

Monday Night Raw – May 11, 1998 – Austin And That's About It

Monday Night Raw

Date: May 11, 1998

Location: Baltimore Arena, Baltimore, Maryland

Attendance: 8,069

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, Jim Ross

We're still a long way off from Over the Edge but we have our main event set now as Love is full on heel and the new McMahon flunkie. The other main stories are that DX is still going after WCW which is a story that I thought happened on the same show as the more famous invasion. DX is in Atlanta tonight. Let's get to it. Here's Vince to open the show and he has a major announcement regarding Stone Cold. Before Vince can even say anything the Austin chants have already begun. When Austin gets here he's in a tag match with a partner and opponents to be announced later. First up though, here's Dude Love. Love is in a suit and is Corporate now. He even has a copy of the Wall Street Journal and glasses. He knows who he is now and that is a well educated man and a speaker of four languages. I don't get why this had to be Dude Love. Couldn't just Mick Foley work better here actually? He says he'll win the title and shakes Vince's hand. Love talks about losing his smile and Vince helped him find it. That calls for a hug. Vince: "I'm proud of you dude." That sounds so wrong for some reason.

Now we get to the gimmick of the title match at the PPV. Vince introduces Brisco as the guest timekeeper. For your guest ring announcer, here's Pat Patterson. As for the guest referee, I think you can all see it coming. Yes, it's Jack Tunney. That kind of joke doesn't work in print so I'll withdraw it. Vince says the entrance and points to the ramp twice and there's no referee.

He says hit the music and there's no music or referee. Vince goes up the ramp and through the entrance. Patterson does the

intro and says that the referee is the best there is, the best there was (Cole/JR in unison: "WHAT?") before it's revealed as Vince of course, coming out in a referee shirt. This might be the most stacked deck in wrestling history.

Sable is getting ready for her confrontation with Mero later tonight.

Sunday Night Heat is coming.

We get our first clip of DX in Atlanta, which is them in their tank with the big gun on it. They go to the WCW offices and Billy gets in the kind of famous line of "We do have a meeting, with the cops that are coming to arrest us." They decide to go to the arena where WCW is allegedly giving away free tickets.

Al Snow is here while Kelly is waiting on Austin. I think this is Snow's debut.

Vader vs. Barry Windham

For some reason this feels like it should be in 1993. This is Vader's return after being out three months thanks to Kane I believe. Windham is already in the ring so I think you know where this is going. Yeah it must have been Kane since it's mask vs. mask with Vader vs. Kane. JR says he isn't sure what's going on because they don't have a lot of their stuff here for some reason. The NWA guys get involved and Windham still has his vest on. We hear about a UFC show on Friday which is something you'll never see on WWE again. A splash gets two for Vader. Vader Bomb ends this clean. Vader was never in any real trouble.

Vader beats up the NWA post match.

We get a clip of Austin on Celebrity Deathmatch which debuts later this week.

Austin is here...and he's in a car. That doesn't fit in the

slightest.

During the break Austin had the news broken to him about the PPV main event and Austin is ticked off and doesn't seem to be surprised. He takes the mic from Kelly and goes off to find Vince.

Skull vs. Hawk

Animal and 8-Ball are in there anyway and now it's down to the regular match. Hawk goes up but misses a top rope clothesline. 8-Ball interferes a bit and Hawk is in trouble. Skull manages a backbreaker without even bending his knee. That takes...talent? Hawk hits one of the few wrestling moves he knows, the neckbreaker, and doesn't bother to cover. Hawk charges into the post and out to the floor as we hear about the Nation vs. DX at Over the Edge. 8-Ball and Skull switch and 8-Ball gets the pin in a small package. Not enough to grade but this was pretty bad.

More of DX in Atlanta at the CNN Tower. There's not much to see here other than they're there.

Edge is still coming.

Earlier today, Bradshaw taught Taka how to drive. It doesn't go well and as they get back, Kai En Tai jumps them.

Jeff Jarrett vs. Farroq

Blackman is here with Farroq to distract Jarrett. Farroq uses his power game to take over and Blackman gets in cheap shots every time Jarrett is put on the floor. And here's the Nation for the DQ. This didn't even crack two minutes. Jarrett and the Nation leave Farroq and Blackman laying.

Here's an ad for the Brisco Brothers Body Shop. I'd rather just listen to the two of them tell stories.

Here's Austin and I'll give you two guesses as to what mood

he's in. He doesn't care about the PPV match because he'll do what he has to do to keep the title. Austin demands Vince come out here now but Austin and the Stooges pop up on the screen. They won't tell him who his partner or opponents are and Austin doesn't really care. And that's it.

Val Venis is still coming also.

Sable vs. Marc Mero

They talk a bit before the match and Mero puts her in the TKO position and then puts her down, saying that's what he could have done. She kicks Mero in the balls and gets a decent powerbomb (all things considered) powerbomb to leave Mero laying. Sable leaves after that so I guess that's a win?

As Jerry is talking about Sable, Taker pops up to attempt to kill him after what Jerry was caught saying to Bearer last week. They go into the ring and there's a huge chokeslam for Lawler. Oh and this is the final week of Seinfeld so they mention it multiple times. Well to be fair they're both NBC networks. Jerry gets loaded up for the Tombstone but here's Kane. Bearer says he told Taker Kane was alive and he was telling the truth. Next week he'll have proof that he's Kane's father. Kane leaves and now Lawler gets his Tombstone.

Al Snow of all people is here to replace King on commentary. Head has a headset too. Security comes and takes him off. I had no idea who this guy was back in the day as I didn't watch ECW. He needs to see Vince which he wouldn't do for a long time.

DX is still in Atlanta but now they're heading back to Baltimore.

And now they're in the arena. Pac talks about how WCW tried to have them arrested but they'll never be taken alive. He runs down Bischoff and the Outlaws say nothing out of the ordinary. Well what would become the ordinary for them. HHH starts to

talk about the state bird or something and gets cut off by Owen. Owen wants to finish the unfinished business so here's a match.

Owen Hart vs. HHH

HHH is in camouflage pants. The Nation comes out to back up their brother Owen. This is non-title. Cornette popped in on commentary now. Owen finally gets in a low blow to break up HHH's offense. Facebuster puts Owen down for two. The leaping knee to the face and a piledriver get two. A DDT gets two for Owen. This is kind of an awkward match. The Nation gets in some shots and Owen gets a piledriver for two. Enziguri puts HHH down and JR blasts DX for being crude and such. Everything breaks down at ringside and it's thrown out.

Rating: C. Well it wasn't bad but they just weren't clicking. The match was thrown together and the point of it was to set up the six man on Sunday which is something they needed to do. This would become the backdrop for Rock vs. HHH which would go on for the whole summer. Decent stuff but I couldn't get into it.

Dustin Rhodes comes out with a barrel and gasoline. He puts the Goldust attire in it and burns it up. He blames Vince for his career falling apart because of his bad ideas and all that stuff. Also Vince has cost Dustin his wife and daughter. I guess this is supposed to be a shoot. Oh wait Russo was writing at this time. That makes sense. This led to a preacher gimmick I think.

Scorpio/Terry Funk vs. Kai En Tai

Yamaguchi-San, the manager of Kai En Tai brings them out and not many people care. Kai En Tai is Funaki, Togo and Teioh. They pop up behind Scorpio and Funk and the handicap is on. There's no semblance of a match at all here, at least not at the beginning. Scorpio starts us off and has to fight off everyone. A move we would call Trouble in Paradise puts Teioh

down. He powerbombs all three foreigners and Funk hasn't been in yet. Funk comes in and he looks like he's fighting a bunch of midgets. And here are Bradshaw and Taka for the run-in. This was barely a match and was short too so no rating. Pretty wild though.

Vince is praising Austin's partner but we can't see who he is.

Snow is still trying to get in but doesn't have a ticket.

Here's the Nation and Rock will be one of Austin's opponents.

Vince is getting ready in the back and it's pretty clear now.

Steve Austin/??? vs. The Rock/D'Lo Brown

Brown isn't really important as Rock had like 5 people to pick from. If you didn't get who the partner was, here's your hint: Vince was looking in a mirror. Austin goes after Rock almost immediately and they start us off. They go to the floor quickly as we're in full Austin mode here. Off to Brown and Austin beats him up for a bit. Vince is chilling on the floor of course. There's no real match here and it's a lot more of a fight.

Rock gets back in after sending Austin into various metal things on the floor. The People's Elbow gets two and Vince is up on the apron now. Austin gets in a right hand and the place EXPLODES. I have never seen anyone as hot as he was at this point. Off to Brown for a few seconds and then here's Rocky again. A double clothesline puts them both down and it's back to Brown since there's no partner for Vince. Low Down misses and Austin gets fired up. Vince comes in and clotheslines Austin down and it all breaks down and is thrown out. Love comes out but DX comes out for the huge brawl to end the show.

Rating: C-. Austin brawls are always fun and you flat out cannot go wrong with Austin vs. Rock, but this didn't do it for me. It was all about the last 15 seconds of the show with

the numbers catching up to Austin in the end. It wasn't much of a match but the brawling stuff was fun enough I guess.

Overall Rating: D+. I couldn't get into this show at all. They were trying but everything and everyone not named Austin was pretty lackluster and things still were on the verge of picking up more. Way way way too many interference based endings and all that stuff that would become a major issue in the Attitude Era. This was one of the weakest in this era so far.

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