

Monday Night Raw – July 26, 2021: They Can't Help Themselves

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 26, 2021

Location: T-Mobile Center, Kansas City, Missouri

Commentators: Jimmy Smith, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

It's time to find out how bad Raw can get this week, which tends to be the new low every week. Last week's show was one of the biggest head scratchers I've seen in a very long time and it could be terrifying to see just how low things can get. We are less than a month away from Summerslam and it's time to build things up. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week's Women's Title match and Nikki Ash cashing in Money in the Bank to win the title.

Here is Nikki Ash to get things going. She finally gets to welcome us to Raw and talks about how she didn't believe she could get here. Nikki has worked to get here and once she finally started believing in herself, she accomplished her goals. If she can do it, everyone can do it and we can all be almost superheroes. Cue Charlotte to talk about how last week wasn't fair and she is getting her rematch at Summerslam. Charlotte knows that everyone is tired of having people better than them around but they need to get used to it.

Cue Rhea Ripley, now smiling and high fiving (a few) fans. Ripley talks about how Charlotte only held the title for a day and promising to win the title herself. Nikki asks why she is being left out and here are Adam Pearce and Sonya Deville to interrupt. The triple threat match is on, and we'll throw in Nikki vs. Charlotte tonight as well. Charlotte jumps Ripley but gets knocked outside by Nikki, who stands tall. This

didn't do much about making Nikki feel important.

Damian Priest doesn't think much of Sheamus bullying Humberto Carrillo so he'll deal with Sheamus tonight.

Damian Priest vs. Sheamus

Non-title but Priest gets a shot if he wins here. Sheamus shoulders him down to start so Priest is back with an armdrag into an armbar. Back up and Priest sends him outside, where Sheamus drops him onto the apron. We take a break and come back with Priest fighting out of a chinlock and hitting a heck of a clothesline.

Another shot knocks off Sheamus' mask but he gets his boots up in the corner to cut Priest off. Sheamus goes up but gets chokeslammed down for two. Back up and Sheamus grabs an Alabama Slam for two, meaning it's time for the Texas Cloverleaf. That's broken up by some kicks to the head so Sheamus knees him in the head for two more. Priest kicks his way out of the forearms to the chest though and the Reckoning is good for the pin at 10:05.

Rating: C+. I can go for two big men beating on each other until one of them can't get up and that is what we got here. This was what it should have been, maybe save for the champ taking a clean loss. I'm really not wild on the Champions Contenders deal, as it just gives you a non-title match to set up the same match with the title on the line. There are a lot of other ways to do this, but why use them when you can take the easy way?

Post match Sheamus shouts that he rebroke his nose and he wants a doctor.

Tag Team Titles: Viking Raiders vs. Omos/AJ Styles

Omos and Styles are defending. Ivar starts fast and runs Styles over, setting up the seated senton out of the corner.

Erik drives Ivar into Omos to knock him off the apron and the Viking Experience connects early. Omos breaks that up at two and sends the Raiders into the barricade to take over in a hurry.

We take a break and come back with Omos cranking on Erik's head. That's broken up and it's back to Ivar to clean house. The cartwheel gets Ivar away from the Phenomenal Forearm and he runs AJ over again. Ivar's charge in the corner hits boots though and AJ gets two off a tornado DDT. Erik comes back in to run AJ over but a Pele kick drops him again. The hot tag brings in Omos and the double chokebomb crushes Erik. AJ's springboard 450 retains the titles at 8:35.

Rating: C-. Remember when Styles and Omos won a tag match because no one, including the Vikings, couldn't stop Omos? Well Styles and Omos just won a tag match because no one, including the Vikings, couldn't stop Omos. Yeah it's repetitive, but the tag team division has all of three decent teams in it at the moment, and I'm not sure what else they can do at the moment.

We recap Jinder Mahal and company attacking Drew McIntyre in Money in the Bank. As a result, McIntyre annihilated part of the company last week.

Here's Drew McIntyre for his match with Veer but here are Jinder Mahal and someone in a suit instead. Mahal talks about how Shanky was taken out by an angry McIntyre, so this man is Mahal's lawyer. McIntyre is being SUED, so McIntyre can do the right thing. That makes Drew think: should he take everyone out for a steak dinner and apologize? Or should he beat Veer down just as bad? McIntyre asks for a DREW IS GONNA KILL YOU chant and we're ready to go.

Drew McIntyre vs. Veer

They slug it out to start with Veer actually dropping McIntyre with a right hand and a slam. The jumping elbow sets up a neck

crank but McIntyre fights up. Jinder Mahal throws in a chair, which is Claymored into Veer's face for the DQ at 3:50. Er actually Veer is disqualified for holding the chair. Huh?

Rating: D. This feud is already on the brink of disaster and now McIntyre can't even Veer? I don't know why WWE thinks 3MB imploding in 2021 is interesting but that's what the guy who carried Raw throughout the pandemic is getting. I know he seems interested in the idea, but shooting it down is a good idea at times too.

Post match Drew Claymores the lawyer too.

We recap Eva Marie and Doudrop in Alexa's Playground, with Alexa Bliss seemingly finding a new target.

Eva Marie/Doudrop vs. Natalya/Tamina

Non-title, but it's a CHAMPIONS CONTENDER match. Doudrop takes Natalya down for two to start and Natalya comes up favoring her knee. It's off to Tamina, who gets taken down by Doudrop. Eva comes in to get the cover...and Alexa Bliss takes over the screen for a video on the Lillylution. The distraction lets Tamina hit the superkick for the pin on Eva at 3:10.

Rating: D-. Hopefully Natalya is ok as her knee didn't look good. This was another match which wasn't going to be very good in the first place and was then made worse with the dumb interference. The Lilly thing was dumb in the first place and now it's back because it must be a good idea...somehow. Now just get rid of the Champions Contenders things and the show can be that much better.

Karrion Kross vs. Keith Lee

Non-title. Kross can't pick him up to start but Lee can toss him with a release belly to belly suplex. A clothesline puts Kross outside, where he posts Lee to take over. Kross hits his own suplex on the floor and we take a break. Back with Kross

choking in the corner and hitting a DDT for two. The Krossjacket Choke goes on but Lee powers out of it and starts hammering away. Lee hits the hard running shoulder but the Spirit Bomb is countered into the Doomsday Saito. The running forearm to the back of the head sets up the Krossjacket to make Lee eventually tap at 8:52.

Rating: C-. That's better than last week for Kross, and he should have beaten Lee here. At the same time, if they want to do anything with Lee at any point in the future, he shouldn't have been in this spot. I'm not sure what is going on with Lee, but it is pretty clear that something has gone wrong. I'd still love to know why he was gone, but right now I'd rather know why WWE seems to have given up on him.

We recap Nikki Ash winning the Women's Title, plus her big celebration.

Nikki Ash believes in herself and no one can take away that feeling, win or lose. She wants all the boys and girls to believe that things are worth fighting for and no matter what, she will be defending her title at Summerslam. Rhea Ripley comes in to say he can respect the confidence, but she is leaving with the title. Tonight though, she wants Nikki to give Charlotte h***.

Mace and T-Bar are ready to eat the smaller people, because people like Mansoor and Mustafa Ali exist to be devoured by them.

Mace/T-Bar vs. Mustafa Ali/Mansoor

Before the match, Mansoor talks about wanting to show how good the team can be. Ali says follow his lead, get the win, and we'll see about the future. Ali hammers on T-Bar to start but the Cyclone Boot kicks Ali's head off for two. Mace comes in to plant Ali with Mansoor having to make a save.

That earns Mansoor a shot to the floor and a running big boot

gets two on Ali. A shot to the face gets Ali out of trouble and he brings Mansoor in to take over. T-Bar makes a save of his own and sends Mansoor outside, where Ali hits a suicide tornado DDT for the save. Ali yells at Mansoor for not being ready but Mansoor saves him from a chokeslam. A victory roll gives Mansoor the pin on Mace at 3:04.

Rating: D+. I'm curious to see where this goes as Ali doesn't like Mansoor but Mansoor is really into the team. At the moment, it isn't like there are many teams to contend with so throw some people together and see what they can do. Mace and T-Bar seem to be the latest lost causes and I'm not sure why, but it's another shame.

Here are Bobby Lashley and MVP to respond to Goldberg's challenge (which Lashley already did on Twitter last week). MVP recaps the challenge and asks Lashley for his answer. Lashley isn't going to dignify that with a response, but says this is his ring. Cue Cedric Alexander to say he didn't like the disrespect when Lashley broke up the Hurt Business. Now it's Shelton Benjamin coming out to say Alexander's voice is annoying before challenging Lashley as well. Lashley says he'll fight them both at once.

Bobby Lashley vs. Cedric Alexander/Shelton Benjamin

Non-title and Lashley runs them over to start. Cedric is sent outside, leaving Lashley to go after Benjamin. Back in and Cedric trips Lashley up, allowing Benjamin to hit a running knee. A springboard tornado DDT plants Lashley for a double two but he is back up with the spinebuster to Alexander. The spear cuts Benjamin down and it's a Jackhammer to plant him again. The Dominator puts Alexander onto Benjamin for the double pin at 2:44.

John Morrison and the Miz are ready to make this city Moist AF but AJ Styles and Omos interrupt. They have something to talk about, with AJ doing the talking and Omos blocking out the

camera.

John Morrison vs. Riddle

Miz is here too and it's a Drip Stick to Saxton before the match, which actually makes him sound angry. Riddle takes him down by the leg to start and snaps off a suplex for two. The kicks in the corner rock Morrison and a fisherman's suplex gets two more. Miz Drip Sticks Riddle so it's a jumping knee to Morrison. Riddle kicks Miz down, turning the wheelchair over. That means mocking Miz for being stuck on his back as we take a break.

Back with Miz upright and Riddle striking away in the corner. The threat of a running kick in the corner sends Morrison outside, where Riddle hits a springboard flip dive. Cue AJ Styles and Omos so Morrison can get in a shot to the face for two of his own. That just earns Morrison the Final Flash for two and Riddle goes up top...as Omos breaks the scooter. The distraction lets Morrison grab a Razor's Edge spun into a hard slam. Starship Pain finishes Riddle at 9:56.

Rating: C. This was about storyline advancement, as Riddle needs his partner to save him from the numbers game. RKBro getting the title shot at Summerslam could be a great moment, especially if Orton finally gets in on Riddle's antics. You know, assuming Orton doesn't take months to get back like so many others.

Post match (after Miz sprays the Drip Stick in celebration) Styles stomps on Riddle and plants him with the Styles Clash.

We recap Reginald winning the 24/7 Title last week.

24/7 Title: Reginald vs. R-Truth

Reginald, with an unseen trampoline to get him over the top, is defending and Truth has a headset on. Truth hits him in the face and takes Reginald's jacket off, so Reginald flips into

the corner. Some shots with the coat miss due to some well timed flips and Truth misses a charge into the corner. The side kick misses as well and Reginald's running flip seated senton is good for the pin at 1:31.

Post match the usual gang of idiots are here so Reginald flip dives to the floor and backflips up the aisle.

Charlotte vs. Nikki Ash

Non-title and Charlotte chops her into the corner to start. Charlotte goes after the mask and chokes on the ropes to keep Nikki in trouble. Nikki is sent outside, allowing Charlotte to ask if this is your champion. Back in and Nikki's comeback is cut off in a hurry, as Charlotte fires off more chops. Some rollups give Nikki two each and a headscissors sends Charlotte outside. There's a dropkick through the ropes but Charlotte throws her over the announcers' table as we take a break.

Back with Nikki still in trouble so Charlotte can grab the chinlock. Nikki fights up and hits a quick crossbody for a breather so Charlotte misses a bit boot. The leg is snapped across the top but she blocks the sunset flip without much effort. There's a bulldog for two on Charlotte but she chops Nikki into the corner. Nikki is sat on top, only to come back with a tornado DDT. Charlotte rolls through the high crossbody though and pins Nikki at 12:33.

Rating: D. What is there to say here? Nikki is trying to be a star and gets beaten down, with Charlotte selling absolutely nothing for most of the match. I'd like to think that this leads to Cross overcoming the odds at Summerslam and retaining, but that isn't going to matter if this is what happens to her on the way. This was a long form squash and Charlotte reminded us of that every chance she could.

Post match Charlotte laughs at Nikki and grabs a mic to say no one is in her league. Nikki grabs the mic and says she knows she lost but she showed she ALMOST could have won. Therefore,

Charlotte gets a rematch next week. Charlotte accepts and beats Nikki down again, yells some more, and drops her one more time to end the show.

Overall Rating: D. I was thinking that this show was a fair amount of good things with some bad sprinkled in, but the more I look back on it, the ratio is reversed. There were quite a few bad parts to this show with only a few positives and that isn't enough. The Women's Title stuff is insufferable, Mahal is the same boring heel he has been for years and the Lilly stuff is awful. There were a few bright spots here and there, but it was another bad show as Raw focuses so much on the terrible stuff that it drags everything else down. Another awful show, mainly thanks to the focus being on the worst parts.

Results

Damian Priest b. Sheamus – Reckoning

AJ Styles/Omos b. Viking Raiders – Springfield 450 to Erik

Veer b. Drew McIntyre via DQ when McIntyre kicked a chair into Veer's face

Natalya/Tamina b. Eva Marie/Doudrop – Superkick to Eva Marie

Karrion Kross b. Keith Lee – Krossjacket Choke

Mustafa Ali/Mansoor b. Mace/T-Bar – Victory roll to Mace

Bobby Lashley b. Cedric Alexander/Shelton Benjamin – Double pin

John Morrison b. Riddle – Starship Pain

Reginald b. R-Truth – Running flipping seated senton

Charlotte b. Nikki Ash – Rolled through high crossbody

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Monday Night Raw – July 19, 2021: The Raw Problem Continues

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 19, 2021

Location: American Airlines Center, Dallas, Texas

Commentators: Byron Saxton, Corey Graves, Jimmy Smith

The week of the fans continues as we have the first Raw in front of a crowd since March 2021. Smackdown and Money in the Bank seemed to go pretty well but this is the big test. This is the Raw that WWE has literally had months to plan for and they can put on their best show possible. John Cena is back and opening the show so they should have a good start. Let's get to it.

[Here is Money in the Bank if you need a recap.](#)

Here is John Cena to get things going as they're starting fast tonight. Cena says he can still see some people coming in so come on down. After acknowledging a kid's "I'm turning 11 and I'm here to see John Cena" sign, Cena says he missed us. Cena talks about what a group effort Raw is and how he was here last night for the end of Money in the Bank.

Paul Heyman panicked, Roman Reigns didn't know what he was supposed to do, Michael Cole was really happy and Pat McAfee still didn't know where Cena was. Cena is back for Reigns and he thinks about five weeks from now in Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas, Nevada sounds like a safe bet. He could talk about how important Summerslam is and how great it would be to win his seventeenth World Title, but it is a lot simpler than that: "Roman Reigns is an a*****." (WWE censored it too this time).

Reigns is an overhyped gimmick who isn't as great as he says he is, "and that's coming from ME". Cena asks to hear the fans a bit more and says the saying goes if they're great, the people will tell you. He's going to be at Smackdown on Friday and he'll see Reigns there. Cue Riddle and it's time for a Bro Off (WWE version, not the Impact version).

Riddle/Viking Raiders vs. John Morrison/AJ Styles/Omos

Riddle takes Morrison down to start and puts on something like a YES Lock. It's off to Erik for a knee to the face and Ivar is slammed onto Morrison for a bonus. Everything breaks down and the Viking are sent outside, where they catch Morrison's slingshot hurricanrana. Morrison gets crushed between them but Omos throws Styles onto them for the huge crash as we take a break.

Back with Omos powering Riddle around and handing it off to Styles for two off a suplex. Morrison comes back in to crank on the neck but Riddle flips out of Styles' suplex and brings in Erik. The strike off goes to Erik and he crushes Styles in the corner. Ivar comes in for a running corner dropkick to Morrison but misses a good looking moonsault. Starship Pain misses but Morrison steals Miz's Drip Stick and sprays Omos, leaving said stick with Miz. Morrison goes to save his buddy but Omos throws him back inside. AJ goes to deal with things and the Viking Experience finishes Morrison at 12:07.

Rating: C. I can go for a pretty good six man tag and that is what we got here. They took a feud and two others and put them together to give us some fresh combinations, which is often a smart idea. Distracting Omos made sense as there was no other way around him, so at least they did things the right way here.

The very intense Jaxson Ryker is ready to do something else to Elias, because feuds just kind of keep going until they stop around here.

Elias vs. Jaxson Ryker

Symphony of Destruction (music theme and falls count anywhere), with Ryker promising to silence Elias before the match. There are instruments around the ring and Ryker hits him in the back with a keyboard. Elias is back with a guitar and a jumping knee to the face for two but gets sent through the gong. Ryker hits him with the guitar and we take a break.

Back with them fighting on the apron until Elias sends him into the post. Ryker drops him onto a piano for two as this just keeps going. Then Elias drops Ryker onto the piano for two of his own. Elias breaks the cello over Ryker's back for two more and they finally get back inside. That doesn't last long as Ryker superplexes him through two tables at ringside for the pin at 12:45.

Rating: D. This was WAY longer than it needed to be, which is to say it was about 12:45 too long. The feud was over with the strap match a few weeks ago but they did this so they could have something else added on to the show. The ending bump was good and that's about the extent of the positives here. Now let them be done already.

Mansoor has gotten himself and Mustafa Ali a tag match next week, which does not please Ali. Mansoor talks about how he has seen that Ali was right so Ali tells him not to screw it up. Sheamus comes in to complain about his match against

Humberto Carrillo tonight but has to do it anyway.

Here is Charlotte for her big celebration of winning the title again. Rhea Ripley can rip off as many of Charlotte's moves as she wants, but Charlotte won the title anyway. After explaining that Becky Lynch isn't here because she's at home taking care of her baby, Charlotte brags about all of the congratulations that she has received and talks about how she has won eleven women's titles (at least they're keeping it at main roster singles titles this time). She can beat Rhea Ripley any time so here is Rhea to say she wants the rematch tonight.

Charlotte says no, so Adam Pearce and Sonya Deville come out to make the match for tonight anyway. Charlotte kicks out Rhea's knee and leaves. Somehow, this took nearly ten minutes instead of "due to her actions in the title match, Charlotte will be defending against Ripley in a rematch, per orders from Pearce and Deville" taking fifteen seconds to start the show.

Video on the Money in the Bank ladder matches.

Nia Jax/Shayna Baszler vs. Tamina/Natalya

Non-title and they're actively torpedoing the show at this point. Joined in progress with Natalya knocking Baszler outside, where Jax hits a Samoan drop into the barricade. Back in and some double teaming has Natalya down, setting up the stomp to the arm. Jax goes shoulder first into the post though and Natalya's discus lariat gets two. It's off to Tamina, who gets caught on top. Reginald's distraction gets Natalya's attention so Baszler kicks her down, leaving Tamina to hit the superkick for the pin at 3:45.

Rating: D. Just in case you didn't get the idea the first dozen or so times. The match was short and bad, but at least Tamina got to pin Baszler. I would like to believe that Nox and Shotzi will take the Tag Team Titles, but it isn't like there is any reason to believe that will be the case. Another

bad match, as Raw continues its downward spiral.

Post match it's another argument, but this time Jax headbutts Reginald down and leaves with Shayna. Cue the 24/7 goons with Akira Tozawa running into the ring...where Reginald takes him down and hits a running flipping seated senton to win the title. Reginald Parkours his way out. If he has to be on TV, this is about as good as it's getting with Reginald.

Sheamus vs. Humberto Carrillo

Non-title. Sheamus pounds him down to start but Carrillo gets up top for a high crossbody. That doesn't work either, as Sheamus takes him outside and poses to send us to a break. Back with Sheamus hitting the forearms to the chest but Carrillo bites him. A bunch of kicks is capped off by a jumping kick to the face but Sheamus goes up top.

After grabbing his hand, Sheamus is pulled down with a super hurricanrana. A missile dropkick gives Carrillo two but he punches Sheamus in the STEEL mask. After that brilliant move, Sheamus Brogue kicks him for the pin at 10:13. Note that Sheamus is still favoring his hand, which might not be good.

Rating: C-. Somehow, this was the best thing on the show for the last hour plus. I was nearly stunned when this was non-title and then Carrillo just lost anyway. It wasn't great, but Priest vs. Sheamus down the line sounds good enough for me. Sheamus is a talented guy and it would be nice to see him getting the chance to have a hoss fight with someone who can hang in there with him.

Here are MVP and Bobby Lashley for an open challenge. MVP mocks the Dallas Cowboys (gah) and says that Kofi Kingston was right: Lashley had been getting soft because of the women and the champagne and the good life, but no more. Now no one is beating Lashley for the champion so tonight it is time for the ultimate champion to face some loser. Lashley says bring it on and....it's KEITH LEE.

Keith Lee vs. Bobby Lashley

Non-title, though Graves suggested it was a title match before the bell. The GOLDBERG chants start us off as they shove each other around to start. Lee powers him around but the Spirit Bomb is countered into a Downward Spiral. A running clothesline puts Lee on the floor but Lashley can't lift him up for the ram into the post.

Instead Lee splashes him against the post but an MVP distraction lets Lashley knock Lee off the apron. The spear cuts Lee in half and Lashley hammers away back inside. The Hurt Lock is blocked though and Lashley gets flipped over. That's fine with Lashley, who hits a spinebuster to take him down again. Another spear gives Lashley the pin at 5:53.

Rating: C-. So much for that, as this was little more than a squash for Lashley. Lee got in a few shots here and there but then he lost in less than six minutes. I'm not sure what he is going to do from here, but this is not exactly something that gives me hope for Lee's future. Not the worst match, just rather disappointing.

Post match Lashley poses so here is the expected Goldberg return. Goldberg says he's next and Lashley is ready but MVP holds them apart.

Post break, MVP says they aren't acknowledging the return.

Here are Jinder Mahal, Veer and Shanky for a chat. Mahal, who is celebrating his birthday, is proud of what he did to Drew McIntyre last night because McIntyre embarrassed him last week with the fake sword. Then McIntyre destroyed Mahal's motorcycle, but this isn't about a motorcycle. Mahal wants McIntyre out here, so cue McIntyre from behind with a chair to clean house. Veer and Mahal bail, leaving Shanky to take an insane twenty chair shots to the back (with twice as many camera cuts because that's how Raw works).

Karrion Kross video.

Karrion Kross vs. Jeff Hardy

Non-title (a theme tonight) and no Scarlett with Kross, because why keep what is working with Kross in NXT? At least Hardy has No More Words back for his theme music, which is quite the plus. Kross starts fast but gets sent into the post. It's way too early for the Swanton but the big forearm is cut off. They go into the corner with Hardy grabbing a rollup and putting his feet on the ropes for the pin at 1:40. My jaw dropped on that one and I'm not even going to pretend to understand this.

Post match Kross promises that Hardy made a mistake and will fall and pray.

It's time for Alexa's Playground and LILLY IS BACK. Eva Marie and Doudrop come in, with Eva threatening to have Doudrop beat Lilly up. Bliss wouldn't recommend that but Eva leaves, only to trip over Doudrop's foot. Bliss thinks Lilly did it.

Women's Title: Rhea Ripley vs. Charlotte

Charlotte is defending and gets faceplanted to start. A whip into the corner has Charlotte shaken up again but she comes back with right hands to the face. Ripley shrugs them off and snaps off a German suplex, setting up a running basement dropkick for two. They head outside with Charlotte hitting a chop block to the bad knee, sending us to a break. Back with Charlotte taking the knee out again and crushing it on the mat.

Ripley manages a northern lights suplex but Charlotte boots her in the face. The moonsault hits raised knees though and Ripley grabs her own Figure Four. Charlotte turns that over for the break but Ripley hits a superkick into the Riptide for two as Charlotte gets a foot on the rope. That's enough for Charlotte, who tries to walk out, only to hit Ripley in the

face with the title for the DQ at 12:24.

Rating: C. I was watching this match and wondering if putting the title back on Ripley here would make up for last night, but then the ending was hardly the biggest surprise. WWE does not seem interesting in having Ripley be a big prop for Charlotte and little more. But hey, at least Ripley “beat” her here, right?

Post match Ripley jumps Charlotte again and lays her out....and we have a cash-in!

Women's Title: Nikki Ash vs. Charlotte

Nikki is challenging and a high crossbody gives her the title in 10 seconds.

Nikki celebrates in the crowd to end the show.

Overall Rating: D-. I'm being as generous as I can with that because getting rid of a briefcase makes up for a few of the problems this show had. The thing is this show had A LOT of problems, with one bad idea after another. There were some good parts, such as the Cena promo (and that pop), the six man tag, about thirty seconds of excitement over Lee's return, and the briefcase being cashed in for the title change. That stuff was pretty good.

Then it's everything else, and that's where the problems come in. You have things like Elias vs. Ryker going for nearly thirteen minutes, Natalya and Tamina continuing their roll, Sheamus vs. Carrillo (which might have been a highlight with some better structuring), the return of Lilly, whatever Kross' debut was, Ripley being tossed aside (seemingly to set up Bliss vs. Nikki), Goldberg getting ANOTHER World Title shot (because he needs them on the second and third biggest pay per views of the year) and the explosion of 3MB, because that's what people are begging to watch.

Last week, I heard someone say WWE fights with its fans on Raw and that is a perfect description. This show doesn't feel like it's about what the fans want to see, but rather whatever WWE has decided is going to work. If you like it, that's fine, but if you don't, get over it because that is what you are getting anyway.

See Mahal for example. He didn't work as WWE Champion and he didn't work as US Champion. Then he goes away for the better part of two years (not his fault of course) and comes back as....pretty much exactly the same guy, but with bigger lackeys. There's no development, there is no evolution and there is no change. WWE has just decided that you are getting Mahal as a guy on the show and if you don't like it, too bad.

This show was the one they had months to prepare for and set up something for the fans to care about but instead of something good, we got a lot of the same old WWE tropes (Goldberg returned for the second time this year for a World Title shot) and a few bonuses thrown in to try and take away some of the pain. I was sitting here watching this show with my mouth hanging open more than once, wondering how this is the best that WWE can do. Smackdown was pretty good and Money in the Bank was great, proving once again that this is a Raw problem, not a WWE problem. As I've said many times: fix it already, but it isn't happening.

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Main Event – July 8, 2021: Don't Remind Me

Main Event

Date: July 8, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Kevin Patrick, Byron Saxton

Our random wrestling show of the week is back and I'm really not sure what that is going to mean. In a reversal of things that I said for years about Main Event, I'm running out of ways to say that things are different around here and that is a very good thing. I'm curious to see what we get, though it might not wind up working out. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Veer vs. Jeff Hardy

Shanky and Jinder Mahal are here with Veer. That isn't surprising as Jeff Hardy and Shanky doesn't have the same ring. Veer powers him into the corner to start and Jeff knocks himself down while trying a shoulder. Hardy is sent throat first into the middle rope and we're already in the neck crank. Jeff fights up but gets taken down by the hair, which seems to be the consequences of a bad appearance choice.

The nerve hold goes on again but Hardy fights up with a sitout jawbreaker. This time Hardy's comeback actually works, including some shots to the head but the Twist of Fate (possibly with a botch as we cut to Mahal and Shanky) is blocked. Veer sends him into the corner for some running clotheslines and the baseball clothesline finishes at 4:31.

Rating: C-. They're doing a nice enough job of making Veer feel like a monster, but then you remember that he is (at least currently) little more than Mahal's lackey. That could go in a few different directions, but odds are it winds up being nothing more than another Mahal push, because of course that is what it is going to wind up being. As for Hardy...egads it's still weird to see him like this.

We look back at Edge returning to challenge Roman Reigns. This still isn't working.

From Smackdown.

Here is Jimmy Uso to call Edge out. Cue Edge, who asks Jimmy if he gets what is going on. Jimmy is doing everything Roman Reigns wants, because he is Reigns' b****. Yeah this is a trap, but it's a trap for Jimmy. Edge goes to the ring and the fight is on, with Edge sending him shoulder first into the post twice in a row. Jimmy is back with a superkick and a ram into the steps, followed by a bunch of right hands. A big boot cuts Jimmy off and it's a crossface (with a sleeper for a change) to make him tap. Edge grabs a piece of chair for the regular Crossface to mimic the Wrestlemania photo from earlier to end the show.

From Raw.

Nikki Cross/Alexa Bliss/Asuka/Naomi vs. Eva Marie/Doudrop/Shayna Baszler/Nia Jax

Oh boy. First of all, it has gone from Nikki Cross to Nikki ASH to Almost A Superhero Nikki Cross. Second, this could be

an all time train wreck. Reginald is here too because you just need nine people here for a match. Doudrop and Naomi start but Eva tags herself in and actually drives Naomi into the corner. A single forearm sends Naomi into the corner and it's already back to Doudrop. Naomi kicks Doudrop to the floor and hits the dive onto everyone else.

The parade of dives is on until Eva is left alone in the ring. Bliss comes in and screams her to the floor as we take a break. Back with Bliss forearming Doudrop but getting headbutted down for her efforts. Jax comes in to hammer on Asuka and it's off to Baszler to work on the leg. That doesn't last long so Bliss channels Reginald, with Baszler breaking things up. Eva comes in, ducks a kick from Asuka, and hands it back to Baszler again. Everything breaks down with Nikki's top rope splash connecting for two, only to have Jax (Nikki Jax according to Smith) Samoan drop her for the pin at 12:24.

Rating: D-. There were botches, there were timing issues, there were too many people involved at once and none of them were interesting, plus Cross loses so NIA JAX can get some momentum? This division is in a complete nose dive and feels so silly most of the time these days. It's turning into the Divas Era where most of the women are either goofy or horrible in the ring and that's a scary thought. It's also very disappointing, though I really don't think WWE cares.

Angel Garza vs. Shelton Benjamin

Benjamin grabs a headlock to start but gets armdragged down for an early standoff. This time Shelton tries wrestling him down to some better success, only to have Garza slip out again for another reset. It's Garza's turn as he hiptosses Benjamin down, leaving him rather stunned. Benjamin is back up and sends him over the top to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Benjamin running him over and grabbing a half camel clutch. With that not working, Benjamin grabs a snap suplex

for two. The reverse chinlock goes on, with the reverse being dropped in a hurry. Garza fights up and hits a kick to the head but Benjamin rolls through a rather high crossbody. A whip into the corner has Benjamin in trouble though and the delayed Lionsault is good for the pin at 9:15.

Rating: C. As usual the formula of taking a pair of talented wrestlers and giving them some time works out well for everyone involved. This wasn't a great match, but it was something fresh and that is often welcome. I could go for more from Garza and Benjamin is still good for putting someone over. It's a perfectly nice match and that there are far worse ways to fill in about ten minutes.

We look back at Kofi Kingston's rather good argument with MVP, setting up this week's main event.

From Raw.

New Day vs. MVP/Bobby Lashley

MVP works on Xavier Woods' arm to start and then powers him down without much effort. Woods goes after MVP's recently healed knee though and hammers away on the mat. Kofi Kingston comes in off the top with a shot to the knee and then slaps on a hammerlock. That doesn't last long so Lashley comes in to unload on Kingston in the corner.

A neckbreaker gives Lashley two but Kingston slips power of a powerslam and kicks him in the face. Lashley isn't having that and pounds Kingston down in the corner, allowing MVP to come back in for some right hands of his own. Kingston knees his way out of a delayed vertical suplex though and it's into the corner for a short form Unicorn Stampede.

New Day sends them outside for the big dives and we take a break. Back with Lashley snapping off a suplex to Woods, setting up an armbar. MVP comes in to work on the arm as well but Woods shoves him away without much effort. It's back to

Kofi to clean house, including a Ballin Boom Drop to MVP. Everything breaks down with Lashley being knocked outside, allowing Trouble in Paradise to finish MVP at 14:36.

Rating: C-. This felt like a house show main event and I believe it is the match that was advertised for the house show main event when things come back later this month. The match itself was a fine way to get Kingston ready for the title match, but it wasn't exactly something that got my interest up very high.

Overall Rating: D+. All this did was remind me of how bad Raw was this week. I know the fans being back is the big goal and that's when things are supposed to get better, but egads people. Do we really need to waste so much time with one horrible show after another? As is almost always the case, Smackdown is watchable enough and serves as a fine show, but Raw is dreadful and makes me not even want to watch the highlights. With this as example, the lowlights might be a better way to go.

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Main Event – July 1, 2021: Keep Spinning The Wheel

Main Event

Date: July 1, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Kevin Patrick, Byron Saxton

This show was turned upside down last week as it was all about NXT, which is not something you see happen around here. I'm curious to see what they have this week, but it would not surprise me to see quite the downgrade this time around. Then again, the surprises have been coming a lot faster around here and it might be the case again. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Veer vs. Drew Gulak

Shanky and Jinder Mahal are here with Veer. Gulak gets powered into the corner to start and seems a bit worried here. An armbar doesn't get very far on Veer, who shrugs off a kick to the leg and punches him down. The sidewalk slam does it again but Veer misses a running boot in the corner. The nerve hold doesn't last long so Veer goes with a neck crank instead. Back up and Gulak starts kicking at the leg, setting up a leglock to keep Veer down. That's broken up as well so Veer slams him down, setting up a jumping elbow for two. Three straight corner splashes set up a baseball style clothesline to finish Gulak at 5:02.

Rating: C-. The match was a David vs. Goliath style but you are only going to get so far under these circumstances. Veer isn't ready to carry a match on his own and Gulak isn't going to win anything big. That makes Gulak's control feel a bit

like filler, though at least the match stayed short enough.

Quick look back at Roman Reigns destroying Rey Mysterio inside the Cell.

From Smackdown.

Here are Roman Reigns and Paul Heyman for the State Of The Universal Title Address. We see a video on Reigns beating Rey Mysterio in the Cell, plus Reigns beating up Dominik for a bonus. Heyman talks about all of the people that Reigns has beaten up, including the Fiend, Cesaro, Kevin Owens, Braun Strowman, Edge, Daniel Bryan and Rey Mysterio. Reigns has cleaned out the division, so now he needs to make an announcement.

Before he can speak, cue the returning Edge to jump Reigns and the fight is on, with Edge knocking Reigns outside. A clothesline off the apron lets Edge send Reigns face first into the announcers' table over and over. Back in and Reigns hits a Superman Punch to cut Edge off. Reigns goes for a chair but walks into a spear.

Edge loads up the Conchairto but here is Jimmy Uso to cut him off. That earns Jimmy a spear through the barricade as Reigns and Heyman escape. Edge: "WHERE YOU AT ROMAN???" On the stage dude. Just turn to the right. Posing ends the show. This works well as Edge didn't get his big singles match, so he'll do fine for the Money in the Bank challenger. Like Heyman said, who else is there?

Video on Bobby Lashley vs. Kofi Kingston, including Lashley wrecking Xavier Woods inside the Cell.

From Raw.

Here is Kofi Kingston for a chat. Last week, his best friend Xavier Woods was locked in the Cell with Bobby Lashley and put in everything he had, like he always does. Woods showed he can

hang at that level and he should get the respect he deserves. Kofi was forced to watch Woods in the Hurt Lock from outside the Cell and now it is time for some revenge.

Cue MVP, with Lashley's women, to laugh off the idea that Kingston is going to be able to beat Lashley. Kingston thinks Lashley is going soft though, and that is coming from a unicorn wearing, pancake tossing hip swiveler. MVP had to save Lashley from losing the title a few weeks back and Kingston knows he can win. Every week, a layer is stripped away from Lashley and by the time we get to Money in the Bank, Lashley might look like MVP.

Kingston talks about never taking time off as WWE Champion, including taking the title to his hometown in Ghana to show that anything is possible. MVP has Lashley on vacation and taking days off and someone is going to take the title from him. That is going to be Kingston at Money in the Bank. MVP thinks Kingston did all that stuff to feed his own ego and is sounding as confident as Woods did last week.

Kingston says Woods is going to be back next week and thinks MVP has been milking his knee injury for the better part of six months. MVP says he isn't cleared for combat or else he would take Kingston down. That's enough for Kingston to go to the floor and, after ducking a cane shot, hit Trouble In Paradise. That's a bit aggressive over someone not medically cleared.

Lucha House Party vs. Mace/T-Bar

Gran Metalik starts against T-Bar, including being sent to the apron so he can kick T-Bar in the head. The high crossbody is pulled out of the air so Metalik settles for the running hurricanrana instead. The reverse Sling Blade allows Lince Dorado to come in for a headscissors but T-Bar takes him into the corner for the tag to Mace. That's fine with Dorado, who knocks him away and hits a top rope clothesline. The House

Party clears the ring and poses as we take a break.

Back with Mace ramming Dorado's head into the mat So T-Bar can slaps on the front facelock. Dorado gets rammed face first into the mat, allowing Mace to drop a middle rope elbow. A quick shot to the face staggers Mace though and a middle rope crossbody puts him down. It's off to Metalik to pick up the pace and Mace is taken down again. A moonsault misses though and Mace grabs a Boss Man Slam for two, with Metalik making the save. Everything breaks down with T-Bar and being sent outside, leaving Mace to catch Metalik with a sitout chokebomb for the pin at 8:56.

Rating: C. Much like the opener, this was about a normal sized team against a pair of monsters. This time around though, you had some more talented small guys who could make Mace and T-Bar look a bit better. T-Bar shouldn't need that as much, but the monsters just aren't that good. I'm not sure why, but they should be a layup and instead are barely scraping by here.

We recap Riddle winning the battle royal to earn a shot at a Money in the Bank spot for Randy Orton.

From Raw.

Money In The Bank Qualifying Match: Drew McIntyre vs. Riddle vs. AJ Styles

Omos is here with Styles and if Riddle wins, Randy Orton gets the spot. McIntyre starts fast with the overhead belly to belly suplexes, followed by the crazy high backdrop to Styles. It's too early for the Claymore so they go outside, where McIntyre loads up a powerbomb onto the announcers' table. Riddle dives out of the air to break that up but Styles posts both of them to take over. Styles and Riddle fight to suplex the other through the announcers' table until Riddle settles for one on the floor.

Back up and an enziguri drops McIntyre, allowing Riddle and

Styles to slam him through the announcers' table. We take a break and come back with Styles working on Riddle's leg but wisely going outside to stomp on the still down McIntyre. Back in and a half crab has Riddle in trouble, with Styles being smart enough to keep it on when Riddle makes the rope. A brainbuster gives AJ two but Riddle is back up with a hanging DDT. The RKO is loaded up but AJ is back with something close to a Burning Hammer for two.

McIntyre is back in though and gets rid of AJ, setting up the reverse Alabama Slam to Riddle. The Claymore misses though and Riddle dumps McIntyre out to the floor. Riddle is back up with a penalty kick to each of them and the springboard Floating Bro hits both of them for a big crash. Some kicks to the chest have Styles and McIntyre down again but Styles sends a kick into the steps.

Riddle thinks his (bare) foot is broken so it's time for some medics to take him out. We come back from another break with Riddle gone and McIntyre possibly tweaking his knee. A neckbreaker takes Styles down but he slips out of a superplex attempt. The fireman's carry neckbreaker gets two, as does a Michinoku Driver to Styles.

A quick Calf Crusher has McIntyre in trouble but here is Riddle with a taped up ankle for the Bromission to break things up. AJ goes for the ankle for the save but McIntyre is back up. An enziguri, with the bad foot, drops McIntyre to the floor and Riddle jumping knees AJ out of the air. The RKO hits Styles but Omos pulls him out at two. The Claymore gives McIntyre the pin on Riddle at 26:41.

Rating: B-. This was really long and the ending was a bit disappointing, but at least they had some solid action to fill in a large chunk of the show. Riddle fighting for his best friend is a good story and I could go for more of that in the future, though I don't think Orton is going to be overly happy with his partner taking the fall. Good main event overall, but

they could have chopped it down a bit.

Overall Rating: C. You had some decent original wrestling but this was all about the big main event. This week's show was certainly a return to form as there was nothing to suggest that the match had such a different episode last week. Money in the Bank needs to come and go already, if nothing else so we can have fans back. They need to add in what they can, but WWE needs to give them something to cheer about and I don't think this was it.

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Monday Night Raw – July 5, 2021: Try, And Not Again

Monday Night Raw

Date: July 5, 2021

Location: Yuengling Center, Tampa, Florida

Commentators: Jimmy Smith, Byron Saxton, Corey Graves

We have two Raw's left before both the return of fans and Money in the Bank, meaning that it is time to start kicking

things into a higher gear. WWE needs some momentum on their way back into normal and I'm not sure if they know how to do that at the moment. We are also likely getting some more hard pushes towards the ladder matches so let's get to it.

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

We open with MizTV with Miz and John Morrison in the ring. Miz's guests this week will be the four entrants in the men's Money in the Bank match, starting with Morrison as you might expect. Morrison says it is time for the Aquaholics to get soaked as he becomes Senor Dinero En El Banco. This brings out Drew McIntyre to say he has been fighting back to the title since Miz cashed in Money in the Bank. McIntyre recaps the Money in the Bank concept and since the show is in Texas, it is time for McIntyre's History Lesson. This week is about the Alamo, because he is a distant relative of Davy Crockett. Morrison: ".....REALLY???"

McIntyre hopes that Morrison is wet for Money in the Bank, because McIntyre is sticking Morrison's head inside Miz. Morrison says you can kick the ocean and all you'll get is wet, but here is Ricochet to cut them off. Miz calls Ricochet rude and reckless and we see a clip of Ricochet's huge dive last week. Ricochet promises to do whatever it takes to win but here is Riddle to interrupt this time.

With his foot taped up, Riddle climbs the ladder because this is the Money in the Bank edition. Riddle: "I'm really high." He failed last week so now he is dedicating his Money in the Bank performance to Randy Orton. That's too far for Miz, who wants to know why Orton hasn't kicked Riddle's head in yet. Riddle: "Because we're best buds!" McIntyre can respect that but Miz wants Jinder Mahal to take McIntyre apart tonight. Cue AJ Styles and Omos to say last week's triple threat shouldn't have happened because Orton was out. But no, instead of Styles vs. McIntyre, it was a triple threat where he wasn't pinned.

Riddle thinks AJ is really annoyed down there, hopping around like a little rabbit all nimbly bimbly like (Ricochet can barely hold it in on that one). That's enough for Omos to shove the ladder, and Riddle, over for a crash onto the bad foot. The ladder is thrown out and it's a big circle staredown. AJ kicks Riddle in the leg and the brawl is on with Ricochet throwing Morrison out. Omos gets clotheslined outside by McIntyre and Ricochet hits a triangle dropkick to put Morrison down again. This was your standard, long, everyone come in and chat about the match before fighting segment and it wasn't very good.

Ricochet vs. John Morrison

Ricochet has even made this one personal by BREAKING THE DRIP STICK. Morrison gets sent into the corner to start and there's a running clothesline to put him down. We hit the reverse chinlock with a knee in Morrison's back but Morrison reverses into a chinlock of his own. This is so thrilling that we look at Ricochet's big dive last week until Morrison hits a flipping neckbreaker for two. The chinlock goes on again but Ricochet fights up and sends is sent outside, with Ricochet sliding back after him.

Ricochet has to jump over Miz (in his wheelchair), only to have his hurricanrana countered into a powerbomb against the apron. We take a break and come back with Ricochet hitting a faceplant but walking into a Spanish Fly. A crucifix gives Ricochet two but he gets caught in the ropes. Morrison misses a slingshot elbow and Ricochet hits a running crossbody to take Morrison down HARD to the floor. Morrison rolls back in but Miz wheels in front of Ricochet so he can't beat the count at 12:13.

Rating: C+. Yeah it was another countout ending but they certainly had a creative way to get there. Miz interfering to help Morrison at least helps up set that prospect for Money in the Bank, though I wouldn't trust those two to be smart enough

to make a cheese sandwich. Ricochet is only going to be in the match for the high spots, but that's better than slumming on Main Event.

Jinder Mahal arrives on a motorcycle and talks about how he and Drew McIntyre were friends once. McIntyre was there with him when he bought this motorcycle to celebrate a WWE Championship victory. The other day, Mahal sent McIntyre a text asking if he wanted to go riding for old times' sake. McIntyre took THREE DAYS to reply, saying he was "2 busy". And yes he used the number 2! Tonight, Mahal is proving that he was always the better man.

Reginald comes up to Nia Jax and Shayna Baszler, saying Alexa Bliss is behind them. Bliss is nowhere to be seen, so Baszler yells at him for being a mostly grown man scared of shadows. The three walk off and of course Bliss is there now.

We look back at MVP and Kofi Kingston's argument last week.

Last week, Nikki Ash (just go with it) pinned Shayna Baszler thanks to an Alexa Bliss distraction.

Asuka and Naomi are happy to be part of a team with Nikki Ash, but she insists that she isn't a hero. Now she has a chance to win Money in the Bank, though the other two aren't so thrilled with the idea. Nikki runs off for her match when Alexa Bliss comes in to say Naomi and Asuka should lower their expectations for Money In The Bank.

Nikki Cross/Alexa Bliss/Asuka/Naomi vs. Eva Marie/Doudrop/Shayna Baszler/Nia Jax

Oh boy. First of all, it has gone from Nikki Cross to Nikki ASH to Almost A Superhero Nikki Cross. Second, this could be an all time train wreck. Reginald is here too because you just need nine people here for a match. Doudrop and Naomi start but Eva tags herself in and actually drives Naomi into the corner. A single forearm sends Naomi into the corner and it's already

back to Doudrop. Naomi kicks Doudrop to the floor and hits the dive onto everyone else.

The parade of dives is on until Eva is left alone in the ring. Bliss comes in and screams her to the floor as we take a break. Back with Bliss forearming Doudrop but getting headbutted down for her efforts. Jax comes in to hammer on Asuka and it's off to Baszler to work on the leg. That doesn't last long so Bliss channels Reginald, with Baszler breaking things up. Eva comes in, ducks a kick from Asuka, and hands it back to Baszler again. Everything breaks down with Nikki's top rope splash connecting for two, only to have Jax (Nikki Jax according to Smith) Samoan drop her for the pin at 12:24.

Rating: D-. There were botches, there were timing issues, there were too many people involved at once and none of them were interesting, plus Cross loses so NIA JAX can get some momentum? This division is in a complete nose dive and feels so silly most of the time these days. It's turning into the Divas Era where most of the women are either goofy or horrible in the ring and that's a scary thought. It's also very disappointing, though I really don't think WWE cares.

MVP isn't sure how Kevin Patrick keeps getting into his dressing room but promises to take out New Day tonight. Bobby Lashley promises to do the same.

Mustafa Ali vs. Mansoor

Ali takes him down with an armbar to start, including some trash talk, but Mansoor is right back up. A spinebuster out of the corner gives Mansoor two and he whips Ali into the ropes, with Ali's foot getting tied up. Mansoor helps him out...and gets rolled up for the fast pin at 2:54. Ali: "I TOLD YOU! THE HIGH ROAD WILL ONLY GET YOU SO FAR!!!"

Drew McIntyre explains that his sword is made from the Loch Ness Monster's tooth and a great story talks about how a warrior will use it...to beat Jinder Mahal and go on to Money

in the Bank in Fort Worth, Texas.

Drew McIntyre vs. Jinder Mahal

Veer and Shanky are here with Mahal. McIntyre drives him into the corner to start and hits a running shoulder to drop Mahal. Another shoulder does it again and McIntyre runs him over a third time, setting up a release overhead belly to belly to the floor. The goons offer a distraction though and Mahal drops McIntyre onto the announcers' table as we take a break. Back with Mahal holding a chinlock but McIntyre is right back up with another suplex. There's a nip up into a 3MB reference and Futureshock plants Mahal again. The Claymore is loaded up so Veer and Shanky come in for the DQ at 10:13.

Rating: D+. Yep, he's still Mahal and he has some enhanced Singh Twins. That's not a good sign for what we're going to be seeing in the future but WWE loves Mahal and we're getting him no matter what. I hope this isn't the start of some kind of a story but it feels like exactly what we're getting.

Post match the beatdown is on...and Mahal steals McIntyre's sword because this is continuing.

New Day is ready to fight Bobby Lashley and MVP because they are not going to stay down. What matters is getting to Money in the Bank and seeing the fans' pleasure at watching Kofi Kingston becoming WWE Champion. Kingston channels Kevin Garnett by shouting ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE and says after Money in the Bank, MVP and Lashley can take some vacations because they won't have those championship responsibilities.

Mace/T-Bar vs. Lucha House Party

Lince Dorado is in a Kane inspired mask. Dorado hammers on T-Bar to start and snaps off a running hurricanrana. T-Bar catches a high crossbody without much trouble though and Dorado is sent outside. Mace sends him into the announcers' table, setting up a heck of a big boot from T-Bar back inside.

Gran Metalik saves Dorado from High Justice though and hits a step up dive to drop T-Bar on the floor. Back in and a hurricanrana finishes Mace at 3:35.

Rating: D+. What even is this show anymore? I'm not sure what WWE thinks of Mace and T-Bar, but losing to Lucha House Party is not a good sign for their future. This was another short and not awful match, but it does not exactly seem like something that is going to be leading anywhere.

Riddle checks on his foot but Damian Priest interrupts. Priest is worried about Riddle's foot but Riddle says he has fallen off higher things than that. One time he dive off a roof and broke his foot diving into a pool. Priest: "That's rough. Not sure what it has to do with tonight." Riddle isn't done though because he did it again the next year and landed in the deep end. He isn't scared of ladders and he'll win tonight. For Randy Orton.

AJ Styles vs. Riddle

Omos is here with Styles, who goes straight for Riddle's injured foot. An armbar attempt sends Styles bailing to the ropes so he takes the foot out all over again. Cranking ensues but Riddle is back up, meaning it's another shot to the foot to take him back down. Riddle hits a jumping kick to the chest and hammers Styles down in the corner for a bit of a surprise. A gutwrench suplex drops Styles again but Omos sweeps the leg to take over.

We take a break and come back with Styles grabbing an ankle lock. The Calf Crusher is broken up though and Riddle blasts him with a knee. The Broton gives Riddle two but Styles is back up with something like a reverse Death Valley Driver for two. Then the Viking Raiders pop up to distract Omos and Styles, allowing Riddle to grab a rollup for the pin at 13:01 (though Styles' shoulder was very close to being up in time).

Rating: C. This match had the most potential of anything

announced tonight and this is the best they can do? I get that it's just a Money in the Bank momentum match, but the ending felt like it was stapled on, which was about as good as you would expect. They were rolling until then but the legs being cut off like that didn't help things.

Here is Charlotte, on a crutch after getting chop blocked by Rhea Ripley last week. She talks about the NBA Playoffs being ruined because of all of the injuries, and now she might miss Money in the Bank. Ripley must be scared because she is trying to hurt hurt in advance and that is exactly what Charlotte would do. Cue Ripley with a crutch of her own (Charlotte: "You're taking my entrance too?") and it's time for a crutch fight. Charlotte knocks Rhea's away but Ripley gets it back and sends Charlotte running (with the knee looking fine). I guess that counts as Ripley outsmarting her?

Cedric Alexander/Elias vs. Jaxson Ryker/R-Truth

Hold on though as 24/7 Champion Akira Tozawa runs into the ring so Truth can roll him up for two, with the usual gang of imbeciles chasing after him. Truth joins the chase and that means a handicap match. Ryker throws Alexander around to start and it's off to Elias....who runs off. The swinging Boss Man Slam finishes Cedric at 1:03.

Bobby Lashley is warming up.

Next week: Ricochet vs. John Morrison falls count anywhere and Sheamus defends the US Title against Humberto Carrillo.

In two weeks: the Viking Raiders get their Tag Team Title shot against AJ Styles and Omos.

New Day vs. MVP/Bobby Lashley

MVP works on Xavier Woods' arm to start and then powers him down without much effort. Woods goes after MVP's recently healed knee though and hammers away on the mat. Kofi Kingston

comes in off the top with a shot to the knee and then slaps on a hammerlock. That doesn't last long so Lashley comes in to unload on Kingston in the corner.

A neckbreaker gives Lashley two but Kingston slips power of a powerslam and kicks him in the face. Lashley isn't having that and pounds Kingston down in the corner, allowing MVP to come back in for some right hands of his own. Kingston knees his way out of a delayed vertical suplex though and it's into the corner for a short form Unicorn Stampede.

New Day sends them outside for the big dives and we take a break. Back with Lashley snapping off a suplex to Woods, setting up an armbar. MVP comes in to work on the arm as well but Woods shoves him away without much effort. It's back to Kofi to clean house, including a Ballin Boom Drop to MVP. Everything breaks down with Lashley being knocked outside, allowing Trouble in Paradise to finish MVP at 14:36.

Rating: C-. This felt like a house show main event and I believe it is the match that was advertised for the house show main event when things come back later this month. The match itself was a fine way to get Kingston ready for the title match, but it wasn't exactly something that got my interest up very high.

Overall Rating: D-. The opener was pretty good, AJ vs. Riddle was ok and the main event was acceptable. The rest of the show on the other hand was what happens when Raw does not try. WWE has made it clear that NOTHING matters until they get the fans back next week, which made this show feel even more pointless than usual. As bad as this was, that has me terrified for next week, which could be an even bigger chore to sit through.

I can handle bad shows and bad ideas, but the worst thing is when it feels like no one cares. That is what we had here, and it made for one of the worst shows I have sat through in a good while. Outside of the eight woman tag, nothing was overly

terrible, but it felt like a show where most of the stories and segments were there because they had to be, and that is an awful feeling.

All night long, the message this show went was that what you're watching doesn't matter and keep waiting until next week. That's fine in theory, but based on this show, I have no reason to believe that anything is going to be getting better in the near future. WWE, at least Raw, is just so bad right now and there is nothing to suggest that it is improving. What on here is supposed to make me want to keep watching? The scary part is I think WWE believes everything is supposed to, and that isn't going to improve things.

Results

John Morrison b. Ricochet via countout

Nia Jax/Eva Marie/Shayna Baszler/Doudrop b. Nikki Cross/Asuka/Naomi/Alexa Bliss – Samoan drop to Cross

Mustafa Ali b. Mansoor – Rollup

Drew McIntyre b. Jinder Mahal via DQ when Veer and Shanky interfered

Lucha House Party b. Mace/T-Bar – Hurricanrana to Mace

Riddle b. AJ Styles

Jaxson Ryker/R-Truth b. Elias/Cedric Alexander – Swinging Boss Man Slam to Alexander

New Day b. MVP/Bobby Lashley – Trouble in Paradise to MVP

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