

Great American Bash 2006 – Not Horrible, And That's A Breath Of Fresh Air

Great American Bash 2006

Date: July 23, 2006

Location: Conseco Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, Indiana

Attendance: 9,750

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield

Ok...this HAS to be better than the other two. I mean it has to be. This is during that weird period where I don't think anyone really knew what was going on in WWE. This is Smackdown only again and the main event is Rey, defending that title that Eddie won while under a mask and shorter, against King Booker in a match that I don't think anyone really asked to see. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about how this is a great melting pot and how Khali is awesome and how he'll beat up Taker tonight in the Punjabi Prison match. No he won't due to the Wellness Policy but nice try at least. There's a world title match tonight too.

Smackdown Tag Titles: Paul London/Brian Kendrick vs. Pit Bulls

The Bulls are Jamie Noble and Kid Kash. They were a team that was around when I really wasn't watching Smackdown so this is a new thing for me. London and Kash start us off with Kash taking it to the mat. For some reason we're talking about the Rock N Roll Express now. Kash keeps running him over so London speeds things up to take over. Off to Kendrick and they use a modified rocket launcher for two.

Kendrick works on the arm and we hear about the Crockett family starting up the Bash in the 80s. Off to Noble who

apparently likes having men on the ground. I love wrestling but the gay jokes are really hard to avoid at times. Back to London who keeps Noble's arm in trouble. This has been one sided so far and Londrick sends them to the floor. You know that means stereo dives.

FINALLY Noble gets in a shot to take over and gets a pair of two counts. Back to Kash who slams Kendrick into the mat by his hair. Kendrick dodges a charge and brings in London. Things speed way up and we talk about Ivan Putski. They go to the apron and London tries to skin the cat, but Noble gets in a shot to the back. I guess this is the official face in peril part.

London may have hurt his back on the way down onto the apron. Noble hooks on a chinlock for a few seconds and there's a leg lariat for two. The Pit Bulls do some good old fashioned heel tag team work to keep Kendrick out. More double teaming follows but London fights out of the corner. He kicks Noble into Kash but Kash makes the save to break up the tag. Cole says London was minutes away from making the tag. Well at least he was close.

London backflips out of a suplex and falls into Kendrick for the tag. Springboard missile dropkick takes out Kash and things speed WAY up. He hits leg lariats to everyone but Noble makes the save on the cover. Noble tries something like a double underhook piledriver on Kendrick but London saves again. There's a huge dive to the floor by Kendrick to take out Noble. Kash can't get the brainbuster to London so Kendrick dives off the top with a sunset flip for the pin.

Rating: B-. This match right here has already had more energy in it than the entirety of the previous two shows in this series. Londrick would spend the next 9 months or so as champions which is still the longest tag title reign in the WWE/F in about fifteen years. Very fun tag match with all kinds of old school heel tag work to make things very fun and

get the crowd into it.

Khali wants to take out Taker now. He picks up Daivari, his manager, when he disagrees.

Here's Teddy to waste some PPV time. He says that Lashley is out of his US Title match tonight due to being Wellnessed. Not due to steroids, but due to elevated liver enzymes, which is what also got Khali. Cue Lashley in wrestling clothes. He says he's fine and he wants his US Title back. Teddy says his administration is looking out for his long term health. He'll get his shot later.

Lashley leaves and here's the champion Finlay, along with his lackey Regal. Finlay thinks Lashley is running scared and not sick. He wants his hand raised, but Teddy says there's going to be a title match tonight.

US Title: Finlay vs. William Regal

JBL goes on a hilarious rant before the match. "LIVER ENZYMES??? AS MUCH AS I'VE DRANK I'M LUCKY TO HAVE A LIVER!!! MY LIVER LOOKS LIKE JAKE ROBERTS' AND MY LIVER ENZYMES HAVE NEVER BEEN HIGH!" I'm having issues having Cole as a neutral commentator. Regal is worried about Horny (not yet named) interfering. Regal goes a-leprechaun hunting and before the match starts.

Regal says he'll just leave but Finlay tries to roll him up anyway. They lock up and go all the way to the floor without breaking it. They walk around and back up the steps and into the ring without breaking that lockup. Regal grabs a single leg and works the leg but that gets him nowhere. Regal throws him to the floor and here's Horny! He pops Regal in the leg and JBL freaks out. "I want one for Christmas!"

Regal loses track of him and stands on the steps instead of, you know, GETTING IN THE RING. Horny sneaks up on him and Regal nearly jumps out of his skin. Back in Finlay gets a

clothesline for two and it's off to a nerve hold. This heel vs. heel thing is only kind of working so they're going for comedy. JBL gives us a European soccer lesson as Finlay takes over. Regal gets in some kicks and a butterfly suplex for two.

Horny is back! He bites the fingers of Regal and Regal has to rake the eyes of the tiny leprechaun to escape. Back in and Finlay takes over, working on the hand. Regal gets in a shot to the leg to break the momentum. This is a highly technical match to go with the comedy which is an interesting mix. Regal hooks a chinlock but Finlay fights out with some shots to the ribs.

Back to the floor and you can hear them hitting each other incredibly hard. This was the same thing they did back at Uncensored 96, although this is a more entertaining match. Now Finlay hooks the chinlock. Regal throws him into the corner and they ram heads. In a great old school heel move, Regal drops to a knee, putting his leg on Finlay's throat, while he talks to the referee. Exploder suplex puts Finlay down and there's a knee drop for two.

The fans call this boring. I call them uncultured slobs. This is a European style match and it's entertaining to see a different perspective. Regal runs off the apron and gets crotched on the apron skirt. Finlay hammers him back into the ring and takes Regal's shoe off. It's possible Horny stole it. Finlay misses a charge and hits the post. The fans are loudly booing now. Regal gets the Irish club that I can't spell. Horny slips Finlay Regal's boot though and a shot with that is enough for the pin to keep the title on Finlay.

Rating: C-. I'm going to be in the fairly extreme minority here but I enjoyed this. The technical aspect of it is really good but the comedy stuff is going to be very hit or miss. To be fair though, this was a hard one to work out as the styles really clashed. I was entertained by it though and that's the point of this.

Rey and Chavo have a little chat and Chavo says all of Eddie's fans are in Rey's corner tonight.

Matt Hardy vs. Gregory Helms

Helms is Cruiserweight Champion but this is non-title because Matt is overweight. The fans are all behind him though so at least he has that going for him. Matt grabs an armdrag and it's a standoff. They go to the mat with Hardy in control. Back up and it's a standoff but Matt strikes a Hurricane pose to crack everyone up. Rollup gets two for Hardy. Helms grabs a swinging neckbreaker for two and control.

Another neckbreaker gets the same and let's hit that chinlock. Matt fights up and hits a punch to the ribs of a jumping Helms. Russian legsweep sets up an attempted Side Effect but Helms escapes. He goes up and gets crotched so Matt tries a superplex. The more famous of them is crotched also so Helms hits a top rope swinging neckbreaker to put both guys down.

It eventually gets two as Matt throws his foot on the rope. Greg works on the neck some more and goes into a chinlock again. He shifts that over to a Pedigree position on the mat so he can ram some knees into Matt's face. Back up and they slug it out. Side Effect gets two for Matt. Bulldog gets two. Twist of Fate is countered (probably due to him standing there before trying it) into....uh....the best I can think of is a Killswitch if Matt was facing up and Helms was a bit off to the side. I've never seen that before. Either way it gets two.

Shining Wizard misses but the second attempt hits for two. Helms sets for a belly to back superplex but Matt hits some elbows and OH MY GOODNESS THE HUMANITY!!!! Matt hit a moonsault press and I'm sure Helms is dead. I mean....the fat that must have just landed on him. Anyway Matt drops an elbow on the top of the head for two. Matt pounds away in the corner but a snake eyes drop into the buckle plus some tights are enough for Helms to get the pin.

Rating: C-. The first seven minutes or so were really bad but after that this got a lot better. The innovative stuff from Helms is always worth seeing. They were trying to make him seem like something more than just a Cruiserweight and it was kind of working before he broke his neck in May of next year and was out for about 15 months.

Khali goes on a rampage and finds Taker in the back. They stare each other down when Big Show jumps him. I hardly ever remember seeing Taker as the Dead Man in the back in the light. The giants beat down Taker.

We recap Taker vs. Khali. This was a long running feud with Taker never really having a chance. Tonight is supposed to be the blowoff to it but the match isn't going to happen due to enzymes in Khali's liver. They would eventually be supposed to have a last man standing match at Summerslam, but, and I kid you not, it was determined that Khali wasn't good enough to put on live television.

Show, Khali and Daivari are in the back and Teddy comes in and makes it Show vs. Taker tonight for no apparent reason. Show is the ECW Champion but it has no bearing on tonight's match.

Big Show vs. Undertaker

This is a Punjabi Prison match and I have NO idea how it works. I've seen both of them and I have no idea how it works. The cage is made of bamboo (allegedly) and it looks like a cage made of it and then an octagon shaped cage that is on the floor around the ring with room in between, almost like the Cell. There's no top to either. It does look pretty cool. Oh sweet Cole is giving us a rule explanation.

There are four doors on the cage around the ring, each with its own referee. A wrestler can call for it to be opened but it'll only be opened for 60 seconds. There are no doors on the outer cage and you win by getting out of both cages. No word on if the doors can be re-opened once they're closed. I think

they changed it to thirty seconds for Batista vs. Khali. I looked it up and each door is open for sixty seconds and once it closes, it's locked for good. If you can't get out of one of the four doors, you have to climb over the spikes. It's not as complicated as it looks.

Show looks like he's about to cry. I know because Cole told me so. There are also tables between the cages with weapons on them. They don't seem conventional either but it's Taker's lighting so I can't see them. Show stomps him down to start but Taker gets him into a slugout and guess who wins there. Logic would say Big Show, but this is a zombie inside an Indian prison with no Indians in sight so I don't think logic has much place here.

Show knocks him into the cage all slowly. He really wasn't all that interesting at this point. Show really was just the big monster that beat people up. Taker fights back and goes for a climb but Show pulls him down and crotches him on part of the cage. Show headbutts him down and Taker looks small by comparison. There are straps up there for some reason and Taker gets choked out.

Back in the ring and Show hammers him down with a clothesline. Taker starts fighting back and actually jumps at Show with flying hip attacks for lack of a better term. Show grabs him by the throat for a chokeslam but Taker DDTs out of it. Taker calls for the first door to be opened so he has 60 seconds to get out. Show pulls him away from it and doesn't go for it for no apparent reason. A superkick puts Taker down and Show pulls one of those straps off the wall. The door closes so there are only three left.

Big Show takes a buckle off but walks into a bunch of punches. Something resembling a combination Thesz Press/clothesline puts Show down. Old School is broken up and Show calls for a door to be opened. Taker kicks him in the head and TRIES TO GO OUT BECAUSE HE ISN'T AN IDIOT but Show stops him. Show manages

to chokeslam him but can't get out of the door in time. Two left.

He curses instead of going through another door so they slug it out even more. Taker is busted a bit. Show pounds him down and goes for a climb. Taker low blows him and hits a superplex to put both guys down. Not quite Henry vs. Show but not bad. Taker pops a door open and falls through it to get to the second cage. The third door closes but he goes through the fourth door to stop Taker from climbing out.

Why they keep the clock running even though both guys are already out I'm not sure. Show takes one of the tables with weapons and breaks it over Taker. He then does something very smart by throwing Taker back into the first cage as the clock runs out and Taker is trapped inside.

He can still climb out. Show climbs the outside cage as Taker climbs the inside one. Taker goes Tarzan and jumps from one cage to another, then swings into Show to knock him down. Show manages to knock him through the other table and they slug it out AGAIN. Here come Khali and Daivari and Taker climbs the wrong cage. Taker dives onto Show and they fall through the cage (great structure guys) and Taker is declared winner. Khali and Daivari stand on the cage and have no bearing on this match at all.

Rating: D. This match started kind of promisingly but it went on WAY too long. This was over twenty minutes long and far too complicated. If you forget the rules part of the way through, you're screwed here. Also they probably slugged it out about 8 times in this match and it was just way too overdone. Not as horrible as it's made out to be, but they really needed to cut this down to like 15 minutes instead of over 20.

Sharmell talks to Booker and tells him he'll be king of the world after winning the title tonight.

Ashley Massaro vs. Kristal Marshall vs. Jillian Hall vs.

Michell McCool

Bra and panties match of course. Michelle is the teacher still. This is Diva Search drama. There's no point to trying to do commentary or anything like that here as I think you get pretty clearly. It's not even elimination. You win when you get someone into their underwear. JBL: "I've had these girls knocking on my door for years. I finally let them out." Ashley gets her top stolen. Cole tries to call stuff and JBL just blasts him.

Jillian loses her top and yes, the implants were a good idea. JBL is cracking me up here. "WHO CARES ABOUT THEIR ATHLETICISM??? THEY'RE HOT!!!" Kristal and Michelle, the heels, get their skirts taken off. Oh wait Michelle has a second one on. Jillian and Ashley are minus their tops. The heels brawl for a bit and Jillian tries a Boston Crab on Kristal as Ashley rips the top off to win it. No rating because it's not wrestling, but hilarious commentary. JBL: "Get me a Hennessy and my black American Express!"

The new interviewer talks to Kennedy (Anderson) who says he challenged Batista because he can. Mark Henry couldn't beat Batista, but he can. I still don't get how announcing your own name is a good gimmick.

By the way, the new interviewer: The Miz.

Batista vs. Mr. Kennedy

This was during the Kennedy is great and keeps beating ex-world champions but never wins the title himself because he keeps getting hurt period. This was supposed to be Mark Henry against Batista but he tore his knee or something and is out for a few months. Batista is coming back from an injury as well and it's his first PPV match since December. Batista shows intelligence and jumps him during the Mic Drop. All Big Dave to start and they head to the floor. Kennedy goes into the steps and is busted a bit.

Ok so it's more than a bit as there's blood flowing down his head. He goes for a walk but tries to sneak in on Batista, only to get speared right back down. Out to the floor again and Kennedy rakes the eyes to take over. He chokes away because he really isn't much as far as offense at this point. Batista is busted a bit.

Kennedy pounds him down in the corner and a bit more on the floor. Back in it's time for a chinlock because those work so well right? He works on the arm which was the injury that put Batista out. For some reason he slaps Big Dave and pain is imminent. He sends Kennedy into the post three times then chokes to a DQ. Kennedy claims another former world champion.

Rating: D+. Just a brawl here with a weak ending. This is another example of where they booked themselves into a corner and the only thing they could do was have an ending like this because they couldn't have either guy lose clean. Batista would get the title back in November while Kennedy would do the same stuff over and over again until getting hurt next year....again.

Batista destroys him post match with three spinebusters and a Batista Bomb.

We recap the main event. Booker won a battle royal to get the shot here. Booker had been pushed very strong and was clicking pretty strong, so the ending was pretty much a given at this point. This gets the music video treatment.

Smackdown World Title: Booker T vs. Rey Mysterio

The King and Queen come out with some kind of car thing. It has a throne on it as well. Eh I don't think anyone really knew what was going on here so who cares. Booker's entrance takes about 5 minutes, reaching near Undertaker territory. Rey points to the sky because Eddie is the point of this title reign. Booker: "Eddie can't help you now." Long stall to start.

Booker uses the size and power advantage to take over but Rey speeds things up and hits a legdrop for two. JBL and Cole get in an economic debate and Cole is accused of being a socialist. Now remember what I said they did for the first section of the match? Repeat that for the next few minutes. Rey knocks him to the floor and hits a seated senton off the top. A springboard splash gets two.

The challenger is really having issues with someone smaller than him and therefore the match is kind of struggling. A superkick and clothesline get two each for Booker. He works on the arm for some reason and then drops Rey as he tries a jumping snapmare. As in Rey tried it and Booker just shoved him off. Booker goes total rudo and hits Three Amigos for a very delayed two.

The axe kick misses but Rey misses the 619. A BIG kick to the head gets two for the champ and he loads up the 619 again, but Sharmell makes the save. That earns her an ejection and pretty much no reaction from the crowd. Booker gets in a good shot for two and the bulldog is countered into a belly to back suplex for two. Rey takes out the knee and hits a rana to take over. Springboard cross body gets two.

Tornado DDT gets the same. He tries a rana out of the corner but Booker counters and launches Rey into the referee. With him down the seated senton and 619 connect and the frog splash looks to finish but there's no referee. Booker hits a low blow and Bookend but there's no referee still. Dang those guys are fragile. Booker's chair shot misses and Rey dropkicks it into his face. Here's Chavo to pick up the chair and of course he turns on Rey, cracking him with the chair and giving Booker the title.

Rating: C+. Not a horrible match but the first five minutes or so didn't really work at all. They were trying, but the problem was due to the size difference. Booker's title reign was nothing particularly good but he was just holding it warm

for Batista anyway. Not a bad match, but you feel like you're waiting for the real main event after this instead of getting ready to leave the arena, which isn't good.

A LONG celebration by Booker and a bunch of replays end this. I'd assume they were a few minutes short or something.

Overall Rating: D+. It's not a great show or even a particularly good one, but this is so far and away better than anything they had in the previous two versions of this show that it's a breath of air to have just an ok show. There was some actual stuff here you can get out of it and it makes for a much more refreshing show. Still not good, but it's on a totally different level from the other shows.

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