

Monday Night Raw – May 24, 1999 – Raw Is Owen

Monday Night Raw

Date: May 24, 1999

Location: Kiel Center, St. Louis, Missouri

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is the Owen Hart tribute show. The previous night Owen Hart fell to his death at Over the Edge in a botched stunt as the Blue Blazer. That was one of the hardest shows I've ever had to review so I know this isn't going to be easy either. Tonight isn't about angles or titles etc but about celebrating the memory of Owen Hart. Let's get to it.

We open with everyone on the stage and in the aisle as you might expect. Big Owen chant starts up. We ring the bell ten times in a moment of silence. The place goes QUIET for this too. Everyone applauds at the end with an Owen chant. We get a video tribute on the Titantron.

Vince narrates and talks about how great a person Owen was outside the ring as well as in it. Owen was a prankster and was more than just one of the wrestlers. He was a friend and a brother to everyone. This is interspersed with pictures of him in the ring and with his family. He was 34 years old.

JR more or less says this isn't about wrestling tonight and it's about Owen. There will be ten matches tonight and that's about it. The ratings for the matches aren't going to be judged on the normal criteria as that's not fair in the slightest. Almost all of my criticisms in this shouldn't be taken as seriously as it's not like these guys can think clearly for the most part.

First interview is Foley who says that his son's favorite wrestler is Owen Hart. His son kept getting his hair cut like

Owen and Mick was proud of him for it. These aren't promos and aren't from characters but rather from the people portraying them. Foley says there's probably a special place in Heaven for Owen.

Bradshaw talks about how cheap Owen was on the road but he did it because he wanted to retire early and spend time with his family and kids. He hopes Owen's kids know what a great father they had.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Test

Jarrett says Owen wasn't a nugget. There's an address given if you wanted to make a memorial tribute to Owen which would go to the Alberta Children's Hospital which was Owen's favorite charity. Nothing wrong with that at all. Jeff hammers away at the member of the Union. Lawler hasn't said much at all until JR asks him something. Test takes over with a slam. House shows have been canceled apparently. Top rope elbow misses and Jarrett gets a single arm DDT. Jarrett gets caught in the gutwrench powerbomb for two but hits the Stroke and the Sharpshooter ends this in less than two minutes.

Mark Henry reads a poem about dying. All of these interviews are in the back in front of a basic blue screen. He starts crying as he says this.

Droz says that he only knew Owen for about a year but he was the only person that could walk into a locker room and make everyone smile. Owen loved ribbing people no matter what it made him looking like.

Tag Titles: Kane/X-Pac vs. Edge/Gangrel

Kane and X-Pac are tag champions. Rather surprising they would do a title match on a show like this. Kane has the Owen armband on too. Christian is with the challengers here. We don't know much about them at this point but they fight using the Freebird Rule. Pac and Edge start us off. Edge hasn't been

around that long and is under 26 which is odd to hear.

Pac goes down to a spin kick and Edge takes over. Pac seems a good bit off as you would certainly understand here. Who would have thought Edge would become a far bigger star than Kane? Off to Gangrel and Kane now and a double DDT takes Kane down for about a second. Kane takes over and hammers away on everyone and it's off to X-Pac. Christian's interference gets them nowhere so Kane cleans house again. Bronco Buster to Edge and a chokeslam/elevated splash ends Gangrel to retain the titles.

Rating: D+. This was just a squash for the tag champions so there isn't much to talk about in it. Of the ten matches tonight, this is the longest at 4:02. Nothing special at all but it's not supposed to be. I never liked Gangrel though so this was never going to be that much at all.

HHH and Chyna talk about Owen. Chyna talks about a hair thing she and Owen had going on. HHH breaks down while talking but says you never saw bad things out of Owen for the most part. He implies that Owen shot on him at the Rumble one year. This takes awhile to get through.

Dave Hebner tells some Owen stories.

Hardy Boys vs. Kaientai

The Hardys don't mean much at all and are low level heels with Michael Hayes managing them. Kaientai rushes the ring and it's on fast. Double teaming to Matt as the foreigners take over to start. Swanton Bomb (not called that yet) to the floor to Taka by Jeff as the Hardys have taken over.

Jeff tries a Phoenix Splash (moonsault with a twist into a 450) but eats canvas. Michinoku Driver gets no cover and it's a double tag. Funaki and Matt hit the floor and Hayes interferes. Taka takes both Hardys out as the crowd isn't that impressed. And the Twist of Fate ends Funaki. Nothing match so

no rating.

Bruce Pritchard (Brother Love) says basic stuff about Owen.

Dustin Rhodes tells a story about Owen pouring hot sauce in a pot of chili Harley Race made so Harley Race used a stun gun on Owen.

Hardcore Holly vs. Ken Shamrock

Shamrock outmaneuvers him with ease as you would expect. Holly tries an armbar which gets him nowhere. Cradle gets two for Shamrock. They speed it up and Shamrock takes over. Ankle Lock ends this with ease. Total squash.

Faarooq says they were family.

Test tells a story about doing two shows on one day but the first was canceled due to snow. He's in sunglasses while he does this mind you which is kind of stupid. Owen prank called him and said that the second show was up to him and the guy said Test says cancel the show. He didn't find that out until the morning of this Raw apparently.

Billy Gunn vs. Mankind

Billy does his if you're not down with that, but substituting Owen for "that". That's fine...I guess. Ross talks about Owen stealing his hat. Gunn puts Foley in the corner (no one puts Foley in the corner!) and hammers away. Mankind puts him on the floor but has to stop to pull his pants up (thank goodness). Back in and Gunn works on the knee. Apparently Foley has been doing Chef Boyardee commercials. Gunn goes to the floor to get a chair but as he gets back in it's a Mandible Claw and Billy can't get back in time and it's a count out. Another short (understandable) match.

Foley does Owen's WOO after the match.

Jeff Jarrett, one of Owen's best friends and former tag

champion partner, says that you have very few friends in this company. He had seen Owen recently more often than his family and now he misses his friend. He talks about how great Owen is and how Owen had integrity which is rare in wrestling. Owen made things entertaining and fun. Jarrett promises to tell Owen's kids how great their father was.

Cole introduces a video about Rock vs. HHH and Austin vs. Taker for the title from last night. Uh...yeah, not something they likely should have done. There was a fast count to take the title from Austin, which apparently was a last second change due to Austin not wanting to wrestle due to the death of Owen. That's more or less the only storyline stuff you'll see tonight.

Edge talks about Owen mentoring him in his limited time here in the company. As a lot of people have said, Owen can make people laugh. Edge was in Owen's last match, a tag match with Edge/Christian vs. Owen/Jarrett. At the end of this you can hear a producer say "thanks Adam" just before Edge leaves.

Acolytes vs. Mark Henry/D'Lo Brown

Henry is Sexual Chocolate here. The Acolytes are in the Corporate Ministry. Faarooq and Henry start and it's of course power vs. power. Both partners come in and you can tell not a lot of people are interested in this. Farrooq's thong is sticking out of his tights. JR and Lawler talk about Bradshaw and Steve Blackman getting into an argument at their baggage claim at an airport. Ok then.

Farrooq gets a DDT on Brown for no cover and it's off to Bradshaw again. Never mind as Farrooq is back in again. We talk about Owen's funeral a bit as Bradshaw takes over. Brown makes a blind tag and gets drilled. Neckbreaker gets two on D'Lo. Bradshaw accidentally kicks Farrooq and Brown rolls up the future JBL for the pin.

Rating: D+. Just a tag match here. The Acolytes would become

pawns in the Corporate Ministry thing which broke up relatively in a few months if I remember right. Henry and Brown never went anywhere as they split over Brown trying to make Henry lose weight for the sake of his health.

Pat Patterson misses Owen.

Hardcore Holly says Owen can make people laugh and ribbed a lot of people. Holly talks about Owen putting Holly over in Mobile a few years ago which would be before Holly meant anything (yeah just go with it). Holly didn't exactly seem the most interested in being here.

Road Dogg vs. Godfather

No match as Road Dogg suggests they open some beers and tell some Owen stories in the back. I can live with that.

Paul Bearer says something that sounded like a poem.

X-Pac reiterates that Owen was a funny guy.

HHH vs. Al Snow

Odd choice for a match here but this is an odd show. Snow is Hardcore Champion. We get the My Time music which is always cool to hear. This is a regular match and not hardcore. They do some fast paced technical stuff to start which is where Snow was a lot better than he was given credit for. After we hit the floor for a bit we go back in and HHH takes his head off with a knee.

HHH hammers away and Chyna gets a shot in as well. The expected dominance begins with a vertical suplex to set up the knee drop for two. Snow gets a clothesline and the headbutts as HHH does a Flair Flop (Ross: Looks like he just got off of Space Mountain.). Snow misses a moonsault and there's the Pedigree to end it.

Rating: C+. Much better than you would expect here. When Snow

kept things calm he was actually really good in the ring. The Flair stuff was really rather funny as HHH was a big fan of Flair and you can tell that. Good little match here and definitely the best one of the night so far.

Road Dogg can barely hold himself together and talks very fast.

Brisco says Owen was a great performer. Owen never cut corners either.

Big Show vs. Goldust

Blue Meanie is with Goldust here. Goldust has black face paint on here. He shoves Meanie into Show here and it's more or less a handicap match. Show doesn't seem to mind and a pair of chokeslams ends this in maybe a minute. Show would be world champion at Survivor Series.

Debra cries during her talk, saying that she spent a lot of time with Owen. She talks about how she took Owen for granted a bit because she didn't think he'd be gone. Owen made her life better. She keeps looking for Owen and it's weird not to have him around anymore.

Shane talks about the pranking stuff again. He tells a story about Bret and Shane out drinking a bit so they went back to the hotel and woke up Owen. Owen stole their stuff or something the next day.

The Rock vs. Val Venis

Val does his usual intro but says this is about Owen, not him. Very true. Rock has a bad arm from last night. He gets on a corner and does the FINALLY bit. He says tonight he's here to entertain Owen and throws in some catchphrases. This was more of a Rock promo with Owen being in there just a bit. Val goes for the arm, they slug it out a bit, Rock Bottom and People's Elbow end this in less than a minute.

Ross tries to talk about Owen but he can't do it. Jerry talks about being in the ring with Owen after he fell last night and says never leave your family without saying you love them.

Here's Austin to close the show. This was an interesting one as he and Owen had legit issues back in the day, namely Austin not wanting to work with Owen when Owen came back after Montreal due to the botched Piledriver. I can see both sides of it, but this was seen as a lot more of a corporate thing than a genuine tribute. Austin doesn't say anything but rather toasts Owen, leaving the can in the ring. A shot of Owen on the screen takes us out.

Overall Rating: N/A. This was a very odd show. First and foremost, the emotion wasn't there as much. I won't say it felt forced, but I didn't really seem to care as much about this one as I did the Eddie show. I wasn't a fan of either guy, but the Eddie show was legitimately hard to sit through at times. This just kind of came and went although it's a very similar show. I won't grade it because obviously that's not the point. However, this was odd for some reason and it's hard to put into words what that reason is. It was all about Owen, but something didn't feel right on it. Odd indeed.