

Smackdown – November 4, 2022: Taped Very Goodness

Smackdown

Date: November 4, 2022

Location: Enterprise Center, St. Louis, Missouri

Commentators: Wade Barrett, Michael Cole

It's time for a taped show as everyone else is already in Saudi Arabia. The main event this week is Gunther defending the Intercontinental Title against Rey Mysterio in a match that has some potential. Other than that, we probably get the final push towards Logan Paul challenging Roman Reigns for the Universal Title, because celebrity. Let's get to it.

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

Liv Morgan vs. Sonya Deville

No DQ. It's a brawl to start with Deville grabbing some kendo sticks and driving Morgan into the apron. Back in and Deville unloads with the stick but Morgan is smiling. Morgan fights up and sticks her down, meaning it's table time. That's broken up and Deville puts the table back under the ring. Back up and Morgan hits a suicide dive to drop Deville and then she does it again. Now we can get the table set up with Liv driving her through it as we take a break.

We come back with a bunch of chairs in the ring and Deville hitting a running knee, followed by a middle rope knee for two. Liv fights back and hits a springboard Codebreaker for two but Deville powerbombs her onto the chairs for her own near fall. Another Codebreaker staggers Deville and Oblivion onto the chairs finishes for Morgan at 13:48.

Rating: C+. Good brawl, though I still can't get into Hardcore Liv. It's better than what they were doing with her as

champion but it still doesn't feel like the right way to go. Granted she is still getting reactions and the matches are good enough, so there might be something here if they keep developing the idea. The match was a pretty good brawl, but nothing that hasn't been done a dozen times this year alone.

We look back at Emma's return last week as she lost to Ronda Rousey.

Emma is excited to be back but Xia Li interrupts. Li calls her weak and is promptly shoved down.

Logan Paul's brother Jake Paul will be in his corner at Crown Jewel.

Video on Roman Reigns vs. Logan Paul, including a clip of Jake Paul showing up at the press conference.

The Viking Raiders are still coming back.

Ricochet vs. LA Knight

Before the match, Knight mocks the ring announcer's intro, allowing Ricochet to take him down. Ricochet throws him in and we get the opening bell, with a kick to the back rocking Knight. A few shots take Ricochet down though and Knight loads up a top rope Lionsault, only to crash hard. Ricochet knocks him to the floor and we take a break.

Back with Knight stomping away in the corner and hitting the jumping neckbreaker for two. Knight goes up but spends too much time talking, allowing Ricochet to jump up for a super hurricanrana. The running shooting star press gets two but Knight rolls him up with tights/the rope for the pin at 9:56.

Rating: C-. Hey look Ricochet loses again. That's just one of those things you have to get used to these days, though I can appreciate Knight getting a boost. Having him cheat in two ways is a good way to go and I like the ending, but the match wasn't exactly thrilling on the way there.

Sami Zayn hypes the Usos being ready to set the all time Tag Team Title reign but Jey Uso doesn't like his advice. Jey says they were champions before Sami and they'll be champions after him. Jimmy: "He's got a point Sami." The Usos leave and Sami asks "my dogs" to come back.

Bray Wyatt says he isn't used to sharing his feelings. It's new to him and he doesn't like people playing with him like that. We pause for an interruption from someone with a box and, after the camera gets hacked, Bray talks about getting annoyed at a driver who cut him off. The camera keeps cutting to the Wyatt logo as he rants about how he wants to break things because he can't handle himself.

Bray wants the guy to reach down into his soul and apologize to him for interrupting. The camera interruption gets a bit longer and the man apologizes, with Bray seemingly accepting and asking him to leave. We see a graphic saying Wyatt will be at Crown Jewel, which was announced on Raw. So are the camera cuts and weird graphics Bray's inner evil trying to escape as he tries to hold it back?

Here are the Usos for a chat. They are ready to become the longest reigning Tag Team Champions and, after an UCEY chant, we hear about how the next step is getting by the Brawling Brutes. Cue the New Day to say they're cheering for the Brutes tomorrow but if the Usos retain, the New Day has next. Cue the Brawling Brutes for the beatdown so Solo Sikoa and Sami Zayn come in for the save. Butch comes back up with some shillelagh shots but Sikoa takes him down and the Bloodline stands tall.

Rey Mysterio loves wrestling and is ready to fight back to win the Intercontinental Title.

Shayna Baszler vs. Natalya

Ronda Rousey is here with Baszler. Natalya gets taken down to start but manages to reverse the arm stomp into a rollup for two. Baszler goes right after the arm again though and takes

Natalya down, where Natalya is made to scratch her own head. That's broken up and Natalya hits the discus clothesline, only to get pulled into the Kirifuda Clutch for the tap at 4:09.

Rating: C. This was just a step above a squash for Baszler as she is heated up again. It would not surprise me to see her as the eventual challenger for Rousey, especially with Rousey as her inspiration. It's a different direction for Rousey and that is something she has desperately been needing. Now just give Baszler some women to crush and we should be fine.

Post match Natalya gets up and is blasted right back down.

Video on Drew McIntyre vs. Karrion Kross.

Here is MVP to introduce five unnamed opponents for Braun Strowman. Cue Strowman to run all five over and then chase MVP off. MVP's cane shot is shrugged off and Strowman breaks it in half. The running powerslam plants MVP as a way to keep him from being at Crown Jewel. No match.

Gunther is ready to beat Rey Mysterio and nothing will change because he will retain his title.

Legado del Fantasma isn't impressed by Shinsuke Nakamura helping Hit Row last week so it's time for some revenge.

Intercontinental Title: Rey Mysterio vs. Gunther

Gunther, with Imperium, is defending. The champ starts fast by going with the power and knocking Mysterio outside for an early break. Back with Rey being sent stomach first to the floor but coming back in for a crucifix bomb. Mysterio grabs a sleeper and Gunther is in trouble, so he climbs to the middle rope and crashes backwards to free himself and send us to another break.

We come back again with Rey managing a knockdown and hitting the top rope seated senton. A Lionsault gives Rey two and he counters a powerbomb into a hurricanrana for two. Another

powerbomb attempt is countered into a Code Red for two more and Gunther has had enough.

The running dropkick in the corner finally lets Gunther hit the powerbomb...for two, and Gunther is livid. Another powerbomb attempt is countered into a 619 attempt but Gunther kicks him away with a heck of a big boot. The big clothesline knocks Rey silly and retains the title at 18:17.

Rating: B+. These two know how to do the big man vs. little man stuff very well and they made it work here. Mysterio started off as an annoyance to Gunther and then became a threat near the end until Gunther went into beast mode to take him apart. That's a well told story with talented people doing their thing. What more could you ask for in a TV main event?

Overall Rating: C+. The main event helped this show a lot but there was only so much that could be done with a taped show before a pay per view that is all but set and not that great in the first place. Crown Jewel needs to come and go so we can move on to something else, which should be the case after Saturday. This show wasn't all that great, though Gunther vs. Rey was a rather strong main event.

Results

Liv Morgan b. Sonya Deville – Oblivion onto chairs

LA Knight b. Ricochet – Rollup while holding tights and the rope

Shayna Baszler b. Natalya – Kirifuda Clutch

Gunther b. Rey Mysterio – Clothesline

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Smackdown – October 7, 2022: One Eye Here, One Eye There, One Eye Somewhere Else

Smackdown

Date: October 7, 2022

Location: DCU Center, Worcester, Massachusetts

Commentators: Michael Cole, Wade Barrett

It's the season premiere of a show that has seasons in the loosest sense of the world. This week features a showdown between Roman Reigns and Logan Paul, plus a rematch from Clash At The Castle with Gunther defending the Intercontinental Title against Sheamus. One of these things should be awesome so let's get to it.

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

HHH is in the ring to get things going to say that there will be a time when you think everything is over but it is just the beginning. Welcome to Smackdown, where there is another QR code on the microphone cube.

Wade Barrett is introduced as the new member of the commentary teams. I've heard worse ideas.

With HHH gone, here is the Bloodline for a chat. Roman Reigns hits the catchphrase but gets cut off by Logan Paul, who stays on the apron. Reigns invites him in and the fans DO NOT like Paul. Reigns: "Don't worry, they did that to me years ago too." Paul Heyman is told to smarten Paul up, with Heyman saying that Logan (too many Paul's around here) is the Mr. T. and Cyndi Lauper of his day.

The good thing is that Logan brings in more eyes who can acknowledge Reigns, so he is a good thing. Heyman goes over some other online celebrities like Ben Shapiro who would not have the guts to fight Roman Reigns. He can't for Logan to be in a hospital bed, where he can acknowledge Reigns. Logan asks if Jey Uso is the Tribal Chief, which doesn't sit well with Reigns. Sami Zayn plays peacemaker and rants about Logan before promising that Reigns will crush him. Zayn hits the catchphrase as Logan leaves. I'm not sure what they were going for here but if the idea was to get Logan over, they might want to try again.

Solo Sikoa vs. Ricochet

Sikoa jumps Ricochet after his flipping entrance but gets sent outside for a dive, with Ricochet still having his vest on. A triangle dropkick puts Sikoa on the floor and Ricochet flips into the superhero pose. Ricochet starts fighting back but a springboard is broken up, dropping Ricochet on the back of his head on the apron (OUCH) and we take a break. Back with Ricochet fighting out of a chinlock and striking away. A superkick into a jumping knee drops Sikoa so Ricochet goes up, only to have his shooting star press countered into Spinning Solo for the pin at 8:40.

Rating: C. Well thankfully Ricochet's head isn't broken after that landing. Other than that, the match was another win for Sikoa, which is exactly how you get someone over. Sikoa is brand new to the main roster and he pinned a former Intercontinental Champion clean. What else can you do to get

him over?

The Bloodline is pleased with what happened, with Sami Zayn taking some credit for Siko's success. Jey Uso doesn't like that so Roman Reigns calling him a hothead. Now Sami gets to deal with the Jey problem.

The Usos and Sami Zayn run into New Day. Insults are thrown and a six man is set for later.

Hit Row comes out for a match but three masked men jump them. Zelina Vega joins in and the men unmask to reveal Legado del Fantasma. Yes believe it or not, the three masked men who wear Legado del Fantasma masks, look like Legado del Fantasma and move like Legado del Fantasma are in fact Legado del Fantasma. Vega introduces the team in case you're slow on the uptake.

We get a White Rabbit vignette, which says the date of 10.8.22, or Extreme Rules. Feed Your Hero.

Sonya Deville/Xia Li vs. Shotzi/Raquel Rodriguez

Deville drives Li into the corner to start and Li comes in for a shot of her own. That doesn't last long though as the hot tag brings in Rodriguez to clean house. The Vader Bomb elbow connects and everything breaks down. An assisted standing Sliced bread drops Li and the Tejana Bomb finishes Deville at 2:14.

Video on Ronda Rousey vs. Liv Morgan.

Karrion Kross and Scarlett come to the ring but Drew McIntyre jumps him from behind. The strap is tied up but McIntyre has to beat up security. That's enough to let Kross pull McIntyre into the post a few times before giving him quite the whipping. Drew's back is all messed up but he gets to his feet and glares as the villains leave. That is always going to work and it did here.

The Viking Raiders talk about waiting and healing. A woman's

voice says Valhalla awaits.

Usos/Sami Zayn vs. New Day/???

The mystery partner is....Braun Strowman, who should work well. Sami and Woods start things off but let's go with Kofi instead. Jey comes in, glares at Zayn, and gets dropkicked down. New Day hits the double dive to take out the Usos and we take a break. Back with Kofi in trouble and Sami giving Jey a rather rough tag.

That's fine with Jey, who chokes Kofi on the ropes to let off some steam. Kofi fights up and knocks Jimmy away, allowing the hot tag off to Strowman for the house cleaning. Sami and Jey get in an argument on the floor, leaving Jimmy to get caught with UpUpDownDown for the pin at 10:28.

Rating: C+. The Usos vs. New Day will be another fine tag program, as well as another instance where I cannot bring myself to care about seeing them fight again. I know they're probably the two best WWE teams of their generation, but this is reaching Bockwinkel vs. Gagne levels of FIND SOMEONE NEW. Strowman was the perfect choice as the mystery partner here as he is great at getting the hot tag. It's a great sign that WWE is getting it with him and that should serve him in the future.

Max and Maxxine Durpi argue in the back, with Max declaring himself LA Knight. Barrett: "I KNEW IT WAS LA KNIGHT ALL ALONG!"

Commentary previews the main event and there is a man in a white rabbit suit behind them.

Video on Gunther vs. Sheamus.

Intercontinental Title: Sheamus vs. Gunther

Gunther is defending and we get the Big Match Intros, complete with WXW and PWG references from Cole. They fight straight to

the floor to start with Sheamus driving him into the barricade as we take an early break. Back with Sheamus hitting the forearms to the chest but getting sent chest first into the buckle to break it up. Gunther grabs a choke but Sheamus fights up, earning himself a release German suplex as we take a break.

Back with Sheamus driving him into the corner to break up another choke. Sheamus hits ten forearms on the apron, then does ten more over the other two ropes for a change of pace. White Noise connects for two but Gunther is right back with a powerbomb for the same. A top rope splash to the back gives Gunther two but Sheamus grabs White Noise.

The Cloverleaf goes on and Gunther taps...but it doesn't count as he was reaching for the rope? That's either one heck of an error or a bad plot point because that was a tap. As Sheamus seems confused, Imperium and the Brawling Brutes come down for the fight. The Brogue Kick is loaded up but the distracted referee lets Gunther get in a shillelagh shot to retain at 18:17.

Rating: B. It was a good fight but that tap was a REALLY bad visual and hurt all of the momentum they had. I'm assuming they were going for the reaching the rope and it looked like a tap thing but if that's the case, the execution was terrible. Gunther retaining is ok, but there was no way they were reaching the level of their first match (which is hardly a fair request in the first place) and that tap hurt them a lot.

The brawl continues to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This show did work, though it seems WWE is already looking beyond Extreme Rules. There was some build towards the show, but a lot of this week felt like they were getting ready for more important things. Knowing that the White Rabbit will be revealed at Extreme Rules helps and the strap match should be good, but this week felt like it was

trying to focus on several different things, with Extreme Rules being just one of them. Still though, good show with some nice action and stories being advanced, just not necessarily ones for tomorrow's pay per view.

Results

Solo Sikoa b. Ricochet – Spinning Solo

Shotzi/Raquel Rodriguez b. Sonya Deville/Xia Li

New Day/Braun Strowman b. Usos/Sami Zayn – UpUpDownDown to Jimmy

Gunther b. Sheamus – Shillelagh shot

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Smackdown – September 9, 2022: They're Learning

Smackdown

Date: September 9, 2022

Location: Climate Pledge Arena, Seattle, Washington

Commentators: Corey Graves, Michael Cole

Clash At The Castle has come and gone and that means it is

time for the setup to Extreme Rules. The show is in less than a month and since there is not likely to be a Roman Reigns match, we'll need a new main event. That could go in a few different ways and we might get an indication of that this week. Let's get to it.

[Here is Clash At The Castle if you need a recap.](#)

We open with a look at Solo Sikoa costing Drew McIntyre the World Title at Clash At The Castle.

Brawling Brutes vs. Imperium

Kaiser knocks Holland into the corner to start so it's off to Vinci, who gets elbowed in the head a lot. Butch works on Vinci's fingers before Gunther comes in for the big chop. We take a break and come back with Holland being taken into the corner so Vinci can come in for a suplex. Gunther comes in for some chops but Holland busts Vinci's spine, allowing the tag to Butch. Everything breaks down and it's Gunther vs. Sheamus on the floor, which is broken up rather quickly. Back in and Vinci pulls Butch into a hard clothesline to send us to another break.

We come back again with Butch fighting out of Gunther's Boston crab but not being able to make a tag. Gunther and Sheamus have their staredown but Butch gets in a shot of his own, allowing the tag to Sheamus. Vinci and Kaiser are taken down, setting up the twenty five forearms to the chest and related areas on Kaiser. The Irish Curse and Brogue Kick hit Vinci, who isn't legal, allowing Kaiser to grab a rollup for two.

Holland comes back in for the big lariat on Kaiser but Gunther chops him in the back of the head. Sheamus and Gunther get in the big fight and the fans are really happy. Everything breaks down and it's a triple fight until Holland suplexes Kaiser down HARD, with Kaiser landing on his knee (uh oh). The knee is fine enough to hit the European Bomb to finish Holland at 19:02.

Rating: B-. Good stuff here, as they seem to be building up to another Sheamus vs. Gunther showdown. Those two can beat the fire out of each other as often as they can and it probably wouldn't get old for a long time. I'm not sure what kind of a brawl they could have at Extreme Rules, but hopefully it doesn't get too gimmicky as that doesn't fit for Gunther.

Condolences are given to Queen Elizabeth II.

Here are the Usos and Sami Zayn for a chat. Sami is rather fired up to be here and Jimmy seems pleased too, but Jey just glares. Jimmy talks about how deep the Bloodline runs and introduces Solo Sikoa (with a highlight package from his time in NXT because WWE is finally learning). Solo says if you create problems, he'll finish them and he is here to stay. Cue Drew McIntyre to clear the ring with a chair, with Sami taking a shot for Sikoa.

Aliyah/Raquel Rodriguez vs. Toxic Attraction

Non-title and Toxic Attraction praises Rodriguez on the way to the ring. Jayne: "Aliyah...uh you're pretty!". Jayne kicks Rodriguez in the ribs to start but Rodriguez takes over without much trouble. Aliyah comes in and gets thrown at Dolin for two but gets pulled into the corner so the double teaming can begin. A running backplash hits for Aliyah for two and Jayne cranks on both arms. Aliyah ducks a clothesline though and rolls over for the hot tag to Rodriguez. A spinning side slam drops Dolin and the twisting Vader Bomb elbow gets two. Aliyah breaks up the double suplex and the Tejana Bomb finishes Jayne at 4:58.

Rating: C-. Just like on Monday, you can't help but feel like the titles are already in jeopardy and there is a good chance that they are changing hands next week. That is why the champs get a win here to boost them up a bit, though Aliyah continues to be little more than a person who happens to be in Rodriguez's corner while she wrecks things. Even Toxic

Attraction's pre-match promo made it clear that Aliyah means very little, and that might come into play during the title match next week.

We recap Adam Pearce snapping on Ronda Rousey last week, with Rousey ripping his arm apart as a result.

Xia Li vs. Natalya vs. Sonya Deville vs. Lacey Evans vs. Ronda Rousey

Elimination rules for the Extreme Rules title shot against Liv Morgan (watching in a sky box). Everyone goes after Rousey to start until Natalya tries to Sharpshooter Li. That's broken up and Rousey armbars Natalya for the tap at 1:19. Li breaks up Rousey's armbar to Evans and Evans has to do the same for Evans.

Deville is back up for a choke to Li and Rousey armbars Evans for the stereo eliminations at 2:20. That leaves Deville vs. Rousey with Rousey taking her down and hammering away. Piper's Pit is countered into a choke and they crash out to the floor but they're right back in. Piper's Pit hits Deville and an ankle lock with a grapevine finishes Deville at 4:31.

Rating: D+. I'm not sure what to make of this one, as Rousey just wrecked most of the Smackdown women's division in less than five minutes. If you want to make Rousey the champion again then do it, but don't have Morgan get destroyed at the pay per view and then keep the title on some fluke. This sets up the title match, but I'm worried about what they'll do when they get there.

The Usos fire up Solo Sikoa when Sami Zayn interrupts for a staredown. Solo thanks him for the help out there and accepts Roman Reigns' endorsement as proof of Sami's status. Jey still isn't convinced and says Solo needs to do his thing tonight. Sami is ready to go but Jey says everyone is going on there.

Shayna Baszler tells Ronda Rousey to take Liv out. That seems

to work for Rousey, who seems to think she can do what Baszler couldn't.

Maximum Male Models/Los Lotharios vs. Hit Row/Street Profits

Mansoor gets in trouble to start and the good guys chase everyone else off the apron and we take a break. Back with Adonis in trouble but Humberto accidentally takes Angel out. The hot tag brings in Dawkins to clean house as everything breaks down. Humberto breaks up the big dive so Dawkins backdrops him to the floor. Dawkins hits his own big dive and Top Dolla loads up his own, only to have Maxxine break it up. B Fab isn't having that and the brawl is on, leaving Mace to take the Heavy Hitter for the pin at 8:34.

Rating: C. They do seem to be doing something with Hit Row as the team is being treated as a threat, though having them around an established team like the Street Profits is only going to work for so long before they feel overshadowed. Granted it doesn't help when they're beating a team like the Models, who are little more than jokes. Los Lotharios aren't much better, but a little variety would be good for them.

Here is the Alpha Academy for a chat. We hear about how great the team is and the catchphrase is demonstrated before Chad Gable talks about how annoyed he is at the returning Braun Strowman. More bragging and threats ensue until Strowman storms the ring and wrecks them both, including a powerbomb to Otis. That seems to work.

Drew McIntyre says Clash At The Castle should have been the greatest moment of his life but it wasn't because of Solo Sikoa. Now it is time to face the consequences and Sikoa isn't going to like them.

Drew McIntyre vs. Solo Sikoa

The Usos and Sami Zayn are here too. McIntyre starts fast and knocks Sikoa around without much trouble. The Futureshock

connects early and Sikoa bails outside for a meeting. We take a break and come back with Sikoa holding a nerve hold. McIntyre fights up but gets knocked into the corner for the running Umaga attack. Back up and McIntyre gets in an elbow to the face but has to drop the Usos.

Sami breaks up the big flip dive and the distraction lets Sikoa hit the superkick for two. McIntyre is sent outside for the beating from the Usos but the Street Profits run in for the save. Ford hits the big dive, leaving McIntyre to Claymore Sikoa to the floor. The dive is loaded up but Karrion Kross comes in with the KrossJacket to choke McIntyre for the DQ at 10:30.

Rating: C+. They had me worried at the end there and then saved it with the interference rather than Sikoa taking the Claymore for the pin. I get that you don't need Sikoa to get a pin over McIntyre straight off and it would be too far, but they did a nice job with finding a way out of the clean loss. Sami and the Usos continue to be a great wildcard and it could be a lot of fun to see Zayn be the one who breaks the Bloodline apart from within.

Kross chokes McIntyre out to end the show (with the camera fading to black and commentary screaming for someone to help McIntyre in a great feature).

Overall Rating: C+. Much like Raw, I'm curious about how much of this show went down this way because of the travel fatigue. They were coming off of a weird run of shows over the weekend and that might explain why this one was a bit off. They did take some steps towards Extreme Rules and you can probably guess some of the card from here. Certainly not a bad show, but nothing that has me wanting to see what is next all that badly.

Results

Imperium b. Brawling Brutes – European Bomb to Holland

Aliyah/Raquel Rodriguez b. Toxic Attraction – Tejana Bomb to Jayne

Ronda Rousey b. Xia Li, Natalya, Sonya Deville and Lacey Evans – Ankle lock to Deville

Hit Row/Street Profits b. Maximum Male Models/Los Lotharios – Heavy Hitter to Mansoor

Drew McIntyre b. Solo Sikoa via DQ when Karrion Kross interfered

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Clash At The Castle: The Choice, Then Singing

Clash At The Castle

Date: September 3, 2022

Location: Principality Stadium, Cardiff, Wales

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

It's the first stadium show in the United Kingdom in over thirty years and that means it is time for one of the biggest WWE shows of the year. The main event is a showdown between Roman Reigns and Drew McIntyre for the WWE Title, with McIntyre almost having to win. Other than that, Sheamus vs. Gunther should be a heck of a hoss fight. Let's get to it.

The stadium looks very good as the place is massive and looks packed.

Kickoff Show: Street Profits/Madcap Moss vs. Alpha Academy/Austin Theory

Dawkins and Gable run the ropes to start and it's an armdrag to take Gable down. Ford comes in and gets his ankle locked but Theory sneaks in for a cheap shot to take over. Gable grabs an armbar but Ford hits a double DDT for the escape. Moss comes in to clean house until Dawkins tags himself in to do the same.

Everything breaks down and the American Automatic gets two on Dawkins. Otis gets fall away slammed by Moss and Dawkins saves Ford from getting German suplexed off the apron. That leaves Ford to hit a running flip dive Doomsday Blockbuster (GEEZ) to drop Gable onto the pile. Back in and the frog splash finishes Gable at 6:30.

Rating: C+. Exactly what you want out of an opener as they flew through everything and didn't let the fans get bored. Ford continues to be amazing to watch and showcased himself very well, with that Blockbuster being an incredible thing to see. Dawkins is on quite the level himself and doesn't get the attention he deserves and that could serve him well when Ford becomes a solo star.

The opening video looks at various shots of Wales, plus everything on the six match card.

Alexa Bliss/Asuka/Bianca Belair vs. Bayley/Dakota Kai/Iyo Sky

Bayley doesn't like the fans singing to her to start and decks Asuka on the apron. The six way brawl is on until we're down to Bayley vs. Belair. Bayley gets dropped but Kai and Sky break up the handspring elbow. The villains come in for a double suplex attempt but all six get back in, with Belair and company hitting a trouble suplex. Belair's handspring moonsault hits Sky and Kai, sending the two of them outside for a conference with Bayley.

Back in and we settle down to Bliss taking Sky down for the Insult To Injury. Sky takes her into the corner though and it's time to start the alternating stomps. Bliss manages a drop toehold though and it's Asuka coming in for a bulldog. The middle rope missile dropkick hits Bayley but Sky comes in with the springboard missile dropkick. The slingshot knees in the corner get two but Asuka gets up and manages the hot tag to Bliss.

A running flip dive takes Bayley down outside, only to have Sky hit a running dropkick into the barricade. Back in and Bliss gets beaten down in the corner, with Kai even mocking Belair's kiss it deal. There's a flapjack to Bliss but she Code Reds her way out of the corner. Kai isn't having that though and kicks Bliss in the face, allowing the tag back to Bayley. Everything breaks down and Bliss is able to get over for the hot tag to Asuka. House is quickly cleaned but the numbers take Asuka down, with a sliding lariat giving Bayley two.

Asuka Codebreakers her way to freedom though and the next hot tag brings in Belair. The pace picks up and it's a spinebuster into the standing moonsault for two on Bayley. Belair throws Kai into Sky bu*t misses a charge into...Bayley's legs as she sits on top in front of the post. Asuka/Bliss are right there though and base off Belair's back for the double superplex to bring Bayley crashing down.

With Asuka and Bliss outside, Sky hits a heck of a moonsault

to take them both down. Back in and Kai misses the running kick in the corner but Sky breaks up the KOD. Bayley grabs Belair's hair to hold her in place for Kai's running kick, setting up the Rose Plant into Sky's Over The Moonsault to give Bayley the pin at 18:41.

Rating: B-. Good way to start as Bayley gets set up for the next title match, as she should be. Belair needs a fresh challenger and this is about as good of an option as she has at the moment. They kept this moving and didn't bother letting things slow down, which is a good idea for an opener. Nice stuff here, even with the villains winning.

Tyson Fury wishes Drew McIntyre luck.

We look at the main event of Summerslam 1992.

Bret Hart is here.

Intercontinental Title: Gunther vs. Sheamus

Gunther is defending and has Ludvig Kaiser in his corner and introduces Giovanni Vinci, as Imperium is back for a big debut. The rest of Imperium and the Brawling Brutes get in a fight as the other two have the staredown ala last week on Smackdown. Butch moonsaults onto Imperium and they all brawl to the back as the bell rings to start the slugout. Forearms and right hands set up the big boot to drop Sheamus but he's right back with a suplex.

The forearms to the chest are broken up and they head outside with Sheamus sending him into the steps. Back in and Sheamus pulls himself to the top rope, only to have Gunther blast him with a chop to the floor. Gunther slams him onto the steps and takes it back inside for the chops. A big boot sets up more chops and Sheamus is rocked again. The Boston crab goes on to send Sheamus to the ropes, leaving Gunther to chop him in the back.

Sheamus fights up anyway and the slugout is on again with Gunther getting the better of things. They fight to the floor with Sheamus being thrown over the announcers' table but coming back with the ten forearms to the chest. Back in and the more traditional forearms to the chest put Gunther in more trouble until he falls back out to the floor. That's fine with Sheamus, who puts him over the barricade for even more forearms to the chest.

Back in and Sheamus' top rope knee gets two but the Irish Curse is blocked with some elbows to the head. The sleeper is countered into White Noise for two and Gunther hits most of a powerbomb for two, leaving both of them down. Sheamus catches him on top and hits a Razor's Edge for two for a double knockdown. The Brogue Kick doesn't work as Sheamus' back gives out, setting up the powerbomb for two. Back up and Gunther BLASTS him with a clothesline to retain the title at 19:31.

Rating: A-. This was exactly as advertised and they beat the fire out of each other with one hard hitting shot after another. Gunther getting to retain the title over a big star is a great way to go and they did what you would have expected. Sheamus isn't going to be hurt whatsoever by a loss like this and Gunther can move on to whoever is next. Awesome fight here and that shouldn't be a surprise whatsoever.

Post match Sheamus gets the standing ovation as he pulls himself up.

We recap Liv Morgan vs. Shayna Baszler. Morgan cashed in Money In The Bank to win the Smackdown Women's Title and has come off as a bit of a joke champion since. Now she is getting the chance to right the ship a bit, while Baszler is promising to do various painful things to her.

Smackdown Women's Title: Liv Morgan vs. Shayna Baszler

Morgan, in white for a change, is defending. Commentary talks about Morgan training with Riddle to prepare for the MMA style

and takes Baszler down into a choke to start. Back up and Baszler goes after the bad arm, including taking her outside for a whip into the barricade. Baszler hits a German suplex into a kick to the chest for two as Morgan is rocked.

Morgan manages to get to the middle rope for a dropkick and a springboard spinning Codebreaker gets two. Another trip up top goes badly for Morgan as Baszler knees her out of the air, meaning the big stomp can be loaded up. Morgan pulls that into a cross armbreaker but Baszler powers out. A hard knee to the face gets two on Morgan and the Kirifuda Clutch goes on. Morgan slips out so Baszler grabs it again, only to have Morgan roll back to escape. The Codebreaker into Oblivion retains the title at 11:01.

Rating: C+. They told a nice story with Morgan fighting from behind and surviving until the end, but my goodness this Morgan reign is not exactly working. They haven't helped themselves by having her feel like an afterthought and adding her to the long list of people to beat Shayna Baszler isn't the solution. They did the underdog thing here, but I can't bring myself to care about Morgan anymore.

Adrian Street and Miss Linda are here for your legends moment.

We recap Edge/Rey Mysterio vs. Judgment Day. The team has gone after Edge and the Mysterios for months and it's time for the big showdown. The wild card is Dominick Mysterio not seemingly being intimidated/controlled/something else by Rhea Ripley. It doesn't help that Dominick seems annoyed about Rey picking Edge as his partner so there is some tension afoot.

Rey Mysterio/Edge vs. Judgment Day

Dominick Mysterio is here with Rey, while Edge wears a mask during his entrance. Rhea Ripley is here with Judgment Day to...well I would say even things out but would anyone put Dominick on Ripley's level? Balor chops at Rey in the corner to start but a headscissors gets Rey out of trouble. Priest

comes in and drops Edge with a single right hand but Rey blocks a whip into the corner, allowing Edge to hammer away.

Balor tries to do the same thing but Edge whips Priest into the other corner to keep him in trouble. Rey comes back in and gets caught in the wrong corner, with a backbreaker/running legdrop combination giving Priest two. We hit the chinlock before Priest kicks Rey in the head to cut off a comeback attempt. Balor hits one Amigo but stops before trying a second for a bit of a troll job.

The chinlock goes on for a bit but Mysterio fights up and takes it to the floor. Balor is sent over the barricade but Rey has to crotch Priest on the barricade, giving us a VERY over the top sell for a chuckle. Back in and the hot tag brings in Edge to make the comeback, including an Edgecution to Balor. Edge hits a 619 (not great but he tried) and Rey adds the springboard splash for two, with Priest making the save.

That earns Priest a spear through the ropes and out to the floor but Balor throws Rey outside. Balor Sling Blades Edge but Dominick offers a distraction, allowing Rey to hit a super hurricanrana. Ripley beats up Dominick but Rey dives onto both of them for the save. Dominick trips Balor back inside, setting up a 619 into a spear to give Edge the pin at 12:01.

Rating: B-. Good stuff here, which shouldn't be a shock. I'm not wild on Edge getting another pin over the team but that is just how things go for him. The lack of a Dominick turn isn't exactly a shock either as they have been teasing it for so long now, but it would be nice to actually get to the point with it. Judgment Day needs to start wrapping up if they aren't going to get a big win though, as this isn't doing anyone involved any favors.

Post match Dominick celebrates with Edge...and then kicks him low. Then a clothesline drops Rey, much to Judgment Day's

approval. Dominick leaves on his own and Edge and Rey get the big ovation. Yeah but it's still Dominick.

The attendance is 62,296.

We recap Riddle vs. Seth Rollins. They were scheduled to fight at Summerslam but Rollins injured him beforehand. Since then Rollins has made it personal, including insulting Riddle for his family splitting up. Riddle has promised revenge.

Riddle vs. Seth Rollins

Rollins has flame themed attire, plus heart sunglasses and wings. The bell rings and Riddle goes right after him, setting up some rolling gutwrench suplexes. Rollins gets in a few shots before avoiding a charge to send Riddle crashing throat first into the ropes. They head outside with Rollins hitting a barricade bomb, setting up the suicide dive to put Riddle onto the announcers' table. Back in and Rollins takes him down again, setting up the Falcon Arrow for two.

Riddle manages to get away and heads up top, only to get crotched back down. The superplex into the Falcon Arrow is countered into a fisherman's buster to leave both of them down. Riddle catches him with a t-bone suplex to the floor, setting up the penalty kick into the springboard Floating Bro. Back in and the Bro To Sleep into a powerbomb into the Final Flash knee gets two on Rollins, leaving them both down.

The Floating Bro hits knees but Riddle is fine enough to pull him into a triangle choke. Rollins hits a Bro Derek for two but Riddle is back up with some kicks to the head. An enziguri into a Pedigree gives Rollins two and they're both down again. Rollins shouts about Riddle being a loser, which is why his wife left him and now his kids are going to know it.

That sends Riddle over the edge but Rollins uses the anger to kick him in the face. Rollins loads up an RK0 but Riddle pulls him into a choke. The beating is on, including Rollins being

bounced off of the announcers' table. They head back inside where Rollins hits a Stomp, followed by a middle rope Stomp to finish Riddle at 17:16.

Rating: B. This felt like a fight between two people who wanted to hurt each other and that is how it should have gone. They played into the emotion at the end with Riddle's anger costing him and likely setting up a rematch next month at Extreme Rules. What we got here was good though and came off like two angry men hitting each other, so points for getting the feeling right.

Tyson Fury talked to Roman Reigns earlier and is in the crowd.

Karrion Kross and Scarlett are in the crowd as well.

We recap Roman Reigns vs. Drew McIntyre in the big title showdown. Reigns has been champion for two years and McIntyre is the home kingdom boy, meaning the titles are in jeopardy.

Undisputed WWE Universal Title: Roman Reigns vs. Drew McIntyre

McIntyre is defending and gets a BROKEN DREAMS montage before he comes to the ring. They fight over a lockup to start with Reigns grabbing a headlock. A shoulder doesn't do anything to McIntyre so Reigns bails out to the apron for a breather. Since there is no one outside with Reigns, he has to think about it on his own, which is quite different for him. Back in and Reigns hammers away, only to be taken back outside and whipped into the steps.

Hold on though as Karrion Kross and Scarlett pop up in the front row for a distraction, allowing Reigns to get in a cheap shot. Back in and Reigns hits the corner clotheslines, which knock McIntyre outside again. McIntyre gets back in and is dropped by a jumping clothesline for one, giving us the signature fast kickout. Reigns starts talking trash and knocks McIntyre down to cut off a comeback attempt. They fight over a suplex until Reigns knocks him down again...and gets a mic.

Reigns wants Cardiff to acknowledge him, allowing McIntyre to come back with the Glasgow Kiss. Back up and McIntyre starts the comeback, including the neckbreaker into the nip up. A running corner clothesline sets up a superplex but McIntyre gets knocked into the Tree of Woe. That's fine with him, as he pulls up and hits the belly to belly superplex. Reigns bails to the floor at the threat of a Claymore before coming back in with a Rock Bottom for two. McIntyre fights back up and tries the Claymore, only to have it cut off with a Superman Punch for two more.

Back up and the spear connects for another near fall and Reigns isn't sure what to do. The guillotine goes on and McIntyre's ram into the corner doesn't break it up. McIntyre breaks it up and posts him to the floor, where Reigns is speared through the barricade for a change. Back in and another spear gives Reigns another two and they're both down again. Reigns stops to yell at and threaten the referee, allowing McIntyre to hit a Claymore from behind.

That's enough to send the referee outside...and it's Austin Theory time, with a second referee. The cash in is loaded up...and Tyson Fury knocks Theory cold from the front row (that was clever/great). Reigns grabs a chair but McIntyre hits the Claymore for a very near fall. They slug it out from their knees and then their feet until McIntyre hits another Claymore for two...and someone pulls the referee. It's Solo Sikoa, which is enough of a distraction for Reigns to hit the spear to retain at 30:38.

Rating: B+. I believe the term here is "bold choice" as Reigns wins again. I'm not sure where he goes from here, but he is going to need something big to follow up. McIntyre gave this everything he had and the Sikoa debut was a nice surprise, but my goodness this was a surprise. Heck of a fight as these two work well together of course, though I'm not sure what the heck is supposed to be next for either of them.

Post match Tyson Fury gets in the ring and shakes Reigns' hand. Reigns and Siko leave and Fury helps McIntyre up. Fury gets a mic and says McIntyre did his country proud. The fans were chanting for him and then Fury sings his signature American Pie song. McIntyre joins in on the chorus, including a guy in a shirt saying "Better Dad Than Chris Benoit". McIntyre puts over the fans and sings Sweet Caroline before posing with Fury.

A highlight package wraps us up.

Overall Rating: A. This was a great show with one awesome match after another, though the lack of anything major actually happening was a weird way to go. You can probably see a lot of the card for Extreme Rules from here and it should be good, but you would think something bigger would happen on a show like this. What matters here though is that they blew the roof off the place with an excellent show and it felt like a major event. This is worth the look, though the ending is going to be quite the sore spot for some.

Results

Bayley/Dakota Kai/Iyo Sky b. Bianca Belair/Asuka/Alexa Bliss – Over The Moonsault to Belair

Gunther b. Sheamus – Clothesline

Liv Morgan b. Shayna Baszler – Oblivion

Edge/Rey Mysterio b. Judgment Day – Spear to Balor

Seth Rollins b. Riddle – Middle rope Stomp

Roman Reigns b. Drew McIntyre – Spear

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Clash At The Castle 2022 Preview

This is one of those special shows as WWE will be holding their first stadium event in the United Kingdom in over thirty years. You would think this would mean a huge card but while the main event is a big deal, there are only six matches on the card. A bonus match would not surprise me but WWE is not exactly known for some very last second changes. Let's get to it.

Smackdown Women's Title: Liv Morgan(c) vs. Shayna Baszler

We're not starting with a good one here as this feels like either character rehabilitation for Morgan or the end of a short and unsuccessful reign as champion. Morgan has been more or less a disaster since her cheat code title win and subsequent tap out in the next match. The charm is long gone and WWE continues to think that her just holding a belt is enough to make her a big deal.

I'll take Morgan to retain here, just so she can have a clean win. That being said, how in the world has Baszler never won a singles title in WWE? I know she was stuck with Nia Jax for the better part of ever, but you would think there would be at least a token win in there somewhere. I would love to see it

happen here, but unless WWE has completely given up on Morgan, that isn't going to be the case.

Edge/Rey Mysterio vs. Judgment Day

Now this is one of those stories where you can see where things are going and that isn't a bad thing. WWE has all but hit you over the head with the fact that Dominick Mysterio is turning on Rey here and since that has been teased since LAST YEAR'S Summerslam, I would call it well overdue. Whether it is because he enjoys being beaten up by Rhea Ripley isn't clear, but the turn is going to happen.

Naturally Judgment Day takes this and hopefully they're done with the Mysterios for now. I don't think I can see Dominick joining the team and that's probably a good thing, but ultimately they need to move on and fight someone other than Edge/Rey/Dominick. They could also use a win as a team and that is where this probably comes in, which should at least be a good match despite the lack of shock over the turn.

Matt Riddle vs. Seth Rollins

Yes Matt, as he got his first name back this week. This is a feud that has been going on for a few months now but they haven't actually had a match yet. The good thing is that they have made it more personal this week on Monday Night Raw with Rollins' lines about Riddle's divorce. That should make things that much better, and now we get to see how the violence goes down.

As much as it seems like Rollins is probably going to win here, I'll take Riddle to give him a victory and some personal revenge. That is a smart way to go as Rollins has been a made man for years and Riddle could still use a few more wins under his belt. If nothing else, just having the full name back makes him a bit more serious of a star and that is a nice thing to see after so long.

Bianca Belair/Asuka/Alexa Bliss vs. Bayley/Iyo Sky/Dakota Kai

Can we officially name the heels yet? The Control thing has been thrown around multiple times but it has never been used by anyone on TV. Anyway, this is a match that the villains need to win after Raquel Rodriguez and Aliyah won the Women's Tag Team Titles on Monday for whatever reason. The good thing is it seems WWE believes in these three so there is some hope to be had.

I'll take Bayley and company to win, likely with Bayley pinning Belair to set up the next title match. Asuka and Bliss are still a team (I guess?) because we need to have a division to fight for the titles, meaning they can be set up against Kai and Sky down the line. For now though, this is Bayley's chance to get a big win now that she is back in the ring and pinning Belair would certainly qualify.

Intercontinental Title: Gunther(c) vs. Sheamus

Of all the matches on the show, this one feels like the most fun. They aren't trying to hide what they have here, as this is going to be nothing but two big strong men beating the tar out of each other. Gunther wants to face elite competition and Sheamus wants to win the one title he needs to complete the Ultimate Grand Slam. This isn't complicated and it doesn't need to be.

I'll go with Gunther to retain in his hardest match to date. As someone who needs one title to complete the collection in WWE, I would think it's safe to say that Sheamus doesn't need the win. While I could see them giving him the win for the sake of history, I don't think they want Gunther losing so soon so he should hold onto the title here. He'll be rather banged up, but he'll still be champion.

Undisputed WWE Universal Title: Roman Reigns(c) vs. Drew McIntyre

I believe you would call this shaky ground for WWE, because one thing has become clear in the last few weeks: McIntyre has to win this. The last time I felt like a star needed to win a title this badly was James Storm at Lockdown 2012 and that went very badly for both Storm and TNA when he didn't. There is no reason to not pull the trigger here, even if it is for just one title (through some shenanigans) or even if he loses it soon thereafter (either to Austin Theory, Karrion Kross (stop laughing) or Reigns again). McIntyre could lose all four limbs and still needs to win this and that brings us to the problem.

Therefore, I'll go with the logical step and say McIntyre wins the title, or at least part of it, here. Maybe something happens after, but WWE has put too much into the build of the once in thirty years deal and McIntyre in general to have him be the next name on Reigns' list. WWE needs to be smart here and go with the corner they have booked themselves into and I'll give them the benefit of the doubt by saying McIntyre wins.

Overall Thoughts

The more I think about this card, the bigger it feels, though it wouldn't surprise me to see one more match added in to boost things up a bit. The show being a six match card doesn't really sound impressive but having the World Title change hands over there would make up for some of the problem. Either way, we should be in for a good show as we see the first event with time to be built off the new regime. I'm interested, and that's a nice thing to be able to say.

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Smackdown – September 2, 2022: Now Stick The Landing

Smackdown

Date: September 2, 2022

Location: Little Caesars Arena, Detroit, Michigan

Commentators: Pat McAfee, Michael Cole

We're on a rare taped show this week as the roster has already head over to Wales for tomorrow's Clash At The Castle. This week is focused on Roman Reigns reaching two years as Universal Champion and that means we are likely to see Drew McIntyre pop up too. Other than that, there is a chance we could see something else added to the card, as there are only six matches so far. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

New Day vs. Viking Raiders

This is a Viking Rules match, meaning falls count anywhere and there is a bunch of viking themed stuff around the ring, including a big wooden mast of a ship extending from the ring into the aisle. New Day starts fast and stomps away in the corner, with some of the shields (yes shields) being knocked

off the apron. The Vikings are sent to the floor so the big running flip dives take them down again. A running dropkick sends a shield into Erik's face and Kofi adds a splash off the barricade for two.

We take a break and come back with Ivar hitting a running crossbody into the barricade for two on Woods. Back in and Kofi kendo sticks Erik, who hits a kind of Boss Man Slam for two of his own. Kofi knocks Erik to the floor and grabs a New Day themed mallet, which cracks Erik in the head for another two, because a mallet to the head is the same as a cover off a clothesline. Back up and the Vikings remember that it's time to use the ship, with Kofi being slammed down hard onto the deck. A super World's Strongest Slam gets two on Woods with Kofi making the save and we take another break.

Back again with two tables stacked up at ringside and Woods hitting a dropkick through the ropes. A discus forearm drops Erik and it's a double stroke to send him through a chair. Ivar makes the save with a splash to the back (further crushing Erik in the process). Another super World's Strongest Slam is broken up and Ivar misses a moonsault. Kofi's top rope splash to the back sets up Woods' rope walk elbow for two. They slug it out on the floor and Kofi is sent into the ship. The Vikings start swinging the shield to take over and Woods gets powerbombed through the two tables for the pin at 22:12.

Rating: B+. These guys beat the fire out of each other and while there were goofy themed weapons included, they were having a serious fight. That makes almost anything like this work and it was a rather good match as a result, The other good thing is that the Vikings get the big win, which more or less leaves nothing for them to do but face the Usos. Unfortunately that doesn't seem likely, but maybe they have something else in there.

We take our first look back at Roman Reigns' time as Universal Champion, starting with the title win and alliance with Paul

Heyman.

We look back at Sami Zayn trying to endear himself to Roman Reigns over the last few weeks.

Sami Zayn is ready to be the emcee for Roman Reigns' two year celebration as Universal Champion. Jimmy Uso approves of the efforts but Jey doesn't like that Zayn couldn't help him against Kevin Owens.

Shayna Baszler promises to win the Women's Title by making Liv Morgan suffer. Morgan comes in to say not only will she not tap out, but Baszler is going to tap. Baszler is amused.

Killer Kross is ready to hurt Drew Gulak, just like he hurts everyone else. Tick tock.

More on Reigns' reign, including his sixteen pay per view main events.

Karrion Kross vs. Drew Gulak

Kross powers him into the corner, kicks him in the face, hits the Doomsday Saito and finishes with the KrossJacket at 1:15. Total dominance.

Then Roman Reigns smashed more people.

Here is Ronda Rousey with a piece of paper. The paper is an official statement from WWE and she wants Adam Pearce out here to hear it. Pearce comes out and says the suspension was never personal. The letter reads that Rousey has gone too far but nothing she did was criminal. She has paid the fines so while she is on probation, she is no longer suspended. Pearce is ticked off and says he would have fired Rousey, who laughs at the idea of the Board taking his side over her.

Rousey goes to leave but Pearce goes on a rant about how no one cares what happens to him while he runs two shows a week 52 weeks a year. He has to take care of two shows and a bunch

of whiny stars like Rousey. Pearce has no problem with the Board but he has a big problem with her.

Heaven forbid everything doesn't go her way so she isn't the Baddest Woman On The Planet. No, she's the single biggest b**** that Pearce has ever met. Rousey loads up the death stare and Pearce begs off, only to get armbarred in short order. The fans were way behind Rousey here, which WWE seemed to understand with Pearce not exactly endearing himself to the crowd.

Sami Zayn gets a delivery for Roman Reigns: a bouquet of black roses with a note saying TICK TOCK.

Hit Row vs. Maximum Male Models

B Fab and the Dupris are here. The Models are cleaned out to start but here are Los Lotharios for a distraction. B Fab kicks them both in the face, leaving the Models to take Adonis down. Mace walks over Adonis' back and drops an elbow for two. Adonis is back up and gets over to Dolla for the hot tag. House is cleaned, including a running splash in the corner to Mansoor. The Heavy Hitter finishes for Adonis at 2:59.

Post match Hit Row gets beaten down but the Street Profits come in for the save.

Happy Corbin is tired of losing so it's open challenge time.

Roman Reigns has beaten a lot of people in different kinds of matches.

Happy Corbin vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

In case McAfee couldn't get any more excited. Nakamura starts fast and kicks him into the corner, setting up the choking. Another kick to the face looks to set up Kinshasa but Corbin reverses into Deep Six for two. End of Days is countered so Corbin tries the slide under the ropes, only to charge into Kinshasa for the pin at 2:18.

We look at Raquel Rodriguez winning the Women's Tag Team Title tournament on Raw.

Connor's Cure video.

Happy Corbin is in the back when a limo, with horns, comes up. A voice that sounds a lot like JBL asks what happened to Corbin and tells him to get in. They ride away together as commentary confirms that was JBL's voice.

Butch vs. Ludvig Kaiser

The rest of the Brawling Brutes and Gunther are here too though Butch is in his Pete Dunne gear for a bit of an upgrade. Butch hammers him into the corner to start but Kaiser fights his way out and steps on Butch's hair. Back up and Butch hits a clothesline before starting in on the arm. Butch cranks on the arm but gets taken into the corner for a slap to the face. Kaiser's middle rope European uppercut is forearmed out of the air and falls outside, where he uppercuts Butch down hard as we take a break.

Back with Butch stomping on the fingers and kicking him in the head for two. Some forearms to the head keep Kaiser down but he catches Butch with a kick to the head in the corner. A reverse t-bone suplex gets two but Butch slams him down and hits a big kick to the head. There's the finger snap and the Bitter End finishes Kaiser at 9:01.

Rating: B-. Sometimes you need two people put in the ring to beat on each other really hard. That is what you got here, as Butch and Kaiser can both hit hard and have a good match at the same time. It also lets them build up Sheamus vs. Gunther by proxy and I'll absolutely take that over either of them losing.

Post match Sheamus is ready to fight Gunther but we'll save that for later.

We look at Roman Reigns having the sixth longest World Title reign in company history.

Sami Zayn is ready for the big moment but Jimmy Uso has to keep Jey Uso and Sami from having more problems.

Here are Sami Zayn and the Usos for the big celebration, complete with blown up pictures of some great Reigns moments. Zayn starts his speech but Jey takes over and says how much Reigns has dominated over the last two years. After telling the people to be ready, we cut to the back where Reigns arrives...and is promptly Claymored by Drew McIntyre.

Now it's McIntyre in the arena and cleaning house, setting up the big running flip dive over the top onto all three. Zayn gets a chair Claymored into his face and the Usos are put through the announcers' table/the barricade. McIntyre says he isn't going to stop and promises to kick Reigns' head off of his body, leaving McIntyre looking up at the new Undisputed Champion.

Overall Rating: B. The energy continues around here as they did a heck of a job building to Clash At The Castle on a taped show. The opener was very good and McIntyre looks like a killer on the way to Cardiff. Throw in the JBL/Corbin stuff which has me a bit interested and I liked a good bit of this show. Rather strong go home show, and if they can stick the landing tomorrow on the big stage, WWE is doing a lot better than they have been in a good while.

Results

Viking Raiders b. New Day – Double powerbomb through two tables

Karrion Kross b. Drew Gulak – KrossJacket

Hit Row b. Maximum Male Models – Heavy Hitter to Mansoor

Shinsuke Nakamura b. Happy Corbin – Kinshasa

Butch b. Ludvig Kaiser – Bitter End

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Smackdown – August 26, 2022: The Match That Gets An F

Smackdown

Date: August 26, 2022

Location: Little Caesars Arena, Detroit, Michigan

Commentators: Michael Cole, Pat McAfee

We are eight days away from Clash At The Castle and most of the card is set. There are still some things that need to be covered though and odds are we can get some of that this week. That would mainly include pushing the rest of the build to the matches we already have set, while probably adding in something else. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Ricochet vs. Happy Corbin

Ricochet starts fast and knocks him outside before backflipping into the superhero pose. Back in and a dropkick sets up a standing shooting star press for two on Corbin. The fast starts continues as Ricochet loads up a springboard, only to get knocked out of the air. Corbin pounds away a bit but gets knocked down for another flipping dive as we take a break.

Back with Corbin hitting something like a World's Strongest Slam onto (not through) the announcer's table before hammering away inside. Ricochet tries a handspring and is forearmed right back down as the power keeps working for Corbin. A spinning DDT gets Ricochet out of trouble and it's time to kick away. Deep Six gives Corbin two but Ricochet kicks him down again. The shooting star press finishes for Ricochet at 12:13.

Rating: B-. This worked well because they followed a pretty simple formula of power vs. speed. Ricochet is able to fly with the best of them and it is great to see him getting a win here. Corbin losing again is a great thing to see and it is nice to see these emotional roller coasters that he lands on so often. Good start here and the rise of Ricochet is nice to see.

Post match, Corbin stays down in the corner, leaving McAfee to bust out the telestrator to explain what a horrible person he is.

The Street Profits meet Hit Row and seem rather cool with each other.

Long video on Drew McIntyre talking about the path his career has taken to get here. This includes a bunch of really cool footage of the early days of McIntyre's career and his rise through the ranks, from the UK to FCW. McIntyre talks about his mom getting sick and hitting rock bottom when he was fired from WWE. More on this later.

Karrion Kross and Scarlett aren't impressed because Kross could put his elbow through McIntyre's head at anytime.

Women's Tag Team Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Natalya/Sonya Deville vs. Shotzi/Xia Li vs. Tamina/Dana Brooke vs. Doudrop/Nikki Ash

This is a one fall to a finish Last Chance match as Toxic Attraction was injured and a replacement was needed. Tamina superkicks Natalya off the apron to start and hits a Samoan drop on Deville, with Doudrop having to make a save. Li comes in to suplex Nikki into the ropes before dropping her throat first onto the top. Everything breaks down and it's a parade of everyone being knocked down. With a big pile on the floor, Dana superplexes Nikki onto everyone else, with Nikki's leg landing REALLY awkwardly. Sonya immediately throws her inside for the pin at 3:13 as I'd be shocked if we didn't have a bad injury.

Rating: F. This was pretty terrible and I'm not even sure where to start. The biggest thing is Nikki's leg, as she crashed hard at the end and very well might be in trouble. Other than that, Li looked lost and the match was an eight woman cluster with no one getting to shine. This was a total wreck and I'm not sure how much worse it could have been.

Video on Shayna Baszler.

Here are the Brawling Brutes, with Sheamus promising to beat the sauerkraut out of Gunther at Clash At The Castle to become the Ultimate Grand Slam Champion. Cue Gunther and Ludwig Kaiser, with Sheamus cutting Kaiser off because no one can understand him. Sheamus' issue is with Gunther, because Sheamus is a ring general himself. Sheamus has beaten all kinds of stars around here and has won almost everything there is to win.

There are a lot of similarities between them and now Sheamus wants what Gunther has. Gunther says Sheamus is a man to be

respected, but to protect the title, Gunther will teach him what violence really means. The staredown is on, even as Butch and Kaiser get in a fight. Ridge Holland is knocked outside and Kaiser and Butch are both knocked down, with Sheamus and Gunther not breaking their stare. Eventually they each grab their boys and leave, after one of the more amusing staredowns I can remember in a long time.

Sonya Deville and Natalya are ready for their semifinal match. As they talk, Nikki Ash and Doudrop are in quite the heated argument.

We look at the end of last week's show with Sami Zayn taking the Claymore from Drew McIntyre to save Roman Reigns.

Zayn goes to see Reigns but finds the Usos instead. The Usos aren't cool with McIntyre still walking but Reigns tells Zayn to come in. Reigns says Zayn lost but he appreciates what Zayn did to help him out. That's something family would do and now, Reigns needs another family. He needs McIntyre distracted, which is cool with Zayn as he and McIntyre are facing each other tonight. Zayn says he has this and suggests making it a team effort. Reigns thinks this is all about Zayn though, which he can make work.

Women's Tag Team Title Tournament Semifinals: Raquel Rodriguez/Aliyah vs. Natalya/Sonya Deville

Bayley, with Iyo Sky/Dakota Kai behind her, is on commentary and Michael Cole looks crushed. Of note: the trio came to the ring before a break and the Zayn/Reigns stuff, meaning I was worried we would come back to them standing there. Instead, we came back to them at commentary, which was such a great relief that WWE stopped that dumb concept.

Anyway, Sonya gets knocked to the floor to start and Aliyah hits a Meteora off the apron. Natalya Michinoku Drivers Aliyah on the floor and we take a break. Back with Natalya breaking up the corkscrew Vader Bomb and kicking Rodriguez in the head.

Rodriguez powers out of a choke but Aliyah has been knocked off the apron so Rodriguez knocks both of them down instead. The running splashes in the corner connect and there's the corkscrew Vader Bomb to Deville. Rodriguez has to take out Natalya and gets kneed down by Deville for two. A big kick misses though and the Tejana Bomb finishes Deville at 8:13.

Rating: C. This was more or less a handicap match for Rodriguez and she continues to roll over just about anyone in front of her. That might be better to keep Aliyah away from the longer matches and let Rodriguez do just about anything. I can't imagine they win the titles, but the title match should work out well enough.

Post match Sky and Kai come in for the staredown.

Maximum Male Models are having a photo shoot but Hit Row's bus starts blaring music. No worries though as Maxxine has an idea.

Here is New Day, with Xavier Woods in a wheelchair (with his legs covered with a blanket) for their big return. They're a bit serious here and talk about how they need to face reality: the Viking Raiders have been beating them up week after week. Then last week, the Raiders burned a bunch of their stuff and that has them thinking...that they'll be interrupted by the Raiders.

Erik says this is pathetic because the New Day was giving a proper sendoff and yet here they are sniveling. The one thing a viking despises more than anything else is weakness and this groveling makes them sick. Violence is threatened but Woods whips the blanket off and the kendo stick underneath the blanket knock the Raiders outside. This could have been worse, but the feud needs to end already as it is already going too long.

The Maximum Male Models have painted HIT ROW SUCKS on the side of their bus, but Hit Row comes in to say it isn't their bus.

The Street Profits come out and glaring ensues.

Jey Uso yells at Sami Zayn to handle his business and never disrespect Jey in front of the family again.

We get the second half of the McIntyre video, featuring his return to WWE and rise to the top. Now he needs to get back to the top defeating Roman Reigns again. He promises to kick Reigns' head off his f***** body. I'm not sure how this is going to work, but they almost have to change the title after setting up McIntyre this well.

Drew McIntyre vs. Sami Zayn

Zayn bails to the floor to start before catching McIntyre on the way back in. McIntyre knocks him outside though and it's time to slug it out on the floor again. Back in again and Zayn kicks the rope into McIntyre's leg, allowing him to hammer away. Zayn chokes away on the rope but McIntyre is getting annoyed. McIntyre unloads in the corner and there's the tilt-a-whirl backbreaker to put Zayn down again. Back up and Zayn manages a sunset bomb out of the corner to send us to a break.

Back with McIntyre snapping off an overhead belly to belly before snapping off an overhead belly to belly. There's a neckbreaker to drop Zayn but here are the Usos for a distraction, allowing Zayn to grab the Blue Thunder Bomb for two. McIntyre shrugs that off and hits the Claymore for the pin at 10:26.

Rating: C+. This was almost guaranteed to be at least pretty good and that's what we got here. McIntyre winning is no surprise as he has a major title match coming up. Zayn on the other hand is on a roll right now and doing some of his best work in years. It wouldn't surprise me to see him change sides sooner rather than later, perhaps teaming up with Kevin Owens to go after the Tag Team Titles. Nice main event here though, and that's all it needed to be.

Post match Roman Reigns comes in and the big beatdown is on, with the spear setting up a bunch of chair shots. McIntyre gets sent into various things on the floor, followed by Reigns guillotining him back inside. Reigns puts a chair over McIntyre and sits down to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This show was up and down, with the main focus being on the World Title match and everything else being a pretty hard step down. Other than a nice opener and the awkwardly amusing Sheamus/Gunther faceoff, there wasn't much of value on the whole show. That four way women's tag was just awful on every level and one of the worst TV matches I've seen in a long time. The show as a whole was ok enough, but the bad part was dreadful and the good didn't bring it to a higher level.

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Smackdown – August 12, 2022: What Makes The Show Work

Smackdown

Date: August 12, 2022

Location: PNC Arena, Raleigh, North Carolina

Commentators: Pat McAfee, Michael Cole

It's time for a title match as Gunther is defending the Intercontinental Title against Shinsuke Nakamura. What matters here is that they are treating the title like it matters and that is more than you could say about most WWE shows for a long time. Other than that, we are probably going to get more about the returning Karrion Kross so let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Women's Tag Team Titles First Round: Raquel Gonzalez/Aliyah vs. Xia Li/Shotzi

Gonzalez sends Shotzi to the apron to start but gets rolled up for a fast two. A front facelock is shrugged off without much trouble as Natalya and Sonya Deville pop up to scout from ringside. Aliyah comes in with a high crossbody and we take a break. Back with Aliyah getting dropped on her head for two and Shotzi adding a bulldog.

Aliyah finally breaks away and brings Rodriguez back in to clean house. Shoulders and fall away slams abound and the spinning Vader Bomb hits Li. Shotzi manages a hurricanrana into the corner and Sliced Bread gets two. A double Russian legsweep is broken up by Aliyah's spear and the Tejana Bomb finishes Li at 9:31.

Rating: C. This was a nice workout for Gonzalez and Aliyah,

which more or less meant Gonzalez cleaned house and Aliyah did one thing at the end. Odds are they lose in the second round but at least they had a chance to get in a win here. Li and Shotzi were little more than cannon fodder here but the match could have been a lot worse.

Video on Drew McIntyre vs. Roman Reigns, with Karrion Kross debuting last week to interrupt the proceedings.

Karrion Kross and Scarlett call that the rebirth of a darkened soul. Kross waited for the perfect time to strike the chosen ones. Now you are going to see the new timeline, because everybody pays the toll. We hear Drew McIntyre's music and it turns out this speech was taking place near him.

Here is Drew McIntyre for a chat. He is looking forward to Clash At The Castle but first of all, there is Karrion Kross. Last week, Kross returned after a year away and took out the #1 contender and stared down Roman Reigns. That's a problem because that #1 contender is Drew McIntyre. Kross' options are knockout, hospital or graveyard, so he needs to watch what's coming at Clash At The Castle.

As for tonight, shock and awe, Reigns isn't here tonight. McIntyre was watching at Summerslam and saw Reigns need his family, weapons and tables to beat Brock Lesnar. Well McIntyre beat Lesnar with his bare hands, so what is he going to do with Reigns? Cue Scarlett to interrupt (meaning black and white lights) and the Usos come in from behind to jump McIntyre. The 1D leaves McIntyre laying.

Video on the Intercontinental Title, similar to the video on the US Title that has been airing on Raw. This is a great idea, especially given how badly the title has been treated for most of the last few....decades?

Shinsuke Nakamura is ready for Gunther.

Ivar (of the Viking Raiders, who are no longer new or vicious)

comes to the ring for a singles match but Kofi Kingston jumps them from behind. That doesn't last long as the Vikings beat him down and leave him laying. Well what did you expect man?

Sami Zayn knocks on Roman Reigns' door (Why does he have a dressing room when he isn't here?) but gets the Usos. Before he can get too far into his apology, Drew McIntyre jumps them from behind and promises to do this every week they get in his business. McIntyre goes looking for Sami, who escaped.

Brandon Scott/Trevor Irvin vs. Hit Row

The team (Ashante Thee Adonis/Top Dolla with B Fab) is back with Cole saying there was "controversy" when they left. Top Dolla runs Scott over to start and sends him into the corner, where Adonis hits a slingshot dropkick. Irvin tries to come after Dolla so it's a World's Strongest Slam to Scott and a Wasteland to Irvin at the same time. A dropkick/belly to back suplex combination (the Heavy Hitter) finishes Scott at 1:35. Total dominance and the team still seems cool.

Post match Hit Row reintroduces themselves.

Video on Gene LeBell, who passed away recently. There's a legendary name you don't hear much about on WWE TV.

We look at Shayna Baszler becoming #1 contender to Liv Morgan's Smackdown Women's Title.

Gunther promises to make Shinsuke Nakamura suffer.

We're ready for the contract signing between Shayna Baszler and Liv Morgan...and here is Ronda Rousey coming over the barricade, with a bag. Rousey says she was suspended and fined, so she pours out the money from the bag. That's double the fine, because she's going to get fined again since being the baddest is expensive. Cue security, so Rousey beats them up and then leaves, where Baszler is waiting on her. Baszler says you can't do that and Rousey says Baszler used to be a

killer before leaving.

With that out of the way, Baszler gets in the ring and promises Liv is next on the list. Baszler signs and tells Morgan to get out here right now. Cue Liv, who says Baszler is a bootleg Rousey, which Liv would know because she beat the real thing twice. Liv signs and the fans remind her that she tapped out. The beating is on, but Morgan manages a springboard bulldog through a table and escapes. The YOU TAPPED OUT chants at Liv show you where she is at the moment.

The Usos come up to Sami Zayn and yell at him for leaving, but Sami says he was going to get security. That doesn't work for the Usos, who are going to call out Drew McIntyre.

Here are the Usos to call out Drew McIntyre and any partner he wants.

Drew McIntyre/??? vs. Usos

Non-title and non-partner for Drew to start but he beats up both Usos anyway. The numbers game starts getting the better of McIntyre but here is Madcap Moss for the save and McIntyre has a partner. This seems to work for Drew and house is cleaned as we take an early break.

Back with Moss exploding out of the corner to drop Jey and the double tag brings in McIntyre and Jimmy. Cue Sami Zayn for a distraction so a superkick into the Superfly Splash can get two on McIntyre. Moss pulls Jey outside and they fall into the timekeeper's area. The Glasgow Kiss into the Claymore finishes Jimmy at 9:05.

Rating: C+. The Usos almost have to be close to losing the titles if they are losing a nothing non-title match like this to a makeshift team. By "almost have to" I mean "probably won't but should", because this reign just keeps going. Maybe Hit Row can give them a challenge, but that might not be for a bit. Moss is moving up the ladder nicely, and I certainly

didn't have that coming a few months ago so well done on the improvement.

Post match Jey goes after Drew but gets Futureshocked but Sami takes the Claymore for him.

Maximum Male Models are in a photo shoot when Los Lotharios interrupt. They should be the models and hit on Maxxine, which has Max annoyed as Los Lotharios leave.

Video on Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Gunther.

Ricochet laughs about beating Happy Corbin last week and gets jumped by...Corbin, believe it or not.

We meet Nikkita Lyons and Zoey Stark, who like to fight. And dance, at least in Lyons' case.

Intercontinental Title: Gunther vs. Shinsuke Nakamura

Gunther, with Ludwig Kaiser, is defending. They go with the grappling to start and Nakamura goes with a headlock. Uppercuts and chops drop Nakamura though and the Boston crab has Nakamura in trouble. That's switched into an STF as Cole talks about Gunther wanting to face people like John Cena and other elite stars. A cross armbreaker doesn't work very well for Nakamura so he starts kicking away at the arm. The arm is good enough for a huge chop to put Nakamura down and we take a break.

Back with Gunther favoring his arm so he kicks Nakamura in the face. Gunther's top rope splash is countered into a triangle choke but he muscles Nakamura up. Nakamura switches into an armbar, which is reversed into a butterfly suplex for a breather. A hard knee to the face rocks Gunther and Good Vibrations makes it worse.

There's the sliding German suplex, with Nakamura landing in front of Kaiser for some yelling. Back up and Gunther hits the shotgun dropkick in the corner but Nakamura escapes the

powerbomb. Kinshasa is loaded up...and knocked away by a hard clothesline. Nakamura goes after the arm again so Gunther dropkicks him in the back. The powerbomb retains the title at 13:06.

Rating: B. They did have a hard hitting match here and that's what you would expect from something like this. Gunther seems primed to hold the title for a long time and now he has beaten someone with a bit stronger resume than most of his previous victims. Nakamura didn't seem likely to win the title here, but he can beat people up well and he made Gunther sweat here, which was entirely the point.

Overall Rating: B-. The important thing to say about this show was that it had energy. It didn't come off like a show that was all about one match and they had stuff going on throughout the card. The show felt like it was building towards something in the future and I'm wanting to see what happens next week. Much like on Raw, it didn't need a bunch of surprises popping up, but rather people feeling like they were trying. That is what we got here and it was a good show as a result.

Results

Raquel Gonzalez/Aliyah b. Xia Li/Shotzi – Tejana Bomb to Li
Hit Row b. Brandon Scott/Trevor Irvin – Heavy Hitter to Scott
Drew McIntyre/Madcap Moss b. Usos – Claymore to Jimmy
Gunther b. Shinsuke Nakamura – Powerbomb

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Smackdown – August 5, 2022: Get The Band Back Together

Smackdown

Date: August 5, 2022

Location: Bon Secours Wellness Arena, Greenville, South Carolina

Commentators: Michael Cole, Pat McAfee

We're done with Summerslam and well on the way to Clash At The Castle, which should make for an energized few weeks. WWE seems to want to make this show into something special and they have the ability to do so. The main event is already set and now we get to see what else they have. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a long recap of Summerslam, unfortunately set to that song about Nashville being a crazy town.

The Bloodline arrives (with the Usos driving in what can't be a good idea).

Pat McAfee gives us a telestrated recap of him kicking Happy Corbin low at Summerslam. We see the impact about ten times before cutting to the back, where a bunch of people are laughing at Corbin. Ricochet laughs a lot and gets a match with Corbin tonight as a result. The telestrator gag went on so long that it became funny.

Ricochet vs. Happy Corbin

Corbin throws him into the corner to start but Ricochet kicks him in the face, setting up the big flip dive to the floor. Back in and Ricochet's springboard is broken up but he's fine enough to block Corbin's slide under the ropes. Corbin has to dodge the apron moonsault and posts Ricochet as we take a break.

Back with Corbin holding a chinlock before hitting a backdrop for two. Ricochet fights up and hits a handspring elbow, setting up a springboard clothesline. The running shooting star press gives Ricochet two but a moonsault is countered into a torture rack neckbreaker (that was nice). A sunset flip out of the corner gives Ricochet two but Corbin is back with a heck of a Deep Six for two. Ricochet goes up but gets shoved off onto the apron, leaving Corbin to go up and stare at McAfee. The distraction lets Ricochet hit the Recoil into the shooting star press for the pin at 11:46.

Rating: C+. This was a power vs. speed match and that is going to work every time. It's very nice to see Ricochet getting a big win as Corbin's bad luck continues. I'm not sure where that is leading, but a motivated midcard Corbin is a nice thing to have as it fits him well. Leave him around here doing things like this and he'll be fine.

Post match McAfee throws Ricochet a football, which Ricochet throws back. McAfee signs it and punts it into the crowd for a nice moment.

Sami Zayn knocks on Roman Reigns' door. Post break the Usos open the door but say it's not a good time for Reigns. They'll text him.

We look back at Liv Morgan beating Ronda Rousey at Summerslam, albeit with some controversy.

Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Ludwig Kaiser

If Nakamura wins, he gets an Intercontinental Title shot next week. Kaiser sends him into the corner to start but Kaiser blocks a kick. Good Vibrations has Kaiser in more trouble but he grabs a tilt-a-whirl faceplant as we take a break. Back with Nakamura hitting a running knee on the apron, only to have Kinshasa broken up with an uppercut. Kaiser suplexes him down for two but has to stomp his way out of an armbar. Nakamura hits a spinning kick to the head and Kinshasa connects for the pin and the title shot at 8:46.

Rating: C. They kept this one pretty much to the point and it worked well enough. I don't need to see the match again, but they built Kaiser up a bit by giving him a win over Nakamura so this one meant a bit more. Nakamura vs. Gunther should be a heck of a match and it can work well as Gunther's first test.

We look back at the Viking Raiders taking out Xavier Woods.

Kofi Kingston isn't used to being alone around here but he promises revenge on the Vikings.

Sami Zayn knocks on Roman Reigns' door again but gets the Usos. Sami asks if he didn't get the text because of bad reception but he is sent to the production truck to make sure Reigns' entrance goes well.

Here is Liv Morgan, with her arm in a brace, for a chat. The fans don't seem to like her but that is why she is here. She wants to address the elephant in the room, but we first pause for the YOU TAPPED OUT chants. Liv appreciates being called out and says the title means everything to her. It is why she got through the armbars, and yes she tapped, but only once she thought the referee counted three. Cue Sonya Deville to interrupt and mock Morgan before promising to take the title at Clash At The Castle. Why WWE felt the need to have Morgan tap out in her first title defense and then talk about it is beyond me.

Gauntlet Match

The winner gets a Smackdown Women's Title shot at Clash at the Castle. Sonya Deville is in at #1 and Aliyah is in at #2. Deville wastes no time in taking her down for a chinlock. Aliyah fights up but gets pulled into a reverse DDT (Deville's Advocate) for the pin at 2:16. Raquel Rodriguez is in at #3 and Deville goes right after her knee to take her down too. The chinlock goes on again but Rodriguez powers up with a side slam. The spinning Vader Bomb elbow sets up the Tejana Bomb to get rid of Deville at 4:43 (total).

Shotzi is in at #4 and we take a break. Back with Rodriguez powering out of an abdominal stretch and hitting another side slam. Another Vader Bomb elbow sets up another Tejana Bomb for the pin at 10:06 total. Xia Li is in at #5 and starts working on Rodriguez's leg in the corner. A half crab puts Rodriguez in more trouble but she breaks out and hits a fall away slam. The spinning elbow sets up another Tejana Bomb to eliminate Li at 12:57 total.

Natalya is in at #6 and goes right after the knee, including a chop block. The legs are tied up on the mat with Natalya getting to punch Rodriguez in the head for a bonus. Somehow Rodriguez rolls through and muscles her up for two off a suplex. Natalya is right back with the Sharpshooter but a rope is grabbed. Some right hands in the corner have Rodriguez in more trouble but she Tejana Bombs her way out for the tap at 15:35 total.

Shayna Baszler is in at #7 to complete the field and we take a break. Back with Rodriguez fighting out of a leglock but getting her knee stomped to cut her off again. Rodriguez makes another comeback and tries the spinning elbow but gets caught in the Kirifuda Clutch. Rodriguez tries to flip out but Baszler rolls her up and gets the pin for the title shot at 22:05 total.

Rating: C+. Oh yeah things have changed around here and that is a good thing. Baszler is someone who seemed ready to move

into the title picture years ago but she was stuck with Nia Jax for the better part of ever. This match was set up well, with Rodriguez getting the superhero push before getting caught in a rollup after surviving the holds. Nice job here, and the result is rather nice.

Sami Zayn bothers the Usos again but this time is told he's not seeing Roman Reigns tonight. Now either get it together or lose the Bloodline shirt.

Viking Raiders vs. Jim Mulkey/Tommy Gibson

As I chuckle at the jobbers' names, Ivar slams Erik onto Gibson (who Cole doesn't think is any relation to Hoot). A super World's Strongest Slam plants Mulkey and a spinebuster sets up a double pin at 1:28. Total dominance.

Post match Kofi Kingston charges the ring and beats the Vikings up with a kendo stick.

Kofi Kingston vs. Erik

Erik wastes no time in catching a kick and planting Kingston hard. Kingston gets up and hits a high crossbody for two but Erik grabs a full nelson slam onto a knee for two more. Back up and Kofi knocks him to the floor for the over the top dive but he has to avoid an Ivar kendo stick shot. Back in and Kofi rolls Erik up for the pin at 3:44.

Rating: C-. This was kind of a weird one as the Raiders have been unstoppable monsters for a few weeks and here they lose despite having a numbers advantage. There I no shame in losing to a former World Champion so it's hardly some shocking upset, but it's a bit of an odd way to go. The interesting thing for Kofi is that he is so associated with the New Day that it was pretty much impossible to imagine someone else coming out there to save him.

A tournament for the Women's Tag Team Titles starts on Raw. I

THOUGHT IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE BETTER NOW!!!

Video on Gunther.

Here is the Bloodline (minus the recovering Paul Heyman) for a chat. After getting his acknowledgment, Reigns talks about how he respects Brock Lesnar but Lesnar put Paul Heyman in the hospital (yes hospital). Cue Drew McIntyre who says he's ready to fight Reigns right now...but then everything goes black and white. A woman appears in the entrance and Karrion Kross returns to take out McIntyre. The woman, Scarlett, brings her hourglass to the ring and Kross stares at Reigns to end the show. Kross is pretty polarizing, but leather jacket/hair Kross instead of whatever the old Raw version was could work.

Overall Rating: B-. The most important thing about this show is the general feeling of fun. It has an energy to it and it feels like something different might happen. That was the case on Raw too and while I don't know if it is going to last, it makes a world of difference here. Good show, with a pretty decent amount of wrestling and some stuff set up for the future. That makes for a nice evening, and that is what they had here.

Results

Ricochet b. Happy Corbin – Shooting star press

Shinsuke Nakamura b. Ludwig Kaiser – Kinshasa

Shayna Baszler won a gauntlet match last eliminating Raquel Rodriguez

Viking Raiders b. Jim Mulkey/Tommy Gibson – Double pin

Kofi Kingston b. Erik – Rollup

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Smackdown – July 22, 2022: Another Boring Friday

Smackdown

Date: July 22, 2022

Location: TD Garden, Boston, Massachusetts

Commentators: Pat McAfee, Michael Cole

And then Vince McMahon retired from WWE and everything changed. This is one of those moments that you knew would happen in some way at some point but you can't actually fathom it going down. On top of that, Brock Lesnar has reportedly walked out on the show and won't be here, though maybe something can be salvaged. Let's get to it.

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

Here is Stephanie McMahon to get things going. She announces Vince's retirement and the fans immediately go into a THANK YOU VINCE chant. Stephanie asks the fans to not get ahead of them her and says thank you Vince for everything. This was Stephanie the person rather than Stephanie the character and that is completely acceptable given the once in a lifetime circumstances.

Here are the Street Profits to be all hyped up for their Tag Team Title shot at Summerslam. Cue Theory to remind us that he will be cashing in on Roman Reigns. That brings out the Usos, who don't like Theory threatening Roman Reigns. The Usos says Montez Ford and his wife are leaving Summerslam with no titles and the fight is on. Madcap Moss runs in and the good guys clear the ring.

Shinsuke Nakamura vs. Ludwig Kaiser

Kaiser knocks him into the corner to start as commentary wonders if Gunther's aggressive mentorship is a good thing. Nakamura strikes back and gets Kaiser into the corner for Good Vibrations. The leg is lifted up though and Kaiser hits a suplex for two. That's shrugged off though and Nakamura hits the running knee in the corner. The apron kick to the chest is blocked though and we take a break with Nakamura down on the floor.

Back with Nakamura fighting out of a chinlock and hitting the sliding German suplex for two. Nakamura stops to yell at Gunther though, allowing Kaiser to grab a small package for two. A kick to the head drops Kaiser again and Nakamura rolls him up, but the kickout sends him into a right hand from Gunther. Kaiser grabs a DDT for the pin at 9:30.

Rating: C. Kaiser is someone who has done well in the limited time that he gets to appear in the ring as he is fine for a person who gets to clear some of the way for Gunther's opponents. The cheating keeps Nakamura strong on the way to the likely Summerslam title match so it's a story you've seen before. Not a bad match here, and I'm sure we'll get a rubber match in the future.

Post match Kaiser looks pleased but Gunther tells him to assume the position anyway. Gunther pats him on the back...and then chops him anyway. He's a tricky monster.

We recap Liv Morgan cashing in the Money In The Bank briefcase

on Ronda Rousey.

We get a face to face with Rousey and Morgan, with Rousey telling the interviewer to scram. Rousey is ready to win the title back and expects Morgan to shake her hand. Morgan talks about how she wants and needs the title more than Rousey. She'll shake Rousey's hand, after she beats her again. This was taking two bad talkers and having them talk to each other.

Happy Corbin jumps Pat McAfee, who gives chase to the back this time. The brawl is on backstage with Adam Pearce and company breaking it up.

Post break McAfee is back and gets tossed a microphone. McAfee talks about how in eight days, it is man vs. big bald baby and this right leg of his is putting the baby out for a nap. As usual: McAfee can talk as well as almost anyone in the company.

We look at the Viking Raiders being vicious and breathing all heavy.

Viking Raiders vs. Shanky/Jinder Mahal

New Day is on commentary. Ivar elbows Mahal in the corner to start but he comes back with a superkick. The beating takes Mahal outside again and it's a countout win for "the new Vicious Viking Raiders (yes that is what they are officially called)" at 1:39. Mahal and Shanky can't take a pin?

Sonya Deville mocks Adam Pearce for his job as the boss, which wouldn't have happened if she was in charge. Pearce gives her a match with Raquel Rodriguez as punishment.

Here are the Brawling Brutes with a green covering over something. Sheamus recaps his recent issues with Drew McIntyre, but his main problem is with McIntyre's sword. There is not going to be a match between them until that sword is gone. Cue McIntyre, with Sheamus having Ridge Holland and

Butch wait outside in exchange for getting rid of the sword. McIntyre: "What happened to you Sheamus? When did you become such a b****?" He wants to know what happened to the Sheamus he fought in front of 100 people when they have a chance to be in a UK stadium show in front of 70,000 people.

McIntyre wants to fight right now and Sheamus is in...but just not tonight. Instead, they can do this next week in a good old fashioned Donnybrook, but the sword is barred from ringside. They can have weapons though, which brings Sheamus to what is under the covering: a bunch of shillelaghs! Adam Pearce comes out to make the match and McIntyre cuts Sheamus' cane in half. That sword should be the one challenging Reigns as it is getting more of the focus.

Paul Heyman talks strategy with the Usos, saying they need to use Theory's skills to help get rid of Moss and the Profits. THEN it is time to go off the air with Theory taken out. The Usos are in.

Raquel Rodriguez vs. Sonya Deville

Deville takes her into the corner to start and shoves her in the face, only to realize that a waistlock is a waste of time. With that broken up, Deville goes with a running knee for two before we hit the chinlock. Deville's guillotine is powered off but Rodriguez misses a charge into the corner. A DDT gives Deville two as she seems to be favoring her arm. Rodriguez comes right back up with the Tejana Bomb for the pin at 3:35.

Rating: C. Rodriguez continues to be treated as someone who can be the next big star in the division and it isn't like there is enough depth for her to overcome. I'm still not sure why having Deville in there getting beaten up is supposed to make her feel like a villain, but she lost a clean match here so it's even more confusing. This feels like a story where they have forgotten the point and just keep moving forward without a goal.

Lacey Evans vs. Aliyah

Remember how over the last few weeks, Evans has insulted the crowd, put herself over because she's a military veteran and then laid out Aliyah before the match can start? Same thing here.

Jeff Jarrett is very excited to be the guest referee because he's going to call it right down the line. It's the biggest tag match in Summerslam history (no) and it needs a special referee. Spelling ensues.

We meet Max Dupri's sister Maxxine (better known as Sofia Cromwell from NXT) to say that what Maximum Male Models had scheduled this week will take place next week.

Theory/Usos vs. Street Profits/Madcap Moss

Dawkins dropkicks Jimmy down to start and we're in an early armbar. The Profits take out the Usos and knock Theory off the top for a bonus, allowing Ford to grab the Money in the Bank briefcase for some drumming. We take a break and come back with Moss getting pounded down in the corner.

That's broken up and Moss gets over for the tag to Ford so house can be cleaned. The villains are knocked outside again and we take another break. Back again with Ford getting out of trouble and bringing Moss back in to wreck the Usos. A kind of lifting powerbomb gets two on Jimmy but the Punchline is broken up.

Jimmy drops Moss with a superkick for two but Theory would rather walk out than get tagged in. Jey superkicks Theory and go after him but Dawkins goes after them for whatever reason. Ford hits the big flip dive, allowing Theory to take Moss back inside. The brainbuster onto the knee gives Theory two but Moss runs him over with a shoulder. Then Theory hits him with the briefcase for the DQ at 16:52.

Rating: C+. This was the long form main event tag match and it went well enough, save for the lame ending. That's one of the biggest problems with the Money In The Bank briefcase being around: it lets the holder have an out, which WWE certainly loves to use. It would be nice to see them doing something else, but this is what you get around here and there isn't much of a way around the idea.

Post match Theory unloads on Moss....and here's Brock Lesnar (McAfee: "I THOUGHT..." Cole: "I DID TOO!"). F5's and briefcase shots leave Theory laying to end the show. At least they figured out whatever was going on with Lesnar.

Overall Rating: C+. Pretty good show here, though there was nothing here that felt completely out of place after the big McMahon news. Granted there is a very strong chance that it will not change until after Summerslam, if ever for that matter, but at least there is a hope. Overall, slightly better than average here, and I'll take that after the drek that Raw has been as of late.

Results

Ludwig Kaiser b. Shinsuke Nakamura – DDT

Viking Raiders b. Jinder Mahal/Shanky via countout

Raquel Rodriguez b. Sonya Deville – Tejana Bomb

Madcap Moss/Street Profits b. Usos/Theory via DQ when Theory used the briefcase

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