

# Smackdown – January 13, 2023: Just Like NXT

## Smackdown

Date: January 13, 2023

Location: Resch Center, Green Bay, Wisconsin

Commentators: Wade Barrett, Michael Cole

It's a big show this week as we have a pair of major matches. This week we'll be seeing another match between Sami Zayn and Kevin Owens, which should have some Bloodline implications. In addition, Gunther is defending the Intercontinental Title against Braun Strowman. Let's get to it.

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

## Intercontinental Title: Braun Strowman vs. Gunther

Strowman is challenging and wearing boots designed by a boy who died in the Waukesha parade shootings. Feeling process to start as Gunther is a bit hesitant to go after him. Strowman manages to send him outside though and the running shoulder sends Gunther into the announcers' table.

We take a break and come back with Strowman getting posted, allowing Gunther to start in on the arm. The armbar goes on but Strowman powers up, only to fall down when the arm gives out. Strowman fights out again and hits a clothesline but the rest of Imperium offer a distraction, allowing Gunther to hit the chops. The powerslam gives Strowman a breather though and we take a break.

Back again with Strowman running him over and hitting a spinebuster for two. Strowman can't hit the Monster Bomb though as Gunther is back with a heck of a clothesline for two. Gunther's top rope splash gets two so he goes up again, only to have Strowman catch him. Gunther snaps the arm though

and the powerbomb off the ropes retains the title at 17:28.

**Rating:** B-. I'm glad to see Gunther retain as his long reign continues with another good victory. Gunther racking up these wins is making him seem all the more impressive and I'm wanting to see just how far he can go with it. Strowman has been hot since he came back, but he doesn't need the title and can show up again in a few weeks to do his monster thing again without any trouble.

Video on Roman Reigns and Sami Zayn's recent issues.

Sami Zayn comes up to the Bloodline's locker room to talk strategy, but Paul Heyman is here alone for the team tonight. Heyman is sending Zayn out there on his own against Kevin Owens tonight, as per Reigns' orders.

Here is Rey Mysterio to talk about his recent issues with his family. On Christmas Eve, Rey's son came to his house and got arrested for assault. That's a tough thing to do, so now he is going to make himself feel better by winning the Royal Rumble. Cue Karrion Kross and Scarlett to interrupt, with Kross wanting to talk about Rey's family. Maybe Dominik is what he is because Rey is such a horrible father and Rey was never there. Is Dominik a failure because Rey wasn't there or because Rey wanted his son to be like him? That's enough for Rey and the fight is on. Scarlett grabs Rey's leg though and the Krossjacket leaves Rey laying.

Emma, Maxine Dupree and Raquel Rodriguez ask Liv Morgan if it's a good idea to enter the Royal Rumble at #1. Morgan insists it is and gets a match with an annoyed Rodriguez.

Tegan Nox vs. Xia Li

Nox starts fast and strikes away, only to get pulled down for a crash. Li takes her into the corner and strikes away to keep Emma in early trouble. A kick into the corner sets up a running knee but Nox runs her over for a breather. Back up and

the Shiniest Wizard finishes Li at 2:42.

We look back at the Viking Raiders attacking Sheamus and Drew McIntyre after last week's Smackdown.

The Viking Raiders are ready to hurt people by obeying Valhalla.

Sheamus and Drew McIntyre are happy to hear about a #1 contenders tournament for a shot at the Usos (for the Smackdown Tag Team Titles that is). Sheamus and McIntyre are in and face the Viking Raiders next week.

Here is Bray Wyatt for a chat. After a long entrance, Bray sits in a rocking chair to talk about knowing who he is. He is Uncle Howdy and the question is who are you. He will be reborn in darkness at the Royal Rumble and when the lights go out, LA Knight should run. This was all of Bray's greatest hits and I wonder if they've just dropped everything else.

Sami Zayn interrupts Kevin Owens, asking why he couldn't just stay away. Owens says Sami caused all of this and says Roman Reigns is using him. Sami says it's family business and he'll deal with Owens tonight.

Gunther is banged up but he's happy with his victory. Now he's going to the Royal Rumble.

### Raquel Rodriguez vs. Liv Morgan

Rodriguez shoves her into the corner to start and hits a big boot. There's a toss over the top as we talk about the Royal Rumble, followed by a hard shot to the face to give Rodriguez two back inside. This time it's Liv trying to throw Rodriguez over the top but not being able to quite do it. Back up and Liv rams her own head into the buckle before hitting a running Codebreaker. A clothesline sends Rodriguez outside and Morgan rams her into the post. The table is set up but Rodriguez rolls off before Morgan can dive on her. Back in and the

Tejana Bomb finishes Liv at 4:47.

**Rating:** C. In other news, Morgan tries to do the hardcore stuff and it backfires on her. I'm still not on board with that part of her but Rodriguez getting another win is a good sign for her. She has the potential to be the next breakout star and beating someone who was Women's Champion less than a year ago is a nice moment for her.

Sonya Deville wants a rematch with Charlotte but Adam Pearce says no. She can enter the Royal Rumble though. Sonya is going to make it happen somehow.

Post break, Sonya jumps Charlotte in the back. Referees break it up but Deville jumps on her again as Charlotte is livid.

Video on Cody Rhodes' return last year, plus his injury and recovery.

### Sami Zayn vs. Kevin Owens

They won't shake hands to start so Owens knocks him to the floor. Owens questions Sami's Ucey but Sami knocks him away and runs back inside for the big dive. They fight to the apron and Zayn drops him with a brainbuster onto said apron as we take a break. Back with the two of them ripping at each others' faces with Zayn getting the better of things. The superplex is broken up though and the bullfrog splash gives Owens two.

Back up and the Blue Thunder Bomb gives Zayn two but it's a double knockdown to send us to another break. We come back again with Owens hitting the swinging fisherman's superplex for a delayed two. They slug it out with Owens being knocked into the corner. Sami loads up the Helluva Kick...but the Usos and Solo Sikoa run in to beat Owens down (Sami doesn't look pleased) for the DQ at 15:05.`

**Rating:** B. That's a storyline ending as Zayn might not be

pleased that he wasn't given the chance to finish Owens off when he had the time. They are taking this storyline at a very steady pace and it is paying dividends when you get to the next big piece. As for the match itself, these two work very well together so it isn't a shock that it was more good stuff between them.

Post match the big beatdown is on, with Owens being splashed through the announcers' table to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B-. In a way, this felt like an old episode of NXT, as it seemed that they came in with a list of things to accomplish and then checked them off one by one. We got some names added to the Royal Rumble, a title match and the Bloodline story being advanced in about two hours. Throw in a pair of good matches and this was another efficient show, which is a sign of something HHH put together. Solid stuff here as we get closer to the important part of the year.

### Results

Gunther b. Braun Strowman – Powerbomb

Tegan Nox b. Xia Li – Shiniest Wizard

Raquel Rodriguez b. Liv Morgan – Tejana Bomb

Kevin Owens b. Sami Zayn via DQ when the Bloodline interfered

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