

New Column: 7 The NXT Way

The main roster needs some help, so maybe these people can help.

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Monday Night Raw – January 29, 2007: He's Here

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 29, 2007

Location: American Airlines Center, Dallas, Texas

Attendance: 17,115

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

We're done with the Royal Rumble and that means it is time to start moving forward towards Wrestlemania. The big Raw stories coming out of last night would be John Cena retaining the WWE Title in a great Last Man Standing match over Umaga, plus Shawn Michaels coming this close to winning the Royal Rumble. I wonder if that means anything. Let's get to it.

[Here is the Royal Rumble if you need a recap.](#)

Here is Shawn Michaels to get things going. Last week, he said no mortal man was going to keep him from making it to Wrestlemania. The problem is there were 29 mortal men in the Royal Rumble and one Undertaker. That was a setback, but he is going to Wrestlemania to become the new WWE Champion. Undertaker has the right to choose, but he hasn't picked yet.

If Undertaker picks Bobby Lashley's ECW World Title (Shawn has jokes) or Batista's World Heavyweight Title, that leaves John Cena and the WWE Title wide open. Tonight, Shawn is throwing his hat in the ring but here is Cena to interrupt.

Cena likes that idea but here is Edge to interrupt. Edge laughs at Shawn for losing last night and is greeted with a YOU SUCK chant. Shawn lost last night and he has beaten Cena more times than he can count. Edge is undefeated at Wrestlemania so the title shot should be his. Cue Randy Orton, who doesn't seem to agree.

Last night it was every man for himself and it is the same with that WWE Title. Edge has had 30 title shots at Cena but Orton hasn't had one. Cena cuts them off and the challenge is on but Vince McMahon pops up on screen. Since it's Fan Appreciation Night, the Tag Team Title match is on for later. Cena seems intrigued and Shawn...kind of stands there.

JTG talks to the camera and sends some shout outs to his friends but Shad Gaspard says they have a match up next.

Cryme Tyme vs. Shelton Benjamin/Charlie Haas

Haas hammerlocks Shad to start but a shoulder puts Haas into the corner. A Shelton cheap shot cuts him off though and it's time to stomp on Shad's knee. Benjamin comes in and stays on the leg, even cutting off Shad's rights and lefts with a half crab. Shad finally kicks him away and brings in JTG to take over. An elbow to Benjamin and a backdrop to Haas connect but everything breaks down. Shad is sent outside and Haas sneaks in a DDT so Benjamin can cover JTG (with tights) for the pin. That's Cryme Tyme's first loss.

Rating: C-. I'm not sure what the point was in having Cryme Tyme lose here unless they needed to be cooled down a bit, as they are the hottest regular team going at the moment. Haas and Benjamin haven't been doing much of anything lately so this was kind of a strange loss. It's not a career killer or

anything, but kind of odd.

Vince McMahon gives Melina a pep talk in the back, telling her to seize the moment. Vince gets a hug and Melina leaves, with Coach replacing her. Fan Appreciation Night is ready to go and they're both excited. It's going to be bigger than the Royal Rumble and maybe even bigger than Wrestlemania. This is going to leave Vince's name up there with Mother Teresa, Gandhi and DESMOND TUTU! Coach goes to make sure everything is ready.

This Week In Wrestling History: the first Royal Rumble, which was in no way aired to screw with the NWA's Bunkhouse Stampede (which didn't need to be screwed with in the first place).

Melina vs. Maria

The winner gets a Women's Title shot at some point in the future, as per Vince McMahon's order (or a First Contenders match according to Melina). JR says Maria has been improving every time she is in the ring, which is a scary concept. Maria rolls her up to start and hits a Bronco Buster for one. Melina isn't having that and tosses Maria down by the hair to take over. A few kicks out of the corner don't do Maria much good as Melina hits a not great looking flapjack. Melina screams a lot and grabs a Muta Lock for the tap. Lawler says that's called California Dream, which Melina told him online. Lawler: "I'd like to blog her."

Shawn Michaels isn't going to kick Todd Grisham again but he'll win the Tag Team Titles tonight. John Cena is no HHH though.

Super Crazy interrupts Mickie James, asking her if she remembers people calling her crazy. Well he's SUPER Crazy! Melina comes in to say Mickie must be crazy if she thinks she's keeping the Women's Title. A brawl breaks out, with Melina shouting "I'M THE TRUE CHAMPION YOU WH***!"

Edge is with Lance Cade and Trevor Murdoch and can't believe

that Randy Orton thinks he should get a title shot at Wrestlemania. No one can take the Tag Team Titles from them though.

Stills of Umaga vs. John Cena.

Umaga vs. Val Venis

Umaga starts fast with the Samoan drop and ties Venis in the Tree of Woe. The running headbutt connects and the running hip attack sets up the Samoan Spike to complete the squash.

Here is Vince McMahon, in a cowboy hat, for Fan Appreciation Night, complete with something under a sheet. Vince: "HOWDY PARDNER! Why you must be the new school marm!" That's ridiculous, just like wearing a cowboy hat (yep). Anyone over the age of five wearing a cowboy hat is stupid, because it even messes up your hair. Vince stomps on the hat and thanks the fans for making him a billionaire. He would like to give everyone some monetary thanks but it can only be one person.

Vince calls in a woman from the crowd, who is in no way a model. He knows she must be nervous and then pulls the sheet off, revealing a large version of his Muscle & Fitness cover from last year. The woman seems to like it and Vince sends her away, saying he won't remember her name (Jackie). And now, in a moment that I'm sure will age just fine, Donald Trump appears on the screen, sending Vince into a panic. He says the fans have no choice but to do what Vince wants and no one would want that picture. Not even Vince's wife!

Trump knows what the fans want, including the value for what they paid for tickets tonight. Therefore, he is dumping money out of the ceiling, which seems to be completely real, despite what Vince says. Vince: "DONALD TRUMP YOU SON OF A B****!" JR even catches some money as Vince tries to get his head around the idea that it is raining cash. Vince rants about how the people are taking his money and storms off, as JR declares that Vince has been trumped. It's going to be a long, long

Road To Wrestlemania.

Post break, Coach, with money, says he can't believe Trump would try to upstage him like that. Coach has gathered up as much money as he could, even throwing in some of his own (Ten dollars!). Vince jumps in the limo and leaves in a huff anyway.

Carlito/Super Crazy vs. Kenny Dykstra/Chris Masters

Torrie Wilson is here with Carlito/Crazy. Masters drives Crazy into the corner to start and drives in some knees to the ribs. Crazy knocks him down and drops a corkscrew elbow for an early two. It's off to Dykstra, who gets caught with a basement dropkick. Carlito comes in for a hurricanrana to the floor and the stereo dives drop the villains.

Back in and Masters trips Crazy down so Dykstra can drop an elbow to take over. The chinlock goes on for a bit, followed by Carlito coming in to break up a cover. Dykstra grabs his own chinlock but gets belly to back suplexed for his efforts. The double tag brings in Carlito and Masters to pick up the pace, including Carlito's running knee lift. Everything breaks down and the Backstabber gives Carlito the pin.

Rating: C-. This could have been worse as Carlito and Crazy worked out well enough together. I never need to see Masters vs. Carlito again though, as it is one of those pairings that has been beaten so far into the ground. Dykstra continues to be one of those people who is just kind of there, but it can be rather hard to build someone up from almost nothing.

Randy Orton talks about what an honor it was to win the Tag Team Titles with Edge but they both want to be WWE Champion. As for tonight, they're retaining the titles.

Intercontinental Title: Great Khali vs. Jeff Hardy

Khali is challenging and knocks Hardy outside in a hurry.

Hardy gets pulled back in with one arm and some heavy shots knock him down again. A big clothesline makes it worse for Hardy, who manages to get up for a Whisper in the Wind. That doesn't do much though as the big chop puts Hardy on the floor for the countout.

Rating: D. It was more of an angle than a match and it made Khali look great without having Hardy get pinned. In theory this should set up Khali destroying him to win the title, or at least a title match, though I'm not sure I believe WWE is going to follow through on it. Nothing match, but it wasn't supposed to be.

Candice Michelle is in a GoDaddy commercial for the Super Bowl. Not on Peacock of course.

Wrestlemania Recall: the first Money In The Bank.

Vladimir Kozlov is amazed that money fell from the ceiling but he wasn't impressed by the Royal Rumble. He would have won you see.

Highlights of the Last Man Standing match.

John Cena and Ric Flair are in the back, with Flair saying Shawn Michaels wants to go to the main event of Wrestlemania. He might even superkick Cena to get there.

Vince McMahon will be on ECW this week. Oh dear.

Tag Team Titles: Rated-RKO vs. Shawn Michaels/John Cena

Michaels/Cena are challenging and the champs bail to the floor to start. Shawn chops Edge to start and Orton is almost ready to come in and save him. Instead it's more chopping against the ropes with Edge flopping around early on. Cena comes in to quite the reaction and it's a hiptoss into an elbow to the jaw for two. A DDT is good for the same but it's off to Orton for some forearms to the back.

Orton grabs a suplex and Cena gets caught in the wrong corner. Cena fights up but gets knocked down again, only to have Orton knock Edge down by mistake. Things are about to fall apart but Orton knees Cena in the back from the apron to keep him in trouble. A knee drop gives Orton two and Edge adds a dropkick for the same.

The bodyscissors with a chinlock goes on until Cena fights up and powers his way to freedom. The hot tag brings in Shawn to clean house but Orton breaks up the superkick with a dropkick. Shawn blocks the RKO though and brings (the busted open) Cena back in for the FU and the pin to give us new champions.

Rating: C+. This was the way to get the Road To Wrestlemania off in a hurry as Shawn vs. Cena is already all but set for the show. That isn't a bad thing, and it isn't like there is a strong division underneath the titles in the first place. Michaels and Cena holding the titles isn't that much different than Orton and Edge, so using it as a plot device to get us to Wrestlemania is not a bad thing.

Post match Shawn teases a superkick but stops, leaving Cena to yell at him instead. Then the gong goes off and here is Undertaker to stare them down to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The wrestling wasn't the point here, because this show was all about having stuff happen. They did a lot of big things on this show and you can see where a good chunk of the Wrestlemania build is going. Your individual tastes may vary, but there is something to be said about having the build start hot and that is what they did here. The followup is important, but at least they were off to a good start.

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Monday Night Raw – June 28, 2021: Get The Money Back

Monday Night Raw

Date: June 28, 2021

Location: Yuengling Center, Tampa, Florida

Commentators: Jimmy Smith, Corey Graves, Byron Saxton

We'll wrap up the first half of the year as we are on the way towards the Money In The Bank. A lot of the spots have already been filled in and this week we are finishing up the Raw's men's qualifiers with a triple threat match. I'll take that over the building momentum matches so let's get to it.

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

Adam Pearce and Sonya Deville tell us that Randy Orton is out of the triple threat match for reasons beyond WWE's control. Therefore we are going to have a battle royal for the spot...but here is Riddle with a (football shaped) letter from Orton, saying Riddle should get the spot. The bosses think Riddle wrote the letter, mainly because most of these words aren't real and there is a viper drawn in the corner. Riddle offers to wrestle on Orton's behalf and giving Orton the spot if he wins. Deal.

Battle Royal

Riddle, Erik, Ivar, Jinder Mahal, Angel Garza, R-Truth, Mustafa Ali, Drew Gulak, Akira Tozawa, Damian Priest, Jeff Hardy, Cedric Alexander, Mansoor, Shelton Benjamin, Humberto Carrillo

Only Riddle gets an entrance and it is good to see Priest back in the ring. Gulak is out early (duh) and Cedric does his best Road Dogg impression by wrapping all four limbs around the bottom rope. Mahal dumps Benjamin and Mansoor throws Garza over, but Garza lands on one foot and hops around to get back in. Garza goes to eliminated Mansoor but Ali makes the save and dumps Garza instead. Then, as you might have expected, Ali tosses Mansoor.

The eliminations are teased among everyone else until Mahal tosses Truth. Mahal sends Tozawa out as well in a scary landing, allowing Gulak to steal the 24/7 Title. Then Truth gets it back from Truth and Tozawa takes it from him because this is still a thing. Cue Omos to pull both of the Vikings out and then beat them up as we take a break. Back with Hardy, Priest, Mahal, Riddle and Cedric still in.

That means a Priest vs. Mahal slugout with Priest kicking him out in a bit of a surprise. Cedric reverses a Twist of Fate and tosses Hardy out, setting up a lot of trash talking. Priest gets rid of Cedric and Priest starts striking away, only to get German suplexed down. The Bromission goes on but Priest sends him to the apron for the break. Riddle hangs on and grabs it again but Priest gets back inside. They fight to the apron again and this time Riddle knocks him out for the win at 14:48.

Rating: C-. They kept it fast paced enough here and moved some stories forward, but it's rather tricky to rate these things. That being said, this was a battle royal for a spot in a match to determine a future shot at a champion at any time, with a wrestler appearing in another wrestler's place. That should be enough to downgrade it a bit.

Riddle demands Randy Orton's music be played.

Video on Shayna Baszler vs. Alexa Bliss.

Shayna Baszler is shuffling a deck of cards (there is a Shayna Baszler Queen Of Spades deck but it's not them) when Nia Jax and Reginald come in to mock her for it. Baszler says it keeps her from hitting people in the face but now she needs to deal with Alexa Bliss and the doll. They all leave and Bliss is watching.

AJ Styles is ready for Riddle and doesn't like the suggestion that Omos cheated the Viking Raiders in the battle royal.

Nikki Cross loves being a superhero and is so glad that she is in Money in the Bank. She is one win away from being a superhero, making her Nikki ASH: Almost A Superhero. There's your reference to the released WWE writer.

Nikki Cross vs. Shayna Baszler

Reginald and Nia Jax are here too. Cross starts fast with a crossbody but Shayna sends her hard into the corner to take over. Cue Alexa Bliss for a distraction though and Cross dives onto everyone as we take a break. Back with Shayna kicking the knee out and hitting a gutwrench faceplant for two. A running knee in the corner connects but a Bliss distraction lets Cross hit a tornado DDT. Jax goes over to glare at Bliss, who starts mind controlling her. Reginald breaks it up so Bliss kicks Jax in the leg and gives Reginald a low blow before leaving. The distraction rollup gives Baszler two so Cross grabs la majistral for the pin at 9:42.

Rating: D+. Another match where they got their weird supernatural deal in and moved on, all while making sure to turn Baszler into even more of a lower. I like the idea of Cross winning something for a change, but egads man. What did Baszler ever do to deserve losing so much in this horrible angle?

We look back at Bobby Lashley destroying Xavier Woods last week.

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.

We recap Doudrop turning on Eva Marie last week.

Eva Marie says Doudrop made a mistake last week so tonight it's a rematch so the Eva-Lution can continue. Doudrop looks

annoyed.

Asuka/Naomi vs. Doudrop/Eva Marie

Doudrop plants Naomi to start but misses a backplash, allowing the tag off to Asuka. That means a missile dropkick into the corner and a kick to the face staggers Doudrop again. The Asuka Lock goes on but Doudrop walks over for the tag to Eva...who drops to the mat. Asuka goes after Doudrop but gets knocked down. Naomi gets the same and it's a seated crossbody to give Doudrop the pin on Asuka at 2:19.

Eva Marie claims victory and Doudrop isn't happy.

Miz and John Morrison talk Money in the Bank cashing in strategy. Ricochet comes in to say not so fast and steals the Drip Stick to spray them down.

Ricochet vs. John Morrison

Miz is on commentary as Ricochet blocks a kick to start and hits a slam. Morrison takes him down into an armbar but Ricochet fights up and kicks him to the floor. The baseball slide hits but Ricochet can't bring himself to hit Miz. Instead Ricochet dives over said chair and hurricanranas Morrison, setting up a Drip Stick blast to Miz.

We take a break and come back with Ricochet striking away, including a knee to Morrison's chin. A dolling Death Valley Driver and a basement clothesline get two on Morrison but Morrison is back with a knee to the face for the same. Starship Pain misses and Ricochet knocks him to the floor, with Morrison bailing over the barricade to avoid a dive. Morrison sits on the barricade so Ricochet hits a dive for a crazy disappearing crash. They're both done and that's a double countout at 10:04.

Rating: C+. The ending alone deserves a boost as those two disappeared over that barricade. That being said, this was the

same thing that WWE does every year with the Money in the Bank participants: nothing matches which change nothing for the pay per view, which will reset everything and ignore what has happened in the previous few weeks.

We look at Charlotte beating Rhea Ripley via DQ at Hell In A Cell.

Charlotte talks about how she and Natalya and Tamina know what is expected from them.

Charlotte/Natalya/Tamina vs. Mandy Rose/Dana Brooke/Rhea Ripley

Hold on though as a huge brawl breaks out before the bell. Everyone fights on the floor and we take a break before the match starts. Dana headscissors Natalya to start but gets sent outside where Tamina offers a distraction. Charlotte gets in a shot to the back of the head of her own, allowing her to hit a cheap shot on Ripley. Back in and the beating continues, with Tamina stomping away in the corner.

Charlotte goes after the ribs but a slam is reversed into a cradle for two. The kickout sends Brooke into the corner for the tag to Ripley though and it's time to pick up the pace. Natalya comes in and gets kicked in the head as everything breaks down. Mandy slips out of a pair of Sharpshooter attempt but Charlotte makes a blind tag. The big boot to the jaw finishes Mandy at 5:33.

Rating: D+. The pre-match brawl was good but things go downhill as soon as the bell rings. There is only so much you can do with a couple of losers like Rose and Brooke and that was apparent here. I'm sure they'll get some fluke win and that's going to be enough for the title match, but it isn't like they have done anything to make the build work.

Post match Charlotte poses but Rhea chop blocks her. Charlotte is limping.

Jaxson Ryker whips himself as the 24/7 goofs come in. R-Truth stops to ask if Ryker hates himself or something. Ryker explains the idea of his strap match with Elias and says he is exploring the ways to inflict the most pain. Truth: "Thank you for sharing man." He asks if can borrow the strap after the match so he can lasso Akira Tozawa. Ryker keeps whipping himself and Truth runs off. Your new Raw star people.

Elias vs. Jaxson Ryker

Strap match and Elias jumps him before the bell. Ryker gets tied over the post so Elias can pull him up by his arms for some pain. Back in and Elias hits a jumping knee to knock Ryker out of the air for two. That's enough to fire Ryker back up though and a few whips set up the swinging Boss Man Slam for the pin at 3:31.

Rating: D. So yeah the push continues as Ryker's entire deal seems to be that he's really serious and intense. The strap added a few spots here but these rather short gimmick matches are always kind of hard to take. Pretty much nothing to see in this one, but Ryker is probably going to be pushed pretty hard going forward.

Riddle, channeling Randy Orton, is warming up when Damian Priest comes up to give him a pep talk. After a Burger King plug, Riddle holds out his hand to do the lock and key deal, but when Priest doesn't get it, Riddle admits that he isn't Orton. Priest knew, and wishes him luck.

Drew McIntyre talks about how tonight's triple threat match is like the Scots vs. the English vs. the Irish. They were all fighting once (Drew: "I can't remember why.") and tonight he is going to win. I'm not sure if I like these history lessons or not but they're energized.

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-. The main event bailed out a good bit of this show but the warm streak came to an abrupt halt here. A lot of these matches were pretty dry or had annoying results (again, mainly the women's division, which has fallen off a cliff in recent weeks, and it is still not the wrestlers' fault) and a lot of this felt like filler instead of building to the pay per view. That is where this season starts to get hard to watch and you could feel it starting here. It wasn't the worst (the lack of Lily continues to help a lot) but it was also not a show that you needed to see.

Results

Riddle won a battle royal last eliminating Damian Priest

Nikki Cross b. Shayna Baszler – La majistral

Doudrop/Eva Marie b. Asuka/Naomi – Running crossbody to Asuka

Ricochet vs. John Morrison went to a double countout

Charlotte/Tamina/Natalya b. Mandy Rose/Dana Brooke/Rhea Ripley
– Big boot to Rose

Jaxson Ryker b. Elias – Swinging Boss Man Slam

Drew McIntyre b. Riddle and AJ Styles – Claymore to Riddle

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205 Live – June 25, 2021: Fare Ye Well

205 Live

Date: June 25, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Nigel McGuinness, Vic Joseph

Well this show suddenly means nothing as most of the roster has been released, meaning I have no idea what to expect from this series going forward. That may or may not be a good thing, but it is fairly clear that 205 Live is going to get a heck of a shakeup following this taped edition. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Ikemen Jiro vs. Ariya Daivari

Jiro, now in a corn on the cob jacket (I need to see the store that comes from), gets taken down by the wrist to start but comes right back with a headlock. Back up and a running knee to the ribs puts Jiro down but he is fine enough to bust out a handstand in the corner. A Delfin clutch gets two on Daivari, who is right back with a reverse DDT onto the apron. Some

right hands to the head set up a chinlock on Jiro and Daivari kicks him hard in the ribs.

Jiro fights up with a suplex and some running forearms, setting up a double springboard moonsault. The Ikemen Slash misses so Jiro superkicks him to the floor instead. A Lionsault connects to set up another moonsault for two back inside. Daivari is right back with a hammerlock DDT for two of his own but the Persian Lion splash misses. The Ikemen Slash finishes Daivari at 8:42.

Rating: C-. Not much to see here but it was the usual perfectly fine Daivari match. Jiro might not be everyone's can of corn, but those jackets are a bit more memorable than almost anything else does around here. Jiro getting a win is a good sign and it wouldn't surprise me to see him as a featured piece of the new look 205 Live.

Grayson Waller vs. August Grey

Waller takes him down to start and walks over Grey's back as the cockiness is on in a hurry. Grey gets taken down again but this time Waller lets him up, allowing Grey to snap off a hiptoss. The armbar keeps Waller down and Grey twists it around a few times for some near falls. Waller uses some very fast nipups into a forearm to the head to escape and chops away in the corner.

Grey's sunset flip is countered into a triangle choke (cool), followed by some choking on the ropes. Waller snaps off a suplex and puts on Grey's headband before tying him in the Tree of Woe. A torture rack sets up a reverse Regal Roll (that's a new one) into a middle rope elbow for two. Grey fights up with a clothesline to the floor into a suicide dive but Waller snaps his throat across the top. The running stomp finishes Grey at 9:42.

Rating: C+. I'm not sure what kind of legs he'll have, but they have something with Waller for the time being. He does

all of the heel stuff well and the stomp is a good looking finish. It isn't like he has anywhere to go but up and it is nice to see a heel with this kind of success. Grey was starting to get somewhere but it wasn't like he was lighting the world on fire. He had a short WWE run though and that's better than most people get.

Overall Rating: C. It's weird to see a show that has absolutely no meaning but that was the case here. I have no idea what they are going to do with the show going forward, but hopefully they do something actually new instead of just putting new names out there with the same issues. I've grown a bit of a soft spot for some of these rather talented people over the years and hopefully they wind up doing well elsewhere, as they deserve it for putting up with this low level show for so long.

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Smackdown – January 26, 2007: The Battle Royal Preview Show

Smackdown

Date: January 26, 2007

Location: Mobile Civic Center, Mobile, Alabama

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

It's the final show before the Royal Rumble and I'm really not sure what they are going to be able to do to fill in two hours this week. Last time felt like a show that didn't need to exist and I have a bad feeling that we are going to be seeing even more than that this time. Hopefully we get a little something good in there but there is only so much Deuce and Domino can do. Let's get to it.

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

We open with a look at how Mr. Kennedy became #1 contender and then fighting Undertaker in a rematch. Kennedy attacked World Heavyweight Champion Batista on commentary, drawing him in for the DQ in a very smart move.

Opening sequence.

Batista vs. Gregory Helms

Non-title. Batista starts fast by driving Helms into the corner and boots him out to the floor. Some choking ensues on the outside but Helms goes to the eyes to escape. Back in and Batista shoves him out of the corner but a few shots to the head put Batista down. The eye is still messed up as Helms drops a leg. Some right hands to the eye set up three straight near falls but Batista is back up with the spinebuster. The spear into the Batista Bomb finishes Helms.

Rating: D+. This was much more frustrating than bad, as there

was no reason for Helms to lose here. With all of the talented wrestlers WWE has, there was NO ONE ELSE to take this loss other than the heavily damaged Cruiserweight Champion? There wasn't a second option for this one? This has been done far too long now and it is beyond old at this point. If nothing else, it makes JBL sound stupid for praising him over and over with Helms losing so often.

Miz vs. Chris Benoit

Non-title and we see some clips of Benoit winning the 2004 Royal Rumble. Benoit takes him into the corner to start and Miz hits the hide button. With that broken up, Benoit hits a running elbow for two and kicks away in the corner. A headbutt into a backbreaker gets two but Miz is back with a neckbreaker. The neck crank goes on to slow Benoit down and a slam gives Miz two. We're right back to the neck crank but Benoit drives him into the corner for the chops. Benoit isn't having this and headbutts away, setting up the Swan Dive for two as Miz gets a foot on the rope. The Crossface is good for the tap a few seconds later.

Rating: D+. Well at least the champ didn't lose. It wasn't much of a match though as Benoit beat Miz up, took a few shots and then won with his signature stuff. Granted that's about exactly what should happen here as there is no reason whatsoever for Miz to be a threat to Benoit. I'll take that over another champion losing at least.

Deuce and Domino and Cherry make sure their car is ready. These three are gems, with Deuce being rather annoyed at the possibility that the backstage guy is looking at Cherry.

Maryse, with champagne, welcomes us back from a commercial in French.

Deuce And Domino vs. Adam Evans/John Robinson

Cherry is here too and takes her sweet time taking off the

guys' jackets. Robinson and Deuce start things off and it's a shot to the mouth to put Robinson down. Domino comes in to talk a bunch of trash as Cole talks about being bullied in high school. It's off to Evans, who gets kneed in the head and sent outside. Deuce isn't pleased with Evans being near Cherry so it's back inside to Domino to keep up the beating. The assisted running boot to the face knocks Evans silly for the pin.

Rating: C-. Again, probably the most entertaining people on the show at the moment. They got to have another complete squash here and it worked out fine, with the focus being on just getting the idea over instead of doing anything important. The division needs someone new and this worked well for what it was supposed to be.

MVP tells Teddy Long that his match with Kane tonight is unsafe and the burns on his back are all Long's fault. Long: "First of all, I want you to quit breathing on me." If MVP doesn't wrestle tonight, he isn't in the Rumble on Sunday. MVP seems to change his mind.

King Booker vs. Finlay

The Leprechaun pokes his head out during the entrances and Queen Sharmell joins commentary. Booker seems to get in an accidental poke to Finlay's eye to start so we pause for a bit just a few seconds after the bell. With the eye seemingly ok, Booker takes him down by the arm and starts hitting Finlay in the face. Finlay comes back with his own thumb to the eye and some shots to the throat to put Booker down. There's the jumping seated senton for two, setting up the chinlock.

Back up and Booker hits his hook kick to the face for two. Finlay isn't having that and takes him down by the leg to crank away. Some cannonballs onto the leg keep Booker in trouble so Finlay wraps it around the rope. The leglock goes on and you can get the feeling that Finlay likes to hurt

people like this. Booker fights up with right hands and a kick to the face to drop Finlay, setting up an elbow drop. They ram heads in the corner though...and the Leprechaun goes after Sharmell. The Leprechaun tries to drag her underneath the ring but Booker makes the save. The brawl is on in the aisle and that's a double countout/DQ.

Rating: C. There is something about the way Finlay beats people up that makes it so much fun. He just looks mean and it is fun to watch him pull on a limb. I can also go for the idea of not having Finlay lose, as Booker is on a downward trend since he lost the title. Let Finlay get a bit of a boost instead of bringing Finlay down to boost Booker up again for a week or two.

Paul London/Brian Kendrick/Ashley vs. MNM

London takes Nitro down to start as I love how frequently the Brand Extension rules are just forgotten. Nitro can't do much with London other than sending him to the apron, where Melina breaks up a springboard to put London in trouble. Mercury comes in to take over on London but it's right back to Nitro for a faceplant.

London can't quite fight out of the chinlock but he can flip out of a double suplex and bring in Kendrick to pick the pace way up. Kendrick clears the ring but Melina breaks up a dive. That's fine with Ashley, who spears her down (with a heck of a spear), leaving Kendrick to dropkick Mercury for two. In the melee, the Snapshot is enough to finish Kendrick.

Rating: C. I like both teams so this worked out well. It would be nice to have MNM want to go after the titles not, but I can't believe that is actually going to happen. This was a fine use of a few minutes though, with talented wrestlers getting the chance to showcase themselves a bit. Commentary even stopped talking about Ashley's Playboy for a bit to take the match seriously!

Here's Mr. Kennedy, but first we see the opening video again. Kennedy talks about beating the Undertaker again last week and now it is time to beat Batista again to become World Champion. Kennedy brags about how great he is and how no one can stop him but here is Batista to interrupt. Batista offers him a chance for another slap...and then the gong goes off. Undertaker appears in the ring but his big boot hits Batista by mistake. Undertaker doesn't seem to mind though, which certainly fits for him.

Maryse tells us to keep watching.

Vladimir Kozlov is in negotiations with all three brands. He would win the Royal Rumble if he had the chance to compete though. Also, he loves WWE.

Kristal comes in to see Teddy Long and hits on him. Long thinks she looks good and she leaves, with Vickie Guerrero replacing her. Vickie needs to talk to him about something but he must be busy with Kristal. Long isn't sure what to do.

Video of Kane eliminating eleven people from the 2001 Royal Rumble.

Kane vs. MVP

MVP tries to circle him but Kane gets in a shot to the back to cut him down. Some shots to the bad back have MVP in a lot of agony and Kane elbows him in the corner. There's a knee to the back complete with leg cranking to make things even worse. Kane rips the gear open to get at the bad back a bit more and MVP needs a breather on the floor. Back in and MVP gets in a shot to the face to choke away on the ropes.

Right hands on the mat keep Kane in some trouble and a bit shot puts Kane on the floor. That's fine with Kane, who hits an uppercut but gets sent into the steps. Back in and Kane unloads in the corner, setting up the side slam to bang up the injuries even more. There's the top rope clothesline to put

MVP on the apron, setting up a dropkick to his back. With nothing else working, MVP grabs a chair for the DQ.

Rating: C-. Mainly a squash here but that isn't the biggest surprise. The problem is we have established that Kane can dominate MVP and I'm not sure how many more times we need to see it. They did keep it a little bit shorter here though and that is a good idea given what they have done so far.

Post match MVP chairs him down again and grabs a can of gasoline. Kane sits up and kicks him in the face to take it away though, sending MVP running.

Royal Rumble rundown.

Battle Royal

Kane, MVP, Chris Benoit, Miz, King Booker, Finlay

Kane goes straight for MVP for the whole attempted burning alive thing. The brawling continues around the ring with Booker down near the ropes. The Leprechaun slips Finlay the shillelagh to hit Kane in the back and that's good for the first elimination. Benoit and Booker brawl to the floor without being eliminated, leaving MVP and Miz to not be able to get rid of Finlay.

Everyone gets back in so Miz hits MVP in the back to slow him down. We get some teases of people going through the middle rope before MVP wises up and tries to put Finlay over the top. MVP kicks Finlay out tot he apron as we hear about Shawn Michaels winning the WWF Title at the 1997 Royal Rumble. Finlay backdrops Miz out...and there's the gong again. Undertaker appears and starts wrecking people...and keeps doing it for several minutes as this kind of keeps going. I'm assuming the match was thrown out somewhere in there.

Rating: D. This was a bunch of sitting around waiting until Undertaker got here and that made for a pretty big waste of

time. I'm not sure what they were going for with this, but they could have cut off a few minutes to make it that much better. It just seems like they were out of time and it was a bunch of filler until the end...which went on for a long time too.

A bunch of finishers from Undertaker allow him to stand tall to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. They had an idea for the show but it really wasn't working throughout. The big deal was setting up the Royal Rumble and that was fine, as long as you have something that is a little bit more interesting. The show wasn't very good, but the Royal Rumble is on Sunday and none of this matters as soon as that show starts. Not a good show, and that really doesn't make a difference.

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ECW On Sci Fi – January 23, 2007: Terrible

ECW on Sci Fi

Date: January 23, 2007

Location: Mobile Civic Center, Mobile, Alabama

Commentators: Joey Styles, Tazz

It's the go home show for the Royal Rumble and Bobby Lashley still needs a challenger for his ECW World Title. That would seem to be Test, but the match needs to be set already. Other than that, I'm not sure how much almost anything else matters around here, and ECW has not done much to fix that situation. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Battle Royal

Sandman, Kevin Thorn, Rob Van Dam, Sabu, Tommy Dreamer

This is an Over The Top Rope Challenge, because Battle Royals aren't a thing around here. It's a brawl to start as you would expect, with Van Dam being knocked down into the corner.

Dreamer sends Sabu into the corner so Sabu tries a hurricanrana over the top, taking both of them out in the process. That's rather Sabu of him. Thorn gets rid of Sandman and we're down to two in a hurry.

Van Dam's monkey flip is blocked and he is sat on top, where his tornado DDT is broken up. Instead it's a big spinwheel kick to the face to drop Thorn, setting up Rolling Thunder. Thorn backdrops him to the apron but the forearms aren't enough for an elimination. Rob gets to the top instead and manages a spinning kick in the corner, leaving Thorn to rather

loudly call a spot. That spot seems to be awkwardly kick Van Dam in the face but not be able to toss him out. A superkick sends Thorn to the apron and Van Dam hits his top rope kick to the face for the win.

Rating: D+. I like the idea of Van Dam getting a bit of momentum going into the Royal Rumble, even if he has no chance of winning. They didn't bother with any drama with the other ECW originals and got to the point here, which was a good idea. The quality wasn't the point here, and while it was weird to see a battle royal in ECW, it did make sense.

For unclear reasons, Hardcore Holly is out of the main event and Test will be replacing him.

Marquis Cor Von vs. Wes Adams

Before the match, Cor Von tells Adams to get out of the way or get run over. The beating is on in a hurry and a big boot cuts Adams down in a hurry. The release butterfly suplex sends Adams flying and it's the Pounce into the Fujiwara armbar to end Adams in a hurry.

Cor Von gets in a few more shots after the match but makes sure to get his hand raised.

Hardcore Holly storms into Test's locker room and wants to know how Test got the match changed. Test doesn't know, but Holly says he's coming for the ECW World Title no matter what.

Here are Kelly Kelly, Brooke Adams and Layla El for the return of Kelly's Expose/debut of Extreme Expose, meaning three women dancing in rather limited clothing. This goes on for a good while and they don't quite have it down to a science yet. Then the music stops and they all look confused.

Video on Test.

Matt Striker comes out for commentary, meaning we look at Kelly Kelly flashing him last week.

CM Punk vs. Elijah Burke

Punk strikes away in the corner and you can hear the beads in Burke's hair rattling against each other. Burke gets in a shot of his own but Punk cuts him off with a spinwheel kick. The armbars go on to keep Burke in trouble as the fans are not incredibly interested. Striker talks about being conservative and being scared about the idea of Punk winning the Royal Rumble.

Punk fires off the knees to the chest as Striker tries to figure out why the fans like Punk more than him. Styles: "It's only an hour show." Burke comes back with a shot to the back of the neck and the chinlock goes on. There's a swinging neckbreaker (with Punk falling a bit early) and we're off to another chinlock. Punk fights up again and gets pulled down into yet another chinlock as this is dying hard.

Back up and Burke misses a charge in the corner but holds the ropes to avoid a Russian legsweep. Now it's a reverse chinlock as the fans are trying to get behind Punk. A knee drop gives Burke two and THE CHINLOCK GOES ON AGAIN. Punk finally fights up and hits a neckbreaker to start the comeback but the fans are way gone. The running knee in the corner sets up the bulldog for two so Burke grabs a rollup with trunks for two. That's reversed into a cradle to give Punk the pin, much to Striker's annoyance.

Rating: D-. The fans were dead, Striker was his usual buzzkill self on commentary (as he was supposed to be) and the match was just bad. It wasn't interesting and you had a completely unacceptable five chinlocks in an eight minute match. Grab an armbars or something man, as it stopped working after the second attempt. This was one of the weakest and most boring matches I can remember in a very long time.

Royal Rumble rundown.

Test vs. Bobby Lashley

Non-title. Test bails to the floor to start so Lashley is right on him to start up the beating. Back in and Test gets in a quick stomp, only to be knocked outside again. Back in again and Test bails a second time as we take a break. We come back again with Test grabbing a chinlock (that last match must have been quite the influence) but Lashley is up in a hurry. A hard whip into the corner looks to set up the top rope elbow but Lashley gets the boot up.

Lashley misses an elbow so Test hammers away and unhooks a turnbuckle pad. The referee checks on that so Test unhooks another buckle (what a crafty villain), setting up the chest first whip. The pumphandle slam gets two on Lashley so it's time to grab a chair. Lashley spears him down and hammers away, including a running shoulder to the ribs in the corner. A suplex sends Test outside and Lashley tosses him into the barricade. Back in and Lashley hits the running powerslam for the clean pin.

Rating: C-. The match itself was a watchable power match, but Test was already announced as the #1 contender for the Royal Rumble. Not only does it not make sense for him to wrestle here at all, but it really doesn't make sense to have that ending. It's quite the bizarre choice, though I would be scared to know how much thought was actually put into anything ECW did at the moment.

Overall Rating: D-. Total and complete misfire here as this show was awful. It took a good while to get through the thing because it wasn't interesting at all and pretty much nothing worked. ECW isn't a good show most of the time but this was one of the worst shows I've seen from WWE in a very long time. I would hope that things get better, because this show was horrible.

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Smackdown – June 25, 2021: C For Depression

Smackdown

Date: June 25, 2021

Location: Yuengling Center, Tampa, Florida

Commentators: Pat McAfee, Michael Cole

We're done with Hell In A Cell and that means it is time to get ready for Money in the Bank. A bunch of the ladder match spots have already been filled so it is time to start hammering out the rest of the field. Throw in Roman Reigns needing a new challenger and we could be in for a packed show. Let's get to it.

[Here is Hell In A Cell if you need a recap.](#)

We open with a recap of Roman Reigns beating Rey Mysterio in the Cell last week.

Paul Heyman tells Roman Reigns that the Mysterios are acknowledging him from their hospital beds. Jimmy Uso comes in so Reigns asks where Jey is. Jimmy called him a hundred times and finally got through to him, but Jey isn't coming back. Reigns isn't happy, but Jimmy says he's got Reigns' back. He

says he can do everything Jey can, but Reigns doesn't look convinced. Jimmy needs to prove himself.

Here is Bianca Belair to say we are three weeks away from leaving the Thunderdome and coming home. Tonight she gets to beat up Bayley again, because she has worked so hard to be here. She looks at the title and knows the work has been worth it, because she didn't let a Bayley, or a bully, get to her. Everyone at home who is dealing with their own bully can make it too, but here is Seth Rollins to interrupt. He is VERY happy with beating Zazzaro, and he did better than Belair did against Bayley.

Rollins holds his hand up for a celebrating with Belair now, since she is going to be on the mat after the match. Cue Bayley to say the fans deserve a champion who doesn't brag, so the staredown is on. Rollins offers a distraction so Bayley can jump Belair but Cesaro comes out to send Rollins flying. Bayley yells at Cesaro but Belair comes in to clear her out too.

Bianca Belair/Cesaro vs. Seth Rollins/Bayley

Cesaro takes Rollins down to start and drives him into the corner to it's off to Bayley vs. Belair. The beating is on again and it's already back to Cesaro, who cuts Rollins down with an uppercut. Cesaro gets sent into the middle buckle with a Downward Spiral though and Rollins grabs the chinlock.

Back up and Cesaro hits some uppercuts, only to get snapmared into a kick between the shoulders. A backflip gets Cesaro out of a suplex attempt and it's back to Belair for a pair of nipups with a dropkick in between. Belair's standing moonsault gets two but they head outside with Belair getting posted. We take a break and come back with Bayley working on the arm and slamming Belair down for two. Belair powers back up and brings Cesaro in to clean house, including the Swing to Rollins.

The springboard spinning uppercut gives Cesaro two but a

Bayley distraction lets Rollins hit Cesaro in the back of the head. Belair makes a save of her own, prompting Rollins to say Belair and Cesaro are what's wrong with this place. It's back to the women with Belair's spinebuster getting two as the guys fight on the floor. The KOD is loaded up but Rollins comes in to break it up. Bayley hits a running knee to set up the Rose Plant for the pin at 12:03.

Rating: C+. SO I guess Hell In A Cell means nothing either as we seem to be on our way to EVEN MORE REMATCHES between these people. That would certainly make sense given how WWE seems to enjoy doing things these day, but that doesn't make it any more interesting. The match was pretty good, but egads they need to move on to something new.

Jimmy Uso is waiting outside of Roman Reigns' dressing room when Paul Heyman comes out. Uso wants to know what Reigns means by proving himself, so Paul explains that Jimmy needs to be Main Event Jimmy Uso to help Reigns. Heyman says Reigns understands winning, so Jimmy needs to win a match. Jimmy says he has this, so Heyman goes to get the match made, while offering a threat if Jimmy loses.

We get the official coronation of Shinsuke Nakamura as the new King of WWE. Rick Boogs handles the guitar playing and the introduction. Nakamura receives his crown and we head to the back, where Baron (yes Baron) Corbin can't talk about this.

Sonya Deville and Adam Pearce are enjoying the guitar playing when Seth Rollins comes in. Rollins thinks he is ready to face Roman Reigns next, as tonight we will be having the State of the Universal Title. He has never been more ready, but Pearce and Deville aren't ready to make that decision. Rollins: "The time is now."

Video on Otis' path of destruction.

Money in the Bank Qualifying Match: Big E. vs. Apollo Crews

Non-title and Commander Azeez is here with Crews. Big E. drives him into the ropes to start and sends Crews outside in a heap. Back in and Big E. charges into a boot in the corner but comes right back with a clothesline. They head to the apron with Crews hitting a Death Valley Driver to send us to a break.

We come back with Big E. fighting out of a chinlock but getting dropkicked down for two. The chinlock goes on again but Big E. powers up, only to have his belly to belly broken up. Big E. gets back up again and this time the Warrior Splash connects. The Rock Bottom out of the corner is countered though and Crews rolls some German suplexes.

That doesn't last long as Big E. grabs a Stretch Muffler, sending Crews over to the leg for the break. An enziguri rocks Big E. so Crews goes up and gets two off a frog splash. An arm trap German suplex gives Crews two more and Big E. is sent outside. Azeez whips him into the barricade and loads up the Nigerian Nail...but gets caught just in time, meaning it's an ejection. Back in and the Big Ending finishes Crews at 12:57.

Rating: C. There's your "champ gets pinned but it doesn't matter because this is about Money in the Bank instead of the title" box checked off. These two fought for months and now they have done so again in the name of something other than the title that Crews holds. Commentary was trying to make it a big deal that Big E. had never been in Money in the Bank, but it felt like more of a bit of trivia than a selling point.

We look at the banged up Kevin Owens losing to Sami Zayn.

Sami Zayn is VERY happy about his win and talks about how there is order to the chaos of the universe. This might be the greatest moment of his life...until he is told he is facing Kevin Owens in a Money in the Bank qualifying match next week. Sami storms off, declaring this the worst week of his life.

Post break, Sami asks Adam Pearce what is going on here and

thinks he should just be in Money in the Bank. That's a negative, because he has to qualify. Sami asks one more time but it's off the table, which he describes as playing a very dangerous game.

Here is Sonya Deville to announce the first entrant in the women's Money in the Bank ladder match: Carmella. Cue Carmella to say she's happy with this but wants to be introduced as the Most Beautiful Woman In WWE. That brings out Liv Morgan to says he should be in the ladder match instead but Carmella says the match is for the stars. The fight is on but Deville says they can just have a match.

Carmella vs. Liv Morgan

Joined in progress with Carmella in control on the floor as Sonya Deville watches at ringside. Back in and Carmella sends her into the corner for a slow superkick. Morgan is right back with Oblivion for two as Carmella gets a foot on the rope. Carmella grabs a middle rope hurricanrana but Morgan rolls through into a cradle for the pin at 3:15.

Rating: D+. So this wasn't for the spot in the ladder match and Morgan wins the series 2-1 but Carmella is in the ladder match anyway, despite losing the last two matches. I'm sure Liv will be added to the match as well, which will make the entire three match series completely meaningless. This should not surprise you at all.

Jimmy Uso dedicates his match to Roman Reigns.

Jimmy Uso vs. Dolph Ziggler

Bobby Roode is here with Ziggler. Uso starts fast with an enziguri but gets punched into the corner. Ziggler's big elbow sets up a chinlock but Jimmy fights up without much trouble. Ziggler is sent outside so Jimmy can dive onto Roode, only to get caught in a Zig Zag onto the steps (egads) as we take a break.

Back with Ziggler hitting another Zig Zag for two and the frustration sets in. They slug it out from their knees with Uso using the headbutts but getting punched into the ropes. The Zig Zag is countered into a powerbomb which is countered into a sunset flip for two. Uso is right back up with a superkick for the pin at 9:43.

Rating: C. This could go a few ways, but it's kind of hard to bring myself to care about someone beating Ziggler. That is almost the free space on the WWE Bingo card and while it is a new one for Jimmy, it isn't exactly exciting. What might be interesting is seeing where this goes for Jimmy and Reigns, and ultimately that is what matters the most.

Uso heads to the back where Roman Reigns seems pleased but doesn't say anything. Reigns heads towards the ring and Jimmy goes to follow him but Paul Heyman cuts him off.

Next week: Kevin Owens vs. Sami Zayn in a Last Man Standing Money In The Bank qualifying match.

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 Conchair to 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?

Overall Rating: C-. The ending helped a good bit, but this show was really pretty depressing. It's clear that we're going to be seeing a lot of rematches (including some tonight) and that isn't the most inspiring way to get us to Money in the Bank. The action wasn't bad, but the level of interest took a big hit this week as it became clear that what we have been watching for weeks to get us to the Cell is going to be the same thing that gets us to Money in the Bank. Edge being back does help, but that's about all the good there was.

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New Column: Speak To Them

It's an anniversary column, and a bad one.

<https://wrestlingrumors.net/tommyhall/kbs-review-speak-2/>

Monday Night Raw – January 22, 2007: The Rumble One

Monday Night Raw

Date: January 22, 2007

Location: Cajundome, Lafayette, Louisiana

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

It's the go home show for the Royal Rumble but you might not know it by watching the previous shows. The Rumble itself has barely been mentioned as most of the focus has been on Umaga vs. John Cena for the World Title. That's not a bad move, but it is a bit of a weird one. Let's get to it.

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

In Memory Of Bam Bam Bigelow. That's a hard one.

We open with a recap of Rated-RKO taking out some of Shawn Michaels' friends last week but getting taken out by Shawn himself in the main event.

Here is Shawn Michaels to get things going. Last week, he felt a feeling that he has tried to overcome for years. He does not like those feelings coming back but those days of stopping are gone. Shawn feels like he can be WWE Champion again and that starts this Sunday by winning the Royal Rumble. May God have mercy on the 29 other entrants who dare to get in his way and no mortal man is going to get in his way...but here is Edge to interrupt.

Edge talks about how he is the one who is going to win the Royal Rumble because he has been to the top of the mountain twice, but Shawn tells him to shut up. The fight is on and security can't break it up. We take a break and come back with the break still on in the back and security still not being much good.

Jeff Hardy vs. Joey Mercury

Non-title and this is Raw vs. Smackdown as Jeff wants revenge on Mercury for helping take out Matt Hardy on Friday. Johnny Nitro and Melina are here too but Jeff throws Mercury in to start in a hurry. Mercury gets in a shot so Nitro pulls the mat back on the floor. That's enough for an ejection but Mercury is able to grab Jeff's face and rip away. Jeff fights up with some elbows to the face into the Whisper in the Wind. The Twist of Fate drops Mercury on his damaged face to give Jeff the fast pin.

Post match Jeff gets out of there before Nitro and Melina can get back.

Jonathan Coachman comes in to see Vince McMahon and has an idea for tonight. He'll throw Shawn Michaels and Edge out, but Vince makes a street fight instead. In addition, Vince has an announcement to make in the ring.

Here are Vince and Coach for a chat. Vince talks about reading Donald Trump's letter last week, so tonight he is going to read his own letter to Trump. The letter talks about Trump's TV ratings being awful, but they will go up when Vince guest stars on the Apprentice. He is the reason for Raw's ratings success, and it could be due to his good looks, his charisma, or his Herculean physique. The people love him and he loves them back. Fans: "A**HOLE!" Vince: "You're making it tough to love you back!"

Vince promises to show his love for the people next week but here is John Cena to interrupt. Cena wants to know when Vince

became Brother Love and tells him to stop yapping about Donald Trump. It's like Vince is obsessed with him and an obsessed Vince McMahon is never a good thing. Cena: "Remember that obsession you had with starting your own football league?" Cena compares Vince and Trump, with Coach saying Trump does everything bigger than Vince, including having more money. That's too far for Vince, who makes Cena vs. Coach for tonight.

Chris Masters vs. Super Crazy

Masters jumps him to start but Crazy hits a quick middle rope crossbody. Crazy gets thrown down again and the stomping is on in a hurry. Back up and Crazy slugs away, including a spinwheel kick, which has Lawler thinking Crazy is "all jacked up on Mountain Dew." Masters catches him coming out of the corner with the Masterlock but Crazy climbs the corner and drops back onto him for the pin.

Rating: C-. This didn't have time to go very far but Crazy wins to give him a little momentum. WWE seems interested in pushing him and he hasn't done badly at all in response. I could go for a bit more of him and the fans seem to like him well enough. Granted it isn't hard to get cheered against Masters, so the pairing does make sense.

Coach tries to convince Vince McMahon that he is way richer than Donald Trump but Vince is more worried about showing the fans how he appreciates them next week. Oh and Coach's match with Cena is still on.

Kenny Dykstra insists that he is going to win the Royal Rumble on Sunday. He defeated Ric Flair three times so he knows he can do it. Maria doesn't seem convinced but Dykstra says this is going to be his year.

A very banged up Randy Orton isn't happy with Edge for leaving him to get mauled by Shawn Michaels last week. Edge tries to explain what happened and wants to know if Orton has his back

in getting rid of Shawn Michaels tonight. Orton says we'll wait and see as you can feel the tension.

John Cena vs. Jonathan Coachman

Non-title. Actually hang on a second as Coach has another idea: we're going to have a Royal Rumble, and if Cena wins, THEN he can face Coach one on one. Lance Cade and Trevor Murdoch are here first and the double teaming is on in a hurry, including a bunch of right hands. Cade drops Murdoch down into a legdrop on Cena and the beating is on in the corner. Cena fights out of said corner and tosses Murdoch without much effort.

Shelton Benjamin and Charlie Haas are in next, with Viscera following shortly thereafter. Cade comes back in to help hold Cena down for Viscera's elbow. Cue Great Khali to starts clearing the ring until Viscera and Cena are the only others left. A big boot drops Viscera and Khali tosses him, allowing Cena to come in off the top with a shoulder. That has almost no effect so Khali hits a clothesline and tosses him out for the win.

Rating: D+. This was much more of an angle than a match and that's all it needed to be. Khali is becoming a player in a hurry because he is pretty easy to push. You can probably pencil him in for a title program soon after Wrestlemania is over and I've heard far worse ideas. Not much of a match of course, but at least it had a point.

Post match Khali runs Cena over again and drops him with ease, allowing Coach to run in for two. Cue Umaga to jump Cena from behind and I guess that's a DQ? Either way, Umaga splashes Cena through a table to crush his ribs. It takes a long time to get rid of Umaga and Cena has to be helped to the back.

Candice Michelle/Mickie James vs. Victoria/Melina

This is Candice's return after Victoria broke her nose,

meaning a lot of nose pointing ensues. Mickie starts fast with a basement dropkick to Melina and we get the required spank. A hurricanrana sends Melina flying out of the corner but Victoria pulls Mickie down from the apron. There's a double wishbone to keep Mickie in trouble and Melina chokes in the ropes, sending Lawler into hysterics.

Mickie avoids Victoria's running charge in the corner and the hot tag brings in Candice to start cleaning house. A dropkick puts Melina down but Victoria hits a heck of a knee to the face. Mickie comes in for the save and dives onto Melina, leaving Candice to hit a middle rope...uh...I guess we'll say elbow for the pin on Victoria.

Rating: D. Yeah what else were you expecting here? This was about getting Candice out there to show off what seems to be her new cosmetic enhancements and rather limited outfit. Candice is absolutely trying but there is a bit of a way to go between effort and success. Pretty bad match, but you can almost guarantee that Candice is getting a push in a hurry.

Carlito vs. Kenny Dykstra

Torrie Wilson is here with Carlito, who sends Kenny into the corner without much effort. Kenny is right back with a dropkick into a chinlock but Carlito gets to his feet and hammers away. A springboard back elbow drops Kenny but he grabs a rollup into a pinfall reversal sequence. Kenny finally grabs the trunks for the fast pin.

Rating: D+. Nothing match here with Dykstra getting a win over someone other than Ric Flair. It doesn't make things that much better for him as all of the problems are still there, but at least they are trying with someone else. At the same time, Carlito is still about as uninteresting as you can get, which has been the case for a long time now.

We recap Rated-RKO vs. Shawn Michaels from last week in the same video that started the show.

Cryme Tyme is selling Royal Rumble numbers to Eugene and Super Crazy. Since he is crazy, Crazy will take any number. Crazy is rather pleased with his number and Eugene gets #30. Hold on though as Cryme Tyme explains that he really wants to be #1...which he can be for another \$50. Eugene leaves, and we find out that not only are the numbers not real, but Eugene isn't even in the number. Also, they sold the painting The Scream and it wasn't real either. Cryme Tyme leaves and it turns out that Ron Simmons bought said painting. Guess what he has to say.

Royal Rumble Rundown.

We look back at Cena being taken out. Cena may have a ruptured spleen.

We look back at Edge and Shawn Michaels brawling earlier tonight.

Shawn Michaels vs. Edge

Street fight and they're both in street clothes. Shawn wins the early slugout and pulls Edge's belt off for a whipping. The weapons are brought in but Edge knocks him out of the air with a trashcan lid. We take a break and come back with Edge busted open and hitting him in the ribs with something made of metal.

Edge gets creative by superplexing a ladder onto Shawn for two but a powerbomb is broken up with some right hands to the head. The comeback is on with Shawn hitting the atomic drop. A chain is wrapped around Edge's eyes and now he is busted open as well. Shawn drops Edge onto a ladder bridged over two sets of steps but Edge gets up to catch Shawn on top.

That doesn't make a difference either though as Shawn drops Edge ribs first onto the ladder again. Sweet Chin Music is loaded up but Edge reverses into something like an electric chair (Edge tried to pick him up but dropped Shawn on the way to

the shoulders). The spear is countered into the Thesz press though and Shawn grabs a chair to knock Edge silly. Another Conchairto is loaded up but here is Randy Orton to hit the RKO and give Edge the pin.

Rating: B. These two getting some time in a violent match is always going to work and that was the case here. It felt like a main event and the two of them beat each other up for about fifteen minutes. The ending makes sense given what they are doing as Edge and Orton want to destroy Shawn, but Orton is going to mess with Edge on the way there if he can.

Post match Orton throws Edge over the top but here are Ric Flair, Kenny Dykstra and Carlito in a row. Shawn comes back up with some Sweet Chin Musics

Overall Rating: D+. The main event was the only worthwhile thing on this show as the Royal Rumble only needs so much of a build. Umaga injuring Cena was a good angle but other than that and the main event, there wasn't much to see on the whole thing. It isn't that surprising as the pay per view is set, but it would have been nice to have more than one good match in two hours.

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205 Live – June 18, 2021: Cruiserweighting Along

205 Live

Date: June 18, 2021

Location: Capitol Wrestling Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Vic Joseph, Nigel McGuinness

We're back to the cruiserweights and as of late, we are getting to see some fresh talents, which can make for some interesting matches. The same problems continue to abound, including the completely obsession with old vs. new. That was the case last week but now we seem to be on the way to Asher Hale vs. Ari Sterling. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

Asher Hale vs. Grayson Waller

Waller, dressed a bit like a boxer sans gloves, seems rather into staying hydrated and bails into the ropes to start. Then he does it again just in case you didn't get the idea. They go to the mat for some grappling with Hale easily getting the better of it, sending Waller to the ropes again. Hale tells Waller to come get him before sending him to the apron. A legsweep takes Waller to the floor and there's the big dive to the floor.

Back in and Waller crotches him on top, setting up some rights and lefts. Waller ties him into the Tree of Woe and strikes away before grabbing a cravate. A kick drops Hale again but he is right back up with some suplexes. Hale's tornado DDT is broken up and it's a triangle choke over the ropes to put him back in trouble. Waller gets sent out to the floor but dives back in with a rolling Stunner into a Stomp over the back to

finish Hale at 7:50.

Rating: C-. I'm still not sure if I like Waller or not. He's a rather cocky heel and I want to see him get his head punched in, so there is certainly something there. Hale continues to look like the most polished of the new generation around here and his style can work well against anyone. It's nice to have someone who does more than just flying around and Hale seems fairly well rounded, making him fun to watch.

Post match Waller offers a handshake but pulls it back and dances instead.

August Grey is done with Ariya Daivari because he is ready to go after Kushida and the Cruiserweight Title. Daivari pops up (Grey needs to get his peripheral vision looked at) and says he is the thorn on the 205 Live rose, so this ends when he says it's over. Their partners meet tonight.

We look at Trey Baxter debuting on NXT and giving Kushida a run for his money in the Cruiserweight Title match.

Tony Nese vs. Ikemen Jiro

Nese powers Jiro (and his jacket) into the corner to start so Jiro comes out with a wristlock. The leg is swept so Jiro can crank on the leg but Nese reverses into a quickly broken chinlock. A shoulder puts Jiro down but he nips up, followed by the exact same sequence. Jiro armdrags him into an armbar and a palm strike sends Nese down. That doesn't last long as Nese knocks him to the floor and puts on a jacket of his own to continue the beating. Back in and we hit the bodyscissors, followed by some left hands to the face.

Nese goes old school with the torture rack but Jiro pulls the jacket over his face to escape. Jiro strikes away and hits a shot to the back of the head, followed by an uppercut to put Nese in 619 position. A Swanton gives Jiro two but Nese catches him on top with a kick to the head. One heck of a

spinning kick to the face gives Nese two but it's too early for the running Nese. Instead Jiro heads outside and avoids a charge, setting up an ankle scissors to drive Nese into the apron. Back in and Nese superkicks him into the corner but Jiro hits a series of kicks to the face. The Ikemen Slash finishes Nese at 11:10.

Rating: C. Totally watchable match here as Jiro gets a win to further establish himself around here. You don't get to see him doing much in the way of singles matches so it was a good idea to put him in here like this. Nese continues to lose and it continues to not matter, as he is a 205 Live lifer and isn't going to get much further than he is at the moment. That is not necessarily a bad thing either.

Overall Rating: C. This was a pretty skippable show but it is still nice to see some fresh faces around here. It's ok to mix things up a bit and that is what we had here. Granted the matches didn't exactly light the world on fire, but, again, how bad can a show really be when it barely breaks thirty minutes? Fine enough show, but not worth your time, even by 205 Live standards.

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