

History of Summerslam Count-Up – 1995: Barry Horowitz On PPV. That Sums This Show Up.

Summerslam 1995

Date: August 27, 1995

Location: Pittsburgh Civic Arena, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Attendance: 18,062

Commentators: Jerry Lawler, Vince McMahon

We're in the In Your House era now and if you've read my reviews of the earlier ones, you know what my thoughts are on the booking that was going on in this era. If you haven't, go read them now you lazy morons. Stupid people trying to just read what comes later and avoid all of the intellectual labor. Anyway, we're in 1995 and the business is at a seemingly dead end.

No one really knows where to go right now and it would take Hogan's shocking turn in about 11 months to change everything. Hall and Nash are clearly almost on their way out at this point, which is interesting as they're both in the singles title matches tonight. Now if you want proof that the business has no idea where to go, think about it. We're at the point now where your big matches are a rematch of what was a big deal...a year and a half ago, and Diesel vs. Mabel.

Yes, that's your main event: Diesel vs. Mabel. Bret Hart is fighting an evil dentist, and Barry Horowitz has a match on a pay per view. Think about that for a few minutes while we dig into what is considered one of the worst PPVs ever, Summerslam 1995. Side note: Nitro debuted 8 days after this.

Standard intro talking about the two big matches. Oh and Shawn is a face now. In the back we have Dean Douglas who is critiquing the matches tonight. For those of you that don't

know, Douglas was Matt Striker done properly.

1-2-3 Kid vs. Hakushi

Apparently Kid is from Minnesota, Minneapolis which is a place that's known for it's cheap heat. Yeah that joke makes no sense to me either so just go with it. Kid more or less botches jumping into the ring so he must have gotten genuine Columbian cocaine today. Hakushi lost a match to Barry Horowitz earlier in the day so take that for what it's worth. This is actually a pretty good match so far with some very nice back and forth stuff going on.

Waltman really isn't that bad against other cruiserweights. The heel is completely dominating as we have a lot of smarks in the crowd who are cheering him. He'd turn face soon enough so that's all well and good. Lawler insults the Kid and the Pittsburgh fans, which isn't really that hard to do. He sends Kid to the floor with a SWEET looking back kick. Kid makes his comeback which is actually pretty good. It's a lot of interesting looking high flying stuff that works really well for someone of his size etc.

Eventually he goes for a spinwheel kick and gets caught in a suplex/powerbomb kind of move for the pin. I really like that ending as it made sense to have Kid keep going for bigger and bigger moves before finally getting caught. That's a nice little touch to end on.

Rating: B. This was a very solid opener I thought. It was fast paced and exciting as both guys were jumping all over the place and it just flowed really well. The fans were into it which isn't saying much as this is a very hot crowd to say the least. Good choice for an opener.

In the back, Mabel says that he won't tell Doc what his surprise is for later.

HHH vs. Bob Holly

Holly is still the racecar guy here while it's still very early in HHH's WWF career. He's been here about 4 months at this time so this is easily his biggest match to date against his toughest opponent. Lawler says that HHH is the kind of guy that eats Kentucky Fried Quail. Is that an insult or a compliment? Anyway, there's a natural heel thing about HHH that works so well with this blueblood character.

Just about everyone that he would face would have a culture clash with him because who doesn't hate some rich guy that thinks he's better than you? BREAKING NEWS! The British Bulldog is here! This is apparently shocking and terrible as he turned heel last week, attacking Diesel. How can something like this happen? A WWF wrestler that's a pretty big star coming to a WWF event? Yes folks, anything can happen in the WWF, even a guy coming to work.

We of course go split screen to show Smith walking. Oh my goodness, get these people an Emmy dang it! Even being the rich guy vs. the redneck, this is a very boring match. There's no drama to it at all as Holly just isn't that good and HHH doesn't know how good he is yet. Imagine telling Vince back then that HHH would not only be a ten time world champion but also his son in law and the heir to the throne. After about 8 minutes of pure boredom, HHH wins with a not yet perfected pedigree.

Rating: D+. This is just flat out boring. No one wanted to see it and it's more or less a glorified squash match. Where's the fun in that? In my eyes, there's very little indeed. Seriously, why was this on Summerslam again? Did they not have anything better that they could have put on here? They spent half the time talking about Smith so even the announcers didn't care.

We see a video talking about the WWF vs. Pittsburgh firefighters in a tug of war for some charity thing. Bam Bam, Mabel, Henry Godwin and Savio? Something just doesn't fit in

there. It's for charity so I can't make any jokes about it really.

Smoking Guns vs. Blu Brothers

Blu Brothers were later known as DOA, Creative Control, Harris Brothers and I think the Bruise Brothers. They're twins so this works really well s it's easy to get heel heat by just switching. The Cowboys are just flat out boring. They're ok in the ring but DANG they're bland.

This is pretty much a tag version of the previous match as no one is interested and it feels like a weak house show match. It's about 5 minutes long and is just a heel domination leading to the hot tag and the faces hitting the Sidewinder to end it. That's all there is to it and no one could care less at all.

Rating: D. This was even worse than HHH's match as it just doesn't fit on Summerslam at all. It's a bland match that feels like it belongs at a house show on its best day. Why would someone want to pay for something like this?

Barry Horowitz vs. Skip

This is actually kind of a cool story. Horowitz for those of you that don't know is one of the biggest jobbers of all time, ranking up there with the Brooklyn Brawler. He hadn't won a match in years yet somehow kept a job. Anyway, one night he pinned Skip when he wasn't paying attention. A week later he somehow gets credit for another win after going to a time limit draw. For some reason, that warrants a match here at Summerslam.

Can someone explain to me why this is happening and not maybe a tag title match? It's the second biggest show of the year, Raw has long since been established as the A show, and In Your House has debuted. Do we really need to give these guys, a relative newcomer and a jobber time on Summerslam, but not the

world tag team titles? Sunny is Skip's manager and I'm convinced she's an alien. No human could be that hot.

Anyway, they start hot as Barry is wearing suspenders to go with his tights. They're gone in about 8 seconds so what was the point of them? This is actually a pretty good match with some nice technical stuff. Sunny is sent to the back, causing 75% of male viewers to change the channel. For some reason she doesn't leave which is a good thing. Candido is impressing me actually. His offense is very crisp and sharp with no botches or anything like that.

He passed away at only 33 and he was already an established veteran so he would certainly still be active today. Skip hits his diving headbutt finisher but pulls him up at the last second which even Lawler says is a bad idea. As he's doing this, for no apparent reason, Hakushi comes out and distracts Skip. This allows Horowitz to roll him up for the small package while Skip's hand is very close to Barry's package.

Rating: B. This was a very good match. The story was fine and the in ring work was very good. There's no noticeable botches or anything like that and you get an excellent feel good moment. However, I have to ask again: is this more important than a tag title match? Even a squash tag match would be fine, but there's no need to have these two get 10 minutes plus at Summerslam.

Dean Douglas says that Horowitz didn't deserve to win.

Todd says that Barry should have won and shows a short clip from the ladder match. Shawn comes in and says he'll win no matter what.

Women's Title: Bertha Faye vs. Alundra Blayze

Now THIS is one of the weirdest characters of all time. Weighing in at 230 pounds, Faye was just an ugly fat woman that Harvey Whippleman was in love with. She wore a skirt that

showed her underwear and was fat. That's about it. What was the point or thought behind this character? We've been trying to figure that out ever since. Her song was called Sweet Loving Arms if that tells you anything. They did everything they could to make Blayze a big deal and it just never worked once.

This is a pretty short match which is likely good. Blayze of course knows some martial arts because every diva is skilled with them right? How many women use a kick as a major point of their offense?

Anyway, Alundra (how odd of a name is that anyway?) hits a bunch of kicks and big moves but she can't beat the big fat chick, leading to the worst sitout powerbomb of all time and as the champion gets her shoulder up at 2, the three comes down and we have a new champion. She and Harvey celebrate in the aisle after the match.

Rating: D+. Oy vey this was bad. Neither was incredibly skilled in this match, which wasn't fair as both could actually wrestle pretty well. Faye was a comedy character and Blayze would get the belt back in about two months or so. This was a waste of time though and wasn't entertaining at all.

Recap of Taker vs. Kama, which was a pretty bad feud. Kama, aka the Godfather, stole his urn at Mania and made it into a necklace. He then beat up the creatures of the night, causing this to become a casket match. They did this at an In Your House show as a dark match which wasn't that good. This has more time and is on a bigger stage, so maybe this is better.

Paul Bearer and Taker say Kama is in trouble.

Casket Match: Kama vs. Undertaker

Kama still works for DiBiase at this point. Hmm Taker in a violent gimmick match in Pittsburgh. Same thing happened later on in the Mankind Cell match. Kama of course isn't afraid, as

no heel has been in forever. Well at least in the beginning this is far better. What this should be is more or less Kozlov vs. Taker, and that's what we're getting. Kama is hammering him with big power strikes and Taker is absorbing them.

Kama is showing fear of the coffin so we're getting inside his head too. This is light years ahead of what we had last month at In Your House. Taker goes to the floor and DiBiase kicks at him, leading to Bearer taking his jacket off to fight Ted. That is something I'd pay to see. Ted having been retired for awhile and likely out of shape vs. Paul Bearer. Oh my goodness that would be funny.

Kama suplexes him onto the closed casket. I can't imagine a back injury in a casket match with Taker can you? The Rest In Peace chant really is awesome here. This is kind of standard Taker stuff, which means that it's going just fine. Taker gets beaten down, then makes his comeback.

They both go inside the big wooden box at the same time and Kama crawls out, giving us the dragging him under visual that Shawn made famous at the 98 Rumble. Eventually it's tombstone and the dark box for Kama to give Taker the win.

Rating: B-. I was liking this. Kama is the perfect kind of heel to feed to Taker. He's big and strong with good fighting skills, which makes it easy for Taker to fight him off and look good doing it. This was a long feud for Taker but no one really put much thought into it. All it really was supposed to do was keep him busy until he could move onto something big, which he did as he started feuding with Mable for a few months before moving on to Diesel soon after that.

We hit the recap button on Bret vs. Isaac Yankem, who is just an agent of Lawler to try to fight Bret. Some of the lines by Todd here are great. "Lawler did what he does best: got somebody else to fight his battles for him." "He went out and got someone else to fight for him. He got a dentist."

“Yankem was a demented tooth fairy.” You know, for all that Bret and Kane have done for the WWF, this might be their best stuff. Think about it: Kane is a crazed dentist which sounds like a bad horror movie. Wow, See No Evil 2 here we come! Anyway, Bret is the guy that has to fight a crazed dentist. How over the top can you get?

Bret Hart vs. Isaac Yankem

Isaac is from Decatur, Illinois. That just sounds funny to me for some reason. Hart says he's tired of Lawler, and asks if a chiropractor is next. That made me laugh. No awesome leather jacket for Hart which sucks. This is another good matchup for Hart as he's against a big guy that he can take down after getting beaten up. That's a nice thing to get going which always works well. Taker is apparently on the Superstar line. That's just a funny thing to imagine.

Crowd is WAY into Bret here. This is a pretty good back and forth match for the early part as they hammer on each other with Bret slowly breaking Isaac down but Kane hitting a power move to stop Bret dead in his tracks. Eventually the big guy takes over and works Bret into the ground pretty well. Bret has a sweet counter for this neck pull move that's hard to describe. Basically Bret back flips out of it. It's really cool looking.

The referee grabs Isaac by the hair and pulls him away which is just not smart. It makes the wrestler look bad because a referee is manhandling them and it's just not professional. You can hear that Vince is seriously ticked off over it. Yep he's fired. Anyway, this is mainly over the kiss my foot match that Lawler and Hart had where Lawler had to kiss not only Bret's foot but his own.

He says it was like kissing a hog with halitosis, which is horrible. Also, Lawler sells sea shells by the seashore for six cents on Saturdays. They're on the floor for awhile which

is just more time for Hart to get beaten up as Isaac looks good. Kane even does a very short walk of the top rope to land a leg drop to the back of Bret's head as he was hanging over the top rope.

Dang why hasn't he done that since? Wow has Kane really been in the WWF nearly 15 years? That's almost hard to believe if you think about it. Finally Hart has had ENOUGH and throws a suicide dive and beats the heck out of Isaac. Sharpshooter leads to Lawler helping Isaac get out which he more or less had to do. He's now a manager instead of a commentator so Vince is on his own.

Oh this isn't going to go well. Brea beats on him for a bit, drawing a mad pop from the crowd, but allowing Kane to hit a double axe from the top to save the King. Lawler eventually grabs Bret's foot and tries to pull him out as Isaac helps him. This causes the referee to FINALLY DQ them after counting to six. They hang Bret between the top and middle ropes and pull on him which has to hurt badly.

Instead of just going in reverse of what got Bret in that position, the suits that run down decide to shove Bret's head through the ropes, hurting him even worse. Did they not pay attention to Foley losing an ear in a similar thing? Oh he's fine though. Being this close to Canada gives Bret his super human powers. It's kind of like the sun with Superman, but Bret could take him in Canada.

Rating: B-. This was pretty good, but it was in essence a handicap match. While that's all well and good, this should have been Bret vs. Lawler for one big and final blowoff match, maybe in a cage. Yeah I think that would have worked just fine. Kane was a good enough choice, but the focus was more on Lawler, which hurt things a bit. Either way, the stuff in the ring was very good and this was a solid 15 or so minute match.

IC Title: Shawn Michaels vs. Razor Ramon

No transition here or anything at all other than the Razor promo. It's the rematch of the ladder match. It doesn't need much of an explanation so there we go. Shawn climbs the ladder in the aisle to stare down Razor which is a semi-famous image, or at least it was back then. Vince telling someone to get down is just wrong on so many levels.

They raise up the belt which is something you don't often see. Doc Hendrix jumps in on commentary. Vince says that you would have to be Andre the Giant with a jetpack to reach the belt. Or you could just get a ladder but who am I to argue. Doc offers up a surprising stat: only once in Summerslam history up to that point, in 1993, did the IC Title not change hands. Hey he's good for something.

Shawn says lift it up and there's the bell. They slug it out to start and both guys escape finishers. Shawn is knocked to the floor and then stops Razor from getting the ladder. Why? Shawn has to bring it back also doesn't he? Razor blocks Shawn's suplex and suplexes him to the floor. I love that move. Not sure why but I always have. Either that or it just sounds good and I'm trying to fill in space.

Both finishers miss again and we get a double clothesline to give them a breather. Razor gets to the ladder which is enough for Vince to say he'll win. Sid, the guy that gets the winner, is watching in the back. Shawn gets the ladder and control but it's not like the match is ending anytime soon so the drama isn't there at all. Why must we always see Shawn's back?

Down goes the ladder and Shawn and he might have hurt his knee. Oh that's funny. Shawn's knee never gets hurt. The fans aren't sure if they like what Razor is doing here or not. Shawn is more or less dead and falls as Razor tries to send him into the ladder. This is a much more psychological based match than before but they have some experience this time so that might have something to do with it.

Razor has been dominating for a good while here. No attempt at going for the belt yet though which doesn't really surprise me. Lots of leg work which is logical. Shawn manages to send Razor to the floor but another knee shot takes away any kind of advantage Shawn may have gotten. Razor is wrestling heel here and it's working pretty well. Granted that's his natural style so it's easy for him.

He goes up but Shawn literally makes a diving save to send him down. Doc declares this the greatest match he's ever seen. It's good but seriously, the best you've ever seen? That might be a stretch dude. Then again given how many drugs he probably did this might be the only match he can remember seeing. Shawn suplexes Razor off the ladder and everyone is down.

Razor eats ladder in the corner and Shawn takes over. Shawn goes up and hits a moonsault press. It kind of misses but it was close enough to still look ok. A splash from the top of the ladder misses and everyone is down. They slug it out on top of the ladder and a headbutt from Razor sends both guys flying down. Doc says Ted and Sid have to be dancing in the streets. Or they could be watching in the bar on a monitor but same thing I guess.

Shawn charges with the ladder but goes through the ropes to the floor. Razor is like screw this and gets a second ladder. He finally gets the Edge off the ladder and both guys are down again. If there's one criticism here it's that they're staying down for too many long stretches of time. Granted I can totally understand them needing a break.

Vince wants to know which one is the legal ladder. Is there a ladder checking team that I'm not aware of? Both guys climb up a ladder at the same time and Shawn gets more or less Sweet Chin Music to knock Razor off. And then like an IDIOT he jumps at the belt and misses completely, crashing down onto the mat. Shawn sends him to the floor and climbs again, getting his hands on the belt but just not grabbing it. He goes up again

and gets it so I'd think the second one was just a slip or something.

Rating: B+. While not as good as their initial match, this is indeed an excellent one. The problem here is simple: how do you follow the greatest gimmick match of all time to that point, especially with the same two guys in it? Every spot you can look at and say it was better the first time or that wasn't as good as the one you did last year.

That's the issue they're facing here, so while this is good, by comparison it just isn't as solid of a match, which can mainly be attributed to the expectations they had coming into this match I think.

In the back Dean Douglas has a few choice words to say about the "Bad Guy". This leads to Ramon coming in and beating him up, kickstarting their feud which would actually be Ramon's last in the company before heading to WCW.

WWF Title: Diesel vs. Mabel

Please help me get through this. Mabel won the KOTR because Vince got really high one night and decided he wanted to see how well he could screw up Summerslam, so he gives us this. Let's see, how many other options were there that are better than this? Maybe every single person on the roster? Are you telling me you couldn't have thrown someone like Owen Hart maybe in there? He would have at least given a decent match.

The problem here is simple: Mabel is too fat for Diesel to muscle around like he's always done, and it's going to throw Diesel off his game. Therefore, you have a champion off his game and a big man that can't do jack. Does this sound like a good equation to anyone at all? Mabel comes to the ring as KOTR with Sir Mo. Oh yes I can see the greatness so clearly here. Vince talks about how Bulldog and Luger are here.

Ooh, why did we not have either of those as a good main event?

Oh I remember. We had to use that at In Your House instead of here where it would actually matter. Luger of course would be back in WCW 8 freaking days later after infamously having been in WWF one night and debuting for WCW the next night on the debut episode of Nitro, which when you think about it is absolutely brilliant and an amazing move.

Mabel looks like an idiot with that crown. In case you can't tell, I hate this stupid match. We keep hearing about the royal plan. Oh yes, Mabel is clearly an evil genius. Give me a break Vince. Mabel starts on offense and Diesel gets beaten up. Soon thereafter we switch that up and put Mabel on offense as I have my family hide all sharp or blunt objects to keep me from hurting myself.

Shockingly enough, Diesel can't do much other than punch and clothesline him, mainly because it's the only offense he can use without getting a hernia. Oh yeah, Mabel is wearing his shiny purple and gold ensemble here. Mable eventually gets back in control and as I was waiting on, he sits on Diesel. He puts his hands on Nash's face but doesn't pull back, yet somehow it's called a chinlock.

This goes on for EIGHTY FOUR SECONDS. Yes, I get that Mable needs a rest in there as after 5 minutes someone of his gravitational pull would get tired. HOWEVER, a minute and a half is WAY too much to have a fat guy sitting on his opponent. That's all he's doing: high impact sitting. Moe comes in of course and gets beaten up. Apparently this is the great and mighty royal plan: get your manager/tag partner/fellow homeless guy to beat on Diesel.

Oh my lord my feeble brain can't comprehend such intricate and complex thoughts! Luger runs in for the save as I think the referee has sought out psychiatric help after having to stand out there and put up with this nonsense for ten minutes. Oh wait here's part 2 of the plan: a leg drop on the floor! Actually it's more of a seated senton with Diesel in the near

area. Luger beats up Moe, proving that he's indeed smarter than a 5th grader.

The referee returns from rehab long enough to count a two on Diesel. Mabel jumps off the second rope in his attempt to change the rotation of the Earth but misses a splash. This combined with what's called a clothesline from the second rope but is more Diesel jumping on Mable lead to the slowest count of all time and a succ....a succ... I'm sorry but there was nothing successful about this match at all. Diesel keeps the belt let's go with that. He poses with the belt to close us out.

Rating: F+. Do I really need to explain this one any further? I hate this match and I hate Nelson Frazier, who is easily one of the worst "wrestlers" of all time in my eyes.

Overall Rating: F. This was a hard one for me, but overall the good moments of this show just can't get out from underneath the epicness of the nonsense on the card. Hakushi/Kid and Horowitz/Skip are actually quite good matches. I was impressed with them. However, there is no way you can justify having those two plus HHH and the Guns' squashes all be on this show.

You have a 9 match card and I could see at the very most, four belonging on a major show: the opener because you simply need a hot opener to set the stage which that one certainly meets the requirements for, the Hart/Isaac match, Taker and Kama, and the ladder match. Of the two in the middle, they could have easily been altered to put Hart and Lawler together. The second and third matches are just wastes of time, plain and simple.

The HHH match I can kind of see the point in as it gives an up and coming star a PPV match to get himself over. I can almost come to validate that one, but not by much. The Guns' match however has no business on a PPV, none. The next match was one of the best in ring matches of the night, but I ask again: WHY

IS BARRY HOROWITZ WRESTLING AT SUMMERSLAM???

Women's match was bad but since it's a title match it can be justified I suppose, and then the main event I've already vented on. I'm sorry, but an opener, a ladder match that's an inferior version of a match from a year and a half ago and two above average midcard matches simply are not enough to sell a PPV for me.

This show is just a flat out failure. It has its moments and would have been passable as a much lower level show, but this is unacceptable as the second biggest show of the year, which is saying how bad WWF was at this time when you had this and Mania 11, perhaps the worst of all time, as your big shows. This was horrible.

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