

Smackdown – September 4, 2020: It Gave Me A Good Feeling



IMG Credit: WWE

Smackdown

Date: September 4, 2020

Location: Amway Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves

It's the show after Summerslam and we get two big deals in one tonight. First of all, Roman Reigns and Paul Heyman are making their first comments since they revealed their alliance last week. In addition to that we have a four way match to determine the #1 contender for Reigns' Clash Of Champions title defense. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a recap of Roman Reigns revealing Paul Heyman as his new...whatever term they are using for him, and Reigns winning the Universal Title two nights later.

Here are Reigns and Heyman to get things going. Heyman says as soon as you thought he was out, Reigns pulled him back in. Reigns is the one corrupting him and pulled Heyman back in from the ocean of obscurity. Now he is back on the island of relevancy because they did the same thing to

Heyman that they did to Reigns. What happened to the thank yous and the appreciation?

Reigns over delivered during his life threatening illness and no one offered him any thanks. When Reigns needed some time off, they made him give up his title. A Fiend or a monster isn't born to reign. Imagine turning on Fox News and seeing an interview with a growling man as champion. Roman's reign as your champion has always been defined as what WWE wants you to like: family, tradition and legacy. Tonight there is a four way to crown a new sacrificial lamb.

Heyman isn't going to say their names because he'll let Anderson Cooper and Carmella's latest boyfriend handle that. Heyman is outside council to your Undisputed Universal Champion, Roman Reigns. Roman says he is a man of his word and did exactly what he said he was going to do: he signed the contract, wrecked the other two and left as Universal Heavyweight Champion. He'll face whoever wins tonight and all he has to do is show up and win. Really, really good stuff here as Heyman sounded ticked off and Reigns sounded like the serious monster that he has needed to be for years now.

Post break Jey Uso comes up to Reigns in the back and congratulates him. Heyman leaves and Jey asks what the deal is with Heyman and Reigns. Roman says he's got this and Jey accepts, even saying he's got Reigns' back if he ever needs it. Reigns leaves and seems rather distant, which Jey notices.

Miz/John Morrison vs. Heavy Machinery

Otis runs Miz over to start and Tucker comes in for the standing double splash. Miz and Morrison are knocked to the floor and we take a break. Back with Tucker diving over both of them and making the tag off to Otis. House is cleaned but the Flying Chuck hits Otis to take him down. Morrison hits the Moonlight Drive on Tucker on the floor but Otis starts gyrating off Miz's kicks. Miz is knocked down to set up the Caterpillar and a Vader Bomb (that's better as he needed a new finisher) finishes Miz at 8:06.

Rating: D+. It's kind of amazing how far Otis has fallen in the last few

months and so much of that has to do with the crowd. It isn't all from the crowd though, as some of it is over him not exactly feeling like a threat to the World Title. Can you imagine him cashing in the briefcase and actually being a real World Title contender at this point? Granted there very well could be some shenanigans to get it to someone else, and really, there almost has to be.

Post match, Morrison steals the Money in the Bank briefcase and celebrates with it.

Big E. and Drew Gulak are having a birthday party for the returning Xavier Woods and tell Lucha House Party to stay away from the cake. Big E. is ready to become #1 contender but someone comes up to say Woods has arrived. With the cake in hand, Big E. goes out to find him but gets jumped by Sheamus, who takes him down with a Brogue Kick. White Noise onto the windshield of a car likely writes Big E. out of the #1 contenders match.

Post break Big E. is injured and has to go to a local medical facility. Sheamus comes in and says that is tough to watch but he can't take his eyes off of it. With Big E. being loaded up on the stretcher in the background, Kayla Braxton asks if Sheamus set this up because of the Payback loss. Sheamus claims self defense and thinks Big E. just got distracted by the idea of seeing Woods again. If you want to be Universal Champion, you need to be focused at all time. Now Sheamus has to go because he has a triple threat to get ready for.

Bayley and Sasha Banks are ready to win the Women's Tag Team Titles back but Banks doesn't like Bayley being asked about tapping out twice in a row. Banks talks about how great Bayley is and promises to get the titles back.

Adam Pearce says the four way is still on and the replacement will be named tonight. Heyman comes up and wants to talk to Pearce about something.

Women's Tag Team Titles: Sasha Banks/Bayley vs. Nia Jax/Shayna Baszler

Jax and Baszler are defending and we get an inset promo from Shinsuke

Nakamura and Cesaro, talking about how this is going to be a car crash. Cesaro calls out Nakamura for being insensitive after what happened to Big E. They raise a toast anyway. The champs are sent outside for double baseball slides but Bayley and Banks get caught. Despite them locking hands, the champs swing them into the barricade a few times as we take a break.

Back with Bayley in trouble as Banks seems rather concerned. Jax grabs a chinlock before it's off to Baszler to crank Bayley's arm back for a nasty visual. Bayley gets over for the tag to Banks and it's a Backstabber into the running knees in the corner to Jax. The top rope Meteora gets two and everything breaks down. Jax is sent to the apron where Bayley hits a Stunner onto the middle rope so Bayley can hit a powerbomb to the floor. Bayley suplexes her way out of the Kirifuda Clutch and it's time to beat on Jax in the corner.

The Backstabber hits Baszler and Bayley starts going up but Banks covers for two instead. Now Bayley can hit the elbow for two more but Banks' running knees only hit the post. Back in and Baszler takes out the bad knee. A spinning toehold is countered into a small package for two but Baszler is right back up with a shot to knock Bayley off the apron. Baszler stomps at the knee and tries a Muta Lock, only to have Bayley come back in for the Bayley to Belly for the save.

Banks grabs the Bank Statement instead of tagging and it's Jax coming in to break things up. Jax gets the tag and tries a Stretch Muffler but Banks reverses into a sunset flip for two. Bayley saves Sasha from a super Samoan drop and a double powerbomb hits Baszler. Jax hits a middle rope crossbody for the double pin to retain at 15:38.

Rating: B-. They did a really good job here of making you think that the match was over and then finding a way to keep it going. The action was intense here too and the knee injury was a fine way to keep things going. I'm not wild on Jax and Baszler as champions but they had a rather solid match here so fair enough for one night.

Post break medics are checking on Banks...and Bayley kicks her in the head. Bayley sends her into the steps and then stomps the bad leg on the steps.

Banks goes into the barricade and then back in to keep up the beating, including more kicks to the leg. Bayley yells at her a lot and then wraps a chair around the leg. Banks gets in some kicks but Bayley blasts her again and adds a bulldog driver. With Banks out cold, Bayley wraps the chair around Banks' neck and Pillmanizes her, probably putting Banks out all the way until Clash Of Champions.

Post break Banks is taken away in an ambulance.

Here's Sami Zayn for a chat. Sami does not like not being mentioned as Intercontinental Champion. He hijacks the headset and talks to the production truck for not including the fact that he is Intercontinental Champion. Apparently it wasn't in their notes, but here's Jeff Hardy to interrupt.

Hardy says all Sami had to do was ask for a title shot but Sami says it should have been Sami who was asking. Cue AJ Styles to say he's back and healthy so Jeff says he's ready to defend. AJ jumps Hardy and the fight is on with Sami joining in. AJ hits Hardy as well but Hardy gets back up, with AJ being sent outside. The Helluva Kick hits Hardy and Sami bails.

Jey Uso is replacing Big E. in the #1 contenders match.

Tucker can't find Miz and Morrison to get the briefcase back. Otis is cool with it because he keeps the Money in the Bank contract in his mini lunch box. Tucker is happy but wants to know what's in the briefcase. As luck would have it, Morrison is ready to open the briefcase at that time and finds...a stapler, some Q-Tips and a sandwich.

Jey Uso thanks Roman for getting him in the match but Roman says it was Heyman's doing. Reigns wants Jey to win one on his own and wishes him luck.

Riddle comes out for the main event and charges at Corbin's throne on the stage to start the fight early. Sheamus and Jey come down and the brawl is on in the ring and on the floor. We take a break before the bell rings and come back with...the Firefly Fun House.

Bray knows that you are down in the dumps just like He is because He lost

his favorite toy again. It's cool though because next week a brand new friend is coming to the Fun House. BYE!

Alexa Bliss comes up to Nikki Cross in the back and doesn't know what came over him. With Ramblin Rabbit in the background, Bliss hugs her and walks off.

Matt Riddle vs. King Corbin vs. Sheamus vs. Jey Uso

For the shot at Clash and we're finally ready to go about ten minutes after Riddle's entrance. It's a brawl to start with Jey superkicking Corbin to the floor and Sheamus hitting a backbreaker on Riddle. Jey comes back in for the save but gets knocked down, leaving the big guys to brawl. Riddle gets in as well and it's a double charge in the corner to Sheamus and Corbin.

They come back with the Irish Curse and Deep Six for a double two, followed by Sheamus running Corbin over. We take a break and come back with Sheamus hitting the forearms to Jey's chest but Riddle is back up with strikes of his own. An exploder suplex into the Broton has Sheamus in trouble but he pulls Riddle into the Cloverleaf. Jey makes the save and hits some running Umaga Attacks to both of them in the corner.

Corbin gets in a cheap shot on Jey but Riddle and Sheamus throw Corbin over the barricade. Jey dives onto Sheamus and Riddle for the double knockdown but Corbin is back up to throw Uso into the video screens. The other three get back in and Sheamus Brogue Kicks Corbin. The Bro To Sleep sends Sheamus outside and it's the Floating Bro to Corbin. Jey comes back in with the Superfly Splash to Riddle for the pin at 13:18.

Rating: C. Well it wasn't expected. I'm not exactly going to believe that Jey Uso is actually getting the title shot until I hear the bell ring and I'm also not sure that the match is going to last more than about fifteen seconds if it does take place. The match was good enough and the ending was a surprise, though I'm not entirely convinced that it's lasting, which is fine too. That being said, you have Riddle, Sheamus and Corbin in there and Riddle takes the fall?

Post match Jey says he made the family proud too and is ready to take

Roman to the Uso Penitentiary.

Overall Rating: B-. The word here is energy, as the show felt like it was doing a lot of stuff that mattered (not everything mind you, but a good deal of it). Heyman and Reigns had a good promo to start, the Bayley/Banks angle was good and they threw in a big curve ball at the end. I liked the show more than I have liked Smackdown in a long time and that's a nice thing to be able to say. Good start to the Evil Reigns era and now we get to wait and see what comes next. The fact that I want to see what that is makes this a success.

Results

Heavy Machinery b. John Morrison/The Miz – Vader Bomb to Miz

Shayna Baszler/Nia Jax b. Bayley/Sasha Banks – Double middle rope crossbody

Jey Uso b. Matt Riddle, King Corbin and Sheamus – Superfly Splash to Riddle

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the paperback edition of KB's Complete 2004 Monday Night Raw Reviews (also available as an e-book) from Amazon. Check out the information here:

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Main Event – April 23, 2020: Yes, Here Too



IMG Credit: WWE

Main Event

Date: April 23, 2020

Location: WWE Performance Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, MVP

It's time for another one of these and I'm not sure what there is to think about it anymore. These empty arena shows are draining me of any reason to care and this is my least favorite time of the year. We'll be seeing a lot of Money in the Bank build and that isn't exactly thrilling stuff. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Asuka vs. Catalina

You may remember Catalina from her short term run on Raw. Asuka takes her into the corner for a grab of the mask and it's time to walk around a bit. Catalina grabs the arm to send Asuka face first into the mat but Asuka is right back with an armbar. An armdrag sends Asuka outside and Catalina hits a running boot to the face.

That's about it for Catalina though as Asuka hits her in the face on the

floor and kicks her in the head back inside. An armbar and the running hip attack in the corner have Catalina in more trouble and a bulldog gets two. Catalina fights back with a clothesline but misses the twisting Swanton. A kick to the head sets up the Asuka Lock for the tap at 7:04.

Rating: C. Catalina is someone who could go somewhere with some more time and experience in the WWE style but as young as she is, she has a long time left to get there. Asuka had to sweat a bit here before the win and that's more than you would expect from a match like this. If nothing else, it's nice to see Catalina again as she made a small splash and then vanished.

From Smackdown.

It's time for A Moment Of Bliss to start things off. After bragging about being two time Women's Tag Team Champions (I completely forgot their first reign, which isn't a good sign for titles that are fourteen months old), Nikki Cross brings out Braun Strowman. They congratulate Braun on being the new Universal Champion but bring up the fact that he is officially defending against Bray Wyatt (not the Fiend) at Money in the Bank.

Strowman knows Bray and the games he plays so Bray is going to get these hands. There's a present on the mat though and it seems to be for Braun. Inside is...the old mask he wore as part of the Wyatt Family. Braun looks upset and we hear Bray's laughter as a picture of Braun in the mask comes on the screen.

We see some men qualifying for Money in the Bank.

From Raw.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Rey Mysterio vs. Murphy

Rey headlocks him down to start and it's an early standoff. Murphy takes over with an armbar but has to duck an early 619 attempt. Some forearms put Rey on the floor and Murphy drives him into the barricade. Back in and Murphy stays on the arm until Rey armdrags him to the floor.

That works fine for Murphy, who catches a dive and stomps on the arm on

the ramp. Back from a break with Murphy still on the arm but Rey snaps off a hurricanrana on the floor. They get back in with Rey hitting a tornado DDT and heading to the apron again. A dropkick sends Murphy into the barricade but he's right back with a spinning facebuster onto the knee. Murphy's brainbuster gets two so he goes up top, only to get caught with a super Destroyer. The 619 into the frog splash finishes Murphy at 15:09.

Rating: C+. That was certainly a Money in the Bank qualifying match. They did moves to each other and Mysterio made the comeback win. During those fifteen minutes, we heard references to climbing the corporate ladder roughly 284 times because someone came up with that line and WWE has decided it's the cleverest line in history.

Humberto Carrillo vs. Shelton Benjamin

Yes again. Shelton quickly wrestles him down to start as MVP gets on Phillips for not acknowledging his great point about Shelton's career. Back up and Carrillo sends him into the ropes, setting up some rapid fire forearms to the face. They wind up on the apron for stereo big boots and we take a break.

Back with Carrillo slipping out of a suplex and kicking away, only to get caught with a running knee in the corner. Another suplex lets Shelton chuckle a bit and we hit the chinlock. That's broken up and Carrillo grabs a running hurricanrana. Shelton powerbombs him out of the air but is quickly small packaged for the pin at 10:41.

Rating: C-. This is threatening to become the new Main Event Special with one meeting after another. It's a watchable enough match but it isn't something that I need to see week after week. WWE can do a lot of things with this show and I really hope that they don't choose to do this match so often that it becomes a running joke.

From Smackdown.

Tag Team Titles: Big E. vs. Jey Uso vs. The Miz

Miz is defending the titles on his own. The challengers waste no time in

sending Miz outside before Big E. runs Jey over. Big E. talks about having a plan but the other two are back up to suplex him through the announcers' table. We take a break and come back with Jey hitting back to back suicide dives.

The running Umaga Attacks in the corner make it worse but Big E. catches Jey with the Rock Bottom out of the corner. Miz even goes aerial with a springboard ax handle, allowing him to start the HEY HEY HO HO. Miz can't Figure Four Jey, who kicks him into Big E. for two instead. The Skull Crushing Final gets two on Jey and now the Figure Four goes on. Big E. breaks that up with the Big Ending to Miz for the pin and the titles at 9:45.

Rating: C-. Kind of a surprising ending as we continue to have New Day as placeholder champions, though they've been placeholder champions for what feels like years now. Normally I would say that I hope this doesn't lead to the Forgotten Sons winning the titles because that would almost guarantee that it does, so yeah I've just screwed it up all over again.

We cut to Kofi at his house for an AND NEEEEEEWWWWW for a nice smile inducing moments.

Xavier Woods throws in a bunch of plugs.

Big E. rolls around on the floor shouting EIGHT TIMES to end the show.

We look at Seth Rollins attacking Drew McIntyre.

From Raw.

Angel Garza vs. Drew McIntyre

Non-title and Vega and company are at ringside again. McIntyre goes straight for the knee to start and there's the overhead belly to belly to send Garza rolling to the floor. Some chops against the barricade have Garza in trouble and Andrade's posting fails. So does Garza's suicide dive and McIntyre headbutts him, only to have to deal with Theory.

That allows Garza to hit a posting, followed by a missile dropkick for two back inside. McIntyre fights out of a half crab and kicks Garza in

the face. Garza tries to escape so McIntyre PULLS OFF GARZA'S PANTS as Garza gets to the floor. The big flip dive connects and McIntyre takes out Andrade and Theory. Back in and the Claymore finishes Garza at 5:02.

Rating: C. This was an entertaining squash as McIntyre swatted Garza away like a fly. Even the rest of the team couldn't do anything to slow him down and that's what you should be doing with the champ. McIntyre looked awesome here and it showed how far ahead he is of Vega and company. It was a great showcase and that's what it needed to be.

Post match McIntyre gives Garza another Claymore. Theory comes in and gets one of his own for good measure. McIntyre chases Andrade up the ramp and strikes the Tranquilo pose to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. Not much to see here as the shows they're recapping aren't exactly thrilling. Raw and Smackdown are now little more than below average wrestling shows with no fans. There are some nice moments involved, but it's not like these shows would be good with fans in the first place. Couple that with more of the same matches you see so frequently on this show and it's not a great sign.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the paperback edition of KB's Complete 2004 Monday Night Raw Reviews (also available as an e-book) from Amazon. Check out the information here:

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Smackdown – April 17, 2020: That's The Best Part?



IMG Credit: WWE

Smackdown

Date: April 17, 2020

Location: WWE Performance Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Michael Cole, Corey Graves

It's time to move forwards towards Money in the Bank and this time around we are finding out who else is going to be involved in the women's match, plus the first man involved. I'm not sure how much steam these empty arena shows have left but they're all we're getting at the moment. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Cole runs down the card.

It's time for A Moment Of Bliss to start things off. After bragging about being two time Women's Tag Team Champions (I completely forgot their first reign, which isn't a good sign for titles that are fourteen months old), Nikki Cross brings out Braun Strowman. They congratulate Braun on being the new Universal Champion but bring up the fact that he is officially defending against Bray Wyatt (not the Fiend) at Money in the

Bank.

Strowman knows Bray and the games he plays so Bray is going to get these hands. There's a present on the mat though and it seems to be for Braun. Inside is...the old mask he wore as part of the Wyatt Family. Braun looks upset and we hear Bray's laughter as a picture of Braun in the mask comes on the screen.

Post break, Cole and Graves explain what we just saw.

Sasha Banks vs. Tamina

If Tamina wins, she gets a Women's Title match at Money in the Bank and Bayley is on commentary. Sasha throws her a shirt to start but Tamina says it's not the right size. The shirt is thrown at Bayley and Banks' rollup completely fails. A headbutt sends Banks to the floor and we take a break.

Back with Sasha hammering away and bending the back of Tamina's neck around the rope. The chinlock goes on but Tamina fights up with something like a Rock Bottom to send Sasha outside. Bayley offers a distraction so Sasha can get in a posting, a 619 on the apron and a ram into the steps. Bayley loads up a cheap shot but here's Lacey Evans to cut her off. Tamina hits a superkick and hits a second inside for the pin and the title shot at 8:34.

Rating: D+. So yeah we have the next Jinder Mahal here, as Tamina has never done anything of note (until she won a triple threat match a few weeks ago, she hadn't won a match in over a year) but now she wins a match or two and we're supposed to forget about how unimportant and nothing she has been for years. It's bad storytelling, it's illogical, it's annoying to the fans who watch every week and WWE is going to keep doing it over and over because they don't know how long term storytelling and character building works anymore.

Jey Usos is ready for the triple threat and shouts a lot.

Post break Lacey says wherever Sasha goes, she goes. She's a Marine, and isn't stopping until the mission is accomplished. That would be no more

Sasha, which is written on the back of her hand.

Sheamus vs. Denzel DeJournette

Sheamus shrugs off a takedown attempt and elbows/knees away at the head. The Brogue kick finishes at 1:03.

Post match Cole starts introducing a video on Jeff Hardy but Sheamus interrupts and asks what is Cole's malfunction. That's too much disrespect to Sheamus, fella.

We get the second part of the Jeff Hardy video, which features a bunch of dives that banged Hardy up. It resulted in his addiction issues and caused his career to start spiraling down. Then he left in 2009 (the World Title reigns aren't mentioned) and we see some videos of him high and drunk, which are still hard to watch. This led to a lot of his legal problems and Jeff knows that he has a lot to make up for. Part three next week.

Carmella comes up to Dana Brooke and isn't happy that Dana isn't focused on their Tag Team Title match next week. Dana explains the Money in the Bank idea and says she can do both. Carmella isn't convinced, just like I'm not convinced that any WWE writer has ever had a conversation with a human if this is supposed to sound authentic.

Commentary talks about the Money in the Bank ladder matches...which will take place at WWE Corporate headquarters with the briefcases ON THE ROOF OF TITAN TOWERS! Well that's a new one!

Money In The Bank Qualifying Match: Naomi vs. Dana Brooke

Naomi's helmet is back and at least it covers up that ridiculous looking hair. Naomi kicks her down for two to start but gets thrown outside. Back in and Dana grabs a bodyscissors, allowing her to talk a lot of extra audible trash. That's broken up so Naomi kicks her in the head a few times, followed by a springboard kick to the face for two. A powerbomb gives Dana the same but the Rear View connects for two more. Naomi is SHOCKED that it didn't work, making me roll my eyes a good bit. The split legged moonsault misses though and Brooke gets a rollup pin at 4:10.

Rating: D+. I still like Brooke more than most but it's in the same vein as Tamina: she has barely won anything and yet we're supposed to take her as a threat. Even if there's a huge upset and she wins the ladder match and title, it's still way too much to buy her as a top star. Wins and losses matter if you watch regularly and while this isn't as bad as Tamina getting a title shot, I'm still not buying it.

During the post match replays, Corey says Dana is the first person to kick out of the Rear View. Normally I'd have to look it up but I'm just refusing to believe that's true.

Long recap of Otis/Mandy Rose and the Sonya Deville/Dolph Ziggler plan to stop them.

Here's a very upset Sonya Deville to beg Mandy's forgiveness. They've been friends forever and for the first time in forever, Mandy isn't here. Sonya has wanted to tell her something but here's Mandy in person to cut her off. Fighting back tears, Sonya says....that Mandy is the most selfish human being she has ever met. As soon as Mandy became interested in Otis, she was ready to kick Sonya to the curb.

Mandy doesn't get it but Sonya says that Fire & Desire was always about Mandy instead of them. They came out to her music and talked about Mandy's magazine covers. If Mandy could have focused on the team, everything would be fine. Dolph actually cares about Mandy but she ignored him too. Sonya accepted Dolph's help because he helped the team but then Mandy had to ruin everything.

Now all Sonya wants to do is see Mandy hurt. Mandy might be pretty but she's a dime a dozen blonde who was built in a lab. Sonya worked forever to be second to a talentless piece of eye candy. Now Sonya is going to ruin her life because she isn't going to deal with some centerfold Barbie b****. Cue Ziggler to say he's made a mistake but they had a great Valentines Day. Mandy slaps his hand away and Sonya jumps her, freaking Dolph out. Otis runs in for the save and house is cleaned, likely setting up a mixed tag. Well done on throwing in a bit of a surprise instead of Sonya declaring her love for Mandy.

We get the tribute video to Howard Finkel. That voice is never going to

be topped and it's very rare to see someone who clearly loved wrestling like he did. We get a lot NEEEEWWW's and a look at his comedy stuff, which really did work for him.

Miz thinks it is an injustice that he has to defend the Tag Team Titles in another three person triple threat match after John Morrison already did it at Wrestlemania. I'd call it more of a bad idea than an injustice.

Video on the Forgotten Sons.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Cesaro vs. Daniel Bryan

Shinsuke Nakamura and Drew Gulak are the seconds. Cesaro shows off a bit by jumping up to touch the briefcase above the ring. Bryan wastes no time in knocking Cesaro to the floor for a suicide dive...and here's the masked guy on the screen to show us more hidden video. He says some keep their friends close and others keep their enemies closer. There is no video shown though and we take a break.

Back with Bryan working on an armbar and then grabbing a cross armbreaker. Cesaro muscles him up with a powerbomb to escape and a slam gets two on Bryan. He heads to the apron but manages to snap Cesaro's arm across the top rope. A dive off the top is countered into a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker though and Cesaro grabs the Sharpshooter. Bryan gets to the rope and goes outside, setting up the running uppercut against the barricade.

Back from another break with Bryan hitting the YES Kicks for two but Cesaro hits a gorilla press knee to the face. The Crossface goes on, only to be reversed into most of the YES Lock. Cesaro clotheslines the heck out of him and unloads with uppercuts in the corner. Bryan's moonsault out of the corner is caught but Bryan pulls him down into the YES Lock. Nakamura's interference is cut off by Gulak and Cesaro taps at 14:24.

Rating: B. This is a lot closer to the match that you would have wanted to see from these two as they were given time and allowed to work to their strengths. It helps when you spend a good chunk of your careers wrestling in front of very few people. They know how to do something else and that makes for a better performance like this. Well that and the two

of them being Cesaro and Bryan.

Big E. is ready to win the Tag Team Titles on his own. This morning, he slid out of the triple bunk bed and told Kofi and Woods to eat popcorn in the La-Z-Boys because it's time to become eight time champions.

King Corbin jumps Elias in the back and crushes his hand between two anvil cases. Corbin drags him away. Post break, Corbin steps on Elias' hand and tells him to sing before hitting him in the throat with a baton. That looks to be it but Corbin breaks the guitar over his back for a bonus. Now this is more like it for Corbin, FAR away from the main event scene and beating up midcarders. I can go for this far more.

Tag Team Titles: Big E. vs. Jey Uso vs. The Miz

Miz is defending the titles on his own. The challengers waste no time in sending Miz outside before Big E. runs Jey over. Big E. talks about having a plan but the other two are back up to suplex him through the announcers' table. We take a break and come back with Jey hitting back to back suicide dives.

The running Umaga Attacks in the corner make it worse but Big E. catches Jey with the Rock Bottom out of the corner. Miz even goes aerial with a springboard ax handle, allowing him to start the HEY HEY H0 H0. Miz can't Figure Four Jey, who kicks him into Big E. for two instead. The Skull Crushing Final gets two on Jey and now the Figure Four goes on. Big E. breaks that up with the Big Ending to Miz for the pin and the titles at 9:45.

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We cut to Kofi at his house for an AND NEEEEEEWWWWW for a nice smile inducing moments.

Xavier Woods throws in a bunch of plugs.

Big E. rolls around on the floor shouting EIGHT TIMES to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This was ok enough as they've managed to make these shows feel like any regular Smackdown. That sounds good in theory, but then you remember that a regular Smackdown isn't much of a show, much like this one wasn't. It was a decent enough watch with angle advancement and some good wrestling, but it's nothing overly memorable. I actually liked that mixed tag angle in the middle as much as anything else, as it was well delivered and the motivations make sense. The match will probably be junk, but points for the setup. Not a great show by any means, but watchable enough for Smackdown.

Results

Tamina b. Sasha Banks – Superkick

Sheamus b. Denzel DeJournette – Brogue Kick

Dana Brooke b. Naomi – Sunset flip

Daniel Bryan b. Cesaro – YES Lock

Big E. b. Jey Uso and Miz – Big Ending to Miz

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<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2019/08/26/new-book-and-e-book-kbs-complete-2004-monday-night-raw-reviews/>

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<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Daily News Update – December 10, 2016

When Could Chris Jericho Be Leaving WWE?

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/when-could-chris-jericho-be-leaving-wwe/>

What Other Gimmicks Were Considered for Charlotte vs. Sasha Banks?
December 7, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/what-other-gimmicks-were-considered-for-charlotte-vs-sasha-banks/>

Two NXT Tag Team Title Matches Announced. December 8, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/two-nxt-tag-team-title-matches-announced/>

Update on the NXT Title Situation. December 8, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/update-on-the-nxt-title-situation/>

Ring of Honor Title to be Defended at “Wrestle Kingdom 11.” December 8, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/ring-honor-title-defended-wrestle-kingdom-11/>

Vince McMahon Changes Mind on WWE Network. December 8, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/vince-mcmahon-changes-mind-wwe-network/>

Two More “Smackdown Live” Wrestlers Injured. December 8, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/two-smackdown-live-wrestlers-injured/>

WWE Wishes Legend Happy Birthday, Return Possible? December 9, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/wwe-wishes-legend-happy-birthday-return-possible/>

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AJ Styles Pulled From More Shows. December 9, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/aj-styles-pulled-shows/>

Two TNA Talents Reportedly Gone. December 10, 2016.

<http://wrestlingrumors.net/two-tna-talents-reportedly-gone/>

Smackdown – July 7, 2016: Pre-Draft Momentum

Smackdown

Date: July 7, 2016

Location: Huntington Center, Toledo, Ohio

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Jerry Lawler, Byron Saxton

This is a fresh start for a change as Monday was a completely worthless show thanks to the Fourth of July. We're getting closer to Battleground but more importantly we're less than two weeks away from the Draft which resets everything anyway. In other words there's no way of knowing how good this will be so let's get to it.

The Club is conferencing.

Chris Jericho is trying to find his blue scarf.

Sami Zayn is ready to beat Jericho tonight and make him second best.

Seth Rollins arrives and runs into Jey Uso. Some Samoan family insults are made and a match gets the same treatment. I could go for these quick vignettes becoming a regular thing. It worked for Saturday Night's Main Event and it works here too.

Opening sequence.

Here's Dean Ambrose to say he wants to try his hand as a ring announcer because he could be a taller Howard Finkel.

Jey Uso vs. Seth Rollins

Seth is apparently from a place where he didn't get enough hugs as a child. That's sad. Jey takes over with an early armbar as the fans (or at least the canned versions) are behind the Samoan. Seth gets two off a backbreaker as Dean plugs his new t-shirt and the Seth Rollins ice cream bars but apparently they don't taste very good. A high crossbody gets two on Rollins and there's a suicide dive to take Rollins out again. Dean says that's five minutes (not quite) and asks Seth if it's time to go to a commercial.

Back with Seth hitting his running knee off the apron and throwing on a chinlock. Seth goes to the middle rope but Dean makes an announcement that a 1997 Ford is about to be towed for being in the fire lane. This one doesn't work as well as Seth scores with an enziguri, only to run into a Samoan Drop. The Superfly Splash hits knees though and the Pedigree puts Jey away at 10:25.

Rating: C. Dean was amusing enough here and it's better than just having him do guest commentary for the tenth time Rollins has a match. It's also a good sign that the Usos can work as singles wrestlers and do well enough as so many teams can't do anything without their partner around.

Dean: "The winner of the match, the human equivalent of a root canal."
Seth bails at the threat of a fight so Ambrose can't raise his hand.
Dean: "I'll just raise this instead." And he holds up the title.

We look back at Sami and Kevin Owens beating Jericho up two weeks ago.

Zack Ryder vs. Sheamus

Ryder has a new rock version of his music and it's actually working for me. Sheamus pounds him down with forearms and clotheslines to start, followed by the forearms to the chest. A slam onto the apron makes things even worse but Ryder kicks him in the face and comes back with more

forearms. That just earns him an Irish Curse before Sheamus loads up a superplex. Ryder knocks him off and drops the Elbro for the completely clean pin at 2:43. I know Sheamus isn't what he used to be but this is a big drop off. At least Ryder is getting a push though and that's a good thing.

Ryder wants to get his US Title back and issues the challenge to Rusev.

Baron Corbin video.

Rusev accepts the challenge.

Becky Lynch vs. Natalya

No match as Natalya jumps Becky from behind and puts her in the Sharpshooter. Naturally she tells Becky to tap, which always makes me chuckle.

We recap the Wyatt Family and New Day from Monday.

Xavier Woods is worried about going to the Wyatt Compound because they have no idea what's going to happen there. Woods isn't happy with what his brothers have decided but he'll stand by them. Did the Wyatts send them directions to get there? Otherwise we could be in for a long scavenger hunt.

Here are Enzo and Big Cass to talk about deciding to help John Cena on Raw. That wasn't about them saving Cena or any personal issue with the Club. Monday was about sending a message to the Club to tell them that they can't beat down anyone they want. This brings out the Club with AJ saying they owe the Club an apology for interrupting them as they beat up John Cena.

Anderson thinks they should beat up Enzo and Cass, then hit some golf balls, have some strawberry shortcake and then BEAT UP JOHN CENA. AJ wants to fight Enzo, who says they're not a good original or a good remix. After one round with Sugar Ray Amore, they'll walk out a diabetic.

AJ Styles vs. Enzo Amore

AJ wrestles him down and smirks a lot, only to have Enzo do the same right back. Enzo sends him outside for a big dive but trips on the top for a big crash onto the floor. Thankfully he gets up and is fine this time with AJ hammering away in the corner. Enzo gets in a dropkick but AJ easily takes him down for a chinlock. Back up and the tornado DDT is countered into a suplex to send Amore crashing into the corner. The big guys get in a fight on the floor as AJ crotches Enzo, setting up the Styles Clash for the pin at 5:37.

Rating: C-. This was fine despite the ending not being the biggest surprise in the world. Enzo is fine for a spot like this as he isn't expected to beat almost anyone on his own but he can do such an effective job of talking that he can get back whatever he lost in all of ten seconds. The six man could be a lot of fun.

Apparently Owens stole Jericho's scarf because he wanted to see if he could get one for his wife. Owens had some popcorn earlier and got the thing all greasy so Jericho demands money to have it cleaned. Kevin drops some change into Jericho's hand but Owens makes sure to get the button back. Jericho wants one more quarter but Owens gives him a Jolly Rancher. Oh and he'll be ringside for Jericho vs. Sami later. Jericho thinks it smells like soup. This was a completely face promo from Owens and he was just as good as always.

The Miz vs. Kalisto

Non-title. This is the result of Kalisto being the one to throw potato salad at Maryse on Monday. Apparently she's allergic so this could have been an international incident. Kalisto starts fast with a top rope corkscrew armdrag to send Miz outside where Maryse prevents a dive. Miz sends him into the steps and we take an early break. Back with Miz working on the back with some forearms before he charges into Kalisto's raised boots. Miz comes right back with a slingshot powerbomb for two before sidestepping the corkscrew forearm. The Skull Crushing Finale puts Kalisto away at 7:54.

Rating: D+. So much for the Kalisto experiment as he's gone from defending the US Title at Wrestlemania to losing a match started over

potato salad. He's just the latest victim of the writers throwing a toy out of the crib and it's still pretty sad to see. They had something there but so much for that because it's time to go with....well nothing actually.

Sasha Banks talks about how awesome she is when Charlotte comes in dressed as Banks. Insults are exchanged and Sasha vs. Dana is set for Monday. Charlotte throws down her Sasha gear because it's not her look.

We get Monday's Darren Young/Bob Backlund segment. This has to be close to the last one.

Brock Lesnar's official opponent for Summerslam is.....Randy Orton. Scott Stanford, Booker T., and Corey Graves preview the match a bit from WWE world headquarters.

Golden Truth plugs Sonic with Truth putting the food on top of a ladder to get ready for Money in the Bank. This was no "we got a couple of taters" from Monday.

Sami Zayn vs. Chris Jericho

Kevin Owens is at ringside and starts ripping on Byron before his music even ends. Owens: "Hi Sami! Hope you have a good match! I hope you break your ankle." Jericho wristlocks him down for a bit until Sami scores with three straight armdrags. They head outside with Sami hitting his barricade moonsault but Jericho punches him in the face and mocks the OLE chants as we take a break.

Back with the Lionsault (Owens: "I taught him how to do that.") connecting for two before we hit the chinlock. Jericho: "WHERE'S THE OLE??" Sami comes back but Jericho bails to the floor, only to take one of those running clotheslines. Back in and Owens talks about wanting to see Jericho kick Sami in the face, which is exactly what Chris does a second later.

Sami tornado DDTs Jericho to the floor for the big flip dive but Sami goes to take out Owens so Jericho can take over again. The exploder suplex sends Jericho into the corner but the Helluva Kick has to take

Owens down. Jericho's Walls attempt is countered into a quick rollup to give Sami the upset pin at 12:12.

Rating: B-. This is exactly the kind of match you have Jericho around for. He's been built up for the last few months and now you have a young guy like Sami get a big win that makes him seem important. Owens interfering was a nice touch but the key here was Sami having Jericho beat with the Helluva Kick before having to recover and then win with the rollup. In other words, Sami was the better man and didn't just win off a fluke.

Jericho lays Sami out and Owens comes in for a Pop Up Powerbomb to leave Sami laying as the show ends.

Overall Rating: C. There was an energy to this show that has been missing in the last few weeks and that's a good sign going into the Draft. Above all else though they actually had some stuff happen here with the Lesnar announcement and Ryder challenging Rusev for the title. It's the start of making people feel like they need to see Smackdown instead of it just being a show that they'll stop on if they flip over to USA by mistake. There's a long way to go but hopefully this was a first step.

Results

Seth Rollins b. Jey Uso – Pedigree

Zack Ryder b. Sheamus – Elbro

AJ Styles b. Enzo Amore – Styles Clash

Miz b. Kalisto – Skull Crushing Finale

Sami Zayn b. Chris Jericho – Rollup

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<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01FWZZ2UA>

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Smackdown – March 31, 2016: A Necessary Evil

Smackdown

Date: March 31, 2016

Location: Barclays Center, New York City, New York

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Mauro Ranallo

This is one of the most unique shows of the year as it's mostly going to be about building up Wrestlemania. The few matches that will be on here were taped on Monday at Raw so the crowd is going to be hotter than usual. Expect a lot of video packages here though as that's the point of the show. Let's get to it.

AJ Styles vs. Heath Slater

Before the match, the Outcasts talk about how the four of them are going to win the battle royal. Axel dubs the team the Phenomenal Four. Rose: "You really racked your brain to come up with that one didn't you?" Slater gets in a boot to the head to knock AJ outside, sending him head first into the steps. I'll go on a limb and say that's the extent of his major offense in this match.

We hit a chinlock back inside followed by a jumping heel kick (Lawler: "That was founomenal!") for two on Styles. Slater misses a splash though and AJ makes his comeback with the speedy strikes, including a Pele to Rose. The Phenomenal Forearm puts Slater away at 4:45.

Rating: D. I really wasn't feeling this one as Slater shouldn't be beating AJ up for any given amount of time. I'm fine with him getting in a little offense here and there but this as about 80% Slater and that's a really bad sign with Wrestlemania just a few days away. Bad match planning here and that's not good.

Byron Saxton and Renee Young are at AT&T Stadium to introduce a lot of videos throughout the night. Yeah that's going to be the big bulk of the show.

Long video on Shane vs. Undertaker, mostly stuff we've seen on Raw already.

Network shill.

Hall of Fame ad.

Video on Ambrose vs. Lesnar.

Pre-show preview.

Video on HHH using the Dudley Boyz to trap Reigns from Raw and the ensuing brawl.

Video on Snoop Dogg being inducted into the celebrity wing of the Hall of Fame.

Jey Uso vs. D-Von Dudley

Jey pounds in the corner to start and clotheslines D-Von out to the floor, earning himself a jawing session with Bubba. Back in and Jey's charge goes into the post, allowing Bubba to get in a right hand to really change control. A top rope splash misses though and it's time for the kicks, followed by a Samoan drop. The running Umaga attack causes Bubba to start a D-Von chant, which works far better than it should for the heel act. Bubba and Jimmy get into it on the floor, allowing D-Von to get in a spinebuster for the pin at 4:25.

Rating: C. Believe it or not this was fine. It's kind of hard to screw up a match that only goes four minutes and has someone as capable as D-Von

in there. The match is going to be fine but it's just not a story that I really want to see. It's also interesting that the Usos are the same in singles matches that they are in tags. You don't often see two wrestlers who are so similar and really change nothing when they're in the same match.

Video on the Divas Title triple threat.

Ad for Thank You Daniel on the WWE Network, which really is entertaining.

Clip of Del Rio vs. Kofi on Monday and Coach's post match cameo.

Byron and Renee talk about the World Title match.

Video on Reigns vs. HHH.

Dean Ambrose vs. Erick Rowan

Bray and Strowman only come to the stage so Rowan is on his own here. They slug it out to start with Rowan getting the better of it off a back elbow. Dean sends him outside and knees him from the apron as we take a break. Back with Rowan getting two off a reverse powerslam (ala Lucha Underground's Matanza) and slapping on the chinlock. Dean's comeback is stopped by a boot to the face and it's time for that head vice.

Erick mixes things up with a middle rope back elbow to the jaw (ala Bayley of all people) but takes too long going up and gets superplexed down. Dean gets in the suicide shove and the standing elbow drop gets two. A sitout Rock Bottom (Matt Hardy's Side Effect) and a spinwheel kick give Rowan a pair of near falls but Dirty Deeds ends Rowan at 13:58.

Rating: D. Yeah this was nothing. It was a lot of rest holds before we got to the exact ending everyone knew we were getting. Then again, this isn't exactly a show that is going to be held to a high standard. Rowan is nothing more than the guy you send out there to look big and intimidating and then lose every time. That's going to keep him employed for a very long time though as it's a role that has to be fulfilled.

A quick plug of the Austin Podcast with Mick Foley takes us out.

Overall Rating: D. Like I said in the main event, this wasn't supposed to be a regular show. The wrestling was there for the sake of saying there was wrestling on the show in between the videos. That being said, the show accomplished its goal of being a big commercial for Wrestlemania, which means it's good if you don't watch regularly but a huge waste of time if you watch every week. I'd call it a necessary evil and that has to be expected with this meaningless episode every year.

Results

AJ Styles b. Heath Slater – Phenomenal Forearm

D-Von Dudley b. Jey Uso – Spinebuster

Dean Ambrose b. Erick Rowan – Dirty Deeds

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