

History of Wrestlemania with KB – Wrestlemania 9: Wrestlemania goes...outside?

Wrestlemania 9

Date: April 4, 1993

Location: Caesar's Palace, Las Vegas, Nevada

Attendance: 16,891

Commentators: Jim Ross, Bobby Heenan, Randy Savage

This is considered to be one of the weakest Wrestlemanias in history and I think that's an accurate statement. Looking at the announced card, which was only eight matches long, I only see 2-3 that I would put on a Wrestlemania. Your main event for this evening is Bret Hart vs. Yokozuna, which is ok, but just doesn't scream WM main event to me.

What amazes me the most about it though was this show was so packed they had to cancel one of the matches: Bam Bam Bigelow vs. Kamala. The theme of the show is the world's largest toga (toga, toga, toga) party. Why does this scream BAD IDEA to me? Seriously, what's the point behind this? It made the show seem stupid overall, but that's just me. Anyway, let's get started.

Our show opens with no National Anthem or America the Beautiful. What a crock already. After that, we see Gorilla Monsoon in a toga. God help me. He is our host for the evening, whatever that means. He welcomes us to the show, and throws it over to...Jim Ross? This was Ross' debut and I vividly remember being stunned to see him in the WWF as he had been the commentator for WCW my entire life.

Ross runs down the double main event of Hogan and Beefcake vs. Money Inc. for the tag belts and the already mentioned WWF Title match. He throws it to Finkus Maximus, which is something even I couldn't make up, who introduces Caesar and

Cleopatra on an elephant, which Ross gives us a history lesson on. Macho Man is then introduced riding a sedan which is like a couch that's carried as beautiful women feed him grapes.

Then in one of the funniest scenes in WWF history, Bobby Heenan comes in on a camel, but for some reason he's riding it backwards. He gets to the broadcast position and is a mess, which is kind of funny. Finally, after almost 10 minutes of intros, it's time for a match.

Intercontinental Title: Shawn Michaels vs. Tatanka

Michaels had dumped Sherri since last year but now is accompanied by Luna Vachon, who is proof that not all divas are hot. Tatanka is out next and he has never lost a one on one match. Sherri follows Tatanka out, yet it's made clear she's not with him. So they have stalkers now. Hey they match! Tatanka had pinned Shawn twice leading up to this match, once in a singles match and once in a 6 man.

Some of Savage's comments to Heenan, such as shut up camel breath are just funny to me. There's the first bell, eleven minutes into the show. The outside look is really cool here. They feel each other out at a rather fast pace to start. Top wristlock goes to Shawn and he follows it up with a headlock. Down to the mat with Shawn totally in control.

Tatanka gets a belly to back to escape and a SWEET counter of a top rope clothesline with an arm drag. Shawn to the floor and the girls have a staredown of awkward proportions. Back in and the stereotype works over Shawn's arm which is apparently hurt coming into this one. Shawn hits a clothesline but it hurts him even further so it wasn't worth it at all. Anytime Shawn gets something going he hurts his arm again, this time ramming it into the post.

Bobby: She (Luna) is something. Ross: Yeah what is she? Tatanka gets a shoulder breaker out of nowhere but drops an elbow instead of covering. Top rope chop but still no cover.

He goes up again and jumps down into what we would call Sweet Chin Music. Today that would kill a guy and be on a highlight reel for years but here it's just a momentum changer. Luna and Sherri do nothing of note again during a staredown.

Clothesline from the apron to the floor takes down Tatanka. Shawn yells at Sherri and gets a chinlock for awhile. Modified victory roll gets two as this is getting a lot of time. Another victory roll is countered into an electric chair drop to put both guys down again. Double axe by Shawn gets nothing as Tatanka stereotypes up.

Superkick is blocked and Tatanka gets a top rope cross body for a long two. Slingshot puts Shawn into the post and gets a very close two. Powerslam gets an even closer two. This is getting really good now and Tatanka is sent to the floor. Shawn shoves the referee and Tatanka gets the Papoose to Go for the CHEAP DQ! Dang it that was good stuff and got nearly 20 minutes.

Rating: B+. Very solid match that got the time it needed. If it had a real ending, this would be an automatic A. Tatanka was something interesting. He didn't lose for his first two years which is an amazing streak, longer than even Goldberg's. Shawn wasn't quite up to the level of awesome he would reach but it was coming soon. He benefited a lot from the advent of Raw as it gave him a bigger way to get noticed and to put it mildly, it worked. Well that and Razor Ramon plus a ladder.

Luna beats up Sherri post match.

The Steiners say they're going to beat the Headshrinkers.

Headshrinkers vs. Steiners

Pretty random tag match here but it works ok I guess. It's your standard face team vs. heel team so that's fine. We get the first use of JR's code saying it's going to be a slobberknocker, meaning it's going to be awful from a

wrestling standpoint. I was always a Headshrinkers mark for some reason, just always liked them.

Scott and Fatu start us off. Steiners control early on which is expected. Oh I forgot to mention: Fatu of the Headshrinkers is more commonly known as Rikishi. In a NICE looking move, Scott and Rick both go up the same corner and hits stereo clotheslines on the Headshrinkers. Nice one indeed. We get breaking news that Luna attacked Sherri again, and somehow, I'm more interested in the match at hand. What a stunner.

Afa rams his guys' heads together to wake them up a bit. The referee is Bill Alfonso, who you might know as Fonzie from ECW. He was RVD's overly hyper manager. Samu gets a splash in the corner and Rick just drills him with a clothesline. Afa blasts Scott with what would become known as a kendo stick. Savage gets upset, Heenan doesn't see the Headshrinkers cheating which is one of his trademarks.

Heenan says he can't see right with sunglasses on and JR says he saw it too. Heenan says JR is wrong because he's from Oklahoma. JR's reaction is priceless. Out to the floor for more pounding on White Thunder. Scott slams one of their heads into the mat and gets kicked in the jaw with a sweet kick for it.

Heenan says his head is like Prudential. Savage: I don't know what that means. Bobby: It means the rock is hard. Savage: I didn't ask you Heenan. The commentary for this match is light years ahead of the match itself. Samu gets a dropkick to show off a bit. Off to the nerve hold now, a Samoan trademark. Heenan says Oklahoma is a suburb of Kentucky, which offends JR for some reason.

Samu goes up but misses the big headbutt and there's the tag to Rick and an eruption. He rams their heads together which is of course, STUPID. Dude learn your stereotypes. Headshrinkers hit a double team version of the move we call the Stroke,

leading to one Headshrinker putting Rick on their shoulders for what we would call a Doomsday Device. In a freaking SWEET counter, Rick catches Fatu in the air from on top of Samu's shoulders in a belly to belly suplex. Looked just absolutely sick.

Back to Scott who nearly kills Fatu with a belly to belly overhead. Scott suddenly remembers he's better than Rikishi and hits a Frankensteiner, which might be the most impressive move that anyone has ever regularly done, to get the pin. It's a standing hurricanrana by a guy of Scott Steiner's size. Think about that.

Rating: B+. I liked this match a lot. Both teams are very solid and some of the stuff they did in this match was simply great. Top level stuff here which surprises me greatly. The Steiners are just scary good when they're on their game and this is no exception. That powerslam/suplex spot by Rick is absolutely amazing.

Doink the Clown is a screwed up individual. He dresses up a Caesar statue in clown makeup and we get a recap of Doink vs. Crush. Doink also says Crush will be seeing double vision.

Crush vs. Doink the Clown

Crush had one of the best looks of anyone I'd seen from this era. He seriously could have been something special if he'd cared even a little bit at all. He was a decent wrestler with good size and power. I've never gotten why he didn't pan out. Definitely a solid face challenger if nothing else. At about 6'6 and over 300lbs, he was quick and very strong. What's not to like here?

Doink runs around the ring to start but gets caught by the big Hawaiian that I think Savage wants to make sweet love to down by the pond. Crush beats the holy goodness out of Doink for the majority of the match with basic power stuff. His finishing move was a head crushing move which was always kind

of odd but it worked I guess.

The clown gets a guillotine clothesline and starts a comeback here, but it doesn't mean much. In case I wasn't clear here, Crush is the face in this match. A pretty weak looking Piledriver keeps Crush down for a bit and then he's sent into the post. Doink jumps into a boot though and here comes the big man.

Doink tries to hide under the ring but gets caught. Back in the ring, Crush uses his head vice finisher on Doink but the ref got bumped. Another Doink comes out and hits Crush in the back with a cast then in the head. This leads to a pin for the real Doink. They check under the ring, where the other Doink came from and went to. They check and no Doink.

Rating: D. A Squash leading to a bad ending means not a good match. This feud went nowhere for the most part and I think it went on until at least the King of the Ring. Crush would soon start a big push which stalled like no other for some reason. Still though, this was really bad.

Todd Pettingil talks to some Japanese fans and after the WWF makes bad racial jokes, Razor Ramon is headed to the ring.

Razor Ramon vs. Bob Backlund

It's total filler with no backstory but it's Backlund in his first Mania match which is impressive since he's in his early to mid 40s. Razor is the heel here but to put it mildly, he's very popular. And yet Backlund would be the next guy to win the world title.

Backlund offers a handshake to start but Razor throws a toothpick instead. This is before he had gone insane if you didn't get that. BIG Razor chant starts up and of course isn't acknowledged. Backlund keeps tripping him up and does his stupid little dance. I never got the point of that at all but he always did it.

Razor stomps away after a slam. Bret Hart was knocked out cold by Luger at the Mania brunch today. This wasn't ever addressed after this for some reason. Backlund gets a butterfly suplex which was kind of impressive. Atomic drop, his former finisher, gets no cover. In a great ending, Razor gets a small package out of nowhere to end it. Heenan gets in a great line: he beat the wrestler with a wrestling move.

Rating: C-. Not great but not awful, the ending gives this a decent grade. It's not terrible and the ending surprised me. Razor had debuted just after Mania 8 and was pushed to the moon. He even got a title shot at the Rumble this year in a forgotten match. The breaking news during this match of Bret being knocked out earlier in the day leads to nothing. The last line of he beat the wrestler with wrestling was great.

In the back we see Gene with Money Inc. The feud they're involved in at the moment began on a Monday Night Raw (The first Mania that can be said at as the show debuted about 3 months prior to this) when DiBiase tried to hit Beefcake with a briefcase.

Beefcake had been legitimately huge in a parasailing accident over a year ago and his face was badly injured. This led to a great Heenan line of, "It serves him right. His face has hurt me for years." This attack led to Beefcake getting his friend Hulk Hogan to return to help him.

Also Jimmy Hart jumped from Money Inc to Hogan and Beefcake. Lastly, the night before the show, Hogan was injured, resulting in huge bruises around his eye. Now what really happened to him?

According to the storyline, DiBiase hired a bunch of people to attack him. The WWF said he was hurt in a jetski accident. The common theory in wrestling circles though is Savage thought Hogan and Liz (his real wife) were having an affair and beat the tar out of Hogan. Believe what you will.

Tag Titles: Money Inc. vs. Hulk Hogan and Brutus Beefcake

We get red smoke and Heenan says that can only mean one person. Then Jimmy Hart walks out. Just made me chuckle a bit. This is Hogan's first match in a year and the pop kind of sucks. It's big, but not mind blowing. The heels jump the heroes before the bell but Hogan and Beefcake fight them off with the music playing which always makes me mark out like crazy. There's just something sweet about that.

We get to the real match which is actually quite good. I think just about everyone expected Hogan and Beefcake to somehow take the belts here. Money Inc. had absolutely dominated the tag division for over a year at this point so they were seen as very legit. The champions stall forever to get us started. That's about what you would expect no?

Hogan's eye looks terrible. IRS vs. Beefcake start us off. The champions beat him down and tag in and out but for some reason they don't go after the face that much at all. IRS tries to hit him in the face like a very stupid man indeed. Beefcake takes over and off to Hogan who gets ten punches in the corner on the Million Dollar Man. It's about five years too late but I guess it's better than nothing.

More fast tagging by the challengers and Hogan gets a double axe off the middle rope to DiBiase who is getting destroyed here. They clear the ring again as this is one sided after a few minutes of the champions winning early on. The champions try to leave and we get the ten count thing like we did last year I think. Scratch that as it was at Summerslam.

Hogan vs. DiBiase again. Good old fashioned cheating has Money Inc right back in control though. Hogan does what he does best: gets his ass kicked. LONG Million Dollar Dream puts him down but he shakes his finger to get back up. He must be in that thing for two minutes or so. Beefcake comes in to put a sleeper on DiBiase to drive Heenan crazy.

Why does everything seem to go into slow motion during a Hogan match? It takes like a minute and a half to get the hot tag to Beefcake. IRS comes in as well and a cheap shot gives the champions the advantage again. Beefcake's protective mask gets ripped off and his face gets beaten into oblivion which is always a good thing. Love him or hate him, the guy bumps like a master.

Beefcake finally gets a sleeper on IRS but DiBiase breaks it up causing the ref to go down. Hogan comes in and cleans house leading to a double cover. Jimmy Hart turns his jacket inside out, which just happens to be black and white striped in the biggest coincidence of ALL time (you have to say ALL time at any WM. It's the law) and apparently they think that's good enough to make him a referee.

Some pest of a referee comes out and ruins our celebration saying that there's a DQ as Hogan used Beefcake's metal mask to knock out Money Inc. Jimmy Hart beats up the other referee and we get Hogan's music. Post match, Hogan poses and they steal IRS' briefcase, which contains a brick and money.

Supposedly the brick caused it to hurt a lot worse, because of course hitting someone WITH A SOLID METAL BRIEFCASE didn't hurt enough. There's also money in it which Hogan gives to the fans. This literally goes on well over 5 minutes.

Rating: C+. This is a good tag match which is absolutely stunning in its own right. Hogan put on a great performance here as did Brutus. Money Inc was as great as ever and it boils down to a solid match. The main thing killing it was the ending. I mean REALLY?

Hogan hits has Jimmy get the pin and he celebrates? Dude, come the heck on now. It was really the best option, but I still hate it. This match works for one simple reason: it's nearly 20 minutes long. Both faces get beaten down and we get a double comeback. There's very little missing from it actually.

Mr. Perfect says he'll break Luger's winning streak.

Mr. Perfect vs. Lex Luger

The main perk here is Luger's entrance with four chicks holding mirrors in gold thongs. Not bad at all. This sounds awesome on paper if nothing else. Luger has knocked out everyone he's faced so far with the metal plate in his forearm. They fight over a wristlock to start and it's a standoff. Big shot by Perfect and a knee lift sets up a dropkick and Luger hits the floor.

We talk about baseball as Heenan tries to explain the whole knockout thing and he says Savage knows a thing or two about baseball. That's very true as he played in some minor leagues for White Sox, Reds and Cardinals organizations. Quite an athlete indeed. Perfect works on the knee which is smart as he can't get knocked out from there.

LOUD chop by Perfect as he has controlled for the vast majority so far. As is my custom he gets reversed on a hard whip into the corner to give Luger the control. He gets a shot with the loaded arm into the back of Perfect to really take over. Backbreaker puts Perfect down even longer.

Perfect can't keep anything going and Luger gets a cover with his feet on the ropes for two which Heenan blasts to no end. Powerslam gets two. Sunset flip gets two for Perfect and then hooks a sleeper for all of 2 seconds. Perfect keeps getting pin attempts but can't get more than two on them. A slingshot puts luger into the buckle for two.

Missile dropkick gets a long two as Luger gets his foot on the rope. No heat at all on that either. They fight over a backslide and Luger leans forward enough to put Perfect's feet in the ropes so that he can't kick out for the pin. Post match Luger knocks him out with the forearm.

Rating: C-. Long and at least passable, but I couldn't stand

Luger's gimmick at the time. The forearm was just a dumb way to end every single match and this is no exception. This was ok but it was really spotty at times and it never got into a flow at all. I've seen worse though.

Perfect goes looking for Luger. And for once he finds him and the fight is on again. Shawn jumps Perfect, starting their summer long feud.

Gorilla pops up for no reason at all other than to tell us what two matches are left.

We recap Undertaker vs. Giant Gonzales. Undertaker feuded with Kamala in the fall and beat him. Harvey Whippleman, Kamala's manager said he would get revenge, so at the Royal Rumble he brought out Gonzalez, who boarded on 7'8. He beat the tar out of Taker and eliminated him, leading to this match.

The feud doesn't end here as it would finally be settled at the Survivor Series in a Rest in Peace match, which meant No DQ. In case you're wondering where you've heard this story before, it's THE EXACT same thing that happened with Muhammad Hassan, which led to Mark Henry who combined to play the role of Kamala and then the Great Khali as Gonzalez.

They had a manager that wanted revenge on Taker, then Taker got beaten up by them, then won a no rules match. That's why old fans didn't like the Taker/Khali feud: we knew exactly what was coming and we were exactly right.

Giant Gonzalez vs. Undertaker

This is the first Wrestlemania entrance for Undertaker where he's brought out in a chariot with a vulture on his shoulder which was REALLY cool for its time and is still awesome today. This should sum up how big Gonzalez was: Taker is a big old dude and he comes up to Gonzalez's chest. Clubbing blows get him nowhere and here comes Taker.

Gonzalez chokes Taker who gets on the second rope to choke back but gets a low blow for his trouble down in his little demons. A low blow is no sold and we go to School (In 1993 the School wasn't old yet). This was in that really weird period that stretched to about 1996 when Foley got there where they had no idea what to do with Undertaker so they just had him fight giants.

Giant chokes Taker down until the Urn goes up into the air. Taker goes into the steps on the floor as it's ALL Gonzalez. Heenan proclaims him dead and almost has a heart attack when Taker is like boy I'm the Undertaker and just stands up and keeps beating on Gonzalez. Taker beats him down before Harvey throws in a cloth covered in chloroform which puts Taker down but it's a DQ anyway. Yep this is bad.

Rating: F+. The match itself was just bad as there was one simple flaw: Gonzalez was just terrible. He was too big to be able to properly do anything in the ring and it showed badly here. It's the only thing close to a blemish on Taker's Mania record and that's a shame. The idea that the commentators could smell a small rag in an open area like that is ludicrous to say the least, especially after all of 5 seconds of it being out.

Taker stays down for a long time with Gonzalez standing over him in triumph. They stretcher him out which isn't something you see every day. The fans chant for Hogan for a bit, but then a gong rings. Today that would blow the roof off the place (despite there being no roof here) but here it only gets a solid pop. He staggers out and beats the fur off of Gonzalez which makes me wonder: WHY IN THE WORLD DID THEY DO THE DQ ENDING???

Gene recaps the feud with Hart and Yoko, and then Hulk Hogan makes sure he has the spotlight at the end of the show as he has to talk about how he's in Bret's corner. Oh and he calls Yokozuna a Jap.

WWF Title: Bret Hart vs. Yokozuna

Yoko wins this shot based on winning the Rumble. When you look back, there was absolutely no doubt who was going to win here. The idea is that Bret has no chance and they've spent the entire show telling us that Bret has no chance. Guess what happens in the match.

The problem with this match is very simple: Yoko is too fat for Bret to do much with. Bret's offense is completely unbelievable here and that's not a knock on him as no one for the most part could do much against Yoko. That's also not a knock on Yoko as he was a decent big man (bring it on Irish).

Bret is sent to the floor after a nice attack to start but it's clear he's going to be in trouble. He ties Yoko's legs in the ropes and gets him down so he can hammer away. Savage wants him to cover but is corrected by Heenan in a bizarre moment. Clothesline takes Bret down almost as soon as Yoko gets to his feet. Leg drop half kills Bret for no cover. The fans chant USA for their Canadian champion.

Bret gets a boot up for a BIG pop and a bulldog/jump on his back gets two. Side kick puts Bret right back down as this is bordering on a squash so far. Off to the nerve hold now which is basically a way to waste some time, which in a 9 minute match is rather stupid. Oh and all of Bret's fans are Hulkamaniacs. Heenan points out the stupidity of the USA chants and is ignored. Bret gets in all the offense he can which is more or less getting him nowhere.

FINALLY he gets something as the buckle is exposed and Yoko's head goes into it, sending him down to his stomach. Bret puts on a shockingly passable sharpshooter and the crowd is shocked. Mr. Fuji then throws salt into Bret's eyes allowing Yoko to pin him for the title. Now let's break down why this ending is so bad. Bret gets the sharpshooter on after Yoko shows no sign of his knees being hurt by Bret's offense on

them. I'll let that go though as it's a solid move that would hurt enough for a quick submission.

Fuji has done almost nothing all match. Bret sees him right in front of him as he takes FOREVER to get the salt out and throw it. Are you telling me Bret couldn't have, I don't know, CLOSED HIS EYES??? The referee sees Bret holding his eyes, sees the cloud from the thrown salt and sees Fuji holding a package of salt and thinks nothing of this, and to top it off, salt in the eyes is enough to knock Bret out for a pin? Come on now.

Rating: D+. The size difference here was too much, the time was bad, and the finish was insulting to my intelligence. The wrestling is ok, but just barely. Bret fights valiantly for the full nine minutes of this match and yes you read that right. That's the biggest issue most people have with this match and this Wrestlemania. The biggest match was less than 10 minutes long.

BUT WAIT!!!

Hulk Hogan comes out because he can't handle a *gasp* young and talented guy taking the spotlight or something evil like that, so he explains to Fumbles McWhoops our referee what happened and apparently Fuji has match making abilities now as tells Hogan that Yoko will put the belt on the line right now. Bret points to the ring which apparently means go for it.

Hulk slides in and we're off to the races one more time. The fans are happy, but looking back this is beyond stupid. WHY would Fuji put the newly won title on the line against the greatest giant killer of all time after Yoko has had no rest while Hogan has rested for about half at least? And people wonder why the business was in so much of a hole as it was around this time.

WWF Title: Hulk Hogan vs. Yokozuna

Yoko attacks Hogan as he slides in then holds him for more salt. Hogan ducks, nails Fuji, clotheslines Yoko, drops the leg and wins his fifth title. No rating of course.

Hogan poses with the title as we go off the air.

Overall Rating: F+. This show is truly bad and the main reason behind that is the ending. Hulk Hogan had absolutely no need to come in and steal the spotlight all over again. I don't care how big of a Hulkamaniac you are, and I'm a huge one, but there is no justification for that whatsoever.

Let Yoko leave with the belt and do this on Raw the next night. Aside from that, the rest of the matches are ok at best. There's a few watchable matches here and there but there's no reasoning to sit through the rest of the show for them. Wrestlemania isn't supposed to be something you need to fast forward through to get to the decent stuff. BIG recommendation to avoid here as this might be the worst WM of all time.