

History of Summerslam Count-Up – 2007 – HHH Is Back... . Again!

Summerslam 2007

Date: August 26, 2007

Location: Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, New Jersey

Attendance: 17,441

Commentators: Jim Ross, Tazz, Jerry Lawler, Michael Cole, JBL, Joey Styles

Well, it's somewhat different this year but not by a lot. For one thing, Cena is the undisputed top guy in the company now, even surpassing HHH and Batista. HHH has been out of action since the Fall after tearing his quad again, and tonight is his epic return facing Booker T for no apparent reason other than he's a big name for HHH to beat on. Your main event is Cena vs. Orton for the title, so you can really see how much difference two years makes.

I mean seriously, Cena was champion two years ago, so it's not like they're doing the same thing this year or anything. This was at the beginning of Orton's rise to being one of the top dogs in the company as he is at the moment. He'd go on to win the title in about two months. On the Smackdown side, we have Batista vs. Khali. I don't even need to make fun of that yet. Finally, the ECW Title has become much closer to what it is today, as we have Morrison vs. Punk for the belt. Also, this is about two months after the Benoit tragedy, and I'm going to leave it at that.

It's the 20th Summerslam and we see the logos from all of the previous shows. That's cool as I've been through them all recently so it's like going through a photo album. They talk

about how this is Rey's return and the two world title matches, and then it happens. The screen flickers and we cut to an intro that's designed after the 6 Million Dollar Man as this whole thing becomes about HHH. They talk about how Booker comes to Raw and this is apparently over who the real king is. Well at least they have a story behind it. Booker would be gone within two months and in TNA within three months. It's a good video, but HHH should not be placed above the two title matches, period. Oh dang it I forgot about this horrid theme song. It's by some annoying hip hop singer and it just sounds completely out of place. Wrestling is supposed to be about rock and roll, not bad hip hop/pop music. We intro the show with a all three commentary teams. JR and Lawler more or less say they know Booker has absolutely no chance at all.

Kane vs. Finlay

As best I can tell, Kane is the face here. Finlay only weighs 233lbs? Wow that's weird. This was around the time that Finlay did nothing but hit people with his stupid club. The crowd is popping for Kane so I'll bet on him as the face. They talk about how Kane is being pushed at the moment, even being credited with injuring Edge. For the life of me I don't get why Kane has never gotten a world title reign that's more than a single day.

With some of the people that have been given the belt, you can't tell me that a guy that's been around 12 years and has jobbed to everyone asked of him shouldn't get a world title reign with some length. I'm not suggesting he headlines Wrestlemania, but would it hurt to let him hold it for 2-3 months or even a single month? Dreamer did it and Kane is a far bigger name and star than Dreamer is. Put the title on Kane for a bit. It's not like he's Barry Horowitz or something.

Yes I've always been a bit of a Kane mark. Kane's ribs are hurt here as the big white tape implies, but it's not really

clear. He's only got about 10 inches of tape. If he wants it to be clear it has to be 11 inches. Oh crud it's the leprechaun. He's the Cruiserweight Champion here too. It's sad that a belt that was an integral part of WCW's rise to prominence is now a horrible prop for a guy like this.

Why is this guy still doing this two years later. It's just completely stupid. Anyway he causes Kane to get distracted but Kane fights back, but the ribs keep him from using the chokeslam. This crowd is way hot. Oddly enough, even though Kane couldn't get Finlay up earlier, after another club to the ribs he CAN get him up, which is enough for the pin.

Rating: C. There we have it. The official modern starting system for PPVs is now in place, as we have a rather pointless match opening the show rather than something fast paced and exciting, because there's just no room on the card for anything else. This is why the WWE's PPVs aren't as interesting to me anymore.

There are three matches now that have to be built up as main event level matches along with any other major match on the card, and it leaves no room for filler or just a good match that gives the audience a chance to look at an up and coming star.

If you have two 15-20 minute world title matches, that's two 7-10 minute midcard matches that you can't have, taking away at least 4 wrestlers' chance to show what they can do on a major show. Instead we have feuds like this that go nowhere between two guys that don't need this time. It's the problem with the triple brands as well as the problem with having only one company, as none of these people could just be let go.

In the back, Coach is with Armando, Regal and Teddy, the three GMs. Vince comes in and asks why is there a party with all men? He asks them to find the mother of Hornswoggle, or at least the person that would later be revealed as Hornswoggle

since he asks for the mother of the bastard son, who I don't think we ever saw. Santino comes in and says nothing of importance and is thrown out. MVP comes in and asks why he's not wrestling tonight.

I'd tell him to see my above rant but I haven't mastered talking into the past yet. He says he wants to issue an open challenge to Matt Hardy which has a rant coming later on. Regal implies that he could be the son before leaving. I love how it was just assumed that Vince's child was in the WWE and not maybe an accountant in West Virginia.

Rey Mysterio is coming back...TONIGHT! Yeah we were told this about 15 minutes ago.

IC Title: Kennedy vs. Umaga vs. Carlito

Ok, so maybe at this point there still was a bit of a midcard to speak of. Around this time the IC Title was actually doing really well. Guys like Hardy, Nitro (Morrison), Umaga, Kennedy and Carlito were fighting over it so you were at least having the midcard come in and fight over it. Then Jericho came in and killed things dead, which is a shame.

It would be another year when Santino won it for a second time and turned it into a complete joke that the title died for the most part, with it taking Rey and Jericho's feud over it to turn it back into something special. Kennedy is over here or at least predictable as the fans are chanting what he's going to say and reacting well to it. Carlito gets less than no reaction. He was in desperate need of new music at this point as it just didn't fit his character at all.

It amuses me that of these three, only Carlito is still with the company. This is happening because of a double pin between the two challengers on Raw. JR continues his epic commentary career by saying that Umaga is going to come at everyone in this match hard, especially Kennedy and Carlito. Yeah, I'd say that's true as that IS everyone in the match. Apparently

Kennedy injured Lashley. Kennedy hurting someone? You don't say!

Carlito hits a springboard back elbow, instantly making him cooler to me. Kennedy hits a Stroke, which he sets up exactly like he did with the Mic Check. That was something that was always an issue with Kennedy. Until he got the Mic Check, he used at least three finishers inside of a year that I can remember. He never would just pick something and stick with it.

Kennedy goes to the floor and rips up a table, stealing a monitor. He slams it squarely into the post which is called the head of Umaga, knocking him out. The challengers double team him but in a very cool spot, go for a double suplex that is countered into both of them being suplexed with one arm. With all three men down the referee starts counting to which JR says he's not sure why. I don't know Ross, MAYBE BECAUSE IT'S HIS JOB???

In an ending that feels rushed, Kennedy hits that rolling Death Valley Driver thing that I don't think had a name that stuck, but Umaga casually comes in, pulls Kennedy up and spikes him for the pin to retain. That just felt rushed and WAY too sudden.

Rating: C+. This just felt very rushed at the end. I like that there was an actual midcard match here, but it was treated like a filler, which it shouldn't have been. This was ok, but it could have been FAR better.

In another head scratching moment, we see a video talking about how Taker returns at Unforgiven. Ok, that's fine. However, they say that no one has ever beaten him up like Henry did. Ok, let's see. Set on fire twice, buried alive twice, beaten unconscious by Khali and Lesnar, beaten down badly by Kane many times, yeah Henry isn't even in the top ten all time. I love the rewriting of history. Actually I don't

but oh well. This of course is ruined by that horrid pop song that is the theme. Undertaker does not need to be associated with bad pop music.

We get a recap of Rey vs. Chavo. Chavo injured Rey's knee so that Rey could go have surgery, beating him in an I Quit match. It was followed by him wearing Rey's mask and being annoying. They actually tried to make Chavo be a major heel, which of course just completely failed for the simple reason of he's Chavo Guerrero.

Rey Mysterio vs. Chavo Guerrero

So yeah we're doing the same match this year with a different storyline. It's much better this year though as it's about the two of them and not about Eddie. Rey does that thing where he springs out of the stage that I've always liked. In something I remember from the LD, Rey is painted silver. What is his obsession with super heroes? This is the continuation of the feud from last year which has no Eddie mentions now, so at least they got the hint that it was horrible.

Despite Rey being painted silver, JBL says he's been bronzed. JBL goes on to say that Chavo will go for the knee until he either gets it or he won't. Thank you for that one John. To continue his epicness, he says Pedro Martinez, but Michael Cole cuts him off so we have no idea what his point was going to be. Naturally the main point here is how strong Rey's knee is. We get the Pedro reference from earlier as he talks about how Pedro's shoulder was bad and he's not throwing as fast anymore.

Ok that at least makes sense. See, if Cole hadn't cut JBL off then we could have gotten a decent point out of JBL instead of him sounding like an imbecile. The paint is coming off of Rey and it just looks funny with streaks of skin showing through. Chavo works on the knee, including a bunch of holds where the knee isn't moved at all. JBL calls Cole a parrot which is

funny. Chavo gets kicked in the head and conveniently falls into the ropes in position for a 619.

I love how that happens for no one but Rey. It doesn't hit as the knee gives out. For no reason at all Chavo goes for a slam and his knee goes out for a two. That was random. For the 100th time, JBL says that we won't know how solid Rey's knee is until it's tested. WE GET IT.

Rey is mostly skin again so it looks like his mask is leaking or something. Yet again after more punishment on the knee it improves enough to go for the 619. It misses and Chavo goes for the three suplexes. This works again as Eddie is never mentioned. The fans boo him though so everything is right with the world. A 619 and springboard splash ends this.

Rating: B-. This was light years ahead of last year because the story was about these two and not Eddie, who wasn't needed last year and this is proof of it. Rey was healthy here and you could see that he was fine. Chavo as a major heel is stupid though, and JBL's commentary is actually quite bad as he does little other than repeat himself. This was fine though and even good at times.

Raw is on Sci Fi tomorrow.

Booker is in the back with Todd. The king says that HHH will have little to be happy about tonight. Book sounded weird here as he sounded unhappy with what he was doing and he stumbled a bit. It was almost like he was nervous.

Divas Battle Royal

The winner faces Candice at some time in the future. Candice comes out first and does nothing of note, other than have a really annoying theme song. Since all of them start at once, here they are in the order they're introduced: Maria, Beth, Melina, Jillian, Mickie, Torrie (she's still there at this point?), Victoria, Krystal, Michelle, Brooke, Layla, Kelly.

Yeah, raise your hand if you know who's winning this already.

It's kicking and punching and hair pulling a go-go here as that's all most of these girls can do at this point. I'm so bored right now I can't put it into words. People are being eliminated here and the announcers aren't even calling it. You can tell they're bored out of their minds too. Candice is actually sitting in a director's style chair with palm fronds sticking out of the back of it. I can't think of words to describe how awful this is.

Beth is very loudly heard calling spots to the girls that have no clue what they're doing. Apparently this isn't over the top rope as Victoria goes between the bottom and middle ropes and is gone. Can this please end any faster? They're all wearing pink or orange for the most part so it's hard to even tell who everyone is. The final four are Melina, Beth, Torrie and Michelle. Final two are Michelle and Beth. This lasts all of 4 seconds as Beth wins. Thank goodness this is over.

Rating: F. It was sloppy, it was long, it was boring. What more do you expect of a grade here?

With literally no transition, MVP comes out with people carrying a cooler. Literally, we see Candice and hear his music in the same shot. He says no one cares about the Divas. That's just comical because it's about as close to true as you can get. He talks about how he's better than everyone else and challenges Matt to a beer drinking contest. This was during the time that MVP was hurt and it derailed the Matt beats MVP for the title storyline.

The problem was simple: this feud had been going on for awhile now and Matt wouldn't win the title until the END OF MAY. Part of this was that Matt's appendix burst, putting him on the shelf for a few months. Vince was I guess obsessed with Matt beating him for the title as he let this drag on for nearly a year. The problem was that we stopped caring. These two

competed in everything: arm wrestling, boxing, pizza eating, basketball, beer drinking, and I could go on for a good while longer.

The problem was simple: we wanted something new and we couldn't get it because of the injuries. Just go to someone else! Hardy gets something close to a pop I guess. Apparently this coming Friday these two have a tag title shot. That was another segment of this feud. This is just stupid as they argue for even longer to fill more time. Matt says he won't even try.

He talks about how a few weeks ago, MVP got Evander Holyfield to substitute for him, and I think I know where this is going. Yep, the glass shatters and Steve Austin is here. This segment just got better and now it's no longer filler. The fans are going nuts for this. I love the line JBL says. Cole is talking about how it's completely fair as MVP did the same with Holyfield. "It's completely different. That was just Evander Holyfield. THIS IS FREAKING STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN!"

Only in professional wrestling would you hear that. Austin hits the ropes a few times and does some pushups. Only Austin would consider beer drinking an athletic event. He throws in some jumping jacks for good measure. He hasn't said a word at this point either but the fans are WAY into him. They start drinking and Austin kicks him and stuns him of course. Two things: Austin kicks him in the title belt, so would that even make him keel over?

Second, MVP takes the stunner really well. He jumps backwards but not way too high like Hall did. That always just got annoying, but MVP more or less bounces back. That was well done. JBL's ranting about how Austin isn't a fair opponent is really quite funny.

Wrestlemania is coming to Orlando.

In the back with Vince and the GMs, Cryme Tyme shows up and

says one of them could be his son. Vince is apparently not liking being called V Mac, but Vinny Mac was fine I suppose? This was back when CT was a big deal almost before being release for screwing up an official at a house show.

They start a dance party in the back, with Coach, Long and Regal dancing around Vince. Regal actually was quite good. He goes on his own but turns around to have Ron Simmons in front of him. A single obscenity follows.

Back in the arena the girl that does the theme song dances to her own song. Yeah that's not stupid at all.

ECW Title: CM Punk vs. John Morrison

This was a very well built up feud. Morrison had taken Benoit's spot and therefore his championship at Vengeance and has feuded with Punk since. He really hadn't proven himself yet, but they built him up very well. They didn't make him seem like a guy that was in over h, is head, but rather a rookie wonder, almost like Orton was three years prior to this.

Punk is very popular here as despite what the IWC would want you to think, Punk has been popular in WWE since the day he showed up and is way over to this day. Punk got this in a 15 minutes of fame match against Morrison, which was a cool idea: last 15 minutes or pin the champion in that amount of time and you get a shot. Punk chasing the belt for awhile was a good idea to me as it usually works best that way.

Obviously they didn't want Morrison as their first choice, but he stepped up and made this work, and you can tell that it meant a lot to his career. Soon after this he would be paired with Miz for nearly a year and a half, forming one of the best tag teams in many years as Punk would become a major player in the company soon. This is a preview of the future of the company here, so it should be solid.

They start with a fast technical series which works really well for them. That's a side you see from them both on a fairly decent rate and it's working as always. Morrison hits a reverse neckbreaker, pulling Punk through the ropes and slamming his neck on the apron. That looked painful to say the least. This is a very fast paced match with neither guy getting a long lasting upper hand. The crowd is way into it also so it's not just me that likes it.

Punk busts out a moonsault, and people say he's bland in the ring. He uses all kinds of stuff. Anyway, Punk goes for a rana but Morrison holds on. He tries to get his feet on the ropes but misses them, which isn't really his fault as he just couldn't reach them. Either way, Morrison wins but Punk "got robbed." I know that was lacking jokes, but this was just a freaking good match. It was very fast, both guys were sharp, the offense wasn't boring, and the ending made great sense. I loved this.

Rating: B+. It was just barely 7 minutes and it left me wanting more. You can't ask for much more than that. These two have always had great matches and this was no exception. This is a rare occasion when people called the future actually live up to that billing.

Raw is still on Sci-Fi tomorrow night.

Booker T vs. HHH

We start with a way too long recap of Booker humiliating JR and King. That's fine as it sets the stage just a bit. Booker comes out and has the crown and robe and that's all well and good. Now let's get to the problem with this. The HHH return is so over the top here that it's horrible. I'll show you them both and you compare them.

His return here in 2007:

And his return in 2002

You tell me. Which of those two was more interesting? The first was just flat out corny. The second was a big time wrestler returning. As for the match let's get to it. For one thing, just having his own face on his tights isn't something I want to see. How ridiculous does that look? HHH of course gets beaten down at first, only to make the comeback. The basic idea here is that HHH is awesome, Booker is pretty good and Sharmell is annoying.

In something that I find amusing, HHH goes after Booker's leg. While it's not hurt, that's a nice little thing that shows that HHH is thinking. I like it and yes, I'm making it out to be cooler than it really is. Anyway, Booker hits some big moves including the Book End, but HHH is up, because it's his return match. Did you really expect him to lose? More on that later. Booker counters two Pedigrees here, one of which he does by just punching HHH's leg. That's so simple that it's brilliant.

Anyway, of course HHH wins with a pretty weak looking Pedigree, but he gets it, and then a standing ovation from JR and King. Ok, there's being glad a guy is back, and then there's just flat out overkill. We get it: HHH is a great wrestler and one of the biggest stars ever. No one is questioning that, but this is just taking it too far. He celebrates for a long while, which I'm fine with, but don't make it look like it's the second coming.

Rating: B-. Eh, it was two A list guys so it had the star power. There was little story between the two, but in this case I like that better. This was about HHH returning, not HHH vs. Booker. It worked just fine in that regard. Yes the announcers were WAY over the top, but to be fair the storyline was written that way. Now, this is where the IWC showed how idiotic it was to me. I remember one of the first real arguments I got into on WZ was over this match.

There were people that said HHH was burying Booker here, as he

hadn't had a match in 9 months and he beats a major star. Ok, nonsense. Now I've made no secret of the fact that I'm not a huge HHH fan. Like Cena, I'm relatively indifferent to him. There are moments where I'll applaud him and there are moments when I'll boo him. However, there would be no justification at all for him losing here.

Yes, Booker is a major star. HHH is a bigger one. HHH was returning. Booker was doing nothing. He was put into this feud because he had nothing else to do on the show. It had been a year since he was in a top level angle, as he had a very short feud with both Taker and Matt Hardy. Remember those feuds? I don't either. He had been out for about a month with an injury and came back to be put with HHH.

Booker was a world champion a year ago at this time, but in the world of professional wrestling, that's an eternity. Booker had no business beating HHH. How is he being buried? He's facing a bigger star and he lost. Did Hulk Hogan bury the One Man Gang or King Kong Bundy when he beat them? No he didn't because they weren't on his level, just like Booker isn't on HHH's level. Hopefully most people reading this just said duh at most of that, as I'd hope you have more intelligence than that.

Update: Undertaker is still returning at Unforgiven. Nothing has changed in the last hour.

We get a recap of Batista vs. Khali, which just isn't going to be a good idea if my KB-sense is correct. Basically, Khali says he can't be beaten and Batista says he can beat Khali. Khali debuts the head vice and that's all there is to it.

Smackdown World Title: Great Khali vs. Batista

Batista is about 6'6 and he looks tiny, as does the belt and the chair. That's freaking scary. It's weird hearing the lack of the Punjabi Playboy music which is rather awesome actually and better than this is. Champion came out first here which is

always kind of odd. The palm trees around the entrance are stupid looking.

Khali beats him down early and the Animal is in trouble early on. Big Dave gets in a bit of offense but walks into the chop to take him back down. Khali grabs the neck grip rather than slipping his hands up like 5 inches for the Vice Grip. Batista starts going on as this is already a very dull match. Yep the fans think this is boring. I can't really argue much with that.

Cole tries to tell us that the fans are getting restless which is amusing. Bradshaw says Khali is monkey butt ugly. Well you can't say he's not blunt. Batista gets a spinebuster to get out of the Vice Grip but can't get the Batista Bomb. Khali hits the Punjabi Plunge for two. Singh slides in a chair to Khali and there's the cheap DQ. Really that's it?

Rating: D-. Oy this wasn't good. Vince instantly thinks that every muscle guy like Batista can do what Hogan did. That's just not the case. Hogan was able to make the others look great because Hogan was a far better wrestler and thinker than he was given credit for. Neither of these guys have that mental aspect that makes a wrestler great. Their styles are far too similar and almost nothing Batista can do can make him look sensible or effective against Khali.

Batista isn't nearly as bad as he's made out to be, but this wasn't a fair request of him. Now last year against Booker was a different story. Booker is a big guy, but not big enough that Batista couldn't do something with him. This one is much harder to blame on the Animal as Khali is just too big to do anything with. That's not his fault, but rather the person that green lit this match.

Post match, Batista gets the chair and beats Khali up. Or does he beat him down. Diagonally? Or is it horizontally?

The Condemned is on DVD.

Vince is in the back and Regal says there are some women here for him. You know who they're going to be. Mae says she wants to be the mother of his next bastard son and shoves him onto a couch and kisses him. Moolah pulls her out by the hair and they leave. Vince says he liked it. Sadly, Moolah would pass away in about two and a half months due to complications from a shoulder operation.

We get a short recap of Cena vs. Orton. It's a very basic concept. Cena has beaten every heel on the roster except one: Randy Orton. Cena turned around one night and got RKOed. It's a very basic build but it made you think that Orton could do it. Cena had held the title longer than anyone in over twenty years at this point, so anything was possible. Orton had injured HBK, RVD, Dusty Rhodes, Slaughter and others, so it was a distinct possibility that he could take Cena out here as well.

Raw World Title: John Cena vs. Randy Orton

The fans are certainly going with the flow here as Orton is booed and Cena isn't booed as loudly. He gets another mixed reaction which is something I've always liked. We get something you don't see any more as the referee checks each guy for weapons. It takes a few seconds and makes things look more legit, so why not bring that back? Lawler mentions that Orton has a fan club in Lichtenstein.

That's too absurd to make up so I'm going to assume it's true. If so, that's pretty cool to me. They start out with a headlock, which is about as basic of a move that you can start with, and in a big match it works every single time. Orton takes the early advantage and holds onto it for a good while, which also makes sense. They're following a very basic formula here and there's nothing at all wrong with that.

Since this is a long Orton match, we hit about the 4 minute mark in total chinlock time. That's added to the two minutes

of headlock time, making this match VERY BORING. We've been at this about 15 minutes and Cena has been in control about 45 seconds. Oh wait, could this be a comeback? Nope, Orton counters with that backbreaker he does which starts from what you ask? A chinlock. Of course this is the most damage that Cena has ever taken since that happens every match.

Oh and Orton is coldblooded. You'd think he was a reptile, or maybe even a viper. Yeah that string of jokes is getting old to me also. Of course Cena kicks out of the move that injured RVD because he's John Cena blast it. Ross says Orton is Viper-like. And so it begins. Orton goes for the RKO but Cena shoves him off and we're on the floor and more violence ensues. Back in, Cena starts his real comeback, this time with Orton being beaten down pretty well.

They go for the throwback, but they botch it and Cena comes at his head instead of his back, making it look like a running neckbreaker or Morrison's diving neckbreaker that he used to do. They speed things up a lot as it's both guys trying to hit their finisher. Orton gets caught in the STFU but gets the ropes.

Cena is ticked and despite Orton being in the hold for a good while, he hits the RKO out of nowhere. At least he sells the hold just after it so maybe I could go for that. Cena kicks out and the crowd is WAY into this. Cena is up way to fast and hits the fastest FU in history to win clean before collapsing from the RKO. Replays and photo opportunities close us out.

Rating: B. This is a tale of two matches. The beginning part of it is just flat out boring. However, the last 5 minutes of this is great stuff with the crowd eating from the palms of their hands. These two can bring it pretty well most of the time and this was fine. They built from slow to fast which is how things are supposed to go. This was a solid main event and should be in two weeks.

Overall Rating: B. This was a very back and forth show with good and bad stuff. Some of the matches are just flat out horrible and some of the matches are great. The ECW and WWE title matches are great as was the Austin segment. This was a solid show all around I think and while I'd avoid the Diva match and Batista's match, the rest of the show is certainly good so it's recommended.