

# Best Of 2022 Awards (Last Part)

We'll wrap it up here and move on from last year.

## Worst Match Of The Year

5. Men's Royal Rumble – Royal Rumble
4. New Day vs. Brawling Brutes – Wrestlemania XXXVIII
3. Nikkita Lyons vs. Lash Legend – NXT – April 26
2. Vince McMahon vs. Pat McAfee – Wrestlemania XXXVIII
1. Ric Flair/Andrade El Idolo vs. Jay Lethal/Jeff Jarrett – Ric Flair's Last Match

Like this could be anything else. This wasn't so much a match as much as it was a horrible embarrassment/a cry for help. There were parts of the match that were acceptable, which you knew would be the case with the other three involved. But then Flair teased a heart attack and had to lay on the apron because he couldn't stand. This match made me feel wrong to be watching it and you could almost feel Flair and Conrad Thompson counting the money in their heads throughout the whole thing. This is a runaway #1 and nothing is touching it.

## Rookie/Newcomer Of The Year (As in rookie/newcomer on a show, not new to wrestling. And no, I won't be cutting them off if they had a match or two in 2021.)

5. Raquel Rodriguez
4. Roxanne Perez
3. Pretty Deadly
2. Hook
1. Logan Paul

Like this could have been anyone else. I had barely heard of Paul before he showed up in WWE but then he gets announced for

a match at Wrestlemania. Then he's winning there, beating Miz at Summerslam, and blowing it out of the park in a Saudi main event against Roman Reigns. This is something that felt like it should have been a horrible joke and wound up being a massive success. Paul has more than proven himself and it was a blast to watch him more often than not.

## **Worst Wrestler Of The Year (Not counting people who had one or two matches that is)**

5. Shanky
4. Kip Sabian
3. Lash Legend
2. Top Dolla
1. Aliyah

Aliyah debuted in NXT in 2015. Roman Reigns hadn't even headlined Wrestlemania yet and Aliyah had her first match under the WWE banner. How in the freaking world has she not picked up SOMETHING yet? There are worse wrestlers out there, but how is it possible that she hasn't gotten at least the basics down at this point? I had to think about this one for a bit and then thought back to what Aliyah had done in her career. Realizing how long it had been was enough to put this one over the edge.

## **Worst Angle Of The Year**

5. Jade Cargill And The Baddies
4. Andrade/Hardy Family Office Contract Nonsense
3. Drew McIntyre vs. Happy Corbin/Madcap Moss
2. Jay Lethal/Jeff Jarrett vs. Ric Flair/Andrade El Idolo (There was a build to that monstrosity.)
1. Kip Sabian Has A Box On His Head

This went on for months and for the life of me I still cannot tell you what in the world the point was supposed to be. Sabian literally sat there for months (without being acknowledged for most of the time), eventually unboxed, and

then lost to Pac before the whole thing was dropped and not mentioned again. I have no idea what they were going for here and I don't think AEW does either.

## **Title Reign Of The Year**

5. Bron Breaker – NXT Title
4. Josh Alexander – Impact Wrestling World Title
3. Roman Reigns – Undisputed WWE World Title
2. Usos – WWE Tag Team Titles
1. Gunther – Intercontinental Title

This has been the year of the long title reigns and really, some of them are getting boring. We've seen the Usos and Reigns hold their titles for so long that you know nothing is going to happen to them for a very long time. The same is true of Alexander and Breaker, as there are only a few people who are going to take the title from him. That left me with Gunther, who has made the title seem so much more important, while also having the longest title reign in over ten years (even if you might not have realized it). Gunther takes this one for me, as I want to see how much longer he can hold the thing.

## **Surprise Of The Year (In-Ring/Storyline Only)**

5. Bray Wyatt Returns
4. Cody Rhodes Returns
3. Bayley/Damage Ctrl Returns
2. Sami Zayn Makes The Bloodline So Much Better
1. Steve Austin Wrestles

This is one of those things that I never thought I would actually see and then it actually happened. That is the kind of wonder that you do not get in wrestling very often but dang is it a special moment. I don't think there was any doubt that Austin would do something physical, but how many people had "Steve Austin is going to main event Wrestlemania" back in October 2021? This wins by a landslide and it felt special,

even to a not very big Austin fan.

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## Best Of 2021 Awards Part 3 (Last Part)

We'll wrap it up with some sad parts of the year.

### Worst Angle Of The Year

5. Karrion Kross Keeps Losing
4. Cody Rhodes vs. QT Marshall
3. Fiend/Alexa Bliss Exist
2. Nikki Ash
1. Lilly

I was going to go with Nikki, but then I thought of that doll. That stupid, rotten, horrible, no good doll, WHICH WINKED AT THE CAMERA AND THEN APPEARED IN A MIRROR. WWE went out of their way to destroy a lot of people and things for the sake of pushing the idea that Alexa Bliss had an evil doll. It was some bad horror movie come to life and I could not stand this stupid thing, which is somehow following us into 2022, because of course it is.

### Angle Of The Year

5. CM Punk Is An Old Gunslinger
4. The Rise Of RKBro
3. Baron Corbin Is Broke And It's Hilarious
2. Hangman Page Wins AEW World Title
1. Whose Side is Paul Heyman On

WWE is pretty terrible these days but this is must see

television. Paul Heyman is one of the greatest performers in wrestling history and the things he is doing in this story has been even better than I would have thought possible. Above all else, he made me want to see where the story was going next and it was nothing short of amazing to see every single week. The story is still going in the new year and I really want to see where these things go next. Or just whatever Heyman is going to do.

## **Worst Match Of The Year**

5. Charlotte vs. Nia Jax – Raw – August 30
4. Randy Orton vs. Bray Wyatt – Wrestlemania
3. Alexa Bliss vs. Eva Marie – Summerslam
2. Miz vs. Damian Priest – Wrestlemania Backlash
1. Kenny Omega vs. Jon Moxley – Revolution

This is one where your mileage may vary, but ultimately, this was a bunch of barbed wire violence before the lamest ending you could imagine. It was like some sparklers going off in place of an explosion. Ignoring the total disaster of the ending, you had the carnage for the sake of carnage, all because AEW wanted to recreate some angle from Japan, down to Eddie Kingston trying to cover Moxley and selling the....well nothing really. This was bad on all fronts and is still somehow even worse than I remember.

## **News Story Of The Year**

5. NXT Gets Its Own Sequel
4. Ring Of Honor Hiatus
3. Huge Stars To AEW
2. Fans Return
1. WWE Releases

I don't know how it could be anything else, as WWE did not so much take the roster apart but completely gutted the thing. Over the last year and a half, WWE has literally released over

a hundred wrestlers. That isn't just going to shake up the WWE, but also the wrestling world as a whole. In addition to weakening the WWE roster, it opened up the flood gates to all kinds of other promotions. Several wrestlers have since moved elsewhere, which has made some other companies that much more interesting. This was a game changer, and the amazing part is it might not be done yet.

## **Feud Of The Year**

5. Roman Reigns vs. Edge
4. Pinnacle vs. Inner Circle
3. Edge vs. Seth Rollins
2. Kenny Omega vs. Hangman Page
1. Roman Reigns vs. John Cena

This might have been short, but what mattered was how big this felt. That's the kind of thing you don't get to see very often, but Cena can make it work so well. Above all else, this felt like a feud that belonged in the main event of one of biggest shows of the year. Then the match wound up working too, which shouldn't be a surprise. It wasn't long, but Reigns defeated Cena in a huge main event and it felt like a showdown.

## **Title Reign Of The Year**

5. Bianca Belair – Smackdown Women's Title
4. Young Bucks – AEW Tag Team Titles
3. Bobby Lashley – WWE Championship
2. Kenny Omega – AEW World Title
1. Roman Reigns – Universal Title

The words "of the year" apply here, because Reigns was champion for the entire year. That is not something you get to see very often but it has been pretty incredible for a very long time now. Reigns comes off as the biggest star in all of wrestling and has been bringing people up just by association.

This was an easy pick to make, because holding the title for a year is hard to fathom back in the day, let alone modern times.

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## Best Of 2020: Title Reign Of The Year

We'll jump right into a weird one as a lot of the title reigns were extended this year due to the Coronavirus (expect to hear that word a lot). There were several champions who never had the chance to defend their titles for several months and as a result, I'm going to be a bit hesitant to include them. That isn't the case for everyone though and some of these reigns are worth looking at fondly. Let's get to it.

As usual these are in no particular order until the winner at the end.

### Bayley – Smackdown Women's Title

I've been a big Bayley fan for a long time now and I'm in awe of what she has been able to do with this new heel run. Seeing her turn was like seeing the Easter Bunny become a monster and I can't believe how well the whole thing has worked. She is great at what she does and it's so easy to hate her on sight, but at the same time you want to see how great she is at everything. This might be more for the turn itself, but holding the title for over a year (plus an extra 140 days only broken up by a five day Charlotte reign) is more than worth a mention.

### Drew McIntyre – WWE Title (First Reign)

If there is one thing that WWE needs to work on, it is making a new star. That is partially what makes McIntyre's rise and victory at Wrestlemania all the more frustrating: they clearly know how to do it and yet they just don't for so long. McIntyre won the title at Wrestlemania and held

it for about six months before getting it back a few weeks later. His opponents were not the strongest (not his fault) but he comes off like the World Champion in everything he does and that's a heck of a trick to pull off.

#### Io Shirai – NXT Women's Title

You might not have noticed it, but Shirai held the title for more than half the year and has been champion for over seven months. By the end of this week, she'll have the fifth longest reign in the title's history and could very easily go even further. There is such a natural grace to her movements in the ring and that moonsault is one of the best I've seen in a long time. This has been a surprisingly long reign but she has been awesome throughout.

#### Street Profits – Raw Tag Team/Smackdown Tag Team Titles

This is cheating a bit but they literally didn't lose the titles in between reigns so I'm calling it the same one. Outside of the New Day, it has been a LONG time since WWE truly established a team and it's great to see someone as charismatic as the Street Profits getting the chance. They completely hit their stride this year and the entrance with the full crowd is one of the best going today, just due to the high levels of energy alone. They deserve credit for such a reign and they're a heck of a team who have moved up a lot during their reign.

#### Jon Moxley – AEW World Title

AEW was one of the few promotions to not really be hurt by the pandemic as far as their on-screen product went and Moxley was champion for the majority of the year. He also had some awesome, hard hitting matches while coming off as a major star. It was kind of inevitable that he would lose to Omega in the end, but what he got to do was great and made him look like a star throughout.

I went back and forth with McIntyre and this one for the win but there was something that pushed the other over the edge.

#### Roman Reigns – Universal Title



Reigns is going to come up a lot this year and there is a good reason for that. This is the kind of run that WWE has not seen in a long time as Reigns feels like someone who could be champion for years (plural) without missing a beat. He's that great at the moment and the thing that pushes this over the edge is how they've made it work. Reigns got two pretty excellent pay per view title matches out of Jey Uso. Someone being able to bring a career tag wrestler with nothing as far as singles experience up to that level is worth the pick and the more I think about it, the more interested I am in seeing how far Reigns goes with this.

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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## **Best Of 2018: Title Reign Of The Year**



IMG Credit: WWE

I know it's one of the more basic ideas but at the end of the day (or year in this case), most wrestling feuds revolve around titles. It's what most of the people wrestle for and some of the title reigns are outstanding highlights of the year. As is the case with everything though, you can decide which is best and that's where I come in.

#### Undisputed Era – NXT Tag Team Titles

I know the Ascension's record is out of reach (and the Undisputed Era isn't making it out of Phoenix with the titles) but if you ignore the three week reign by Moustache Mountain (those pesky Brits), Undisputed Era has held the titles since November 2017. That's a heck of a run in a division that usually changes over so quickly. They're a great team and the kind of guys who could work very well on the main roster as well.

#### Seth Rollins – Intercontinental Title

This was the reign where you knew you were going to get something special no matter what happened. Rollins was on the roll of a lifetime in the first half of 2018 as he was back from his knee surgery at full speed and could have a great match with anyone. Then came a feud with Dean Ambrose about how cities smelled and it kind of went away, but the time he spent as champion was incredible.

#### Tommaso Ciampa – NXT Title

Now this is more of a mixture of in-ring work and character stuff, which is about as good as you can get in wrestling. Of course there's the time

with Gargano, but at the same time Ciampa had a great match with Velveteen Dream and even a good one with Otis Dozovic. His mic work has destroyed that though and turned him into one of the best characters in recent memory. I'm not sure how long he's going to hold the title but at this rate, Finn Balor's record may be in jeopardy.

#### Pete Dunne – United Kingdom Title

There were two real options here and the one thing holding me back on Dunne was how he doesn't defend the title all that often. That has changed in the latter half of the year but it's still not as frequent as most. If Dunne was around full time, this would pretty easily be his but for now, he's the part time mega star and that's only good for really close and one of the best title reigns in a long time.

#### AJ Styles – Smackdown World Title

Yeah this one might have been obvious. Styles held the title for a year plus and most of 2018, including some of the best matches of the year. There were some awesome efforts against Shinsuke Nakamura, Samoa Joe and Daniel Bryan, which probably had something to do with how good the matches were. That being said, it takes two people to have a great match and that tended to be the case every time the champ was in the ring.

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<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2018/11/20/new-paperback-complete-1997-monday-night-raw-reviews/>

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# 2014 Awards: Title Reign of the Year

This one might surprise you a bit.

When you think about it, there weren't a ton of great title reigns this year. Most of the reigns were either transitional, short term, or really nothing all that special. Look at Havok with the Knockouts Title for example. The idea was to build her up for someone to build ala Lashley, but Havok wrestled something like five or six matches in total before dropping the title. That's really hard to get behind you know?

Speaking of Lashley, we'll start with his reign as TNA World Champion. Lashley's reign was actually a huge surprise for me as he finally hit the level that WWE was looking for. Imagine that: a guy with an intimidating look, a great physique, great amateur skills and no talking skills is better suited as a heel. This was your old school monster heel run and it worked really well as Lashley destroyed every major face on the roster. I wasn't crazy on Roode just getting another shot and taking the title, but it made him look like a world beater.

Off to the tag division, where we have some solid options.

Ascension held the NXT Tag Team Titles for just under a year and had almost no competition the entire time. This was another old school style run with shades of Demolition or the Legion of Doom: two big, strong guys who just beat you down while loving every minute of it. The only downside is the reign went on a bit too long and got repetitive, but the idea was solid and the title defenses were great.

Up on the main roster, we had the Usos doing the polar opposite. Instead of beating everyone down, they opted to just have one great, competitive match after another with their matches against the Wyatts and the Wrestlemania XXX pre-show blowing away a lot of the other tag team

matches we've seen in the previous years. That being said though, the Usos' reign just doesn't feel epic. It's entertaining, but comes off like Strike Force: good matches and chemistry, but it felt like a long transitional reign which took on a life of its own instead of something great.

One last tag team would be ReDRagon's ROH Tag Team Title reign....but I don't watch much ROH. I've heard good things but I can't really comment on it when I've only seen two or three of their matches.

That leaves my choice for the win: Adrian Neville as NXT Champion. This one is a lot more simple as Neville won the title in a big match, had a series of major defenses and then dropped the title in a classic. The reign went on for the better part of a year and had every necessary element of a great title reign. Some of the others come close, but no one else nailed it like Neville did down in the best promotion going right now.