

Monday Night Raw – June 29, 1998 – Oh Cheese And Crackers The Brawl For All Is Here

Monday Night Raw

Date: June 29, 1998

Location: Gund Arena, Cleveland, Ohio

Attendance: 16,505

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

This is pretty historic show in that we have a world title match as Kane defends against the man he beat last night, Steve Austin. Other than that, we also have the debut of one of the dumbest ideas in the history of the company: the Brawl For All. Other than that, we've got Shamrock as the new King of the Ring and we begin the road to Fully Loaded, which is in four weeks. Let's get to it.

We open with a still package from the title match last night. Taker smacked Austin in the head with a chair and claimed that it was inadvertent. Either way, it cost Austin the title.

Here's Vince and here's all fired up. There's a red carpet in the ring and the title is under glass. He spends a lot of time bragging about how awesome the new champion is rather than the old one. Vince praises Kane who has never had alcohol or uttered a swear or anything like that. He's a role model apparently. Here's Kane and Bearer does the talking of course.

Paul talks about how this is a place where dreams come true. He spent over twenty years watching Kane watch his brother and about how Kane wanted to be like Taker. Bearer told him that Kane could be better than him. For the first time, Taker is in Kane's shadow. Here's the belt presentation. Patterson isn't here due to a family emergency which is legit if I remember correctly.

Vince goes to put the title on Kane but here's Austin. He says Kane never busted him open which is true. Austin wants a rematch right here tonight. He keeps telling Vince to make it but Vince is hesitant. If the people want it, why not do it? Bearer says it's all right with him if it's all right with Kane. Now Austin yells at Kane, talking about how it was Taker who won the title last night and in a great bit of manipulation, Austin says Kane will always want to know if he could do it himself. Kane nods yes to Austin and the title match is on for later.

Darren Drozdov vs. Steven Regal

Sable introduces Regal, who sadly enough is just Steven Regal, British guy. I hadn't realized it yet but Lawler is now on commentary both hours. Sable sits in on commentary. Droz hammers away on Regal who does his usual shouting. We're on a split screen of the match and Sable, so at least there's something to look at. JR keeps asking Sable about her relationship with Vince and all that and she can't comment. Regal hooks a chinlock and pounds away on Droz. Droz makes a comeback and goes up. Regal suplexes him off the top and the Regal Stretch ends this boring match.

Rating: D-. I can see why Regal was sent down to Dory Funk's training center for some more work. He hurt his ankle there though and later broke his leg so he didn't have another match on WWF TV until around Halloween. That's good too because this was really pretty boring stuff.

Here's the new King, Ken Shamrock. He talks about how it was hard to win last night but he managed to win. As far as Rocky goes, the guy he beat last night, last night Rocky showed him something. Here comes Owen who says he was a better king than Ken is. Owen challenges him for later and Ken says it was Owen that broke his ankle so it's on. Now here's HHH who wants in on this too. Shamrock is a really weak talker. Granted that isn't his strong suit and never was supposed to be.

We had to get here. I didn't want to do it but we had to eventually. It's time for the Brawl For All.

The UFC was gaining popularity so WWF tried to get in on some of it. This is the result. There are three one minute rounds and a point system. You get 5 points for the most punches per round, 5 points for a takedown and 10 points for a knockdown. A knockout ends the fight.

Now here's where things got really stupid: It wasn't predetermined. That's right: this is a legit fighting tournament. Now, any common sense would suggest that Dan Sever, a legit all-American wrestler and an Olympic alternate as well as a former UFC Champion, would be the runaway favorite. However, for some reason this was designed to get Dr. Death Steve Williams over. That didn't happen. It also didn't help that it was another tournament just after the King of the Ring and that there were no submissions. Let's get this over with.

Brawl For All First Round: Marc Mero vs. Steve Blackman

I won't be rating any of these because it's not wrestling. Blackman takes him down quickly but instead of holding him on the ground, they stand up and start all over again as soon as they hit the ground. The crowd is openly booing 26 seconds in. Blackman gets 4 takedowns in the first round alone. He also got the most punches so he's up 25-0. The fans say they want wrestling. Blackman dominates the second round and there's no point to even talking about this. After about 9 takedowns, Blackman wins by decision, making the points worthless. He was hurt though so Mero got to come back. So freaking stupid.

Kane says he's giving Austin a title shot because he knows he can win and is better than Taker ever was.

Someone is just getting here.

Val Venis vs. Dick Togo

Make your own name jokes. Val chases Yamaguchi off with a chair. Yamaguchi's wife is at ringside, which comes into play later. Val pounds him into the corner for a fast start. Dustin Rhodes comes out to preach a bit. Togo runs the corner and hits a nice flip dive attack. Rhodes wants to know if Jerry and JR have thought about how many people they can reach by spreading the word of God. Jerry says chill and Rhodes quotes scripture. DDT gets two for Togo. Togo goes up but jumps into a powerslam. A regular slam sets up the Money Shot (with gyrations) to end this clean. Pretty much just a squash.

Val hits on Yamaguchi's wife post match. Yamaguchi protests and slaps him. Kai En Tai comes in so Val blasts them with a chair.

Edge is watching from the crowd.

Austin says he didn't lose the title so he'll be getting it back tonight.

HHH vs. Ken Shamrock vs. Owen Hart

Owen and Hart fight on the floor while HHH chills in the ring. Owen comes in so HHH pounds on him for a bit and the jumping knee gets two. Jerry suggests that HHH would have been the King of Kings if he had won there. So that's where it started. All three are back in now and the fans are all over Owen. Shamrock and Owen wind up double teaming the Game and Shamrock gets two.

Owen is sent to the floor and HHH gets a flying knee for two. A piledriver gets two on Trips but Shamrock saves. Snap suplex puts Owen down but he pops up and grabs a German on Shamrock for two. During the break we got the triple sleeper and double jawbreaker spot. Now the blondes are going after the ankle of Shamrock which isn't totally healed yet. A missile dropkick puts HHH down (with an inadvertent bell) and Owen hooks a Sharpshooter (Jerry: "Is Vince around?").

Now Triple H tries the Pedigree on Shamrock but Owen breaks it up with a spinwheel kick. DDT puts HHH down and Shamrock comes back on Owen. Leg lariat gets two for Ken and he crushes HHH. Here's the ankle lock to Owen but HHH makes the save. Rana is countered by HHH into a powerbomb but he gets enzigured to the floor. Chyna takes Owen out so Shamrock goes out to beat on him. Rock runs in and blasts HHH with the IC Title. Shamrock comes in and gets the easy pin.

Rating: C. This was a long match and it was very energetic as they moved all over the place the entire time. I wasn't wild on it but I'm not a fan of triple threats in general. This was before the modern standard triple threat formula was established though so it was a nice change of pace.

DX and the Nation fight on the stage as is their custom. Owen puts Shamrock in a figure four around the post.

Here's Taker who has an explanation of some sort. He says he owes no one anything but he'll say why he came to the ring last night. He and his brother don't get along but he couldn't let Kane set himself on fire. Cole who is conducting the interview says that may have cost Austin the title. Taker says he did what he had to do.

Cue Vince who says Taker did it because he thinks he can beat Kane but not Austin. Vince calls him evil and threatens him with something if he interferes tonight.

Brawl For All First Round: Bradshaw vs. Mark Canterbury

Canterbury is Henry Godwinn. They throw a lot of punches during the first round and are gassed afterwards. Bradshaw pounds him down but Canterbury stands up. The fans think it's boring. I'm not really going to bother talking about these much because that's not what I'm here for. Canterbury gets a takedown as Lawler tries to make us believe that this is something impressive. Bradshaw wins if you care.

Summerslam is in 9 weeks. That would be pretty easily the biggest Summerslam ever.

Here's the LOD minus Sunny. Animal says they have a new manager: Paul Ellering, their original manager. Here's the LOD to complain though. Ellering turns on the LOD because the DOA is his new team. Ellering would later say that this was awful because he couldn't bring himself to insult the LOD.

Taker says no one tells him what to do, implying that he'll interfere in the title match.

WWF Title: Steve Austin vs. Kane

Austin has a bad arm from an infection I believe. Austin goes right at Kane but gets knocked down by the power. A forearm shot floors Kane though and the fans are erupting after every single move. Quick Stunner attempt is countered and Kane heads outside. Austin dives from the apron with a clothesline and Kane goes into the steps.

Back inside and Kane hammers him down but walks into the Thesz Press. Austin goes after the leg, wrapping it around the post. Kane kicks him to the floor and Austin goes into the steps again. Austin is in trouble so the fans cheer even faster. Even Bearer gets a poke in with what looked like an object. Off to a chinlock and here's Taker.

Austin tries to make a comeback but walks into a big boot by the champion. Top rope clothesline takes Austin down. Austin tries to come back but walks into a bad chokeslam. Tombstone and Stunner are countered but the second attempt at the Stunner gives Austin the title back totally clean. Taker did nothing at all.

Rating: C-. This was kind of a weird match. Austin pretty much just beat Kane clean in about 9 minutes. I mean...that's it. He took all of the attacks, countered the Tombstone and hit the Stunner to end it. There's nothing else to it and that's such

a surprise given how dominant Kane had been over his time so far.

Austin Stuns Taker post match and the giants sit up at the same time to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. The Brawl For All stuff just cripples it. I know it's short, but my goodness it takes me out of the show. It drives me crazy when wrestling apparently isn't enough so they have to do whatever else they can to try to get people watching. Just stick with what it says on the marquee and you won't go wrong. Why Vince hates that idea is beyond me.

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