

Great American Bash 2008 – Why Wasn't This Ever A Wrestlemania Match?

Great American Bash 2008

Date: July 20, 2008

Location: Nassau Coliseum, Uniondale, New York

Attendance: 12,454

Commentators: Jim Ross, Mick Foley, Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, Tazz, Mike Adamle

This is the last of the Bashes and the card looks pretty good. The main event is for the Smackdown Title and is one of the few big matches that never got a big time PPV main event slot: HHH defends against Edge. Other than that we have a parking lot brawl with JBL vs. Cena and Jericho vs. Michaels in a match where HBK's eye is bad. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about Vickie and Edge's wedding. Edge then cheated on her with wedding planner Alicia Fox but this was ok I guess. The rest of the video is about the matches I mentioned.

Oh and this is officially the last show before PG began.

Smackdown Tag Titles: John Morrison/The Miz vs. Finlay/Hornswoggle vs. Jesse/Festus vs Curt Hawkins/Zack Ryder

Miz and Morrison are defending. Festus is Luke Gallows who freaks out at the sound of a bell. Jesse and Festus clear the ring so the champs send Horny in to fight him. Smart move guys. Horny wants to try it but instead dives through the ropes to take out the champ. Festus vs. Miz gets us going officially. Off to Jesse with the only world champion to be found in this match in trouble.

Morrison and Finlay come in and the Irishman is in trouble. Foley asks why you would tag into someone on another team since this is one fall to a finish. Miz and Morrison use various nefarious techniques to hurt Finley and it's off to the chinlock. Miz and Morrison switch in and out twice and Finlay gets in a shot. I don't think Hawkins and Ryder have been in yet and as I say that Ryder comes in to steal a pin attempt, getting two.

The former Edgeheads/Major Brothers hammer away on Finlay but he counters into the rolling fireman's carry slam, whatever that was called. The Irish Club is brought in and I don't know who got hit as Miz and Morrison ran in to break it up. Finlay gets in a shot on I think Hawkins and it's off to Horny. Jesse tags himself in to beat on Hawkins. There's the not hot tag to Festus and he cleans house. He and Jesse load up a rocket launcher but Ryder pulls Festus to the floor and Jesse gets slammed off the top. Hawkins pins Jesse for the surprise title win.

Rating: C-. Hey, you ever seen one of those multi team tag matches where not a lot really happens because there are so many teams that nothing can get going at all and no one is able to get anything going and the ending is a big mess with a team that didn't do much stealing the win and it wasn't bad but you've seen something just like it before? Well this was one of those matches.

US Title: Matt Hardy vs. Shelton Benjamin

Shelton is the Gold Standard and challenger. The announcers point out that no one has ever lost the title at the Bash and of course they treat it like the same show as the WCW incarnation. Shelton takes over with a headlock but Matt takes over with an armdrag of his own. A quick Pay Dirty (Little Jimmy) and Twist of Fate are both countered and Matt takes over again.

Matt tries to skin the cat but Shelton dropkicks him to the floor. Shelton rams him into the post to take over. The fans are into this and I presume they're behind Hardy but I can't really tell. It might be split. Matt tries a Side Effect but Shelton counters into an STO for two. The Dragon Whip looks to set up the Stinger Splash but Matt counters. Middle rope leg and sunset flip get two for Matt. Twist attempt is countered and Shelton looks for a middle rope belly to back superplex but Matt knocks him off. Moonsault gets knees and Pay Dirt gives Benjamin the title.

Rating: C-. This wasn't bad but I really didn't get into it. Matt was certainly better as a guy that was chasing the title rather than actually holding it. Matt would go on to win the ECW Title soon after this as Shelton would hold the US Title for like 8 months and then would just chill on ECW until being released in 2010.

On Monday, Punk said Batista saved him so that Batista would get his shot tonight because Punk is the easier victory. He says he's not the biggest or the strongest or anything like that. He's the man that proves everyone wrong, CM Punk, World Heavyweight Champion. I like that ending.

Here's a video from Smackdown where HHH showed Edge cheating on Vickie with Fox (not yet a Diva).

ECW Title: Mark Henry vs. Tommy Dreamer

Henry is champion and Dreamer is challenging because he's Tommy Dreamer and it's the ECW Title. Oh Mike Adamle: how I forgot about you. Tony Atlas is with Henry here. Dreamer has Colin Delaney with him. Delaney is a jobber that Barry Horowitz would laugh at. Dreamer charges at Henry because he's not that smart. Single leg fails miserably. Mark runs him down and this is pure dominance as expected. Henry steps on his face. That has to hurt.

Henry grabs the wrist and works on the arm for absolutely no

logical reason. Dude YOU'RE MARK FREAKING HENRY! GO DESTROY A SMALL CITY! The fans correctly chant boring and I'd be doing it too...maybe. Now back to the arm. The fans try to cheer for Dreamer but he gets beaten even worse. A splash (called the World's Strongest Slam by Adamle but corrected by Tazz) misses and here comes Dreamer. A neckbreaker gets two for Tommy. DDT puts Henry down but Atlas distracts. Dreamer goes after him and then goes up, where Delaney turns on him, shoving him off. The Slam ends this.

Rating: D-. What a boring match. Tazz freaking out over Delaney turning is kind of funny. This went nowhere at all and was a VERY boring match with Henry literally crushing him for most of the match, other than that weird arm stuff. Dreamer would beat up Delaney for awhile before they finally got rid of his worthless self.

We recap Shawn vs. Jericho. This is kind of a complicated one. So Shawn retired Flair at Mania and Batista was MAD about it. He demanded a match with Shawn and got it at Backlash. Jericho was referee for some reason. Shawn claimed to injure his knee and won anyway. Jericho had Shawn on the Highlight Reel and said Shawn faked it. Shawn denied it but Jericho persisted. Eventually Shawn admitted he was faking it but Jericho wanted more of a confession than that. It turned into them arguing about who was better and then Jericho accidentally (allegedly) injured Shawn's eye. Shawn is coming back tonight.

Chris Jericho vs. Shawn Michaels

They stare each other down and here we go. It's a slugout to start and Jericho controls early. Shawn may have bad ribs but he manages to get in a shot at Jericho's knee to take over. There's a reverse Figure Four and Jericho is in trouble early on. Jericho gets in a shot though and the springboard dropkick to the apron makes Shawn backflip on the apron and land on the floor.

Jericho works on the ribs but mixes in some face shots (remember the eye) to show some very nice psychology. Shawn hits the forearm and nips up but the kick is countered into the Walls. He manages to get the rope and fires another kick which is blocked as well. Clothesline gets two for Shawn. Shawn loads up the big elbow but Chris crotches him. Jericho loads up a superplex but gets knocked off and Shawn can hit the elbow.

Here's Jericho flunkie Lance Cade who breaks up the superkick but Shawn manages to avoid a Codebreaker attempt. Jericho gets a rollup for two and is then promptly launched to the floor. Shawn goes up and tries a moonsault to take out both guys but mostly splits them to crash to the floor. That looked PAINFUL. Jericho pops him with an elbow and the eye is bleeding. Jericho turns into a shark, going after the eye.

Shawn is covered in blood quickly and just has his hands up to try to defend himself but Jericho goes right for the eye with punches. Cade even gets in a shot. Shawn keeps saying don't stop it. Jericho rams in headbutts and Shawn is in big trouble. Out of NOWHERE Shawn grabs a Crossface but Jericho breaks it pretty quickly. There is blood all over Jericho and Shawn.

Shawn makes the referee promise not to stop it so Jericho hammers away even more. They check it again and Jericho asks if Shawn said keep it going. He's told Shawn said yes so Jericho kicks him in the face. Even Jericho's hair has blood on it. Chris traps Shawn's eyes and shouts in his face as he gets in a bunch of unprotected shots until the referee finally stops it.

Rating: B. It was a great beating and a great example of how blood can help a match and visual a lot, but it didn't quite reach epic levels, probably due to the ending just being a repeat of everything that had happened for the majority of the match. They would have better matches coming up, but this

certainly wasn't a bad one.

Shawn gets his eye checked post match to eat up some of the ton of time they have left on this show.

Edge is surprised when JR asks him how he feels. He says HHH has taken away his personal life and this is all he has left. All Edge can do is take the WWE Title.

Divas Title: Michelle McCool vs. Natalya

This is for the inaugural title and there's probably some stupid tournament that set this up. Michelle takes her to the mat and speeds things up. Natalya takes over and hooks a surfboard but Michelle counters (impressively so) into a heel hook attempt which is countered. Nattie hooks the Sharpshooter but Michelle gets the ropes. A second attempt is countered into the heel hook and Michelle wins the title.

Rating: D. The joke here was that hopefully Michelle enjoyed the Undertaker semen that came with that belt. I'm not sure how much anyone cared or if anyone on the planet that didn't work for WWE thinks there was a need for another female title, but they unified it...eventually, as in like two years later.

Jericho comes out to interrupt the celebration and says keep your ticket stubs because this was the night of Shawn's last match. Shawn has a detached retina, meaning he's finished.

We recap the Raw Title match. Punk won MITB and cashed in on Edge after Batista destroyed Edge to open a Raw. Batista I guess too offense to Punk winning the title that way and treated Punk like an easy challenger, which to be fair is how he's been treated since.

Raw World Title: CM Punk vs. Batista

Punk looks like a kid. He has to stick and move to avoid the power game but Batista gets in a clothesline and boot for two. Batista gets sent to the floor and Punk hits a baseball slide.

A suicide dive is mostly countered. I was at a house show about two weeks before this so I saw a lot of these spots before they happened here. Batista reverses a whip into the corner which Lawler calls a desperation move.

It's amazing hearing Cole and Lawler as a decent commentary team. Cole is good at setting up King with softball questions to knock out of the park. Lawler needs someone to lead him in and then he can more than take care of himself on there. Batista hooks a camel clutch which is broken pretty quickly. There's a leg lariat by Punk to send Big Dave to the floor. Top rope cross body gets two.

Punk goes for the corner knee but gets caught in a Bomb attempt. Batista takes him down and shakes the ropes. Here's another try at the Bomb but he grabs the rope again. The corner knee hits and a GREAT high kick takes Big Dave down. Into the corner and Punk grabs the arm which he pulls back over the ropes. That looked cool. Punk hammers away but walks into a clothesline. A charge goes into the post and they head to the floor where Batista KILLS PUNK DEAD with a spinebuster. And here's Kane for the DQ. Big Dave wins.

Rating: D+. I knew that ending was coming and I still rolled my eyes. This was getting to be something good, but at the end of the day Punk looked beaten and Kane came in. It's REALLY not going to hurt Batista to go down to a rollup or something. Punk never really had a chance in this title reign and never lost the title. Hate that ending.

Wait....HOW IS THAT A DOUBLE DQ???? KANE NEVER TOUCHE.....oh screw it. Batista powerbombs Punk post match.

We recap Cena vs. JBL. JBL declared martial law because Punk was champion. He had private security carry Cena out. Cena and Cryme Tyme came out and helped Punk keep the title. This turned into the usual culture war of these two. A parking lot brawl was proposed and accepted. JBL attempted to run Cena

over in one of the dumbest looking spots you'll ever see. There was a camera in the car and from where Cena would have been sitting. Jibbles missed of course.

John Cena vs. John Bradshaw Layfield

This is in "the parking lot" and likely was taped earlier today for the most part. JBL is in a shirt and tie and has a crowbar. He takes the tie off at least. They have the circle of cars set up and a referee out there. Something metal hits the ground but we don't know where it was from. Now a car turns on and Cena drives it at the car JBL is standing on. Ok now it's on.

Cena chokes him with jumper cables. Then he slams a car hood on him. Now he jumps JBL's balls. That would kind of, um, KILL HIM. Cena picks up an oil drum and chucks it at a car which JBL tries to escape in. Bradshaw gets in some shots but nothing significant. They knock a car door off. Cena went through it so JBL takes over. Powerbomb on a car gets two. Cena gets dropped on the top of a car for two.

Cena goes through a window and isn't busted open. Did they hit the blood quota earlier or something? This is really dull by the way. Cena is knocked down then thrown into the back of a car and JBL goes to get a gas can out of his limo. He covers the car with the gas and throws a lighter on it. Uh yeah I'm done here. They put it out but JBL is stealing a forklift. Cena gets out and Bradshaw is mad.

They brawl even more and Cena takes over, throwing JBL into a car then into a car. Cena gets the forklift and spears the car. He lifts the car up and drives the forklift into the arena. JBL gets beaten up on the stage. There's the Shuffle and Cena loads up the FU. Instead of flipping the fool like a clam shelled cellular phone, he walks towards the car and JBL escapes and throws Cena off the stage into the windshield for the pin.

Rating: N/A. This had nothing to do with wrestling. It was bad, whatever it was. They got WAY too ridiculous here and I'm sure the fans loved seeing a total of maybe three minutes of this live. They were setting up JBL as the next challenger to Punk and Cena moved onto Batista, but this was still bad.

We recap Edge vs. HHH. The whole wedding thing is recapped again but in greater detail. I think that's about it to the story.

HHH says he regrets nothing.

Smackdown World Title: HHH vs. Edge

How this is used at the Bash and not Wrestlemania I'm not sure. Edge takes him down immediately and they head to the floor. HHH throws him into the barricade and a big forearm back in the ring puts Edge outside again. HHH misses a charge and Edge gets a breather. A quick spear by Edge takes Trips down but the Game hammers away. HHH is champion if I forgot to mention that. There hasn't been a lot of sustained contact in this.

Edge rams him into the barricade and then the apron a few times. Now to the table. Off to a body scissors to work on the injured ribs. HHH escapes and pounds Edge about the head and shoulders. A Canadian dropkick puts HHH down but he comes back with right hands and a clothesline. Facebuster puts Edge on the floor but Edge slides in so he can miss a baseball slide.

Edgecution might have knocked HHH out on the floor but he manages to kick out back inside. Edge goes up but jumps into a slingshot and a DDT of HHH's own. That's still my favorite move. It only gets two here but it looked pretty good. Edge-0-Matic gets two. It's the reverse X-Factor if no one has any idea what that is anymore.

Spear misses and HHH rolls him up for two. Edge kicks him in the head to put HHH right back down as we're running low on

time. Spinebuster takes Edge down but the Pedigree is countered by ramming HHH into the corner. Edge superplexes him down and here's Alicia Fox. She tries to slid the title in to Edge but Vickie comes out and breaks it up. Now the girls fight in the ring and the fans seem into it. Edge accidentally spears Vickie which I think is what put her back in the wheelchair. The distraction lets the Pedigree end it.

Rating: B-. Good match but it felt kind of there. It's good but it feels like an afterthought instead of a big time title match, which is what these two should be. Vickie and Alicia had to get into this because that was by far the bigger story and I'm more than ok with it, but it didn't help the match seeming just there. It was good though.

Overall Rating: C. This was almost the same as the previous year's but not quite as good from a wrestling perspective. The main event isn't as good but the show wasn't bad overall. 2008 was just kind of there as a year for WWE. They were getting some stuff together but it really wasn't that great. Still though, this wasn't bad but I'm never going to want to see it again, which happens a lot with these shows.

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