

WWE House Show – October 3, 2021: Welcome Home (Again)

It was time to go back to the arena last night as I took in the WWE house show at Rupp Arena in Lexington, Kentucky. This was another Supershow, featuring more or less a WWE all star card. They did one of these back in Louisville in July and it was a lot of fun, so hopefully they can make it work here too. Let's get to it.

Before anything else, I needed a ticket so I went to stand inline. As I was waiting, a guy in a John Cena shirt came up to me.

Guy: "Are you getting tickets?"

Yeah....

Guy: "Want these two free ones?"

First row off the floor. I mean...if that's all you have, I guess they'll do.

I didn't catch the guy's name but in the one in a quadrillion chance he sees this, thank you very much (again) as that was one of the nicest things anyone has done for me in a long time.

The arena was far from full, though Rupp Arena is one of the biggest in the country with over 20,000 capacity. Still though, there couldn't have been more than a few thousand in the building.

1. Intercontinental Title: King Nakamura vs. Seth Rollins

Nakamura had Rick Boogs with him and that is an AWESOME entrance live, as the guitar sounds great and Nakamura seems rejuvenated since this whole thing started. Rollins also feels far, far better suited to this than the disastrous Monday Night Messiah, as he is reveling in the goofy heel shtick. The fans are buying it too as Rollins got an awesome reaction.

This was a very fun match as you could tell they were having a good time.

They started slowly with Nakamura having to chase Rollins, and even stealing his coat to freak him out. Rollins made it clear that he did not like booing and I'm sure you can guess how that went. Nakamura eventually got more serious, leading to this exchange:

Nakamura: "COME ON!"

Rollins: "NO!"

Repeat three times.

Rollins: "NO!"

Nakamura: "PLEASE!"

They went into the match you would expect them to have until Rollins loaded up the Stomp. Boogs played some guitar for a distraction though and Nakamura hit Kinshasa to retain at 15:32. This was very fun and one of the best things all night long, as two people who know what they are doing got to do their own thing.

2. Karrion Kross vs. John Morrison

Morrison feels like a star, even with the Drip Stick in the entrance. Kross...there's no way around it: the gear looks stupid. He had his big entrance with the cool Titantron video, but he looked so goofy standing in front of the thing. Anyway, Kross told us that it was Morrison's birthday and started singing before jumping Morrison to start. Kross beat on him for a bit until Morrison fought back, including blasting him with the drip stick in the corner. Starship Pain missed though and the Krossjacket finished Morrison at 8:08. D+. Post match, Kross asked what was in the Drip Stick and then chased Morrison away. This didn't work.

Riddle was in the back and talked about how happy he was to be in Lexington, even with Randy Orton still taking time off. AJ Styles and Omos jumped him, saying they would beat up New Day tonight and then come after the Tag Team Titles.

3. Carmella vs. Liv Morgan

Carmella did the usual "I'm hot and you're not", speaking to both the crowd and Morgan. She also wore her mask, which was quite the odd visual. A fan called Carmella a chicken so she danced around like a chicken and then ran away from Morgan for a bit. The match was very kicky/punchy/chokey and didn't exactly do either of them many favors. Morgan ripped off the mask and won with Oblivion at 6:35. D+. Almost all of the positives come from Carmella being a ball of charisma, which has always been the case. Morgan still feels like a breakout star waiting to happen, but that has been the case for a long time now.

4. WWE Title: Big E. vs. Bobby Lashley

This was a rather simple idea: take two big muscle guys and have them beat each other up for a little while. Big E. wasn't quite serious to start as Lashley shouldered him into a near Matrix, with Big E. fighting to keep his balance and then applauding himself. Lashley didn't like that and jumped him, only to hurt his knee in the process. This went on for a good while, with the fans getting pulled into things until Lashley jumped Big E. to take over. Eventually Lashley got the Hurt Lock but Big E. reversed into the Big Ending to retain at 10:10. C. Big E. has more charisma than he knows what to do with and it's bizarre to see him with the title.

In one of my favorite things about any show, Big E. signed autographs and took pictures around ringside. There were two girls who looked to be about 10-12 years old who got some autographs and it was the greatest thing that had ever happened to them. I know WWE gets a lot of flack and complaints at times, but there is something so great about seeing fans having such genuine joy about seeing one of their favorites up close and personal. You can't fake that kind of thing and I love seeing it every time.

Intermission.

5. AJ Styles/Omos vs. New Day

I've seen Omos a few times now and the visual is right up there with Great Khali and Andre. As you might expect, New Day had a crazy energetic entrance, with Woods giving his vest to a fan at ringside with a

Consequences Creed shirt. After his entrance, Woods shouted "THAT'S MY NEPHEW!" for an explanation. New Day danced to AJ's music for a funny bit, sending AJ into a rant about how the Kentucky Wildcats got lucky against the Florida Gators the previous day and said he couldn't wait until they played Georgia (it's going to be painful). This match featured a lot of dancing, gyrating and pelvic thrusting until Omos came in and wrecked Kingston. Everything broke down and Omos was sent to the floor, leaving Woods to roll AJ up at 10:39. C. This wasn't much and I was kind of disappointed in the whole thing.

Post match AJ yelled but Riddle came in with an RKO. Riddle left and AJ splashed Riddle's hat.

6. Smackdown Women's Title: Becky Lynch vs. Bianca Belair

Belair felt like a star during the entrance and the fans loved seeing her. Becky got a star pop though and was back in the classic gear that she wore in the Wrestlemania main event. The match was good enough and they went back and forth like you might have expected. It wasn't a classic or anything but it was good enough for what it was. Becky reversed the KOD into a rollup with feet on the ropes to retain at 11:11. C+. Of note, Belair limped to the back (though she did take some pictures with fans) despite Becky not working on her leg. That could be something in the future and hopefully she is fine.

7. Finn Balor/Street Profits vs. Bloodline

The biggest part here was the entrances, as Balor felt like a star, the Street Profits were pure energy (the Kentucky Wildcats banner they brought to the ring, which Balor wore like a cape while running around in a circle, helped), and then Reigns felt like the biggest star going today. This was a pretty long but completely watchable six man which felt like a main event. Ford worked on the arm for a bit while shouting about how good it felt.

Eventually Dawkins got beaten down in the corner and the fans started cheering for Roman. Reigns did a GREAT job of working the apron and started listening to the fans, even after he knocked the Kentucky banner down. Reigns came in to a huge pop, beat down Dawkins for a bit, and then

left, where the fans started booing him again. Finally the hot tag got Dawkins out of trouble and Ford and Balor both came in to do their big stuff. Ford got knocked off the top though and the spear gave Reigns the pin at 16:15. B-. Reigns is an absolute star and that's what mattered here.

Post match, Reigns allowed the fans to acknowledge him to end the night.

Overall Rating: C+. This was what you would want out of a house show: a bunch of stars having mostly good matches. It's not going to be anything great, but you can get a much more personal feeling from the wrestlers as they are allowed to play to/interact with the crowd that much more. It was a fun night and I'd absolutely go again, though I do kind of miss house shows being about giving underused wrestlers ring time. The all star thing makes far more sense, but an undercard six man can be a lot of fun too.

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