes up to John Cena and offers his help anytime. Cena walks off without saying anything. Jimmy Uso comes in to ask when Cena changed (as apparently he hasn't been watching for weeks). R-Truth says there are two sides to every story and he wants to be Cena when he grows up. Jimmy: "But you are grown up." This is called "explaining the joke" and it's not a good idea.

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

The Profits are defending in a TLC match. It's a brawl to start (of course) and Dawkins gets to clean house with the ladder on the floor. Back in and the brawling continues, with Ciampa (sans beard for a WEIRD look) getting in some ladder shots of his own. Dawkins is tied in the Tree of Woe for some shots to the ribs before a bunch of people head outside. Ford hits a big flip dive onto a bunch of them and Shelley comes up favoring his arm.

Ford goes up but gets Downward Spiraled down by Gargano. Dawkins cuts Ciampa off and gives Gargano a Big Ending off the ladder for a crash to the floor. A brainbuster puts Shelley through an open chair but Dawkins blocks a double suplex onto a pair of chairs. Instead Dawkins hits the swinging butterfly suplex onto the chairs and Ford busts out the huge flip dive over the ropes for a Doomsday Blockbuster onto the pile.

A fan whips out a prosthetic leg for a bonus weapon and a ladder is bridged between the ring and the barricade. Shelley hits a big frog splash to put Dawkins through a table at ringside, followed by Ford hitting a huge running Swanton through Ciampa through a table on the floor. That doesn't work for Ciampa, who is back up with an Air Raid Crash to send Ford through a ladder and a lot of people are down again.

Skull And Bones puts Gargano through a table, leaving Ciampa

to go up top but the Guns move the ladder. Ciampa is hanging from the ladder so Dawkins goes up and spears him down, through a table because of course. Sabin and Gargano go up top with Sabin knocking him down but Ford springboards up the ladder. Gargano pulls him down though and ties him in the ladder for a superkick. Sabin and Gargano go up top but Ford climbs the SIDE of the ladder and knocks both of them down, allowing Ford to pull the titles down and retain at 22:52.

Rating: A-. Yeah I'd call this a winner. It was six guys beating the living daylights out of each other and just trying to go totally insane. That's what we had here and it worked incredibly well. The ending was creative and Ford looked great in his win, which made for a solid ending. This wasn't meant to be anything more than a long car crash and they did it very well. Leaving this on Wrestlemania was a great idea, as it gets to stand out on its own here rather than being on the packed Wrestlemania card. Awesome main event.

Overall Rating: B+. That main event alone is enough to carry a bunch of this show and it was pretty entertaining throughout. Orton and Cena's segment was long and only so good, but at least it set up a big match in short order. The rest of the show was your usual collection of debuts, returns and surprises, with the big TLC main event to wrap it up. Rather great show, though I'm not sure they'll be able to do this again next week.

Results

Fraxiom b. Los Garza – 450 to Angel

Jade Cargill b. Tiffany Stratton via DQ when Naomi interfered

Zelina Vega b. Chelsea Green – Code Red

Drew McIntyre b. LA Knight via DQ when Jacob Fatu interfered

Street Profits b. Motor City Machine Guns and DIY – Ford pulled down the titles

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Smackdown – April 18, 2025: The Starrcade Reference

Smackdown

Date: April 18, 2025

Location: T-Mobile Arena, Las Vegas, Nevada

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

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

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

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

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

ten years brought Punk back to the ring, but it wasn't a WWE ring.

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

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

Wrestlemania rundown.

Video on Andre The Giant.

Andre The Giant Memorial Battle Royal

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

R-Truth poses with Carlito to start and then throws him out, only to get booted out by Miz for some fast eliminations. Karrion Kross goes after Miz and we actually get a Bloodsport

reference for a weird thing to hear on WWE TV. Legado del Fantasma goes after Fenix, who gets rid of Berto and Angel in quick fashion. Pretty Deadly beats up Bate but get tossed by A-Town Down Under. Bate is sent over the top but skins the cat, only to get dropkicked out by Kaiser.

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

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

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

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

Miz comes out to celebrate.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

8:25.

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

DIY steal the titles and leave.

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

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

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

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

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

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

future endeavored again.

The smoke person is here next week.

Zelina Vega vs. Chelsea Green

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

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

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

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

LA Knight vs. Solo Sikoa

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

Rating: C. They didn't have time to get anywhere here but that wasn't the point of the match. Odds are someone is going to

run in and help Knight after the match and a tag match will break out. Knight and Fatu's match is already set up so this was just one more push to get us to the showdown.

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

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

We're joined in progress with Fatu being low bridged to the floor and Strowman coming in to clean house. The Strowman Express drops Sikoa on the floor but Fatu is back with a jumping clothesline back inside. Sikoa and Fatu take turns working on a neck crank until Strowman fights up and brings Knight back in. Everything breaks down and Strowman is sent over the announcers' table. With Fatu outside, Knight hits a BFT to pin Sikoa at 4:34 shown.

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

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

LW0/Rey Fenix vs. American Made

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

headbutt as Mysterio can be seen limping off.

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

Rating: B-. The fact that Mysterio is gone is not a good sign and there is a strong chance that he is not going to be at Wrestlemania. Fenix taking his place would make sense if that is where they want to go, but hopefully the injury isn't as bad as it seems. For now though, it was a fast paced match, even if it wound up being a handicap match.

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

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

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

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

One more Wrestlemania rundown wraps us up.

Overall Rating: C+. This was exactly what you would expect here as it's the last Smackdown before the biggest nights of the year. They had the battle royal, a few other matches, and then the big closing segment. Hopefully Mysterio is healthy enough to wrestle tomorrow, but that doesn't seem likely based on what we saw. It's not a particularly good show and definitely not worth seeing, but this could have been far worse.

Results

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

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

Zelina Vega b. Chelsea Green – Super Code Red

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

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

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

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Smackdown – April 11, 2025: We're Getting There

Smackdown

Date: April 11, 2025

Location: Climate Pledge Arena, Seattle, Washington

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

We are just over a week away from Wrestlemania and that means it is time for one of the final pushes to the show. That means we aren't likely to be seeing much in the way of big time matches but the talking will get a lot of attention this time around. Your mileage may vary but it's a special time of the year. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of Kevin Owens announcing his neck injury and Randy Orton hitting an RKO on Nick Aldis to blow off some steam.

Here is Aldis to get things going with the fans being VERY pro Orton. Aldis is here to address what happened last week and while he is going to maintain his professionalism, he invites Orton to the ring. Cue Orton to say that he paid his fine double in advance because he knew what would happen. Right now there is nothing for him at Wrestlemania and Orton doesn't care who he faces, but he needs to be on that show. Orton doesn't even care if it is Aldis himself, but Aldis needs to

calm down.

Aldis doesn't need Orton to pay another fine because he needs his respect. Orton says Aldis earned his respect a long time ago but he can't promise he'll apologize to Mickie James if Aldis doesn't give him a match. Cue Solo Sikoa and Tama Tonga, with Sikoa promising that Jacob Fatu is leaving Wrestlemania with the US Title. Orton doesn't like the interruption and issues the challenge so the brawl is on, with Orton getting beaten down. LA Knight runs in for the save and issues the challenge for the tag match later tonight. Aldis makes the match.

Women's Tag Team Gauntlet Match

For a shot at Liv Morgan and Raquel Rodriguez (ringside) at Wrestlemania. Bayley and Lyra Valkyria are in at #1 and Shayna Baszler/Zoey Stark are in at #2. Baszler takes Bayley down without much trouble to start and it's off to Stark for a running shoulder. Bayley gets up and brings in Valkyria, who is quickly dropped by Stark. Bayley makes the save so Baszler goes to stomp Valkyria's arm. That's reversed into a jackknife cover to give Valkyria the pin at 3:18.

Natalya and Maxxine Dupri are in at #3 and we take a break, coming back with Natalya hammering away at Valkyria. Maxxine comes in with a high crossbody for two on Bayley before taking the straps down (the fans approve). Some running clotheslines set up the reverse Worm but Bayley reverses a Sharpshooter attempt into a small package to pin Dupri at 9:14 total.

Kayden Carter and Katana Chance are in at #4 and rush Bayley, who gets her knees up to cut off a splash. The elbow drop gets two on Carter so it's off to Valkyria, who gets caught with the Keg Stand for two. A quick Nightwing finishes Chance at 11:48 total and it's Michin/B-Fab in at #5.

We take another break and come back with Valkyria kicking her way out of trouble and bringing Bayley back in. Michin cuts

her off with a quick DDT and everything breaks down. Michin dives onto Valkyria but Bayley Rose Plants B-Fab for the pin at 17:31 total. Piper Niven and Alba Fyre are in at #6 (last) and knock the winded Bayley outside. A double suplex into a backsplash gets two on Bayley as we take a third break.

Back again with an assisted backsplash giving Fyre two as Bayley is in big trouble. Bayley counters a double suplex into a double DDT (the fans are WAY into the comeback) and the diving tag brings in Valkyria to clean house. A tornado DDT hits Niven, who is right back with a suplex to Valkyria.

Somehow Valkyria powerbombs Niven out of the corner and the top rope elbow gives Bayley one. A backbreaker/Swanton combination gets two on Bayley but Valkyria is back in for the save. Bayley dropkicks Niven into a powerbomb to the floor but Fyre kicks Bayley down for two. The Rose Plant hits Fyre though and Valkyria adds a top rope ax kick for the pin at 28:39.

Rating: B. Normally I don't care for gauntlet matches but they were working hard here in front of a VERY hot crowd. Bayley and Valkyria are a thrown together team but at least they had to put in a hard fought performance to get the title shot. It's not like there are any other teams ready to go after the belts and it is something fresh so I can go with this.

Post match the champs get in the ring for the staredown.

Apparently Charlotte and Tiffany Stratton got in a fight before the show. Which we aren't seeing.

Damian Priest vs. Drew McIntyre is set for a street fight on Wrestlemania Sunday.

Classic Wrestlemania Moment: Hulk Hogan vs. The Rock. That works.

Here is Damian Priest for a chat but Drew McIntyre runs in and

rams him head first into the apron monitor. Priest is carried out, leaving McIntyre saying we are starting to see now. McIntyre is the only one who tells the truth and Priest is the only person who benefits from McIntyre getting screwed. Their street fight is a year in the making and his eye is completely fine. He's 100% cleared so Priest is 100% screwed. Cue Priest so the brawl is on but McIntyre goes to the eyes and hits him in the face with the steps. The Future Shock onto the steps leaves Priest laying.

DIY thinks there is a conspiracy against them and Pretty Deadly thinks they're nuts. The Motor City Machine Guns come in to mock DIY as well.

We look at Rey Fenix's debut last week.

HHH Hall Of Fame video, looking at him winning the 1997 King Of The Ring.

Berto vs. Rey Fenix

The rest of Legado del Fantasma are here with Berto. Fenix rolls him up for a fast two to start and spins around into another rollup for another two. Berto shoves him off the top and onto the apron for a crash. The big dive connects and we take a break. Back with Fenix chopping away and hitting a spinning top rope headbutt for a knockdown. Berto is sent outside for the big running flip dive but he's back in with a springboard kick to the face for two.

A sitout powerbomb gets two more but Fenix is back with a springboard hurricanrana for two of his own. Berto is back with a fireman's carry into another sitout powerbomb for another near fall. Fenix gets his boots up to stop a moonsault though and a running springboard kick to face in the corner rocks Berto again. The Mexican Muscle Buster finishes for Fenix at 10:41.

Rating: B. This was a good showcase for Fenix, who might not

have the cool factor like Penta but he can do some crazy high flying stuff. That's the kind of thing that is going to get someone noticed in a hurry and Fenix has made it work in two weeks. Note that commentary also mentioned Fenix and Penta are brothers, so they aren't bothering wasting time with some big reveal.

Roxanne Perez is here to talk about how she doesn't like Tiffany Stratton, who comes in to yell at her. They both want a match and Nick Aldis pops in to say he'll think about it.

We get a video on Paul Heyman's history with CM Punk, including OVW footage and their time working together to great success. Then Punk left and came back, with their relationship still being a thing, albeit in the background. Punk then helped Heyman a bit and Heyman will be in Punk's corner at Wrestlemania, even with Roman Reigns in the same match.

Chelsea Green is annoyed that Piper Niven and Alba Fyre aren't ready to help her. Zelina Vega comes in to mock Green for having to wrestle on her own.

We get another smoky vignette.

Zelina Vega vs. Chelsea Green

Non-title. Green stomps away to start and they go outside with Vega being dropped onto the announcers' table. Green throws her back inside, yells at commentary...and gets counted out at 1:02.

Santos Escobar is disappointed in Berto for losing to Rey Fenix. Escobar and Angel are off to congratulate Fenix on his win.

After a look at what is coming in the rest of the show, Andrade comes in to give Berto a pep talk. Berto tells him to mind his own business.

Naomi can't stand Jade Cargill, who she calls a snake for

taking Naomi's spot.

Jade Cargill says Naomi's time has run out and revenge is coming.

Here is Cody Rhodes for a chat and there are a bunch of WWE Titles from throughout history in the ring. Rhodes puts his title on a pedestal in the middle of the rest and, after soaking in some cheers, Rhodes thanks the fans for always giving him a warm reception. These titles are the denotations of excellence and Rhodes has been blessed to hold the title. Wrestlemania is about the next twenty champions, who might be from NXT or the ID Program or maybe someone here in Seattle tonight. But there is one man who wants to take all that away and that man is John Cena.

Seattle is not part of Cena's retirement tour so Rhodes brings up Cena saying Rhodes is nothing but a common fan. Rhodes has his tattoo and wears a suit because he wants to be someone. He goes down the titles and talks about various champions who held them, including Cena with the spinner title. Cena was someone who was trying to find himself, which is what he has said about Rhodes.

The reality right now is that Rhodes is the WWE Champion and Cena is not. Rhodes calls himself the captain around here and he is part of a stacked roster (which he lists off). The reality is that Rhodes does his best work when his back is against the wall and that is going to be the case at Wrestlemania. It would be clever for Rhodes to say Cena's time is up but that has been the case for a long time. The reality is Rhodes is champion and it is staying with the people. I love a good props segment and this was very good stuff, with Rhodes making the title the focal point of the whole thing.

Here's what's coming next week.

The Street Profits are ready to retain their Tag Team Titles against the Motor City Machine Guns next week. Dawkins even

mentions the IWC as the Guns' fans, but Miz and Carmelo Hayes interrupt. They seem to want the titles for themselves and a staredown ensues.

Tiffany Stratton vs. Roxanne Perez

Non-title. Stratton shoves her out of the corner to start and Matrixes her way out of a clothesline. A headscissors takes Stratton down but she's back with some snap suplexes for two. The referee has to fix the ring skirt though and Stratton is sent into the post as we take a break.

Back with Stratton hitting some clotheslines and a spinebuster gets two. Another spinebuster gets another two but Perez avoids a hip attack. Perez's Lionsault hits raised knees but she breaks up the Prettiest Moonsault Ever. A middle rope Russian legsweep gives Perez two and the crossface goes on. That's countered with a Regal Roll and the Prettiest Moonsault Ever finishes for Stratton at 9:18.

Rating: B-. Nice stuff here with Perez looking like she was getting squashed but turning it into a good match. That's a nice thing to see as Perez could be quite the player on the main roster if given the chance. I'm not sure when that is going to start, but at least she is in the ring for something like this. Also of note: it's a bit odd that both Women's Champions both use moonsaults as a finish. Not a bad thing, but not something you often see.

Post match here is Charlotte, who had been sent home, to jump Stratton.

We recap CM Punk picking his favor from Paul Heyman, which did not sit well with Roman Reigns. Then Seth Rollins attacked Punk and teased attacking Heyman, saying Heyman owed him a favor as a result. They wouldn't have Punk join Rollins, right?

We get the official Wrestlemania lineups, including the days:

Saturday:

Roman Reigns vs. CM Punk vs. Seth Rollins

Naomi vs. Jade Cargill

Raw Tag Team Titles: War Raiders vs. New Day

Rey Mysterio vs. El Grande Americano

US Title: LA Knight vs. Jacob Fatu

Smackdown Women's Title: Tiffany Stratton vs. Charlotte

Raw World Title: Gunther vs. Jey Uso

Sunday:

Women's Tag Team Titles: Bayley/Lyra Valkyria vs. Liv Morgan/Raquel Rodriguez

Drew McIntyre vs. Damian Priest

Intercontinental Title: Bron Breaker vs. Penta vs. Finn Balor vs. Dominik Mysterio

AJ Styles vs. Logan Paul

Raw Women's Title: Bianca Belair vs. Rhea Ripley vs. Iyo Sky

Smackdown World Title: Cody Rhodes vs. John Cena

That Saturday show is rather stacked, though I would assume Sunday gets another match to even things up.

Randy Orton/LA Knight vs. Solo Sikoa/Tama Tonga

Tonga drives Knight into the corner for some shoulders to the ribs. Sikoa comes in and Knight fights his way out of the corner, allowing the early tag off to Orton. An early hanging DDT plants Sikoa but he comes back with a Samoan drop as we take a break. Back with Sikoa grabbing a chinlock so Orton belly to back suplexes his way to freedom.

Knight comes in for a running knee in the corner to Tonga and a neckbreaker out of the corner drops Sikoa. Back up and the Samoan Spike hits Knight, only for Tonga to walk into the RK0. Sikoa and Orton brawl into the crowd, leaving Knight to hit the BFT to pin Tonga at 9:01.

Rating: C+. This was pretty much a house show main event and that's not a bad way to wrap up the night. We're coming up Knight facing a member of the family for his title at Wrestlemania so having him beat one of the lackeys is a fine way to go. Orton vs. Sikoa doesn't feel like much of a Wrestlemania showdown (and it might not be) but it's not like they have anything else ready on such short notice.

Post match Jacob Fatu comes in and beats down Knight, including three triple jump moonsaults, to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. We're literally now to the point where the cards have been announced for Wrestlemania so there isn't much left to do. With just the final Raw and next week's Smackdown, which is pretty much just a big pre-show, to go, Wrestlemania really feels like it is here. This week's show had better action than I was expecting and I really liked the Rhodes segment with the classic belts. Good stuff here (with one of the hottest American crowds in recent memory), as we're starting to get the final touches ready for the biggest nights of the year.

Results

Bayley/Lyra Valkyria won a gauntlet match last eliminating Piper Niven and Alba Fyre

Rey Fenix b. Berto – Mexican Muscle Buster

Zelina Vega b. Chelsea Green via countout

Tiffany Stratton b. Roxanne Perez – Prettiest Moonsault Ever

LA Knight/Randy Orton b. Solo Sikoa/Tama Tonga – BFT to Tonga

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Smackdown – April 4, 2025: Out Of Favor

Smackdown

Date: April 4, 2025

Location: Allstate Arena, Rosemont, Illinois

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

We're back stateside and that means it is time to really hit the gas on the build to Wrestlemania. Most of the show is either set or all but set but there is still time to build some things up for the big weekend. This week we are on CM Punk's home turf, which should make for some interesting moments. Let's get to it.

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

After seeing some people come to work, we recap last week's contract match between CM Punk, Seth Rollins and Roman Reigns for the Night One main event of Wrestlemania.

Here is Punk to the eruption you would expect. Punk gets the big entrance and poses on the barricade for a bit as you know this is a special night for him. He says he doesn't know where to begin but talks about the Chicago audience and steals the camera to show them. With the camera back where it should be, Punk talks about how it is his goal to make new fans anywhere he goes.

Tonight though, he wants to thank the fans here in Chicago because he has always been told he isn't supposed to be here.

Now though, he's not sure if you've heard it, but he's in the main event of Wrestlemania. Punk has taken all kinds of steps throughout his career, including being on John Cena's gangster call at Wrestlemania in this very building, but everyone said he wasn't supposed to be here. Now though, he's right here in his hometown and he has to thank his beautiful wife first.

After an AJ LEE chant, we get a Larry the dog reference and now the hard work begins. He is getting ready for Wrestlemania but here is Paul Heyman to interrupt. Heyman apologizes for being late and he says it was no disrespect to this city or his best friend, the best in the world, CM Punk. The fans (and Punk) chant ECW and Heyman can't help but smile. Heyman says that Punk belongs here and he belongs in the main event of Wrestlemania.

The last time they were in his ring together, Heyman asked Punk to take him with him. Then the Bloodline attacked Heyman and put him out longer than any time when he wasn't fired. Punk was considering leaving after Hell In A Cell but Heyman begged him to come back at WarGames. For now though, Heyman has one favor to ask him: let him know what the favor he owes Punk is going to be. Punk says it's going to involve Roman Reigns, so he'll tell them both to their face.

Nathan Frazer vs. Rey Fenix

This is Fenix's debut. They fight over wrist control to start and Fenix sends him into the ropes to a nice reaction. A spinning kick to the head gives Fenix some near falls but Frazer sends him outside for a dive. Back up and Fenix hits a big middle rope dive to the floor and we take a break.

We come back with Frazer running the corner for a superplex into a suplex neckbreaker for two. Frazer misses his Phoenix splash so Fenix runs the ropes for a kick to the face, setting up an over the shoulder tombstone (Fire Driver) for two. A kick to the head sets up the spinning Muscle Buster (Mexican

Muscle Buster) for the pin at 8:17.

Rating: B-. It was a good debut with the two of them getting to do enough stuff to make Fenix look like a star. Fenix is the kind of guy who can do some great high flying stuff and he got to showcase himself well. I'm not sure if it did as well as Penta, but Fenix is a different kind of high flier who is going to get over with a different style.

Post match Fenix says he has a history here in Chicago and this was a big step. He did it with passion and rage and now he is happy to say that he is WWE.

Legado del Fantasma thinks Fenix would fit in well, though Berto says he is better than Fenix. Santos Escobar says go prove it.

Drew McIntyre, with an eye patch, says no one cares about Damian Priest unless he's feasting off of McIntyre's scraps. That's what he did last year at Wrestlemania and this year at the Elimination Chamber. Then last week he put McIntyre through a windshield, resulting in his eye injury. McIntyre swears vengeance.

We look back at Jacob Fatu attacking LA Knight and Braun Strowman last week.

Strowman is ready to crush Fatu in a Last Man Standing match. Solo Sikoa and Tama Tonga come in to laugh at the concept, but Knight comes in to make fun of Tonga's weird noises.

LA Knight vs. Tama Tonga

Non-title and Solo Sikoa is here too. Knight slugs away to start and drops him with an elbow but gets sent into the corner. A belly to back suplex drops Knight, who comes right back with some rams into the buckle. Knight even hits his own running Umaga attack before taking Tonga outside for the rams onto the announcers' table.

Sikoa offers a distraction though and Knight gets knocked off the apron as we take a break. Back with Tonga hitting a heck of a clothesline for two but he misses a middle rope elbow. Knight grabs a neckbreaker out of the corner and hits a powerslam, setting up the jumping elbow. BFT is broken up and Knight has to deal with Sikoa. Now BFT can connect to finish Tonga at 9:12.

Rating: C+. This was a nice win for Knight, who gets to beat both Tonga, even with Sikoa's help. That's the kind of win that he needs every so often, as Knight is still supposed to be better than most people on his level. There is a good chance that he loses the title at Wrestlemania, but it's nice to see him getting a win here to set him up a bit better.

Paul Heyman is in the parking lot and says no matter what CM Punk wants, the answer is yes. A car arrives and it's...Seth Rollins, which has Heyman disappointed. Rollins wants to see Roman Reigns when he arrives.

We get the smoke vignette again but this time it looks like someone with coins over their eyes.

Here is Charlotte for a chat but before she can say anything, Tiffany Stratton interrupts. Wade Barrett is serving as moderator and introduces both of them, with Charlotte saying the mixed reaction is power. Charlotte is asked why she chose Stratton and if she still thinks it is the right idea. She talks about how she wanted to prove the smartest fans wrong, including those here in Chicago. Stratton: "Did she get her WOO in?"

Stratton talks about how Charlotte's real competition is in the crowd. The saddest thing is that if Charlotte breaks all of the records, she'll always be second to her dad. Charlotte says Stratton is saying the same things that her opponents have been saying for the last ten years, but the fans boo her out of the building.

Stratton says Charlotte was in her dad's basement drinking at 25 years old while Stratton is the Women's Champion at 25. Stratton calls her a nepo baby, but Charlotte says "Nepo Queen". We get a not so veiled reference to Charlotte's divorces (Stratton: "What is it? 0-3?") and Stratton bails, with Charlotte asking why Kaiser is in her DM's. Stratton no sells the line and leaves, which is nice to see as she owned Charlotte here and left her ranting.

Nick Aldis announces a women's Tag Team gauntlet match for next week (Raw teams will be included), with the winners getting a title shot at Wrestlemania.

Motor City Machine Guns vs. DIY

For a title shot at the Street Profits, who are here as well. Gargano and Sabin trade wrist control to start before Ciampa comes in. That means an armdrag to take him down just as fast and everything breaks down. Shelley chases Ciampa on the floor and gets caught on the way back in. We take a break and come back with Sabin hitting a high crossbody onto both of them. A tornado DDT drops Ciampa and a big suicide dive takes out the villains again.

Back in and double basement superkicks drop Ciampa but Gargano breaks up the Skull & Bones. A turnbuckle pad is taken off and Ciampa knees Sabin for two. The superkick/Fairy Tale Ending combination gets two on Sabin with Shelley having to make the save. Meet In The Middle doesn't work and it's the Dream Sequence to Ciampa. Skull & Bones is cut off again but Ciampa's rollup with feet on the ropes is cut off. Instead Sabin avoids a charge to send Ciampa into the exposed buckle and gets a rollup for the pin at 9:01.

Rating: B. The more I see from these two, the more amazed I am at how badly their Royal Rumble match went. They had another good match here and you would think that they are capable of doing it anytime they want. For now, it sets up the Guns for

their rematch, though I'm still expecting a big multi team mess at Wrestlemania.

Post match the Guns have a staredown with the Profits.

The Miz and Carmelo Hayes mock Pretty Deadly for losing in their hometown last week. Pretty Deadly doesn't think much of Miz and make fun of his acting record. Miz isn't impressed and shouts the catchphrase as a match seems likely.

B-Fab vs. Naomi

Michin is here with B-Fab. Hold on though as Jade Cargill jumps Naomi in the aisle before the bell. Naomi gets in the ring and the bell rings so B-Fab hits a clothesline. A spinning kick in the corner drops Naomi and B-Fab gets to hammer away even more. B-Fab hits a Rock Bottom for two but another kick misses in the corner. Naomi grabs her arms and pulls her into a one knee Codebreaker for the pin at 2:05.

Post match Naomi calls out Cargill, who runs in with a pump kick. Nick Aldis comes out to make Naomi vs. Cargill at Wrestlemania. Why? Cargill has crushed her every time so why should I believe it's going to be any different?

Damian Priest calls out Drew McIntyre for being distracted time after time and Priest took advantage. Then McIntyre cost him his chances at going to Wrestlemania so next week he wants McIntyre face to face.

Another HHH Hall Of Fame video, focusing on his time in Evolution.

Here is a rather upset Nick Aldis to make an announcement. There is a reason we say "don't try this at home" and he brings out Kevin Owens, in a snazzy Bret Hart jacket, for a chat. Owens talks about doing this for twenty five years but there is a price to pay for doing things how he does them. Now it seems like it is his turn and after the last few months of

issues, he needs neck surgery.

The timing couldn't be worse and it means he won't be facing Randy Orton at Wrestlemania. He doesn't know when he'll be back but he will never take this for granted. Owens even shakes Aldis' hand and goes to leave but here is Orton to interrupt. Orton goes to get in the ring but Owens bails, leaving Aldis to say Orton doesn't have a Wrestlemania match. The RKO lays out Aldis. I'll believe Owens isn't wrestling at Wrestlemania when it doesn't happen, but hopefully it's not an actual injury.

Our classic Wrestlemania moment: the first one.

Jacob Fatu vs. Braun Strowman

Last Man Standing and the winner gets a US Title shot at Wrestlemania. The brawl is on in the aisle with Strowman getting the better of things. They get inside where Fatu breaks out of the running powerslam and puts him down. The triple jump moonsault connects and Fatu hits a second to send Strowman outside.

We take a break and come back with Strowman dropping him for a change, meaning it's time for a table. That takes too long (it often does) and Fatu is back up with a big suicide dive. Strowman beats the count so Fatu posts him, only to charge into a chair to the head. That's good for five before Strowman gets a running start and knocks him through the barricade.

We take another break and come back with the two of them fighting in the crowd, where Strowman suplexes him through a table. They get back inside, where the table is set up in the corner. Strowman takes too much time getting up though and the running Umaga attack sends him through said table. Only Fatu can beat the count and Strowman is done at 15:12.

Rating: B-. Maybe it was the two commercials but I couldn't get into this one. The problem here is Strowman has been

beaten up by Fatu over and over again so there wasn't much of a reason to believe Strowman would pull it off here. It was a good, hard hitting match but it never got to the level that these things can reach.

We recap the John Cena/Cody Rhodes segment from Raw, with Rhodes laying Cena out.

Here's what's coming next week.

Paul Heyman says Roman Reigns will be here soon. After the break, Reigns arrives.

Reigns comes to the ring (and he makes great time for once), with a somewhat nervous Heyman behind him. After hitting the catchphrase, Reigns asks Heyman if "he" is here and acknowledges that it's CM Punk. Reigns wants to know about the favor but first, he wants to share a secret with Chicago. The reality is that Punk would not be back here without him.

Reigns mocks the idea that people cheer for Punk because they're both from Chicago before asking for some chants of his own. He wants Punk out here right now to find out about this favor. Instead, here is Seth Rollins to interrupt and he hits his catchphrase as well. Rollins wouldn't miss this for anything and wants to know about the favor as well. Rollins rants about Punk being in the main event of Wrestlemania, which he blames on Reigns for not stopping him when he had the chance.

Reigns says that he made a promise to Heyman and he keeps his word. He called Punk out here but got Rollins instead, but Rollins wants to know about the favor as well. Cue Punk, who says this is about promises being made and promises being kept. Punk talks about meeting Heyman at 4400 Shepherdsville Road (0VW) in Louisville, Kentucky and how Heyman knew that Punk would be a star. Heyman said that when Punk main evented Wrestlemania, force WWE to deal with them.

That is what Punk is going to do to Reigns now, as he wants Heyman in his corner at Wrestlemania. Reigns is a bit stunned and laughs off the idea, saying he saved Heyman. Even if he let Heyman do it, he knows Heyman wouldn't and tells Heyman to let Punk down gently. Instead, Heyman looks at Reigns and starts crying. Reigns gets serious and says to tell Punk no but Heyman doesn't say anything. Heyman says no...to Reigns, which has Rollins laughing. Reigns yells at Heyman and gets taken down with a GTS. Punk stares Rollins away to end the show.

That's an interesting way to go for the Favor, as Reigns' success has been built on the idea of Heyman giving him the mental side of things. Getting under Reigns' skin has been his downfall before and Punk capitalizing on it makes sense. At the same time, my goodness does Rollins feel like a total afterthought in this whole thing. I had forgotten he was there and it was annoying to remember it after he showed up again.

Overall Rating: B-. As has been the case in recent weeks, this show wasn't about the wrestling, even though it wasn't that bad this week. Instead, this was about pushing things forward for the matches that have either already been set up or are likely to be set up in the near future. I'm not wild on some of what we got, but it's nice to be able to see the Wrestlemania card coming together. Now just make things more interesting, which is what we'll be doing in the next few weeks. That was the case here and it went fairly well, though the lack of a focus on action can be a bit annoying.

Results

Rey Fenix b. Nathan Frazer – Mexican Muscle Buster

LA Knight b. Tama Tonga – BFT

Motor City Machine Guns b. DIY – Rollup to Ciampa

Naomi b. B-Fab – Codebreaker

Jacob Fatu b. Braun Strowman when Strowman could not answer the ten count

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Smackdown – March 28, 2025: He Finally Got There

Smackdown

Date: March 28, 2025

Location: O2 Arena, London, England

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

We're still in Europe and this time around we're in a rather big location. The major attraction this week is actually a contract signing between CM Punk, Seth Rollins and Roman Reigns, which should make for some fireworks. Other than that, Braun Strowman is getting a US Title shot, which might attract some attention. Let's get to it.

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

Various people came to work today.

Here is Cody Rhodes for a chat. Naturally the fans sing his song before Cody asks what they want to talk about. We get the dueling John Cena chants before they switch back to singing

(positively) about Rhodes. He's ready for Wrestlemania but on Monday, he and Cena will be face to face in the same arena.

Cue Randy Orton to interrupt and the fans get to sing again. Orton says he isn't the sentimental type, but for the sake of London, he looks at Rhodes and can't believe the man he has become. He remembers Rhodes in his early 20s, working harder than anyone but Rhodes realized that he needed to go somewhere else to grow. That took some guts, which Rhodes displayed again when he was facing Seth Rollins inside of the Cell and again when he beat Roman Reigns.

That was the end of the story, but now Rhodes is in another story. Orton respects him and loves him and he's very proud. Now though, it is time for Wrestlemania and Orton is going to kick Kevin Owens' head off. After Wrestlemania though, Orton is going to come after Rhodes and the title, but he's going to look Rhodes in the eye and say he's coming for this. Cue Drew McIntyre to interrupt, saying he is sick of these nepo babies.

Orton has been back and took more time off, because people talk about McIntyre's five minute World Title reign than Orton's entire comeback. That's why Wrestlemania should be McIntyre vs. Rhodes, but Damian Priest screwed that up. If Rhodes survives Cena, McIntyre is the one taking the title from him. The reality is that Orton looks great on the outside, but his back is hanging on by a thread. Orton tries a quick RKO but McIntyre bails out to the floor. This isn't so much adding something new to Wrestlemania, but it's teasing something for after Wrestlemania, which is important as well.

Tag Team Titles: Street Profits vs. Pretty Deadly

The Profits are defending. Dawkins headlocks Prince to start but it's quickly off to Ford, who gets double hiptossed down. We take an early break and come back with Ford knocking Prince down and handing it back to Dawkins. A whip into the corner crotches Ford on top though and everything breaks down.

Dawkins grabs a spinebuster to set up the frog splash but Ford hits the illegal Wilson, meaning Ford can get a rollup for two. A four way collision lets Pretty Deadly hit Spilled Milk on Dawkins with Ford making the save. The Doomsday Blockbuster retains the titles at 7:56.

Rating: C+. Pretty Deadly was getting to be more serious tonight in their home country and it was nice to see them getting to do something like this. They weren't about to win the titles but the fans liked them and were into the match. There are a bunch of teams going for the belts at the moment and I hope that doesn't result in a ladder match at Wrestlemania.

Earlier today, the Green Administration annoyed Zelina Vega and Kayden Carter/Katana Chance, with a tag match being set for tonight.

Steve Austin vs. Bret Hart, as in the match from Wrestlemania XIII, is going into the Hall Of Fame. That's a new concept.

Kayden Carter/Katana Chance vs. Piper Niven/Alba Fyre

Chelsea Green is here with Niven and Fyre. Carter and Chance take Fyre down to start for a basement dropkick to the head. Fyre is sent outside for a pop up crossbody but Niven is back with a running crossbody. We take a break and come back with Carter fighting back, including a springboard spinning legdrop for two on Fyre. Niven accidentally crushes Fyre with a backplash but Carter manages to Samoan drop Niven for a breather. Everything breaks down but Green offers a distraction to break up the After Party. The Piper Driver finishes Carter at 7:01.

Rating: C. You need to give the new evil team a win or two and that's what we got here. Chance and Carter aren't a great team but they're good enough that people know who they are. It might not have been a great match, but it was the kind that set things off in the right direction for Niven and Fyre.

Post match the beatdown is on so Zelina Vega runs in to clear the ring, only for the numbers game to catch up with her.

US Title: Braun Strowman vs. LA Knight

Knight is defending and gets shoved down to start. A belly to back suplex isn't happening for Knight so Strowman runs him over for two. Strowman gets low bridged to the floor, where he easily cuts Knight off with a big boot. We take a break and come back with Strowman charging into a boot in the corner to give Knight a needed breather.

Knight sends him into the corner and now the belly to back suplex connects. The jumping elbow gets two on Strowman but the BFT is easily blocked. Strowman knocks him to the floor for the train but Jacob Fatu jumps Strowman for the DQ at 6:19. Not enough shown to rate but they didn't get very far into it anyway.

Post match Fatu easily takes both of them out, with the running hip attacks rocking Strowman in the corner. The Moonsault makes it even worse.

Jimmy Uso is fired up after slapping Gunther on Raw because he knows that Jey Uso can beat Gunther at Wrestlemania. He runs into Miz and Carmelo Hayes, the former of whose insults set up a match tonight.

Solo Sikoa and Tama Tonga yell at Jacob Fatu for what he just did, but Fatu isn't having any of that. Fatu promises to be the last man standing with Strowman and promises to bring the US Title home to the family. He'll do it with or without Sikoa.

Naomi talks about being someone who always wants to do the right thing. This includes taking out Jade Cargill last year. How can Cargill just show up out of nowhere and take Naomi's place? Naomi has been an influence on people for the last ten years but now she's tired of being just another third wheel.

Moving forward, if Cargill will continue to be in her way, proceed with caution.

Cargill is looking for Naomi, who hasn't been seen here. B-Fab and Michin come in to know Cargill will give Naomi what she has coming.

We see a shadowy person with smoke and Roman numerals popping up.

Michin vs. Charlotte

B-Fab is here with Michin...and they're both jumped by Naomi before Charlotte comes to the ring. Cue Jade Cargill to chase Naomi off, with B-Fab having to be taken out. Charlotte comes out and has a staredown with Cargill on the way. The bell rings and Charlotte gets an early two as we take a slightly less early break.

Back with Michin fighting out of a chinlock and managing a tornado DDT for two. Charlotte kicks her in the head but Michin manages a sitout powerbomb for another near fall. The cannonball sets up Eat Defeat for two as Charlotte gets her foot on the rope, which has Michin annoyed. Charlotte gets up and goes after the leg, with the Figure Eight getting the fast tap at 7:39.

Rating: C+. Michin got in some offense here but there was no reason for her to be a serious threat to Charlotte, who is on her way to another title match at Wrestlemania. Let Michin shine a bit, then have Charlotte win in the end. That's all this needed to be and they made it work well enough.

Tiffany Stratton mocks Charlotte's insults to her last week, because that little girl is going to retain the Women's Title over Charlotte at Wrestlemania.

We look at HHH's entrances over the years.

Randy Orton vs. Drew McIntyre

Orton grabs a quickly broken headlock to start and McIntyre starts in on the back. McIntyre gets sent into the corner for some right hands and his shoulder goes into the post. They go outside, where Orton drops him onto the announcers' table. We take a break and come back with McIntyre working on the arm but Orton fights up and makes the clothesline comeback. The powerslam looks to set up the hanging DDT but McIntyre snaps the throat across the top. Orton fights back but cue Kevin Owens for a distraction. McIntyre hits the Claymore for the pin at 7:56.

Rating: C+. This wasn't exactly their World Title matches from a few years ago but there is only so much you can do with about eight minutes. Owens coming out for the distraction is fine and gives McIntyre one of his bigger wins in a bit. That's what he has been needing, even if it seems like he is heading for a showdown with Damian Priest at Wrestlemania.

Post match Owens goes after Orton but can't hit the package piledriver on the announcers' table. The Punt is loaded up but Owens gets away.

The orange luchador is confirmed to be Rey Fenix, who will debut next week.

Jimmy Uso vs. The Miz

Uso starts fast and hammers away but Miz is back up with some knees to the back. The running boot misses though and Uso clotheslines him to the floor. Another shot takes Miz into the timekeeper's area and we take a break. Back with Uso fighting up and striking away, only to get caught with a short arm clothesline. The DDT gives Miz two and the Yes Kicks connect. Uso is right back with a quick superkick and the Superfly Splash finishes at 7:52.

Rating: C. Another fairly short match tonight, with Uso getting some momentum before his likely destruction at the hands of Gunther on Raw. Miz is the perfect choice to give Uso

a singles win as he's been a made man for so long. Uso might not have much of a chance against Gunther, but at least he's being built up well.

Post match Uso promises to take Gunther out on Raw.

Drew McIntyre meets a singer and goes to leave but runs into Damian Priest in the parking lot. The brawl is on and Priest chokeslams him through the windshield of a car. With Priest gone, CM Punk walks by and I managed to avoid a "real glass" joke.

We look back at the John Cena/Cody Rhodes segment from Raw.

Here is Nick Aldis to run the main event contract signing. Roman Reigns, with Paul Heyman, comes out first and appreciates the fans chanting his name. Even Heyman gets in on the act and Reigns is basking in his own glory. Reigns signs the contract and seems to think his night is done but here is Seth Rollins to interrupt.

Rollins talks about their history in this building and how they are on the same mission. Reigns points out that THEY died a long time ago, but Rollins points out the evil that is CM Punk. When Reigns had the chance to take Punk out, he let it go, which is why Rollins has to clean up Reigns' mess again. Rollins signs as well, giving us two out of three.

This brings out Punk, who says he has come here to chew bubblegum and sign a contract, but he is all out of bubblegum. Punk starts looking through the contract, which has Reigns annoyed. Reigns: "Go to page four. Clause five. Come on junior this is TV today." Heyman goes over to Punk and says he knows what Punk is looking for...and it's in there: the match will be closing the show, making Punk a Wrestlemania main eventer.

Punk starts crying but Rollins snaps, shouting about how Punk doesn't deserve it. Rollins blames Heyman and Reigns for letting this happen but Punk thanks the fans here and in

Louisville, Kentucky for making this happen. Reigns wants the thanks for making this happen so the fans chant his name again. Punk thanks him as well, signs, and says he'll see him in the main event of Wrestlemania...but that's not the favor that he is owed.

Like him or not, Punk being in the main event of Wrestlemania is far from a stretch. It's a genuinely emotional moment for him and that's a great thing to see. The favor aspect makes things more intriguing, and Punk's delivery of that line made me a lot more interested.

Overall Rating: B-. As is usually the case for Wrestlemania season, the wrestling wasn't the point here. This was about getting things ready for the show, with the contract signing giving the match the big fight feel that it needs. This was a solid enough show, with stories advancing in some very nice ways. Now just keep it up for a few more weeks and everything will go on fine.

Results

Street Profits b. Pretty Deadly – Doomsday Blockbuster to Wilson

Piper Niven/Alba Fyre b. Kayden Carter/Katana Chance – Piper Driver to Carter

Braun Strowman b. LA Knight when Jacob Fatu interfered

Charlotte b. Michin – Figure Eight

Drew McIntyre b. Randy Orton – Claymore

Jimmy Uso b. The Miz – Superfly Splash

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Smackdown – March 21, 2025: Italian Reference

Smackdown

Date: March 21, 2025

Location: Unipol Arena, Bologna, Italy

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

The European excursion continues as we roll into Italy. We're less than a month away from Wrestlemania and that means we should start to see some more of the show coming together again this week. CM Punk, Seth Rollins and Roman Reigns are all here this week so there is a chance things will get nuts. Let's get to it.

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

Here is Randy Orton to get things going but before he can get a word out, Kevin Owens interrupts him. Owens apologizes for everything he did to Orton, saying only Cody Rhodes and Sami Zayn deserved what happened to them. Orton can understand the idea of letting anger make you do things you'll regret so if Orton can forgive him, Owens can forgive him.

Last week, Owens saved Carmelo Hayes to prevent Orton from becoming his old self. They should be looking to the future, so why not winning the Tag Team Titles at Wrestlemania? Orton says he should go beat Owens up right now and after thinking about it...yeah Owens deserves a kick in the head. It used to be "Fight Owens Fight" but now it's "b**** Owens b****."

Orton hears voices in his head, they counsel him, they understand, and they're telling him to kick Owens' head off at Wrestlemania. The match doesn't seem to be officially set but this was as quick and to the point as you could get, with Owens realizing he may have bitten off more than he can chew.

Damian Priest/Jimmy Uso vs. Drew McIntyre/Shinsuke Nakamura

Priest and McIntyre start brawling in the aisle before the bell with the other two joining in. They get inside with Uso hammering away at McIntyre, who suplexes him out of the corner to cut that off. The fans chant something that I can't make out but it seems against McIntyre. Uso fights back but gets pulled to the floor for a kick from Nakamura.

Back in and Nakamura hits a running knee, followed by another in the corner. McIntyre adds a suplex as the fans are chanting for Uso. The armbar has Uso in more trouble but he Samoan drops his way to freedom. A jumping enziguri puts Nakamura down and the needed tag brings in Priest to clean house. The Old School crossbody hits Nakamura and a clothesline gets two. Uso cuts off McIntyre and South Of Heaven finishes Nakamura at 7:43.

Rating: C+. Uso and Nakamura are kind of floating around at the moment but Priest vs. McIntyre is all but penciled in for Wrestlemania at this point. That's the kind of match which could go a long way for Priest, though it feels like a bit of a letdown for McIntyre at the moment. The match itself was seemingly just a way to get them on the show and there are worse ideas.

Post match McIntyre jumps Priest, promising that the beatings will be on sight every time. Priest's head is rammed into the mat and McIntyre adds a Claymore.

LA Knight says he has Braun Strowman's back against Jacob Fatu. Strowman says that the match is now for a US Title shot and he sees the title as his ticket to Wrestlemania. Works for

Knight.

We look at Tiffany Stratton and Charlotte's wild brawl last week.

We get a split screen interview between Charlotte and Stratton, with Charlotte cutting off Stratton, saying the Queen goes first. Stratton is always trying to be like Charlotte because that's what everyone has to do. Stratton thinks that because she's a blonde and can do a backflip, she can be the next Charlotte. Back in the day, Charlotte was one of her biggest supporters, but Charlotte mocks the idea of ever being in Stratton's corner. Stratton promises to win at Wrestlemania, which Charlotte finds funny. Stratton better win at Wrestlemania, or she's the latest victim of Charlotte's never ending dominance.

Jacob Fatu vs. Braun Strowman

For a future US Title shot. Strowman powers him into the corner to start and then knocks him to the floor. Back in and Strowman kicks him in the head but the charge around the ring only to miss a charge over the announcer's table. Strowman's head is sent into various things but a whip sends Fatu's knees into the steps.

They get back inside, where Fatu hits a running clothesline and then tells Strowman to get up. Then why did you knock him down? Strowman fights out of a neck crank so Fatu Samoan drops him into a backsplash for two. Strowman is back up with a running clothesline in the corner and a spinebuster but Solo Sikoa runs in for the (rather unwise) DQ at 9:21.

Rating: B-. It was another hoss match between these two, but there is only so much to be gained from Strowman winning like this. After Fatu smashed him at Saturday Night's Main Event, Strowman is either going to have to pin Fatu at some point (which isn't a good idea) or he's always going to be behind him in the feud. They are at least mixing it up with the title

aspect, though seeing Fatu win the title seems like a rather strong outcome as well.

Post match Fatu is mad but helps with the beatdown anyway. LA Knight runs in for the save.

Post break, in the back, Fatu yells at Sikoa and Tama Tonga, with Sikoa saying it looked like Fatu needed help. Fatu tells him to watch it.

Piper Niven vs. Zelina Vega

Chelsea Green and Alba Fyre are here with Niven. Vega tries to run the ropes to start but has to slip off of Niven's shoulders. Some choking works a bit better for Vega and she hammers away in the corner, only to get distracted to send us to a break. Back with Niven knocking her down to cut off a comeback and sending Vega hard into the corner.

A gorilla press is countered into a choke though, with Vega switching into something like an octopus hold. The Code Red is blocked so Vega grabs a tornado DDT for two instead. The 619 connects, only for Fyre to offer a distraction. Niven hits a crossbody for the win at 12:15.

Rating: C. This feels like the start of something for Vega, as she is going up against a lot of odds on her way to a title match. It might take some time to get her to that match and she might need some help on the way, but it does seem like they have set things up. Hopefully it winds up working, as Vega certainly needs the boost.

We get a long recap of John Cena's big explanation and response from Cody Rhodes on Raw. It still feels so weird hearing those things coming from Cena's mouth.

Randy Orton vs. Kevin Owens is set for Wrestlemania.

Jade Cargill is ready to show Liv Morgan what she gets for trying her. After that, it's time for revenge on Naomi.

We get the A/4 logo again.

Liv Morgan vs. Jade Cargill

Raquel Rodriguez is here with Morgan. Cargill kicks her down to start but goes after Rodriguez, only to cut off a sneaking Morgan for a ram into the barricade. Morgan tries to leave but is quickly dragged back as Cargill isn't up for the whole retreating thing. Back in and a powerbomb gives Cargill two but another Rodriguez distraction lets Morgan get in a cheap shot to take over.

We take a break and come back with Cargill fighting out of a chinlock to drive Morgan into the corner. Morgan is fine enough to hit Three Amigos but Oblivion is countered into a German suplex. Cargill plants her with a spinebuster and something like an F5 does it again. Cue Naomi for a belt shot though (the Rodriguez distraction helped) and Oblivion finishes Cargill (her first pinfall loss in WWE) at 10:11.

Rating: B-. That's an interesting way to go as you wouldn't expect Cargill to lose a fall, especially in what wasn't a heavily hyped up match. That being said, it does make Naomi look like that much bigger of a deal as she has cost Cargill something else. I'm not entirely interested in seeing them fight, but at least they're doing something a bit different with Naomi.

Post match Naomi stays on Cargill, including a hanging Pedigree and a knock onto the announcers' table.

We look back at Drew McIntyre attacking Damian Priest after their tag match earlier.

McIntyre says he has explained his issues with Priest and mocks Priest's voice. He'll see Priest in London next week...and then runs into Seth Rollins, who stares at him.

We look at the Street Profits winning the Tag Team Titles last

week.

Here are the Profits, who say this is long overdue. They had been doubting themselves for a bit but these titles made everything worth it. They're proud that they can count on their brothers but here is Legado del Fantasma to interrupt. Santos Escobar says they're coming for the titles but here is Pretty Deadly to interrupt. They're the #1 contenders and Legado needs to step aside, but Escobar says that is NOT happening. The Profits know Pretty Deadly have their shot but Legado wants to fight tonight so let's do it.

We get the orange luchador vignette again, which is pretty clearly Rey Fenix.

Street Profits vs. Los Garza

Non-title. We're joined in progress with Angel in trouble and Ford hitting a running knee to the face. Berto comes in to knock Ford down and a double basement superkick drops him again. Angel ties Ford in the Tree of Woe so stomping can ensue but a quick head fake and a dive brings Dawkins back in to pick up the pace. A low bridge drops Dawkins to the floor though and we take a break.

Back with Dawkins fighting out of a double arm crank but getting dropkicked down just as fast. Berto plants Dawkins again and the Gory Bomb/flipping cutter gets two, with Ford having to make the save. Dawkins finally gets in a shot of his own and it's back to Ford to take over. Ford has to flip out of a super double gorilla press attempt and a superplex gets two on Garza. Dawkins hits his own flip dive and Ford's frog splash is good for the pin at 14:32.

Rating: C+. This got more time than I was expecting and it wound up being a good enough, back and forth match. Los Garza aren't likely to move up the ranks very far, but they're good enough to make someone else look better in the ring. The division on Smackdown has gotten that much better, though I'm

really hoping we don't get some big ladder match at Wrestlemania.

HHH Hall Of Fame video.

Pretty Deadly runs into DIY, who offer to help them win the titles next week in exchange for a title shot. Pretty Deadly: "NO BOY!" The Motor City Machine Guns pop up to gloat.

Here's what's coming next week.

Here is Roman Reigns, with Paul Heyman, for a chat. CM Punk took him out at the Royal Rumble so Reigns took him out on Raw. Seth Rollins tried to kill him so Reigns tried to kill him. He'll be out here if anyone has anything to say to him so here is Rollins in person. After a lot of the fans singing Rollins' theme song, Rollins says Reigns should have let him finish Punk off because Punk is that dangerous.

The reality is Rollins and Reigns cannot coexist in the same place at the same time. They should write another chapter in their story but here is Punk to interrupt. Punk says neither of them have beaten him without the other's help. Reigns was tossed out of the Royal Rumble where it was every man for himself. That was after Punk saved Reigns' family at WarGames, and he's still owed a favor of course.

Punk dives on Reigns and the fight starts fast, with Rollins getting involved as well. Referees break it up and Punk points to the Wrestlemania sign (Heyman: "NO!"), leaving Rollins to fight with Reigns. Rollins breaks away and points at the sign before going after Punk. Reigns drops both of them with the steps and points as well, with the brawl having to be broken up again to end the show. I'm not big on triple threats, but they've done a good job of making me want to see these three fight. There is a reason for them to want to get at each other and that makes for a much better story.

Overall Rating: B-. The crowd wasn't as hot as it was last

week but they were certainly there enough to keep up the interest. This show was more about getting things ready for Wrestlemania and they added one match, with another being all but confirmed. That's a good way to go, along with some other things being pushed forward. Wrestlemania is starting to come together, and other shows like this should help it along even more.

Results

Damian Priest/Jimmy Uso b. Drew McIntyre/Shinsuke Nakamura – South Of Heaven to Nakamura

Braun Strowman b. Jacob Fatu via DQ when Solo Sikoa interfered
Piper Niven b. Zelina Vega – Crossbody

Liv Morgan b. Jade Cargill – Oblivion

Street Profits b. Los Garza – Frog splash to Berto

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Smackdown – April 12, 2001: He Got It

Smackdown

Date: April 12, 2001

Location: First Union Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Attendance: 14,626

Commentators: Michael Cole, Tazz

This was another request for reasons I don't exactly remember. We are freshly off Wrestlemania X7 and the big story is the Two Man Power Trip (all four of them) are running roughshod over the company. That is going to create some issues and it is time for someone to fight back. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Vince McMahon apologizing to Linda McMahon on Raw, only for Linda to say she wanted a divorce. Like that marriage could ever fall apart. Lita called what Linda did inspiring and got put in a six person tag, teaming with the Hardys against HHH/Steve Austin/Stephanie McMahon. Lita pinned Stephanie and destruction ensued as a result. Austin beating on Lita with a chair and giving her a Stunner are limited to still shots.

Opening sequence.

Here are HHH and Stephanie to get things going, with Steve Austin joining them. HHH talks about how things were pretty great just about a month ago, with The Rock and Chris Jericho as champions and Mick Foley as Commissioner. Now things have changed though, as The Rock is gone and they have taken the titles, just like they wanted to. The Hardys and Lita tried to stand in their way and look what happened.

Everywhere HHH goes or in "the dirt sheets", he keeps hearing about how they went too far with Lita. The heck with that, because they will tell you when they crossed the line. HHH is that d*** good, Austin is that d*** cold and they are that d*** unstoppable. Eh not sure about that catchphrase. Austin is tired of all the same questions and talks about attacking the Rock at Wrestlemania because he wanted to.

Then Jim Ross asked why Austin did what he did but Austin is tired of Ross riding his coattails. He did it because he could and no one was there to stop him. Then the Hardys tried to do

something about it and look what happened. Beating Lita with a chair was the best feeling he has had in a long time and there is no one back there who can stop them. Austin talks about how he could have done that to anyone in the audience but here is Jeff Hardy to lay out all three of them with a chair (Twist of Fate for Stephanie). It was a good, evil promo, but the Hardys felt WAY below these two and it was showing.

Post break, HHH storms into William Regal's office and demands Jeff Hardy tonight, no matter what it takes.

Spike Dudley vs. Albert

The Dudley Boyz and the rest of X Factor are here and this is the fallout from Albert taking out Spike in a tag match on Raw. Spike forearms away to start and is dropped with a single shot to the face. Albert throws him across the ring (with a great Spike sell) and then drops him face first for the big crash. Spike avoids a charge but gets crotched on top to cut him off. Somehow Spike manages to knock him off the top though and a top rope double stomp connects. The Dudley Dog gets two as everyone starts fighting on the floor. Albert shrugs it off and hits the pump kick for the pin at 2:46.

Post match the Dudleys give Albert What's Up. The table is loaded up but X-Pac takes out D-Von, followed by a double superkick to Bubba. Spike goes through the table.

Debra is looking for Jim Ross.

Don't Try This At Home.

William Regal tells Jeff Hardy that he has an Intercontinental Title shot against HHH tonight (works for him) but if he ever besmirches (yes BESMIRCHES) Stephanie McMahon again, he will never get another title shot. Jeff leaves and Big Show comes in, demanding Undertaker and Kane tonight. Regal makes the match, with Show getting to pick any tag team he wants for a handicap match.

Crash Holly isn't worried about Rhino, who Gores him into a steel door.

Debra comes in to see Jim Ross, who is fine with her being here despite what her husband did to him. She apologizes for what Steve Austin did and insists that she wasn't involved. Ross knows that because he knows what kind of a person Debra is and knows she wouldn't have anything to do with it. Austin comes in and accuses him of flirting with Debra before throwing him out (of his own dressing room). Debra isn't sure what to do but Austins says they're leaving now. They leave during the break.

Stephanie McMahon is annoyed at Jeff Hardy breaking her earring so HHH says he'll take care of this. The match is officially dedicated to Stephanie and threatens the trainer. Stephanie: "Go get em Hunter. I love you." The whiny voice made that as perfect as it could have been.

Women's Title: Chyna vs. Ivory

Chyna is defending and Ivory has Steven Richards with her. Ivory tries to go up but gets slammed down for the early crash. Chyna's handspring elbow misses though and Ivory grabs a bulldog. The chinlock stays on the neck (which is still banged up from earlier in the year) but Chyna powers up without much trouble. Richards gets involved by pulling Chyna to the floor for a clothesline though and Ivory gets a VERY delayed one. Chyna comes back with a suplex and some clotheslines as Ivory is getting ragdolled here. The gorilla press drop retains the title at 3:53.

Rating: C. This was somehow more competitive than their Wrestlemania match but it showed the problem with Chyna as champion: no one was going to be able to give her any serious challenge. Ivory was hardly a slouch and she got crushed here, which would happen with anyone. Chyna wouldn't be long for the company, and it would take Trish Stratus of all people to save

the division.

Post match Richards goes after Chyna and gets laid out for his efforts.

Big Show tries to get the APA to team with him tonight. That's not happening, so Show accuses the APA of being scared. They're just too busy though and tell him to shut the door as he goes.

Chris Benoit and Chris Jericho say they aren't rocket scientists so they know William Regal is coming for revenge. Benoit says let's go with it.

Edge And Christian/William Regal/Kurt Angle vs. Chris Benoit/Chris Jericho

Benoit and Jericho charge right in and Benoit suplexes Edge, setting up a Lionsault from Jericho. With the other villains cut off, Benoit adds the Swan Dive for two with Christian making the save. We settle down to Regal stomping on Benoit and it's off to Angle for more of the same.

Angle gets in a German suplex but Benoit northern lights suplexes Christian as commentary ignores the match to talk about Hardy vs. HHH. Benoit gets over to Jericho for the tag to pick up the pace and we get back to back Walls and Crossfaces on various villains. That takes a bit too long though and Angle Angle Slams Jericho for the pin at 3:28.

Rating: B-. There was a lot going on in this one but it was more of an angle than a competitive match. The bigger deal here was making Regal, and presumably Vince McMahon and pals, look evil so that the Canadian Chrises would have someone to fight. Moving them up into the main event scene is not a bad idea and putting them in spots like this, where they held their own for a bit, is only going to make that push feel more warranted.

Post match Regal and Angle go after them again, only to get pulled into various submissions to make them tap.

Test wishes Jeff Hardy luck, as he wishes he could have done that to Stephanie more than once.

We recap Linda McMahon asking Vince for a divorce on Raw. This at least seems to be different than the opening video.

Rhyno vs. Hardcore Holly

This is over Rhyno attacking the other Hollys. They waste no time in starting the brawl until Rhyno charges into a boot in the corner. The fight goes to the mat before they get up and chop it out. Holly gets in his hanging kick to the ribs and they brawl into the corner again. Rhyno fights out of the corner but the Gore hits both of them. Cue Molly Holly with a trashcan so Hardcore can send Rhyno running. Apparently Rhyno was disqualified when he Gored the referee, so ignoring the lack of a bell, we'll say it ended around 2:10.

Big Show asks Grandmaster Sexay and Steve Blackman to team with him tonight. Blackman has his nunchucks and Show thinks better of it.

Albert is the guest host at WWF New York. Not that we actually see him, but that's what commentary tells us.

Jeff Hardy would love to be the Intercontinental Champion, but tonight is about payback and revenge.

The Right To Censor recruits Test, but he's good on not having to give up everything and dress like them. He will take a match with Val Venis though.

Big Show settles for Kai En Tai. Apparently they think he's Godzilla.

King Of The Ring sold out in four hours.

Big Show/Kai En Tai vs. Brothers Of Destruction

Funaki starts for the team but Undertaker wants Show. Instead it's Kane coming in to beat up Taka but Funaki grabs the leg. Show tags himself in and hits a clothesline but Kane sits up, so we'll have Funaki pulled in by Show instead. With Show leaving, it's a double chokeslam to Kai En Tai. Kane tries his own Last Ride but just drops Funaki behind him instead. Undertaker shows him the proper method on Taka as Show is furious. Kane hits a better Last Ride to pin Funaki at 2:55. This was goofy fun.

Long video on the XFL playoffs.

Val Venis vs. Test

The Right To Censor is here with Venis, who jumps Test to start. They slug it out until Godfather trips Test up, allowing the RTC to hammer away from the floor. Venis chokes away and cranks on both arms at once to keep Test down. That doesn't last long as Test is back up with a tilt-a-whirl slam, only for Venis to send him outside. Back in and Test hits the pumphandle slam so Godfather offers a distraction. Richards superkicks Venis by mistake and here is Raven, who the RTC tried to recruit on Raw, to give Richards a DDT. The big boot finishes Venis at 3:28.

Rating: C+. For a match between Test and Val Venis, they certainly put a lot in there. That's a nice thing to see as it was a bit of a throwback to the Attitude Era style, which can work well in small doses. The RTC isn't long for the world, and to be fair there wasn't much else for them to do anyway. Not a great match, but it was fun while it lasted.

Post match the RTC gets in a big brawl of their own, with referees not being able to break it up.

We get another recap of what led to Jeff Hardy getting an Intercontinental Title shot.

Intercontinental Title: HHH vs. Jeff Hardy

HHH is defending and they're both alone for a change. The early slugout goes to HHH, who knocks Hardy outside. Back in and Hardy hits the legdrop between the legs into the basement dropkick before hammering away in the corner. HHH shoves him out for the big crash but the Whisper In The Wind gives Hardy two. A missed charge sends Hardy back to the floor, where he's fine enough to send HHH into the steps.

The dive off the barricade is cut off with a powerslam out of the air, only for Hardy to get up...and get powerslammed out of the air again. Might want to try something different there chum. Back in and the jumping knee cuts Hardy off again but this time HHH would rather hammer away than cover. A hard whip into the corner drops Hardy again and HHH grabs a sleeper (more like an awkward hug really).

Hardy jawbreaks his way to freedom and...well one of them grabs a legsweep. Hardy goes up so HHH throws the referee into the ropes for the break, albeit not a DQ due to reasons of convenience. The referee gets shoved down but here is Matt Hardy (not supposed to be here) to chair HHH in the head. One heck of a Swanton gives Jeff the pin and the title in a huge upset at 8:07.

Rating: B-. This was mostly a HHH squash with a screwy ending but dang the fans went nuts when Hardy won. It was the first sign that there might be something to Jeff on his own, but it was also quite the surprise as you do not see a major heel faction lose so soon. That's an interesting way to go, even if HHH would get the title back the next week. Granted there was something a bit bigger waiting on HHH and Austin later on in the form of Undertaker and Kane, but for now, good surprise here.

Overall Rating: B-. While I'm not big on the Austin heel run, it's quite the fun flashback as you can see the incredible

talent pool that the WWF had available. The amazing thing is that it would get even better in about two months with the Invasion and...ok so it didn't exactly work out. This wasn't some classic show, but it was interesting to see where the company was going in the fallout of Wrestlemania, especially with Rock gone. I'll be back around this era one day and it was fun to look back at it again.

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Smackdown – March 14, 2025: Viva

Smackdown

Date: March 14, 2025

Location: Olympic Arena Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

We're taped from Europe this week, which is going to be the case for a little while now. That should make for some interesting situations and we are just over a month away from Wrestlemania. Cody Rhodes is here to talk about John Cena on MizTV, which feels like it is a way to set up a match tonight. Let's get to it.

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

A bunch of people came to work, but in Spain.

Here is the new US Champion LA Knight for a chat. The fans are VERY happy to see him and give him one of those cool singing welcomes. Knight: "YEAH!" This is the first Smackdown in Barcelona (the fans sing again, with Knight quipping that it's a tough crowd tonight) and he is worldwide.

Cue Jimmy Uso to interrupt, saying he needs a rope to Wrestlemania so he wants to challenge for the title right now. Cue Solo Sikoa to say Jacob Fatu deserves a title shot. Sikoa calls Jimmy the failure of the family but Jimmy says the failure was trusting Sikoa as his little brother. The brawl is on with the bad guys in control but Braun Strowman runs in for the save. Nick Aldis comes out to announce a six man tag (with some Spanish thrown in).

Jimmy Uso/Braun Strowman/LA Knight vs. Solo Sikoa/Jacob Fatu/Tama Tonga

We're joined in progress with Uso coming in to jump over Sikoa in the corner and slug away. The ten punches in the corner rock Sikoa but a distraction lets him come back with Spinning Solo. Fatu's backplash sets up Tonga's slingshot hilo and Sikoa adds a running Umaga Attack in the corner. Uso gets in a shot of his own though and hands it off to Knight to pick up the pace.

The jumping neckbreaker and DDT get one on Fatu, who is back up to knock Knight silly. Knight knocks him right back down though and hits the top rope elbow. Fatu drops him again and we take a break. Back with Tonga taking Knight into the corner for a running splash. Fatu hits his own Umaga Attack but Knight manages to suplex Sikoa. Strowman comes in to clean house, including the running shots on the floor. Knight and Uso take out the others, leaving Strowman to powerslam Tonga for the pin at 10:09.

Rating: C+. This was a house show style match and Strowman

gets to win for the popular guys. Tonga is more or less there for the sake of taking the falls for the team as we are getting closer to the split at the top of...whatever Sikoa and company are calling themselves. The match was nothing great, but it did what it needed to do in getting the show started off well.

Post match Sikoa takes Strowman down and Fatu goes after him as well, including the triple jump moonsault. It works so well that Fatu does it again.

We get a look at HHH before his Hall Of Fame induction.

We look back at Naomi admitting she attacked Jade Cargill, leaving Bianca Belair in tears and earning Naomi another beating from Cargill.

Cargill has a sitdown interview in an empty arena earlier today, saying she is physically ready to go. Naomi suggesting that she was the victim made Cargill sick because she remembers being attacked and seeing Naomi run away. She couldn't believe that Naomi would team with Belair like nothing happened so she had to take matters into her own hands. Liv Morgan and Raquel Rodriguez come in to mock her, with Cargill issuing the challenge for next week.

B-Fab, in English and Spanish, is ready to start her legacy by beating Charlotte.

B-Fab vs. Charlotte

They take their time staring each other down to start before Charlotte powers her into the corner. B-Fab comes back with a half nelson slam for two and Charlotte rolls outside as we take a break. Back with Charlotte stomping away before taking her down with a neckbreaker. The chinlock goes on and Charlotte even manages to mock the crowd at the same time.

We take another break and come back with Charlotte hitting the

figure four necklock faceplants to keep B-Fab in trouble. It's too early for the Figure Eight though and B-Fab fires off some right hands. A pump kick gives B-Fab two but Charlotte is back with a superkick. Natural Selection into the Figure Eight finishes B-Fab at 8:22.

Rating: C+. B-Fab was trying here but this was all about getting Charlotte her first singles win in a very long time. That's not a bad thing and B-Fab held her own in a longer match than you usually see from her. Charlotte is on her way back to the title picture at Wrestlemania though and this was more about letting the fans know how good she can be, again.

Post match Charlotte won't let go and it's Tiffany Stratton in for the save. Security can't break it up and the fight stays on, with Charlotte diving off the announcers' table to take Stratton down. Stratton hits her own dive and they're FINALLY split up. I would hope that they're wearing different colors at Wrestlemania because they were both in pink here and I was having trouble telling them apart.

Drew McIntyre blames Damian Priest for all of his problems in the last year.

Here's the Miz for MizTV but Charlotte and Stratton are still fighting at the entrance. Security breaks it up again, only for Stratton to get up on the video screen for a big flip dive. Stratton shouts that there is a new queen in town to finally wrap it up.

And now, MizTV, with Miz doing the introduction in Spanish to continue a trend tonight. Miz talks about how his guest should have taken the Rock up on his offer but then got beaten down by two great rappers instead. Here is Cody Rhodes, with the fans singing his theme song in one of those shows of respect that never gets old. Miz goes even heelier than usual by saying he doesn't have time for the singalong, which earns him a quick Cross Rhodes. Cody takes off his jacket to reveal a

BARCELONA NIGHTMARE shirt (the fans approve) before saying he only wants to talk to John Cena, so he'll see him Monday.

Earlier today, Shinsuke Nakamura told Nick Aldis he wanted a rematch when Damian Priest came in to say he wanted Drew McIntyre. Priest doesn't like what he thinks Nakamura is saying so Aldis makes the match for later. As usual, Priest comes off like he is always ready to fight and that makes him feel more important.

We get a teaser for someone who looks a lot like Rey Fenix. Interesting that he might not be on the same show as Penta.

Damian Priest vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

They trade arm cranking to start until Nakamura takes him into the corner for Good Vibrations. A running clothesline puts Nakamura on the floor though and we take an early break. Back with Priest dropping him face first onto the barricade, only to miss a charge back inside. Nakamura hits the middle rope knee for two and it's time to choke on the ropes.

We take a break and come back with Nakamura grabbing a chinlock. An enziguri takes Priest down again but he catches Nakamura with the lifting Downward Spiral. They go outside with Priest sending him over the announcer's table, setting up the Old School high crossbody back inside. Back up and they trade strikes to the face but here is Drew McIntyre to sit on the announcers' table. The distraction lets Nakamura load up Kinshasa, which is reversed into South Of Heaven. That's enough for McIntyre to come in and jump Priest for the DQ at 8:42.

Rating: B-. This was about two guys getting to go after each other and hit the other rather hard until they got to the finish. In this case that's how it should have gone as you don't want Priest to lose, but Nakamura getting pinned twice in a row would be a bit much. The match itself was a good back and forth fight though, which shouldn't be a surprise given

whom was in there.

Post match McIntyre goes for Priest's eyes, allowing Nakamura to hit Kinshasa. Nakamura leaves and McIntyre wrecks Priest. McIntyre goes to leave but sees Priest getting back up, earning himself a Claymore and some yelling.

DIY says they make the tag team division the best in the world and they'll prove it again tonight. The Motor City Machine Guns come in to say they'll be waiting.

Chelsea Green is glad that her administration is at full force despite everything she has had to go through. Zelina Vega comes in to say she wants a title shot but gets a match with Piper Niven next week instead. Works for Vega, who is still coming for the title.

Randy Orton vs. Carmelo Hayes

Hayes offers him a handshake but the fans want the RK0. Orton tries for the handshake but Hayes pulls it away, earning himself quite the beating. The belly to back drop onto the announcers' table has Hayes in trouble and we take an early break. Back with Orton dropping him on the table again but Hayes gets in a cheap shot to take over. The fans do not like Hayes and rhythmically chant about it as we take another break.

We come back again with Orton fighting out of a chinlock but getting put right back into it. Orton fights up and hits the powerslam before pulling Hayes out of the air for another powerslam. The hanging DDT sends Hayes outside and he grabs a Stunner over the top rope. Nothing But Net misses so Hayes settles for the springboard DDT for two instead. Hayes goes up top again and gets superplexed back down but the RK0 is countered into the First 48. Then the RK0 connects to give Orton the pin at 10:22.

Rating: B-. While Hayes is losing a lot of these big matches,

he is staying in these matches and looking good against bigger stars. What matters is that he could be moved up to the next level with just a win or two. Other than that, there is something to be said about having a younger star like Hayes who can go out there and hang with these names, though a win here or there would be nice.

Post match Orton gives him another RKO to even the score a bit. The Punt is loaded up but Kevin Owens runs in for the save. Owens bails before violence can ensue.

Jacob Fatu wants one more match with Braun Strowman next week.

We get a mysterious smoky vignette with the number 4. Or is that a slightly slanted A?

Here is Gunther for a chat. Gunther says that the Road To Wrestlemania Europe starts here and as the greatest European wrestler of all time...he wishes they could be in Madrid instead. Gunther mocks Jey Uso as having no substance and asks for "a kid" to come face him, meaning Axiom gets a rare main roster appearance.

Gunther vs. Axiom

Non-title and Axiom, a masked high flier from Spain, is one half of the NXT Tag Team Champions. Axiom is a bit tentative to start before going to the mat and getting in a quick kick. Gunther misses the chop in the corner and Axiom strikes away as the fans are losing their minds over this stuff. A chop cuts Axiom off again but the fans are right there as he fires off forearms.

The Boston crab has Axiom in trouble and Gunther flips it into an STF. Gunther goes after the mask, which wakes Axiom up enough for a missile dropkick. A running knee connects but Gunther dropkicks him down. The dropkick gets two but Axiom catches Gunther on top, with a super hurricanrana connecting. The Golden Ratio (superkick) gives Axiom two so he cranks on

the arms. That's enough for Gunther, who hits a powerbomb, the clothesline, and another powerbomb for the pin at 9:24.

Rating: B. The fans were crazy into this and they were carrying this even higher than the two of them were getting in the first place. At the same time, Axiom was more than holding his own out there to make for a heck of a match. Gunther can work well with anyone and having him shut down a smaller high flier like this makes sense. Good match, with awesome crowd reactions.

Post match Gunther sleepers axiom for the knockout.

We look back at Roman Reigns accidentally helping Seth Rollins beat Cm punk in a cage match on Raw. Then Paul Heyman helped Punk up, earning Punk one heck of a beating from Reigns.

Here is Heyman for a chat, declaring that today is Roman Reigns Day, because it is the release day for WWE2K25. He knows everyone is going to go home and play the game, but please wait until the show is over because he likes to keep the ratings high during his segments. Heyman moves on to CM Punk, who is his friend, but it isn't CM Punk Day, nor will it ever be Seth Rollins Day. If you have a problem with that, you can say it to his face next week in Italy.

Here's what's coming next week.

Legado del Fantasma wishes the Street Profits luck. The Profits are ready to get the Tag Team Titles.

Gunther tells Jimmy Uso to get Jey Uso to not challenge him at Wrestlemania or bad things will happen.

Tag Team Titles: DIY vs. Street Profits

The Profits are challenging. Dawkins and Ciampa start things off with Dawkins unloading in the corner to start fast. The assisted moonsault gives Ford two and it's back to Dawkins, who chases Gargano on the floor. That's enough for Ciampa to

hammer away back inside as Pretty Deadly is shown watching. Ford comes back in but gets nailed by Gargano before Ciampa drops him ribs first across the top rope.

The Fairy Tale Ending is blocked though and Ford kicks Ciampa away, allowing the tag off to Dawkins. House is quickly cleaned but Ford's 450 only hits raised knees. Back up and a Doomsday Blockbuster gives Ford two with Ciampa making the save. The Fairy Tale Ending/superkick combination gets two on Dawkins but Meet In The Middle misses. Ford's frog splash connects for the pin and the titles at 11:52.

Rating: B-. This had to happen at some point as the Profits had been so close to the titles so many times, only to come up short. It's nice to see them getting the gold, as it spices things up in the division. Odds are we wind up with some kind of a big five team ladder match at Wrestlemania, but for now, this is the right move as it is long overdue.

Overall Rating: B. Here you had a show where the crowd boosted things up that far, as the fans were going nuts all night long. The title change at the end made things feel that much more important and it was a big way to get things going with the six shows in Europe. It's not a great show, but the fans were hot and you can see where a lot of this stuff is going, which is nice to see.

Results

Jimmy Uso/Braun Strowman/LA Knight b. Solo Sikoa/Jacob Fatu/Tama Tonga – Running powerslam to Tonga

Charlotte b. B-Fab – Figure Eight

Damian Priest b. Shinsuke Nakamura via DQ when Drew McIntyre interfered

Randy Orton b. Carmelo Hayes – RK0

Gunther b. Axiom – Powerbomb

Street Profits b. DIY – Frog splash to Gargano

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Smackdown – March 7, 2025: The Fallout

Smackdown

Date: March 7, 2025

Location: Wells Fargo Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Joe Tessitore, Wade Barrett

It's pretty rare that you see an event take place which turns WWE completely upside down, but that is what we are dealing with following Elimination Chamber. John Cena turned evil for the first time in over twenty years and there are a lot of people who are less than thrilled with the whole thing. There is a good chance we'll be dealing with that here, plus the US Title is on the line as LA Knight gets his rematch against Shinsuke Nakamura. Let's get to it.

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

Earlier today, as people were coming to work, Drew McIntyre jumped Damian Priest.

Elimination Chamber recap, though we don't see the Cena beatdown.

Here is Randy Orton to get things going. Orton talks about how crazy things have been lately but ever since he started, John Cena has always been at the top. Now though, he's just a bottom for Rock, which gives a new meaning to the term "Rock Bottom". That brings him to Kevin Owens, with Orton admiring the wrestler but not liking the person. Orton thinks Owens' jealousy has destroyed him, like Owens' jealousy made him try to destroy Cody Rhodes and Sami Zayn.

That brings us back to Orton, who had to come back from a career ending surgery. Owens was trying to give Zayn such a career ending injury at Elimination Chamber. That's what brought Orton out, and he was hearing those voices for the first time in many years. Now he's ready to prove that Pat McAfee is the second best punter in WWE. This was a very serious and fired up Orton, which you don't see very often.

Chelsea Green yells at Nick Aldis about her title match tonight but Tiffany Stratton doesn't want to hear it. Piper Niven accuses Stratton of censorship and gets a match tonight as a result.

Tiffany Stratton vs. Piper Niven

Non-title. Stratton jumps over her to start and tells Niven to come on, earning herself a big shoulder. Niven's backsplash misses and Stratton hits a basement dropkick but Niven sends her to the floor. The flip dive off the apron wipes Stratton out and we take an early break. Back with Stratton firing off some clotheslines and a handspring elbow in the corner. Another basement dropkick gives Stratton another two and the Swanton connects for another near fall. Niven powers her down and loads up the Vader Bomb, only to miss so Stratton can nail the Prettiest Moonsault Ever for the pin at 7:43.

Rating: C+. Well, the fans are responding to Stratton a bit more positively so things are at least going in the right direction. It's another example of the simple, classic story

here with Stratton having to find a way around the monster. That worked out well, though the buzzsaw that is Charlotte is still waiting for her at Wrestlemania.

Post match Charlotte runs in and takes out Stratton's knee, setting up the Figure eight to make it even worse.

Nick Aldis explains the issues in the tag division and yes he does have a chart to explain the whole story (which is actually rather helpful). The solution: a #1 contenders match this week and the Street Profits (not in the #1 contenders match) get their title shot next week.

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

For the #1 contendership. Angel tags himself in to start and is immediately dropkicked by Wilson but Garza TAKES OFF HIS PANTS and all six get in to brawl. Pretty Deadly and the Guns are kicked to the floor, setting up the stereo dives from Los Garza as we take a break. Back with Shelley taking Pretty Deadly down, allowing the tag off to Sabin, who catches Berto with a tornado DDT for two. Everything breaks down and we hit the parade of knockdowns until Sabin hits a dive onto a bunch of people. Skull & Bones is loaded up but Prince reverses into a backslide for the clean pin on Sabin at 7:06.

Rating: B-. There was a lot of action for such little time, especially when you factor out the break. Pretty Deadly winning isn't the biggest shock but them winning clean certainly is, as that is just not something that happens. This sets up some interesting possibilities, which is a nice sign for the division. There are several stories going on at once, though the reactions to them are only so strong thus far.

We look back at Jade Cargill returning at Elimination Chamber and beating Naomi down.

We look at some reactions to John Cena's turn.

Here is Bianca Belair for a chat. She should be on top of the world because she is on the way to Wrestlemania but two of her best friends are fighting. Belair doesn't believe that Naomi did this and Jade Cargill won't talk to her so she needs some answers from Naomi right now. Cue Naomi, who says she and Belair need to get their Tag Team Titles back. Belair flat out asks Naomi if she did it but Naomi goes on a rant about how Cargill took advantage of Cargill or not. She doesn't say yes or no so Belair wants a flat out answer. Naomi admits that she did it and Belair is in tears.

Naomi said she did it for Belair, who says they are done and walks out. As Belair leaves, Naomi gets angrier and says she should have pushed Cargill sooner and harder. Naomi: "YOU UNGRATEFUL B****!" Cue Jade Cargill, who shares a quick look with Belair (whose face seems to say "do what you have to do, I'm out") and Naomi is quickly destroyed again. Naomi as a villain is an interesting way to go, but she doesn't seem to be the new big bad or anything close to it.

We look at the issues between Drew McIntyre and Damian Priest.

McIntyre blames Priest for costing him the chance to be the World Champion at Wrestlemania.

We look at Cody Rhodes surprising Lex Luger with an induction into the WWE Hall Of Fame. Unfortunately, we don't get any Summerslam 1993 balloons.

Charlotte talks about how the women's division is soft but B-Fab comes in to say no one is interested in bowing down to her. The challenge is issued for next week. I'm not a big fan of Charlotte, but B-Fab is going to get massacred here, and that's what should happen.

Braun Strowman vs. Solo Sikoa

Sikoa bounces off of Strowman to start and is knocked to the floor for his efforts. The ensuing charge sends Strowman into

the steps though and Sikoa adds a running Umaga attack as we take a break. Back with Sikoa managing a Samoan drop, allowing him to stop for some posing. Another Umaga attack connects but Sikoa takes too long loading up a third one, allowing Strowman to run him over. Strowman hits the running powerslam but Tama Tonga comes in for the DQ at 6:56.

Rating: C+. Again, there was only so much that could be done with so little time but Sikoa was wrestling more of a power style here, which worked well for him. The ending was a good thing to see as you don't need Strowman losing another match. I'm not sure how far Strowman can go against the evil group, but at least he looked dominant enough at different parts of the match.

Post match Strowman clears the ring but here is Jacob Fatu for the big showdown. The brawl is on with Strowman getting the better of things to start, only to be sent over the barricade. They fight over to the tech area and Strowman slips out of a Samoan drop, setting up a chokeslam through a table (and through the water bottles). Fatu gets up and backs away anyway.

LA Knight is ready to face Shinsuke Nakamura and get the US Title back. All it takes is one BFT to put Nakamura back to factory settings and it's time to give Old Glory a better representation than it's had lately.

Chelsea Green yells at Piper Niven for not being ready for the street fight. Zelina Vega comes in to say she's coming for whomever comes out as Women's US Champion tonight.

Women's US Title: Chelsea Green vs. Michin

Green is defending in a street fight (and yes she is dressed as Cactus Jack from the 2000 Royal Rumble because she is that awesome) and has Piper Niven with her. Michin on the other hand is in an Eagles jersey and brings the weapons with her to start slugging away before the bell. They get inside for said

bell and Green gets drop toehold face first into an open chair. It's already time for a table (yeah you knew that was coming) and we take a break.

Back with Michin spraying her with a fire extinguisher and loading up another table, only for Niven to break it up. Green manages to go Coast To Coast but cue B-Fab to beat on Niven on the floor. Michin fights up with kendo stick and hammers away. A Cannonball crushes a trashcan against Green for two and now the table is brought in.

Eat Defeat sends Green onto the table, which breaks before anything happens. Michin hits a top rope backplash onto Green onto the broken table but someone in a hoodie (those freaking hoodies) pulls Green out. A kick to the head rocks Michin and it's Alba Fyre, apparently now part of Green's team. Fyre hits a Canadian Destroyer onto a chair and Green retains at 10:03.

Rating: B-. This was the usual street fight style match but what matters in the end was about having Fyre joining the team. With Isla Dawn gone, it's nice to see Fyre having something to do, as she's far too talented to be left off the shows. If nothing else, Green continues to be awesome, with the Jack cosplay being outstanding.

Santos Escobar isn't happy with Los Garza. Andrade comes in to seemingly recruit Berto.

TKO is launching a boxing promotion in partnership with Saudi Arabia.

We get the long look at the John Cena turn.

Here is Cody Rhodes (with a HORRIBLE looking eye) for a chat. Rhodes talks about how he didn't see what happened at Elimination Chamber coming. John Cena turned on him after earning the title shot at Wrestlemania. Rhodes spent two years driving Cena around to learn everything he could.

Now though, Cena has given up and, with Rhodes trying to keep his composure, he talks about how Cena had acted like his friend. Then at some point, Cena said the title was going to get heavier every day and now Cena believes that he is the last of his kind. Now the title has never felt lighter so if Cena wants some, come get some. This was the fired up Cody that it had to be and it worked well enough.

Miz pitches Nick Aldis an interview with Cody Rhodes next week on Melo Don't MizTV. Carmelo Hayes comes in to mock Randy Orton, who pops up and gets a match with Hayes next week.

Saturday Night's Main Event is back on May 24.

Drew McIntyre vs. Jimmy Uso

Jimmy jumps him to start and knocks McIntyre to the floor, where a dive is cut off with a right hand. A quick charge sends McIntyre over the announcers' table and we take a break. Back with Jimmy hitting a Samoan drop and nailing the running Umaga attack. A superkick gives Jimmy two but the Superfly Splash misses. The Claymore finishes Jimmy at 7:16.

Rating: C+. This was a win that McIntyre has been missing after something of a string of losses and it evens things up after his loss to Uso a few weeks back. That's all this needed to be, as McIntyre is likely on to bigger and better things in the near future. Jimmy still needs something to do, and a loss like this isn't the best sign for his immediate future.

Post match Damian Priest runs in to jump McIntyre. Security can't quite keep them apart and Priest gets in a few more shots.

Shinsuke Nakamura is ready to finish LA Knight for good.

Video on DIY vs. the Street Profits for the Tag Team Titles next week.

DIY is ready to retain the titles next week because they are

the best team. They hold a moment of silence for the Street Profits, with Byron Saxton screwing it up.

Here's what's coming next week.

US Title: LA Knight vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

Knight is defending and knees him down to start but Knight is back up with some right hands. They go to the floor, with Nakamura hitting a running knee to take over again. The sliding German suplex drops Knight again but Knight knocks him outside, this time for a baseball slide.

We take a break and come back with Knight hitting his jumping neckbreaker into a powerslam into the jumping elbow for two. Nakamura cuts off the superplex attempt though and hits a nasty belly to back superplex for another near fall. Kinshasa is cut off so Nakamura goes up, only for Knight to run the ropes for the superplex. There's the top rope elbow but Nakamura heads outside to grab a chair.

The referee takes that away so Nakamura tries the mist, which hits the referee by mistake. Knight's rollup gets no count so Nakamura kicks him in the head again and a Meiko Satomura Scorpio Rising connects. Nakamura grabs the chair again but gets caught with the BFT, meaning another referee can run in to count the pin and give Knight the title back at 11:10.

Rating: B-. They did a nice job with the fake out of having the rollup with the referee down, only to have Knight get the title back anyway. It's a bit of a weird way to go as Nakamura only won the title a few months ago and now Knight has it back. That's good for Knight though, as he was kind of floating around without much to do. It's a big win for him and hopefully he gets to have a bit of a better reign this time around.

The big celebration ends the show.

Overall Rating: B-. It wasn't a great show but they had to deal with the huge moment from Elimination Chamber. You can only get so far with that without having Cena or the Rock here, but that's going to be saved for a bigger moment down the line. The title change at the end was a big deal and we got some emotional promos. You can see a lot of Wrestlemania coming from here and this show took some steps in getting it ready. Now just take those next steps in the coming weeks and things should go well.

Results

Tiffany Stratton b. Piper Niven – Prettiest Moonsault Ever
Pretty Deadly b. Motor City Machine Guns and Los Garza – Backslide to Sabin

Braun Strowman b. Solo Sikoa via DQ when Tama Tonga interfered

Chelsea Green b. Michin – Canadian Destroyer onto a chair

Drew McIntyre b. Jimmy Uso – Claymore

LA Knight b. Shinsuke Nakamura – BFT onto a chair

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