

WWE Monday Night Raw

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Tonight is the Night!... - WWE is on its best behavior. - We see the fallout of WWE Night of Champions.

Raw opened with CM Punk's music playing as Paul Heyman, alone, walked to the ring. Paul Heyman wanted to clarify the ending of last night's title match, so he invited referee Chad Patton to the ring to defend his decision. In a hilarious moment, at least to me, Michael Cole said the following as Patton walked to the ring: "This official, as far as we know, has never been involved in any controversy or turmoil." Yes, except he was the catalyst to the entire Sheamus-Brogue Kick story that took place several years ago. Oh, no, wait... that was just this summer. Easily forgotten. Patton said he made the right decision last night in declaring a draw, and Paul Heyman showed a YouTube video to support it.

John Cena entered, a little less upbeat than usual. Cena agreed that Chad Patton made the right decision, but says CM Punk didn't earn his respect because he defended his title in a tie. He gave a long speech about how respect is earned by beating someone clearly, and wanted to find out who the winner really can be. Cena challenged Punk to a title match tonight.

Alberto Del Rio came out to complain to Cena about his loss last night. Alberto demanded a rematch, apparently mistaking Cena for Booker T. AJ Lee skipped down to the ring wearing an outfit much like the one she wore last night at Night of Champions, which is more revealing than the suits she has been wearing recently. AJ was speaking on behalf of Booker T (which is also odd, seeing as how Booker was upset she did that last week). AJ made Punk & Del Rio vs Cena & Sheamus the main event for tonight, which unlike recent "main events", probably won't be put on at 9pm. AJ skipped round the ring to leave, with Heyman following her around trying to get her attention. Didn't happen.

Match: Sin Cara & Rey Mysterio vs Primo & Epico Before the match, JBL and Jim Ross were introduced as tonight's commentary team sitting in with Michael Cole. JBL mentioned CMLL and WWC both in this match, including saying Mysterio and Sin Cara were former CMLL champions. I know very little about lucha, but I'm pretty sure that isn't true. Mysterio hit a double 619 on both men, while Sin Cara splashed onto Epico with a swanton for the pin in a nice build up match for their eventual tag title chase.

Post match, the two were celebrating in the ring when the Prime Time Players attacked both from behind. JBL was proud of PTP for taking the action. Titus grabbed a mic and said that they were taking what they want from now on. Titus had a lot of fire, and Darren smiled in the background as if he was happy to see how mad his big angry friend was, knowing opponents would have hell to pay from now on.

Michael Cole announced the debut of "MizTV" would be tonight with guest Booker T.

Match: Beth Phoenix vs Eve Layla was the guest at commentary this week, hopefully not to get into a childish argument with JBL... or even worse, Jim Ross. Brad Maddox is your ref. I'm telling you, something weird is happening. Layla said Eve has been a fake the last few weeks, even intimating that Eve had something to do with Kaitlyn's attack last night. JBL called her out

on her loss. Here we go. Anyway, Eve rolled up Beth for the win in under a minute. Layla said Eve was being manipulative. I don't see how here, however. JBL said Eve, with five years of Gracie camp experience, was what a champion should be.

Match: Brodus Clay vs Heath Slater In keeping with tonight's theme of guest commentary, Antonio Cesaro joined the team. Brodus had both Cameron and Naomi with him for his entrance. Brodus won with his splash, but it looks like we're getting a Cesaro-Clay program.

MizTV: Miz introduced Booker T as his guest, and asked Booker why he was against him. Miz said Booker misses the spotlight, but Booker instead brought out The Ryback. Ryback destroyed the set, including tossing some couches out of the ring. The crowd chanted 'Boring' through most of this. Miz was great looking scared to close out the segment.

Cole threw to a Tout from Jerry Lawler while in the hospital, and again stated that Lawler had returned home. Jerry Lawler will be doing an interview on Raw next week.

Backstage, CM Punk told Josh Mathews that he is not looking forward to teaming up with Alberto Del Rio tonight.

Match: Santino Marella vs Dolph Ziggler JBL put over Dolph huge during commentary. Crowd was pro-Ziggs, as well. Ziggler took the cobra sock out of Santino's tights early, and screamed at Santino that he was a joke. During the verbal tirade, Chad Patton asked Santino if he wanted to continue, apparently worried that Santino could not withstand the verbal assault. Santino was again distracted due to not having his sock during the match, and Ziggler would take advantage, eventually pinning Santino after his ZigZag.

Match: Wade Barrett vs Justin Gabriel Only one possible outcome here. And it happened, although it took more time than I expected. Barrett killed Gabriel with his smashing forearm. Okay, not killed... but close.

Backstage, R-Truth was throwing a birthday party for Lil' Jimmy. Okay, not Lil' Jimmy... but Subway. Jared from Subway was here, and gave a turkey breast sub to Lil' Jimmy. Damien Sandow grabbed a sub. As did Zack Ryder. As did The Ryback, who screamed at Jared to "Feed Me More!"

Backstage, Sheamus and John Cena talked about how Cena needs a win, and a clear one, to justify getting a title match.

WWE showed video of Jerry Lawler arriving in Memphis. Match: Kane & Daniel Bryan vs Kofi Kingston & R-Truth
The champs still don't get along. Daniel Bryan still brings about the most lively crowd reactions, and nothing ever seems boring when he's on TV. As Kane was going for a chokeslam late, Daniel Bryan tagged in. The two began arguing, which allowed R-Truth and Kofi to get the advantage. Later, Kane went for the chokeslam again, but caught Bryan trying to sneak a tag. Kane went to choke Bryan, but Bryan dropped off the apron leaving Kane prone to R-Truth's attack. Truth went for a pin, but Bryan broke it up. Kane finally did hit his chokeslam, but Bryan tagged in and tapped Truth out with the No! Lock. Bryan lifted both belts up and screamed "I am the tag team champions!" some more. Kane grabbed the belts, and screamed the same. Then, the two hugged. Kane and Daniel Bryan are easily the best parts of Raw right now. JBL disagrees.

Match: Randy Orton vs Tensai LOL guess who won! No, it wasn't Tensai. Tensai beat up Orton much of the match, including forearms to the back, bearhugs, and knees to the back. JBL brought up how Tensai had been the longest reigning IWGP tag champion in history while away from WWE. Crowd was more interested in chanting for 'Albert' than anything else. After minutes

of being on the wrong side of a beating, Orton was able to hit his draping DDT. Orton followed with the RKO for the win. This was a pretty hard hitting match compared to most of Orton's bouts. Yeah, bouts. It is so weird how Orton is in limbo, and has been for quite a while it seems.

We haven't had a #RAWactive match tonight.

Backstage, Paul and Punk were discussing AJ when David Otunga interrupted and told Punk to follow Del Rio's lead tonight. Paul brushed that off. They went back and forth, with nothing being accomplished.

Match: Damien Sandow vs Zack Ryder All these matches. All these geeks. Sandow said that Back To School is his favorite season. He was giving us a list of vocabulary words when Zack Ryder interrupted. Sandow was lecturing Ryder during the match about how he couldn't win. He also took the time to hook the leg on a russian legsweep, which earns brownie points. Ryder went for the Broski boot twice, hitting it the second time, but could not get the pin. Sandow hit his neckbreaker quickly afterward for the win, and Jim Ross put over his toughness in withstanding Ryder's boot. This was a good win for Sandow, coming before the Cena segment, and beating a popular character in what was a competitive match.

Main Event: CM Punk & Alberto Del Rio vs John Cena & Sheamus Punk finally in a main event that goes on last on TV. Brad Maddox is the referee, again. For the main event. Yeah, not buying this one bit. Punk held up his title belt for quite a while, much like last night, before the match could begin. Punk started the match, but immediately tagged out to Del Rio. Something tells me this team won't get along. Cena and Sheamus took turns with the advantage over Del Rio early, until he could tag out to Punk. Punk was doing everything he could to retreat from Cena at first, but did eventually get the advantage until Sheamus tagged in. Each of the four had control of the match at various points. Cena got the hot tag at 11:03 and put Punk into an STF. Del Rio broke it up but walked right into a brogue kick. Cena hit AA on Punk, and got the pin although Maddox missed Punk's foot being on the ropes. While Cena and Sheamus quickly left the arena, Heyman and Punk argued with the ref about the bad call.

Maddox tried to leave, but Punk was in his ear the whole time walking up the ramp arguing. Heyman tried to stay inbetween the ref and Punk hoping Punk wouldn't get physical.

The show ended, with no clear answer on whether Cena has earned his rematch. I've said for three weeks that Maddox being brought up as a ref was fishy, but didn't think he'd be put into a main event program (in any capacity), if that is indeed what is happening.

Final Thoughts: The show was paced well, and seemed to go by much quicker than previous episodes. The commentary team was great tonight, if not factually accurate. Now, if Cole continues to be the impartial/babyface he has been the last two nights when Lawler comes back, I think the show overall will be helped greatly. It's nice to see WWE finally moving along Antonio Cesaro, Ryback, and Prime Time Players into more serious programs. CM Punk vs John Cena began their road to Hell In A Cell, in what should be the main event. With five weeks before that PPV, there is plenty of time to build up some programs, many of which began tonight.

@BradMaddoxIsWWE